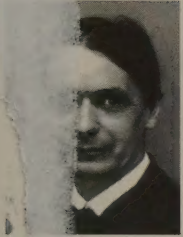


THIRTEEN LECTURES BY
RUDOLF STEINER

The Fifth Gospel

From the Akashic Record

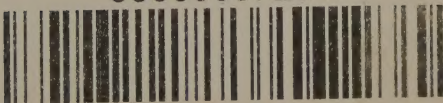


RUDOLF STEINER (1861–1925) called his spiritual philosophy ‘anthroposophy’, meaning ‘wisdom of the human being’. As a highly developed seer, he based his work on direct knowledge and perception of spiritual dimensions. He initiated a modern and universal ‘science of spirit’, accessible to anyone

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 6,000 lectures across Europe. In 1924 he founded the General Anthroposophical Society, which today has branches throughout the world.

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MAIN CONTENTS OF LECTURES

Lecture 1, Oslo, 1 October 1913

Graeco-Roman life of the intellect highly developed at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. But Christ impulse spread through simple people who loved Christ and entered into the whole of our civilization. Thus Copernicus and Giordano Bruno though persecuted by the Church were still members of the Church. Haeckel's and Darwin's thoughts were wholly Christian, and their thinking can be understood by grasping the Christian idea behind it. The Christ is like the soul of the Earth, entering into human souls irrespective of what they think. Time has now come when he must be understood. Why was it necessary for the Christ impulse to spread through centuries when people had no understanding of it?

Lecture 2, Oslo, 2 October 1913

First Pentecost: Quickened by all-prevailing cosmic love the Apostles woke from a dream-filled state of consciousness and were now able to understand what had happened on Golgotha. Access to events on and around Golgotha may be gained by entering into the mind and heart of one of the Apostles. Peter's denial due to being in altered state of consciousness. Darkening of the Earth and earthquake as occult signs the seer is able to read. Intellectual thinking of the time represented by Moon darkening the Sun. Body of Jesus taken up into the Earth. What appeared like a death on Golgotha had in fact been the birth, to the whole Earth, of that cosmic love. Apostles recognized Christ as the great spiritual teacher they had known between Golgotha and Ascension when images from after Golgotha merged with images from before Golgotha. Difficult for Rudolf Steiner to speak of these things, but occult obligation. From a free-thinking and

scientific background, he found his way to the Christ spirit through spiritual science, and his revelations from the Fifth Gospel may therefore be seen as more objective.

Lecture 3, Oslo, 3 October 1913

Baptism by John in the Jordan like conception, and Mystery of Golgotha the birth, to the Earth, of the Christ, to be followed by his actual life on Earth when he was with the Apostles in their unusual state of consciousness. Ascension and Pentecost with pouring out of cosmic love equivalent to our entering the world of the spirit on death, but in opposite direction. Persian or Mithraic mysteries with their seven stages of initiation. Initiates bearing the name of their nation would enter the realm of the Archangels to receive guidance. Sun Heroes went to dwell in the Sun sphere with the Archai who preserved a nation's achievements on behalf of humanity. They met the Christ spirit in the Sun who then came to Earth at Golgotha. Three years of pain and suffering in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. Christ spirit initially able to be elsewhere than the body of Jesus but gradually uniting more closely with body. Road from fullness of divine powers to utter powerlessness. Out of this was born the all-prevailing cosmic love, the Christ impulse that came to humanity.

Lecture 4, Oslo, 5 October 1913

Much was expected of Jesus of Nazareth after the wisdom shown in the Temple. But he grew increasingly silent. Pain of realizing that ancient Hebrew revelation could no longer reach people, that pagan rites had been invaded by demons, with the Bath Kol revealing the macrocosmic Our Father. Realization that Essene practices were exclusive, driving Lucifer and Ahriman away. Question: 'Where do Lucifer and Ahriman go when they take flight?'

Lecture 5, Oslo, 6 October 1913

Talk Jesus of Nazareth had with his stepmother in which he spoke to her of his experiences and the pain he felt. Story of Hillel. Zarathustra spirit left Jesus. His own dead mother's soul entered into the stepmother's soul. The physical, ether and astral bodies of Jesus went to receive the Christ spirit at the baptism. First temptation by Lucifer and second by Lucifer and Ahriman was repulsed, third by Ahriman alone could not be repulsed entirely, because the Christ had no experience of material world. Christ Jesus saw that people were caught up in material world and reversed the macrocosmic Our Father in the Lord's Prayer. Christ might speak through any of the disciples and could not be told apart from them. Judas therefore had to betray him, under the influence of Ahriman. Need to speak of the spirit in the right way and approach the Fifth Gospel with reverence.

Lecture 6, Berlin, 21 October 1913

Laying of foundation stone in Dornach and need for Anthroposophy. Human beings progressively less spiritual in different civilizations until wholly related to physical plane at time of Golgotha. Crusaders looked for the Christ on physical plane where he was no longer to be found. Need arose to 'prove' existence of God. Foolishness and inner untruthfulness of intelligent people—Eucken, Harnack, Renan. Until now Christ impulse not dependent on our understanding but now understanding must be sought.

Lecture 7, Berlin, 4 November 1913

Two Jesus children. Between his twelfth year and the baptism in the Jordan, Jesus of Nazareth learned that the ancient revelations of Hebrew and pagan religion could no longer reach people and that the Essenes' search for higher

development was exclusive of others and drove Lucifer and Ahriman away. Vision of Buddha. Pain suffered in mind and spirit (unlike Maeterlinck's idea). Need to treat Fifth Gospel revelations with reverence.

Lecture 8, Berlin, 18 November 1913

The macrocosmic Our Father. Jesus of Nazareth talks to his mother about his experiences. Story of Hillel. Inner changes in Jesus and his mother and baptism by John in the Jordan. Temptation as presented in the Fifth Gospel. Consequences of Ahriman's challenge not being fully answered. Christ spirit entering gradually into bodies of Jesus of Nazareth but also able to go apart and to speak through disciples.

Lecture 9, Berlin, 6 January 1914

Three encounters Jesus of Nazareth had on his way to the Jordan. Temptation. Need to ask question—Parsifal and young man of Sais. New Isis Mystery.

Lecture 10, Berlin, 13 January 1914

Hebrews saw Yahveh as Earth god; their religion distinct from astral religions. John's 'offspring of vipers' refers to this. Paul's mission. Higher faculties bound to heredity in the past, now have to be developed individually. Kepler on the Earth as an animal organism and the Earth's soul, and his poetry. We gain living connection with the Christ if we acknowledge that our gifts come from him.

Lecture 11, Berlin, 10 February 1914

Three cosmic events preceding Golgotha, when the Christ spirit united with the soul that would later be the Nathan child. These prevented chaos of the senses, chaos of the seven vital organs and chaos of thinking, feeling and will. Contrast

between Pythia/Apollo and sybils. Mystery of Golgotha to prevent chaos in evolution of I. Fate of physical body and ether body after death. Earth evolution terminating in heat death. Blood of Christ gave new germinal life that will take us to Jupiter. Body of Christ makes this visible for us after death. Because of the Christ impulse we are able to progress on Earth.

Lecture 12, Cologne, 17 December 1913

Nature of Solomon and Nathan Jesus boys. Consequences of Zarathustra-I passing from the one to the other. Jesus of Nazareth experiencing decline of Hebrew religion (Hillel) and pagan religion (macrocosmic Our Father), and exclusive nature of Essene Order, keeping out Ahriman and Lucifer. Talk with his mother and its consequences. Three encounters on his way to the river Jordan.

Lecture 13, Cologne, 18 December 1913

Method of gaining access to Akashic Record: our thinking a thought of the Angels, offering yourself to the Archangels, becoming food for the Archai. Christ spirit entering three bodies of Jesus of Nazareth. How the hierarchies guide evolution. Need to send Sun spirit to counter Lucifer. Christ spirit limited by capacities of the bodies. Temptation leaving residue of Ahriman's challenge. Christ spirit speaking through disciples. Judas influenced by Ahriman to betray the Christ. Golgotha event with darkening of Earth and earthquake. Christ spirit entering into Earth's aura and therefore into human evolution.

INTRODUCTION

The whole of Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy turns on perceiving the central significance the Christ event holds for the whole of human and Earth evolution. His work as a teacher in the science of the spirit began at a time when biblical scientists and those researching the life of Jesus Christ cast increasing doubt on the Gospels as a historical source and on the historical reality of Jesus Christ. In 1902 Steiner published his *Christianity as Mystical Fact*, laying the foundation for a new justification of true Christianity. He showed that the Gospels cannot be taken as a historical biography of Jesus Christ but in fact present the 'typical life of the Son of God', earlier forms of which had existed for a long time in different mystery traditions. In the years that followed he continued and deepened the theme in many lectures. After a time he also began to present the results of his spiritual investigations concerning the actual historical life of Jesus of Nazareth up to the baptism in the Jordan when Christ, the Son of God, entered into the human being Jesus of Nazareth. Rudolf Steiner called these research findings 'the Fifth Gospel', or also the 'Gospel of higher perception', contributions from the science of the spirit to add to the four Gospels, for, as we read at the conclusion of John's Gospel, 'Jesus also did many other things. Indeed if they were all written down I expect that the world itself would not contain the books being written' (John 21: 25 [Kalmia Bittleston translation]).

The existing records of lectures given in 1913 and 1914 under the title *The Fifth Gospel* have been collected in this volume [the original German edition also contains one

lecture given in Hamburg and two lectures each given in Stuttgart and Munich]. There is some repetition, but as the lectures were given to different groups of people in each place this means a considerable enrichment, as the manner of presentation progressively gains in vigour. The main themes are: scenes from the childhood and youth of Jesus of Nazareth—the profound pain he experienced on realizing that the great wisdom of old was no longer reaching the people—events from his travels as a journeyman—the revelation of the Cosmic Our Father—the connection with the Essenes and John the Baptist—important talks with his stepmother concerning human salvation—events on the way to the baptism in the Jordan.

Rudolf Steiner said that he felt he was deeply obliged to communicate these research findings. On one hand he was convinced that the present age needs renewed understanding of Christ Jesus and a new way of seeing what really happened because of the Mystery of Golgotha, and on the other hand he believed that human souls would gain in health and strength by being mindful of this event, which holds the key to the meaning and purpose of human and Earth history.

LECTURE 1

Oslo, 1 October 1913

The theme I have in mind for these lectures seems of special importance in view of the present-day situation. Let me emphasize from the beginning that there is no element of sensationalism or anything of that kind in the choice of the title *The Fifth Gospel*. I hope to be able to show that it is possible to speak of such a Fifth Gospel from a point of view that is of particular importance to us in the present age, and that no title could be more suitable for what is intended. As you will hear, the Fifth Gospel has never yet been written down, but it will certainly be put into definite form in future times. In a sense, however, it would be true to say that it is as ancient as the other four Gospels.

In order that I may be able to speak about the Fifth Gospel, we shall first have to consider some important points which are essential to any real understanding of it. Let me say to begin with that the time is certainly not far distant when even in the lowest grade schools and in the most elementary education the branch of knowledge commonly called history will be presented somewhat differently. It is certain—and these lectures should in a way confirm this—that in time to come the concept or idea of Christ will play a completely different and much more important part in even the most elementary study of history than it has done until now. I know such a statement seems controversial, but let us remember that there were times, by no means far distant, when among both the ordinary folk and the most highly educated in

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Western Europe countless hearts turned to Christ with feelings of immeasurably greater fervour and intensity than is the case today. If you study modern writings and reflect on people's main interests today the impression is that enthusiasm and warmth of feeling for the Christ idea are on the wane, especially in those who claim an up-to-date education. In spite of this, our present age is moving towards a point where the Christ idea will play a much more important part in the study of human history. Does this not seem to be a complete contradiction?

Let us look at this from another side. I have been able to speak about the significance and content of the Christ idea on several occasions, also in this town. Books and lecture courses which are available here contain deep teachings of spiritual science concerning the secrets of the Christ and of the Christ idea. Anyone who assimilates what has been said in lectures, courses and indeed in the whole of our literature will realize that any real understanding of the Christ needs extensive preparation, and that the deepest concepts and thoughts must be summoned to our aid if we desire to reach some comprehension of the Christ and the Christ impulse which has been working through the centuries. It might even be thought that knowledge of the whole of spiritual science or Anthroposophy is necessary before there can be a true conception of the Christ, but there are also reasons that speak against this. If we leave this aside and look at the development of spiritual life in past centuries we find that century after century there has been detailed and profound scholarship aimed at understanding the Christ and his incarnation. For centuries, people have developed sublime and significant ideas in their endeavours to reach an understanding of the Christ. It seems as if only the most highly intellectual achievements would suffice for such understanding. But

is this really the case? Quite simple reflection will show that it is not.

Let us, as it were, lay on one scale of a spiritual balance all the contributions which scholarship, science and even anthroposophical conceptions have contributed towards an understanding of the Christ. On the other scale let us lay all the inwardness of human hearts, all the deep feelings which through the centuries have turned to the being called the Christ. We shall find that the scale on which we have laid everything contributed by science, scholarship and even Anthroposophy to explain the Christ will rise with amazing rapidity, whilst the deep feelings and inner responses human beings have had for the Christ will make the other scale go down deep. It is no exaggeration to say that the Christ has had a tremendous influence and that scholarship has contributed least of all to this. Truly it would have boded ill for Christianity if people had needed all the learned dissertations of the Middle Ages, of the Schoolmen and the Church Fathers in order to understand the Christ, or indeed if they had to depend on everything we are now able to offer out of Anthroposophy. This whole body of knowledge would be of very little help. I hardly think that anyone who studies the march of Christianity through the centuries with an unprejudiced mind can raise any serious argument against this line of thought. But the subject can be approached from yet another side.

Let us look back to the times before Christianity came into existence. I need only mention something of which those sitting here are certainly aware. I need only remind you of the ancient Greek dramas, especially in their earlier forms. When portraying a god in combat or a human being whose soul was under the influence of such a god, those plays would literally show on stage how the gods worked and influenced life. Think of Homer¹ and how his great epics are all interwoven

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with the workings of the spirit; think of the great figures of Socrates,² Plato³ and Aristotle.⁴ These names bring before our mind's eye a life of the spirit that in a certain domain was supreme. Leaving all else aside and looking only at the single figure of Aristotle, who lived centuries before the founding of Christianity, we find there an achievement which, in a way, has remained unexcelled to this day. Aristotle's thinking, the way he developed human logic, reached such a level of perfection that even today we may say that, through him, human thinking reached a height never yet surpassed.

Let us now create a strange hypothesis, just for the moment, which will help us to understand. Let us imagine that there were no Gospels to tell us anything about the figure of Christ, that the earliest records which have come to us in the form of the New Testament were simply not in existence. Leaving on one side all that has been said about the founding of Christianity, let us study its progress as historical fact, observing what has happened through the centuries of the Christian era. In other words, ignoring the existence of the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, St Paul's Epistles and so on, let us consider only what actually happened. This is pure hypothesis, of course, but what really happened before and after the founding of Christianity?

Turning our attention first of all to southern Europe, we find that at a certain point in time spiritual life and culture had developed to the highest level, represented, as we have seen, in Aristotle. This developed further in the centuries that followed. At the time when Christianity began to make its way in the world, many people in southern Europe had received a Greek education and assimilated the spiritual culture of Greece. If we follow the evolution of Christianity to the time of Celsus⁵—that strange individual who was such a violent opponent of Christianity—and even beyond his

time, we find that up to the second and third centuries after Christ many highly cultured people in Greece and Italy had absorbed the noble ideas of Plato, astute ideas that seem like a continuation of Aristotle's thinking. Here were minds of refinement and power versed in Greek learning, Romans who had added the aggressive, personal characteristics of Roman civilization to the subtlety of Greek civilization.

Such was the world into which the Christian impulse made its way. Truly, in respect of intellectuality and knowledge of the world, the early representatives of the Christian impulse seem to be uneducated in comparison with many well-educated Romans and Greeks. A group of uneducated people emerges in the midst of a world of mature intellectuality. And now we witness a strange spectacle: through these simple, unsophisticated people, who were its first bearers, Christianity spread comparatively quickly through southern Europe. Thinking of them today, perhaps having gained some understanding of the nature of Christianity through Anthroposophy, we are able to say: in that world of highly developed Greek thinking, the unsophisticated people who emerged as the bearers of the Christian impulse had no understanding at all of the nature of the Christian impulse. They had nothing to offer in the market-place of Graeco-Roman life save their own inwardness, a personal connection with the Christ whom they loved as though he were a much-loved member of their family. The people who brought into the Graeco-Roman world the Christianity which has continued to develop right to our present time were not well-informed theologians or theosophists, they were uneducated. The Gnostics, who were the learned theosophists of those times had, it is true, risen to sublime ideas concerning the Christ, but even they were only able to contribute knowledge that must be placed in the rising scale of the balance. If everything had depended

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on the Gnostics, Christianity would certainly not have made its victorious headway through the world. It was no highly developed intellectuality that came over from the East, causing the comparatively rapid decline of the old Greek and Roman culture. This is one side of the picture.

We see the other side when we consider people of intellectual distinction, beginning with Celsus—the opponent of Christianity who brought forward all the arguments that may still be brought today—all the way to Marcus Aurelius,⁶ the philosopher on the throne. We think of the Neo-Platonists with their subtle scholarship, whose ideas make those of modern philosophy seem like child's play, so greatly do they surpass them in loftiness and breadth of vision. If we consider all the arguments against Christianity brought by those philosophers, people of high intellectual eminence in Graeco-Roman civilization, we gain the impression that they all failed to understand the Christ impulse. Christianity was spread by people who understood nothing of its real nature; it was opposed by an advanced culture incapable of grasping its significance. Truly, Christianity made a strange entry into a world where adherents and opponents alike understood nothing of its true spirit. And yet there were people who had the power in them to secure for the Christ impulse its victorious march through the world.

Let us now look at people such as the great Church Father Tertullian⁷ who entered the lists on behalf of Christianity with a certain greatness and power. Tertullian was a Roman who may almost be said to have re-created the Latin tongue, creating new words with a surety and precision that tell us he was a personality of real significance. But if we consider his idea of the Christ, there is a very different story to tell. In this respect he showed little evidence of intellectuality or of being a great mind. The defenders of Christianity also did not

achieve much. Yet people like Tertullian—someone whose arguments would not be highly rated by any educated Greek—nevertheless proved potent personalities. He was captivating—but in what way? This is the crux of the matter.

Let us realize that this is a very real question. How were the bearers of the Christ impulse able to have such an influence when in fact they understood little of the true nature of that impulse? How were the Church Fathers, including even Origen,⁸ able to have such an influence, in spite of their obvious inability to understand the Christ impulse? Why were people who had reached the highest level in Graeco-Roman scholarship unable to understand the essential nature of the Christ impulse? What does all this signify?

But let us go further. The same phenomenon emerges even more clearly if we consider the course of history. As the centuries went by, Christianity spread over Europe, among peoples such as the Germanic peoples who had entirely different ideas of religion and worship and appeared to be completely at home in those ideas, yet nevertheless they accepted the Christ impulse with open hearts, as their true life. When we think of the individuals who were the most influential missionaries among them, were they highly educated theologians? No, indeed! Comparatively speaking they were simple, unsophisticated souls who went among the people, talking to them in the most homely, everyday language, but moving their very hearts. They knew how to frame their words in such a way as to touch the deepest heart strings of those to whom they spoke. Simple people went far and wide, and it was their work that produced the most significant results.

Christianity thus spread through the centuries. But we marvel at the fact that this same Christianity also became the subject of profound scholarship, science and philosophy.

Without undervaluing this philosophy, let us focus our attention on the remarkable fact that up to the Middle Ages the peoples among whom Christianity spread, soon becoming part of their very souls, had until then had ideas of a very different kind in their hearts and minds. In the not too far distant future, many other important aspects relating to the spread of Christianity will emerge. Speaking of the influence of the Christian impulse, people will find it easy to agree that there was a time when these Christian teachings were the source of real enthusiasm. Yet in modern times the fervour which in the Middle Ages accompanied the spread of Christianity seems to have died away.

Think of the time of Copernicus,⁹ when the development of science started that has continued to the nineteenth century. Modern science, which from the time of Copernicus has become an integral part of western culture, might appear to have run counter to Christianity. The known historical facts may seem to confirm this. Thus the writings of Copernicus were put on the index of forbidden books by the Roman Catholic Church until the 1820s. The Church considered Copernicus its enemy. These are superficial aspects, however, and they did not prevent Copernicus from being a canon. The Roman Church may have burnt Giordano Bruno¹⁰ at the stake, but he was, for all that, a member of the Dominican Order. The ideas of both these thinkers sprang from the soil of Christianity and they acted out of the Christian impulse. To maintain that their teachings were not the fruits of Christianity would show poor understanding on the part of anyone claiming to hold fast by the Church. All this goes to prove that the Church did not really understand the fruits of Christianity; it needed a long time, right into the nineteenth century, before it realized that Copernicus's ideas could not be suppressed by the index. Anyone able to see

more deeply will have to admit that all the achievements of peoples and nations, including those of more recent centuries, have been the outcome of Christianity and that it was because of Christianity that humanity turned its gaze from the Earth to the wide spaces of the heavens through the work of Copernicus and Giordano Bruno. That work was only possible within Christian culture and through the Christian impulse.

Anyone who considers the depths and not merely the surface of spiritual life will understand something which may seem highly peculiar but is nevertheless correct. Looking beneath the surface it seems impossible that someone like Haeckel,¹¹ that arch-opponent of Christianity, could be the man he is except on the basis of Christianity. Ernst Haeckel is inconceivable without that basis. And the whole development of modern science, where great efforts are made to oppose Christianity, is nevertheless the offspring and a direct development of the Christian impulse. Once it has got over its teething troubles, people will see quite clearly that, taken to its logical conclusion, the point of origin of modern science truly leads to a science of the spirit, and that there is a consistent path from Haeckel to the science of the spirit.¹² Once this has been grasped, people will realize that Haeckel is Christian through and through, although he himself has no notion of it. The Christian impulses have given rise not only to elements that called and still call themselves Christian but also to those that on the surface appear to run counter to Christianity. We have to study the underlying reality and not merely the concepts and ideas that are put into words. The Darwinian theory of evolution leads in a straight line to the teaching of repeated earth lives, as you can see from my essay 'Reincarnation and Karma'.¹³

To gain the right approach to these things we must be able to observe the influence of the Christian impulses without

prejudice. Anyone who understands Darwinism and the teachings of Haeckel and has at least some notion that both could not have been anything but Christian movements (Haeckel has no idea of this, but Darwin¹⁴ still had some awareness), will inevitably arrive at the idea of reincarnation. Someone with clairvoyant powers will be able to follow this road consistently and arrive at the spiritual origin of the human race. It is a roundabout way, but with the help of clairvoyance we have a consistent path from Haeckel's teachings to a spiritual conception of the Earth's origin. It would also be possible to accept Darwinism as it presents itself today without letting its life principles influence us. In other words, if Darwinism is taken as an impulse and one has no deeper understanding of Christianity, which is part of it, the result is very strange. With that kind of mental attitude people are likely to understand as little of Christianity as they do of Darwinism, and have no sense for either! If we have a feeling for Darwinism we can be as materialistic as we like, but going further back in Earth history we come to a point where we realize that the human being never evolved from lower forms of animal life and must be spiritual in origin. Taking Darwinism to its logical conclusion we come to the point where we see the human being as a spiritual entity hovering above the Earth world. If, however, we have no feeling for the true spirit of Darwinism and believe in reincarnation, we may well believe that we were apes in one of our incarnations on Earth.¹⁵ Anyone who believes this must have lost all feeling for both Darwinism and Christianity! Darwinism taken to its logical conclusion would never allow us to think so. For we would have to graft the reincarnation concept on to materialistic culture in a wholly external way. It is, of course, possible to strip modern Darwinism of its Christian aspect. If we do not do so, however, we shall find

that even to the present day the impulses of Darwinism have been born out of the Christ impulse and that Christian impulses are at work even where they are denied.

Thus we have seen Christianity spread in the early centuries, quite independent of its adherents' level of education and knowledge, and in the Middle Ages, when representatives of the Church and Schoolmen, with all their learning, contributed almost nothing to it. And finally in our materialistic modern science we have the strange paradox of Christianity more or less appearing to be the opposite of what it is. Modern science nevertheless derives all its greatness and tremendous energies from the Christian impulses. And those impulses will inevitably take science out of and beyond materialism.

It is a strange thing with those Christian impulses! It seems that intellectuality, learning and erudition play no role at all in their spread, which has entirely different reasons. We might say that Christianity spreads regardless of whether people are for or against it in their thinking, and actually appears changed into its opposite in modern materialism.

What exactly is it that spreads? It is not the ideas or knowledge of Christianity. We might say that it is the moral feeling that has come with Christianity. But just look at present-day morals and you'll feel that much of the anger representatives of Christianity feel against real or imagined opponents has its justification. Nor can the morality shown by people with little education in the past impress us greatly, even if taken at its most Christian. What, then, is this mysterious impulse making its victorious way through the world?

Let us turn to the science of the spirit, to clairvoyant consciousness. What lived in the ignorant hordes coming from the East who pushed their way into Graeco-Roman

culture? What lived in the people who brought Christianity to the alien world of the Germanic tribes? What lives in materialistic modern science, where the teaching may be said to be veiling its face still? What lived and lives in all those souls, seeing these are neither intellectual nor moral impulses? It is the Christ himself. He goes from heart to heart, from soul to soul, living and working in the world regardless of whether he is understood as evolution progresses through the centuries.

We are compelled to abandon all our established notions and knowledge and point to the reality, showing how Christ himself mysteriously walks through the centuries, in thousands of impulses, taking form in human souls, entering into millions of hearts and bringing fulfilment. Christ himself was in the hearts of the simple people who entered into the world of Greece and Italy. He took hold of more and more human souls in the West and the North. He walked by the side of the teachers who later brought Christianity to the Germanic peoples. Christ himself in all his reality went from place to place, from soul to soul, himself the very Soul of the Earth, entering into those souls regardless of what they thought of Christianity.

Let me use a simple analogy. How many people are there who understand nothing about the composition of foods and yet eat a proper diet? It would certainly mean starvation if we had to know all about our food before we could eat it. Nourishment has nothing whatsoever to do with understanding the nature of foods. In the same way the spread of Christianity over the Earth had nothing to do with how much of it people understood. This is a strange fact. It is a mystery that can only be explained by finding the answer to the question: how does Christ himself live in human hearts and minds? When we consider this question in the science of the

spirit, in clairvoyant investigation, we turn first of all to an event that is wholly in accord with everything I have been saying today and the full reality of which can only be discovered by clairvoyant perception. We shall see something that needs to be seen more and more clearly as time goes on: the time when Christ worked in the way I have just described is past and gone, and the time has come when humanity must understand and have real knowledge of Christ.

We must therefore also find the answer to the question as to why our age was preceded by an age when the Christ impulse was able to spread independently of people's understanding. It was possible because of one particular event. Clairvoyant consciousness tells us that it was the event of Pentecost, the sending of the Holy Spirit. Clairvoyant vision quickened by the true Christ impulse in the anthroposophical sense was first directed to this event. This initially presents itself when our investigation is conducted with a certain question in mind.

What happened on Earth at the moment in world evolution which is presented as the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, an event that is difficult to understand at first? Clairvoyant investigation tells us what it means when it says that simple folk such as the Apostles suddenly started to speak in different tongues, speaking of truths which came to them from the depths of spiritual life, and which no one would have thought them capable of uttering. That was the time when Christianity, Christian impulses, began to spread in a way that was independent of people's understanding.

From the event of Pentecost the Christ power poured out over the Earth. What, then, was this event? The question has presented itself in the science of the spirit, and with the answer to it begins—the Fifth Gospel.

LECTURE 2

Oslo, 2 October 1913

We will begin today by turning our thoughts to the event known as Pentecost. I said in my first lecture that clairvoyant research may first be directed to this event, for as we look into the past it presents itself as a kind of awakening experienced by those who are generally known as the Apostles or disciples of Christ Jesus. It is not easy to form clear and precise ideas of all these phenomena, for they are undoubtedly strange. And to get a true idea of everything that will be said in today's lecture in particular, we shall need to recall from deep down in our hearts and souls some of the things we have learned from our anthroposophical studies.

The Apostles felt at that moment as if they were waking from a state of consciousness that had been different from the usual. It was indeed a kind of awakening from a deep sleep, though this was a peculiar, dream-filled sleep, a sleep the nature of which was such—I must stress that I am always presenting this as it appeared to the Apostles themselves—that they still went around as normal human beings, performing their daily tasks. Other people would not even notice that they were in a different state of consciousness. Yet a moment came when it seemed to the Apostles that for a long time, for days, they had lived in a dream-filled sleep from which they now awoke. And with this awakening came a very special feeling. They felt as if something had come to them from the universe which we can only call all-prevailing love. They felt as if they had been quickened by that love coming from

above, as if they had been raised from their dream-like state. It was as if all the original power of love that exists in the universe, giving it warmth, had roused them from their sleep, as if this original power of love had entered into the soul of each and every one of them. And the people who were able to observe them as they spoke found them completely changed. They knew them to be individuals who had lived an extremely simple life until now, though some of them had behaved in a rather strange manner for some days, as if lost in a dream. People had been aware of this. Now, however, they seemed transformed, like individuals who had really and truly entered into a completely new state of mind, a new soul mood. It seemed they had left behind all narrowness and self-seeking and gained infinite greatness of heart, complete inner tolerance and real, heart-felt understanding of all that is human on Earth. They were able to express themselves in a way that everyone who was there could understand. People felt that the Apostles were able to see into everyone's heart and soul and read their deepest innermost secrets and were therefore able to comfort every individual, saying exactly what each person needed. It certainly seemed most strange to those observers that a group of people could change in this way.

The individuals who had been transformed, having been aroused by the spirit of cosmic love, now felt a new understanding for events in which their souls had been closely involved but which they had not been able to understand at the time. Now, quickened by cosmic love, understanding dawned in their souls of what had happened on Golgotha. Let us look into the soul of one of the Apostles, the one who is generally called Peter in the other Gospels. When his inmost soul is revealed to clairvoyant vision, it appears that his normal Earth-bound consciousness had ceased completely at

the moment which in the other Gospels is usually called the 'denial'. He now looked back to the scene where he had been asked if he had any connection with the Galilean, and knew that he had denied this at the time because his normal consciousness was beginning to fade and an abnormal state was developing, a kind of dream state in which he was transported into another world. Now, at Pentecost, he felt the way we feel when we wake up in the morning and recall the events that occurred before we went to sleep the night before. Peter recalled the events that happened just before the abnormal condition developed, he remembered the 'denial', as it is generally called, the threefold denial before the cock crowed twice. And he remembered that a condition had developed in his soul that was like the spreading of night when we go to sleep. He also remembered that this intermediate state had been filled not with mere dream images but with forms that represented a higher state of consciousness in which he had shared in the experience of purely spiritual affairs. Peter had, as it were, slept through everything that happened since, and this now came before his mind's eye as though in a clairvoyant dream. Above all he learned to behold one event of which we can truly say that he slept through it. He had not been able to follow it with his mind at the time, for full understanding was only possible once he had been quickened by the all-prevailing cosmic love. Now, however, the images of the Mystery of Golgotha appeared to him which we, too, can perceive if we create the conditions that enable us to call them to mind by looking back with clairvoyant vision.

Frankly, it is a strange feeling when one decides to put into words what reveals itself to clairvoyant consciousness as one looks into the mind of Peter and the others who had gathered for the Whitsun festival. The decision to speak of this can only be taken with holy awe and respect. One gets an

overpowering feeling of stepping on to the most holy soil of human perception when attempting to express in words what reveals itself to the inner eye. However, conditions are such at the present time that it seems necessary to speak of these things, knowing, of course, that times will come when people will have greater understanding for what has to be told of the Fifth Gospel. Much of what has to be said today will only be understood when the human mind and soul are able to free themselves from all kinds of things that currently must of necessity fill them.

Looking back clairvoyantly to the event on Golgotha, we first of all perceive something which seems like an insult to the modern scientific mind when it is put into words. I nevertheless feel compelled to put into words, to the best of my ability, what presents itself to clairvoyant vision, and I shall not be able to help it if what has to be said were to go beyond this room and reach less well-prepared minds and souls, with the whole perhaps blown out of proportion as something that cannot stand up to the dominant scientific thinking of our age.

The clairvoyant eye first of all sees an image representing a fact which is also referred to in the other Gospels but appears in a very special way when we see it emerge, as it were, from the vast abundance of images that present themselves. One sees a kind of darkening of the Earth.¹⁶ One feels that at this significant moment, which continued for hours, the physical Sun was darkened over Palestine and over Golgotha. The impression is the same as when an external, physical eclipse of the Sun darkens the land, something which vision schooled in spiritual science can confirm today. To the inner eye, the whole area around the human being looks as follows during a partial or full solar eclipse. Everything looks different. I want to leave aside the aspect presented

by everything produced by human skills and industry. It needs some strength of character, and full awareness of the fact that all these things had to develop, to behold without flinching the spirits arising from industrially produced objects which are devoid of art. I will not go into this but merely tell you that at such a time nature shows itself full of light in a way normally only seen after extremely difficult meditation work. All plant and animal life, every bird, every butterfly looks different. You note that the feeling of vitality is reduced. A deep conviction can arise that a life of the spirit connected with the Sun, the physical body of which may be said to be the Sun we see in the heavens, is intimately bound up with all life on Earth. The feeling arises that when the physical radiance of the Sun is forcibly darkened as the Moon moves between Sun and Earth, this is something entirely different from night time when the Sun is merely not shining. It feels as if the group souls of plants and animals were arising, while living physical bodies grow limp and feeble. Everything spiritual, representing group soul nature, seems to light up.

When the clairvoyant eye looks back to the moment in Earth evolution we call the Mystery of Golgotha it sees something very close to the above. And then something evolves which we may call learning to read, to decipher the real meaning of this strange sign created by the sudden darkening of the Sun in nature. I really cannot help it but I am forced to read an entirely natural event, the kind of thing that has also happened before and since, exactly as it presents itself — which does of course go against current materialistic thinking. It is like opening a book and reading the print; you feel as if something is presented in a written character which is there for you to read. This particular character in the cosmos says it is necessary to read something that needs to be

made known to humanity. It is like a word written in the cosmos, like a phonetic symbol. What do you read there as you open yourself up to it?

Yesterday I spoke of how in the ancient Greek period the intellectual aspect of the human soul had reached a high point in Plato and Aristotle. In many respects the insights gained by those two philosophers could not be surpassed in later times, for intellectual development had, in a way, reached a zenith. We can realize a great deal if we truly recognize this. When someone with clairvoyant perception who has directed his vision to Palestine notes how the intellectual knowledge which humanity had developed had been immensely popularized by itinerant preachers and how it spread abroad in a way we cannot even imagine today, then the impression may develop that one is reading one of the written characters placed in the cosmos of which I have spoken. You realize that the Moon, as it is seen moving in the universe from the Earth, is the character or symbol representing everything the human race has gathered by way of knowledge, the high level of knowledge achieved in pre-Christian times. The Moon is the symbol, for when it comes to gaining higher insight, such knowledge did not cast light on things, or solve riddles, as it were, but brought darkness, just as the Moon darkens the Sun during a solar eclipse. This, then, is what you read in the occult symbol of the Sun darkened by the Moon.

As a clairvoyant you feel that the higher, truly spiritual regions of the world are obscured by the knowledge of ancient times, for this has put itself in front of true perception just as the Moon goes in front of the Sun in an eclipse. The outer event in nature gives expression to the fact that humanity had reached a level where knowledge that had come from humanity itself had obscured insight into higher things. You feel that the darkening of the human soul in

the course of Earth evolution was written in the cosmos as a tremendous occult character at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. As I have said, a modern mind may feel insulted when such things are said, because people no longer understand the way spiritual powers are active in the universe, powers connected with the powers in the human soul. I do not wish to speak of miracles in the usual way, of going against the laws of nature, but I cannot but tell you how we should read that darkening of the Sun. We can do no other but stand before that darkening of the Sun as if we were reading what this natural event brought to expression: Moon knowledge cast darkness on the higher message of the Sun.

Once you have read that occult script there appears to clairvoyant consciousness the image of the cross raised on Golgotha, of the body of Jesus hanging on it between the two thieves. And you perceive the image—perhaps I may be permitted to add that the more you resist the image the more forcibly it presents itself—of the body being taken from the cross and placed in the tomb. Then a second, tremendous symbol appears, for again something is written in the cosmos which has to be read and understood, a symbol of what truly happened at this point in human evolution: you look at the image of Jesus taken down from the cross and placed in the tomb and as you direct the mind's eye to this you are shaken through and through inwardly by an earthquake which passed through that region.

It is possible that the connection between the darkening of the Sun and the earthquake will one day also be understood more clearly in scientific terms. Theories are already in existence, though they lack cohesion, that there is a connection between solar eclipses, earthquakes and even fire damp in mines. The earthquake in Palestine was a consequence of the darkening of the Sun. It shook the tomb in which the body

of Jesus had been laid and the stone covering it was wrenched away. A fissure opened and the corpse was received into this. Further tremors caused the fissure to close up again over the corpse. When people got there in the morning the tomb was empty, for the Earth had received the dead body of Jesus; only the stone remained, flung some distance.

Let us consider the sequence of images once more. Jesus died on the cross on Golgotha. Darkness fell on the Earth. The dead body of Jesus was placed in an open tomb. A tremor shook the ground, and the dead body of Jesus was taken up into the Earth. The fissure opened by the tremor closed, the stone was hurled aside. Those were actual events; I can do no other but describe them. People wishing to approach these things on the basis of modern science may think what they like, offering all kinds of reasons against this. The clairvoyant eye sees what I have described. If someone were to say it was impossible for a tremendous sign language to arise out of the cosmos, presenting a symbol to indicate that something new had come in human evolution; if someone were to say the divine powers do not inscribe events in the Earth in characters such as a darkening of the Sun and an earthquake, all I would be able to say in reply would be: I respect your belief that such things cannot be. But they have nevertheless happened!

I can well imagine someone like Ernest Renan,¹⁷ author of that strange work *A Life of Jesus*, saying: 'We don't believe such things, for we only believe things that can be experimentally reproduced at any time.' Renan's thinking does not stand up to examination, however, for surely he would have believed in the Ice Age even though we cannot experimentally reproduce it. It is certainly quite impossible to bring back the Ice Age, but all scientists believe that it happened. It is also not possible for the cosmic sign which

appeared with the event on Golgotha ever to appear again. But it did appear then.

We can only penetrate to this event by the clairvoyant route I have indicated if we first of all enter into the soul of Peter or one of the other Apostles who felt their spirit quickened by all-prevailing cosmic love at Pentecost. Looking into their souls provides a roundabout route to seeing the cross raised on Golgotha, the darkening of the Earth and the tremors that followed. There is no denying that on the surface the darkening and the tremors were entirely ordinary natural occurrences; but for anyone with clairvoyant vision those events read the way I have described them, as tremendous symbols of occult writing. This must be emphatically stated by someone who has created the necessary conditions in his soul.

For Peter the events I have described had indeed crystallized out in the process of a long sleep. Scenes standing out from the many images that went through his conscious mind showed the cross raised on Golgotha, for instance, the darkening and the tremors. Those were the first fruits of being quickened with the all-prevailing cosmic love at Pentecost. At that moment he knew something he really had not known before in his normal state of consciousness: that the event of Golgotha had occurred, and that the body hanging on the cross was the one by whose side he had often walked in his life. Now he knew that Jesus had died on the cross and that his dying had really been a birth, the birth of the spirit which had now poured as all-prevailing love into the souls of the Apostles as they gathered at Pentecost. Like a ray of eternal, everlasting love, the spirit that had been born when Jesus died on the cross awoke in Peter's soul. A tremendous truth came to him: the death on the cross was only apparent; in reality this death, preceded by infinite suffering, was the birth, for the

whole Earth, of the spirit that had entered his soul like a ray. With the death of Jesus, the all-prevailing cosmic love which before had existed everywhere outside the Earth had been born to the Earth.

These words may be easily said in an abstract way, but we really need to enter into Peter's soul for a moment to know what he felt for the first time at that moment. When Jesus died on the cross at Golgotha something was born to the Earth that before had existed only in the cosmos. The death of Jesus of Nazareth was the birth of all-prevailing cosmic love within the Earth's sphere.

This is the first thing we can read in the Fifth Gospel. It is the event referred to as the descent or pouring out of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. The Apostles' state of soul at the time was such that they could only participate in the death of Jesus of Nazareth in an abnormal state of consciousness.

Peter—and John and James, too—had to recall another moment in life. This is also described in the other Gospels but only the Fifth Gospel can show its full significance. The individual with whom they had walked on Earth had taken them to the Mount of Olives, to Gethsemane, and asked them to watch and pray. They had fallen asleep, however. Now they realized that even then their souls had begun to enter into a state that gradually spread more and more. Normal consciousness went to sleep; they entered a sleep state that continued throughout the event on Golgotha and from which shone the images I have tried to describe in halting words. Peter, John and James had to realize how they had fallen into the dream state and now, as they looked back, the great events began to emerge which had happened in connection with the earthly body of the individual with whom they had walked the Earth. As forgotten dreams may slowly come back to mind, so the days that lay behind came back to the minds and

souls of the Apostles. The whole period they had lived through from the event on Golgotha to Pentecost had been lost deep down in their souls and they now felt it to have been like a period of profound sleep. Especially the ten days from Ascension, as it is called, to Pentecost appeared to them to have been a period when they were fast asleep. Looking back, the time between the Mystery of Golgotha and Ascension of Christ Jesus began to come to mind again, one day after the other. They had shared in the experience but it only came to mind now, and it did so in a very strange way.

Forgive me if I make a personal remark at this point. I have to confess that I was tremendously surprised to perceive how the events they had lived through between the Mystery of Golgotha and Ascension rose up in the souls of the Apostles. It is truly remarkable how this happened.

Image after image came up in the Apostles' souls, and these images said to them: yes, you were together with the one who died or was born on the cross; you knew him. Just as we recall our dreams when we wake in the morning, knowing that in our dream we were in the company of some person or other, so the memories came up like dreams in the Apostles' souls.

The way in which individual events came back to mind was very strange, however. Again and again they had to ask themselves: 'But who was it with whom we went?' Again and again they would fail to recognize him. They were aware of him as a spiritual figure; they knew for certain that they had gone about with him in their sleep-like state, but they did not recognize him in the form which appeared to them now that they had been quickened with all-prevailing love. They saw themselves walking with the one we call the Christ after the Mystery of Golgotha. They also saw that he had truly been giving them instruction about the realm of the spirit. And they

came to understand that for forty days they had walked with the spirit who had been born on the cross, that this spirit of all-prevailing love which had been born to the Earth from the cosmos had been their teacher. They knew that in their normal state of consciousness they would not have been ripe to understand what this spirit had to say; that they had to take it in with subconscious powers of soul; that they had walked beside the Christ like sleepwalkers and would have been unable to take in what he had to give at their ordinary level of understanding. During those forty days they had listened to him at a level of consciousness that was unknown to them, and this only came to them now, when they had gone through the Pentecost event. Their spiritual teacher had taught them secrets they had only been able to understand because he transported them to a different state of consciousness. Now they saw that they had walked with the risen Christ but were only now able to realize what had happened to them. The question is: how did they realize that this was truly the one who before the Mystery of Golgotha had walked with them in a physical body?

Let us assume that an image of this kind had come before the soul of one of the Apostles after Pentecost. He would see how he had walked with the risen Christ who had been his teacher. But he would not recognize him. Then another image would arise and merge with the first, purely spiritual image, representing something the Apostles had really and truly gone through with Christ Jesus before the Mystery of Golgotha. In one scene they felt as if they were receiving instruction in the secret of the spirit from Christ Jesus. They did not recognize him, however, but felt they were standing face to face with a spiritual entity who was instructing them. To enable them to recognize this entity, the image was transformed, while continuing to be the same, into the scene

of the Last Supper they had shared with Christ Jesus. Really try to imagine how such an Apostle would have the supersensible experience with the risen Christ before his mind's eye and also, seemingly in the background, the image of the Last Supper. Only then would the Apostles realize that it was the same individual, with whom they had once walked in a physical body, who now, as their teacher, had the completely different form which he had assumed after the Mystery of Golgotha. Memories from the state of mind that was like a sleep state merged completely with memories that had gone before. It was like two images superimposed on each other: one showing experiences they had after the Mystery of Golgotha, the other showing events they had known before that and which now shone through, as it were, from the time before their consciousness had been dimmed down to the point where they no longer experienced what was happening around them. In this way they realized that the two entities belonged together: the risen Christ and the individual with whom they had walked around in a physical body only a relatively short time ago. They now said to themselves: 'Before we woke up, quickened with all-prevailing cosmic love, it was as if we had been taken out of our normal state of consciousness. And the risen Christ was with us. He received us, who were unknowing, into his realm, walked with us, and revealed the secrets of his realm. Now, after the Mystery of Pentecost, those secrets come to normal consciousness like something experienced in a dream.'

This is something to fill us with wonder and awe: an image representing an experience the Apostles had with the Christ after the Mystery of Golgotha would always come together with an image of an event they had known in the ordinary way, with Christ Jesus in a physical body, during the time before the Mystery of Golgotha.

We have now made a beginning with reporting what can be read in the Fifth Gospel. At the end of what I had to say today, I may perhaps be permitted to make a few personal remarks, things that have to be said in relation to these facts. I feel it my occult duty to speak of these things now. What I wanted to say is the following: I know only too well that we are living in an age when much is in preparation for the immediate future of humanity here on Earth and that within our Anthroposophical Society, as it has now become, we have to feel ourselves to be people who have some idea that something has to be prepared for the future in human souls. I know there will be times when it will be possible to speak about these things in a very different way than is possible today. For we are all children of our age. In the near future it will however be possible to speak more precisely and some of the things that can now only be touched on lightly will be seen far more clearly in the spiritual record of evolution. It may seem improbable but those times will come. Nevertheless, and especially for this reason, it is to some extent my duty to speak of these things now, somehow by way of preparation. It has not been easy for me to speak on the subject, but my obligation to the preparation that has to be done came first. It is for this reason that I have spoken to you on this particular subject, which is for the first time.

Please take everything I have to say on this particular occasion as a kind of hint. It will undoubtedly be possible to put it in a better and more precise way in future. You may find it easier to understand why I say it has been an effort if you permit me not to withhold a personal remark. I am fully aware that in the science of the spirit to which I am devoting myself it is initially extraordinarily difficult and requires much effort to gain things of this kind from the spiritual record. I would not be surprised if the word 'hint' I have used did turn out to

be much more meaningful and significant than we need to consider for the moment. At the present time I certainly cannot say exactly what the spiritual record contains, for I experience all kinds of problems and difficulties when seeking to gain images relating to the secrets of Christianity from the Akashic Record. It is an effort to achieve the necessary density of the images and hold on to them, and I feel it may be karma that I am given the duty to say what I am saying now. I am certain it would have required less effort if like many people today I had received a truly Christian education in early youth. I did not have this. I grew up in an entirely free-thinking environment, and my studies also went in that direction. My higher education was purely scientific. Because of this, I now have some trouble finding the things of which I am obliged to speak.

Perhaps I may make such a personal comment for two reasons. In the first place because people with a peculiar lack of conscience have put about the stupid, ridiculous tale that I have Roman Catholic connections.¹⁸ Not a word of this is true. And it is easy to see the pass to which things have come in the movement which generally calls itself theosophy, for it is there that such shameful statements and rumours are generated. We are compelled, however, not to let this pass lightly but to present the truth, and because of this I feel it is permitted to make this personal comment.

The other reason is that exactly because I was not connected with Christianity in my young days I am much less biased towards it. Having come to Christianity and to the Christ through the spirit, I believe I can claim freedom from bias and prejudice and therefore have the right to make statements on the subject. At the present point in world history people may feel able to place more reliance in the words of someone who has had scientific training and was

not connected with Christianity than in the words of someone who has been connected with it from his earliest youth. Nor do I think that Christianity will lose anything from being presented at a deeper level by someone who only found his way to it out of the spirit. If you take my words seriously, you will get a hint of what lives within me when I now speak of the secrets of the Fifth Gospel.

LECTURE 3

Oslo, 3 October 1913

Yesterday I spoke of the awakening experienced at the first Pentecost by the individuals who are generally known as the Apostles of Christ Jesus. This is not to say, of course, that the whole content of the Fifth Gospel as I am telling it immediately came to the Apostles' minds. Clairvoyant consciousness does show us those images in their souls at the time. But the whole lived in them not so much in images but, if I may put it like this, as direct living experience, a feeling and power of the soul. And the words the Apostles were then able to say, captivating even the Greeks at the time, words that provided the impulse for Christian evolution, the power they bore in their souls, in heart and mind — all this blossomed forth from the living power of the Fifth Gospel in their souls. They were able to speak the way they did, act the way they did, because the content of what we now decipher as the Fifth Gospel was alive in them, even if they did not put it in words the way I have to do today. They had gone through a process of resurrection, as it were, in which they were quickened by the all-prevailing cosmic love, and after this their work was under the influence of that love. The power which the Christ had become after the Mystery of Golgotha was active in them. With this we have reached a point where we have to speak about Christ's life on Earth in terms of the Fifth Gospel.

It is not easy to put this into words that are in accord with modern thinking. We may however be able to use some of the concepts and ideas gained in the science of the spirit to come

closer to this, the greatest secret on Earth. To understand the Christ spirit we have to apply some of the concepts gained through that science in a slightly different form.

To get some degree of clarity let us begin with the event generally called the Baptism by John in the Jordan. In the Fifth Gospel this relates to the life of the Christ as conception does to the life of a human being on Earth. The life of Christ from then until the Mystery of Golgotha may be compared to the life of the embryo in its mother's womb. The Christ spirit may be said to have gone through embryonic life between the Baptism by John and the Mystery of Golgotha. The Mystery of Golgotha itself, that is, the death of Jesus, has to be seen as the birth of the Christ spirit on Earth, whose real life on Earth began after the Mystery of Golgotha. Then Christ went about with the Apostles who were in an altered state of consciousness at the time. Ascension and the pouring out of the spirit which followed must be seen as something which in our case would normally be regarded as entering into the world of the spirit as we die. The continued life of the Christ in the Earth sphere after Ascension or Pentecost has to be compared to what the human soul experiences in Devachan ('God Country') or the Spirit Land.

We see therefore that when it comes to the Christ spirit we have to change all our concepts concerning the sequence of stages in human life. After a short interval generally known as the time of purification, human souls enter the world of the spirit where they prepare for their next life on Earth. We thus live in the spirit after death. The Christ spirit went through something which was to it exactly what the transition to Spirit Land is to us: entering into the Earth sphere. Instead of entering a realm of the spirit, as human beings do after death, the Christ spirit brought a sacrifice by making its heaven on

Earth, as it were. Human beings leave the Earth in exchange for a dwelling place in heaven, as the saying goes. The Christ left heaven to seek his dwelling place on Earth. Please consider this in the right light, and connect with it a feeling for what happened through the Mystery of Golgotha, through the Christ spirit. The true sacrifice made by the Christ spirit was to leave the spheres of the spirit to live on Earth and among human beings, and thus give the impulse that would guide humanity and evolution on Earth towards the future.

This does mean that the Christ spirit did not belong to the Earth sphere before the Baptism by John in the Jordan. It came from spheres beyond the Earth. The experiences between the Baptism and Pentecost had to be gone through so that the heavenly Christ spirit might be transformed into the Christ spirit on Earth.

It is saying infinitely much when this secret is uttered in the words: since the first Pentecost the Christ spirit has been with human souls on Earth; before that it was not with them on Earth. Everything the Christ spirit went through between the Baptism by John and the Pentecost event happened so that the god could exchange his dwelling place in heaven for one in the Earth sphere. The events in Palestine were gone through in order that this divine, spiritual Christ entity might assume the form it needed to enable it to live in communion with human souls.

This also shows that the event in Palestine was unique, as I have said on many occasions. A higher spirit who was not of the Earth came down into the Earth's sphere and will remain with it until it has gone through the necessary transformation. The Christ spirit has therefore been active on Earth from that time.

To understand the Pentecost event fully in the light of the Fifth Gospel, we must fall back on the concepts developed in

the science of the spirit. We know that in earlier times the human soul was raised through initiation in mystery centres to levels where it could participate in the life of the spirit. This can be seen most clearly if we consider the 'Persian' or Mithras Mysteries. Initiation was in seven stages. The individual would first achieve a rank symbolically called the 'Raven'. He would then become an 'Occult Person', a 'Secret One'. The third rank was that of 'Fighter', the fourth the 'Lion', and in the fifth he would be given the name of the people he belonged to. The sixth rank was that of 'Sun Hero', the seventh that of a 'Father'. Concerning the first four levels it is sufficient to say that the individual would be gradually taken deeper and deeper into spiritual experience. At the fifth level he would gain the ability to have an expanded consciousness, which would enable him to be the protector of his whole nation. He would accordingly bear the name of that nation. An initiate of the fifth degree would participate in the life of the spirit in a specific way.

We know from a lecture course given here¹⁹ that the nations were guided by spirits in the hierarchies we call the Archangeli or Archangels. An initiate of the fifth degree would be raised to their sphere and participate in the life of the Archangels. Such initiates were needed in the cosmos, which is the reason why this form of initiation existed on Earth. When such an individual had been initiated into the fifth degree and gone through all the inner experiences to gain the soul content required for that level, the Archangel of the individual's nation would look down on his soul, as it were, and read it the way we read a book which provides the information we need to perform a particular action. Initiates of the fifth degree were required on Earth so that the Archangels might read their souls like a book and know what the nation needed. These initiates mediated between the

Archangels who were the nation's true leaders and the nation itself. They took to the sphere of the Archangels what was needed for proper guidance of their nation.

How was the fifth degree attained in pre-Christian times? It could not be attained if the human soul remained in the body. The soul had to be lifted out of the body in the process of initiation. Out of the body the soul went through experiences that gave it the content I have described. The soul had to leave the Earth and ascend to the world of the spirit in order to achieve what it was meant to achieve.

When the sixth degree of that ancient initiation had been reached more came alive in the Sun Hero's soul than was needed to guide a nation. If you consider human evolution on Earth as a whole, you will see nations come into existence and vanishing again, going through a process of transformation, as it were. Nations are born and die just like people. A nation's achievements for the Earth have to be preserved, however, for the sake of human evolution as a whole. A nation needs not only to be guided, but the work it does on Earth has to be taken beyond the confines of the nation. The spirits who had this task, the Time Spirits, are above the Archangels. They were able to read in the souls of initiates of the sixth degree what would make the work of a nation contribute to the work of humanity as a whole, letting it spread over the whole Earth. Anyone who was to become a Sun Hero also had to go out of the body and actually make the Sun his dwelling place. All this may sound incredible if not downright foolish to modern minds. We may remember St Paul's words that wisdom in the eyes of the gods is often foolishness in the eyes of people.²⁰ During this stage of initiation, therefore, the Sun Hero would be in harmony with the whole solar system, with the Sun his dwelling place, just as ordinary human beings have the Earth as their home

planet. We have hills and rivers around us. The Sun Heroes had the planets of the solar system around them during their initiation. In the ancient mysteries it was only possible to be transported to the Sun when out of the body. Returning to their bodies they would remember what they had experienced and were able to use it as powers of will to benefit human evolution as a whole. The Sun Heroes would return to their bodies with all the powers gained when out of the body during initiation and they would be able to make the work of their nation part of human evolution as a whole.

During the three and a half days of initiation the Sun Heroes experienced communion with the Christ who was not on Earth at that time, which was before the Mystery of Golgotha. The Sun Heroes of old would all go up into the Sun sphere, the only place where they could have communion with the Christ. This is the world from which the Christ later came down to Earth. We may say, therefore, that something that required the whole old initiation procedure and was possible only for a few individuals happened like a natural event for the Christ's Apostles at Pentecost. In the past, human souls had to ascend to the Christ; now the Christ had descended to the Apostles. In a way, the Apostles now had the soul content of the Sun Heroes of old. The spiritual power of the Sun poured out over their souls and from then on continued to be active in human evolution. The event of Palestine, the Mystery of Golgotha, had to happen so that an entirely new power might take effect on Earth.

Where, however, did the roots for the Christ's existence on Earth lie? They lay in profound suffering, suffering that went beyond anything human beings can imagine. If we are to get the right idea at this point, it will again be necessary to remove some obstacles that exist in the modern mind. I am afraid it will be necessary to bring in a number of things

if we are to understand the meaning of the Fifth Gospel.

A book has recently appeared which I greatly recommend. It is written by a man of some genius, proof of the kind of nonsense even people of genius may produce when it comes to matters of the spirit. I am referring to Maurice Maeterlinck's book on the nature of death.²¹ It contains all kinds of nonsense, including the statement that people can no longer suffer once they are dead because they are spirits then and no longer have a body. And according to Maeterlinck a spirit does not suffer, only the body suffers. This intelligent man deludes himself, therefore, that only the physical body can suffer and consequently a dead person cannot suffer. He fails to realize what tremendous, almost unbelievable nonsense it is to think that only a physical body consisting of physical forces and chemical substances can suffer. As if suffering were limited to physical matter and forces! They do not suffer at all. If they were able to suffer, so would a stone. The physical body cannot suffer; it is the mind and the soul that suffer. We have reached a point today where people think the opposite of what really makes sense, even concerning the simplest things. There would be no suffering in Kama-Locha if the life of mind and spirit could not suffer. It is exactly because it then truly misses the physical body that Kama-Locha means suffering. Anyone who believes that it is impossible to suffer in mind and spirit will be unable to get a real idea of the infinite suffering the Christ spirit went through during those years in Palestine.

Before I speak of this, I have to draw your attention to something else. We have to realize that at the Baptism by John in the Jordan a spirit came down to Earth who then lived for three years in an earthly body, going through death in that body. Before the Baptism that spirit lived in conditions that were completely different from those on Earth, which means

that this spirit had no earthly karma. Please consider this carefully. For three years a spirit lived in the body of Jesus of Nazareth here on Earth whose soul was free of all earthly karma. This means that all the experiences the Christ had, everything he went through in life, had a totally different significance compared to what a human soul may go through, for instance. When we suffer or go through an experience we know our sufferings are due to karma. It was different for the Christ spirit. He had to go through life on Earth for three years without the burden of karma. What did this mean for him? It meant suffering for no karmic reason, suffering that was truly undeserved and without guilt! The Fifth Gospel is the anthroposophical Gospel. It shows that the life of Christ in a human body was the only karma-free life that was lived, with the karma concept not applicable the way it is to humans.

Further study of this Gospel also shows something else in connection with those three years. This life—we have compared it to embryonic life—also did not create karma; it was blameless. A life was therefore lived on Earth that was not determined by karma and did not create karma. We have to take all these concepts and ideas at their deepest level. If we do so we may gain much that will help us to understand this extraordinary event in Palestine which otherwise proves inexplicable in many respects. We need to consider many things if we are to understand. Think of all the contradictory statements made about this event and how much it has been misunderstood! And yet it brought about impulse after impulse in the course of human evolution. It is just that we do not always go deep enough in considering these things. A time will come when people will speak very differently of it, realizing its tremendous depth. A hint has been given by saying that a life free from all karma was lived on Earth for three years.

We often pass over things that are of deep significance without giving them a thought. Some of you may have heard of Ernest Renan's *A Life of Jesus* which was published in 1863. We read the book without realizing its full significance. A time will come when people will wonder why so many people have been reading the book until today without any feeling for the truly strange and peculiar aspect of it. The peculiar thing is that the book is a half-and-half mixture of sublime presentation and cheap novel. In times to come it will be considered most peculiar that there could be such a mixture. Read the book with this in mind, read what he turns the Christ into, who for him is, of course, essentially Jesus Christ. He makes him into a hero who initially has good intentions and is a great benefactor of humanity but then is caught up in popular enthusiasm and increasingly gives way to people's wishes and desires, to anything people want to hear and like to be told.

Ernest Renan does to the Christ on a large scale what we often find people do to us on a smaller scale. It does happen that when people see a movement like theosophy gain ground they become critical of its teacher. Initially, they will say, his intentions were quite good; then came those evil adherents who ruined him with their flattery. He made the mistake of saying what his audiences wanted to hear. Renan has treated the life of Christ in this way. He even had the audacity to present the Raising of Lazarus as a kind of fraud which Jesus allowed to happen because it was a useful means of rousing the rabble. He had the audacity to let Jesus get into a temper, a passion, and increasingly give in to people's instincts. As a result, a cheap novel element is mixed in with the sublime passages the book also contains. The strange thing is that anyone with sound common sense—I am not going to say much about this—ought to feel shock and horror when

presented with a figure who initially has the best intentions but finally gives in to popular instincts and allows all kinds of fraud to be committed. Renan has no feelings of horror; he refers to this figure in beautiful, rousing terms. This is certainly strange. It shows how much human souls feel drawn to the Christ, irrespective of whether they understand him or not. This may go so far that someone makes the life of Christ into a cheap novel but nevertheless cannot find enough words of admiration designed to draw people to that figure. Such things are only possible with someone who enters into Earth evolution the way the Christ does. Believe me, much karma would have been created during the Christ's three years of life on Earth if he had lived the way Renan says he did. In time to come people will realize that such a work simply does not stand up to the truth, for it will be realized that the life of Christ was not based on old karma and did not create new karma. That is the message of the Fifth Gospel.

The event by the river Jordan which we call the Baptism by John may be compared with a human being's conception. The Fifth Gospel tells us that the Gospel of Luke correctly says what could have been heard at the time if someone with a highly developed clairvoyant mind had heard the cosmic words used to express the mystery that came to pass. The words that sounded from heaven were indeed: 'This is my son, the much beloved. Today I have begotten him.'²² Those words in the Gospel of Luke tell the truth of what happened by the river Jordan: the begetting, the conception of the Christ into the Earth's spirit.

For the moment let us leave aside the nature of the earthly individual on whom the spirit of Christ descended at the Baptism in the Jordan. We will speak of this in later lectures. For the moment let us take it that a man called Jesus of Nazareth provided a body for the Christ spirit. The Fifth

Gospel tells us—we can read this by looking back with clairvoyant vision—that the Christ spirit was only loosely connected with the body of Jesus of Nazareth at the beginning of its earthly pilgrimage. It was not the kind of connection that normally exists between body and soul, with the latter living wholly in the body. It was such that the Christ spirit could leave the body of Jesus of Nazareth at any time if this proved necessary. The body of Jesus of Nazareth would be in one place, as though asleep, and the Christ spirit would set out to go to some other place, as need arose.

The Fifth Gospel shows that the body of Jesus of Nazareth was not always present when the Christ spirit appeared to the Apostles. The spirit would, however, appear in such a way that they would take the apparition for the body of Jesus of Nazareth. They did notice a difference but this was too small to be always clearly apparent. This is not fully evident in the other four Gospels, but the Fifth Gospel makes it quite clear. The Apostles were not always able to say if the Christ stood before them in the body of Jesus of Nazareth or as a spiritual entity only. They generally would not give it much thought and take it to be the Christ spirit, in so far as they were able to recognize him, in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. However, in the course of the three years of life on Earth, the spirit became more and more closely bound up with the body of Jesus of Nazareth, with the etheric nature of the Christ coming to resemble the physical body of Jesus of Nazareth more and more closely.

It is important to realize that again the process was different in the case of the Christ spirit than in ordinary human beings. To gain understanding of this it is right to say: the ordinary human being is a microcosm relative to the macrocosm, a small image of the whole macrocosm. The whole great cosmos is reflected and comes to expression in

the physical human body as it develops on Earth. The opposite was the case with the Christ spirit. A macrocosmic Sun spirit assumed the form of the human microcosm, squeezing itself together and increasingly condensing itself to identify more and more closely with the human microcosm. It was exactly the opposite.

When the Christ's life on Earth began, immediately after the Baptism in the Jordan, the connection with the body of Jesus of Nazareth was very loose indeed, with the Christ spirit still completely outside the body of Jesus of Nazareth. Walking the Earth, the Christ spirit was still working in a way that was entirely beyond this Earth. People were healed in a way no power on Earth can achieve. The Christ spirit spoke to people with divine intensity. It acted as a spirit from beyond this Earth, merely tying itself to the body of Jesus of Nazareth, as it were. As time went on it identified more and more with the body of Jesus of Nazareth, compressing itself, contracting, entering into and becoming involved in earthly conditions, so that the divine powers were gradually lost. The Christ spirit went through all this in adapting to the body of Jesus of Nazareth, a development which in a sense may be called downhill. The Christ spirit had to experience the progressive loss of divine power and might as the god gradually became a human being.

Like someone who sees his body go into decline in a process involving infinite pain, the Christ spirit saw its divine content dwindle away as its etheric nature identified more and more with the earthly body of Jesus of Nazareth, until it was so close that it could feel the anxiety and fear known to human beings. The other Gospels also speak of this when they refer to Christ Jesus going to the Mount of Olives with his disciples and how the sweat of fear rose on his brow. The Christ became man in the same measure as the etheric Christ

spirit became more like the body of Jesus of Nazareth. The divine powers of a god who could perform miracles faded away. We see that the passion of the Christ spirit began soon after the Baptism by John in the Jordan, when he healed the sick and drove out demons because he had divine powers. The people who saw what the Christ was able to do were amazed and said that no one on Earth had ever done such things. At that early stage the Christ spirit did not resemble the body of Jesus of Nazareth closely.

Over a period of three years, the road took the Christ spirit from being a sensation and causing amazement to the point where it had adapted itself closely to the body of Jesus of Nazareth; this body had become so sick and feeble that the Christ spirit was no longer able to answer the questions put by Pilate, Herod and Caiaphas. It had identified with the progressively weakening body of Jesus of Nazareth to the point where the Christ spirit in the frail, decayed body did not respond to the question: 'Did you say you would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days?' He stood in silence before the Jewish high priest, and he stood in silence before Pilate who asked him if he had called himself king of the Jews.

The way of the passion thus went from the baptism in the Jordan to utter powerlessness. Soon the gaping masses who earlier had been amazed at the super-earthly miraculous powers of the Christ spirit no longer expressed admiration. They stood before the cross mocking the god who had become human and powerless with the words: 'If you are a god, come down from the cross! You have been helping others; now help yourself!'

The way of the god's passion went from the fullness of divine powers to utter powerlessness. A road of infinite suffering for the god who became man, and added to this was

the pain felt for a humanity that had come to be such as it was at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. This was also the time of humanity's highest intellectual development, as I said yesterday.

The pain and suffering gave birth to the spirit that was poured out on the Apostles at Pentecost. Out of this pain was born the all-prevailing cosmic love which at the Baptism in the Jordan came down from the spheres of heaven that lie beyond this Earth and entered the Earth's sphere, a love that took on the likeness of a human being, a human body, and went through infinite suffering, beyond anything human beings can think of, going through that moment of absolute divine powerlessness so that the Christ impulse might be born which we know has influenced the further evolution of humanity.

These are the things we must consider if we wish to understand the deep meaning and full significance of the Christ impulse as it must be understood in times to come. Humanity will need this impulse if it is to progress along the path of civilization and development.

LECTURE 4

Oslo, 5 October 1913

As I am about to speak of another part of the Fifth Gospel today I gain some comfort from the conclusion of John's Gospel. You will remember how it says that the Gospels certainly do not include all the events that happened around Christ Jesus. For if people had wanted to put it all down at the time, the world would not have contained enough books to hold it all. One thing is beyond doubt, therefore: other events may also have happened, apart from what it says in the four Gospels. Today I shall begin to tell stories from the life of Jesus of Nazareth, from about the time we have mentioned on other occasions when short passages from the Fifth Gospel were given.²³ This will provide a basis for everything I really wish to present from the Fifth Gospel in these lectures.

We will thus begin at the time when Jesus of Nazareth was in about his twelfth year. As you know, that was the year when the Zarathustra-I, which had incarnated in one of the two Jesus children who lived at that time, the boy whose origins are given by Matthew, entered through a mystical act into the other Jesus boy who is especially mentioned at the beginning of Luke's Gospel. We know that the Gospel refers to this moment in the life of Jesus of Nazareth by telling us that the Jesus boy of Luke's Gospel had been lost when going to Jerusalem for the feast day and was found again sitting among the scholars, amazing them and his parents by the tremendous answers he gave. We know, however, that those significant, tremendous answers were

due to the fact that the Zarathustra-I was truly emerging in the boy, its wisdom working out of this soul from a deep superabundance of memories. We also know that the two families had come together after the mother of the Nathan child and the father of the Solomon child had died and that the Jesus child who then also bore the Zarathustra-I grew up in the combined family.

The Fifth Gospel shows that his growing up was strange and unusual. Initially the people around young Jesus of Nazareth had formed a tremendously high opinion of him because of the significant answers he had given to the scholars in the temple. People saw the future scholar in him, someone who would reach a specially high level of scholarship. They had tremendously high hopes of him and began to drink in every word he spoke. In spite of this, the boy grew more and more silent as time went on. He spoke so little that people would often feel uncomfortable when he was around. This happened because he was going through a tremendous inner struggle during the period from about his twelfth to his eighteenth year. It really was as if treasures of wisdom were coming alive in his soul, as if the Sun that had once shone as the light of Zarathustra was rising in him, taking the form of Hebrew scholarship.

Initially it appeared that the boy was meant to listen with the greatest attention to everything the many scholars who visited his home had to say, and because of his special gifts was always able to answer. He would surprise the scholars who came to the house in Nazareth to gape at the boy wonder. But as time went on he would be more and more silent, merely listening in silence to what others had to say. Yet great ideas, moral sayings and great moral impulses arose in his soul during those years. As he listened in silence, the things he heard from the scholars who gathered at the house would

make an impression on him, but it was an impression that often caused bitterness in his soul, for he felt—please note, even in those early years—that everything the scholars said about old traditions and the scriptures of the Old Testament inevitably held much uncertainty and sources of error. Above all it oppressed his heart to hear how the spirit used to come upon the prophets of old, how God himself had spoken to inspire them, and how the inspiration had departed from later generations. One thing in particular would make him listen with deep attention because he felt this was something that would one day come to him. The scholars would often say: ‘Yes, the sublime and tremendous spirit who came upon Elijah, for instance, speaks no more. Another voice is still speaking; it is weaker, but some, and scholars among them, believe they can hear its inspiration coming from the heights of the spirit, something given by the spirit of Yahveh himself.’ They called that strange, inspiring voice the Bath Kol, less powerful than the spirit that had inspired the prophets of old but still something of a similar nature. Some of the people around Jesus would thus speak of the Bath Kol, and later Hebrew writings also tell of her.²⁴

I am now going to say something which does not really belong here; it is only to explain the Bath Kol. At a slightly later time, when Christianity had already come into existence, a dispute arose between two Rabbinical schools. The renowned Rabbi Eliezer ben Hirkano²⁵ established a doctrine, and to prove it he said he was able to work miracles. He made a carob tree rise out of the soil—as it says in the Talmud—and replant itself two hundred feet further away; he made a stream flow backwards, and thirdly he said he received revelations through a voice from heaven, the Bath Kol. In spite of this, people at the school of the Rabbi Joshua did not believe the doctrine, and Rabbi Joshua said:

‘However much Rabbi Eliezer makes carob trees transplant themselves from one place to another, rivers flow uphill, and quotes the great Bath Kol as his authority, it says in the law that the eternal laws of existence must be put into human mouths and human hearts. If Rabbi Eliezer wishes to convince us of the truth of his doctrine he must not claim the authority of the Bath Kol but must convince us that his teachings are something the human heart can comprehend.’ I am telling this story from the Talmud because it shows that soon after the coming of Christianity the Bath Kol was held in less esteem than before in some Rabbinical schools. But in a way it did have its flowering as a voice inspiring both Rabbis and scholars.

When the young Jesus heard the scholars who had gathered in his home speak of this inspiring voice of the Bath Kol he would at the same time feel and inwardly receive inspiration through the Bath Kol. The strange thing was that because his soul had been quickened by the Zarathustra-I, Jesus of Nazareth was able to take in everything people around him knew, and do so quickly. Not only had he been able to give the scholars those tremendous answers in his twelfth year, but he was able to perceive the Bath Kol in his own heart. Yet it was this inspiration through the Bath Kol that caused such bitter inner struggles for Jesus of Nazareth when he was sixteen or seventeen years of age. The Bath Kol revealed to him—and he was sure of this—that the time was not far off when this spirit would no longer speak the way it had done in the past to the old Jewish teachers who followed the ancient tradition of the Old Testament. One day, and this was a dreadful experience for the soul of Jesus, the Bath Kol revealed to him that it was no longer in touch with the heights where the spirit could truly reveal to it the truth concerning the future of the Jewish people. That was a terrible moment,

a terrible impression received by the soul of the young Jesus, when the Bath Kol itself seemed to reveal to him that it could not continue the revelations of old. It was declaring itself incapable, as it were, of continuing the ancient revelations of Judaism. And Jesus of Nazareth felt that the ground had been taken away from under his feet. There were days when he had to say to himself: all the inner powers I thought I had been given by grace only make me realize that the substance of evolution in Judaism is no longer able to be in touch with the revelations of the divine spirit.

Let us enter for a moment into the mind and soul of the young Jesus of Nazareth. He travelled widely in his sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth years, partly because of his trade and partly for other reasons. His travels took him through many different regions of Palestine and probably also to places outside it. At the time—clairvoyant penetration of the Akashic Record shows this very clearly—an Asiatic cult was widespread in the Near East and southern Europe. It was a mixture of different rites but predominantly the Mithraic cult. Temples of this cult existed in many places in the different regions. In some places it was more like the cult of Attis but essentially offerings were made to Mithras and Attis at temples and places of worship everywhere. In a way these were more ancient pagan rites, but the customs and ceremonies of the cults of Mithras and Attis had been mixed in. This spread widely, also to Italy, as is evident from the fact that St Peter's in Rome stands on a site that was once such a place of worship. Indeed it has to be said, and this may sound offensive to Roman Catholic ears, that in its outer form the ceremonial in St Peter's and everything connected with it is not at all unlike the ancient cult of Attis, the rites of which used to be performed in the temple which stood on that site. In many respects the ritual

of the Roman Catholic Church is a continuation of the ancient Mithraic cult.

Jesus of Nazareth got to know those places of worship in his travels when he was in his sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth years and also later. We may say that he came to know the inner life of the pagan people by seeing the outer, physical evidence. Because of the mighty act in which the Zarathustra-I had entered into his soul, he had naturally, as it were, acquired the high level of clairvoyance which others could only gain by painful effort. When present at the rites he therefore experienced something different from others who were also there, and there was much that shook him deeply. It may sound fantastic, but I have to stress that when Jesus of Nazareth looked at the offering service performed by a priest at some pagan altar he would see all kinds of demonic spirits who were attracted by the rite. He also found that some of the idols venerated in those places were not images of good spirits from among the hierarchies but images of evil demonic powers. He also discovered that those evil powers would often enter into the faithful who were attending the rites. It is easy to understand why these things have not been included in the other Gospels. It really needs the background provided by a spiritual movement like ours if one is to speak of such things. Human souls can only now gain real understanding of the tremendous, profound and powerful experiences the young Jesus of Nazareth had long before the Baptism by John.

His travels continued until he was in his twentieth, twenty-second or twenty-fourth year. He always felt bitterness in his heart when he saw the demons, which were the offspring, as it were, of Lucifer and Ahriman, and saw that pagan people had often reached the point where they took demons for gods. He saw idols that were images of wild demonic powers that

were attracted by those idols and by the rites and would enter into and obsess the people who were saying their prayers in good faith. Those were bitter experiences for him. They came to a conclusion, in a way, when he was in about his twenty-fourth year. Then an infinitely bitter experience was added to the disappointment he had suffered through the Bath Kol.

I have to tell you of this experience Jesus of Nazareth had, but have to add that at present I am not in a position to state exactly where this event took place. I have been able to decipher the scene itself at a high level of accuracy, but am unable to say where it happened. It seems, however, that it happened when Jesus of Nazareth was travelling outside Palestine. I cannot say this with certainty, but the scene is one I have to describe.

In his twenty-fourth year Jesus of Nazareth thus came to a pagan place of worship where offerings were made to a particular god. But the people all around were sad and afflicted with all kinds of terrible diseases that affected their souls and also their bodies. The priests had long since deserted the place. Jesus heard the people lamenting that their priests had abandoned them, that the blessings of offering no longer came down upon them, and they had become leprous and sick. It pained him deeply to see their suffering and oppression and an infinite love for these people arose in his heart. The people who were there must have noticed something of this love; it must have made a deep impression on them as they lamented their abandonment by the priests and, they felt, by their gods. And immediately something arising in their hearts made them say in recognition of the infinite love they saw in his face: 'You are the new priest who has been sent to us.' They pushed him towards the altar and made him stand on it. He

stood there, and they expected, and indeed demanded, that he should perform the offering service so that the blessings of their god might be theirs again.

As the people lifted him on to the altar he fell down as if dead; his soul was as though transported and the people who believed their god to have returned witnessed the terrible spectacle of the new priest, whom they thought heaven-sent, falling down as if dead. The soul of Jesus, however, felt itself raised to realms of spirit, as if transported to the realm of Sun existence. From the spheres of that existence it heard words sounding which it had formerly often heard through the Bath Kol. But the Bath Kol had now been transformed into something entirely different. The voice also came from a different direction now, and what Jesus of Nazareth heard may be summarized, if we translate it into our language, in the words I was able to communicate for the first time when we were laying the foundation stone for our building in Dornach recently.²⁶

Occult obligations must be met. One of them was that on that occasion I had to communicate what Jesus of Nazareth heard through the changed voice of the Bath Kol at the time of which I have been speaking. He heard the words:

Amen.

The evils hold sway,

Witness of egoity freeing itself.

Selfhood guilt through others incurred,

Experienced in the daily bread,

Wherein the will of the heavens does not rule,

Because man separated himself from your realm,

And forgot your names,

You Fathers in the heavens.

Amen.

Es walten die Übel,
 Zeugen sich lösender Ichheit,
 Von andern erschuldete Selbstheitsschuld,
 Erlebet in dem täglichen Brote,
 In dem nicht waltet der Himmel Wille,
 Da der Mensch sich schied von Eurem Reiche
 Und vergaß Euren Namen,
 Ihr Väter in den Himmeln.

I cannot put those words into German in any other way. They are the words the soul of Jesus of Nazareth brought back with it when he regained consciousness. As he turned his eyes again to the crowd of sorely troubled people around him who bore such burdens, the people who had lifted him onto the altar—he found that they had fled. And as he let his clairvoyant eye range far afield he could only direct it to a band of demonic figures, all of which were connected with those people.

This was the second significant experience gained at the conclusion of a further period of inner development. There was nothing cosy about those experiences, nothing to put the soul into a state of bliss. The soul of Jesus of Nazareth had to experience the depths of human nature when still so young, between his twelfth year and the Jordan event.

Jesus of Nazareth returned home from this journey at about the time when his father, who had remained at home, died, in about the twenty-fourth year of Jesus' life. When he returned home the tremendous impression made by the demonic influences that had entered into the old pagan religion was very much alive in his heart. It is always the case that certain levels of higher insight are only gained by getting to know the depths of life. And in a way this was also the case for Jesus

of Nazareth when somewhere around his twenty-fourth year he looked deep down into human souls, souls that held a concentration of all the inner miseries humanity could know at that time. Wisdom had deepened for him, but it was like a red hot iron in his soul. It also made this soul so clairvoyant that it was able to see into the radiant, far distant reaches of the spirit. Having heard the voice of the Bath Kol he was as though transformed, developing the calm, penetrating eye that reads the spirit at a relatively young age. He had become someone who saw deeply into the secrets of life, deeper than anyone on Earth, for no one before him had been able to observe the degree of misery that was possible for human beings. First he had seen how people can lose the ground under their feet from mere scholarship; then he experienced how the inspirations of old were lost; then he had seen rites and offering services that no longer helped people to relate to the gods but made all kinds of demons appear who would possess people, causing sickness of soul and body and all kinds of misery. Surely no one on Earth had ever seen such depths of misery as Jesus of Nazareth did, and none had responded as deeply in their hearts as he did when he saw the people possessed by demons. Surely no one on Earth was more prepared to consider the question: how can an end be put to this misery?

Jesus of Nazareth not only had the eye and the wisdom of a wise man, but life had also, in a way, made him an initiate. This became known to people who at that time had come together to form an order known the world over as the Essene Order. Essenes had a kind of secret service and secret teachings in some places in Palestine. It was a strict order. Anyone wishing to join had to go through severe trials for at least one but generally several years. They had to show themselves worthy to be initiated by their demeanour, morals

and dedication to the highest spiritual powers, by their sense of justice and human equality, by disregard for all worldly goods, and so on. Once they had been accepted, they would progress through different degrees to a life of the elect, separate from the rest of humanity, observing strict monastic rules, making special efforts to cleanse themselves, removing anything in body and soul that was not worthy, so that they might approach the world of the spirit. This is evident from some of the symbolic laws of the Essene Order. Deciphering the Akashic Record it has become clear that the name Essene derives from, or at least is connected with, the Hebrew word 'essin' or 'assin'. This means something like shovel, small trowel, and the Essenes would always wear a small trowel as a badge, something still seen in some communities or orders today. Their aims also came to expression in certain symbolic acts. They were not allowed to carry coin, nor to go through a gate which was painted or had images in its neighbourhood. At the time, the Essene Order also enjoyed some degree of external recognition, and special, unpainted gates had been built in Jerusalem to enable them to enter the city. If an Essene came to a painted gate, he would have to turn back.

The Essene Order held ancient documents and traditions about which strict silence was kept. Members were allowed to teach only what they had learned within the Order. Anyone joining the Order had to hand over all worldly possessions. The Essenes numbered four or five thousand at the time. People had come from many places in the world to live according to the Order's strict rules. Any property they might have, which might be far away in Asia Minor, would be given to the Order which thus had small properties all over the place—houses, gardens and large fields. People would only be admitted to the Order if they gave their property so that it

might be held in common. There was no personal property. An extraordinarily strict law, in present-day terms, though we can see its point, was that an Essene could use the Order's possessions to support anyone who was in need or heavily burdened, except members of his own family.

An Essene settlement existed in Nazareth where a property had been donated. This meant that Jesus of Nazareth knew about the Essene Order. The people who were at the heart of the Order had heard of the profound wisdom which had entered into the soul of Jesus of Nazareth, and a certain mood arose especially among the most significant and wise of the Essenes. A prophetic vision had developed among them that if the world was to continue on its proper path a specially wise soul would have to come who would be like a Messiah. They had been looking out for people with great wisdom, and they were deeply moved to hear of the profound wisdom in the soul of Jesus of Nazareth. No wonder, then, that the Essenes received him into their community, though not necessarily into the Order itself but as an external member, and did not require him to go through the trials of the lower grades. In a way even the wisest of the Essenes became trusting and were very open towards this wise young man.

Jesus of Nazareth learned much, much deeper traditional Hebrew secrets from the Essenes than he ever did from the scholars who came to his father's house. He also heard some of the things he had known before, when they had brought enlightenment through the Bath Kol. In short, a lively exchange of ideas took place between Jesus of Nazareth and the Essenes. From the age of twenty-four to twenty-seven and beyond, Jesus of Nazareth learned almost everything the Essene Order had to offer. Anything not told to him in words would come to him in the form of clairvoyant impressions. Jesus of Nazareth gained important clairvoyant impressions

within the Essene community and a little later at home in Nazareth when he would dwell on the powers that had come to him, powers of which the Essenes had no idea, but which he experienced inwardly after the important talks he had with them.

One of those experiences or inward impressions needs to be given special emphasis because it can throw light on the whole spiritual evolution of humanity. It was a tremendous, significant vision that came to Jesus of Nazareth when he was in transports, as it were. Following an exchange of ideas with the Essenes, the Buddha appeared to Jesus of Nazareth, and we may say that a spiritual conversation took place between them. It is one of my occult obligations to tell you this, for today we can, and indeed must, touch on these important secrets in human evolution. Jesus of Nazareth heard the Buddha say more or less the following: 'If the doctrine I have taught were to come to fulfilment, all people would have to be like the Essenes. That, however, cannot be, and here lies the error in my teaching. The Essenes, too, can only progress by setting themselves apart from the rest of humanity; other people have to be there for them. Fulfilment of my doctrine would mean that all people become Essenes. And that cannot be.' This was one significant experience Jesus of Nazareth had through his connection with the Essenes.

Another experience came when Jesus of Nazareth met a young man of about the same age who had also come close to the Essene Order without becoming a member, though in a different way. This was John the Baptist who was something like a lay brother within the Essene community. He wore the same clothes as the Essenes, for they would wear garments made of camel hair in winter. But for John the Essene teaching had not fully taken the place of the teachings of Judaism. The Essene teaching and life style

made a deep impression, however, and he lived among them as a lay brother, letting them stimulate and gradually inspire him so that he slowly came to be what the Gospels say he was. Jesus of Nazareth and John the Baptist would often talk to each other.

One day—I know what it means simply to tell these things now, but nothing will prevent me from doing so; I know that occult obligation demands that I now speak of them—Jesus of Nazareth was in conversation with John the Baptist and suddenly it seemed that the physical body of the Baptist had disappeared and Jesus had a vision of Elijah. This was the second major experience he had in the Essene community.

There were other experiences, too. For some time, Jesus of Nazareth had been able to observe that when he came to imageless Essene gates, he could not walk through them without the bitter realization that there were images on those gates after all. The spirits we have come to know as Ahriman and Lucifer would appear to him on either side of such a gate. Gradually he grew convinced that the Essenes' aversion to such images must have something to do with the evocation of the spiritual entities he would see on the gates as images of Lucifer and Ahriman. Jesus of Nazareth saw and felt this on several occasions.

When you experience such things you do not feel the need to brood on them much; they are too overwhelming. You soon know that human thoughts are not enough to enter into them deeply and come close to them. Yet those impressions not only engrave themselves deeply in the soul; they actually become part of one's inner life. You feel a strong connection with the part of your soul in which you have gathered such experiences, and you feel connected with the experiences themselves, taking them with you through life.

That was how Jesus of Nazareth took the images of Lucifer

and Ahriman with him through life, having often seen them at the Essene gates. Initially he merely realized that a mystery existed between those spirits and the Essenes. The effect this had on him affected his communication with the Essenes; they were no longer able to understand each other so well. Something lived in Jesus of Nazareth's soul that he could not talk to them about; each time it was as if the words would not come, for his experiences at the Essene gates would stand between them.

One day Jesus of Nazareth had a particularly important talk with the Essenes, discussing sublime spiritual matters. As he left the main gate of the Essene building he met the figures he knew to be Lucifer and Ahriman. He saw them flee away from the gate of the Essene monastery. A question entered his soul. It was as if it was not he himself who asked the question, using his intellect, but the question arose in his soul with elemental force: 'Where do Lucifer and Ahriman go; where does their flight take them?' He knew the sanctity of the monastery had put them to flight. And the question would not let go, burning in his soul like fire; in the weeks that followed it stayed with him hour by hour, indeed minute by minute.

Tomorrow we shall consider what he did because of the question that lived in his soul when he had learned from life that the old inspirations had gone, that religions and rites had been corrupted by demons, and he had heard the voice of the Bath Kol as he lay by the altar in the pagan place of worship. We shall consider what he did when he had to ask himself the meaning of the words spoken by the Bath Kol and of the other events I have related, and the question arose: 'Where do Lucifer and Ahriman go?'

LECTURE 5

Oslo, 6 October 1913

Yesterday we turned our attention to the period in the life of Jesus of Nazareth from about his twelfth year to his late twenties. You will certainly have realized from what I was able to tell you that this period brought much that was of profound significance, not only for the soul of Jesus of Nazareth but for the whole of human evolution. Your study of spiritual science will have shown that everything in the evolution of humanity is interconnected, and that an event of such importance in the life of a human soul so deeply bound up with the destiny of the human race is also important for the whole of evolution. Our studies are helping us to see the significance of the Golgotha event for human evolution from many different points of view. This particular course of lectures is intended to present the aspect we can gain by looking at the life of Christ Jesus. And so, having turned our minds yesterday to the period between his twelfth year and his baptism by John, we will turn once again to the soul of Jesus of Nazareth and consider what lived in this soul after the significant events that led up to his twenty-eighth or twenty-ninth year.

We may perhaps begin to get a feeling for this from the description of a scene which took place when Jesus of Nazareth was in his late twenties. It concerns a talk between Jesus of Nazareth and his mother—the woman who had been his mother for many years since the two families had become one. A deep and intimate understanding had developed

between Jesus and this mother, far closer than his relationship to the other members of the family who lived in the Nazareth house. Jesus himself would have understood them, but they did not quite know what to make of him. Even in earlier years he and his mother had discussed many of the impressions that had gradually taken shape in him.

At the period in his life of which we are speaking a memorable talk took place which lets us see very deeply into his soul. The experiences we spoke of yesterday had changed Jesus of Nazareth; infinite wisdom now came to expression in his very countenance. But as is always the case, though generally to a lesser degree, it had brought him inner sadness. The first fruit of his wisdom, the penetrating insight he was able to have into people around him, brought him deep sorrow. And whenever he had a quiet hour his thoughts turned more and more to something quite specific—to the great inner change, the revolution, that came in his twelfth year when the Zarathustra-I passed into his own soul. He realized that in the early years following that event he had been aware only of the immense riches of this Zarathustra soul within him. In his late twenties he did not yet know that he was the reincarnated Zarathustra, but he did know there had been a tremendous change in his inner life. Now he often felt: 'Ah, how different was my life before that change!'

Thinking back to those times he remembered the infinite warmth of heart that had been his. As a boy he had been inwardly quite detached from the world. He had been keenly sensitive to everything that speaks to human beings from the world of nature, aware of the whole greatness and splendour of nature. But he took little interest in anything taught in school! It would be quite wrong to think that up to his twelfth year, before Zarathustra entered into his soul, this Jesus child had been particularly gifted or clever in the conventional

sense. But he was uncommonly gentle and mild, capable of infinite love, with a deep, sensitive inwardness. He had real understanding for all that is human but no interest at all in the knowledge amassed through the centuries.

It seemed as if at that moment in the temple at Jerusalem all this had rushed out of his soul and all wisdom had streamed in to replace it. Now he was often mindful of how, before his twelfth year, his connection with the deeper spirit of the universe had been very different, as if his soul had been open to the depths of infinite space. His thoughts would go back to what his life had been like since his twelfth year, when he found himself able, in a way, to assimilate Hebrew learning, though this seemed to well up quite spontaneously in his soul. He would recall how he had been deeply shaken to discover that the Bath Kol could no longer inspire people the way it did before. Then, in his travels, all the different nuances of pagan knowledge and religious life had become known to him. He remembered how between his eighteenth and twenty-fourth years he had been in contact with the external achievements of humanity and how, in his twenty-fourth year, he had joined the Essene community and studied their secret doctrine and the people who dedicated their lives to it. His thoughts would often turn to those years. But he also knew that it was only the store of knowledge people had accumulated from ancient times that had arisen in his soul—treasures of human wisdom, human culture and moral achievements. He felt that from his twelfth year he had lived in all that was human on Earth. Now, however, he often recalled the time before he reached his twelfth year when he felt as if united with the divine grounds of existence, when everything in him was pristine, spontaneous, welling up from a warm and loving heart that united him closely with others. Now he felt lonely and isolated and had fallen into silence.

All these feelings led to a particular conversation between Jesus of Nazareth and the individual who was a mother to him. She loved him deeply and she had often spoken to him of the beauty and greatness of all the gifts that had shown themselves in him from his twelfth year. The relationship between him and his stepmother had become progressively closer, more noble and beautiful, but even to her he had never spoken of his inner conflict, and she had seen only what was great and beautiful. She had seen him grow wiser and wiser as he penetrated more and more deeply into the whole of human evolution. Much was new to her, therefore, in this talk which was a kind of general confession, but she received it with a warm and tender heart. She had a kind of immediate understanding of his sadness, the mood in which he yearned for everything he had been before his twelfth year. And so she tried to comfort him by speaking of all the noble and splendid gifts of which he had given evidence since then. She reminded him of everything she had learned from him about the renewal of the great Jewish doctrines, judgements and treasures of the law. She spoke of all that had revealed itself through him. But his heart grew heavy as his mother was speaking in this way, prizing so highly what he himself felt he had inwardly grown beyond. Finally he said to her: 'Be that as it may, but if I or someone else were able to renew all the spiritual treasures of ancient Hebrew wisdom, what would this signify for humanity? All this is, in reality, meaningless today. If there were still people with ears to hear the wisdom of the ancient prophets, then it would be of value to them if that wisdom could be revived. Yet if Elijah himself were to come today'—so said Jesus of Nazareth—'and proclaim to present-day humanity the best of what he learned in the realms of heaven, there would be no one with ears to hear the wisdom of Elijah, nor of the older prophets, of Moses

or anyone else, as far back as Abraham. Everything these prophets would have to proclaim would fall on deaf ears today. Their words would be preached to the winds. Everything I have and hold in my soul has therefore become valueless.'

This was the sense in which Jesus of Nazareth spoke. He also spoke of someone who only recently had been a great teacher, yet his words had made no real impact. For, Jesus said, although good old Hillel²⁷ could not equal the ancient prophets, he was nevertheless a great and profound teacher. Jesus knew well what good old Hillel had meant to many of the Jewish people, having gained considerable authority as a teacher even in the difficult times of Herod. His soul had been full of great wisdom. And Jesus knew how little heed had been paid to the heartfelt words Hillel had spoken. Nevertheless it was said that Hillel had restored the Torah, the oldest codex of Hebrew law, which had been lost to the people. He brought the original Hebrew wisdom back to life. He would also walk through the land like a true teacher of wisdom. Mildness was his main character trait and he was like a kind of Messiah. All this is narrated in the Talmud and can be confirmed in the ordinary way. People were full of praise for Hillel and had much good to say of him. I can only mention a few things to indicate the mood and vein in which Jesus of Nazareth spoke of Hillel to his mother. Hillel is described as a man of mild and gentle character who achieved tremendous things through this very gentleness and loving kindness.

One story that has been preserved about him shows him to have been pre-eminently a kind and patient man, ready to meet anyone who came to him. Two men once had a wager on the possibility of rousing Hillel to anger, for it was known that no one could ever make him angry. One of the two men said: 'I will go to any lengths to make Hillel angry.' If he

achieved this, he would have won the bet. At a time when Hillel was particularly busy, much involved in his preparations for the Sabbath, a time when someone like him really should not be disturbed, the man knocked on his door and without any politeness or using the proper form of address — Hillel was the president of the highest ecclesiastical court and used to being treated with respect — shouted ‘Hillel, come to the door, come to the door quickly!’ Hillel put on his coat and came to the door. The man said brusquely: ‘Hillel, I have a question.’ Hillel replied: ‘What is your question, my son?’ ‘I want to know why the Babylonians have such narrow heads.’ Hillel said in the mildest of tones: ‘The Babylonians have narrow heads because their midwives lack in skill.’ The man went away, thinking to himself that this time Hillel had remained unruffled. A few minutes later he came back again and called out gruffly: ‘Hillel, come to the door. I have an important question!’ Hillel put on his coat again, came to the door and said: ‘Well, my son, what is your question?’ ‘I want to know why the Arabs have such small eyes.’ Hillel answered mildly: ‘The vastness of the desert makes their eyes small; they get small from looking out on the great desert.’ Again Hillel had remained unruffled and the man was getting concerned about winning his bet. He therefore returned a third time, calling out in a gruff voice: ‘Hillel, come to the door. I have an important question to ask you.’ Hillel put on his coat, came to the door and asked as mildly as before: ‘My son, what do you wish to know?’ ‘I want to know why the Egyptians have such flat feet.’ ‘Because the ground there is so swampy,’ answered Hillel, and calmly returned to his work. Some minutes later the man returned and said to Hillel he did not have a question to ask this time, but he had laid a bet that he would make him angry and he did not know how to achieve this. Hillel answered mildly: ‘My son, it is better

for you to lose your bet than for Hillel to lose his temper.'

The legend is told to show how kind and gentle Hillel was with everyone who importuned him. Such a man, said Jesus of Nazareth to his mother, is in many respects like the prophets of old; many of his utterances sound like a revival of the ancient wisdom of the prophets. Jesus cited some beautiful things Hillel had said and then continued: People say Hillel is like an ancient prophet who has come again. I take a special interest in him because it is dawning on me that there is a special connection between him and myself; it seems to me that the knowledge I have, and everything that lives in me as a great spiritual revelation, does not come from Judaism alone. And that was also true in Hillel's case. He was born a Babylonian and only came to Judaism later. He, too, was of the House of David, connected with it from ancient times, just as Jesus of Nazareth and his kinsmen were. And Jesus went on to say: 'If I, also a son of the House of David, were to do as Hillel did and utter the sublime revelations that have brought enlightenment to my soul and are the same sublime revelations as were given to the Hebrews of old, none would have the ears to hear today.'

Pain had entered deeply into Jesus' heart because he knew that in times past the Hebrew people had been told the greatest truths in the world, and their bodies had been such that they could understand those revelations. Now times had changed and so had the bodies of the Hebrew people, so that they could no longer understand the revelations of the Fathers.

As if to sum up everything he had to say on the subject, Jesus told his mother: 'The revelation of ancient Judaism is no longer suitable for the Earth, for the old Jews have passed away; the ancient revelation must be considered worthless on Earth today.'

Strangely enough, his mother listened calmly to what he had to say about the worthlessness of what she held most sacred. But she loved him tenderly and in her inmost heart she was able to understand something of what he had to tell her. He then went on to tell her how he had wandered into pagan places of worship and what he had experienced there. Remembrance came to him of how he had fallen to the ground when standing at the pagan altar, and how he had heard the Bath Kol in its altered form. And then something like a memory of the ancient Zarathustrian teachings came back to him. He did not yet know with certainty that he bore the Zarathustra soul in him, but the old Zarathustrian wisdom, the old Zarathustra impulse rose up within him during the talk. Together with his mother he experienced the reality of this mighty impulse. All the beauty and glory of the ancient Sun wisdom rose up in him. And he remembered: when I lay by the pagan altar I heard something like a revelation. The words of the altered Bath Kol came to him — I spoke them for you yesterday — and he repeated them to his mother:

Amen.

The evils hold sway,

Witness of egoity releasing itself.

Selfhood guilt through others incurred,

Experienced in the daily bread,

Wherein the will of the heavens does not rule,

Because man separated himself from your realm,

And forgot your names,

You Fathers in the heavens.

All the greatness of the Mithras worship came before his soul with these words, rising as though from an inner genius. He spoke at length to his mother about the grandeur and glory

of the old paganism, about how the separate ancient mysteries of Asia Minor and southern Europe had merged in the Mithras cult. Yet he also had a dreadful inner feeling of how that ancient religion had gradually changed and fallen prey to the demonic powers he himself had experienced in his twenty-fourth year. Everything he had experienced at the time came back to him. It appeared that the ancient Zarathustra wisdom, too, was something to which people of his own time were no longer receptive. For the second time he said significant words to his mother: 'Even if all the old mysteries were revived and with them everything that had once been so great in the pagan mysteries, the people no longer exist who could hear it. All those things are of no avail. If I were to go and proclaim to people the changed message of the Bath Kol which I heard, if I were to make known the secret as to why people are no longer able to live in communion with the mysteries when in physical life, or if I were to proclaim the ancient Sun wisdom of Zarathustra, the people no longer exist who would be able to understand. Today all this would turn into demonic nature in people, for it would resound in them but they would not have the ears to hear. People are no longer able to hear what was once proclaimed and heard.'

Jesus of Nazareth now knew that the changed voice of the Bath Kol he had heard call out to him the words 'Amen, the Evils hold sway' was ancient sacred teaching. One all-powerful prayer had been said in all the mystery places but it had since been forgotten. He now knew that something of the ancient mystery wisdom had been given to him when he had been out of his body at the pagan altar. Yet he also realized, and said so to his mother, that it was not possible for people of his time to gain understanding of those mysteries.

Continuing the talk with his mother he spoke of the things he had learned among the Essenes. He spoke of the beauty,

greatness and glory of their doctrine, and remembered their gentleness and sweet temper. For the third time he spoke significant words, which had come to him when he conversed with the Buddha in his vision: 'It is not possible for all people to be Essenes. Hillel²⁸ was right when he said: "Do not cut yourself off from the community but work and be active in the community, with love for your fellow human beings; for what indeed are you all on your own?" That is what the Essenes do, however; they cut themselves off, withdrawing from the world to live a life of holiness, and this brings misfortune on others. For the rest of humanity must suffer if they go apart.'

He then told his mother the event he had witnessed—I spoke of this yesterday: 'Once I left the Essenes after an important, personal conversation, and when I reached the main gate I saw Lucifer and Ahriman running away. Since then, dear mother, I know that the Essenes protect themselves from them with their life-style and their secret doctrine, and Lucifer and Ahriman have to flee from their gates. But by sending Lucifer and Ahriman away the Essenes are making them go to other people. They gain blessedness by saving themselves from Lucifer and Ahriman.' Having lived among the Essenes Jesus knew that there was a way of reaching the heights where we unite with the divine and spiritual, but it could only be done by individuals and at the cost of others. He knew now that the connection with the world of the divine and the spirit could not be established in the Hebrew, the pagan or the Essene way.

These words entered into his mother's loving heart with tremendous power. Throughout the talk he had been at one with her, as though they were one. The whole soul and the whole I of Jesus of Nazareth lay in those words. Let me speak of a secret connected with the talk Jesus had with his mother

before the baptism by John. Something passed from Jesus to his mother. Not only did he wrest all these things from his soul in words, but having been so close to her from his twelfth year, his whole essential nature passed to her with his words, and he was now in a condition as if beyond himself, as if his I had been lost to him. His mother on the other hand had a new I, which had descended into her, as it were: she had become a different person. If we study this and try to find out what happened, a strange fact emerges.

The dreadful pain and suffering that was wrested from the soul of Jesus poured into his mother's soul and she felt at one with him. Jesus himself felt that everything that had lived in him from his twelfth year had gone from him in the course of this talk. The more he spoke of it, the more was his mother filled with all the wisdom that lived in him. All the events that had lived in him from his twelfth year now came to life in his mother's loving heart. For him, however, they seemed to have vanished; he had put into his mother's soul, into her heart, everything he had been living with from his twelfth year. This caused his mother's soul to change.

Jesus, too, was a changed person after that talk, so much so that his brothers or stepbrothers and other relatives began to think he had lost his mind. 'What a pity,' they would say, 'he knew such a lot. True, he did not say much, but now he has completely lost his senses!' He was given up as hopeless. And he did indeed walk about the house for days as if in a dream. The Zarathustra-I was in the process of leaving the body of Jesus of Nazareth and entering into the world of the spirit. This I came to a last resolution: as if driven from inside, from inner necessity, he left the house after a few days, moving mechanically, and made his way to John the Baptist, whom he knew, to ask to be baptized.

There followed the event I have frequently described as the

baptism by John in the Jordan: the Christ spirit descended into his body.

Those then were the events. Jesus now bore the Christ spirit in him. Since the talk with his mother the Zarathustra-I had gone and the other I, which had been his up to his twelfth year, was present again, only it had grown and become even greater. Into this body, which now only held the infinite depths of heart and mind, a feeling of being open to infinite spaces, came the Christ. Jesus now had the Christ in him; his mother also had a new I which had entered into her; she was a new person.

The scientist of the spirit perceives the following. At the moment when the baptism took place in the Jordan, the mother, too, experienced something like the end of a transformation process. She felt—she was in her forty-fifth or forty-sixth year at the time—as if the soul of the mother of the Jesus child who had received the Zarathustra spirit in his twelfth year, the mother who had since died, now entered into her. The Christ spirit had come to Jesus of Nazareth, and the spirit of the other mother, who was then in the world of the spirit, had come to the stepmother with whom Jesus had the talk. From then on she felt herself to be like the young mother who had borne the Jesus child of Luke's Gospel.

Let us get the true picture of this infinitely significant event. Let us try to feel it deeply, and also realize that a unique spirit had come to live on Earth: the Christ spirit in a human body, a spirit that had never yet lived in a human body, but had been in the realms of the spirit; it had never yet lived on Earth and knew only the worlds of the spirit. It only knew as much of the Earth world as had been stored up, as it were, in the three bodies—physical body, etherbody and astral body—of Jesus of Nazareth. The Christ spirit entered into the three bodies which had developed through thirty years of life in the

way I have described. His first encounters with life on Earth were free from all previous experience.

Initially the Christ spirit was guided to a place of solitude. This, too, can be known from the Akashic Record of the Fifth Gospel. Jesus of Nazareth, into whose body the Christ spirit had entered, had given up everything that had previously connected him with the rest of the world. The Christ spirit had just arrived on Earth. Initially this Christ spirit felt drawn to impressions gained in the body that had remained in memory, as it were, and been most strongly imprinted in the astral body. It was as though the Christ spirit said to itself: yes, here is the body that has seen Ahriman and Lucifer flee, has felt how the Essenes seeking to advance themselves compelled Ahriman and Lucifer to go to other people. The Christ felt drawn to Ahriman and Lucifer, knowing them to be the spiritual entities humanity had to contend with on Earth. In the first place, therefore, the Christ spirit, dwelling for the first time in an earthly human body, felt drawn to do battle with Lucifer and Ahriman in the desert solitude.

I believe the temptation scene I am going to describe to you is entirely correct. It is, however, extremely difficult to read these things in the Akashic Record. Let me therefore state explicitly that some aspects may need to be slightly modified when further occult investigations are made. But the essence is there, and this is what I am going to tell you. The temptation of Christ is narrated in other Gospels, but in different aspects. I have often referred to this. I have made every effort to perceive the temptation scene as it truly was, and will tell you what really happened in a way that is as unbiased as possible.

First of all the Christ spirit in the body of Jesus encountered Lucifer in the wilderness, Lucifer with all his power and influence, who offers temptation to human beings when they think too highly of themselves, lacking in self knowledge and

humility. Lucifer will always seek to play on our false pride, arrogance and self-importance. He came to Christ Jesus and said more or less the words that are also written in the other gospels: 'Look at me! The other realms in which man's life has been set were established by the other gods and spirits. They are old. I am going to establish a new realm; I have released myself from the world order; I shall give you everything the old realms have to offer by way of beauty and magnificence if you will enter into my realm. But you must leave behind those other gods and recognize me!' Lucifer spoke of all the beauty and glory of the luciferic world, anything that must touch a chord in the human soul that had even the least bit of arrogance and pride. But the Christ spirit had come from the worlds of the spirit and knew the soul's attitude to the gods that preserved it from being led into temptation. In the world from which it had come, the Christ spirit had known nothing of luciferic temptation; but it knew how to serve the gods and was strong enough to reject Lucifer.

Lucifer then made his second attack, but this time he had called on Ahriman to support him, and the two of them now spoke to the Christ. Lucifer sought to rouse his pride, Ahriman to address his fear. One of them therefore said: 'Because of my spirituality and everything I am able to give to you, recognize me and you will not need what now you do need, being the Christ who has entered into a human body. This physical body makes you subject to itself and you have to recognize the law of gravity when in it. It prevents you from going beyond the law of gravity, but I shall raise you above the laws of gravity. If you recognize me, I shall cancel out the effects of the fall and nothing shall happen to you. Throw yourself down from the parapet! It is written: I shall command the angels to protect you, lest your foot strike a stone.'

Ahriman, wishing to play on his fear, said: 'I shall protect you from fear! Throw yourself down!'

Both of them beset him. But it was just because there were two of them and they held each other in balance that he was able to save himself from them. And he found the strength human beings must find on Earth if they are to rise above Lucifer and Ahriman.

Ahriman then said: 'Lucifer, you are no good to me, you are in my way; you have not increased but reduced my powers; I am going to tempt him on my own.' He sent Lucifer away and made the final attack on his own, saying the words we know from the Gospel of Matthew: 'If you claim to have divine powers, make the mineral element into bread', or, as it says in the Gospel, 'turn the stones into bread'. Then the Christ spirit said to Ahriman: 'People do not live by bread alone but by the truths that come from the worlds of the spirit.' The Christ spirit knew this very well indeed, having just descended from those worlds. Ahriman's reply was: 'You may be right. But the fact that you are right and the extent to which you are right cannot prevent my having a certain hold on you. You only know how the spirit acts that descends from the heights. You have not yet been in the human world. Down there you find people who truly need to turn stones into bread. They cannot possibly live by the spirit alone.'

Ahriman was speaking of things that could be known on Earth but not by a god who had only just come to Earth. A god would not know that down on Earth it is necessary to turn mineral substance, metals, into money to provide bread for the people. Ahriman said that those poor people down on Earth were forced to feed themselves by using money. This was the point where Ahriman still had power. 'And', he said, 'I am going to use it!'

This is the true account of the temptation of the Christ. Something was left unresolved. Lucifer's questions had been answered, but not those of Ahriman. To solve these, something else was needed.

When Christ Jesus left the desert solitude he felt that he had grown beyond everything he had lived through and learned from his twelfth year; he felt the Christ spirit to be connected with what had lived in him before his twelfth year, and no longer felt any connection with everything that had grown old and withered in human evolution. Even the language spoken by those around him had become a matter of indifference to him, and to begin with he kept silent. He wandered about in the area around Nazareth and gradually went further and further afield, going to many of the places he had visited as Jesus of Nazareth. And something very strange emerged. Please note, I am telling you the story of the Fifth Gospel, and it would be pointless for anyone to look straight away for contradictions between this and the other four Gospels. I am telling the story of the Fifth Gospel.

Generally silent, as if he had nothing in common with the world around him, Christ Jesus went from one lodging to the next, always working for people and with the people. Ahriman's words about bread had touched him to the quick and left a deep impression. Everywhere he found people who had known him when he had worked for them before. They would recognize him again, and among them he did indeed find those to whom Ahriman must of necessity have access, for they needed to turn stones, mineral substance, which is to say money, metal, into bread. He had no need to visit people who followed the moral teaching of Hillel and others. He went to the people who in the other Gospels are called publicans and sinners, for they were

caught up in the necessity of turning stones into bread. He would often be among these people.

Something strange had happened, however. Many of these people had known him before he reached his thirtieth year, for he had been with them once if not two or three times as Jesus of Nazareth. They had come to appreciate his mild, gentle and wise nature. For the great pain and profound suffering he had gone through from his twelfth year had ultimately been transformed into the magical power of love, a love that flowed from his every word, as if there were a mysterious power which poured out over the people around him. Wherever he went, in every house, every lodging, he had been deeply loved. And this love had remained when he had left their homes and gone on his way.

People would often speak of dear Jesus of Nazareth who had passed through those homes and those towns and villages. And something would happen, as if a cosmic law were in operation. (I am speaking of scenes that happened over and over again and come up frequently when clairvoyant research is done.) The families for whom Jesus of Nazareth had worked liked to sit and talk after work, when the sun had gone down, and it was as if Jesus was still among them! They would talk of the dear man who had been with them, speaking of his love and gentleness, and the wonderfully warm feelings they gained when he was under their roof. And it would happen—as an after-effect of the love that had come from him—that as they sat together, having talked for hours of the man who had been to visit them, that the image of Jesus of Nazareth would enter the room, as if in a vision shared by the whole family. He visited them in the spirit, or we may also say they created a spiritual image of him.

You can imagine how they had felt when he came to them in such a common vision, and what it meant to them when he

now returned, after the baptism in the Jordan. They recognized his outer form again, but the light in his eyes had grown stronger. They saw the transfigured countenance that had once looked at them with such kindness; they saw the whole person who had been sitting among them in the spirit. You can imagine the extraordinary thing that happened among those families of publicans and sinners, people who because of their karma were surrounded and plagued by all the demonic spirits of that age, people who were sick, heavily burdened and beset. You can imagine how they felt on his return.

Now the changed nature of Jesus was apparent. It was particularly through people like these that one could see what had become of Jesus of Nazareth when the Christ spirit had come to dwell in him. Where in the past they had merely been comforted by his presence they now felt he had healed them. They went to fetch their neighbours who were equally oppressed and plagued by demonic powers and brought them to Christ Jesus. Thus it happened that among the people who were under Ahriman's rule, Christ Jesus, having vanquished Lucifer, with only a sting remaining from the encounter with Ahriman, was able to do what the Bible describes as driving out demons and healing the sick. Many of the demons he had seen when he lay like one dead on the pagan altar would depart from human beings who came face to face with Christ Jesus. The demons saw him as their opponent just as much as Lucifer and Ahriman did. As he went through the countryside and saw how the demons behaved in human souls he would often recall the occasion when he had lain by the ancient altar of sacrifice where the gods had gone and demons had taken their place and where he could not perform the rites. He had to remember the Bath Kol who had spoken the ancient mystery prayer. And again and again the middle line of the

prayer would come to mind: 'Experienced in the daily bread.' Now he could see that the people among whom he went had to turn stones into bread. He could see that there were many among them who had to live by bread alone. And the words of the ancient pagan prayer: 'Experienced in the daily bread' entered deep into his soul. He experienced the whole process of man assuming a body in the physical world. He could feel that because of this necessity, human evolution had reached a point where because of their physical embodiment people would forget the names of the Fathers in the heavens, the names of the spirits of the upper hierarchies. And he felt that now human beings were no longer able to hear the voices of the old prophets and the message of the Zarathustra wisdom. He realized that life in the daily bread had separated humanity from the heavens and must inevitably drive them to egotism and to Ahriman.

As he went about with these thoughts in his mind it happened that those who were most deeply aware of the change in Jesus of Nazareth became his disciples and followed him. He would take along one individual or another from his various lodgings, people who followed him because they had that awareness to the highest degree. Soon a band of disciples had gathered. Jesus thus had people around him whose basic inner mood was an entirely new one, as it were; through him they had become different from the people of whom he had to say to his mother that they could no longer hear the old revelations. There dawned in him a god's earthly experience: I have to tell not how the gods prepared a path that led from the spirit down to the Earth, but how human beings can find their way again from the Earth to the spirit.

The voice of the Bath Kol came to mind again, and he knew that the ancient formulations and prayers needed to be given a new form; he knew that man now had to find the way that

led from below upwards to worlds of the spirit, and that he would be able to look for the divine spirit with the help of this new prayer. Jesus therefore took the last line of the ancient prayer:

‘You Fathers in the heavens’

and changed it into a form that was right for people of the new era, for it should no longer refer to a multitude of spirits in the hierarchies but to one spiritual entity only:

‘Our Father in heaven.’

And he changed the line he had heard as the last but one in the mystery prayer:

‘And forgot your names,’

making it right for the people of the new era:

‘Hallowed be your name.’

He changed the third line from the end to show how people should feel who needed to rise up from below to approach the godhead, so that

‘Because man separated himself from your kingdom,’
became

‘Your kingdom come.’

And he changed the line

‘Wherein the will of the heavens does not rule’
into

‘Your will be done on Earth as it is in heaven.’

That was the only way in which human beings could hear it

now, for no one could hear the words in their old order any more. The path to the worlds of spirit had to be completely reversed.

The mystery of the bread, of incarnation in a physical body, the mystery of everything that the sting of Ahriman had fully revealed to him, he changed in such a way that human beings might feel that the physical world, too, comes from the world of the spirit, even if people do not realize this immediately. The line of the daily bread thus became:

‘Give us today our daily bread,’

and he changed the words

‘Selfhood guilt through others incurred’

into

‘Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.’

The second line in the ancient prayer from the mysteries,

‘Witness of egoity releasing itself’

became

‘But deliver us’

and the first line

‘The evils hold sway’

was changed to

‘from evil. Amen.’

The prayer which Christendom knows as the Our Father (the Lord’s Prayer) came into being when the changed voice of the Bath Kol which Jesus had once heard was transformed by

Christ Jesus and taught by him as the prayer of the new mysteries, the new Our Father. The words of the Sermon on the Mount and other things which Christ Jesus taught his disciples came into being in the same way, and much can still be said on the subject.

Christ Jesus influenced his disciples in a remarkable way. (Please keep in mind, as I tell you these things, that I am simply telling you what can be read in the Fifth Gospel.) As he went about in those days he influenced those around him in a peculiar way. He and the disciples formed a community, that is true. But he was the Christ spirit, and it seemed that it was present not only in body. As he went about the country with his disciples, one or the other of them would sometimes feel as though the Christ were in him, in his own soul, when he was also walking beside him, and he would begin to say words which really only Christ Jesus himself could speak. And so this group of people went about and met others, and they would talk to them, and it was not always Christ Jesus himself who spoke but sometimes one of the disciples; for he held everything in common with his disciples, even his wisdom.

I have to confess I was enormously surprised when I realized that in the conversation with the Sadducee²⁹ which is related in the Gospel of Mark, Christ Jesus did not speak from the body of Jesus but from that of a disciple; it was, of course, the Christ who was speaking. Another common phenomenon was that when Christ Jesus left the group—he would occasionally separate from them—he would still be among them. He would either be walking with them in spirit while he was far away, or he might be with them only in his etheric body. His ether body was among them, going about with them, and it was not always possible to say if he had his physical body with him, as one may

put it, or if it was only the ether body which appeared.

This was the way in which Christ Jesus was with the disciples and all kinds of ordinary people. His own experience was something I have already mentioned briefly: initially the Christ spirit was relatively independent of the living body of Jesus of Nazareth, but as time went on it had to adapt to it more and more. As life progressed it was increasingly bound to the body of Jesus of Nazareth, and in the final year it caused the Christ spirit immense pain to be bound to this body, which had also grown frail. Yet it could still happen that the Christ, who by then was going about with a large group of people, would leave his body. Now one of the Apostles would speak and then another, and it was possible to think that the individual who spoke was Christ Jesus or also that he was not—the Christ spoke through them all when they were in this close communion.

It is possible to listen in on a conversation between the Pharisees and Scribes where they said to one another: ‘To set an example for the people, it would, of course, be enough to take and kill any one member of the group; but it might easily be the wrong person, for they all speak in the same way. This will not serve, therefore, for then the real Christ Jesus may still be there. We have to have the right one!’ Only the disciples, individuals who were close to him, could say which he was, and of course they would not tell the enemy.

By then, however, Ahriman had gained in power with regard to the question which had remained open, being something the Christ could not deal with in the worlds of spirit but only on Earth. A most dreadful deed had to be done so that he might learn what it means to turn stones into bread, or, which means the same, turn money into bread. Ahriman made use of Judas of Karioth.

The influence of the Christ was such that there was no way

of finding out by means of mind or spirit which member of the group of disciples, who venerated him, was the Christ. For where the spirit was active, even if only a last remnant of its convincing power remained, it was impossible to get at the Christ. It could only be done if an individual used a means with which the Christ was not familiar and which he would only get to know through the most dreadful deed on Earth done by Judas. There was no other way of identifying Christ Jesus but to find someone who would put himself at the service of Ahriman; someone who really and truly came to betray him for the sake of money alone. The connection between Christ Jesus and Judas existed because something had happened during the temptation which is understandable in a god: having just come down to Earth, the Christ did not know that the words 'it does not need stones to have bread' apply only in heaven. Ahriman had retained this as his sting, and therefore the betrayal took place. After this the Christ still had to come under the dominion of the Lord of Death — and Ahriman is the Lord of Death. This, then, is the connection between the temptation and the Mystery of Golgotha with Judas' betrayal.

Much more could be told of the Fifth Gospel. But I am sure the rest will emerge as humanity continues to evolve. My aim has been essentially to show you the nature of it by means of isolated incidents. Now, at the conclusion of these lectures, I recall that at the end of the first lecture I said it was a necessity of the times to speak now of the Fifth Gospel. I would ask you, please, to treat everything it has been possible to say with the right reverence. We have more than enough enemies already and they have their own peculiar methods. I do not wish to speak on this point; you have probably read about it in the news sheet. You also know the strange fact that for some time now certain people have been saying that

everything I teach is infected with all kinds of bigoted Christian dogma and even Jesuitism.³⁰ This kind of malicious slander, without conscience, comes largely from some adherents of Adyar theosophy, as it is called. What is worse, there is one source where people have been particularly vocal about the bigoted, perverted and despicable nature of our teaching, and have also abysmally falsified it.³¹ A man coming from the United States spent weeks and months getting to know our teaching, writing it down and then publishing it in a watered-down form as a Rosicrucian theosophy—which he had copied from us. He does say he learned a lot from us here, but states that he was only afterwards called to the Masters and learned more from them. He did not make it clear that he had learned the deeper things from our lecture courses which had not been published at the time. This has happened in the United States. Now we might be as meek and mild about it as Hillel was, even when faced with the fact that this is having repercussions in Europe. The people who were most openly against us had a translation into German done, and it said in the introduction to the translation that a Rosicrucian approach had also developed in Europe but in a bigoted, Jesuit way, and that it could only thrive in the pure air of California. Well, you can imagine the rest. This is the method used by our opponents. We may look at these things leniently and indeed with compassion but we must not close our eyes to them. Seeing that such things happen, people who have shown such remarkable lenience over the years to those who acted without conscience should also beware. Perhaps their eyes will be opened one day. I really do not wish to speak about these things, but it is necessary for the sake of truth. All these things must be seen very clearly.

On one hand we have people spreading such things about,

but this does not preserve us from others joining the fray who are somewhat more honest in finding these things unpalatable. I won't bother you with all the silly things the two parties manage to write between them, for there is no need to pay attention to the peculiar literature now appearing in Germany, written by Freimark, Schalk, Maack and others,³² because the standard is extremely poor. But there are people who have a special problem with anything of the nature of this Fifth Gospel. Perhaps hatred was never more honest than in the criticisms that were raised as soon as the mystery of the two Jesus children³³ became publicly known. True anthroposophists will approach this Fifth Gospel, presented in good faith, in the right way. Take it home, talk about it in your local groups, but also tell people how to approach it. Make sure it is not irreverently cast before people who may actually ridicule it.

With things of this nature, based on clairvoyant research that our age does need, we are in confrontation with the whole present age and above all the academic circles who set the tone today. We have tried to be mindful of this. Those who were present when we laid the foundation stone for our building in Dornach will know that we tried to be aware of the urgent need for spiritual teachings to be proclaimed with faithful adherence to the truth. We tried to be aware how far our present civilization is removed from the search for the truth. We may say that the times are crying out for the spirit but that people are too arrogant or narrow-minded to search for the true spirit with a real will. The degree of truthfulness which is essential if we are to perceive what the spirit has to say needs to be taught and developed. Such truthfulness is not to be found in the educated world today, and, what is worse, people do not realize that it is lacking. Make sure that everything given here as the Fifth Gospel is treated with

reverence in your groups. We ask for this not from egotism, but for a completely different reason, for the spirit of truth must live in us and the spirit must stand before us in truth.

People talk of the spirit today but even as they do so they have no idea of its true nature. Someone who has been much acclaimed for always speaking of the spirit is Rudolf Eucken.³⁴ He is always talking about the spirit but if you read his books—you should try doing so—he always says: the spirit exists, we must experience it, we must commune with the spirit and be mindful of it, and so on, in endless phrases running through every one of those books: spirit, spirit, spirit! People talk like that because they are too lazy or arrogant to go to the actual sources of the spirit. And they are greatly respected.

Nevertheless it will be difficult for us to make headway in the world with the truths gained in such a concrete form from the spirit as had to be done in describing the Fifth Gospel. It needs a sober approach and inner truthfulness. One of Eucken's most recent publications is on whether we can still be Christians. Page follows page, like the sections of a tape-worm follow one another—soul and spirit, spirit and soul—going on for volume after volume. Fame and glory can be gained by telling people that one knows something about the spirit. For the readers do not notice all the inner untruthfulness, though one would think it was time they finally learned to read. On one page we read the statement: 'Humanity has progressed beyond belief in demons today, and you can no longer ask people to believe in them.' Yet there is another passage in the same book where we read the strange words: 'Contact between the divine and human worlds engenders demonic powers.' So here we have a man who makes the above statement on one page and then in all seriousness refers to demons. Surely this is the most

profound untruthfulness. I never noticed any of our contemporaries being alive to this, however.

Serving the truth of the spirit we are in opposition to the people of our age today. It is important to remember this so that we may clearly see what we need to do in our hearts if we want to take part in proclaiming the spirit, in supporting the new life of the spirit that is essential for mankind. How can we hope for much of a response to spiritual teaching that seeks to guide the human soul to the Christ spirit when contemporary thought is satisfied with the kind of truths told by all those clever philosophers and theologians: that Christianity existed before Christ! They will show that the ritual and certain typical narratives were current in the East in earlier times. Our clever theologians will explain to all who wish to hear that Christianity is nothing but a continuation of what had gone before.³⁵ These publications command great respect, really tremendous respect among our contemporaries, who have no idea of the real situation.

If we speak of the Christ spirit descending to Earth and later discover that the Christ spirit was worshipped in rites that were also used to worship the pagan gods of old, and if such discoveries are used to deny the Christ spirit altogether, which is what is happening today, the logic behind this is of a kind that may be demonstrated as follows: somebody or other goes into a lodging house and leaves his clothes behind. People know them to be his clothes. Later on, someone like Schiller or Goethe, for instance, comes to the house and circumstances make it necessary for him to put on those clothes and leave the house in them. Someone may see Goethe walk about in those clothes and say: 'What are you talking about? In what way is he supposed to be special? I have carefully examined those clothes. They belong to so-and-so who is nothing special at all.' Because the Christ spirit made use of the garments, so to speak, of ancient rites, those clever

people fail to realize that the Christ spirit merely put on those garments and that the Christ spirit has entered into those old rites.

Look through whole libraries and countless works written on the basis of a biased modern science: evidence is produced of the Christ spirit's garments; what is more, it is correct! People with that kind of nose for cultural evolution are held in high regard today; their discoveries are taken for profound wisdom. This is a picture we must keep in mind if we want to receive the Fifth Gospel not only into our minds but also into our hearts. It is meant to help us so that we are alive to how and where we stand with our truth in the world today, realizing how impossible it is to make the new tidings, which must come, comprehensible to the thought life of the past. And so, as we take leave of one another, the words of the Fifth Gospel may be spoken: no progress can be made in the coming phase of spiritual evolution if humanity continues in its present way of thinking. This must change and take a new direction. People who like to compromise and are unwilling to form a clear picture of things as they are, and as they have to be in future, will not be able to contribute much to the spiritual teachings and dedication humanity needs.

I have been obliged to speak of the Fifth Gospel, which is sacred to me. And I take leave of your hearts and souls with the wish that the bond already created between us in many other ways may have been strengthened through this spiritual investigation of the Fifth Gospel which is so dear to my heart. Your hearts may perhaps be warmed by the thought that even if we are physically separated in space and in time, we shall nevertheless be together, and together develop a feeling for the inner work to be done and for what the spirit demands of human souls in the present time.

I think this is the best kind of farewell I can make, especially at the end of this particular course of lectures.

LECTURE 6

Berlin, 21 October 1913

This winter we are going to embark on something which may be seen as a kind of continuation of the spiritual scientific work we have done throughout the years. The interval, which has been a fairly long one for Berlin, has been filled with more than just the usual performances and the course of lectures given in Munich,³⁶ for we have also been laying the foundation stone for the new building in Dornach,³⁷ and dealing with a wide variety of work connected with the early stages of the building work. Tonight, as we meet again in this room for the first time,³⁸ let me first of all speak of our aims connected with the building in Dornach. It is to be hoped that the anthroposophical approach we represent will create an outer symbol there for the bond that exists between the hearts and souls of all who feel connected with the efforts made in the science of the spirit our anthroposophical movement seeks to further.

Basically—and you'll be aware of this from various comments made in recent years—the whole of our present-day cultural life shows that people are unconsciously thirsting for a truly spiritual approach to life. This is true not only for those who may be positively stating such a desire but also for many others who do not even know such an approach exists. Others again, who do not want to know about it and may even be hostile towards it, are unconsciously seeking what our approach is able to give—we might say because their hearts desire it, though this does not come to

expression in clearly formulated concepts and ideas but in some instances actually in concepts and ideas that oppose our own.

It therefore was a very special occasion when we laid the foundation stone of the Dornach building. Only a few of our anthroposophical friends were present, people who happened to be about at the time or were able to come at short notice. It was a very special feeling to know ourselves to be present at the inception of a building intended to be an outward symbol, for the time being, of our common endeavour.

Standing on the hill where the building is to rise one can see distant mountains and plains, and turn one's gaze to distant spaces that lie far beyond these, and there came to mind the crying need people have the world over for a spiritual approach to life and for everything our spiritual movement is able to give. We were aware that beyond anything said or felt, many other symptoms of our present age clearly indicate the inner need for such an approach, a need for it to become fruitful in human souls. Such, then was the feeling in our hearts when we laid the stone above which the building is to rise. We hope that the architectural forms given to the building will also reveal our aims, so that for people looking at the completed building from the outside or the inside, these forms will be like characters in a script, characters to tell them the aims we hope to realize in this world.

Reflecting on an event such as the laying of the foundation stone and recalling the feelings we had at the time, it seems natural to consider the influence karma has not only on individual lives but on the whole of human evolution. We might say that individual lives have a lesser karma and that a greater karma is active in Earth and human evolution as a whole. The wonderful thought we are able to experience

is: when something like this happens out of a spiritual background, we — and that includes all who are engaged in the pursuit of Anthroposophy — are the instrument, however humble, of the spirit active in world karma, the spirit responsible for what karma does. To feel thus at one with the spirit of world karma is a feeling that should again and again bring together everything we are able to consider in the light of Anthroposophy. It can give inner calm when we need it, inner harmony when this is needed, and inner strength, power, endurance and energy when those are the qualities required.

When the truth of spiritual ideas of the world comes to us, those ideas become pulsating inner life and an energy we can feel and sense. This can be alive in us when our thoughts soar to the highest levels we are able to reach, and also in every demand, even the meanest, made in our everyday work. This is something we can always fall back on when we need new strength, something we can refer to when we need consolation in life. Genuine morality, genuine moral strength will only come for humanity if we direct our inner attention to true spirituality, the true life of the spirit.

World karma is different for us today than it was for humanity at the time when the event took place that we have often referred to as the centre, the focus, of human evolution: the Mystery of Golgotha. In recent weeks, speaking in other cities specifically with reference to the present evolution of our science of the spirit, I have drawn attention to unusual conditions concerning the Mystery of Golgotha. Today I want to speak to you on the same subject so that you, too, may take it into your hearts and souls.

The living Christ impulse entered into the world through the Mystery of Golgotha. At what time did it enter into the world? Today we know from deeper spiritual insight what it was that entered into a human body at that time in order

to become part of both Earth and human evolution. The preparatory studies we have made give us some understanding of the significance of the Mystery of Golgotha. As I have stressed on a number of occasions, people of later ages will understand it more clearly. Now we may ask ourselves how the Mystery of Golgotha was understood at the time when it happened. It is important for us to grasp the reality of this Mystery, understanding what it really was about. Was it a matter of what people were taught at the time? If that were the crux of it, people who maintain that most of the things Christ Jesus taught had also existed in earlier times would be partly right, though we know that this is not completely true. But that is not primarily what it was all about, but something entirely different. What happened on Golgotha and in connection with that event is what matters, and this would have happened even if not a single soul on the whole Earth had understood it. It was not a question of a fact being realized at the time, but merely of the event taking place. The significance of the Golgotha event lies not in what people have understood, but in what happened for the sake of humanity, and happened in such a way that the stream of this event has come to expression in the world's spiritual realities.

The Mystery of Golgotha truly came at a strange time. To get an idea of how strange it was let us consider post-Atlantean evolution. I have often said that in the post-Atlantean age human evolution first of all evolved in the ancient Indian civilization. I have shown the sublime significance of that civilization, when people were inwardly much more open to the life of the spirit, an openness that gradually decreased through the ages. I also spoke of the way direct interest in the worlds of the spirit grew less and less in ancient Persian and Egypto-Chaldean times. In ancient Indian times people took everything the world conveyed to them into their ether bodies

and experienced it in their ether bodies — this was true at least for those who truly took part in that ancient Indian civilization. Such experiences gained in the ether body are highly clairvoyant by nature. In ancient Persian times soul life was experienced in the sentient body; this was already a lower level of clairvoyance. In Egypto-Chaldean times, inner experience was gained in the sentient soul, again a lower level of clairvoyance. Then came the fourth period with the Graeco-Latin civilization, and the Mystery of Golgotha fell in this period. In that era, the human soul had already reached a point where perception was entirely on the outer, physical plane. The civilization of the rational mind, relating to external things, was beginning. The soul developed powers relating to the outside world.

In our present era, the fifth post-Atlantean civilization, life experience has so far been limited to observation of the outside world and the impressions gained through the senses. The people of this present era will, however, have to turn round and gain a new, fresh receptivity for the life of the spirit. They must bring life in the spiritual soul to fruition.

If we ask ourselves in which of the first four post-Atlantean ages people would have been least able to understand the Mystery of Golgotha, the descent of the Christ, and follow it with genuine spiritual understanding, we may well say: if — world karma did not allow this, but we may take it as a hypothesis — the Christ had entered into a human body during the ancient Indian civilization, countless souls would have been able to understand the event, for they still had that kind of spiritual perception. Even in the ancient Persian and indeed the Egypto-Chaldean eras it would, in a sense, have been relatively easy to understand the Mystery of Golgotha if it had been world karma for it to happen then. During the fourth post-Atlantean era, the human soul was

at a point in the process of evolution that made it impossible to understand the Mystery of Golgotha.

We will have many more occasions to refer to the strange fact that the Mystery of Golgotha waited for an era of post-Atlantean civilization when spiritual insight into the event was no longer possible. In Graeco-Latin times the intellectual or mind soul was in the process of special development. At that time attention focused lovingly on the outside world, something we can see in the whole of Greek civilization. Essentially, the whole civilization of that time saw the Mystery of Golgotha much as the women did who came to the Christ's tomb looking for the dead body and found the tomb open and the body no longer inside. They asked where the Lord's body had been taken and the answer they heard was: 'the one you seek is no longer here!' The people of the fourth post-Atlantean era were looking for something that could not be found in the place where they were looking. They were still looking and still using the same approach when the fourth post-Atlantean era came to an end in the 15th century.

What happened to the women visiting the tomb of Christ Jesus can be seen on a larger scale in the Crusades. The hearts and minds of many Europeans were filled with longing to find the tomb of Christ Jesus. Vast hordes of people went across to the Orient to look for what they were seeking because of a feeling they had. How can we describe what the people felt who went on the Crusades to the Orient? It was as if the whole of the Orient said to them: 'The one you seek is no longer here!' Surely this tells us, in a profoundly symbolic form, that throughout the fourth post-Atlantean era humanity had to look and search on the outer physical plane, using the senses, but that the Christ must be sought on the spiritual plane, even in so far as he is in the Earth world.

Where was the Christ when the women looked for him at

the tomb? He was in the realm of the spirit, where he was able to show himself to the Apostles when they opened their hearts and souls to him. They were then able to use powers that went beyond those of the senses and see the Christ as he walked the Earth for a time after the Mystery of Golgotha.

Where was the Christ when the Crusaders looked for him outwardly on the physical plane by going to the East? We perceive that at the time when the Crusaders looked for him in the East he entered into the mystics of the West in the way he is truly able to enter into human souls. That was where the Christ power, the Christ impulse, had gone! As the Crusaders went to the East to look for the Christ in their own particular way, the living Christ impulse—such as it could be then, considering the situation in Europe—came alive in the souls of Johannes Tauler, Meister Eckhart and others, individuals who were able to receive him into their hearts and minds in the conditions prevailing at the time. He had moved away and entered into western civilization. Those who looked for him in the old place had to be told: ‘The one you seek is no longer here!’

The fifth post-Atlantean civilization is the era dedicated to development of the I, or self, that is, the spiritual soul. Human beings go through intellectual soul development so that they may become fully ego conscious. We have often spoken of these truths which have been revealed through the science of the spirit. Now, at this hour, I speak of it with a very special feeling.

It is understandable that views such as these meet with growing opposition when they are made known in the present age. With regard to the feeling of which I am speaking, it is nevertheless significant, for instance, that I have to produce a second edition of my book on nineteenth-century views of the world and of life.³⁹ When it first appeared at the turn of the

century it offered a review of the last century. A second edition cannot do the same, of course, for there is no point in writing a review of the past century in 1913. The new version has to be different in a number of ways. Among other things I felt it was necessary to write a long introduction, presenting an overview of developments from earliest Greek times to the nineteenth century. This meant that I recently had need to review, from a more philosophical point of view, the philosophies of Thales,⁴⁰ Pherekydes of Syros⁴¹ and so on, right up to the present time. There one is considering not only the spiritual aspect but also historical tradition; I literally made it a discipline to refer only to philosophical aspects, leaving aside all religious impulses. The reality of the remarkable change that occurred at the beginning of the Graeco-Latin era emerged with profound clarity in the process. At that time the old perception of the world in images that had still existed in Egypto-Chaldean times changed and people began to think about the world. From the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries onwards awareness of the I impulse—not the I impulse itself, for that came earlier—developed out of the thinking approach.

Considering the individual philosophers one by one, the truth of all this becomes tangible, assuming historical reality. I am therefore speaking of these things from a completely different point of view today than could be done in the book I spoke of, and with a very special feeling. It is however also possible to see how self-awareness, a feeling of self, entered into the human soul in around the fifteenth century if we just consider ordinary history.

The present era is specifically destined to force human beings to bring the energies and powers of the self to the surface, making them increasingly conscious of their selfhood. This is best achieved by limiting one's approach to outer

phenomena as they appear to the senses, the kind of limitation seen in the evolution of modern science. The world no longer offers human beings the tremendous images that appeared in Egypto-Chaldean times, nor the great thought panoramas known to Plato, Aristotle and other thinkers of their time. People now have to do without the panorama of perceived images, and without the panorama of thoughts which Aristotle still perceived in Graeco-Latin times. And so the I, having some intuitive feeling that the spirit is to be found only within itself, must grasp the nature of its being and seek to find the power of its self-awareness. And you will note that all serious post fifteenth-century philosophers, if you consider what they were really about, have been struggling to develop a philosophy where the world is seen in a way that allows the human I, human self-awareness, to exist.

In the fourth post-Atlantean era, when the intellectual or mind soul was developing, human minds were far removed from being able to understand the Mystery of Golgotha; yet there was one thing that could bring them close to it. We also call the intellectual soul the 'mind' soul because it really has a dual aspect, and in the fourth post-Atlantean era the intellect and also heart and mind—inwardness, feeling—governed human nature. In this second aspect, the heart was able to feel what was a closed book to the intellect. Understanding based on feeling—we may also call it faith—developed for the Mystery of Golgotha, which means that human souls had an inner feeling for the Christ impulse. People felt the Christ impulse in their hearts; they felt inwardly connected with it even if unable to understand its significance and true nature. The Christ existed for them. Awareness of this had to be lost, however, in our present age of ego culture, for in order to grasp itself fully in its individual nature, the I must shut itself off from all spiritual impulses that come to the soul directly.

We thus see a strange spectacle. We see quite clearly that with the beginning, even the first approach, of the new era a new lack of understanding is added to the old, and this new lack of understanding went even further than the old. If you examine the life of mind and spirit you can understand that people of the fourth post-Atlantean era were able to receive the Christ impulse in their hearts but unable to grasp it intellectually. But because they were able to take in at least that much they knew that the Christ existed and had an influence in human evolution. People were able to feel this.

The new, fifth era brought something entirely new. Not only was there failure to understand the nature of Christ but also failure to understand anything divine and spiritual by nature. Where do we have proof—all kinds of proof could be found, but one in particular makes the issue perfectly clear—that failure to understand increased, that is, that people were no longer able to accept not only the Christ principle but the divine and spiritual principle altogether? The twelfth century saw a foreshadowing of ego culture when St Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, found ‘proof of God’s existence’, which meant that he actually considered it necessary to ‘prove’ the existence of divinity.⁴² What do we prove? Things we know, or things we do not know? If, for instance, a thief has been in my garden and I was able to watch from the window and saw him steal things, I do not need to prove that it was this particular individual who committed the theft. I only look for proof when I have no direct evidence. The fact that people seek to prove the existence of God is proof that he is no longer known or experienced. Anything we experience does not need proof; we prove things of which we have no direct experience today.

Lack of understanding continued to increase, and today we have reached a strange point in this respect. I have on several

occasions touched on the endless misunderstandings that have piled up in recent centuries, and above all in the last century, concerning the Mystery of Golgotha and Christ Jesus. We have theologians today who do not merely belittle Christ Jesus, reducing him to a human teacher, albeit an outstanding one, but actually deny his existence.⁴³

All this has to do with much deeper and characteristic aspects of our era. Life moves fast, however, and people are not prepared to take note. But for anyone prepared to take note, the facts speak all too clearly.

Let us take one fact. I am speaking of minor things, but they are symptomatic. A well-known weekly journal recently carried a strange essay that has attracted both attention and respect.⁴⁴ Essentially it says: 'The philosophies developed over the last centuries really are too "conceptual", using concepts that are difficult to follow.' From our point of view they are saying: they cannot be grasped in the world of the senses to which we wish to limit ourselves. Oddly enough the author of the essay finds it difficult to follow Spinoza's attempt to grasp the world on the basis of a single concept, the concept of divine substance.⁴⁵ To gain a modern approach to philosophy, the author suggests a visual presentation with the concept at the top and further concepts splitting off and spreading out from it. In short, his idea is to 'visualize' Spinoza's thought edifice by presenting it in diagrammatic form. People will then no longer have to consider how the thoughts arose in Spinoza's mind but can have the evidence of their senses by looking at a film.

If such 'ideals' become reality we shall perhaps be able to go to a cinema and see not cinematic recordings but 'interpretations' of the thought and idea edifices produced by prominent people.

This shows how far the human soul has come in our time,

and it is important to mention this symptom for a particular reason. People have failed to see what they should have seen if they had considered a symptom such as this in a healthy way. For there should have been laughter of derision at such foolishness, at the madness that lies in such a new approach to philosophy. The zeal coming to expression in such laughter might well be called a holy necessity.

This is one symptom—for it must be taken as a symptom—indicating a great need to enter more deeply into the spirit in our age, but into the true spirit. We need not only to enter more deeply into the spirit in any way whatever, but to do so in a way that leads to the truth. Souls today need the truth of the spirit. People tend to be satisfied with things that take us far, far away from genuine spirituality, particularly in education and indeed in developing a philosophy. Our age is easily satisfied with outer appearances. In the particular stream of which we are speaking these lead to inner untruths and to untruthfulness, however.

Another symptom to illustrate this relates to the philosophy of Eucken,⁴⁶ which has aroused considerable interest. He has not merely been given the world-famous Nobel Prize for his work, but is also praised as someone who dares to speak of the spirit again. Praise, however, is given not because Eucken speaks especially well of the spirit, but because people tend to be satisfied with very little today in matters of the spirit, so long as someone holds forth about the spirit, and because Eucken is making the same statement all the time, in an infinite number of variations. You find it everywhere in his books; it is just that people do not realize he is repeating himself. The statement is: 'It is not enough to realize that the world we know is the world perceived through the senses. People have to find themselves inwardly and in this way—inwardly—unite with the spirit.' So there we have it. We

have to find ourselves inwardly and unite with the spirit! This statement comes up again and again in Eucken's books, not just three or four but five or six times. This, then, is a 'spiritual' approach to the world! Symptoms of this kind are significant because they show us what the people who must be considered to have greatest understanding today regard as 'great' today. If only people were able to read! If you open Eucken's most recent work,⁴⁷ you find a strange passage where he says more or less that people have progressed beyond the belief in demons that existed at the time of the Christ. Today, he says, we need a different view of the Christ, one that no longer refers to demons and takes them for reality. It is indeed flattering for us in this enlightened age to be told by Eucken, the great teacher, that we have progressed beyond belief in demons. Reading on, however, we find the strange statement that contact between the divine and human worlds engenders demonic powers.

I'd like to know if everybody who had read Eucken's book laughed at Eucken's naiveté, or shall we say 'wisdom', which enabled him to state that we have progressed beyond belief in demons on one page and speak of a demonic element on another. His followers will of course say he did not mean it in a literal sense, that it was not meant to be taken so seriously. But that is exactly where the problem lies — people use words and ideas but do not take them seriously. A profound inner untruthfulness shows itself in this. It must, however, be part of a genuine approach based on the science of the spirit that we are aware of the fact that words have to be taken seriously, and that we should not speak of a demonic element unless we intend to take the word at its face value.

Otherwise the same thing may happen to us that happened to the chairman of a philosophy club where I had to give a lecture. In my lecture I had pointed out that in his book on the

nature of Christianity Adolf von Harnack⁴⁸ says that the question as to what actually happened on Golgotha could well be left aside; something which we could not ignore, however, was that belief in the Mystery of Golgotha had arisen in those days, irrespective of whether this belief had a foundation of reality or not. The chairman of this philosophy club in Berlin, who was, of course, a Protestant, told me: 'I read the book but I did not find the passage you quoted. Harnack cannot have said it, for it is a Roman Catholic idea. The Catholics say, for instance, that the ins and outs of the Tunic of Trier⁴⁹ are of little importance, what matters is that people believe.' I had to write down the number of the page for him where the passage occurs. It is probably quite common for people to read a book but somehow miss the really important and symptomatic part.

We have thus cast a side-light on our present age, and the symptoms we have discovered show that one thing above all is necessary, and that is to become conscientious in the spirit, so that we do not uncritically accept someone representing a particular philosophy who says we have progressed beyond belief in demons and then uses the term 'demonic' in a peculiar way. Considering that we live in a 'newspaper civilization' today, we should not say there is little hope of cultivating conscientiousness. No, we have to say that it is all the more necessary to do everything possible to bring about such a cultivation of conscientiousness. But we have to keep our eyes open so that we see the symptoms of our age.

One more thing. Ernest Renan's *A Life of Jesus*⁵⁰ has made an enormous impression since it was first published in the 1860s. I am mentioning this to show how people relate to the Mystery of Golgotha today. Reading Renan's book you say to yourself: well, in the first place this individual, who has visited all the places in the Holy Land and is therefore able to

provide excellent local colour, has a marvellous style; it is also a book written by someone who does not believe in the divinity of Christ, but speaks with infinite veneration of the sublime figure of Jesus. If we consider the work in more detail we find that, oddly enough, in describing the life of Jesus, Ernest Renan really shows that Jesus went through what anyone has to go through—some more so, others less—who has to present a particular philosophy of life to a number of people, large or small. What happens is more or less this. At first the individual presents to the crowd what he alone believes; then people come to him; one wants one thing, another something else; one takes the matter in one way, the next in another; some have one particular weakness, others a different one. The upshot is that the individual who initially spoke out of an inner truth gradually gives in. In short, Renan says that for many people who have something important to say this is essentially ruined by their followers. In his opinion, Christ Jesus was ruined by his followers. Take the Lazarus miracle, for instance. According to Renan, it was presented in a way which we would have to call a kind of confidence trick, but one that proved highly effective in spreading the affair, and that it was for this reason that Jesus let it happen. Renan presents other aspects in a similar way. Finally, having shown that the life of Christ Jesus followed a downward path, the author offers a hymn of praise such as can only be addressed to the most sublime.

Let us consider this inner untruthfulness. Renan's book is in fact a mixture of two things: something extraordinarily beautiful, a brilliant presentation, parts of it sublime, and mixed in with this is pulp fiction—but in conclusion a tremendous hymn to the sublime image of Jesus. To whom is this hymn addressed? It cannot really be to the individual whom Renan has described, not for anyone with sound

judgement; we simply would not address such praise to the Christ Jesus presented by Renan. This, then, is another case of inner untruthfulness.

What did I intend to suggest to you in this lecture? Let me summarize it briefly. I wanted to indicate that the Mystery of Golgotha came at a stage in human evolution when humanity was not ready to understand it, and that in our present time people are still not ready to do so.

But it has been an influence for two thousand years! This influence exists. It exists in a form that is independent of the understanding humanity has shown so far. If the Christ could have influenced humanity only to the extent that he was 'understood', he would have achieved little. But we shall see as we go on that we are now at a point in evolution where it is necessary to develop the understanding that has so far been lacking. We now live in an age where it will to some extent be necessary no longer to look for the Christ in a place where he is not to be found, but in a place where he may indeed be found. For he will appear in the spirit and not in a body, and those who seek him in the body will again and again hear the words: 'He whom you seek in the body is not in the body.'

We need a new understanding, in many respects perhaps a first understanding, of the Mystery of Golgotha. The time of no understanding must give way to the dawn of a first understanding. That is what I wanted to indicate today. We shall continue with this next time.

LECTURE 7

Berlin, 4 November 1913

Specific occult studies now make it possible to discover something we may call the Fifth Gospel. If you consider everything I have said with reference to the Mystery of Golgotha over the years, you may recall that some things said in order to explain the four Gospels also included statements about the life of the Christ Jesus which are not to be found in those Gospels, for instance the story of the two Jesus children. Many other things found in wholly spiritual records are tremendously important for our age, and it seems the time has come when those who are ready and prepared should gradually learn about them. For the time being nothing given from those sources should go beyond this group. But you can consider it to be something which is destined to pour into human souls in the present age, so that people may gain a much more vivid picture of the activity of the Christ Jesus than has so far been possible.

From my first introductory lecture you will have realized that today we need to grasp the Christ Jesus figure in a much more conscious way than has been the case in earlier times. If anyone should object that it is not in accord with the evolution of Christianity to say something new about the life of Christ Jesus, let me remind you of the conclusion of the Gospel of John where it says quite clearly that the Gospels present only some of the events that happened, and that the world itself would not contain the books to describe them all.⁵¹ This can give us the courage and strength to present new

things about the life of Christ Jesus at a time of genuine need. And we can be confident that only the narrow-minded will raise objections to this.

Let me remind you of something I have said on a number of occasions, including here in Berlin. Two Jesus children were born at the beginning of our era. We also know that at birth the spiritual essence of Zarathustra incarnated in one of the two boys who then lived with this spiritual essence of Zarathustra until about his twelfth year, the time when the Gospel of Luke tells us Jesus was taken to Jerusalem by his parents, who lost the boy, only to find him again among the teachers, expounding the scriptures in a way that surprised those teachers — whose function it was to expound them — and also his parents. I have shown that the description given in the Gospel of Luke reveals how the Zarathustra spirit, having lived in one Jesus child for about twelve years, went over into the other Jesus child, who was also twelve at the time and who had until then been of an entirely different cast of mind. Thus the Jesus child of the Nathan line in the House of David did not have the Zarathustra spirit in him until he reached his twelfth year, but he had that spirit in him after that.

Using the means I have spoken of on several occasions, a method that may be called 'reading the Akashic Record', we can gain further insight into the life of the Jesus child who now also had the Zarathustra spirit in him. It is possible to distinguish three periods in his life, the first extending from about the twelfth to the eighteenth year, the second from the eighteenth to the twenty-fourth year, and the third from approximately his twenty-fourth year to the baptism in the Jordan, that is, until about his thirtieth year.

We realize, therefore, that the Jesus child who in his twelfth year received the Zarathustra spirit into him appeared

to the teachers of the Israelites as someone with elementary knowledge of the nature of Jewish dogma and the nature of ancient Hebrew law, and was able to speak about these in a proper way. The ancient Hebrew world had thus come alive in the child's soul. Everything known about the Hebrews' relationship to their god—generally speaking the message the Hebrew god was believed to have given to Moses—lived in him. In general terms we may say that a great treasure of the sacred Hebrew teachings was alive in Jesus as he lived in Nazareth, following his father's trade, given up to this knowledge and letting it live in his soul.

A study of the Akashic Record shows that everything he thus knew became a source of much inner doubt and pain for him. Profoundly and deeply troubled in his soul, he felt that long ago, in very different times of human evolution, a grandiose message or revelation had come from the worlds of the spirit to the souls of such individuals as were able to receive this at the time, their inner powers being very different then. In particular Jesus came to realize that those people had been able to look up to the spiritual powers that came to revelation and that they had a very different way of understanding those revelations than his own generation. The inner powers of his generation had come down from those earlier ones; they were not directed upward in the same way, and they were all people had when they sought to understand what had once come from above. Many times he would say to himself: all this was once made known; we can still know it today, but we can no longer understand it as fully as the people did who originally received it.

As more of this was revealed to him, entering into heart and mind, like on the occasion when he stood before the Jewish teachers and expounded their own laws to them, he realized how impossible it was for the people of his time to enter into

the ancient Hebrew revelations. It seemed to him that the people, the souls, of his time were like the descendants of people who had once received great revelations but were now no longer able to reach the heights of such revelations. Once these would have entered into souls as bright flames, with tremendous warmth. Now, he had to say to himself, the glory that had been so deeply experienced in earlier times had faded and in many respects seemed empty. This is what he felt with regard to many things that now entered his soul through Inspiration.

From his twelfth to his eighteenth year his soul entered more and more deeply into the Jewish teachings, feeling that they were less and less able to meet his needs and indeed caused him increasing pain and suffering. It fills the soul with the most profound feeling of tragedy when you perceive how Jesus of Nazareth had to suffer because of what had become of the sacred teachings in a later generation. And he would often say to himself, as he sat there quietly dreaming and pondering: 'The teachings once came down from above, revelation was given to humanity; now, however, the people are no longer to be found who are able to understand them.'

This gives a general impression of the inner mood felt by Jesus of Nazareth. It was active in his reflections in the brief moments left to him during the days when he was working as a tradesman, a joiner, in Nazareth.

From his eighteenth to his twenty-fourth year he travelled in nearby regions and also further away. During those journeyman years he worked in and visited all kinds of places in Palestine and surrounding regions. Those are years when the human heart and mind are young and receptive, and he came to know many people and their way of thinking, how they lived with ancient sacred teachings, or at least as much as they were able to understand of these. We can certainly

understand how all those inner joys, sufferings and disappointments during those six years would burden the soul and impress the mind of this young man very differently from the way they would any other person. Every soul was a riddle he had to solve; in every soul something also told him it was waiting for something that was to come.

The many regions he visited included some where pagan people lived. One scene stands out in the spiritual panorama of his journeyings in Palestine and surrounding countries between his eighteenth and twenty-fourth years for it made a very profound impression on him. You see him arrive at one of the many pagan places of worship set up for pagan gods, whatever their names, in Asia, Africa and Europe. The ceremonies held there resembled those celebrated in the mysteries. There people had understood them, but in these pagan places they had become mere outer ceremony. Jesus of Nazareth came to one of these places. The priests had abandoned it and the rites were no longer held. It was a region where people lived in poverty and misery, disease and great hardship; their place of worship had been abandoned by the priests. But when Jesus of Nazareth came, they gathered around, a people plagued by disease and the miseries of poverty but above all by the thought: 'This is the place where we used to gather, where the priests performed the offering rites with us and showed us the works of the gods; now the place is empty and deserted.'

The spiritual observer here notes a particular trait in the soul of Jesus. It had already been apparent on his earlier journeys that people would always receive him in a very special way. His fundamental mood of soul was such that something gentle and kind went out to the people among whom he found himself. He went from place to place, working in joinery shops here and there, and would then sit

and talk with the others. Every word he said was received in a special way because it was spoken in a special way, full of gentleness and kindness of heart. It was not so much what he said but how he said it that poured a hint of magic into people's hearts. He would be warmly received everywhere. People did not see him the way they did other people; they saw a special radiance in his eyes and could feel something special speaking to them from his heart.

For the troubled, suffering people standing by their altar and seeing a stranger come in their midst it was as if the thought came alive in their hearts: a priest has come to us who will perform the offering rite again at the altar. Such was the mood that arose at his coming.

Yet as he stood before the congregation a moment came when he felt as if taken out of himself, with his soul in an unusual state—and he saw dreadful things. He saw entities we may call demons both by the altar and among the gathering crowd, and he realized what those demons signified. He realized that pagan sacrifices had gradually turned into something that held a magical attraction for such demons. When Jesus had reached the altar, people had streamed there but so had the demons that had gathered around the altar for earlier offering rites. For he realized that such pagan rites derived from the offerings formerly made in good places to the true gods, in so far as these could be known, and that these rites had gradually fallen into decline. The secret knowledge had become degenerate, and instead of streaming to the gods, the offerings and the priests' thoughts attracted demons, the luciferic and ahrimanic powers he now saw around him in his altered state of mind. When the people who had gathered around him saw that he was in an altered state of mind and therefore fell down, they fled from the place. The demons remained, however.

Jesus of Nazareth had become aware of the decline of the

old Jewish teachings and now even more emphatically of the decline of the pagan mysteries. Between his twelfth and eighteenth years he gained inner experience of the truth that the spiritual gifts which in the past had warmed and illuminated human hearts and minds could no longer come alive for them, and this had led to growing inner emptiness. He saw that the old, beneficial influence of the gods had been replaced by the activities of luciferic and ahrimanic demons. Because of what he saw around him in the spirit as he stood by the altar he realized that paganism had deteriorated.

Enter with heart and mind into those inner experiences, into the way he discovered what had become of the influence of the ancient gods and of human communion with those gods. Enter into the feeling that would arise in the process: humanity must be thirsting for something new; for misery must fill human souls unless something new comes to them.

The demons had taken note of him, as it were, before they followed the fleeing crowd. Jesus of Nazareth remained behind and then had a kind of vision, a vision we shall discuss more fully later on. It was as if the process of human evolution sounded forth in a special way from the spiritual heights for him. He had a vision of which I will speak in another lecture, perceiving something like a macrocosmic Our Father. He entered into what had once been proclaimed to humanity as pure Word, the pure Logos.

Jesus of Nazareth came home from this journey at about the time—this is what spiritual research tells us—when his father died. In the years that followed, from his twenty-fourth year until the time generally known as that of the baptism in the Jordan, he became acquainted with Essene teachings and the Essene community. The community had settled in a valley in Palestine. Their central seat was in an isolated position. But they had settlements everywhere, including a

kind of settlement in Nazareth. They had made it their mission to evolve a special life-style, where the inner life was specially developed but remained in harmony with outer life. This made it possible to develop a higher level of experience and enter into a form of communion with the world of the spirit. Those who reached certain levels of development rose to the highest gift the Essene community could offer to its members: a kind of union with the higher world.

The Essenes had thus evolved a schooling that developed the human soul, putting something within its reach that had generally gone beyond the reach of human souls at that stage of evolution: the old connection with the divine and spiritual world. They sought to achieve this by means of strict rules governing everyday life. They sought to achieve it by completely withdrawing from contact with the outside world. An Essene would have no personal property. Essenes came from all parts of the world, as it then was. But to be an Essene you had to give everything you owned to the Essene community, which alone had property. If someone who wanted to be an Essene had property in some place he would give his house and any land that went with it to the Essene community. They thus had properties in many different places. This was an odd principle, one that would no doubt give offence today, but it was essential if the Essenes were to achieve their aims. They developed the inner life by devoting themselves to a life of purity, giving themselves up to wisdom and also to charity based on love. It was they who did good deeds wherever they went, and their mission took them everywhere. Healing the sick was part of their ethos, but they also helped people in a material way. A principle they used, one we cannot and perhaps should not imitate in our present-day social order, was that an Essene might help and support anyone he considered to be in need, but not a member of his family.

The Essene ideal was to perfect the soul so that it could once again relate to the world of the spirit. The intention was to keep the temptations of Ahriman and Lucifer away. Another way of defining the Essene ideal would be to say: an Essene would do everything possible to keep those temptations at a distance. He would try to live in such a way that the ahrimanic tendency to drag people down into the outer world of the senses and materialism could not touch him. He also sought to live in purity of body, so that his soul would not be touched by luciferic enticements and temptations. The Essenes had developed a life-style where Lucifer and Ahriman could not touch them.

Jesus of Nazareth's growth and development had been such that he was able to relate to the Essenes in a way that would not have been possible for other people at the time unless they had actually become Essenes themselves. Jesus of Nazareth was permitted to enter the very centre of the Essene Order, the most sacred rooms where solitude reigned. He was able to do so as far as the extremely strict rules permitted, and he was able to talk with Essenes in a way in which they would normally only talk among themselves. He was able to initiate himself in the most profound rules of the Essene Order. He thus came to know how individual Essenes felt, what they sought to achieve and how they lived. Above all he came to know from experience — and this is one of the aspects that matter — the ultimate inner achievement possible in his day, which was to perfect oneself to the point where it was once again possible to be in touch with the most ancient, sacred revelation.

One day he had a significant experience as he was leaving the Essene community. Walking through the gate of the isolated Essene dwelling place, he saw two figures who appeared to be fleeing, rushing away from either side of the

gate. He had the feeling that Lucifer and Ahriman were present. The experience was repeated a number of times, always in a similar kind of vision. The Essene Order included large numbers of people. They had their settlements everywhere, as I have said, and were, in a way, respected, in spite of the fact that their social life was very different from that of other people. The cities they visited built special gates for them because Essenes were not permitted to walk through gates that had paintings on them. If they wanted to enter a town and came to a gate with an image on it they would turn round and enter the town at another point, where there were no images. There was a reason for this in the Essene doctrine of perfection, and the rule was that nothing by way of legend, myth or religious subject should ever be shown in the form of an image. The Essenes thus sought to escape the luciferic element that lived in the image-creating impulse.

Jesus of Nazareth got to know the image-free Essene gates on his travels. And again and again he would perceive Lucifer and Ahriman as invisible images on those gates where visible images were taboo. Those were significant experiences in the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

What was the outcome of the significant experiences Jesus of Nazareth had in his many conversations with Essenes who had reached a high level of perfection? Something which depressed him deeply, causing untold pain and suffering, for he had to say to himself: that is a strictly enclosed community; here present-day people seek to get in touch with the powers of the spirit, the divine and spiritual world. So even in the present age something exists within humanity that seeks to restore the connection. The question is: at what cost? At the cost of this Essene community leading a life which others could not lead. For if all people had lived the Essene life, that life would in fact have been impossible. He saw

something that weighed heavily on his heart. Where do Lucifer and Ahriman escape to when they flee from the Essene gates? They escape to places where the souls of other people are.

This, then, was the point humanity had reached. A community had to shut itself off in order to find the connection with the divine and spiritual world. And in doing so, being able to develop their own social cohesion only by shutting out other people, they condemned those others to fall more and more deeply into the element they, as the Essene community, were seeking to escape. As the Essene community reached higher levels of development, the others had to fall all the more deeply. Because the Essenes lived a life that did not allow Lucifer and Ahriman to come in contact with them, Ahriman and Lucifer were all the more powerful in their temptation and enticement of others.

This, then, was the experience Jesus of Nazareth had in connection with an esoteric order. In earlier years he had made his own everything that could be known of Jewish law in his day. When the world of demons appeared to his inner vision at a significant moment he had gained living experience of the level to which pagan rites had sunk. Now he had to learn that in his time a price had to be paid if human beings sought to come closer to the mysteries of the divine and spiritual world. He learned from bitter experience that humanity was living in an age when those who seek to connect with the divine and spiritual world have to do so by living in closed communities and at the cost of others. He realized that this was an age when human hearts cried out in longing for a connection with the divine and spiritual world that would be for all people. All this oppressed him greatly.

In this mood, he once had a conversation within the Essene community with the soul of the Buddha. The whole mode of

life in that community showed a great deal of similarity with the teachings of the Buddha. Jesus saw himself face to face with the Buddha and heard the Buddha himself say: 'The path I have shown to humanity does not offer a relationship to the divine and spiritual world for all people. I have established a doctrine which makes it necessary for people to close themselves off if they are to grasp its higher aspects and enter into them.'

It thus became clearly, blindingly apparent to Jesus of Nazareth that the Buddha had established a doctrine which presupposes that apart from the people who follow his teachings most closely there also had to be people who could not follow them thus closely. How could the Buddha and his disciples have walked the roads, bowl in hand, to collect alms if there had not been people to give them those alms? And he now heard the Buddha say that his doctrine was such that not all human beings, whatever their situation in life, could follow it.

In the three periods of life that preceded his baptism in the Jordan Jesus of Nazareth had thus perceived the potential for development that existed in his time. He did not learn this in an abstract way but from direct personal experience. He had been in closest possible touch with the teachings of ancient Jewish laws, and the light of this had shone forth in him as an Inspiration, enabling him to experience an echo of the revelations given to Moses and the prophets. He had also realized that for people with the physical constitution of his time it was no longer possible to take such things in fully. Times had changed since the day when the ancient Jewish laws were truly meaningful. He had seen how decay of the pagan mysteries had called up a world of demons. This, too, he had learned from direct personal contact, an experience in the higher world at a time when he had drawn to him not only the

people who had fallen into misery and pain because their places of worship had fallen into decay, but also the demons that gathered in the place of sacrifice, replacing the good pagan powers of old. In the six years immediately preceding his baptism in the Jordan he had also discovered that in spite of the demands of the future it was impossible for people at large to learn something of the most profound and secret knowledge possessed by the Essene Order.

A study of the Akashic Record in this field makes us realize that inner soul experience caused sufferings of a kind that no other soul on earth would have been able to suffer. It may well be that the words I have just spoken are not easily understood, especially in our present day and age. Let me bring in something else, therefore. In telling you more of the Fifth Gospel, I shall have to speak of the way those sufferings grew to enormous proportions in the time between the baptism in the Jordan and the Mystery of Golgotha. Today someone may well ask why it was altogether necessary for such a sublime soul to suffer. People have strange ideas on the subject today. If I am to speak of the full depths of suffering borne by Jesus and later the Christ I shall have to make you aware of the many misunderstandings which are liable to arise in this respect.

I have mentioned several times, also here in Berlin, that you should read the recently published book on the nature of death by Maurice Maeterlinck⁵² because it shows the kind of absurdities written by someone who has also produced good literary works. One of the absurdities is the statement that a spirit cannot suffer unless it is in a body, only a physical body being capable of suffering. Maeterlinck draws the conclusion that someone who has left his body cannot suffer in the world of the spirit. Anyone who thinks like this may easily also conclude that the Christ, having entered into the body of

Jesus of Nazareth, was not able to suffer. I shall however have to refer to the profound suffering the Christ went through in the body of Jesus of Nazareth the next time I speak to you.

It is strange, though, that someone who is of sound mind can believe that a physical body is capable of suffering. It is only the soul within the physical body that suffers, for a physical body cannot know pain and suffering. Pain and suffering are located in the soul and spiritual aspects of a body, and physical pain is caused by irregularities in the physical organism. In so far as the physical body is an organism, irregularities can occur. You may have pulled a muscle, and so on; but the physical body, the physical organization does not suffer, even if physical matter is pulled from one location to another. In the same way a sack of straw won't suffer if you throw the straw about. But there is spirit and soul in the living body, and this suffers if something is not the way it should be. The more sublime the element of spirit and soul is, the greater its capacity for suffering, and the greater its sublimity, the more is it able to suffer under impressions gained in spirit and soul.

I am telling you this so that you may try to develop a feeling for the suffering of the Zarathustra spirit in those years when it learned that the old revelations were no longer meeting the needs of the human soul. This was the infinite suffering that cannot be compared with any suffering on earth. We come across it when we study the Akashic Record for the period in the life of Jesus of Nazareth we have been considering today.

At the end of the period I spoke of last, Jesus of Nazareth had a talk with his mother. This talk then led to his next step. He went to someone with whom he already had some connection through his relationship to the Essene Order: John the Baptist. This talk with his mother, which was crucial for what followed in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, will be the subject of my next lecture.

Let me say in conclusion that you may consider anything said here about the Fifth Gospel has been presented to the best of my ability because the spiritual powers of our age demand that a number of people should now know these things. Please approach what is said here with some degree of reverence. As I have said on a number of occasions, the outer literary and cultural life in Germany went wild when something was first published about the two Jesus children. Members of the public who are outside our movement are still quite unable to tolerate these things which are brought down from the world of the spirit. All kinds of things arise then, such as wild passion and the desire to ward off something that comes as a new Gospel from the world of the spirit. Nor is there need for careless talk to reduce these things to the undignified and ridiculous level that was reached when the story of the two Jesus children was told. These things should be sacred to us.

It is far from easy to speak about these things in the present time, exactly because resistance is extremely powerful in this respect. Basically this is due to something which I have frequently mentioned: infinite laziness of human souls and minds in our age, not wanting to enter into the more exact detail provided through the science of the spirit and therefore refusing to accept that such things can be known. The present situation is that on the one hand people thirst and deep down in their souls call out for revelations from the world of the spirit, and on the other hand the conscious mind is most passionate in its rejection the moment such revelations are presented.

Think about these concluding words, and take them as an indication as to how we should approach these things when we speak of the Fifth Gospel.

LECTURE 8

Berlin, 18 November 1913

In my last lecture I spoke of events occurring in the life of Jesus of Nazareth from his twelfth year to his baptism in the Jordan as they appear in the Fifth Gospel. I spoke of the significant experience Jesus of Nazareth had in a pagan place of worship and was able to show that by reading the Akashic Record we are able to see that he had an impression of demons surrounding the altar in that place of worship. Let me briefly remind you how he fell down as if dead, as if removed to another world where he was able to perceive the divine and spiritual secrets of the ancient doctrines taught in the pagan mysteries. This enabled him to gain a living idea of what paganism had once been and what it had become in his day.

I mentioned that during that time—when he was in an altered state of consciousness at a pagan altar—he heard words proclaimed as though from the world of the spirit. These told a secret from the most ancient sacred doctrine of pagan peoples, the secret of how the human being got caught up in the material, physical world of the senses. He heard a voice coming from worlds of spirit, the voice that had spoken to the pagan prophets of old. What he heard was a kind of cosmic Our Father which says what the inner destiny of man must inevitably be, because from birth to death he is bound up with earth matter. It was later reversed to become the earthly Our Father. I was able to say the words of the cosmic Our Father for the first time when we laid the foundation stone in Dornach. I am going to read them out again, for these

words truly hold the original teachings of pagan humanity. I am going to present them in the German language to the best of my ability.

Amen.

Es walten die Übel,
Zeugen sich lösender Ichheit,
Von andern erschuldete Selbstheitsschuld,
Erlebet in dem täglichen Brote,
In dem nicht waltet der Himmel Wille,
Da der Mensch sich schied von Eurem Reiche
Und vergaß Euren Namen,
Ihr Väter in den Himmeln.

Amen.

The evils hold sway,
Witness of egoity freeing itself.
Selfhood guilt through others incurred,
Experienced in the daily bread,
Wherein the will of the heavens does not rule,
Because man separated himself from your realm,
And forgot your names,
You Fathers in the heavens.

Those were approximately the words Jesus of Nazareth heard in pagan lands—the secret of the earthly human being as it was presented in ancient sacred teachings. They hold deep secrets of human evolution. Jesus was able to hear them and they entered deeply into his soul when he was coming up to his twenty-fourth year. From then on he knew words which had once, in early times of human evolution, sounded from the world of the spirit. They seemed so great and powerful to him that he said to himself, especially in the light of

impressions gained at the derelict pagan centre of worship: 'There is no one on Earth today who can understand them.'

We have seen that in three successive periods of his young life he gained profound insight into Judaism, paganism and the Essene Order. We have seen that each in turn proved a source of deep suffering, for each time he had to say to himself: 'They might still exist if conditions among humanity today were such that they could be received; but those conditions cannot be created now.'

That was the fruit of this period in Jesus' life. The Fifth Gospel shows that before he received the Christ into himself Jesus was able to say to himself: 'In the course of evolution human beings have developed faculties that obscure the faculties of earlier times. Because of this, people are no longer able to receive the messages from the world of the spirit which the ancient Hebrews and pagans had been able to receive.'

His connection with the Essenes had forced him to say to himself that the way the Essenes were able to reunite with the world of the spirit was open only to a small band of people and not to the whole of humanity. Their road thus seemed equally impossible. Poor, poor humanity, he thought, you would not be able to understand the pagan prophets of old if they were to speak again; you would not be able to understand the Hebrew prophets of old if they were to speak again, and not all of you will be able to aim for the goal the Essenes are seeking to attain; only a small band can do this, seeking perfection at the cost of the rest of humanity.

I am putting this in a few dry words. To him it was life, a painful inner reality. With infinite compassion he shared the suffering of all humanity, compassion he had to feel in order to mature to the point where he would be able to take the Christ spirit into himself.

Before this, however, Jesus of Nazareth had an important talk with the individual known to us as his foster mother or stepmother. We know that the true biological mother of the Nathan Jesus, the child who in his twelfth year had received the Zarathustra spirit into himself, had died soon after that time, and that her soul had long since been in the world of the spirit. You also know from lectures I have given in earlier years that the father of the Solomon Jesus child had died and that the two families of the two children had become a single family in Nazareth, bringing Jesus and the other children together with the Zarathustra mother. We know that Jesus of Nazareth's father died when Jesus returned from a relatively long journey in about his twenty-fourth year, and that Jesus of Nazareth was now living alone with his foster mother. Generally speaking, this mother had needed some time to gain deep inner understanding of all the profound experiences Jesus of Nazareth had gone through. As the years went on, the souls of Jesus of Nazareth and his foster mother progressively merged one into the other, as it were.

In the time immediately after his twelfth year Jesus had to cope with his deep, painful inner experiences on his own. The other members of the family really only saw a form of dementia developing. His mother, however, found a way of gaining increasing understanding. And so it came about that in his twenty-ninth or thirtieth year Jesus of Nazareth was able to have that important talk with his mother. This had a profound effect, as we shall see.

Essentially the talk was a kind of review of everything Jesus of Nazareth had experienced from his twelfth year onwards. The Akashic Record shows how the talk went. Jesus of Nazareth first of all spoke of experiences gained between his twelfth and sixteenth or eighteenth year, when he had gradually entered into inner experience of the ancient

Hebrew teachings. He had not been able to gain such experience through anyone in his social environment, which was also true of the words he had spoken among the scholars in the temple, much to their surprise. But inspirations would always rise up in him, and he knew that they came from the world of the spirit. Hebrew teachings arose in him in such a way that he knew himself to be the possessor of those ancient Hebrew teachings, though at the time none had ears to hear them. He was on his own with those teachings and it caused him great pain to be thus alone.

His mother had much to say when he told her that even if the voices of the Hebrew prophets were to be heard again today, there would be no one to understand them. She said that there had been Hillel, for example, a great teacher of the law.⁵³ Jesus of Nazareth appreciated Hillel for what he had been and had meant for Judaism. I need not tell you of Hillel's significance; you will find it fully recognized in Judaic literature. Hillel had renewed the best virtues and teachings of ancient Judaism. He had also brought renewal to Judaism by the fact of his own personal nature, not because he was a scholar but because everything he did, and above all his feelings, will and desires and his way of dealing with people clearly showed the transformation all forms of true wisdom bring about in the human soul. Patience in dealing with others, a much praised virtue in Judaism though people no longer really understood it — Hillel was rightly acclaimed for it. The way he had come to work among the Hebrews had been unusual. He was originally from Babylon but from a family descended from the David family itself who had been transplanted there by the Jews at the time of exile. Hillel thus combined elements he had taken up in Babylon with the Hebrew nature that pulsed in his blood. A well-known legend tells of the way this influenced his inner life.

The story goes that one day Hillel was just arriving in Jerusalem where the most renowned Hebrew scholars had met for various discussions, with arguments going to and fro concerning the secrets of Hebrew teachings. Hillel did not have any money, being a poor man. It was very cold, but he nevertheless climbed up a small hill in front of the house where the discussions were held so that he might follow them through the window. He did not have the entrance money. The night was so cold that he was frozen stiff and when people found him there in the morning they had to thaw him out first. However, by going though this he had been able to participate in the discussion in his ether body. And while the others only heard abstract words flying to and fro, Hillel had perceived a world of wonderful visions that transformed his soul. There are many such stories.

Hillel was famous for his patience which was said to be inexhaustible. Once, so the story goes, someone made a bet that he would exhaust Hillel's patience completely and throw him in a rage. The bet was made, and the individual who said he would make Hillel angry, that is, exhaust his patience, agreed to go and do this. He proceeded as follows. He went and knocked on the door when Hillel was preparing the lessons for the Sabbath and was in his undergarments, calling: 'Hillel, Hillel, come to the door!' Hillel asked: 'What is it?' 'Ah, Hillel, come to the door, I have an important question to ask you.' Hillel put on his outer garment, went to the door and said: 'What do you want to ask, my son?' The man who had made the bet said: 'Hillel, I have an important question to ask you. Why do some Babylonians have such pointed heads?' Hillel replied: 'Well, you see, my son, the Babylonians have such bad midwives, and so they are born under difficult circumstances. That is why some people there have pointed heads. Go home now. Your question has been

answered.' Hillel went back inside and continued his preparations for the Sabbath.

Soon the same individual returned, again calling: 'Hillel, Hillel, come to the door!' Hillel answered: 'What is it you want, then?' 'Ah, Hillel, I have an important question and it needs to be answered immediately.' Hillel came to the door again and said to the questioner: 'What is your question?' He replied: 'Please tell me, Hillel, why are there so many people with eyes squeezed tight in Araby?' Hillel said: 'In Araby the desert stretches far, and you can only look at it if your eyes have adapted to it. That is why many people in Araby go around with their eyes squeezed tight. Go now, my son, your important question has been answered.' And Hillel went back inside.

But it was not long before the man came for a third time, again calling out: 'Hillel, Hillel, come to the door!' 'What is it?' 'Hillel, come to the door, I have an important question that needs to be answered immediately!' Hillel went to the door, and the man said: 'Ah, Hillel, please tell me: why do many people in the region around Egypt have such flat feet?' Hillel replied: 'My son, their feet are flat because they live in marshy regions. They need flat feet, like many of the birds living in marshlands, and their feet have to be adapted to the environment. That is why their feet are flat. So now, my son your question has been answered.' And again he went back inside.

A few minutes later the man came knocking on the door again, but he had grown more and more miserable with every question, and now, feeling even more miserable than before, he called: 'Hillel, come to the door!' And when Hillel came he said: 'Hillel, I made a bet that I could get you in a rage. I have tried three times, asking you questions. Please tell me what I should do so that I do not lose my bet.' But Hillel said:

‘My son, it is better for you to lose your bet than that Hillel should get in a rage. Go and pay up!’

The example is intended to show the degree of patience Hillel had achieved in the eyes or opinion of his fellow Hebrews. Jesus of Nazareth also knew the influence this man had had. But he knew not only what Hillel had done. His own inner ear had heard the great Bath Kol, that is, a voice from heaven, when the secrets once made known to the prophets had arisen within his own soul. And he therefore knew that even Hillel had perceived only a faint echo of something their Hebrew ancestors had once been able to hear. Now their descendants were no longer able to hear even the faint echo that sounded in Hillel’s voice, let alone the great Bath Kol.

All this lay heavy on his heart, and he spoke to his mother about it. He told her what he had suffered; how week after week he recognized more and more clearly the nature of the ancient sacred teachings of the Hebrews and that descendants of the ancient Hebrews no longer had the ears to hear what once had been the words of the great prophets. And now his mother understood, and was able to receive his words with deep feeling and a heart full of understanding.

He then spoke of the experience he had after his eighteenth year when he had travelled in Jewish and pagan regions. It was only now that he told his mother of how he had come to a pagan place of worship that had been abandoned by its priests. A deadly, highly infectious disease had afflicted the local people. When the people saw Jesus the news spread like wildfire that a very special individual was coming. For it was a characteristic of Jesus of Nazareth that he made an impression wherever he went, simply by the way he bore himself. The greatest sorrow of those people was that their priests had abandoned them and their altar stood unused. Now they thought Jesus of Nazareth was coming as a priest to perform

the offering service. Soon a large crowd had gathered around the derelict altar. Jesus of Nazareth was not willing to perform the offering rite. But he saw the deeper reasons for the people's suffering. He saw something that may be put as follows:

In the past, proper offering services had been performed at those altars, an outer ritual to reflect the ancient mystery revelations of those pagan countries. In ancient and most holy times those rites had been performed in the right mood by the priests, and the divine spirits with whom those pagan peoples were connected would take part in the rite. Jesus knew this from direct perception. But the offering rites had gradually fallen into decadence and been corrupted. The priests no longer had the right attitude, and the result was that instead of the good divine spirits of old, demons now reigned in those places of worship. And these demons were responsible for the people's sufferings. Jesus of Nazareth saw the demons gathered in the place. They challenged his clairvoyant eye, as it were, and he fell down as one dead. As he fell the people realized that he had not come to perform the offering at their altar. They took to their heels, and at that moment he saw how the world of the old pagan gods had changed into a world of demons and realized that these were the reason for the people's sufferings.

Inwardly he was then taken back to ancient pagan times when the true revelations of ancient sacred teachings had come down to the people. And it was on this occasion that he heard the cosmic Our Father which I read to you. Then he knew how far removed our present-day humanity, and also the humanity of his time, both pagans and Hebrews, had become from the ancient teachings and revelations. He himself had gained his knowledge of Judaism through the voice of the great Bath Kol. Paganism had come to him in a

terrible vision that was very different from any abstract communication, for it changed his soul. And so he knew that people no longer had the ears to understand what in Judaism had once sounded in the voices of the prophets, nor for what had once come down to the pagans of old. He told all this to his mother in moving words.

Then he spoke of being in the Essene community, and especially of something which would have been difficult to understand if his mother had not already developed such deep understanding. He told her how on one occasion, as he left an Essene gathering, he had seen Lucifer and Ahriman flee from the gates. He knew that Essene methods could not be used by the masses. They enabled people to unite with the world of the divine spirit, but only by rejecting Lucifer and Ahriman. And if this was done, Lucifer and Ahriman were given even greater opportunity to go to others and enmesh them more deeply in earth existence, which meant that those other people could not share in the union with the world of the spirit. In the light of this experience Jesus of Nazareth knew that the Essene way, too, could not serve the whole of humanity, being possible only for a small band of people. This was the third painful realization that came to him.

His way of telling these things was unusual. His words did not merely go across to his mother but they were like living beings that entered into her heart. As the profound meaning of these words—a meaning full of suffering but also filled with profound love for humanity—entered into her soul she felt inwardly strengthened by a power that came to her from him and she felt that her soul was changing. It was as if everything that lived in Jesus' soul had gone over into his mother's soul in the course of this talk. And it was the same also for him.

Here the Akashic Record reveals something strange. Jesus

of Nazareth spoke in such a way that the words wrested from his soul that entered into the heart and soul of his mother always carried a piece of his own I with them. We might say that his own I seemed to go across, as it were, to his mother on the wings of his words, though it did not in fact go across; it was merely that his mother felt she was given new life by those words. The strange effect of this talk was that the soul of the woman who had been the physical mother of the Nathan child came down from the world of the spirit and united with the soul of the foster mother. After that talk, the soul of the Nathan child's true mother had been received into the stepmother's soul. Virginity was reborn, as it were. The transformation of the mother's soul as another soul entered into it from worlds of the spirit is deeply moving to the spiritual observer who perceives that from then on the stepmother had become the vessel holding the mother who had been in the world of the spirit from Jesus' twelfth to thirtieth year.

For Jesus himself it was as if he had given his I to his mother, and now only physical body, ether body and astral body lived in him, as though governed by cosmic laws. The urge arose in this threefold body to go to the individual he had met in the Essene community, who had been no more an Essene than himself but had also been accepted by the community. The urge arose to go to John the Baptist. During the baptism the Christ spirit entered into the body of Jesus of Nazareth, as we know from the other four Gospels, a body that had put its I—which was bound up with that body's essential nature and all the suffering experienced in it—into the words that had gone out to his mother's soul. The threefold body received the Christ spirit into it which then took the place of the other I in those three bodies.

The Fifth Gospel, which can be found in the Akashic

Record, also tells us of the temptation which followed the conception of the Christ spirit. It is, however, presented in a somewhat different aspect there, and I shall again do my best to tell you how the scene presents itself.

Christ Jesus, as we may now call him, first faced Lucifer who put a question the manner and form of which a spiritual investigator is well able to understand. The question has to be translated into everyday words, of course, if we want to report it. It is also reported in the other Gospels, a question specifically intended to address arrogance and conceit: 'All the realms you see around you' — Lucifer was referring to the realms of the astral world in its vastness — 'shall be yours if you acknowledge me to be your lord!'

Put at the right moment, at least to a human being, the question is an impulse of deepest temptation, arousing all the forces and drives of arrogance and conceit in the human soul. It would be difficult to get a real idea of this if we were to think of the astral world in purely abstract terms. However, for someone who knows the reality of that world, the powers of the astral world, within which Lucifer was then speaking, have such an effect on the whole human constitution that all the demons of arrogance are let loose inside, and this happens with the same inevitability as hunger occurs when we have not eaten anything for four or five days. We cannot use feeble phrases such as 'do not be blinded by conceit'. They will do fine on the physical plane, but lose all validity when the whole astral world lays siege to the human constitution. Christ Jesus withstood Lucifer's temptation, however, for he could not fall into arrogance. He rebuffed Lucifer.

I would like to add something at this point. It is easy to get the sequence of events wrong when reading the Akashic Record. I believe the sequence of the 'temptation' to have been as it presented itself to me. It is possible, however, that

it was the other way round. I do not think so, but I could not say with certainty that later verification will not show the sequence to have been the other way round. Please note that in telling you things from the Akashic Record I am speaking only of what really shows itself, and when there is some uncertainty I draw your attention to the fact that this may later be amended.

When the first attack, which came from Lucifer, had been repulsed, Lucifer and Ahriman appeared together. Speaking as one, they put to Christ Jesus the question of leaping down into the deep abyss. This was addressed to human pride. A roundabout way was used to address the question to human pride, to feeling above all fear. Christ Jesus refuted the question. He could not be tempted by addressing his pride or any feeling of being above fear. Lucifer had to yield at this point and leave him alone.

Ahriman remained behind. He put the third question, and again the Fifth Gospel is in agreement with the other Gospels. It was the question of turning stones into bread. If the Christ truly had the power, he should turn stones into bread. And behold, when this question was put something remained that could not be answered. Christ Jesus was not entirely able to answer Ahriman's question, and Ahriman was not completely vanquished when he departed. This is apparent when we consider the Akashic Record of the affair. And Christ Jesus knew that a residue remained in the case of Ahriman that could not be overcome by such an inner, spiritual process but needed other things before it could be resolved.

Let me try and present this in a way that may be considered commonplace but may make it easier for us to understand each other. Ahriman rules the laws of matter. Once the lectures given in Munich this year are published,⁵⁴ people will be able to see more clearly through the whole world of

Ahriman. Ahriman is lord of the laws of matter, laws which shall indeed only become spiritual when the whole of Earth evolution has come to completion, laws that remain active and effective. Ahriman is the rightful lord of those laws. If he did not abuse his powers, extending them to something else, he would represent an element which in its own way is an absolute necessity in Earth evolution. But the words of the cosmic Our Father: 'Selfhood guilt through others incurred, Experienced in the daily bread, Wherein the will of the heavens does not rule' are true. Human beings are bound to the laws of matter while on Earth, unable to spiritualize what comes from the laws of matter in a purely inner soul process, for this needs something else, which has to come from outside. Everything to do with rich and poor has to do with this question, everything that makes us part of a social order, subjecting us to laws we shall only be able to spiritualize within the whole course of Earth evolution. And in connection with this—as I said, I am going to use a commonplace idea, but it is not meant to be so—the element we may call money will gradually govern our social order, money which makes it impossible to live directly in laws into which the spirit has entered. Everyone will know what is meant by this. And because it is impossible to make stones into bread, to have the spirit itself in matter, independent of materiality, because we have the rule of money, which is the mirror image of this impossibility, Ahriman rules supreme. Socially speaking, Ahriman lives in our money.

Ahriman's question had to remain unanswered so that it would become the ideal for Christ Jesus to pour himself into Earth evolution and gradually and slowly influence the whole further evolution of the Earth. This could not just be done at the level of the soul. The whole of future Earth evolution had to be filled with the Christ spirit! Ahriman had

the power to impose on the Christ the necessity to truly connect himself with Earth evolution. He therefore entered into Judas later on, and in him had the means of truly bringing about the death of Christ. Through death the Christ essence then entered into the Earth essence. Judas' deed was the question put by Ahriman that could not be fully answered. The luciferic temptation could be overcome inwardly, in the soul. Every human soul has to do this inwardly. Ahriman's nature is such that he will be overcome as human evolution progresses if human beings let the Christ essence enter into them more and more, identifying themselves with it.

If we consider Ahriman's question as it is shown in the Akashic Record we perceive a deep secret relating to historical evolution after the Mystery of Golgotha. This says it all. And the Christ knew he needed to unite completely with the earthly body and become truly and wholly human.

The process of becoming human was the source of three more years of suffering. For—as observation of the Fifth Gospel in the Akashic Record tells us—the Christ spirit did not immediately become one with the three bodies of Jesus of Nazareth. Considering Christ Jesus walking on Earth in the early stages we can see that the Christ spirit dwelt in the three bodies but that it was not completely within them the way the I is usually within a person. It was like a mighty aura that only lightly touched those three bodies. It was certainly possible, as happened on countless occasions, for the physical body of this Christ Jesus to be in one particular place, in solitude or with other people, when the Christ himself would be far away, moving around in the spirit. When this spirit appeared to one or other of the Apostles it would not always be in the physical body of Christ Jesus. Even then his spirit body was so powerful that his physical presence could always be felt. When the Gospels speak of the disciples being

with the Christ, the Fifth Gospel tells us that they were not always together physically, but it would be a visionary coming together enhanced to the level of physical presence.

In the early days, the Christ and the body of Jesus of Nazareth were only loosely connected, as it were. Gradually, however, they entered into closer and closer union. The Christ spirit had to enter more and more and unite with the bodies of Jesus of Nazareth. However, it was only towards the end of the three years that the Christ spirit and the bodies of Jesus of Nazareth became one, as it were, and it only happened completely in the death on the cross, or rather immediately before it. This union with the human body meant continuous and increasing suffering, however. The union of the all-embracing, universal spirit of the Christ with the body of Jesus of Nazareth involved untold suffering that was to continue for three years.

Seeing these things certainly does not make one sentimental, and the impression gained in the world of the spirit is free from all sentimentality. No other suffering is likely to compare with the process in which the Christ spirit united with the body of Jesus of Nazareth. One realizes how much a god had to suffer so that a humanity which had grown 'old might be rejuvenated again and human beings would be able to take full possession of the I.

The way it happened was like this. At the time when some disciples had already gathered around Christ Jesus he would sometimes be united with them in the physical body, though as a spiritual entity he would be invisible to anyone who could only see with physical eyes. Only the disciples knew him to be among themselves because of the way in which he had united with them.

The Akashic Record of the Fifth Gospel reveals something very strange. Christ Jesus would speak very little, especially

during the early part of the three years. He was an influence. His mere presence would have an effect. Because of the special way in which the Christ spirit was connected with the body of Jesus of Nazareth, he influenced other people in ways that otherwise did not exist in Earth evolution. The poorly understood echo of this which has come down to us is rather ineptly given the name 'miracle'. He had that influence because of the way his essential nature was made up. I shall say more on this on the next occasion. Now, however, I want to speak of something very strange.

You would see the group of disciples go about, and with many impressions gained from the Record there would be a definite feeling that the physical body of Jesus of Nazareth was among them at the time. This would most often be the case when Christ Jesus walked in solitary places with the disciples. Often, however, you would get the impression that the physical Jesus of Nazareth was far away, but the disciples felt that the Christ spirit was among them as they walked. The spirit would however be able — and this is the strange thing — to speak through each of the disciples, sometimes one of them and sometimes another. And when one or the other of them would thus be speaking, his whole physiognomy would change in the eyes of the people who had come to listen, it would be hallowed, as it were, and everything would be different. One of them would always be as if transfigured, and on each occasion it would be a different one.

All kinds of conditions had resulted in a general awareness that someone was rousing the people, spreading things about, and the leaders of the Jews at that time did not want this to happen. But they did not know who it was. He would speak first through one person and then through another. And it was this, the Akashic Record tells us, which made Judas' betrayal necessary.

I myself have to confess that the question as to why Judas' betrayal was necessary, why it was seriously necessary for someone from the group of disciples, someone who would know how to point a finger, as it were, with the Judas kiss — 'This is the one!' — always seemed a peculiar story to me until I knew that they really were quite unable to know who it was, because the Christ was able to speak through any of them. He could not be recognized even when he was among them in the body. Any of the others might be taken for him if he was speaking through them. And every one of them would speak! The Jews were unable to apprehend him until someone who knew when Christ Jesus would actually be among them in the body would tell them: 'This is the one!'

It really was a phenomenon of a very peculiar kind at that time, something that happened at the focus, the centre of gravity, of Earth evolution. I have sometimes said in a more theoretical way that humanity goes through a descent and an ascent, and that the Christ impulse came to realization at the focal point of human evolution. There we get an impression of the tremendous significance of the Christ impulse in Earth evolution. To gain that impression we have to establish the nature of this impulse in relation to the whole of Earth evolution. I do not think that a simple narrative of the events as they present themselves to inner vision will have less of an effect on hearts and minds. I do not think that anything that has been said concerning the crucial significance of the Christ impulse will be less impressive because we realize what Jesus of Nazareth went through in the years when Zarathustra was in his body; how he gained in stature through suffering and how good will arose from such suffering, so that the Zarathustra-I was in the words said in the conversation, and with those words departed from itself.

If we then learn how Jesus became free of himself in the

talk with his mother, and how the Christ spirit entered into him; how the Christ spirit struggled with Ahriman and Lucifer, and how everything that followed arose from his suffering—I think these details as they are presented are entirely in accord with the major outlines provided through the science of the spirit. It is difficult to speak without reservation of these things today, but it must be considered a real obligation to offer to individual souls something that will become more and more necessary for inner development in times to come. I would therefore ask you once more to treat these things with reverence and keep them in your hearts.

LECTURE 9

Berlin, 6 January 1914

Particular importance clearly attaches to everything that happened after the talk Jesus of Nazareth had with his mother. I have shown you how this presents itself in the Fifth Gospel, as I would like to call it. Now, to begin with I would like to draw attention—I hope this may be done within a close group like this—to what happened immediately after the talk, that is, between it and the baptism by John in the Jordan. I am going to present the facts as they come to direct intuitive perception. They will be given without further explanation, so that everyone can have their own thoughts on the subject.

We have seen that after the period from Jesus of Nazareth's twelfth to twenty-ninth or thirtieth year—some details of this have been given—Jesus had a talk with the woman who was his stepmother or foster mother, the physical mother of the Solomon child. The fruits of his experiences during those years entered with such energy into the words Jesus spoke that a tremendous power went over into his mother's soul with them. The power was such that the soul of the natural mother of the Nathan child was able to descend from the world of the spirit where she had been from about the twelfth year of that child, enter into the soul of the foster mother and fill it with her spirit. And for Jesus of Nazareth himself the outcome was that the Zarathustra-I left him, as it were, with those words. The being who now set out on the road to the baptism by John in the Jordan was essentially the Nathan Jesus with the three outer bodies constituted in the way we

have discussed, without the Zarathustra-I but with the effects of that I, so that everything the Zarathustra-I had been able to pour into those three outer bodies was indeed present within them.

The being who then was Jesus of Nazareth followed a vague cosmic urge, as it were—vague to him but quite specific as far as the cosmos was concerned—and went to the Jordan to be baptized by John. You will understand why he cannot be called a human being in the ordinary way. For the Zarathustra-I that had filled this being from his twelfth year had now gone. It merely lived on in its effects.

When this Jesus of Nazareth being set out to go to John the Baptist, the Fifth Gospel tells us, he first of all met two Essenes. He had often talked to them on the occasions I have described to you. He did not recognize them immediately, because the Zarathustra-I was no longer in him. They recognized him, however, for the physiognomy which had developed when the bodies were holding the Zarathustra-I had not changed, at least not to outward appearance. The two Essenes addressed him, saying: 'Where are you going?' Jesus of Nazareth replied: 'To a place which souls like yours do not wish to see, where humanity's pain can feel the rays of the forgotten light!'

The two Essenes did not understand those words. Realizing that he failed to recognize them they said: 'Jesus of Nazareth, don't you recognize us?' His answer was: 'You are like stray lambs, and I shall have to be the shepherd from whom you have gone astray. If you truly know me you will soon run away from me again. It was a long time ago that you ran away from me!' The Essenes did not know what to make of him, for it seemed impossible to them that such words could come from a human soul. They looked at him in uncertainty. He went on to say, however: Why do you clothe

yourself in forms that deceive? Why is there a fire burning within you that has not been kindled in my Father's house? You bear the mark of the tempter; he has made your wool glitter and shine with his fire. The hairs of that wool pierce my eyes. You lost lambs, the tempter has filled your souls with arrogance; you met him in your flight.'

When he had said those words, one of the Essenes asked: 'Did we not show the tempter the door? He no longer has any part in us.' Jesus of Nazareth replied: 'You did show him the door, but he went away to other people. Now he is grinning at you from the souls of those other people all around you! Did you think to elevate yourselves by bringing down others? You consider yourselves to be at a high level; yet this is not because you have reached a high level but because you have reduced others to a low level. That is why they are lower. You have remained where you were, and you only see yourselves higher than they are.' The Essenes were taken aback. At that moment, however, Jesus of Nazareth vanished from view. They were no longer able to see him.

Their eyes were as if blinded for a while; then they felt the urge to look into the far distance. There they saw something like a mirage: the countenance of him who had just stood before them had become enlarged to giant proportions. And from this countenance came words that entered deeply into their souls: 'Vain are your efforts, for your hearts are empty because you have allowed the spirit to enter into you who deceptively hides pride within the mantle of humility!' They stood for a while as if numbed by the countenance before them and the words it had spoken. Then the mirage vanished, and Jesus of Nazareth was no longer with them. They looked around. He had walked on and they saw him a long way off. The two Essenes went home and never told anyone what they had seen. They kept silence until they died.

I am giving these facts just as the Akashic Record shows them, and everyone can have their own thoughts about them. This is important at the present moment, for the Fifth Gospel may well emerge in greater detail as time goes on, and any theoretical interpretation would merely interfere with what is to come.

Jesus of Nazareth continued on his way to the river Jordan for a while. He met someone who may be said to have been in deepest inner despair. Jesus of Nazareth said: 'To what pass has your soul brought you? I saw you aeons ago, and you were different then.' The desperate man said: 'I was a high dignitary; I had come far in life. I went from holding one office to the next in the human order of affairs, and it went fast. Seeing others lag behind in their attainment to dignity while I myself was rising higher and higher I often said to myself: you must be a rare individual; your great virtues are raising you above all others! I was enjoying good fortune and fully appreciated this.' Those were the words of the desperate man. He then went on to say: 'Then something appeared to me as if in a dream as I was asleep. It was as if a question was put to me in my dream, and I immediately knew that I felt shame before this question. For the question put to me was: who made you so great? And a spirit stood before me in my dream who said: I have raised you high, but this means that you are mine! And I felt ashamed; for I had thought I owed my advancement entirely to my own merits and talents. And then another spirit came—I could feel the shame I experienced in my dream—and this spirit said that my rise was not due to any merit of my own. And I felt so ashamed in my dream that I had to flee. I left all my offices and titles behind and am now wandering aimlessly, seeking but not knowing what it is I seek.' Those were the words of the desperate man. And as he spoke that spirit appeared again, standing between

him and Jesus of Nazareth, and the figure of the spirit blocked out the figure of Jesus. The desperate man felt that this spirit had something to do with the luciferic element. And Jesus of Nazareth vanished while the spirit still stood between them, and then the spirit, too, vanished. The desperate man then saw that Jesus of Nazareth had gone past him and was some distance away. He resumed his aimless wanderings.

Jesus of Nazareth then met a leper. Jesus of Nazareth asked: 'To what pass has your soul brought you? I saw you aeons ago, and you were different then.' The man said: 'People cast me out because of my disease! No one wanted to have anything to do with me, and I did not know how to provide myself with the essentials of life. I wandered about aimlessly in my pain and came to a wood. Something like a luminous tree stood in the distance and drew me to itself. I could do no other but go to that tree, as if driven. It then appeared as if something like a skeleton emerged from the luminosity of the tree. And I knew: death itself stood before me. Death said: "I am you! I feed on you." And I was afraid. But death said: "Why are you afraid? Did you not always love me?" But I knew I had never loved death. And as death said the words "Why are you afraid? Did you not always love me?" it changed into a beautiful archangel. He then vanished and I fell into a deep sleep. I did not wake until morning and found myself sleeping by the tree. From then on my leprosy has grown worse and worse.' When he had told his story, the spirit he had seen by the tree stood between him and Jesus of Nazareth and changed into an entity he knew to be Ahriman or something ahrimanic. As he was still looking, the entity disappeared and so did Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus had in fact been walking on for some while. And the leper had to go on his way.

After these three encounters Jesus of Nazareth came to the

River Jordan. Let me mention again that the baptism by John was followed by the event known as the temptation which is also described in the other Gospels. The form the temptation took was that Christ Jesus did not face one spiritual entity but that the whole went in three stages, as it were.

First Christ Jesus faced an entity which was close to him because he had seen it when the desperate man had come to him. Because of that encounter he was able to sense that it was Lucifer. This is a highly significant combination of circumstances. And then the temptation by Lucifer happened which is put in words as: 'I shall give you all the realms of the world and their glory if you recognize me as your lord'. The Lucifer temptation was repulsed.

For the second attack Lucifer returned but also the spirit who had stood between Jesus of Nazareth and the leper, the spirit he had felt to be Ahriman. There followed the temptation which in the other Gospels is given in the words: cast yourself down; nothing shall happen to you if you are the Son of God. This temptation, in which Lucifer could be cancelled out by opposing him with Ahriman and vice versa, was also repulsed.

The third temptation came from Ahriman only. Christ Jesus was asked to make stones into bread, and this temptation was not completely repulsed at the time. And because Ahriman was not completely vanquished, later events then took the course they did, as we shall hear. Because of this, Ahriman was able to work through Judas.

You see, an akashic intuition has arisen concerning a moment which we have to consider to have been tremendously important in the whole Christ Jesus evolution and therefore in Earth evolution. It was as if the way in which Earth evolution is connected with the luciferic and ahrimanic element had to be gone through once again. Those were the

events that took place between the talk Jesus of Nazareth had with his foster mother and the baptism by John in the Jordan. The Nathan Jesus, in whom the Zarathustra-I had been active for eighteen years, had been prepared by the events I have described to take the Christ spirit into him. It is extraordinarily important that the point thus reached presents itself to us in the right way if we are to understand this aspect of human evolution on Earth. This is why I have tried to bring in a number of insights gained through occult research, so that you may understand this aspect of our human evolution on Earth.

Perhaps it will be possible at some later date to speak here also about the things I have spoken of in Leipzig,⁵⁵ where I attempted to make a connection between the Christ event and the Parsifal event. Today I'll merely touch on this in connection with the facts given in the Fifth Gospel, hoping to discuss this further the next time we meet. Let me point out that the meaning and the whole course of human evolution comes to expression in all kinds of ways within that evolution. They are imprinted on it, as it were, so that evolving humanity can gain some insight into the course of events, providing they are seen in the right light. I am not going to discuss the connection between the Parsifal idea and the Christ evolution here, but rather something that was inherent in everything I said in Leipzig.

In the first place we have to consider how Parsifal, who was several centuries after the Mystery of Golgotha, presents himself to us. He marks an important step in the working of the Christ event in a human soul.

Parsifal was the son of a knight-errant and the lady Herzeleide. The knight went away even before Parsifal was born. His mother suffered pain and was in torment even before he was born. She wanted to protect her son

from everything connected with knightly virtues and from developing one's powers by being a knight. She brought him up in such a way that he knew nothing of the outside world and of what it had to offer. Parsifal was to grow up in the solitude of nature, knowing only what nature could teach. He was to know nothing of what normally goes on among knights and among other people. The story even says that he knew nothing of the religious ideas that existed in the world. His mother only told him that there is a God who is behind everything. He wanted to serve God. But he knew no more than this: that he might serve God. Everything else was withheld from him. However, the urge to be a knight was so powerful that he was driven to leave his mother one day and go out into the world, to find what the urge demanded. After many wanderings he came to the Grail castle. The best description of what happened there—best in relation to what we can gather from the spiritual record—was given by Chrétien de Troyes,⁵⁶ who was also a source for Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parsifal*.⁵⁷ We learn that in his wanderings Parsifal once came to a wooded region by the seashore where two men were fishing. At his request they showed him the way to the castle of the Fisher King. He reached the castle, entered, and saw a weak, sick man lying on a couch. The man gave him a sword. It was his niece's sword. Parsifal also saw a squire enter with a lance from which blood was dripping onto the squire's hands. Then a maiden carrying a golden chalice entered, and the light that shone from the chalice was stronger than all other lights in the hall. A meal was served. Each time another course was served, the chalice would be carried past Parsifal into the next room where the Fisher King's father would be given nourishment from it.

All this had seemed something to marvel at to Parsifal, but at an earlier stage in his wanderings a knight had advised him

not to ask many questions. So he did not ask about the things he saw, intending to ask only the next morning. Yet when he woke the next morning the castle was empty. He called out but no one came. He thought the knights had gone hunting and wanted to follow them. In the castle yard he found his horse saddled and ready. He rode away and had to be quick to get across the drawbridge; his horse actually had to take a leap, for the drawbridge was pulled up right behind them. He saw no sign of the knights, however.

We know, of course, what this was about: Parsifal had not asked the question. The most wondrous thing appeared before him and he did not ask. He had to be told again and again that it was part of his mission to ask about the wondrous things he encountered. He did not ask, and he was made to realize that by not asking he had caused a kind of ill-fate.

We see an individual brought up away from the culture of the outside world, not meant to know anything of that culture, who was intended to ask about the mysteries of the Grail when these came before him, but ask in a virginal way, as a soul not influenced by the usual culture. Why was he to ask in that way? I have suggested on a number of occasions that the Christ impulse brought about a deed but that humanity was not immediately able to understand what had happened. On the one hand, therefore, the fact that the Christ had flowed into the Earth's aura had had a continuous influence, independent of what people might think and dispute in all kinds of theological dogmas. For the Christ impulse continued to work! And the western world took shape under the influence of this Christ impulse which may be said to have worked on human souls at a deep-down level and behind the whole of historical evolution. If it had only been able to take effect in so far as people had understood it and fought over it in their disputes, it could not have contributed much to human

evolution. But at the time of Parsifal an important moment came when the Christ impulse had to be taken one step further.

Parsifal was therefore not meant to learn of the sacrifice made on Golgotha and what the Apostles, the Church Fathers and others later taught in different theological streams. He was not meant to know how knights put themselves and their virtues at the service of the Christ. He was only meant to be in touch with the Christ impulse deep down in his soul to the extent that was possible in his time. That relationship would have been clouded if he had learned what was being taught about the Christ. The Christ impulse worked on not in what people did or said but in the soul's experience when it is wholly given up to its supersensible influence. That was to have been the case with Parsifal. External teachings always belong to the world of the senses. The Christ impulse worked at a level that was beyond the senses and was meant to influence Parsifal's soul at that level. The one and only thing he was meant to do was to ask his question in the place where the significance of the Christ impulse could be revealed — at the Grail. His question was to be induced not by any of the reverence which the knights believed they owed to Christ, nor by any of the reverence which the theologians believed they owed to Christ, but simply by the fact that his soul was virginal, though in accord with the time in which he lived. He was to ask what the Grail might reveal, and indeed what the Christ event could mean to humanity. He was meant to ask! Let us hold on to this.

Someone else was not meant to ask. The story is well known. It was the undoing of the young man at Sais⁵⁸ that he felt compelled to ask, doing what he was not supposed to do, and wanting to see the image of Isis unveiled. He was the 'Parsifal' of the time before the Mystery of Golgotha. At that

time, however, the young man was told: 'Take care lest your soul is unprepared when it is revealed what lies behind the veil!' Parsifal is 'the young man of Sais' after the Mystery of Golgotha. He was not to receive any special preparation but was to be guided to the Grail with his soul still virginal. He failed to do the most important thing, for he did not ask, he did not seek to have the mystery unveiled to his soul. That is how times change in human evolution.

We know—to begin with these things have to be referred to in an abstract way; but we shall be able to go into more detail later—that this concerns the unveiling of the Isis mystery. Let us recall the image the ancients had of Isis and the Horus child, the mystery of the connection between Isis and Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris. That is putting it in an abstract way, however. The young man at Sais was not sufficiently mature to have the mystery revealed. When Parsifal rode away from the castle, having failed to ask about the mysteries of the Grail, a woman, a bride mourning her newly dead bridegroom who was lying across her knees, was among the first people he met. That is the image of the mother mourning her son, the *pietà* theme which is so often seen. It provides a first hint of what Parsifal would have learned if he had asked his question. He would have known the connection between Isis and Horus in its new form, the connection between the mother and the Son of Man. And he should have asked the question!

Here we see a profound indication of progress made in the course of human evolution. Something that must not happen at the time before the Mystery of Golgotha ought to happen after that Mystery, for humanity has progressed in the meantime. The soul of humanity had changed, as it were.

As I said, we shall discuss all these things more fully later on. Here I am merely giving a brief indication. But they are

only of real value to us if we make them truly fruitful. The fruit to be gained from the Parsifal Mystery to which the image of the young man at Sais has been added is that we learn to ask questions in a way that is in accord with our own time. Learning to ask questions is to follow the upward stream in human evolution.

After the Mystery of Golgotha we have essentially two streams in human evolution, one that holds the Christ impulse and gradually takes us to the heights of the spirit, and one that represents a continuation of the descent, as it were, taking us into materialism. At the present time the two streams are confused to the extent that by far the greater part of our civilization is tainted by the materialistic stream. We must therefore look without bias or prejudice at everything the science of the spirit is able to tell us of the Christ impulse and everything connected with it so that we may realize that the soul needs inner development in the spirit in order to balance an outside world that is inevitably getting more and more materialistic. We must learn from elements such as those which have been presented that we have to learn to ask questions.

We must learn to ask questions in the spiritual stream. In the materialistic stream everything is designed to stop people asking questions. Let us consider the two side by side to get a clear picture of their nature. On the one hand we have people who are materialists, which does not mean they may not follow various spiritual dogmas, recognizing the world of the spirit in words and in theory. But that is not what matters. What matters is that our souls enter wholly into the spiritual stream. Those who are in the materialistic stream may be said to be people who do not ask questions, for they know it all. It is the characteristic feature of materialism that such people know everything and do not wish to ask questions. Even the

very young know everything today and do not ask questions. It is felt that people are free, with their value as individuals enhanced, if they can always form their own opinion. The problem is, how does this personal opinion develop? We grow into being part of the world. With the first words we hear as children we take something in. We continue to grow, taking in more and more, and do not realize how we take things in. Our karma has made us such as we are, and because of this we like some things more and others less. We grow up, forming our opinions, and reach the age of twenty-five which as far as forming opinions goes is already quite respectable in the eyes of some critics. We feel our judgement to be mature, believing it to be our own. Yet anyone who is able to see into souls knows that it is based on nothing more than the outside life in which we find ourselves, which has become concentrated in our own soul. We may even get into conflict by believing our own judgement to indicate one thing or another for us. Believing ourselves to be independent we become all the more slavishly dependent on our own inner life. We form opinions but are completely unable to ask questions.

We only learn to ask questions when we are able to develop the inner balance that allows reverence and devotion to be retained when it comes to the sacred spheres of life, and when we are able to have an element in us that always seeks to remain independent of even our own judgement in relation to anything that comes to us from those spheres. We only learn to ask questions by being able to develop an expectant mood, enabling life to reveal something to us; by being able to wait; by feeling some hesitation in applying our own judgement especially in relation to anything that should flow in a sacred way from the sacred spheres of existence; by not judging but asking questions, not only of people who may be able to tell

us, but above all of the world of the spirit. We should face that world not with our opinions but with our questions, indeed in a questioning mood and attitude.

Try to get a really clear understanding through meditation on the difference between meeting the spiritual aspects of life with opinions and meeting them with questions. You have to experience the radical difference between the two. This difference is connected with an element in our present time that needs to be given special attention. Our spiritual stream can only grow and develop if we learn to see the difference between questions and opinions. We do, of course, have to use our judgement in daily life, and I therefore did not say that we have to be cautious about using our judgement in all situations. No, it is in relation to the deeper secrets of the world that we must learn to develop an expectant, questioning mood. Our spiritual movement will progress through anything that recognizes and encourages that mood in a relatively large part of the human race. It will be inhibited by anything that goes against the spiritual stream by way of unconsidered opinions. If at truly solemn moments in life we seek to reflect what we may gain from a story such as the legend of Parsifal who was meant to ask questions when he went to the Grail castle, that story can become an example to us in our movement. And many other things will become clear in connection with this.

Looking back once more to human evolution before the Mystery of Golgotha, we have to say: at that time the human soul had a heritage that came from the time when it descended from heights of spirit to its incarnations on Earth. It preserved this heritage from one incarnation to the next. People thus had an ancient clairvoyance in those days that gradually died away. As incarnation followed incarnation the old clairvoyance was getting less and less. That ancient clairvoyance was

connected with the nature of the human being in the external world; our external perceptions made with eyes and ears are also connected with this. Before the Mystery of Golgotha people were like children: they learned to walk and to talk, and while the elementary powers of ancient clairvoyance still existed they also learned to see clairvoyantly. They learned this like something that came to them as they entered into relationship with other people, just as they learned to speak because of the way the larynx is organized. They did not stop at learning to speak, however, but progressed to elementary clairvoyance. This was bound to the human organization as it then was in the physical world, with clairvoyance inevitably assuming the character of the human organization. A debauchee could not bring a pure nature into his clairvoyance; a pure individual was able to bring purity to his clairvoyance. That is only natural, for clairvoyance was connected with the immediate human organization.

Because of this it was important that the secret of the connection between the world of the spirit and the physical Earth world which had existed before Christ Jesus came to Earth should not be revealed to human beings who had the ordinary human organization of that time. That organization had to be transformed and become mature first. It would have been wrong for the young man at Sais to see the image of Isis in his unprepared state.

The ancient clairvoyance had vanished by the fourth post-Atlantean age, which is when the Mystery of Golgotha took place. The human soul was then organized differently, so that the world of the spirit must remain closed to it unless it felt the urge to ask questions. The powers that were harmful to the human soul in the old times cannot touch it now if the question is put as to the secret of the Grail. This secret concerns the element that had flowed into the Earth's aura

since the Mystery of Golgotha. What had not flowed into it before, and now has flowed into the Earth's aura as the secret of the Grail, would remain forever unknown unless we ask. We must ask questions, which means that we must feel the urge to let an element that already exists in the soul truly develop.

Before the Mystery of Golgotha that element was not in human souls because the Christ was not present in the Earth's aura. At that time someone who beheld the image of Isis in the right spirit and fathomed its secret could have done so because of such ancient clairvoyant powers as remained, making use of all that was in him as his human nature.

Since the Mystery of Golgotha someone who begins to ask questions will be able find the right way of doing so, and will also get the right feeling for the new Isis Mystery. What matters today, then, is to ask the right questions, that is, to develop the right attitude to the spiritual view of the world which can now be presented. Someone who merely wants to judge may read all the books and lecture courses without learning anything apart from mere words. Someone who approaches in a questing mood will learn far more than can be found in the words. He will find that those words bear fruit in the powers of growth that lie in his own soul. Anything we are told out of the spirit must become real inner experience. This is what matters.

We are especially reminded of this when presented with the significant events that occurred between the talk Jesus of Nazareth had with his mother and the baptism by John in the Jordan. These things can only have meaning for us if we meet them with a questioning mind, being alive with the need to know what was happening at the important watershed moment which separates the time before the Mystery of Golgotha from the time after the Mystery of Golgotha. It would be best

to let these things live in your soul. Essentially everything they are meant to tell us is to be found in the narrative itself. We do not need to add a great deal of interpretation.

I wanted to make this general remark especially in connection with this part of the Fifth Gospel, indicating that in our present time it is once again important to understand the Parsifal mood. Richard Wagner has tried to embody it in music and drama.⁵⁹ I do not wish to enter into the great dispute in the world at large concerning his *Parsifal*. The science of the spirit does not enter into partisanship. Far be it from us, therefore, to become embroiled in the dispute between those who wish to keep Wagner's *Parsifal*, the most significant document of the new Parsifal mood that exists today, in Bayreuth where it will have a certain protection, and those who want to hand it over to Klingsor's realm. Basically, the latter is already happening. I have been concerned to show that the Parsifal mood has to be present as the Christ impulse continues to work at a time when human powers of judgment, our higher consciousness, do not yet enter into this, but when the spiritual approach to life should show the need for this mood more and more clearly and the need for many other things of which we shall speak in the winter months that lie ahead.

LECTURE 10

Berlin, 13 January 1914

It seems to me that by considering the Fifth Gospel, as I call it, we may have been able to gain a clearer picture of human evolution on Earth and the influence of the Mystery of Golgotha. On earlier occasions we used a number of approaches to gain an idea of what happened especially at the baptism by John in the Jordan. We also considered how the Christ spirit united with the individual we call Jesus of Nazareth, using this aspect in particular to establish the vital importance of the Golgotha event for human evolution.

In these lectures we have been considering the history of Jesus of Nazareth's younger years as it can be established by means of spiritual science. We have seen how the individual we call Jesus of Nazareth came to John the Baptist when the time had come for the Christ spirit to take possession. Let us now take everything we have gained from this very real insight into the Fifth Gospel and seek better understanding of events connected with the Mystery of Golgotha. Let us today turn the inner eye to the individual who is usually called the 'forerunner'—John the Baptist, and some of the things connected with his mission.

To understand John the Baptist and the relationship between him and Christ Jesus which is also mentioned in other Gospels, especially the Gospel of John, we need to consider John's spiritual background. It goes without saying that this was the world of the ancient Hebrew culture. Let us consider its particular nature.

Ancient Hebrew culture did have a special mission in human evolution. Let us remember that in the terms of our spiritual science we consider Earth evolution to have followed out of the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions, and that during Earth evolution the human I has been added to the physical, ether and astral bodies which developed in those earlier stages of evolution. The I could not, of course, be there in an instant; it takes the whole of Earth evolution to develop it to the point where humanity can evolve in accord with the progress of eternity.

If we take this view, the Earth must indeed be seen as the arena for development of the human I within the cosmos. In ancient Hebrew teaching, Yahveh or Jehovah was the spirit in the higher hierarchies under whose influence man put himself. If we consider the biblical story of creation—I tried to show the key situations in a course of lectures on Genesis⁶⁰ in Munich in 1910—it shows very clearly that seven spirits from the higher hierarchies developed until Yahveh or Jehovah emerged from among them. We might say that just as the human organism as a whole is organized with reference to the head, so the seven Elohim became organized and came to special development in one of them, Yahveh or Jehovah, who became the spirit to govern Earth evolution. This was recognized in ancient Hebrew teaching. Yahveh, or Jehovah, was the one among the higher hierarchies to whom human beings had to relate in order to develop the I. The development of ancient Judaism was indeed a special stage in the evolution of the human I. Within that Hebrew culture, the influence of Yahveh or Jehovah was felt to be such that the I could gradually awaken because of the way people felt towards that spirit.

What was the nature of this Yahveh or Jehovah? It is a spirit we have to see as closely bound up with Earth

evolution. It was the lord, the regent, of Earth evolution, as it were, or, better, the figure whom the Hebrews of old saw to be such. We can see that the whole of ancient Judaism was organized in such a way that Yahveh or Jehovah would be seen as the god of the Earth. In the thinking of the ancient Hebrews, the Earth would be governed by such a divine spirit in every aspect, and anyone wanting to be aware of his true relationship to the universe, through the Earth, would have to consider first and foremost the Earth god Yahveh or Jehovah.

Right at the beginning of the book of Genesis, we are told that Yahveh made man from the Earth's substance. In the religious systems that existed all around the ancient Hebrew people, the elements in which their gods were venerated were always something that did not come from the Earth but came in from outside—this can be verified in detail. The ancient Hebrews saw the elements in which their god Yahveh or Jehovah was to be venerated in everything that happened on the Earth through the Earth. Some of the other nations looked up to the starry heavens, to the stars and their movements. Theirs was an astral religion. Others again noted how the elements came to expression in lightning and thunder. They would ask themselves: how do the divine spirits proclaim themselves in the language of lightning and thunder, cloud formations and so on?

The nations living in the areas around the Hebrew people thus looked for their religious symbols in the stars and in the atmosphere above the Earth; these were there to tell them how they related to something that was beyond this world. Today, not enough attention is given to the fact that it was characteristic of the ancient Hebrews to see themselves as entirely connected with the Earth, and indeed with elements coming from inside the Earth. This connection with elements coming from the Earth itself is shown in detail. We are told

that they would follow a cloud or a pillar of fire on their journeys. They 'followed a pillar of fire' of the kind that could be brought about by means of Earth forces.⁶¹

In some volcanic parts of Italy you only have to ignite a piece of paper and pass it along fissures in the ground and columns of smoke will immediately arise because the Earth forces follow the warm air. We have to visualize the pillar of fire that the Jews were following as created by inner Earth forces. Again, the pillar of water or mist should not be imagined as due to atmospheric forces, but as generated from the desert below. The signs for Yahveh or Jehovah in ancient Hebrew times were connected with Earth processes. And we have to look for the origin of the Flood in the forces that pulse in the Earth, caused not by cosmic conditions from outside but by earthly conditions.

The ancient Hebrews' protest against all surrounding nations took the form of giving recognition to the god of the Earth. They felt that everything coming from above, coming to the Earth from outside, had not advanced to the task of creating the Earth and had remained at the Moon stage of creation. It all had to do with the influence of the 'serpent' on Earth, the influence of Lucifer who had remained at the Moon stage of evolution. We can characterize the protest of the ancient Hebrews against surrounding religions by saying that the others felt: to rise to the divine we have to leave the Earth aside and go out into the cosmos; we must venerate all that is brought about in the cosmos or comes into the Earth's atmosphere from the cosmos. The ancient Hebrews would say, however: we do not venerate anything coming from above, being brought about by forces outside the Earth. The true god is with the Earth!

This is not always fully recognized when words like 'god' or 'spirit' are used today and people looking back to old times

feel that these words must have had the same meaning in antiquity. Today, under the influence of almost two thousand years of Christian evolution, western humanity is, quite rightly, looking upwards again. But it would be wrong to think that the ancient Hebrews did the same. They would say: the mission Yahveh intended for the Earth has been disrupted by the god who came from outside, the god whose symbol is the serpent in Paradise.

The Jews had, of course, adopted much from neighbouring nations and we can understand why they in particular adopted so much. Their religion was really the most awkward and tricky in the whole of antiquity, which people find difficult to believe today. For them, Yahveh or Jehovah was an Earth god in the sense I have just shown, which, of course, is not to say that Yahveh, though an Earth god, did not also act within the Moon forces of the Earth—as I have shown in *Occult Science*—and may also be seen as a Moon god. This is not what matters to us at the moment, however. The most exposed religion among peoples on Earth at the time was the faith of the ancient Jews. Even today, people do not think it is possible to look to the centre of the Earth rather than up into the heavens when speaking of the god we turn to first and who to us is the highest. The Jews, too, felt this need to look up, especially when seeing that all the nations around them were venerating something that came from outside the Earth.

The big difference between occult Jewish teaching and anything outside it was that this teaching made it very clear: the forces we have to consider come from the Earth, even if they go as far as the Moon, and it is a temptation to look to other forces. Those other forces come to expression in concentrated form in the symbol of the serpent. The ancient Hebrews thus taught some of the things we find again today in our spiritual scientific approach.

For the reasons I have just given, however, the ancient Hebrews were increasingly losing touch with the old teaching, especially at the time when the Mystery of Golgotha was approaching. Then came a man who felt it was his mission to emphasize the special quality of the Jewish people. This was John the Baptist. Above all he felt called upon to point out where the strength of the Jewish people lay—which is something we have just been considering. Seeing the way Jewish religion was going all around him, he clothed his feelings in tremendous, significant words. He would say, for instance: ‘You call yourselves “Abraham’s children”. If you were, you ought to know that your god, who was the god of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the god Yahveh or Jehovah, is connected with the Earth and gave expression to this by forming the first human being from a clod of Earth. But in your hearts you are no longer Abraham’s children. You are the generation who look up to the powers that are above. You have fallen victim to something that rightly bears the symbol of the serpent. You are a generation of vipers!’

It is deeply significant, in many different ways, that John the Baptist used these words. I have spoken of this before from different points of view.⁶² The words as we read them in the Bible—what do they really mean? If only people would admit more freely to themselves that they read rather badly today! How do people generally take the words ‘you generation of vipers’ that we read in the Bible?⁶³ They imagine that John was roundly abusing the people when he called them a ‘generation of vipers’. That certainly would not have been polite. Nor would it serve any real purpose to start by abusing people when you want to speak to their hearts and souls. We do not really get a true picture of John if we say: that was his divine wrath! Anyone can be abusive. But that is not the point. The whole significance of what John wanted to draw

to the attention of the people around him was: 'You no longer know the nature of Yahveh's mission. Addressing yourselves to forces outside the Earth rather than forces inside the Earth you are not Abraham's children, for you venerate what the serpent has brought. This makes you the offspring of the people around you who may venerate their gods under all kinds of names but are actually referring to the element made known to you as the "serpent".'

Let us enter into the heart and mind of John the Baptist. He no doubt had his reasons for addressing people in this way. At this point I am not speaking on the basis of the Fifth Gospel—for there we have not yet reached the figure of John the Baptist—but on the basis of what can be realized in other ways. John the Baptist no doubt had his reasons for addressing the people who came to him by the river Jordan as if he believed them to have adopted pagan customs. Indeed even the name he was given by those who came meant something he did not wish to hear at that particular time.

The ancient teachings in the regions where John the Baptist said those words were more or less as follows: 'In the beginnings of human evolution a time came when man and the higher animals received from the Yahveh-origin the ability to breathe air; but because of Lucifer's deed the breathing of air became bad. Only the fishes—animals that did not breathe air—remained good, for they continued at the original stage of evolution, as it were.' And so people would come to the Jordan—as Jews still do today in some areas—and at a certain time of the year they would stand at the water's edge and shake out their garments in the belief that they were casting their sins to the innocent fishes which would then have to bear them. Customs like these were connected with the surrounding pagan beliefs. John saw them in the people of whom he said: 'You know more of the

serpent than of Yahveh. You are therefore wrong to call yourselves children of Abraham, the man destined to be your forefather. I tell you: the god of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob might go back to his original mission and from these stones — meaning from the Earth — create a race of people who would understand him better than you do!

The original of this passage, where the Bible says, 'From these stones God has the power to raise up children unto Abraham', contains many words with double meaning; they are deliberately ambiguous, so that people may realize these things to have profound meaning.⁶⁴ We shall only fully understand them if we consider what I have been saying in connection with Paul's mission.

I have spoken of Paul's mission on a number of occasions.⁶⁵ Today I shall present the aspect that may have a bearing on our present goals. How could it be that Paul, who had not been prepared to accept the significance of the Mystery of Golgotha in the light of anything he learned in Jerusalem, became fully convinced of what he called 'the Resurrection of the Christ' by the Damascus event? First we will have to take a look at the way Paul was prepared for the Damascus event.

Paul had received his training in the Jewish school of prophets. He knew exactly that up to a certain point in human evolution salvation would depend on holding fast to the god of the Earth and on knowing how Yahveh's mission was connected with the Earth. A time would have to come, however, and Paul knew this, when 'heavenly things' coming into the Earth from conditions existing outside it would be important. We have to realize that before the Christ took on his mission for the Earth at the Mystery of Golgotha he had a mission in cosmic regions, living in regions beyond this Earth. Details of this may be found in the lectures I recently

gave in Leipzig.⁶⁶ If we trace the earlier situations outside the Earth we find that the Christ initially worked in realms beyond this Earth and then gradually came closer and closer to the Earth, finally entering into the Earth's aura through the body of Jesus of Nazareth. Paul knew that this moment would come, but before Damascus he did not see the 'Christ has come' in the Earth's aura. He was prepared for it, however, and does in fact tell us he was prepared. Read the twelfth chapter of the Second Letter to the Corinthians:

- 1 It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.
- 2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knows); this man was caught up to the third heaven.
- 3 And I know the same man (whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knows).
- 4 Who was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words which no man can utter.
- 5 Of such a one will I glory; yet of myself I will not glory, but in my infirmities.

What was Paul saying? No less than that fourteen years earlier—considering the chronology we would thus have to assume him to have had this experience about six years after the Golgotha event—he was able to ascend to the realm of spirit through clairvoyance. This means, he assures us, that a human being lives in him—and of this alone will he glory, not the physical human being—who is indeed able to look up into the worlds of the spirit. During that experience he realized: 'What did you see when you looked up into the worlds of the spirit before? You saw the Christ, who was then still in the realms of heaven.' Through the Damascus event he realized

that the Christ had entered into the Earth's aura and now lived within it.

This is the significant aspect. It is also the reason why around the time when Christianity was founded many individuals said something that sounds very strange today: 'Christ is the true Lucifer'. They realized that when people who rightly understood human evolution looked up into the higher worlds in the past they had to connect with the 'serpent'. After the Mystery of Golgotha, however, the spirit who overcomes the serpent came down and became Lord of the Earth. All this is connected with the whole of human evolution.

What is the significance of ancient Judaism being in opposition, as it were, to the astral religions of surrounding nations, religions where clouds, lightning and thunder were seen as symbols of the divine? It means that the human soul had to learn to experience the I as something that no longer received the revelations of the spirit through the writing in the stars and through lightning and thunder, but received them in the spirit and through the spirit itself. Before, people who truly wanted to look up to the Christ could only do so the way Zarathustra did, looking up to what we may call the physical vessel of the Christ, Ahura Mazda. People were able to look up to the physical Sun and its effects and know: the Christ lives in it. But through the Mystery of Golgotha the Christ was removed from the physical vessel of the Sun's actions like a seed from its pod, as it were, and became the spiritual Sun that penetrates the Earth's aura. The people who venerated Yahveh or Jehovah may be said to have prepared the way for him before he came to penetrate the Earth's aura. And the highly significant words spoken by John the Baptist must be understood in this way.

Then the Mystery of Golgotha was in preparation. In the

process—I am going to use more abstract terms at this point; we will be able to consider it in more real terms later—Christ Jesus and John the Baptist may be said to have confronted each other. Considering what has just been said about John the Baptist, we can see why this was a confrontation. In John the Baptist Christ Jesus confronted someone who may be said to have understood better than anyone what it means to venerate the Earth's spirit.

Where did the capacity to venerate the Earth's spirit in the right way come from—within Judaism and also elsewhere, for others were also encouraged to do so to a greater or lesser extent, but always through the mysteries. Before the Mystery of Golgotha such a capacity was connected with physical heredity, as we may call it, which is an Earth law. What I am going to say next will seem utter foolishness to modern scientists; yet it may be the foolishness of someone 'foolish in the world but wise with God'.⁶⁷ Before the Mystery of Golgotha the ability to perceive higher things depended, in a way, on hereditary conditions. Human evolution progressed when insight gained through mental images became independent of human heredity.

In the ancient mysteries it was therefore often right for a son to follow his father in serving the mysteries. It is important to note that at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha higher insight ceased to depend on purely physical conditions; it became something entirely for the soul as humanity progressed. The inmost part of the human soul was no longer dependent on physical heredity.

How was it possible for human beings to keep their inner life intact in spite of this? Please consider the full significance of the fact that the core of the inner life, the gaining of higher insight, became a matter purely for the soul, and people could no longer inherit such faculties from their forebears. I am sure

many people today would still like to inherit a capacity for higher insight from their forebears, but it cannot be done. We can see that. Goethe's abilities certainly did not pass on to his descendants, and the same holds true for other people.

What would have happened with those faculties if they had not gained support from something else, receiving a spiritual impulse? They would have become derelict. Human beings would have had to wait for their earthly environment to provide anything that might illumine their minds, depending on their karmic situation. They would not have been able to appreciate this very much, however, and would have been glad to leave the Earth again as soon as possible, since they could not acquire faculties of any value there. Buddha made people very much aware of this; he taught them to turn away from everything perceived with the senses.

The Christ now made himself felt in Jesus of Nazareth as the principle of which Christ Jesus had been able to say at the baptism in the Jordan: 'Something has come down into me to quicken the I.' From then on, human souls would hold contents that came from beyond this Earth and were not merely inherited. Before, everything people were able to know was hereditary, passing from generation to generation under physical conditions. The last individual who had still been able to develop higher faculties on the basis of heredity had been John the Baptist. 'Not one among those born of women is greater than John the Baptist,' Christ Jesus said of him.⁶⁸ He was referring to the fact that the old times differ from the new. In the past, it had been right to say: 'Seeking that which will guide me to the heights of humanity, so that it may live in my heart, I remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; abilities have come to me from them through heredity that can attain to the highest in man.' Today those abilities must come from beyond this Earth. We must no longer look

merely to the Earth and find the Earth's god in the Christ but have to be aware in our souls that the Christ comes from the heavens. This is what Christ Jesus was referring to when he spoke of John the Baptist as one of the greatest 'born of women', that is, people who have abilities that can be directly inherited.

This answers a question that may be very important for our age. At the time when the third post-Atlantean period began to show itself again in our fifth civilization—I have often spoken of this—people were once again turning to things which to earthly human beings may appear to be beyond this Earth. But people were unable to find in this resurrected astral religion what the ancient Egyptians or Chaldeans had found in their astral religion. It now had to be the kind of inner experience one individual had known who truly had the right to speak of these things.

It was in 1607 that someone wrote the following, which I am quoting from a work published in 1905:⁶⁹

A magnificent, wonderful harmony exists throughout creation both in the sphere of the senses and beyond, in ideas and in objects, in the realm of nature and that of grace. This harmony is active in the objects themselves and in their relationships to each other. The greatest harmony is God, and he has impressed inner harmony on all souls as his image. Numbers, configurations, the heavenly bodies and nature altogether are in harmony with certain secrets of the Christian religion. Thus for example three objects are at rest in the universe: the Sun, the fixed stars and the intermedium. Everything else is mobile. And so we have Father, Son and Spirit in the one God. The sphere is also a trinity—the Father is the centre, the Son the surface, the Spirit the equal distance

between centre and surface, the radius. And there are other secrets, too. Without spirits and souls there would be no harmony everywhere. The harmonious predispositions in human souls are infinitely many. The whole Earth is ensouled, and this creates the great harmony that exists both on Earth and between it and the stars. This soul is active throughout the Earth's body, but has its seat in a particular part, just as the human soul has its seat in the heart. From there its influence arises as from a focus or wellspring, going out into the ocean and the Earth's atmosphere. Hence the sympathy which exists between Earth and stars, hence the regular natural effects. That the Earth truly has a soul is most clearly evident from observation of the weather and the aspects it regularly produces. Under certain aspects and constellations the air always grows restless; if there are none, or if they are more or less short-lived, it remains calm.

Kepler also discussed these and similar ideas in his book *Harmonices mundi*. The following passage may serve as an example: 'The globe will be a body like that of an animal, and what in the animal is the soul will be the *Natura sublunaris* of the Earth, exciting weather conditions in the presence of aspects. This is not contradicted by the fact that the excitation of weather conditions does not always coincide exactly with the aspects. Sometimes the Earth appears to be sluggish, sometimes as if excited, so that vapours continue to be exhaled even without the presence of aspects. It is not as obedient a creature as a dog but more like a bull or elephant—slow to anger but all the more violent once aroused.' [Libri 4, Chapter 7].

These and countless other changes and phenomena

occurring in and on the Earth are so regular and measured that they cannot be ascribed to a blind cause. The planets themselves do not know anything about the angles their rays form on Earth, and therefore the Earth must have a soul.'

He then stated, in his own way: 'The Earth is an animal. You will perceive in it everything analogous to the parts of an animal body. Plants and trees are its hair, metals its veins, the sea water its fluids. The Earth has creative powers, a kind of imagination, movement, certain diseases, and ebb and flood are the breathing of animals. The Earth's soul appears to be a kind of flame, hence the warmth below ground and hence no procreation without warmth. A certain image of the zodiac and the whole firmament has been impressed in the Earth's soul by God.'

This is the bond between heaven and Earth, the cause of sympathy between heaven and Earth: the images of all its movements and functions have been implanted into it by God, the Creator.

The soul is the centre of the Earth; it sends out configurations or offprints of itself in all directions and in this way is sentient of all changes in harmony and all objects outside it. As with the Earth's soul, so with the human soul. All mathematical ideas and proofs, for example, the soul creates out of itself, otherwise it could not have such a high degree of certainty and definition.

The planets and their aspects have an influence on the powers of the human soul. They excite emotional responses and passions of all kinds and therefore often the most terrible acts and occasions. They influence the conception of birth and therefore the temperament and character of a person, with a great part of astrology based

on this. It is probable that not only light and heat spread from the Sun to the whole universe but that it is also the centre and seat of the pure intellect, and the source of harmony for the whole universe—and all planets are ensouled.

To a seventeenth-century mind, therefore—as I said, these words were written in 1607—the approach to higher worlds took this particular form. We can also see from these words that the approach is wholly Christian. It was, of course, a deep mind that generated the words I have just read to you. The influence of the relationship between the human soul and the divine principle which is active throughout the world went very deep down indeed. And the same individual whose thoughts on the ‘Earth’s soul’ we have just heard, also wrote the beautiful words:

Hymn to God

Creator of the world, eternal power! Through the whole
of space

Your praise resounds; it sounds through heaven and
Earth.

The very infant babbling repeats the voice; it proclaims
That the blasphemer shall be silent and your praise be
heard for ever.

Great artist creating the world, I marvel at the work
Of your hands, based on ingenious forms,
And at the centre the Sun, giver of light and life,
Restraining the Earth and guiding it according to sacred
law

To take its divers course. I see the toiling Moon
And stars scattered in immeasurably vast spaces —
Lord of the World! Power eternal! Through all worlds
Your immeasurable glory wings on pinions of light.

We see even more deeply into his soul when we read the words:

If now you may behold images in the mirror
 Yet once were meant to know
 Their true essence—why then, eye, do you neglect to
 take
 Reality, so much more precious, and not mere outer
 glory?

If fragmentary knowledge proves such a delight
 To you, how blessed will it be to see the whole!
 Dare, o soul, to let go of the lesser,
 Quickly to gain the eternally great.

If life here means to die each day,
 And death is the wellspring of life,
 Why, human soul, do you take time to die
 And be reborn to greet the light? ⁷⁰

Whose words are these, and those about the Earth's soul? They are the words of the man who provided the foundation for the whole of modern astronomy, and without whom we would not have our present-day astronomy — Johannes Kepler. He was someone whom every monist would praise. Yet their attention should also be drawn to the above words written by him, otherwise all talk about Johannes Kepler is no more than ... well, I won't go into it.

Kepler's words are an early indication of what looking up to the stars must become again: the new way of reading the writing of the stars which we are attempting in our science and philosophy of the spirit. We now find the answer to the question posed at the beginning of today's lecture. How can we come closer to the Christ impulse? How can we understand the Christ? How do we find the right relationship to

him, so that we may say we are truly taking up the Christ impulse? By learning to look up to the Christ with the ardour and depth of heart that lived in the ancient Hebrews when they said: 'I look up to Abraham, the Father' — that is, to the line of physical heredity — 'to Father Abraham, when I want to speak of the ground and origin of the most precious element in my soul.' Today we must find the same depth of soul and inner mood as we look up to what comes from the heights of the spirit to quicken us in the spirit, to the Christ. If we ascribe all our abilities, everything we are able to do that makes us truly human beings, not to any earthly power but to the Christ, we shall gain a living relationship to the Christ. 'Do you delight in some ability, however ordinary, that makes you a human being? Where does it come from?' From the Christ!

The ancient Hebrews would speak of returning to their Father Abraham when they died, and this had deep significance. Today we can grasp the meaning of our time, the time after the Mystery of Golgotha, if we add to those ancient words: 'Out of the god we are born' — words which for us take the place of the old 'return to Father Abraham': 'In Christ we die.'⁷¹

If we understand the Mystery of Golgotha we gain a living relationship to the Christ. We need that relationship, just as in ancient Hebrew times people had a living relationship to the god who was the god of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. That relationship came to expression in the words in which everyone acknowledged: I return to Father Abraham when I die. The people who live after the Mystery of Golgotha have to acknowledge: in Christ we die.

LECTURE 11

Berlin, 10 February 1914

What I have been able to tell you of the Fifth Gospel helps us to get a different view of the arrangements made, as it were, in the whole universe so that the Mystery of Golgotha might come about. The Mystery itself will bring our spiritual scientific study to a temporary conclusion.

We have spoken of the two Jesus children who had to pave the way for the Mystery of Golgotha. We saw that one of them, the Solomon child, had the I of Zarathustra in him, and how this entered into the body of the other boy, the Nathan child from the House of David, when the two boys, who were of about the same age, had reached their twelfth year. Details have been given of the further destiny of Jesus of Nazareth who bore the three outer bodies of the Nathan boy and up to his thirtieth year the Zarathustra-I. Then I told you of the talk Jesus of Nazareth had with his mother and how the power of his words, into which he put all of himself, in a way caused the Zarathustra-I to leave his body. And we know that through the baptism by John in the Jordan the Christ spirit entered into the three bodies of Jesus of Nazareth.

Far from reducing the significance of Christ Jesus in our eyes this new aspect increases it. Greater understanding can be gained from it than from current ideas and from what is told in the Gospels, in so far as we are able to understand them.

The event which together with the crucifixion and resurrection we call the Mystery of Golgotha was preceded by three others.⁷² It may be seen as a temporary conclusion to

those three. One of them occurred very early, in ancient Lemurian times, another near the beginning and the third towards the end of the Atlantean age. Those first three events did not happen on the physical plane but in worlds of spirit. We need to direct the inner eye, as it were, to four events, only the last of which, the Mystery of Golgotha, took place on the physical plane. The other three were a kind of preparation for this in worlds of spirit.

I told you that the Nathan Jesus showed his very special nature as soon as he was born, for he was immediately able to say a few words. Those words were in a strange tongue, however, so that people could not understand them. His mother did however have some idea of what they meant, being able to respond to them inwardly. We also have to realize that this Nathan Jesus child differed from other human beings because they have lived many lives on Earth. The Solomon child, who bore the Zarathustra-I, had lived on Earth before. The Nathan child had until then lived only in the world of the spirit. I referred to this in the past by saying that something was held back in the world of the spirit when human souls entered into human incarnation from the time of ancient Lemuria. It was not guided to human incarnation until it was born as the Nathan Jesus child. We cannot call this a human I in the usual sense, for a human I proceeds from one incarnation on Earth to the next. This entity went through its destiny in worlds of spirit. Only people connected with the ancient mysteries were able to observe what went on in those worlds and to know that this entity, one day to appear as the Nathan Jesus child, first had to go through certain destinies in those other worlds. To find out what those destinies were we must first consider the following.

Most of you will remember the lectures on Anthroposophy I gave here some years ago,⁷³ when I spoke of the human

senses. At the time I made it clear that the five senses we generally speak of are only part of the whole sphere of the senses and that human beings essentially have twelve senses. I won't go into this now. It is important to note, however, that the senses embedded in our physical body would have been condemned to a fate that would have had negative consequences for humanity if the first Christ event had not occurred—the first forerunner of the Mystery of Golgotha, as it were. In Lemurian times humans essentially had a basis for the senses when they incarnated. We also know that this was the age when luciferic powers gained an influence on human evolution. This extended to every part of the human organization. If nothing else had happened our senses would have become entirely different from the way they are today. We might say they would have become hypersensitive. We would not be able to go around with our senses tempered, so to speak, but the impression made by the colour red, for instance, would have caused a specific pain in the eye. Every sensory impression would cause its own kind of pain to the senses. The eye would have felt almost sucked dry by the colour blue, for example. The same applies to the other senses. We would have had to go through the world with the senses painfully affected, or else they would have been gaining excessive and unwholesome enjoyment of the world. The senses would have been more powerfully affected by everything around us than is good for them. This would have happened under the luciferic influence.

Humanity was spared this by an event that did not happen on the physical Earth but may be seen as a first preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha. In Lemurian times the same Christ spirit who united with the body of Jesus of Nazareth at the baptism by John in the Jordan united with an entity that was still in the world of the spirit: the entity later born as the

Nathan Jesus child who was still in those other worlds at the time. Speaking of the event in Palestine, we are able to say that the Christ spirit incarnated in Jesus of Nazareth. Speaking of that first Christ event, we have to say that the Christ spirit entered into the soul sphere of an entity who later came down to Earth as the Nathan Jesus. A soul endowed with spirit thus lived in the worlds of the spirit and in the act of uniting itself—that is, the Christ spirit uniting with the soul that was later to be the Nathan child—and in everything that followed from this, it took away the unwholesome aspect of the human senses. It shone on humanity from worlds of spirit, saving the human race from the misfortune of having to go through life on Earth in such a painful, hypersensitive way. The first event preparing for the Mystery of Golgotha took place for the sake of the human senses. It is because of this event that we are able to live the life of the senses we have today.

The second event occurred in the early Atlantean age. Again the entity who was later to be the Nathan Jesus was ensouled by the Christ spirit. This averted another human disaster. The senses might have been normal thanks to the first Christ event, but under the luciferic and later also the ahrimanic influence human nature would have been such that the 'seven vital organs'—vascular organs in the physical body which, however, are part of the etheric organization; I spoke of them in the lectures I referred to—would have been such that again we could not have known sympathy and antipathy the way we do now. Instead, people would have alternated between rabid greed and the most terrible revulsion in relation to everything they enjoy by way of nourishment with those seven organs. They would also have felt the same raging desire or profound disgust with regard to anything coming in touch with the respiratory organs. Thus the seven

vital organs would have been excessively active under the influence of Lucifer and Ahriman. The second Christ event, which also happened in the other worlds, made it possible for the human vital organs to function in moderation, as it were.

Our senses could never have considered the world in wisdom if the first Christ event had not come in Lemurian times, and our vital organs would know no moderation if it had not been for the second Christ event in early Atlantean times.

Humanity still faced a third disaster, which was connected with the astral body, the balance between thinking, feeling and will activity. Today they are in relative balance, and if that balance is upset a person's health is affected. If thinking, feeling and will do not interact in the right way, the individual either turns into a hypochondriac or becomes mentally deranged. People might thus have fallen into madness if the third Christ event had not happened towards the end of the Atlantean age. The outcome of this—for the third time the Nathan Jesus, who was still in the other world, was ensouled by the Christ—was the creation of a harmonious balance between the inner powers of man represented by thinking, feeling, and will activity.

The three events all influenced the human being from the worlds of spirit; they did not take place on the physical plane. But memories of the third event in particular have survived in mythology. Spiritual insight will often enable us to gain real understanding of the signs given in myth and legend, so that we can see them at a deeper level. And this is also true of the sign for the third Christ event. We are all familiar with it, for it represents a spiritual entity: St Michael, or St George, treading the dragon to death and overcoming it. Overcoming the dragon is to suppress the passionate aspect of nature that would throw our thinking, feeling and will activity into

confusion. We can get a real feeling for the deep significance of such powerful images which are set up, as it were, so that something the intellect is unable to grasp can be seen in a symbolic way and grasped at least in our feelings.

In Greek antiquity people still knew the shadow images of the real divine and spiritual entities who in Atlantean times had existed in the world immediately above the human world. We have spoken of this before. The ancient Greeks had definite awareness of the third Christ event which we only know from images of St George or St Michael overcoming the dragon. To the Greeks the Christ, who ensouled the entity that would later be the Nathan child, was the god Apollo. St George and the dragon was seen within the cosmos in a deeply significant way by the Greeks. At the Castalian spring on Parnassus a chasm opened in the ground, with vapours rising from it. The vapours spread around the mountain like serpents, creating an image of the wild, stormy passions that throw human thinking, feeling and will into confusion. Above the chasm, at the point where the Python serpent dwelt, stood the oracle dedicated to the priestess Pythia. She would sit on a tripod above the chasm and the rising vapours would put her in a trancelike state. Anything she said in that state was taken to come from Apollo himself. Anyone who needed advice would send someone to the Pythia for Apollo's counsel.

To the Greeks Apollo was a real entity. Today we know that this was the entity ensouled by the Christ who later became the Nathan Jesus. He would remove the luciferic and ahrimanic influence from the knowledge that came to the Pythia from the Earth. And when the Apollo sacrifice rose in those vapours they would no longer cause confusion but wisely bring order into thinking, feeling and will intent for the Greeks. We can see that the Apollo idea of the Greeks was

that the god had entered into human thinking, feeling and will intent. This was the god whom we later called the Christ, the god who sacrificed himself, entering into the soul which would later be the Nathan child and bringing harmony into the confusion wrought in human thinking, feeling and will under the influence of Lucifer and Ahriman.

Three Christ events occurring in higher worlds prepared the way for the Mystery of Golgotha. We may ask what the significance of Golgotha itself was. What would have fallen into chaos if this event had not taken place? Well, we know that in the fourth post-Atlantean period, during Graeco-Latin times, humanity became sufficiently mature to develop the I. The region of western Asia, southern and central Europe was the part of the western world first to reach such maturity. The I was meant to develop specifically in the encounter between Romanic and Germanic peoples in central and southern Europe. The I was thus intended to develop in the fourth post-Atlantean age. The development would have lacked order, however. The senses would have developed in a way that lacked order in Lemurian times if it had not been for the first Christ event; the seven vital organs would have developed in the wrong way if it had not been for the second Christ event in early Atlantean times; the three inner activities—thinking, feeling and will intent—would have fallen into confusion if the third Christ event had not come at the end of the Atlantean age, and the I would have developed in chaotic fashion if it had not been for the fourth Christ event in Graeco-Latin times, the Mystery of Golgotha. For humanity had gained self-awareness, an I, during the fourth post-Atlantean age, as has been said before.

A different revelation was initially given for human beings who were not yet meant to reach that level. The characteristic difference between the Buddha and the Christ revelations is

that the Buddha addressed himself to people who were not yet meant to gain awareness of the self, of an I that went through successive incarnations. We have to see this if we are to get the right understanding of Buddhism. I have frequently referred to an analogy used in later Buddhism which says that a true Buddhist sees the principle which goes from incarnation to incarnation as a mango fruit planted in the ground which produces a new tree which in turn produces new fruit. All the new mango has in common with the old is the name and the shape. Characteristically, Buddhists would not speak of a real I that continued through different incarnations. They did not do so because in the East, a real I did not come to full awareness. We can still see today that when people who base themselves on the teachings of the East want to understand the western point of view they cannot penetrate to the point where the I comes into play.

The I was to be born among the peoples of the fourth post-Atlantean era. It would, however, have been chaotic. We can see this from a significant phenomenon arising in that era. Greek philosophy significantly represented the birth of the I. But side by side with it the oracles arose. Sibyls were women whose inner life was not harmonized by Apollo, like the inner life of the Pythia. They let their revelations take effect in a chaos of thinking, feeling and will. Sibylline revelations were made from the eighth century BC until the Middle Ages. They would often contain aspects of sublime truths, but in chaotic form, with all kinds of strange bits and pieces mixed in. Here we can see the confusion that would have come with the birth of self-awareness under the influence of Lucifer and Ahriman — as chaotic as the twelve senses would have been in Lemurian times, the seven vital organs in early, and the three soul organs in late Atlantean times if the first three Christ events had not happened. In post-Atlantean times, the

I would have been in chaos if it had not been for the Mystery of Golgotha.

We thus see the Mystery of Golgotha descending in stages from the heights of spirit, where it occurred as the first Christ event in Lemurian times, until it reached the physical plane in the Mystery of Golgotha. This may serve to indicate the whole significance of this unique event in Earth evolution, showing that it was well prepared in advance from the higher worlds. The connection with the sublime Sun spirit, which we have emphasized on a number of occasions, is also apparent in the Greek Apollo idea, for Apollo was the Sun god.

I have only given a brief outline of elements that contribute to a full explanation of the Mystery of Golgotha. We could go into detail and show the whole tremendous cosmic greatness of the Mystery of Golgotha. You have seen how this Mystery may be approached by considering the cosmos. It can also be approached in another way, which is more or less as follows:

Let us assume someone goes into the world of the spirit, which may be through the gate of death or through initiation. Let us say he enters that world through the gate of death. First of all the human being lays aside the physical body, which is like his outermost garment. The physical body is handed over to the Earth elements. Let us assume that after going through the gate of death the individual looks back to see the fate of that physical body, which is given over to the Earth elements either through decay or by being cremated. What the individual would see would be a natural event like any other natural event, with moral concepts having as little relevance as they would for the development of cloud formations, the lightning that flashes from one cloud to another, and so on. The dissolution of the physical body must be regarded as a natural event. We also know that the individual remains

connected with his ether body for some days and that its separation from the astral body and ego is a second process of separation.

Looking back to the ether body once it has separated, the individual would realize that the processes are different than those that happen after separation of the physical body. We certainly cannot say that what happens to the ether body when we look at it from the world of the spirit after death is a natural event. Far from it, for when the ether body reveals its particular nature we find that all the attitudes we had up to our death are woven into it. If our sentiments have been good and kind, this will show in the ether body, and so will any malicious and evil intentions. You will see and feel the whole range of good and bad feelings and sentiments. All this will come to expression. The whole of our inner approach is reflected in the ether body. We see it there, and it dissolves in a complicated way in the etheric world, being absorbed by it. Looking back at the fate of our etheric body we really see a reflection of what we have been during life on Earth.

Seeing all this we may also say to ourselves: 'If you had good feelings, dedicating yourself to the worlds of spirit in one way or another, you have given something to the general ether cosmos that will have a good influence. If you had bad feelings and sentiments and did not want to consider anything you were told about the higher worlds, you have given the ether cosmos something that wreaks havoc in the etheric world.'

It is part of the destiny of the soul, that is, the astral body and I, thus to see what we ourselves have done to the fate of the ether body, which can no longer be changed once it has separated from the physical body. It is, in fact, the main thing we see after death. In the physical world we saw clouds, hills, and so on. After death we see, like a backdrop, everything we

ourselves put into the ether body by our inner moods and attitudes. This grows larger and larger as the ether body dissolves, becoming like the firmament which provides the background for everything else. It is part of our fate after death to see the fate of the etheric body.

Something else also emerges and that is that the dissolving ether body really has two qualities. One is connected with something which really always tends to sadden and depress us after death. We can see most clearly what this is connected with if we give some brief thought to the fate of the physical Earth.

Physicists are already aware of this fate. They are quite right in saying that the Earth as a physical entity will one day be subject to heat death. The relationship of heat to the other physical forces on Earth is such that a time will come—physicists have already established this—when everything will have assumed the same even temperature. Then nothing more will be able to happen in the physical sphere on Earth. The whole Earth will be subject to heat death.

Materialists who are consistent in their beliefs will of course have to accept that this heat death will mean the end of everything, including human civilization, thinking, aims and goals, and that the whole of human life must vanish in the even heat. Anyone able to see the situation as the science of the spirit presents it will know what this heat death signifies. It signifies that the physical Earth will fall away from its spiritual aspect, like a corpse, just as the physical human corpse drops away from the part of the human being that goes through the gate of death. At death, the human corpse is left behind, while the elements of soul and spirit go through an intermediate state between death and rebirth, with the human being going from one state to another. When the Earth stage of Earth evolution comes to an end through heat death, the

spiritual aspect of the Earth will go on to the Jupiter existence, which will be a new embodiment of everything connected with the Earth by way of the spirit.

Looking back to the ether body after death, we have a particular feeling towards it which makes us aware that some of the qualities of the ether body are connected with everything in the Earth realm that will be subject to heat death and dissolution. The forces which are actively involved in taking the Earth to its heat death are present in our ether body. But there are other forces as well.

Other forces in the ether body relate to all earthly things like the vegetable matter surrounding the embryo from which a new plant will arise. Some forces in the ether body have to work for the Earth only for as long as it exists, until it dies its heat death. But there are also young forces which are connected with the germinal qualities the Earth holds within the cosmos, elements capable of germination that will be taken on to the Earth's next incarnation. We can only see the germinal part of the ether body—and here we touch on another important secret in occult science—once we have gained a certain relationship to the Christ spirit, the Christ impulse, for this part is filled with the Christ powers that poured into the spiritual Earth atmosphere through the Mystery of Golgotha. For the Christ powers will take the germinal element on to Jupiter, including everything in man that has germinal power. This, then, enables us to see our connection with the Christ impulse and the germinal element in the ether body that will go on into the future.

If we are able to see this we know with certainty that an element of which we have often spoken has truly flowed into the Earth's sphere from the Mystery of Golgotha, and that this has something to do with new life being given to the whole spiritual aspect of the Earth, an aspect in which we

human beings are embedded. One experience human beings with true ego-consciousness must have, and people in the West have it today, is that when they see the ether body after death they do not fail to see that it is filled with the Christ impulse. For life after death is pitiful if we cannot see that the ether body is filled with the Christ impulse. It is because of this that I have always said that the Christ did in fact come to Earth, and that even those who today resist the Christ impulse, at least on the surface of their minds, will gradually gain access to it, though perhaps one or two incarnations later than the population of the western world.

It is a blessing for man to be certain of the Christ impulse when beholding his ether body after death. It is hard to see only the part of the ether body after death which must, in a way, go with the Earth to its death. For the people of western civilization who have definite self-awareness—the people of the East do not yet have it so clearly—and who have been born with this, which is already the case in the West, it is certainly a most unhappy state to see only the forces which are destructive in terms of Earth evolution in the ether body, being unable to see the Christ impulse which is part of the substance of the ether body. It is as if one had to live under the continuous impression of an earthquake or volcanic eruption after death, being unable to see the young germinal forces of the Christ impulse.

What are those young germinal forces of the Christ impulse? There is one aspect of them which I have mentioned on many occasions. We have spoken of the role which the blood played in the physical body of Christ Jesus. Being a physical substance, the blood ordinarily dissolves with the rest of the body after death. That was not the case, however, with the blood of Christ Jesus, or at least the part of it which flowed from his wounds. This part of the blood was etherized,

it was truly taken up into the ether forces of the Earth, so that the blood that flowed from those wounds became ether substance. This glistens and shines in the ether body, showing itself in such a way after death that one feels: this is new, germinating life; it makes the human being viable and takes him into the future.

Elements also enter into the ether body from another direction, and we can see from this, too, that it is full of young, vigorous life. One of the great impressions to be gained from the Fifth Gospel—when one is able to see what it is able to give—is that when the body of Christ Jesus had been laid in the tomb something happened which ultimately made it possible for the scene to be exactly as the Gospel of John tells us so beautifully: the tomb was empty and the linen cloths lay in it.⁷⁴ That is a true description. It was like that because an earthquake had come in waves, creating a fissure in the ground. The body of Christ Jesus dropped into the fissure which then closed over it. And the waves and shocks actually tossed the linen cloths around so that they came to lie as the Gospel of John tells us. This is the tremendous impression, touching the heart deeply, to be gained when one learns of these things through the Fifth Gospel and then finds them confirmed in John's Gospel.

Something else thus also entered into the ether body. The body taken up by the fissure penetrated the ether substance shining and glistening in the blood within the ether body, making it visible. The feeling one has after death is as follows, therefore. I told you that the ether body expands after death and we see it as a kind of firmament forming a backdrop to everything else. The body of Christ Jesus, drained of blood and taken up into the Earth, is like the ground substance of this spreading ether body. It is seen as giving new life to the vast tableau of the ether body.

Seeing this, we gain certainty that humanity will not perish but continue to live on as the spiritual content of the Earth when the physical part of it drops away just as the physical body of an individual human being drops away from the spiritual aspect. The I and the astral body certainly guarantee human freedom and immortality. But the individual human being would live on entirely by himself. He would arrive on Jupiter and not fit into Jupiter life if it were not for the fact that the Christ impulse entered into the Earth's sphere, an achievement that will be taken on to Jupiter.

We may say that if human beings were not embedded in a fully Christianized Earth sphere they would have gained little beyond what they already had in Lemurian times by the time they arrive on Jupiter. They would be impoverished, and the impression would be that life on Earth had been fruitless. This state of poverty would be a pitiful thing to be faced by human beings between death and rebirth. On the other hand when we behold the spiritual aspect of the Earth as it has become thanks to the Christ impulse, the soul experiences bliss in the life between death and rebirth, knowing that all inner experience gained after the Mystery of Golgotha has come from the Christ impulse entering into the spiritual atmosphere of the Earth.

LECTURE 12

Cologne, 17 December 1913

Tonight and tomorrow night I need to speak in a rather different way about the event we are accustomed to call the Mystery of Golgotha. Former statements on the subject have, it is true, been of an occult character, but they were more theoretical by nature. We have spoken of the nature of the Mystery of Golgotha and its significance as the central event, as it were, in the whole of human evolution on Earth. The thoughts which have been communicated have certainly been the result of occult investigation. We tapped the source springs that stream out from the Mystery of Golgotha and are alive in human evolution. The significance and meaning of the Mystery can be found when the seer's eye is directed to everything that lives in human evolution on Earth.

Now, however, it will be necessary to go into the actual detail of the events which took place at the beginning of our era. I shall speak of events which created powers that have shone out, as it were, and lived on in the Earth's aura, where they can be observed on occult investigation. Tomorrow I shall give some of the reasons why these things need to be discussed in anthroposophical circles at this particular time. Today I shall attempt to give some indications of what happened in Palestine at the beginning of our era. I hope that the Mystery of Golgotha, so far presented more in the form of ideas, will not lose significance in your hearts and minds if we now consider what happened at the time in very real terms.

In my lectures on the Gospel of Luke and the so-called Gospel of Matthew,⁷⁵ I referred to some essential aspects to be considered in this field, that is, the fact that two Jesus children were born at about the same time at the beginning of our era. I spoke of the different characters and abilities of the two boys. One—and the description of him shines out from the so-called Gospel of Matthew—came from the Solomon line of the House of David. In him lived the soul, or I, of the individual known to us as Zarathustra.

With an incarnation such as this, one thing in particular must be clearly understood. When an individual who had previously reached the heights attained by Zarathustra reincarnates—in this case at the time when he was born in Jesus—it by no means follows that he will know himself to be that individual as a child or young person. There is no awareness that would make him say: 'I am so-and-so.' On the other hand the advanced faculties gained in such a previous incarnation will show early and determine the whole basic structure of the child's character. The Solomon Jesus child—as I shall call him—was thus endowed with great gifts which characteristically enabled him to enter into the achievements of human civilization that were alive in his surroundings. The whole of human civilization was alive in the world around the child—this is especially true of that particular time—in words, gestures, actions, in short in everything he was able to see and hear around him. Children usually take in little of what they see and hear. This boy, however, had a great inner genius which enabled him to perceive from the sparsest indications what humanity had achieved. In short, he had a supreme gift for everything human civilization had produced by way of scholarship and learning. We would call such a child 'highly gifted' today. Up to his twelfth year, the Solomon Jesus child learned quickly,

taking in everything his environment was able to offer.

The other Jesus child, who came from the Nathan line of the House of David, was very different. His character shines out from the Gospel of Luke. He had no gift of scholarship at all. Up to his twelfth year he showed no interest in anything to be gained from human civilization by way of scholarship. On the other hand he showed the highest degree of what we may call 'gifts of the heart', sharing in all the joys and sufferings of others. His genius lay in being less concentrated on himself, less able to acquire the skills and knowledge to be gained on Earth, but in that from his earliest childhood he felt the pain and pleasures of others to be his own, being able to enter into their inner feelings. He had this ability to the highest degree.

The difference between the two Jesus boys as it is presented in the Akashic Record could not be greater, therefore. In their twelfth year an event happened which I have spoken of many times. On the journey to Jerusalem on which the Nathan child was taken by his parents, the Zarathustra-I, which until then had been in the Solomon Jesus boy, left that body and took possession of the physical, ether and astral bodies of the Nathan Jesus. Everything this kingly I had been able to gain was then active in the soul of the Nathan Jesus. That boy gained all the power of Zarathustra, without knowing it, and was able to cause amazement when he appeared as a teacher among the scholars. I also mentioned that the other Jesus boy, the Solomon child, from whom the Zarathustra-I had departed, went into a rapid decline and died relatively soon after.

It is important to realize that when someone gives up the I, as in the case of the Solomon Jesus boy, this does not mean that life is no longer possible. Just as a ball will continue to roll for a time under its own momentum, such a life continues

for a while through the powers inherent in it. Unless one is able to perceive the subtle aspects of human souls, the difference between a soul that still has its I and one that has lost it is not very great. The I does not have much of a direct influence when we meet a soul in ordinary life. Direct revelation of the I is the least thing we perceive in a person, for the I is revealed through the astral body. The other Jesus boy retained his astral body, however. It needs great powers of discernment—this is far from easy—to establish if old habits, old thoughts continue to influence a soul or if something new is taken up. This alone will show if the I is still there or not. But the individual begins to go into a decline, withering away, as it were, and that was the case with the Solomon Jesus child.

As karma would have it, the natural mother of the Nathan Jesus child died soon after the time when the Zarathustra-I had entered into the Nathan child and so did the father of the Solomon child. The father of the Nathan child and the mother of the Solomon child then married. The Nathan child had no brothers or sisters; his new brothers and sisters came from the family of the Solomon child. The two families became one and lived in the small town later called Nazareth. We shall therefore use the term Jesus of Nazareth when speaking of the Nathan Jesus child in whom the Zarathustra-I lived from then on.

Today I also want to tell you something of the younger years of Jesus of Nazareth as revealed in the Akashic Record. I want to present this in a way that will help us to understand a significant moment in Earth evolution which helped to prepare the way for the Mystery of Golgotha, of which we shall speak tomorrow.

Three distinct phases in the life of Jesus of Nazareth are clearly perceptible to the seer. His dialogues with the

scholars had shown that once the Zarathustra-I had entered into him in his twelfth year, he had the inner power to receive enlightenment and connect this with the abilities belonging to the Zarathustra soul. This soul therefore had a tremendous capacity for inner experience. As Jesus progressed from his twelfth to seventeenth and eighteenth year, it is possible to see the inner enlightenment emerge more and more. At the time this was connected with the whole evolution of the ancient Hebrews and of the Hebrew nation altogether.

At the time when Jesus of Nazareth was part of the Hebrew nation, no trace remained of the great revelations the prophets had once given to the Hebrews, secrets coming directly from the cosmos. Much had been passed on by tradition, but the original faculties for obtaining those secrets directly from the worlds of spirit had long since faded. The secrets could now only be found in the old-established literature. A few, like the famous Hillel,⁷⁶ had gone through individual development that enabled them to perceive something of what the prophets of old had proclaimed. But those few no longer had the power that had existed in the days of original revelations given to the Hebrews. A definite decline could be seen in the spiritual development of the Hebrew people. Yet the revelations made by the prophets of old now arose as inner enlightenment, as though arising from the depths, in Jesus of Nazareth's soul.

I do not so much want to draw your attention to the historical fact that inner enlightenment brought the revelations of the prophets alive in an individual human being. Instead I would ask you to feel the isolation experienced by a relatively young Jesus of Nazareth when at the age of thirteen or fourteen he felt a revelation arise in himself which no one else around him was able to experience, for even the best of them had only a faint glimmer of this. Enter into the

life of such an individual who finds himself all alone with one of the greatest human treasures of knowledge. It is important to realize that the Mystery of Golgotha had to be prepared in this way, with feelings of loneliness and isolation arising in the soul of Jesus of Nazareth. If you are on an inner island, as it were, feeling as he did when he had shared so much in the feelings of others from childhood and now wanted to share with them but could not because their souls had descended to a level where they could no longer take it in; if you feel the pain of knowing something others are unable to take in, though you would wish that it might also live in their hearts — then you are preparing for a mission. Jesus of Nazareth was preparing for a mission. This gave his inner life its basic note, for again and again he had to say to himself: 'A voice comes to me from the world of the spirit. If humanity could hear this it would bring infinite blessing. In older times people could hear it, but now the ears no longer exist to hear it.' This pain of being all alone entered more and more deeply into his soul.

Such was the inner life of Jesus of Nazareth from about his twelfth to his eighteenth year. His natural father and his stepmother did not understand him, and his brothers and sisters not only failed to understand but tended to mock him, considering him half mad. He worked hard in his father's carpentry trade, but as he worked, the feelings I have spoken of were alive in his heart and mind.

When he was more or less in his eighteenth year he began to journey, working with different families, different craftsmen, in Palestine and adjacent pagan lands. He was guided by his karma. The unusual nature of this man became apparent to everyone with whom he came in contact. He would work all day and in the evenings sit with the people. And the people with whom he was thus together from his nineteenth to his twenty-second year always had a feeling, though they would

not always be clearly conscious of this, that he was a very special human being, someone of a kind they had never seen before, and indeed whom they could not have imagined ever to exist. They did not know what to make of him.

To understand this we have to bear in mind what must always be borne in mind if we want to enter into secrets of human evolution: experiences like those that had come to the young Jesus of Nazareth cause deep inner suffering. But the pain is transmuted into love. Profound pain has the power to change into love, a love greater than the ordinary kind of love where you merely have to be there with your love. This love streamed out like the far-reaching rays of an aura. And the people who had him among them in those days felt there was much more among them than just a human being. Even when he had left a place the effect continued and they really felt him to be present when they sat together in the evenings. And this would happen over and over again when he had left a place: sitting around the table in the evenings, people would have common visions. They would see him enter as a spiritual figure. They all had the vision simultaneously, feeling that Jesus had come again, was talking to them and telling them things, just as he had done when he was physically present among them. He lived visibly among people long after he had left. Pain transmuted into love made him have such a powerful effect. The people with whom he had been felt specially connected with him. They never really felt that he had left them but that he remained with them and returned many times.

He not only travelled through Palestine but his karma also took him to pagan places — it would go too far to go into detail today. Having first experienced the decline in Judaism he now found that pagan rites, too, no longer held the old, original revelation. This was a second phase in which he experienced the descent of humanity from what had once

been spiritual heights. He was to experience this in a different way, however.

Knowledge of the decline in Judaism had come more from within, through inner enlightenment. He saw that the revelations from the world of the spirit, once proclaimed by the prophets, had ceased, for there were no ears any longer to hear them. Realization of the decline in paganism came when he visited a place where the old pagan rites had deteriorated to a particular degree, and there were also external signs of decline. The people in the place suffered from leprosy and other ugly diseases. Some had become vicious, others feeble and lame. The priests who had fled from those places of worship avoided these people. When Jesus was seen approaching, the news spread like wildfire that someone very unique had come, for even his outer bearing showed something of the pain transformed into love. They saw someone approaching who was unlike anyone who had ever walked on Earth. The news soon spread and many came running, believing that a priest had been sent to them who would once again perform the offering service. Their priests had abandoned them, and now they came running. This is evident from the Akashic Record. He did not intend to perform the pagan offering service. But there appeared to him, as though in vivid Imaginations, the whole riddle of the decline that had occurred also in pagan development. Good spirits no longer streamed down to the pagan altars, but all kinds of demons, emissaries of Lucifer and Ahriman. Jesus of Nazareth perceived this as if in visions coming from outside rather than the inner enlightenment he had received concerning the situation in Judaism.

Learning something in a theoretical way is very different from being able to see directly how demons descended on to an offering altar where divine powers of spirit had come

down in the past and how those demons caused abnormal states of soul, diseases, and so on. Jesus of Nazareth was to perceive this through direct vision in the spirit; he was able to see the influence the emissaries of Lucifer and Ahriman had on people, causing terrible things to happen to them. He suddenly fell down as if dead. The people took fright and ran away. But when he lay there as if out of his mind, as if transported into another world, he gained an impression of everything those old, original revelations to the pagans had been. Before, he had heard secrets that had been made known to the prophets of old but now no longer had even a shadow existence among the Jews. Now he heard, through spiritual Inspiration, how those secrets had been made known to the pagan peoples.

The deepest impression he gained is something I have attempted to investigate. I spoke of it for the first time when we laid the foundation stone for our building in Dornach. It might be called a reverse Our Father, for it was like the essential content given in reverse of the prayer the disciples were later to say they were given by Christ Jesus. As he perceived this, Jesus of Nazareth felt it contained, in highly concentrated form, the secret of human evolution and embodiment in earthly incarnations:

Amen.

The evils hold sway,

Witness of egoity releasing itself.

Selfhood guilt through others incurred,

Experienced in the daily bread,

Wherein the will of the heavens does not rule,

Because man separated himself from your realm,

And forgot your names,

You Fathers in the heavens.

This, rendered in halting words, reveals the laws according to which the human being incarnated from the macrocosm into a microcosm. Since these words have become known to me I have found them extraordinarily significant for meditation. Their power over the soul is quite extraordinary, and you perceive this power all the more the longer you contemplate these words. If you then try to look at them in detail and understand them, you find that they do indeed hold the secret of man and the destiny of humanity in a nutshell, and how their reversal gave rise to the microcosmic Our Father which the Christ gave to his disciples.

This was not the only secret of original pagan revelation perceived by Jesus. When he came out of his visionary state and saw the fleeing people and demons, he knew the whole secret of paganism. For the second time, immeasurable pain entered his soul. The decline of Judaism had become so real to him because he actually received the revelation which had been given to it before decay set in. Now he perceived that much the same had happened with the pagan people. He became fully aware that all around him people had to live out the words: 'They have ears but they do not hear the secrets of the cosmos.' He had to go through this in order to gain the limitless compassion he always felt for people. We may put it as follows. He now had the power of vision, and humanity should be given what those visions contained. But where were those who could communicate it?

Those were his experiences until about his twenty-fourth year. Then his karma took him home, at the time when his father died. He then lived with his stepbrothers and stepsisters and his step- or foster mother. She, too, had not understood him very well in the past, but now she gradually showed increasing understanding for the great pain he bore in his heart. He had further experiences from his twenty-fourth to

his twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth and thirtieth year, and this met with growing understanding from his stepmother, though even now it was not easy. Those were also the years when he became more closely acquainted with the Essene Order. Today I will only touch on the main aspects of this. The people in this order set themselves apart from the rest of humanity and developed a specific style of life in body and soul which was designed to help them find their way back to the original revelation of the spirit which had been lost to humanity. Strict exercises and a rigid rule were to help them reach a level where they could once more be united with the spiritual regions from where the original revelations had come in the past.

Jesus of Nazareth also met John the Baptist among these people, but neither of them became an Essene in the true sense. The Akashic Record shows this quite clearly. It emerges from everything I have said that a human individual of a very special kind had quite an extraordinary effect on everyone he met; this had been extraordinary among the pagans, and now the Essenes, too, people who normally kept everything their souls had gained a close secret, not telling outsiders anything, would speak openly about important secrets held by the Order to Jesus, telling him of the most important things they had gained in their inner endeavour. Jesus came to realize that a path still existed for human souls to ascend to the heights where the original human souls had once dwelt and from which they had descended. But he felt it deeply, and it made him feel uncomfortable, if I may use such a common term, that in order to ascend to the heights an Essene had to isolate himself from the rest of humanity and live apart. This was not at all in accord with the universal love of humanity felt by Jesus of Nazareth. It was unbearable to him that spiritual treasure should not be available to the

whole of humanity but could only be gained by some, at the cost of humanity as a whole. He would often leave the Essene places in great pain. His feelings may be expressed in the following words. Again it is only some, and there can only be a few of them, who find the way back to the original revelation; yet because they segregate themselves the rest must fall into decay all the more. They cannot reach those heights, for they have to do the rough, material work for those who set themselves apart.

On one occasion, as he was leaving the Essene settlement by one of its gates, he saw two figures in his mind's eye that fled from the gate. These are the figures we call Lucifer and Ahriman today. He had the impression that the Essenes were protecting themselves from them, driving them away by their exercises, their ascetic life style and the strict rule. Nothing connected with Lucifer and Ahriman was allowed to touch them. This is why Jesus saw Ahriman and Lucifer fleeing from the gate, and he also knew that it was exactly because a place had been created from which they were excluded, where people did not want to know them, that Ahriman and Lucifer turned all the more to the rest of humanity. It is a big difference if one knows in theory or if one actually sees what individual souls do to advance themselves and how this sends Lucifer and Ahriman to others, having been rejected by individuals bent on their own advancement. He knew now that this was not the path of true salvation and that the Essenes were looking for their own advancement at the cost of the rest of humanity.

His heart was filled with infinite compassion. He could not take pleasure in the advancement of the Essenes, knowing that others had to sink all the lower because they were advancing as individuals. He felt this more and more, because he also saw the image of Lucifer and Ahriman fleeing

at other Essene gates — there were several of these — for these spirits would stand at the gates but be unable to enter the Essene settlements. He knew then that the customs and rules of an order — like those of the Essene Order — drive Lucifer and Ahriman to other people. This was the third great, unending pain he experienced in connection with the descent of humanity. It entered deeply into his soul.

I said that his stepmother gained increasing understanding for what lived in him. Something now took place that was to be a significant step in preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha — a talk between Jesus of Nazareth and his stepmother. The Akashic Record shows this. Her understanding had grown to a point where he could speak to her of the threefold pain he had experienced at the decline of humanity as he had seen it in Judaism, paganism and in connection with the Essenes. And as he spoke to her of all the pain he had suffered in loneliness he could see that this moved her.

One of the most magnificent impressions to be gained in the occult field is to perceive the nature of this talk. Nothing like this is to be found in the whole of Earth evolution. I am not saying 'nothing greater', for the Mystery of Golgotha was, of course, greater, but 'nothing like it'. He was not saying mere words as he spoke to his mother. His words were like living entities that passed from him to his stepmother, and his soul lent them wings, endowing them with special powers. All the tremendous suffering he had gone through passed into his stepmother's soul on the wings of his words. His own I went with every word, and this was no mere sharing of words or thoughts; it was a living soul moving from him to his stepmother's soul in the words of his infinite love and infinite pain. And he was able to present the three experiences he had known as a great panorama. The whole process was further enhanced because Jesus of Nazareth

gradually let the conversation turn into something that had come to him out of the threefold pain he had experienced over the decline of man.

It is truly difficult to put into words what he said to his stepmother, summing up his experiences, as it were. We are prepared through the science of the spirit, however, and so an attempt may be made to convey the meaning of the final part of this talk, using formulations and expressions from that science to help us. What I am going to say now was not said exactly like this, of course, but you can get an approximate idea of what Jesus intended to evoke in his stepmother's heart. Looking back, the whole evolution and life of humanity on Earth can be seen to be like an individual human life, though it would change in later generations, even if people were not conscious of this.

We might say that post-Atlantean life presented itself to his mind's eye. First, after the great natural event, an ancient Indian civilization evolved, with the Holy Rishis presenting their tremendous wisdom to humanity. In other words, this was a highly spiritual civilization. Jesus of Nazareth went on to say that the spiritual forces which were active in that ancient Indian period were very different from those in later times, just as in an individual life the forces active in childhood, between birth and the seventh year, are different from those in later life. In those days these forces extended over the whole of life, not only up to the seventh year, and human evolution was therefore different from what it became later. People would know all their lives what today's children know and experience up to their seventh year. Today we think the way we do between our seventh and fourteenth and our fourteenth and twenty-first year because we have lost the powers we had in childhood, powers that are turned off in the seventh year. In the first

post-Atlantean age these powers poured out over the whole of a human life and people were therefore clairvoyant. They were able to rise to greater heights with those powers. That was the golden age in human evolution.

There followed an age when the powers that are otherwise only active between the seventh and fourteenth year extended to the whole of life. In the third era the powers which today are active between the fourteenth and twenty-first year were active, and after this humanity lived in an age when the powers that are otherwise active between the twenty-first and twenty-eighth year were poured out over the whole of human life. With this, Jesus of Nazareth said, we are coming close to the middle of human life, which is in the thirties. Then the powers of youth cease to grow and we begin the descent. We are now living in an age, he said, which corresponds to the period from the twenty-eighth to the thirty-fifth year in an individual life, and these are the years when the life of humanity begins to go into decline. Individuals still have other powers that enable them to live on, but humanity as a whole has nothing left. This is the painful truth. Humanity is about to enter into the ageing process; its youth has passed and it is between its twenty-eighth and thirty-fifth year. From where can new powers come, now that the powers of youth are exhausted?

This is how Jesus of Nazareth spoke to his stepmother about the decline that was coming for the whole life of evolving humanity. His words were full of unutterable pain, and it was clear that the prospect for humanity was quite hopeless. He knew that individuals would continue to live beyond their thirty-fifth year because some residual powers remained in them. Humanity as a whole had no such powers left; something new had to come, something an individual human life needed between the twenty-eighth and thirty-fifth

year. The power which must illumine individual human beings when they advance from their twenty-eighth to their thirty-fourth year had to come from the macrocosm and illumine the Earth.

Reading those words of Jesus of Nazareth in the Akashic Record one realizes that humanity as such was then growing old. As he spoke to his mother of these things, putting the meaning and significance of human evolution into words, he knew, at a moment when his very self entered into his words, that something of his own true nature went away with them. His words had become his very self. This was also the moment when the soul entity which until then had lived in his natural mother, who had died after the event in which the Zarathustra soul had come to him from the other Jesus boy, and who from Jesus' twelfth year had been in realms of spirit, entered into the stepmother's soul. From then on his own mother's spirit lived in the soul of the Nathan Jesus boy's stepmother.

Jesus of Nazareth had united himself intensely with the words in which he gave expression to all the pain he felt at the suffering of humanity. And it was as if his self had vanished from the shell provided by physical, ether and astral body, with the shell being again as it had been when he was a little boy, only that it was now also filled with everything he had suffered from his twelfth year. The Zarathustra-I had gone, and all that remained in the shell was what survived of those powerful experiences. Now an impulse arose in the threefold shell. It drove him to take the road that would lead him to John the Baptist by the river Jordan. He went on his way as though in a dream, yet it was not a dream but a higher state of consciousness, and only the threefold shell was there, filled with the spirit and impulses of the experiences gained from his twelfth year. The Zarathustra-I had departed. The

threefold shell guided him, and he was scarcely conscious of anything around him. With the I departed, he was wholly given up to his direct vision of human destiny and of human needs.

On his way to John the Baptist by the Jordan he met two Essenes with whom he had often spoken. He did not recognize them in his present state, for it was as if his egoity had been taken out of him. They recognized him, however, and addressed him: 'Where are you going, Jesus of Nazareth?' I have tried to put what he said into words. He said those words in such a way that the Essenes did not know where they came from; they came from him and yet not from him: 'Somewhere where people like you do not wish to direct the inner eye, where human pain can find the rays of the forgotten light.'

Those were his words. The Essenes did not understand them but they realized that he did not recognize them. So they said: 'Jesus of Nazareth, don't you recognize us?' There followed even stranger words. It was as if he said to them: 'You are like lost lambs; I, however, was the son of the shepherd from whom you strayed. If you truly recognize me you will soon stray again. You have fled from me to the world a long time ago.'

The Essenes did not know what to think, for his eyes took on a special look as he appeared to say those words. It was as if they looked out and yet also looked inward. They seemed full of reproach for the souls he addressed. Gentle love was shining from those eyes, but a love that became a reproach to the Essenes, rising from their own souls. The feelings that arose in the Essenes as they heard him may be characterized more or less as follows: 'What kind of souls are you? Where is your world? Why do you present yourselves other than you are? Why is a fire burning inside you that has not been ignited in my Father's house?'

Their souls fell silent at those words, as it were. And he went on to say: 'You bear the mark of the tempter; he found you when you had fled. He made your wool glitter with his fire. The hairs of this wool prick my eyes. O you lost lambs! He has filled your souls with arrogance and pride.'

When he said: 'Your wool glitters, the hairs of this wool prick my eyes,' one of the Essenes said: 'Surely we have shown the tempter the door. He no longer has any part in us.' But Jesus went on to say: 'True, you have shown him the door, but he went away to go to other people, besetting them on every side. You do not raise yourselves if you bring others down. You only think you have elevated yourselves, because you made the others grow smaller. You remain where you are and only feel you are greater because you have made the others less.'

Those words told with the Essenes. And when Jesus of Nazareth had said them their hearts felt so heavy that they were no longer able to see. Their eyes grew dim and Jesus of Nazareth disappeared from their sight. And when he thus seemed to have vanished they saw his countenance as though from afar, but it had become vast. They saw it before them like a far distant mirage, and words came to them as if spoken from this mirage, words they experienced as: 'Vain is your endeavour, for your hearts are empty; you have only filled them with the spirit who deceptively covers pride and arrogance with a cloak of humility.'

Then the mirage, too, had vanished, and they stood there heavy-hearted and perplexed. When they could see again, they realized he had gone some distance from them while they had seen the vision. And they could do nothing, being merely aware that he had gone on his way. Their hearts heavy, they went on to their Essene lodging, and they never spoke to anyone of that experience, keeping silent about it to

the end of their lives. They had gained greater depth of soul than their Essene brothers, but they kept silence and became very taciturn, never saying anything that was not absolutely essential for everyday communication. Their Essene brothers did not know why they had changed so much. Until their death they never spoke of what they had heard. They entered into the Mystery of Golgotha in a special way in their hearts, but the others had no awareness of this.

When Jesus had continued on his way for a while he met a person whose heart was in utter despair. As I have said, Jesus was in a way removed from earthly concerns, and he therefore could not take it in that a human being was approaching. He himself, however, made a deep impression on this man who was in such despair that he showed the signs of profound suffering. The tremendous impression this individual had of Jesus of Nazareth as he came towards him evoked words from Jesus of Nazareth which may be said to be more or less as follows: 'Where has the path your soul took led you? I saw you thousands of years ago; then you were different.'

The desperate man heard this as though it was spoken by the approaching figure of Jesus of Nazareth. He felt an inner need on the one hand to speak of his troubles and on the other hand to find for himself the answer fate would give. He felt impelled to say: 'I have advanced to high rank in my life. I was always learning. The things I learned advanced me to an ever higher rank among others. Every honour I was given increased my pride and I would often say to myself: "You are indeed a special person, seeing the magnificence you have achieved among others." I felt that my soul must be of greater value than the souls of others. My arrogance increased with every new achievement. And then I had a dream. It was a terrible dream! Not only did I dream, but my soul was full of

shame as I dreamt, for I felt ashamed to dream something like that. I had been so proud! And now I dreamt something I would never have wanted to dream, and that seemed right in my dream. I dreamt I was asking myself: "Who has made me great?" And a spirit stood before me who said: "I have made you great, I have raised you, but because of this you are mine!" I felt it was the greatest disgrace when it was revealed to me that I was not a chosen soul and had not risen by my own efforts; another had elevated me. I took flight in my dream. When I woke up I truly took flight, abandoning all my achievements. I did not know what I was looking for, and so I have been going about for a long time, fleeing from myself and everything I achieved, feeling ashamed of everything I once thought in my arrogance and pride.'

As he said these words, the spirit who had appeared to him in his dream stood before him again. Standing between himself and Jesus of Nazareth the dream spirit blocked out the figure of Jesus of Nazareth. And when the dream image had changed and dissolved as in a mist, Jesus had walked on. When the despairing individual looked back he saw he had gone on quite a way. He therefore had to continue on his way in despair.

Then a leper came towards Jesus of Nazareth. His leprosy and suffering had reached a climax. And because of his soul's perception, Jesus of Nazareth's inner being again felt compelled to utter words, which the leper heard. Again the words were: 'Where has the path your soul took led you? I saw you thousands of years ago; then you were different.'

In a process similar to the one that had made the desperate man speak, the leper was impelled to say: 'I do not know how I come to have the disease. It approached gradually. And people would no longer allow me to be with them. I had to walk in desolate places, scarcely able to beg for scraps at

people's doors. Then, one night, I found myself near a dense forest. I saw a bright and shining tree that seemed to come towards me from a clearing. I felt the urge to go closer to the tree that shone out towards me. It drew me to it. And when I came close, a skeleton appeared to step out from the tree. I knew it was death who stood thus before me. And death said to me: "I am you; I am eating you away. Do not be afraid!" And the skeleton went on to say: "Why are you afraid? Did you not love me once through many lives? Only you did not know it was me you loved, for I appeared to you in the form of a magnificent archangel; it was him you thought you loved." And then it was no longer death who stood before me but the archangel whom I had often seen and I knew it was his image I had loved. Then he vanished. I did not wake up until the next morning, lying by the tree and feeling even more miserable than before. And I knew that everything I had taken pleasure in, all the self-love in me, was connected with the spirit who appeared to me as death and as an archangel, maintaining that I loved it and that it was my own self. Now I stand before you, and I do not know who you are.' Then the archangel appeared again, and death, too, and stood between the leper and Jesus of Nazareth, hiding Jesus of Nazareth from his view. As soon as the leper saw the archangel, Jesus disappeared, and then death and the archangel also disappeared. And the leper had to walk on, and he saw that Jesus of Nazareth had passed on.

The Akashic Record thus shows the events that happened on the road Jesus of Nazareth took between the talk with his mother and the baptism by John in the Jordan.

Tomorrow we shall see how these contacts with the world which Jesus had when he was out of himself, events he could not really take in, combined with the spirit that came to him at the baptism by John in the Jordan. These events—the

meeting with the two Essenes, the desperate person and the leper—may seem strange and something to marvel at. To those who find them strange I can only say that they may seem strange, but that is how they truly appear when one investigates the Akashic Record. They represent events which are, of course, unique. They have to be unique, for they happened in preparation for an event which also could happen only once, the event we call the Mystery of Golgotha. Anyone who is not prepared to entertain the thought that something unique happened in human evolution in those days, will find the whole process of human evolution difficult to understand.

LECTURE 13

Cologne, 18 December 1913

Before we continue our contemplation of the life of Christ Jesus I wish to speak briefly about the research method. It is a vast subject, of course, and only an outline can be given, but I would like you to have some idea of 'occult research', as we may call it, which makes it possible to penetrate to facts like those we considered yesterday.

The first thing to be said is that such research consists in reading the Akashic Record. I have shown what is meant by these words in articles entitled 'From the Akashic Record' which have been published in *Lucifer-Gnosis*.⁷⁷ It is important to realize that different methods have to be used to find different facts relating to the history and existence of the world, or, more exactly, it has to be realized that essentially the universe contains nothing but states of consciousness. Anything that exists apart from the states of consciousness of spiritual entities is in the final instance part of maya or the great illusion. You will find particular reference to this in two of my works. The first is *Occult Science: An Outline*. This presents Earth evolution from the Saturn to the Vulcan stages, and shows that progression from Saturn to Sun, Sun to Moon, Moon to Earth, and so on, initially only meant changes in states of consciousness. It means that if we wish to penetrate to these great realities we have go to a level of cosmic evolution that involves states of consciousness, and we can only refer to them as states of consciousness. The same is said in a book published this summer, *The Threshold*

*of the Spiritual World.*⁷⁸ There I have shown how vision gradually rises above the level where objects and material processes are seen all around you. All this vanishes into nothingness, as it were, and is destroyed. Finally you come to a region where you only find entities in various states of consciousness. Those are the true realities of the world. We live in the human state of consciousness and are unable to see the full picture, and because of this things appear to be real that are in fact not real.

I have spoken of this quite often. You only have to ask yourself: is a human hair something real in itself, even in the most limited sense? Does it exist on its own? It would be nonsense to say a human hair existed on its own. We have to see it as something that grows on the human body and cannot exist in any other way. Everyone would agree, therefore, that it is nonsense to speak of a human hair as existing entirely of its own accord, for a hair cannot develop in isolation. Plants are often felt to be individual entities, but they are not, any more than a hair is. For a plant is to the Earth organism what a hair is to the head, and there is no point in considering a plant in isolation. The Earth has to be seen as analogous to a human being, and all plants as belonging to it, as the hairs do to a person's head. It is important to know where we have to draw the line in considering an entity as something existing by itself. At the ultimate level which human beings are able to reach, however, anything that does not have its roots in a state of consciousness cannot be said to be an independent entity. Everything has its root in a state of consciousness, though always in different ways.

Take a thought, for instance—something that lives in a human mind. Initially thoughts exist in our conscious mind, but not only there. Spirits belonging to the next higher hierarchy, *Angeloi* or Angels, also have that thought. But

whereas we have a single thought, the whole of our thought world is a thought of the Angels. The Angels think our conscious mind. You can see that when you advance in higher vision you need to develop a different feeling for perception of the higher worlds than you do in the world of ordinary physical reality. The mode of thinking we use in relation to the physical world and to existence on Earth will not help us to achieve higher vision. There you need not only to think, but also to be thought, and to know that you are being thought. It is not exactly easy to characterize our inner response to higher perceptions accurately, for we do not yet have the human words for it. Perhaps we may use an analogy. It would be like making all kinds of movements and not observing ourselves making them but looking into the eye of another person instead to observe our movements there, saying to ourselves: making our observations there we know that we are doing something or other with our hands or facial expression. This is the feeling you have at the first level of higher vision. You only have a general awareness of the fact that you are thinking, but you observe yourself in the conscious awareness of the spirits of the next higher hierarchy. You let the Angels think your thoughts. You must know that you are not governing your own thoughts in your conscious mind, but that spirits of the next higher hierarchy are governing them. You must feel the conscious awareness of the Angels welling and actively moving within you. This will give you insight into the progressive impulses of evolution, for instance the truth about the Christ impulse which continues to be active even today, seeing that it has come into existence. The Angels are able to think those impulses; we human beings are able to think and characterize them if our attitude to our thoughts is one where we give them over to the Angels, letting them think in us. This is achieved by long

training, as described in my book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*. A moment comes when the words 'Your soul no longer thinks; it is a thought which the Angels are thinking' become meaningful, something you can feel. When this becomes true individual human experience, you inwardly enter into the thoughts of the general Christ truths, let us say, or other thoughts concerning the wise guidance of Earth evolution.

Anything relating to individual periods of Earth evolution—the Ancient Indian period, the Ancient Persian period, and so on—is thought by the Archangels. Further training takes you to the point where you are not only thought by the Angels but become living experience for the Archangels. All it needs is to continue the exercises until you know that you hand your life over to become the life of the Archangels. I have given some details of this in *The Threshold of the Spiritual World*, saying that the sensation you get is one of having your head in an ant heap. I also spoke of this in Munich. The ants are the actively moving thoughts. In ordinary life we believe we think our thoughts. With training, you come to realize that the thoughts are thinking in you because the Angeloi are thinking in you. As you progress you get the feeling that you are taken to different regions of the world by the Archangels and get to know those regions. Anyone giving a true description of Egyptian or Indian civilization knows the meaning of the words: 'Your thoughts are taken to a particular period by an Archangel.' It is as if the juices of life in us knew that they maintain the process of life and are taken around the organism like the blood. The seer knows he is taken around the world's life process by the Archangels.

Anything connected with entering into the soul of an individual experience can only be investigated when the

words: 'The soul offers itself to be food to the Origins or Archai, the Spirits of Personality' acquire meaning. This may sound grotesque, but it is nevertheless true that truths such as the life of Jesus cannot be investigated unless the words 'You are consumed to serve the Spirits of Personality as spiritual food' have real meaning to you. This does, of course, sound nonsensical to people who know only the life of the physical world. But just as the mouthful of bread going down to your stomach becomes your food—if it were able to reflect it would know that its meaning and purpose lie in that we make it our food—so do we human beings have meaning and purpose in serving the Archai as food. We are continually consumed by the Archai as we walk around here on Earth. You will not deny that people in general do not know this and would consider it a crazy idea if someone were to tell them. Human beings are to the Archai what grains of wheat are to you as human beings. We have to know this from living experience and not as mere theory, relating to the Archai the way a grain of wheat would if it were ground to a pulp by our teeth and then passed through our gullet and stomach in the knowledge: I am human food. So we must know: I am Archai food, I am digested by the Archai, this is their life, which I live in them. Then we share in the conscious awareness of the Spirits of Personality, just as we share in the conscious awareness of the Archangels, knowing that the Archangels are taking our souls into a particular age, and we share in the conscious awareness of the Angels when we know that our thoughts are thought by the Angels.

The conditions in which experience is gained must change if we want to enter into the higher worlds and read their secrets. We must know ourselves to be consumed by the Spirits of Personality if we want to investigate facts in

human evolution that are as real and tangible as the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

These remarks may help to show how different occult research is from research in the physical world. You can think the analogy through and it will give you something to go by. You can think yourself to be the grain of wheat ground to a pulp and gain an idea of what is involved when one reads in the conscious awareness of the Archaï. The analogy is perfectly true, for your soul has to be ground to a pulp and you must feel this. Higher investigation is not possible without inner pain and suffering. If it is to yield more than sheer fantasy, investigation into the higher worlds cannot be achieved as painlessly as investigations done in the physical world. Hence my efforts to avoid abstract concepts and abstract description when I spoke of the life of Jesus yesterday. I told you that this was a true account of the life of Jesus of Nazareth from his twelfth to his eighteenth, twentieth and thirtieth years. The details of the story are less important; what matters is that we get a real feeling for what the Jesus soul went through and share in the infinite pain of isolation, when he was all alone with the original truths, there being no ears to hear them. The intention was to present something of the inner life, the inner feelings of Jesus of Nazareth. I wanted to show how he took up the suffering and pain of humanity three times between his twelfth and thirtieth year. Merely telling yourselves or others the events which I attempted to outline will not help you realize the significance of what Jesus went through in preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha. You need to gain an idea of the sufferings undergone by Jesus of Nazareth, a human being, and let your hearts be deeply moved. He had to go through this pain and suffering before he came to the Mystery of Golgotha so that the Christ impulse might enter into Earth evolution.

The Christ impulse comes alive in our minds when we bring those sufferings to life in ourselves, speaking of facts relating to such things as these and seeking to bring our feelings and inner responses to mind. This is evident from the nature of Akashic research which I have tried to describe in a few words. The more one succeeds in entering into the living, surging and welling inner feelings the more does one penetrate those unknown truths.

The next event in the life of Jesus is something I need not go into, for we have often spoken of it. Through the baptism by John in the Jordan the three bodies of Jesus of Nazareth, previously filled with the spirit of the Zarathustra-I, received the Christ spirit. An entity thus came down from the world of the spirit and took up the destiny of being bound to a human body for three years. It is important to realize the meaning of this. Essentially it differs enormously from anything else that happened in Earth evolution. We have to understand that the event in which the Christ spirit entered into the bodies of Jesus of Nazareth was not a purely human affair in Earth evolution.

You may consider the matter from the human point of view and say: 'There was a human being who was as we described him. He took the Christ spirit, the Christ impulse into himself.' But we can also consider the matter from a very different point of view, though in this case our reflections will be a bit thin in mental images. This does not matter. Having prepared ourselves through the science of the spirit, we will be able to make something of it.

Let us assume we sit and contemplate the Mystery of Golgotha not as human beings in the assembled council of humanity, but in the council of the higher hierarchies, being a member of those hierarchies. A rough analogy is the following. If a village is half-way up a mountain, we can look

at it from below and also from the top of the mountain. Naturally we generally consider the Mystery of Golgotha from the human point of view. But it is possible to climb up into the sphere of the higher hierarchies. How would we then speak of the Mystery of Golgotha? We would have to say that when Earth evolution started the higher hierarchies had specific aims for humanity. They wanted to guide Earth evolution in a particular direction. But Lucifer intervened in human affairs on Earth. As a member of the higher hierarchies you look down on Earth evolution, wanting to guide human destinies—and then Lucifer changes the direction of evolution, though the intention had been to let things take a different course.

Looking down on human evolution we would then say to ourselves: 'Not everything that happens down there happens because of us. Lucifer is for ever intervening.' With Lucifer and later also Ahriman getting mixed up in the process an element entered into human evolution that was alien to everything the higher hierarchies were doing. In a way, we might say that the members of the higher hierarchies said to themselves: 'Up to a point, the earthly sphere of action is lost to us. Forces have entered that remove this sphere and its human souls from us.'

The higher hierarchies become involved in stages in the process of guidance, depending on their powers, starting with the lowest. High and indeed the highest of the spirits are involved in the management of Earth evolution, but they let certain matters be dealt with by their servants, the Angels, Archangels and Archai, and these are the first to be directly involved.

We saw ourselves—in all humility—sitting in the council of the higher hierarchies rather than the council of humanity. And in that situation we were able to say: 'The

Angels, Archangels and Archai are our messengers; they could execute our orders extremely well if it were not for the alien forces present in the earthly sphere.' This led to the great council of the gods arriving at something like the following conclusion: 'As we have not been able to keep Lucifer and Ahriman away from Earth evolution, our servants, the Angels, Archangels and Archai, are no longer able, from a certain point in time, to do what we intend them to do for humanity.' The point in time was that of the Mystery of Golgotha.

When this time approached the gods of the higher hierarchies had to say to themselves: 'We are losing the possibility of letting our servants intervene in human souls. We have been unable to hold off Lucifer and Ahriman and because of this we shall not be able to influence evolution through our servants after this time. Then powers will arise in human souls that can no longer be guided by Angels, Archangels and Archai. Human beings are getting beyond our reach because of the powers of Lucifer and Ahriman.'

That truly was the 'mood' in heaven when the moment in time approached that marked the beginning of our present era. The gods' great 'anxiety' was that their servants would no longer be able to look after humanity properly from a certain point in time. I am sure you will not misunderstand this, for you know from the science of the spirit that terms have a different meaning and evoke a different response when we use them to characterize the higher worlds.

The gods' 'anxiety' grew, becoming more and more of a torment, if we may put it like this. Then the decision was made to send down the Sun spirit, sacrificing it, for they said to themselves: 'Let him choose a different destiny from now on. Instead of sitting in the council of the gods let him enter the arena where human souls live. We sacrifice this Sun spirit

who until now has been one of us in the spheres of the higher hierarchies. Now he shall enter into the Earth's aura and Jesus shall be the gateway for this.'

This, then, is how the matter looked from above. It was the concern of the gods who guide Earth evolution, not only a matter for humans. One approach to this would have been not merely to ask: 'What has to be done so that humanity will not go downhill and be lost?' but to ask: 'How can we gods create a counterbalance to what is happening in Earth evolution because we had to let Lucifer and Ahriman become involved in it?'

Now we can feel that the Mystery of Golgotha is more than just an earthly affair, that it is a matter concerning the gods, an event in their world. Truly, it was even more important that the gods had to let Christ go, giving him to the Earth, than that humanity was able to receive the Christ.

Fundamentally speaking, how else are we to take the Mystery but as the central event on Earth? Looking at the Mystery of Golgotha we have to see that it was an affair of the gods; they opened a window in the heavens, and for a while dealt with their affairs in the sight of human eyes. We have to develop a real feeling for this, so that it is as if the house of heaven was closed up as we walked past it, but there would be a window at this point and we would be allowed to look through it and see things that otherwise are hidden within the walls of the gods' dwelling place.

Someone with true, reverent occult feeling will approach the Mystery of Golgotha like someone walking stealthily around a building that is all closed up, having only a faint idea of what goes on inside. But there is a window at one point, and through the window it is possible to witness a small part of what goes on inside. The Mystery of Golgotha is such a window on the world of the spirit. And so we must develop

a feeling for what happened when the Christ spirit entered into the body, or really the three bodies, of Jesus of Nazareth. We need to enter into this idea more and more deeply, realizing that in the Mystery of Golgotha we get a glimpse of an event that was an affair of the gods.

Speaking of things like these we have to use words differently than we do in everyday life. We have to speak of the 'anxiety', the 'fear' of the gods before the time came in Earth evolution that had to be fulfilled through the Mystery of Golgotha. Words have to be given a new meaning for the most sacred affairs of humanity. People are always ready from sheer silliness, frivolity, vanity or for other reasons to denigrate things that are spoken of as something most sacred. All you need to do is to take a term and twist its meaning to suit the way you want it in exoteric life. It is possible to turn something into its opposite, however much it was said out of an inner necessity to make the truths of the spiritual world known, truths it has been so hard to wring from your soul. People who are sufficiently frivolous and unscrupulous will twist their meaning, considering them ridiculous, devilish or satanic. This is only too wide-spread in the present time. And the people who should guard the treasure of sacred spiritual truths so that they may enter into human hearts are not sufficiently watchful.

People want to feed their spirit without effort. How often does one have to see deplorable things! If someone goes only a little beyond materialism in speaking of the spirit people will say this meets their need. It requires no effort on their part, especially inner effort. We should feel that when we take part in spiritual contemplation of the most sacred aspects of Earth evolution we carry responsibility for the rightful use of the treasures of knowledge relating to the world of the spirit. People are extremely frivolous and superficial in this

area today, taking everything lightly. You will meet with such frivolity again and again, but perhaps you will only realize how abhorrent it is if you are sufficiently watchful and if your hearts are truly aflame for the most sacred spiritual truths. Then perhaps you may be able to judge them rightly and be good guardians of the treasures of the spirit we are all called upon to guard.

It is perhaps easiest to say such serious things when one is referring to something as important as the truth that the Mystery of Golgotha is not just a human affair but an affair of the gods, and that we are able to glimpse this divine affair as through a window. I know that anything said to characterize this will be distorted in such a way that I cannot bring myself to speak of it. Perhaps a time will come when you will all have to remember the fact that words used in the physical world have to be given new meaning if we want to use them for the higher world, and that it will then be easy to misinterpret them.

In popular Christianity the truth I have presented has been given in the words: 'The Father sacrificed his Son for humanity.' For human hearts prepared to feel, these words indicate in a popular way what may be truthfully put as: 'The Mystery of Golgotha was an affair of the gods.'

If you take everything I have said you should have an idea of what happened at the baptism by John in the Jordan. It was followed by the temptation, which is also referred to in the other Gospels. From the point of view of the Akashic Record we would more or less say that when Jesus of Nazareth had received the Christ spirit into himself, he had to go into solitude. And there he had a visionary experience that is described fairly accurately in the words of the Gospel writers, who were clairvoyant. We might present it in a similar way, but reference must be made to the fact that the Christ spirit

was now truly connected with the three bodies of Jesus of Nazareth. It had come down from heights of spirit and become limited to the abilities of the three bodies. It would be wrong, therefore, to imagine that after the baptism the Christ, as a member of a higher world, would immediately have been able to gain insight into that world. That was not the case. If you find this difficult to understand, consider what it means to be a clairvoyant. Who are the clairvoyants? You are! Every one of you! There are none who are not clairvoyant. Why do they not have clairvoyant vision? Because they have not developed the organs that enable them to use the powers that exist in every human being. It is not just a matter of having abilities, but of being able to use them.

The Christ spirit had all kinds of abilities, but in the three bodies of Jesus of Nazareth it had only the abilities that were possible in those bodies. They had gone through complex preparatory stages, and the abilities of those three bodies were certainly greater than the corresponding abilities of all other people on Earth. But the Christ was bound to them, just as your clairvoyant abilities are bound to organs which you possess but are not yet able to use.

The Zarathustra soul had left certain abilities behind in the three bodies of Jesus of Nazareth, and the Christ was able to use these when he first of all faced a spiritual entity who was to arouse all the pride and arrogance of which a human soul is capable. He experienced what this spiritual entity brought about in him, using the inner language of visions: 'All the realms you see around you'—these were the realms of the spiritual world—'shall be yours if you recognize me as the lord of this world.' If we were to develop pride and arrogance to the highest degree and enter into the world of the spirit with them, that arrogance would drown everything else and we would gain the world realm of Lucifer. We would have to

leave everything else behind, except for our arrogance. Only we are not made for this as human beings; it would be a terrible fate we would have to face if we were.

Christ Jesus was faced with this possibility. And at this point two images arose in his heart: one reflected the experience he had on his way to the river Jordan, when he met the individual whom I called the desperate man yesterday. And the figure who had approached the desperate man in his dream appeared to Jesus of Nazareth again, now saying: 'Recognize me as the lord of the world.' And he also recognized the figure he had seen before the Essene gates as Lucifer. He therefore knew that Lucifer was speaking to him and repulsed the attack. He overcame Lucifer.

Then two entities launched a second attack on him. The impression he gained was again very much as the Bible tells us. He was told: 'Show all your fearlessness, your strength and power as a human being by throwing yourself down from the heights and not being afraid of taking harm.' In such a situation all awareness of strength, of courage, should arise in the human heart. But it can also cause a person to become wanton. Two figures stood before Christ. He had, however, gained an impression of Lucifer and Ahriman fleeing from the Essene gates, and he also had the impression that one of those figures masked the entity who presented himself as death to the leper whom Jesus had met on his way to the Jordan. He therefore recognized Lucifer and Ahriman, recalling his experiences on the way. He repulsed this attack as well, overcoming both Lucifer and Ahriman.

Then Ahriman approached once more. And what he said to Christ Jesus as a kind of temptation is reflected in the words of the Bible: 'Make these stones into bread to reveal your power.' This time, however, Christ Jesus was not able to meet Ahriman's challenge fully. He had repulsed the

first two attacks, one by Lucifer on his own and one by Lucifer and Ahriman, who cancelled each other out. But Ahriman's final attack could not be entirely repulsed, and this was to have significance for the whole working of the Christ impulse on Earth.

I shall have to use a popular, rather commonplace approach to show what the words: 'Make these stones into bread that they may feed people' actually mean. For the rest of Earth evolution, up to Vulcan, the higher hierarchies will not be able to drive Ahriman completely from the scene of their activities. It will never prove impossible to overcome inner temptation by Lucifer—the wishes, desires, passions, pride, arrogance and presumption that arise in us. If Lucifer attacks human beings on his own, spiritual effort will overcome him. And if Lucifer and Ahriman attack together from inside the human being, spiritual means will again lead to victory. If, however, Ahriman comes on his own, he anchors his powers in the material processes of Earth evolution and then he cannot be entirely removed from the scene. Ahriman, Mephistopheles, Mammon—these terms mean the same—is to be found in money, in everything connected with our natural egotism on Earth. Because human life must inevitably always have some external material aspect, human beings have to reckon with Ahriman. To give real help to humanity on Earth, the Christ had to allow Ahriman to have an influence. Ahriman, material nature, must be part of Earth evolution to its very end. The Christ must not overcome the influence of Ahriman. The Christ had to accept that the struggle against Ahriman must continue until Earth evolution reaches its end. Ahriman had to remain.

Inner attacks by Lucifer and by Lucifer and Ahriman together can be overcome by us. The struggles in the external world of matter have to be fought through to the end of Earth

evolution. The Christ therefore had to keep Ahriman at bay but he had to let him continue at his side. Because of this it was also possible for Ahriman to be active side by side with the Christ during the three years in which Christ was active in the body of Jesus of Nazareth, and then to enter into Judas' soul, inducing him to betray the Christ. What happened through Judas was connected with the challenge offered at the temptation after the event by the river Jordan, a challenge that could not be fully met.

The Christ spirit only united with the three bodies gradually in a process that took three years. Initially the connection was a loose one. The three bodies were only truly filled with the Christ spirit at a time when death was not far off. Compared to all the pain and suffering Jesus of Nazareth experienced in his three stages of development, the suffering the Christ went through now was infinitely greater. Over a period of three years the Christ spirit slowly found a way of entering into the three human bodies. It was continual pain, but pain that was transformed into love and love and love.

If we investigate the way Christ Jesus lived among his close followers during the three years, we find it was different from year to year. In the first year, the Christ was only loosely connected with the body of Jesus of Nazareth. At any moment the physical body might be in one place and the Christ spirit would be somewhere else. When the other Gospels speak of the Lord appearing to the disciples in some place or other, the physical body would be somewhere else, and the Christ spirit would move around the country.

That was at the beginning. As time went on the Christ spirit united more and more closely with the body of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus it would happen, later on, that when the Christ was among his closest disciples, these would be so strongly connected with him in heart and mind that he was not

separate from them, as it were. The more he entered into his body, the more did he come to live in the inmost being of his disciples. Going about in their midst he would speak now through one of them and now through another, for he had become so much part of them that it would not always be Christ Jesus who uttered the words but sometimes one of the disciples. The Christ would speak through one of the disciples. He entered so powerfully into the inner life of the disciples that the face of the disciple through whom the Christ was speaking would change. Outsiders would then feel that it was the master who spoke. The other individual, who was in fact the Christ, would be reduced to nothingness, looking quite ordinary. Thus he would speak now through one, now through another, as they went about the country. This was the secret of his influence during the latter part of the three years.

As Christ went about with his disciples in this way he became increasingly more dangerous in the eyes of his enemies who would say: 'How can we lay hands on him? We can't arrest the whole company. If we take the one who is speaking we shall never know if he is the one or not. If we take the wrong one, the one we want will escape.' They never knew if the one they saw before them was the man they wanted. That was their great anxiety. They knew that different individuals would speak at different times, and the wanted man could not be identified because he would look as ordinary as one of the others.

There was something very special about this company and because of this it was necessary to have a betrayal. The matter was not as it is usually represented. What is it supposed to mean, that Judas was to kiss the one who was wanted? The way the story is normally told, it should not have been difficult to get hold of Jesus of Nazareth. The kiss would be meaningless—unless the situation was such that someone

who was in a position to know had to show those who did not know which was the right man. I have indicated the reason why the enemy did not know which was the right man.

The Christ spirit only united completely with the bodies of Jesus of Nazareth when great suffering had to be faced, and the Mystery of Golgotha was beginning. What happened then is most beautifully described in the other Gospels. One of the facts emerging when the seer's eye is directed to these events in the Akashic Record is that at the time when the Christ hung on the cross, a darkness fell on the Earth in the region around Golgotha that was like an eclipse of the Sun. I am unable to say if it was a solar eclipse or darkness caused by mighty cloud formations, but darkness of the kind normally observed during a solar eclipse happened around the Mystery of Golgotha.

Seen with a seer's eye, life on Earth during an eclipse is very different from the usual. In plants, the connection between the ether body and the physical body is completely different, and in animals astral body and ether body look very different when the Earth is darkened in this way. It is different from what happens during the absence of the Sun at night. Nor was it the way it would be when the sky is covered with clouds in the ordinary way. It was a particularly dense darkness. As I said, I do not know if this was an actual solar eclipse, but one sees something rather like an eclipse. While this change happened on Earth, also in the physical sense, the Christ spirit entered into the living Earth aura. Through the death of Christ Jesus, the Earth received the Christ impulse.

The greatest event that ever happened on Earth can only be described in such simple, halting words. Human words simply are not enough to convey these things adequately.

When the body of Jesus was taken from the cross and laid

in a tomb, another natural event occurred, rather like something entering into the moral life of a person. The seer's eye can observe a whirlwind arising and a fissure opening in the ground. This received the body of Jesus, and the burial cloths were whirled away from the corpse. It is deeply moving to see the cloths arranged exactly as described in the Gospel of John.

Those two events—the darkening of the Earth and the earthquake accompanied by a tremendous whirlwind—show that natural events occurred at the same time as the spiritual events at that time in Earth evolution. Normally this happens only in living creatures, for instance when thinking and a voluntary decision precede a movement of the hand. Earth evolution has been such that in ordinary life we are dealing with mechanical facts only. Only at one special moment did a spiritual and two physical events come together. It also happens in relation to other facts on Earth, but this is the supreme example.

I do not think that a look at the facts, which can now be presented to a small number of people as a kind of Fifth Gospel, will in any way detract from the greatness of the—more theoretical—idea we have of the significance of the Mystery of Golgotha. Quite the contrary. I believe that if we allow these facts to influence us more and more deeply, the more theoretical, abstract concepts of the Mystery of Golgotha presented in earlier lectures, which have been mainly in the realm of thought, will be given substance. It will be evident from the nature of these facts that important events will take place in Earth evolution at this point in time.

Perhaps it will only be possible to get the right feeling and the right inner attitude to the Mystery of Golgotha by getting to know these facts. It has been my intention to help you find that inner attitude by telling you these stories from the Fifth

Gospel. It may be possible to speak of it again in other lectures courses, perhaps also here in Cologne. For it has to be said that although people show little inclination to be told such facts as these, it was absolutely essential that knowledge of such facts should be brought into Earth evolution at the present time. This is why they are communicated, although it is extremely difficult to speak of these things. One may well feel inclined not to speak of them, but they are communicated from an inner sense of obligation, so long as human souls are prepared to receive them. They will be needed in human evolution. The souls which now receive them will undoubtedly need them for the work they must do in soul and spirit as human evolution progresses.

You see, our studies have gradually shown what must come alive in our souls so that we may truly have a part in the ongoing evolution of humanity. The meaning and purpose of human evolution on Earth is that human souls should become more and more conscious of their mission.

The Christ has come. His impulse has been a real influence. For a long time he was active more at an unconscious level. Then he had to be able to work through what had so far been understood. He had an influence because of what he was, not because of what people understood. It will, however, become more and more necessary for people to understand the Christ, who entered into the bodies of Jesus of Nazareth and through them into the Earth's aura and therefore the living evolution of humanity.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

It has been a puzzle to me for many years why Rudolf Steiner, who was a real master of the German language, would often vary his terminology more than is usual in that language. A typical example is variation between 'ether body' and 'etheric body', sometimes in the same sentence. So far my policy had been to follow Rudolf Steiner simply because I did not understand his reasons and therefore did not feel qualified to change the text. It is, of course, a major temptation for translators, and editors, to 'tidy up', but a temptation that should, I feel, be resisted.

Working on this particular volume the issue arose again. These lectures would often make one acutely aware of the effort Rudolf Steiner had to put into rendering his spiritual perceptions into human language. He really let his audience share in this, and the minor variations in terminology helped to bring this out. I began to feel that the variation was deliberate. It could not be due to deficiencies in the shorthand reports, for we know Rudolf Steiner also used them in his written works. He was deliberately using a language that was not wholly definitive, inviting us to let the images live in our hearts and not pin them down intellectually. A typical example in this volume relates to the pagan altar. Rudolf Steiner would sometimes say Jesus of Nazareth was 'on' the altar and sometimes that he was 'by' it. These are growth points that can be of real value to us.

Another 'problem' is ambiguous phrasing of which there are a few instances in this volume. Again I have seen them as growth points for the thoughtful reader and resisted the

temptation to tidy up. I do not feel that it is the translator's role to resolve ambiguities of this nature, for, as I said, Rudolf Steiner was such a master of the German language that they have to be considered to have been deliberate.

It was one of the surprises Rudolf Steiner sometimes has in store for us when, having made my decision on how to handle the problem passages, I came on the following statement in this very volume:

The original of this passage, where the Bible says: 'From these stones God has the power to raise up children unto Abraham,' contains many words with double meaning; they are deliberately ambiguous, so that people may realize these things to have profound meaning. (Berlin, 13 January 1914)

In conclusion I'd like to thank my colleague Johanna Collis for her help with background research and for being always ready to listen and discuss the translation problems connected with this volume. I am also indebted to Racahel Shepherd, Christian Community Priest, and Dr Jenny Zarek, member of the Anglican Church, for helping me to think through certain terminology aspects.

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Anna Meuss

NOTES

GA = *Gesamtausgabe* = Collected works of Rudolf Steiner in German.

The 1992 German edition on which this translation is based has been edited by Ernst Weidman and Hella Wiesberger. This English edition volume contains 13 of the lectures in the German edition. Lectures given in Hamburg on 16 November 1913, Stuttgart on 22 and 23 November 1913 and Munich on 8 and 10 December 1913 are not included, as they cover much the same ground as the 13 lectures.

In several of the lectures given in this volume Rudolf Steiner spoke of further results of his investigations that had been presented elsewhere. Essentially these may be found in a kind of review given in a lecture in Paris on 27 May 1914 (GA 152). An English translation of this, entitled 'Progress in the Knowledge of the Christ' exists in manuscript form (Z422) at London's Rudolf Steiner House Library.

Shorthand records

The lectures given in Oslo were taken down by Fritz Mitscher. This shorthand record has been compared with a number of records and notes taken by other people and made available to the administrators of the Rudolf Steiner Literary Estate, with corrections made to the text as required.

The Berlin lectures are based on a shorthand record by Walter Vegelahm, and the Cologne lectures on that by Rudolf Hahn, Reinach.

The Macrocosmic Our Father

In earlier editions, the prayer was given as beginning with 'AUM, Amen!'. The 'AUM' has been omitted from the 1975 German edition onwards [and consequently also from this English edition] because examination of all available documents has shown that it does not appear in any of the many records and notes taken by listeners nor in Rudolf Steiner's own written versions and notebook entries.

It appears from the existing records that the prayer did start with 'AUM' at the laying of the foundation stone in Dornach on 20 September 1913, and is therefore also printed in this form in Rudolf Steiner's *Guidance in Esoteric Training*, Part 1 [Tr. C. Davy, O. Barfield. London: Rudolf Steiner Press 1977]. A connection thus exists between the AUM and the Macrocosmic Our Father; the speech choir of the Goetheanum did include the AUM under Marie Steiner, and she also added it when the Oslo lectures were first published in 1948.

Unpublished notes Rudolf Steiner made for a lecture on the Lord's

Prayer given in Berlin on 28 January 1907 include the comment: 'The word Amen is a distortion of the old mystery word.' The actual word from the mysteries is not mentioned, but it is unlikely to be anything but the AUM, for 'Amen originally was Aum ... In the dim distant past it had practically the same meaning as Aum' (Mrs Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. 3). Rudolf Steiner explained the AUM as follows on a notebook page (No. 3147):

I stand for <i>myself</i> :	a
I stand for <i>humanity</i> :	u
I stand for <i>life</i> :	m

- 1 Homer (c. 9th century BC). His Iliad and Odyssey are probably the earliest Greek epics, their subject being the legends of the great Trojan War.
- 2 Socrates (469–399 BC). Athenian philosopher.
- 3 Plato (427–347 BC). Athenian philosopher.
- 4 Aristotle (384–322 BC). Greek philosopher, scientist and physician. See Steiner, R. *The Riddles of Philosophy* (GA 18). Tr. not known. New York: Anthroposophic Press 1973.
- 5 Celsus (2nd century AD). Platonist. His *True Dogma* was the first philosophical work opposing Christianity. It was refuted by Origen (see below).
- 6 Marcus Aurelius Antonius (121–80). Roman emperor 161–80. Wrote his widely translated *Self Observations* in Greek.
- 7 Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus (c. 160–220). Christian theologian from c. 190, leader of Montanists in Africa from 205. Creator of Church Latin in his polemical, apologetic and disciplinary writings.
- 8 Origen (c. 185–252). Greek Christian biblical scholar from Alexandria, pioneer of exegesis, apologetics (against Celsus) and dogma. His teachings were condemned by 5th and 6th century Church Councils.
- 9 Copernicus, Nicholas (1473–1543). Founder of modern astronomy born at Torun in Poland. His *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium libri VI*, its contents conceived as early as 1507, dedicated to Pope Paul III, was put on the Index in 1615, remaining on it even after the 1757 revision, and only came off the Index in 1822 when the Holy Office declared that there was no ban on publishing works dealing with the movement of the Earth around the Sun.
- 10 Bruno, Giordano (1548–1600). Italian hermetic thinker, born in Nola, near Naples. Dominican. Arrested by the Inquisition, kept

imprisoned for seven years and burnt in Rome.

- 11 Haeckel, Ernst (1834–1919). German naturalist born at Potsdam. One of the first to take up Darwin's theory, developing it into a scientific system.
- 12 See Rudolf Steiner's lecture on Haeckel, 'Riddles of the World and Theosophy'. Published in German in *Die Welträtsel und Anthroposophie* (GA 54).
- 13 Steiner, R. *Reincarnation and Immortality* (GA 34). Essay written in 1905. Tr. M. & E. Tapp. New York: Multimedia Publishing Corp. 1974.
- 14 Darwin, Charles (1809–82). British naturalist. Founder of Darwinism, author of *Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*.
- 15 Reference to statements made in Besant/Leadbeater's *Man: Whence, How and Whither?* (London 1913).
- 16 From the 4th German edition of these lectures (1985) onwards, the term 'darkening of the Sun' has replaced 'solar eclipse', because in the lectures that follow Rudolf Steiner would always speak of a 'darkening of the Sun' or 'darkening of the Earth', saying that he did not yet know if this was a solar eclipse or if the Sun was obscured by huge clouds.
- 17 Renan, Ernest (1823–92), French author of *Vie de Jésus* (1863), English edition *A Life of Jesus*.
- 18 At the Theosophical Society's Annual General Meeting held in December 1912 in Adyar (India) Annie Besant stated that Rudolf Steiner, 'General Secretary of the German Section, brought up by Jesuits, has not been able to free himself sufficiently from this calamitous influence to allow freedom of opinion within his section.' Reported in *The Theosophist*, London, February 1913. Rudolf Steiner then felt it was necessary to write the story of his life. See also a lecture he gave in Berlin on 4 February 1913 (GA 83/83) (English translation published in *Anthroposophical News Sheet* 1946 pp. 13–22. London RSH Library ref. NSL 326).
- 19 Steiner, R. *The Mission of Folk Souls* (GA 121). Tr. A.H. Parker. London: Rudolf Steiner Press 1970.
- 20 1st Corinthians 3: 18, 19.
- 21 Maeterlinck, Maurice (1862–1949). Belgian poet and dramatist. Nobel prize 1911. *La Mort* 1913.
- 22 Luke 3: 22. The Kalmia Bittleston translation reads: 'You are my son the beloved. Today I have brought you to birth' (Floris Books 1990). The corresponding passages in the other Gospels (Matthew 3: 17 and Mark 1: 11) both follow Isaiah 42: 1: 'in whom my soul delights'. In the German Luther bible and the King James version the Luke

- passage reads the same as Matthew and Mark. The version given by Rudolf Steiner refers to Psalm 2: 7 ('You are my son; this day have I begotten you') and is the version found in many early and reliable sources. Some translations of the Bible use this version, including the German translation by Carl Weizsäcker that was frequently used by Rudolf Steiner (p. 1956 ff.) and the Jerusalem Bible, as the alignment with the Matthew and Mark versions was felt to be suspect.
- 23 Rudolf Steiner first spoke of the two Jesus children in Basle in September 1909 (*The Gospel of Luke*. GA 114. Tr. D. Osmond, Owen Barfield. London: Rudolf Steiner Press 1988). He returned to the subject in three public lectures given in Copenhagen in 1911 (published in book form in *The Spiritual Guidance of Man and Humanity*. GA 15. Tr. H. Monges. New York: Anthroposophic Press 1983).
- 24 *Bath* = daughter; *Kol* = voice. German reference: Strack–Billerbeck's *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament I*, S. 125 f. 1922.
- 25 Rabbi Eliezer ben Hirkano (c. AD 90).
- 26 The foundation stone for the First Goetheanum was laid on 20 September 1913 in Dornach, Switzerland.
- 27 Hillel (c. 60 BC–AD 10), surnamed Habalil (the Babylonian) and Hazaken (the Elder). Jewish sage and chosen President of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. He became the foremost authority on the oral tradition of Judaism that supplemented the written law of the Torah. He taught that kindness and mercy are the core of all the commandments: 'Do not do to your neighbour anything that is hateful to you.' His disciples were known as the School of Hillel. See Delitzsch's *Jesus and Hillel* (1879).
- 28 It is possible that Rudolf Steiner said 'Buddha' here rather than 'Hillel' and was misheard, or perhaps an error was made in writing it down.
- 29 Mark 12: 18–27 (question concerning the resurrection of the dead).
- 30 Reference to disputes with Annie Besant and her followers which had been discussed in the internal news sheet of the German Section of the Theosophical Society.
- 31 Reference to Max Heindel (1865–1919) who heard and wrote down many of Rudolf Steiner's lectures in Berlin in 1907/08, going under the name of Grashof. He then used these in his publication *Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception or Christian Occult Science*.
- 32 Literature by Hans Freimark, Kuno v.d. Schalk, Ferdinand Maack.
- 33 Referring to occasions when Rudolf Steiner spoke of the two Jesus children. See note 23.
- 34 Eucken, Rudolf (1846–1926). Nobel prize 1908. An English trans-

lation of his work, entitled *Can we still be Christians?* was published in 1914.

- 35 E.g. the Assyriologist Peter Jensen in a lecture given in Marburg in 1910 entitled 'Hat der Jesus wirklich gelebt?' (Did Jesus actually live?).
- 36 Refers to mystery plays performed annually in Munich, always followed by a course of lectures. The lectures given in Munich in August 1913 are published in *Secrets of the Threshold* (GA 147). Tr. R. Pusch. New York: Anthroposophic Press 1987.
- 37 See Note 26.
- 38 Rudolf Steiner had last spoken in Berlin on 10 April 1913.
- 39 Steiner, R. *Welt- und Lebensanschauungen im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*. First published in 1900 (part 1) and 1901 (part 2). Second edition entitled *Die Rätsel der Philosophie* published in 1914. English edition *Riddles of Philosophy* tr. by F. A. Kölln. New York: Anthroposophic Press 1973.
- 40 Thales (630–546 BC). Greek philosopher and scientist of Miletus in Asia Minor.
- 41 Pherekydes of Syros. Greek philosopher.
- 42 St Anselm (1033–1109), Archbishop of Canterbury. For his proof of God's existence, see his *Monologion* and *Proslogion*.
- 43 An example of such a theologian was Albert Kalthoff (1850–1906), a Protestant minister, who published *Das Christus-Problem—Grundlinien zu einer Sozialtheologie* in Leipzig in 1902.
- 44 In a well-known weekly journal *Die Zukunft*, Vol. 21, No. 50, 30 September 1913; article by Jakob Fromer: 'Die Erneuerung der Philosophie'.
- 45 Spinoza, Baruch (1632–77). Dutch philosopher.
- 46 Rudolf Eucken. See note 34.
- 47 Rudolf Eucken, *Can we still be Christians?* Page 238 in German edition.
- 48 Harnack, Adolf von (1851–1930). *Das Wesen des Christentums*. 16 lectures given at Berlin University. Leipzig 1901. P. 102: 'Whatever may have happened at the tomb and as regards appearances—one thing is certain: indestructible faith in the overcoming of death and life eternal originated from that tomb.'
- 49 Christ's tunic, woven in one piece (John 19, 23f), ancient symbol for the unity of Church and faith. The Tunic of Trier (Treves) has special significance as a contact relic from Constantinian times.
- 50 Renan, Ernest. See Note 17.
- 51 John 21: 25.
- 52 Maurice Maeterlinck. See Note 21.

- 53 Hillel. See Note 27.
- 54 See Note 36.
- 55 Steiner, R. *Christ and the Spiritual World and the Search for the Holy Grail* (GA 149). Tr. by C. Davy and D. Osmond. London: Rudolf Steiner Press 1983.
- 56 Chrétien de Troyes (c. 1143–c. 1190). French poet, lived at the courts of Champagne and Flanders. Founder and most important representative of epic poetry at the courts. His epics include Lancelot and Perceval.
- 57 Wolfram von Eschenbach (c. 1170–c. 1220). Greatest of epic poets in German courtly poetry. Main work: *Parsifal*.
- 58 A story known from Schiller's poem *Das verschleierte Bild zu Sais* (the veiled image at Sais [in Egypt]).
- 59 Richard Wagner (1813–83). Rudolf Steiner spoke about this especially in a lecture given in Kassel on 16 January 1907 published in German in *Das christliche Mysterium* (GA 97).
- 60 Steiner, R. *Genesis. Secrets of the Bible Story of Creation*. GA 122. Tr. D. Lenn and O. Barfield. London: Rudolf Steiner Press 1982.
- 61 Exodus 13: 21, 22.
- 62 Steiner, R. *The Gospel of St Luke* (GA 114), lecture given in Basle on 20 September 1909. Tr. D. Osmond, O. Barfield. London: Rudolf Steiner Press 1988.
- 63 Matthew 3: 7; Luke 3: 7.
- 64 Matthew 3: 9; Luke 3: 8.
- 65 See Steiner, R. *From Jesus to Christ*. GA 131. Tr. H. Collison and D. Davy. London: Rudolf Steiner Press 1973, and *The Baghavad Gita and the Epistles of St Paul*. GA 142. Tr. L. D. Monges and D. M. Bugbey. New York: Anthroposophic Press 1971.
- 66 See Note 55.
- 67 1 Corinthians 3: 19.
- 68 Matthew 11:11; Luke 7: 28.
- 69 Kepler passages taken from Günther, L. *Kepler und die Theologie*. Pp. 109–112, 116–7.
- 70 Page written by Kepler in the autograph album of Jacob Roller, who had been a fellow student at Tübingen, when the latter was about to take up a professorship in Graz. Written in the spring of 1594, the original was found among the papers of the late Professor Moriz Carrière in Munich. Quoted by Rudolf Steiner from the above work by L. Günther.
- 71 From 1907 onwards, Rudolf Steiner would again and again use the words: 'Ex deo nascimur, in Christo morimur, per spiritum sanctum reviviscimus'. He called them the 'target statement' of true

- Rosicrucianism, rendering them into German with minor variations on different occasions. E.g. 'From God am I born, in Christ I die, through the Holy Spirit I am resurrected' (1909, GA 284); 'From the divine comes the essence of humanity; in Christ death becomes life, in the world thoughts of the spirit the soul awakens' (1923; GA 260).
- 72 Steiner, R. 'The three super-earthly spiritual events preceding the Mystery of Golgotha' (in GA 152). Tr. D. Osmond. Single-lecture typescript Z 411 at Rudolf Steiner House Library, London.
- 73 Steiner, R. *The Wisdom of Man, of the Soul and of the Spirit. Anthroposophy, Psychosophy, Pneumatosophy* (GA 115). Tr. S. & L. Lockwood. New York: Anthroposophic Press 1971.
- 74 John 20: 1–10.
- 75 Steiner, R. *The Gospel of St Luke* (GA 114). Tr. D. Osmond, O. Barfield. London: Rudolf Steiner Press 1988; *The Gospel of St Matthew* (GA 123). Tr. D. Osmond, M. Kirkcaldy. New York: Anthroposophic Press 1985.
- 76 Hillel. See Note 27.
- 77 *Lucifer-Gnosis* appeared in 1904–08. Rudolf Steiner's articles were later published as Steiner, R. *Cosmic Memory. Atlantis and Lemuria* (GA 11). Tr. K. E. Zimmer. New York: Harper and Row 1981.
- 78 Steiner, R. *A Road to Self-Knowledge and The Threshold of the Spiritual World* (GA 16 & 17). Tr. M. Cotterell. London: Rudolf Steiner Press 1975.

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The following have been excluded from the list: Christ, Christ Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth, Lucifer, Ahriman.

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Publisher's Note

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 members' lectures 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 arises from, and directly addresses 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.' The original German editions on

which this text is based were published by Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland in the collected edition (*Gesamtausgabe*, 'GA') of Rudolf Steiner's work. All publications are edited by the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung (estate), which wholly owns both Rudolf Steiner Verlag and the Rudolf Steiner Archive. The organization relies solely on donations to continue its activity.

From his clairvoyant reading of the spiritual Akashic Record – the cosmic memory of all events, actions and thoughts – Rudolf Steiner was able to speak of aspects of the life of Jesus Christ which are not contained in the four biblical Gospels. Such research, in that it is not based on historical records or extant documents, can be spoken of as a 'Fifth Gospel'.

After an intense inner struggle to verify the exact nature of these events, and after carefully checking the results of his research, Steiner described many detailed episodes from the Akashic Record. He speaks here, for example, of Jesus's life in the community of the Essenes, the temptation of Christ in the wilderness, and of a significant conversation between Jesus and Mary.

Steiner states that divulging such spiritual research is intensely difficult, but that it is '...absolutely essential that knowledge of such facts should be brought to Earth evolution at the present time.'

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