

• The Etherization of the Blood

Basel, October 1, 1911

As human beings, whenever we work toward knowledge—whether as mystics, realists, or in any other way—we have been commanded to know ourselves. Nevertheless, it has been repeatedly emphasized on other occasions, that knowledge of the human soul is certainly not as easy to acquire as people often believe, even anthroposophists. Anthroposophists should always be mindful of the hindrances we encounter in our efforts. Self-knowledge is absolutely essential, however, if we wish to attain a worthwhile goal in world existence, and if our actions are to be worthy of us as members of humankind. Let us ask why self-knowledge is so difficult for us. Human beings are truly a complicated, and when we speak of the inner life of our souls, we should not assume that it something simple. We need patience and perseverance and the will to penetrate continually more deeply into this wonderful organization of divine spirit forces that manifest as a human being.

Before we look into the nature of self-knowledge, two aspects of human soul life present themselves to us. Just as a magnet has a north and a south pole, and just as light and darkness present themselves as two poles of light, there are also

two poles in our soul life. Both poles may appear as we observe someone involved in two contrasting life situations. Imagine we are watching a woman standing on the street, and she is completely lost in contemplating the striking beauty and wonder of some natural phenomenon. We see how still she stands, moving neither her hands nor her feet, never looking away from the spectacle presented to her. We are also aware that she is making an inner picture of what she sees. We say that she is absorbed in contemplation of what surrounds her. That is one situation; here is another. A man is walking along the street and senses that someone has insulted him. Without really thinking about it, he becomes angry and hits the one who insulted him. Here we see a manifestation of the forces that spring from anger—impulses of will—and it's easy to imagine that, if the action had been preceded by thought, there would have been no need to strike.

We have imagined two very different actions. In the first, there is only the formation of a mental picture, a process free of conscious will; in the second, there is no thought, no formation of mental pictures, and a will impulse is given immediate expression. These two situations present us with the two poles of the human soul. One is surrender to contemplation and to forming mental pictures and thought, in which volition does not take part; the second is an impelling force of will without thought. We arrived at these facts simply by outer observation of ordinary life.

We can go into these things more deeply, however, and enter areas where we find our way only by calling on the results of esoteric research to help us. Here another polarity confronts us: sleeping and waking. We know the esoteric significance of the relationship between sleeping and waking. Elementary

concepts of anthroposophy tell us that, when we are awake, the four members of our being (physical body, ether body, astral body, and I-being) are organically and actively interwoven; but while in sleep, the physical and ether bodies remain together in bed as the astral body and I-being pour out into the great cosmos that border on our physical existence. We could also approach these facts from a different direction. What can be said about waking life—contemplation of the world, imagination, thinking, and will impulses—on the one hand, and sleep, on the other.

You can see that, if we penetrate this question more deeply, it becomes obvious that, in our present physical existence, people are essentially always asleep, in a certain sense. At night people sleep in a different way than they do in the daytime. This can be proved to you in a purely external way, since you know that one can awaken in the esoteric sense during the day—that is, one can attain clairvoyance and see into the spirit world. The ordinary physical body is asleep to this observation, and one can rightly say that when a person learns to use the spiritual senses, it is an awakening. At night, of course, we are asleep in the ordinary way. We can say, therefore, that while asleep in the ordinary sense, people “sleep in the physical world,” and today’s daytime consciousness is “sleep in the spirit world.”

If people are unaware that volition is not asleep during the night, this is because they understand only how to be awake in their thinking. But the will does not sleep during the night; it works within a fiery element upon his body to restore what was been used up during the day. These facts can be considered in yet another light. On deeper scrutiny, we see that, in the ordinary waking condition of physical life, as a rule people

have little control over the will; volition detaches itself from daily life. Observe closely what we call the human will, and you will see how little control people have over the will in daily life. Just look everything you do from morning to evening, and how little of it is really the result of your own thought, mental pictures, and individual decisions. When someone knocks at the door and you say “Come in,” this cannot really be called a decision of your thinking and volition. If you are hungry and sit down to a meal, this cannot be called a decision of the will, because it is really the result of your organism’s needs. Try to picture your daily life, and you will see how little it is directly influenced by your will.

Why is this? Esoteric teachings show us that, in terms of the will, people in fact sleep during the day; in other words, people do not really live within their will impulses. We can invent better concepts, and we can become increasingly moral and refined as individuals, but we can do nothing about the will. If we cultivate better thoughts, we can indirectly affect the will, but we cannot directly influence the will in life. This is because, in our daily life, our will can be influenced only indirectly—through sleep. While asleep, you do not think; you do not form mental images, but the will awakes and permeates our organism from outside and invigorates it. We feel strengthened in the morning, because the will has penetrated our organism. The fact that we do not perceive this will activity and know nothing about it becomes comprehensible when we realize that all conceptual activity sleeps whenever we sleep.

To begin with, then, we will offer this suggestion for further contemplation and meditation. You will see that, as you progress in self-knowledge, you will find confirmation of the truth that people sleep in their will while awake and sleep in

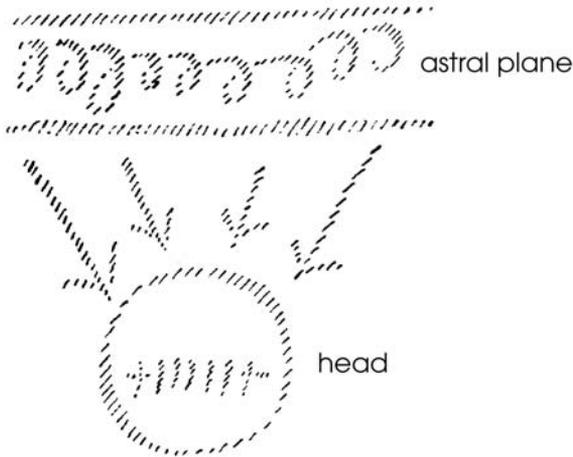
their conceptual life while asleep. The life of will sleeps by day; the life of thought sleeps by night.

Thus there are two poles in human beings: that of observing and forming mental images and that of will impulses. Human beings are related in entirely opposite ways to these two poles, but these are the extremes; soul life as a whole exists in various nuances between these two poles, and we can begin to understand this soul if take it as a microcosm and compare it to what we know as the higher worlds.

From what has been said, we know that the process of mental imagery is one pole of soul life. This process seems unreal to those whose thinking is materialistic. We often hear the notion that mental pictures and thoughts are only mental pictures and thoughts. This implies that, when we handle a piece of bread or meat, this is a reality, but a thought is “only a thought.” This means that you cannot eat a thought, and thus a thought is not real but merely a thought. But why is this? Essentially, it is because what people consider thoughts may be compared to what thoughts really are, just as we can compare the reflected image the thing in itself. The reflected image of a flower points you to the flower in its reality. So it is with thoughts; human thinking is a shadow image of mental pictures and beings that belong to a higher world called the astral plane.

A correct representation of thinking would be to picture the human head as in this drawing (it is not absolutely correct but simply a schematic sketch). In this head are thoughts, represented by dashes. The thoughts that are in the head, however, must be imagined as beings that live on the astral plane. Beings that vary widely are active as abounding mental images and activities that cast their shadow images into human beings; these processes are reflected in the human head as thinking.

Continuous streams flow from your head into the astral plane, and these shadows establish thought life in your head.



In addition to what we call thinking, there is another process in the human soul. Ordinarily, one distinguishes between thinking and feeling (this is not strictly correct, but it is useful to take a concept from ordinary life). Feelings fall into two categories: feelings of pleasure and sympathy and feelings of displeasure and antipathy. The first are stimulated by good, benevolent actions and the second by evil, malevolent actions. This is different and involves more than the just forming of mental images. We mentally form images of things regardless of other factors. The soul, on the other hand, experiences sympathy or antipathy in relation to beauty and goodness or ugliness and evil. Everything that takes place as human thinking indicates the astral plane; everything connected with sympathy or antipathy points to the realm we call the lower devachan. I drew lines to indicate the connection between mental images

and the astral world, and now I can show that feeling point upward to devachan, or the heavenly world. Processes in the heavenly world, or devachan, are projected mainly into our breast as feelings of sympathy or antipathy toward beauty or ugliness and for good or evil. Within our souls, there are shades of the heavenly world, or lower devachan, in what we may call our experience of the moral and esthetic world.¹

There is also a third aspect of the human soul, which we must distinguish strictly from a simple preference for beneficial actions. There is a difference between standing by and taking pleasure in seeing a kind act and activating one's volition to perform such an act oneself. The pleasure one takes in seeing good and beautiful acts or the displeasure one feels toward evil and ugly deeds I will call the esthetic element. The moral element, on the other hand, motivates one to do good. The moral element is at a higher level than the purely esthetic; mere pleasure or displeasure is at a lower level than the will to do something good or evil. Insofar as one's soul the need to express moral impulses, those impulses are the shadow images of higher devachan, of the higher heavenly world.

We can easily imagine these three stages of soul activity: purely intellectual (thoughts, mental pictures, observation); esthetic (pleasure or displeasure); and moral (impulses to do good or evil). These are microcosmic reflections in human experience of the three realms that exist in the macrocosm at ascending levels. The astral world is reflected in the world of thought and intellect; the lower devachan is reflected in the

1. Devachan (Tibetan), literally "the happy place." Steiner also uses other terms to describe areas of the soul: the region of soul life=upper devachan; the region of active soul power=lower devachan; the region of soul light=astral. See *Theosophy*, pp. 103–108.

esthetic realm of pleasure and displeasure; the higher devachan world is reflected as morality.

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|-------------------------|--|----------|
| Thoughts: | shadow images of beings of the astral plane | awake |
| Sympathy and antipathy: | shadow images of beings if the lower devachan | dreaming |
| Moral impulses: | shadow images of beings of the higher devachan | asleep |

If we connect this with what was said about the polarity of the human soul, we experience the intellect as the pole that dominates the life in which we are intellectually awake. During the day, people are awake to the intellect; while asleep, we are awake to our will. Because we are asleep to our intellect at night, we are unaware of what we do with the will. What we call moral principles and impulses act indirectly in the will. Indeed, we need sleep so that the moral impulses we absorb through thinking can become effective activity. In ordinary life today, people are able to do what is right only at the level of intellect; they are less capable of doing anything on the moral plane, because there people depend on help from the macrocosm.

Inherent human nature can bring about the further development of the intellect, but we need the gods to help us acquire greater moral strength. We sink into sleep so that we can plunge into divine will, where the intellect does not interfere and divine forces are transformed into the volitional strength and moral principles we receive, instilling in our will something we could otherwise receive only into our thoughts.

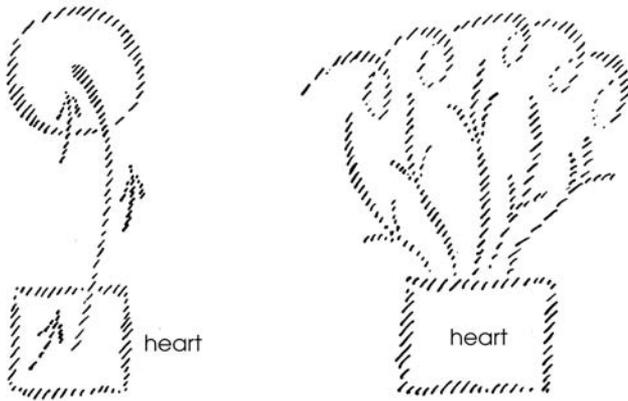
Between these two opposites—the will that awakes at night and the intellect that awakes by day,—exists the sphere of

esthetic appreciation, which is always present in human beings. During the day, people are not fully awake; only the most unimaginative and pedantic individuals are always fully awake during the day. Basically, human beings must in fact dream during the day; they must be able to surrender to art or poetry or some other activity that is completely unconcerned with crass reality. Those who can give surrender in this way create a bond that can enliven and invigorate the whole of existence. To give oneself up to such thoughts is, in a sense, like a dream penetrating waking life. You know that dreams enter sleep; these are real dreams that permeate the other consciousness of sleep. People also need this by day, otherwise they will lead a dry, empty, and unhealthy daily life. Dreams arise during sleep at night in any case, and this does not need proof. Midway between the two opposites of night dreaming and daydreaming there is a condition that can come alive in fantasy.

So here again there is a threefold life of soul. The intellectual element in which we are really awake brings shadow images of the astral plane. This happens when, during the day, we give ourselves up to a thought, whereby fruitful ideas may originate for daily life and great inventions. Then, during sleep, we dream and our dreams play into our life of sleep, and images from lower devachan are reflected in us. When we work during sleep to impress morality upon our will, when we are able to imbue our thinking during the night with the influence of divine spiritual powers, the impulses we perceive are reflections from higher devachan. (We cannot perceive this directly, but certainly its effects.) These are the moral impulses and feelings that live in us. It leads us to say that, essentially, human life is justified only when we place our thoughts at the service of goodness and beauty and allow the heart's blood of divine spirit

to flow through our intellectual activities, permeating them with moral impulses.

What we present here as the life of the human soul—first from exoteric observation and then from a more mystical kind of observation—is revealed by deeper esoteric research. The processes described in their outer qualities can also be perceived in human beings through clairvoyance. When a person stands before us today in a waking state and we observe that individual with clairvoyant sight, certain rays of light can be seen streaming continuously from the heart to the head. To sketch this schematically, we draw the region of the heart here and show continuous streams from there to the brain and flowing around the organ known to anatomy as the pineal gland.



These rays of light flow from the heart to the head and around the pineal gland. These streams arise because human blood, a physical substance, continually dissolves into an etheric substance. In the region of the heart there is a continual transformation of the blood into this delicate etheric substance that streams upward toward the head and flows in a glimmering way around the pineal gland. This process is the etherization of

the blood, and it can be shown in human beings throughout their waking life. However, this is different for human beings when asleep. When people sleep, the occult vision can see a continual stream into the brain from outside, and in the reverse direction as well, from the brain to the heart.

In sleeping people, streams come from outside—from the macrocosm of cosmic space—and flow into the inner constitution of the physical and ether bodies lying in bed. These streams reveal something remarkable when investigated; they vary greatly in different individuals. When asleep, people differ greatly from one another, and those who are a little vain would avoid going to sleep at public gatherings if they knew how much they betray themselves to esoteric observation. The streams that flow into human beings during sleep reveal distinct moral qualities through their particular colors; a person of lower moral principles reveals streams very different from those in a person of higher principles. Attempts to disguise one's nature during day are useless; in the face of higher cosmic powers, disguise is impossible. In cases of those who possess only a slight inclination toward moral principles, the rays flowing into them are brownish red or various shades tending toward brownish red. In those of high moral ideals, the rays are lilac to violet.

At the moment of awaking or going to sleep, in the area of the pineal gland a struggle, so to speak, occurs between the streams from above and streams rising from below. When people are awake, the intellectual element streams upward from below as currents of light, and the moral and esthetic nature flows downward from above. At the moment of waking or going to sleep, these two currents meet, and in persons of low morality, a violent struggle takes place between the two streams in the area of the pineal gland. In those who possess a high

morality and whose intellect flows outward, a glimmering light peacefully expands in the area of the pineal gland. This gland is almost surrounded by a small sea of light during the moments between awaking and sleeping. Moral nobility is revealed when a calm glow surrounds the pineal gland in those moments. Thus a person's moral character is reflected, and this calm glow of light often extends as far as the area of the heart. Two streams can thus be perceived in human beings: one from the macrocosm, the other from the microcosm.

To assess the full significance of how these two streams meet in the human being, we must first consider what has been said in a more external way about soul life and how this life reveals a threefold polarity of intellectual, esthetic, and moral elements that flow downward from above, from the brain toward the heart. We must also understand the full meaning of what was said about turning our attention to corresponding phenomenon in the macrocosm. As a result of the scrupulous, careful esoteric research of recent years by genuine Rosicrucians, these corresponding phenomenon can now be described.² Their investigations have shown that something takes place in the macrocosm that corresponding to what we've described in the microcosm. You will understand this better with time.

Right in the area of the human heart, blood is continually transformed into etheric substance, and a similar process takes place also in the macrocosm. We can understand this when we contemplate the Mystery of Golgotha, the moment when blood flowed from the wounds of Jesus Christ. This blood must not be thought of simply as a chemical substance, but because of all that has been said about the nature of Jesus of

2. See the footnote on page 111.

Nazareth, it must be recognized as something completely unique. When it flowed from his wounds into the earth, a substance was given to our earth that, by uniting with it, became the most important event for every age that followed on earth, and it could take place only one time. What happened to this blood in the ages that followed? The same thing that takes place in the human heart.

In earthly evolution, this blood has passed through a process of etherization. Just as our blood flows upward from the heart as ether, likewise, since the Mystery of Golgotha, the etherized blood of Jesus Christ has lived in the ether of the earth. The earth's ether body is imbued with what became of the blood that flowed on Golgotha. This is important; if that event through Jesus Christ had not taken place, the condition of humankind on the earth could not have been other than previously described. Since the Mystery of Golgotha, however, there has always been a possibility for the activity of the etheric blood of Christ to flow together with what streams in human beings from heart to head.

Because the etherized blood of Jesus is in the ether body of the earth, it accompanies the etherized human blood that flows upward from the heart to the brain; thus, not only do these streams I described earlier meet in the human being, but the human bloodstream also unites with the bloodstream of Jesus Christ. These two streams can unite, however, only if people are able to develop real understanding of the Christ impulse. Otherwise, there can be no union; the two streams will repel each other. In every age of earthly evolution, we must understand in a way that is appropriate for that time.

When Jesus Christ lived on earth, earlier events could be correctly understood by those who came to his forerunner John

and were baptized by him according to the rite described in the Gospels. They were baptized so that their sin—the karma of previous lives that had come to an end—might be changed, and in order that they might realize that the most powerful impulse in earthly evolution was about to descend into a physical body. Human evolution progresses, however, and in our age it is important for people to understand that the knowledge of spiritual science must be received; that knowledge must be able to gradually kindle what streams from heart to brain, so that anthroposophy can be understood. If this happens, people will be able to comprehend the event that begins in the twentieth century: the appearance of the etheric Christ, as distinguished the physical Christ of Palestine.

We have now reached the time when the etheric Christ enters the life of earth and will become visible—initially to a few people through natural clairvoyance, and then over the course of the next three millennia to more and more. This will inevitably happen as an event of nature. It will happen just as certainly as did the inventions related to electricity in the nineteenth century. Some will see the etheric Christ and will experience what took place near Damascus. This will not happen, however, until those people learn to observe the moment Christ approaches them. Only a few decades from now, a few people here and there will have certain experiences, particularly young people (this is already being prepared). And if they have truly sharpened their vision by working with anthroposophy, such individuals may become aware that someone has suddenly approached to help them become alert to something. The truth is, Christ has come to them, although they believe that they see a physical man. They will come to realize, however, that this is a suprasensory being, since he will immediately vanish. Many

will have this experience while sitting silently in a room, oppressed with a heavy heart and not knowing which way to turn. The door will open, and the etheric Christ will appear to console that person. The Christ will become a living comforter. Though it may seem strange now, it is nevertheless true that even large numbers of people will often be sitting together and wondering what to do, and they will see the etheric Christ. He will be there and confer with them; he will cast his word into such gatherings. We are approaching those times, and this positive, constructive element will take hold of human evolution.

We will not say anything here against the tremendous progress in our culture today; these achievements are essential for human welfare and freedom. Whatever we gain in the way of external progress, however, by mastering the forces of nature is small and insignificant compared to the blessing upon those who experience a soul awakening through Christ, who will take hold of human culture and its concerns; unifying, positive forces will awaken in human beings. The Christ brings constructive forces into human civilization.

If we were to look back early post-Atlantean times, we would find that human beings built their dwellings in a very different way that we do today. In those days, they used all sorts of growing things. Even when building palaces, they called on nature to help them by having plants and the branches of trees weave together and so on. Today, we must build with fragments. We make all external culture in our world with the products of fragmentation. During the coming years, you will gain an even better understanding of how much our culture is the product of destruction.

We thus realize what a tremendous advance was indicated by the fact that Christ needed to live for three years on earth in a

specially prepared human body, so that he would be visible to physical eyes. Because of what happened during those three years, human beings have been prepared to see the Christ who will move among them in an ether body; he will enter earthly life as surely and effectively as did the physical Christ in Palestine. If human beings observe these events with undimmed senses, they will know that there is an etheric body that will move within the physical world, but they will know, too, that this is the *only* ether body that can work in the physical world as a human physical body does. It will differ from a physical body in this respect only: that it can be in two, three, or even a hundred or a thousand places at the same time. This is possible for an etheric but not a physical form.

The benefit to humanity provided by this advance is that the two poles I mentioned—the intellectual and the moral—will gradually come together and merge. This will occur because, over the next millennia, human beings will gradually learn to see the etheric Christ in the world; people will become imbued during waking life, too, through the effects of goodness directly from the spirit world. Presently, the will sleeps by day, and people can influence it only indirectly through thinking. However, from our time onward, something is at work in us under the aegis of Christ that, over the course of the next thousand years will make it possible for the activities of people while awake to have direct, beneficial effects.

Light is destroying itself in our post-Atlantean, earthly processes. Until the time of Atlantis, earthly processes had been progressive, but since then they have been processes of decay. What is light? Light decays, and decaying light is electricity. What we know as electricity is really light that is destroying itself within matter. The chemical force that is transformed in

earthly evolution is magnetism. Yet a third force will become active, and if it seems electricity works wonders today, this third force will affect civilization in an even more miraculous way. The more of this force we employ, the faster the earth will tend toward becoming a corpse, while its spiritual part prepares for the Jupiter embodiment. Forces must be applied to destroy the earth so that human beings can be freed from it, and so that the earth's body can fall away. As long as the earth's processes were progressive, this was not happening, since only a decaying earth can use the great achievements of electricity. As strange as this sounds, it must gradually become known. We must understand the process of evolution before we can assess our culture in the right way. Thus we will learn that the earth has to be destroyed; otherwise, spirit will not be freed. We will also learn to value the positive penetration of spiritual forces into our earthly existence.

It was Socrates' dream that one day virtue could be taught; now, not only will it will become increasingly possible on earth to energize the human intellect through such teaching, but also for moral impulses to be spread abroad. Schopenhauer (1788–1860) suggested that to preach morality is easy, but to establish it is difficult. Why is this? Because morality has yet to be spread through preaching; it is, after all, possible to recognize moral principles and yet not live by them. For most people, the Pauline saying applies here—that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. This will change through the moral fire that streams from the Christ. Because of this, it will become increasingly clear to people that the world needs moral impulses. Human beings will transform the earth as they increasingly feel that morality is essential to our world. In the future, immorality will be possible only for those who receive immoral help

and are pushed in that direction—people who are possessed by evil demons, by ahrimanic and asuric forces and who work for such possession. The future of the earth will be such that, although there will be enough people who teach morality and offer a moral foundation, there will be those who by their own choice surrender to evil forces, thus enabling an excess of evil to struggle against the benevolent portion of humankind. Nobody will be forced to once choice or another; matters will proceed according to the free will of each individual.

Then a time will come when the earth enters conditions that, like much else, are described only by Eastern mysticism. The atmosphere of morality will have gathered considerable strength, which has been spoken of for many millennia by Eastern mysticism. Since the coming of Gautama Buddha, it has spoken especially about a future condition when earth will be bathed in a moral etheric atmosphere. Ever since the time of the ancient Rishis, Eastern mystics had hoped that this moral impulse would come to earth from Vishva Karman (or as Zarathustra proclaimed, from Ahura Mazda). Eastern mysticism foresaw that this moral atmosphere would come to earth from the being we call the Christ. Eastern mystics had set their hopes on the being of Christ.

Eastern mystics could imagine the consequences of that event but not its form. They imagined that, within five millennia after the Buddha's enlightenment, pure akashic forms bathed in fire and lit by the sun would appear in the wake of the one who could not be seen by the Eastern mysteries. In fact, this is a wonderful image: that something would come to prepare the way for the Sons of Fire and Light to move through the moral atmosphere of the earth—not in physical form but in pure akashic forms within the earth's moral atmosphere. It

was said that five thousand years after the Buddha's enlightenment, a teacher would be present to show humankind the nature of those wonderful, pure forms of fire and light. That teacher, Maitreya Buddha, will appear three millennia from now and teach people about the Christ impulse.

Eastern mysticism thus joins Western Christian knowledge to form a beautiful unity. It will also be revealed that the one who will appear in three thousand years as Maitreya Buddha will have incarnated repeatedly on the earth as a bodhisattva to succeed Gautama Buddha. One of his incarnations was that of Jeshu ben Pandira, who lived a hundred years before the beginning of our Christian era. The being who incarnated in Jeshu ben Pandira is the one who will one day become Maitreya Buddha, one who returns repeatedly, century after century, in a body of flesh, not yet as a buddha but as a bodhisattva. Even in our time, the one who be Maitreya Buddha gives the most significant teachings concerning the Christ and the Sons of Fire (Agnishvattas) of Indian mysticism.

True Eastern and Christian wisdom both provide the indications by which people can recognize the being who will be Maitreya Buddha. In contrast to the Sons of Fire, Maitreya Buddha will appear in a physical body as a bodhisattva, and he can be recognized by the fact that his development during youth shows no indication of the individual within him. Only those who understand will recognize the presence of a bodhisattva, who will not manifest before the ages of thirty to thirty-three. Something like an exchange of personality takes place at that time. Maitreya Buddha will reveal his identity to humanity in the thirty-third year of his life. Just as Jesus Christ began his lifework in his thirtieth year, so do bodhisattvas, who will continue to proclaim the Christ impulses, reveal themselves in their thirty-third year.

The transformed bodhisattva, Maitreya Buddha, will speak in powerful words that cannot be adequately described at the present time; he will proclaim the great mysteries of existence. Maitreya Buddha will speak in a language that must first be created, because no human being today can find the words that Maitreya Buddha will use to address humankind. Human beings cannot yet be addressed in this way, because the physical instrument for this form of speech does not exist yet. The teaching of the Enlightened One will not flow into human beings only as teachings; they will pour moral impulses into human souls. Such words cannot be spoken today by the physical human larynx; in our time those words can be present only in spirit worlds.

Anthroposophy is a preparation for all that will come in the future. Those who are serious about the human evolutionary process will resolve not to let soul development come to a halt; they will ensure that soul development eventually enables the spirit of the earth to become free, leaving the grosser part to fall away like a corpse. Humankind could frustrate the whole process, but those who want evolution to succeed must begin to understand spirit through what we now call anthroposophy. The cultivation of anthroposophy is thus a duty; knowledge is something that we can actually experience and toward which we are responsible. We should experience an inner awareness of this responsibility and resolve—experience the mysteries of the world so that we are aroused to enter anthroposophy. Spiritual science must not merely satisfy our curiosity, however; it must become a necessary part of our lives. Only when this happens will we experience our lives as building stones in the great construction of human souls and that will embrace all humanity.

Anthroposophy thus reveals the truth of world phenomena as it will confront future human souls, whether in a physical body or in the life between death and rebirth. The coming upheaval will concern even those who have laid aside the physical body. People must come to understand the earth while in the physical body, otherwise such events will have no meaning for them between death and a new birth. It will make no difference for those who acquire some understanding of Christ now, while in the physical body, whether they have already passed through the portal of death when the moment comes to see Christ. But for those who refuse to understand the Christ, if they have passed through the portal of death before that moment arrives, another opportunity will not present itself until another incarnation, because such knowledge cannot be learned between death and a new birth. Once the foundation has been laid, however, it endures, and Christ becomes visible also during the period between death and rebirth. Anthroposophy is just something to learn for earthly life; it also has value after we have laid aside the physical body at death.

This is what I wanted to give you today as an understanding of humanity and to give you a handle for answering a great number of questions. Self-knowledge is difficult, because the human being is so complex. The reason for such complexity is that we are connected with all the higher worlds and beings. We have within us mirror images of the great cosmos, and the members of our constitution—material, ether, astral, and I-being—are really realms of divine beings. Our fourfold being forms one world; the other is a higher world: the world of heaven. For divine spirits, the higher worlds are bodily members in higher divine spirit worlds.

Human beings are complex, because we are truly a mirror image of the spirit world. Realization of this should make us aware of our inherent worth. However, we know that, although we are images of the spirit world, we nevertheless fall far short of what we should be. From this, aside from realizing our worth as human beings, we gain the right attitude of modesty and humility toward the macrocosm and the gods.

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Rudolf Steiner's answers to questions at the end of the lecture

Question: How should we understand St. Paul's words about speaking in tongues (I Cor. 12:28–30 and 14:5–6)?

Answer: In exceptional persons, it may happen that, in addition to the phenomenon of speech while awake, something usually present only in sleep consciousness flows into speech. St. Paul spoke of this, and Goethe also spoke of it in the same sense; he wrote two interesting treatises about this phenomenon.

Question: How will one understand the consoling words of Christ?

Answer: People will experience these words as though they arise in their own hearts. They can also be received by physically hearing them.

Question: How do chemical forces and substances relate to the spirit world?

Answer: In the world, there are a number of substances that can combine with or separate from one another. What we call chemical action is projected into the physical world from the world of devachan—the realm of the harmony of the spheres. When two substances unite according to their atomic weights, they reflect two tones of that harmony of the spheres. The chemical affinity between two substances in the physical world

is like a reflection from the world of the harmony of the spheres. Numerical ratios in chemistry are really an expression of the numerical ratios of the harmony of the spheres, which has itself become silent through the densification of matter. If we were able to dilute material substance into an etheric substance and perceive the atomic numbers as its inner formative principle, one could hear the harmony of the spheres.

There is a physical world, an astral world, lower devachan, and higher devachan. If you push the body even lower than the physical realm, you arrive in the subphysical world, the lower astral world, the evil lower devachan, and the evil higher devachan. The evil astral world is the province of Ahriman, and the evil higher devachan is the province of the Asuras.

The subphysical world:

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Evil astral world (electricity): | the province of Lucifer |
| Evil lower devachan (magnetism): | the province of Ahriman |
| Evil higher devachan (terrible forces): | the province of the Asuras |

If you drive chemical action below the physical plane, into the evil devachan, magnetism arises. If you force light down into the subphysical (that is, a stage lower than the material world) electricity arises. If the harmony of the spheres is pushed farther, down into the province of the Asuras, an even more terrible force is generated, which it will not be possible to hide much longer. One must imagine this force as far more powerful than the most violent electrical discharge, and we can only hope that, before someone discovers this force and delivers it into the hands of humankind, people will have rid themselves everything immoral within them.

Question: What is electricity?

Answer: Electricity is light in the subphysical state, where it is compressed to the greatest degree. An inner quality must also be ascribed to light: light is itself at every point. Warmth can extend into the three dimensions of space, but with light we must speak of a fourth dimension. Light can extend itself in a fourfold way; it has the quality of inwardness as a fourth dimension.

Question: What will happen to the earth's corpse?

Answer: Our present moon circling the earth is the residue of the ancient Moon evolution. Similarly, there will be a residue of the Earth evolution that will circle Jupiter. These residues will gradually dissolve into the universal ether. In the case of the Venus stage of evolution, there will be no residue. Initially, Venus will manifest as pure warmth, then it will become light, and then it will pass into the spirit world. The residue from the Earth stage will be like a corpse. Human beings must not accompany earth along this path, however, because they would thereby be exposed to terrible torment. There are many beings, however, who will accompany this corpse, since they will develop to a higher stage by that means.