

# PNEUMATOSOPHY:

## THE MYSTERIES OF THE INNER HUMAN BEING & THE APPROACH OF THE MICHAEL FORCE

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Translated by Frances E. Dawson  
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MY DEAR FRIENDS, what I would like to bring to you now has to be said—just as everything I've said recently about anthroposophy—with an undertone arising from the painful event that befell our work and our society last New Year's Eve. The Goetheanum in Dornach is, for the time being, no longer standing; flames consumed it during New Year's Eve. All who witnessed this night that destroyed the work of ten long years—accomplished by so many friends with complete devotion—all who have loved this Goetheanum very much, simply because of this work and because of what the Goetheanum meant to us, must be weighed down by the thought that we no longer have this particular outer sign of anthroposophic activity. Even if another building for our work arises on that site (which should happen, by all means), because of the present trials, naturally it can never be the old Goetheanum. Therefore, behind all that I have had to say since those days, in the background stands the fearful glow of those flames, which in such a heart-rending way interrupted the development of all our work. Since this outer sign has vanished, we must dedicate ourselves even more to taking hold of the inner forces and inner realities of the

anthroposophical movement and all that is connected with it for human evolution as a whole. Let me begin, then, by considering the nature of the human being. I have presented much in this way in your midst, and I would like now to consider again one phase from a particular perspective.

I will begin by considering the human entry into the world after descending from the pre-earthly existence and, as it were, taking the very first steps here in earthly life. Of course, we know that at the time of this entrance into the earthly life, a condition governs the soul that is similar to the recurring condition of human sleep. Ordinary consciousness, upon awaking, cannot remember the human soul's experiences between going to sleep and waking up (except for the varicolored multiplicity of dreams, which, as we know, float away as we sink into sleep or awake, and that for the ordinary consciousness do not result from deep sleep). Similarly, ordinary consciousness cannot remember this early condition, and so for one's whole earthly life, this consciousness remembers only back to a certain time in childhood. For one person, this point is a little earlier, for another later. All that happens in the earthly life before this time is concealed from the ordinary consciousness, just as one cannot remember the events of sleep. Naturally, it is true that child are not actually sleeping; rather, they live in a kind of dreamy, vague inner activity; but from the perspective of later life, that state is at least similar to dreamy sleep.

At this time, however, three activities begin that involve learning for children. There is the process that we ordinarily reduce to the expression *learning to walk*, then *learning to speak*, and *learning to think*. "Learning to walk," used for the sake of convenience, is a brief description of a process that is actually very complicated. Just consider how, at first, children are not at all adapted for life and how they gradually learn to assume a position of balance in the space in which they will move throughout life. It is not merely a matter of "learning to walk" that we see in children, but seeking a

state of equilibrium in earthly life. And related to learning to walk is the use of their limbs. For anyone who can look at such a matter in the right way, the most remarkable and most important of life's mysteries is expressed in the activity of learning to walk. A whole universe is expressed in the way children progress from crawling to standing upright and placing their little feet, as well as holding the head upright and learning to use the arms and legs.

Anyone who has a more intimate understanding of how one child will walk more on the heels, and another more on the toes, might also have an inkling of what I will say about these three activities in relation to the spiritual world. But first I would like to describe these three activities in terms of their external aspects. Children learn to speak next, based on their effort to attain equilibrium; or, if I may say it in a somewhat more learned way (and even somewhat more pompously), they search for a dynamic of life based on that effort. For, anyone who is able to observe knows very well that the normal development of children proceeds in such a way that learning to speak is developed on the basis of learning to walk and grasp. With regard to learning to talk, it will be noticed at the very first how the a child's firm or gentle way of walking is expressed in the act of talking, through the emphasis of syllables and the force of speech. And it will be noticed further how the modulation and formation of words runs somewhat parallel to the way children learn to bend their fingers or to keep them straight and whether they are skillful or unskillful. Anyone, however, who can then observe the whole inner nature of the human organization will be able to understand—what even today's teaching of evolution concedes—that right-handed people not only have the speech center in the left third convolution of the forehead—the so-called Broca convolution—which represents in a simple, physiological way the typical relationship between speech and the ability to grasp and the ability to use the arm and the hand (to use a somewhat wordy description). We also know, however,

how closely the movement of vocal cords and the adjustment of the speech organism assume exactly the same character as that of the movements of walking and grasping. But in the normal development of children, speech—which, as you know, is developed in imitation of the environment—cannot develop at all unless the foundation is first established through the quest for a state of equilibrium in life.

With regard to thinking, even the more delicate organs of the brain, upon which thinking depends, are in turn developed from the speech organization. Do not assume that in normal childhood development thinking could evolve before speech. Anyone who is able to observe the process will discover that, for children, speech does not initially express “thinking” in the least. It would be ridiculous to believe this. For children, speech expresses feeling and sensation—the life of the soul. Thus you will first hear exclamations, always related to feelings, which children express through speech. When a child says “Mama” or “Papa,” this expresses feelings toward the mother or father, not a concept or thought. Thinking is first developed from speech. It is true that, among human beings, many things arise out of order, so one might say a child learned to speak before leaning to walk. But this is not normal, and in raising children we should always make sure that the normal course of development is observed: *walking, speaking, thinking*.

Nevertheless, the real nature of these childhood activities is perceived correctly only when we observe the other side of human life—that is to say, when we see how these activities in later life are related to one another in sleep; they arise from sleep, as I indicated, or at least from the child’s dreamlike sleep state. But what do these activities mean during later life on earth?

In general it is impossible for today’s science to get into these matters. It really understands only the outer human being, knowing nothing of the inner relationships between human beings and the cosmic being, insofar as the cosmic being is spiritual. In every

realm, human civilization—or let's say, human culture—has been developed to a degree of materialism, or naturalism. Do not imagine that I have a desire to denigrate materialism; if materialism had not entered human culture, people would not have attained freedom. Materialism is therefore a necessary development in human evolution. But today we must be very clear as to the way we have to go now, as well as in the future. And we must be clear about this in every realm.

To better illustrate what I have to say, I would like to use an example. You all know, or you can learn from my books, that earthly humanity passed through the so-called Atlantean catastrophe before passing through those cultural epochs that are only partially like the present one: the ancient Indian, the ancient Persian, the Egypto-Chaldean, and the Greco-Latin, followed by our own. During that Atlantean catastrophe, those who later became the Europeans, Asians, and Americans lived primarily on a continent where there is now a body of water: the Atlantic Ocean. This area was then mostly land, and for a very long time humanity had developed on the Atlantean continent. In my books and lecture courses, you can learn about what humanity passed through during those epochs.<sup>1</sup> Here I will speak only of musical experiences, not about other human experiences during the ancient Atlantean time.

The whole musical experience of the ancient Atlantean would seem very strange, even bizarre, to people today if they could hear it—which, of course, we cannot. In music, the ancient Atlanteans were looking for the seventh chords, for example. The seventh chords affected the souls of those ancient people in a strange way. We were all sheathed in those bodies, since our repeated earthly lives also passed through that time. It affected them in such a way that they were taken immediately out of their bodies as they lived

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1. See for example, "Cosmic Evolution and the Human Being," in *An Outline of Esoteric Science*, Anthroposophic Press, 1997 (GA 13).

in their music, which emphasized the chords of the seventh. The only frame of mind they knew in music was a state of rapture, or enthusiasm, in which the God imbued them. And when their very simple instruments were played—and they were intended only to accompany song—Atlanteans immediately felt that they were weaving and living in the outer spiritual world.

Then came the Atlantean catastrophe. Among all post-Atlanteans, a preference for a sequence of fifths developed. You probably know that, for a long time after that, fifths played a comprehensive role in musical development. For example, in ancient Greece, fifths played a quite extensive role. This preference for fifths affecting people in such a peculiar way that, when they experienced music, they no longer felt drawn out of their bodies, but they felt they were soul and spirit *within* their bodies. During such musical experiences, they completely forgot physical experience; they were inside their skin, so to speak, but their skin was completely filled with soul and spirit. That was the effect of the music, and few will believe that, until almost the tenth and eleventh century, the natural music was just as I described. Not until then did the aptitude for thirds appear—an aptitude for the major and the minor third, and everything related to major and minor; this came relatively late. But with this late development, there was evolved at the same time an inner experience of music. People now remained within themselves in musical experience. All culture at that time tended downward from the spiritual to the material, and likewise the tendency was downward in the musical sphere, from the experience of spirit in ancient times when music was experienced, to the experience of music within, no longer as external as the skin, but entirely within. In this way, the major and minor moods first appeared at that time, and these are possible only when music is experienced inwardly.

So we can see how in every area, people have descended from spirit into the material, but also into themselves. Thus we should

not merely say, in a narrow way, that the physical has little value and that we must escape from it. People would not have become truly human if they had not descended and taken hold of material life. It is exactly because people apprehended spirit in the material that human beings have become self-aware, independent I beings. Today, with the help of anthroposophic spiritual science, we must regain our way back into the spirit world; we must find the way in every area. This is why it is so painful that the artistic endeavor, created through the Goetheanum in Dornach, has been destroyed. The way into the spiritual world must be sought in every realm.

Let's consider next an activity that children learn—speech—in relation to human evolution as a whole. It must be said that what children learn in this way is truly magnificent. Jean Paul, the German poet, said that during the first three years of life—when the essential lessons are walking, speaking, and thinking—human beings learn much more than they do in the three years at school. Those “three” school years have become many, but we still learn no more in those three years than children learn during the first three years of life. Consider speech. In speaking, first there is the outer physiological aspect: the larynx and speech organ as a whole are set in motion. They move the air, which then becomes a medium for tone. Here we have, in a sense, the physiological aspect. But there is also soul in what we say, and the soul permeates and shines through all that we say in the sounds. Insofar as speech is physical, our physical and ether bodies share in the process. As a matter of course, these bodies are silent while we sleep. In other words, normal human beings do not speak between going to sleep and waking; but inasmuch as the soul and the I participate in speech, they—the astral body and I—take with them the soul power of speech as they leave the physical and ether bodies at the time of going to sleep; they actually take with them everything of a soul nature that we have put into our speech throughout the day. We are, in fact, different beings each evening, because we have been

busy talking all day long—one more, another less, many too much or too little. But, it doesn't matter; we have been busy talking throughout the day, and we put our souls into what was said. And what we put into our speech we take with us into sleep, and it remains our being while we sleep.

Perhaps in today's materialistic age, people no longer have any notion that idealism or spirituality may be expressed in speech. People today generally think that speech is merely intended to describe external, tangible phenomena. The sense that ideals may be expressed in the speech has disappeared almost entirely. Consequently, it is also true that people today typically find what is said to them about spirit "unintelligible." After all, what do people tell themselves when spirit is mentioned? They acknowledge the "words" being used, but those words are understood only in the sense that they indicate something that can be grasped or seen. People have come to dislike the idea that words may also indicate something else, something suprasensory and invisible. That may be one view of speech; but the other may be, of course, that people will rediscover idealism, even in words and language, knowing that soul and spiritual experiences may be heard through each word, as it were.

When people live entirely in the "materialism of the language," what they carry into sleep and into the spiritual leads, strangely enough, to a difficult relationship with the world of the archangels, or archAngeloi, into which we should enter each night while asleep. Those, on the other hand, who guard the idealism of speech in themselves—those who know how the genius of the language lives in speech—enter the proper relationship with the hierarchy of the archangels, especially the archangel to whom they themselves belong in the world between sleeping and waking. Indeed, this is expressed even in ordinary world phenomena. Why do people today look so frantically for an outer relationship to the national languages? Why did this frightful misfortune descend

upon Europe—one that Woodrow Wilson considered good fortune? (But then, he was a strange illusionist.) Why did this great misfortune come upon Europe, that freedom is connected to with a convulsive desire to use of national languages, even those of the smallest nations? It is because, in reality, people are frantically looking externally for a relationship that they no longer have in spirit; in going to sleep they no longer have a natural relationship to the language, nor, therefore, to the hierarchy of the archangels. Unless human beings find a way back to the permeation of everything that connects language with idealism, they will lose their way into the spirit world.

How do people today see what happens for the individuals between going to sleep and waking? People do not consider this sleep state at all. If we recall our past life, it seems that we have a complete life picture before us. But this is not the case; the time spent in sleep generally drops out, and the whole picture is continuously interrupted. We always connect the morning with the previous evening, but between these is the night. First, events during our nightly sleep makes up, outwardly, at least a third of outer human life (at least, “respectable” people say this); second, for the inner human being, it is far more important than the whole day’s outer activity. To be sure, the outer activity is more important for external civilization; but inner development in life is the result of coming into relation with the spirit world in the right way while we sleep at night.

This is also true of what forms the basis of the other activities. Those who place idealism into the whole sphere of their actions—including the entire realm of movements one first learns when entering earth life—and whose life includes the realization of ideals can also rediscover the right relationship with the hierarchy of the archai. And if the thoughts contain idealism, if they are not merely materialistic, people find during sleep a relationship to the hierarchy of the angels. This is what we discover when, with the

help of spiritual science, we investigate the relationship between the sleep state and these three activities acquired during childhood.

But this relationship may be seen much more fully if we look at the whole life of the human being in the cosmos. You are familiar with the description in my book *Theosophy*. When human beings pass through the gate of death, their first experience lasts for some days, a condition that involves the dissipation of thoughts and concepts. We could say that, as the ether body expands into the far reaches of the cosmos, one “loses” that ether body. But this is no different than saying that one’s concepts and thoughts are dissipated. But what does this really mean; that concepts and thoughts are dissipated? It really means much more—that our entire waking life leaves us. Our whole waking life departs over the period of two or three days, and nothing would be left of our life at all, except that we then live through everything that remained unconscious during the earth life. In other words, we then begin to live consciously through what we experienced during sleep life. Spiritually, our sleep life is infinitely richer and more intense than our waking life. Whether our sleep is brief or long, each time it is a repetition of the day life in reverse, but with a spiritual impulse. Your practical accomplishments during the day bring you into a relationship at night with the archai, or primal powers. What you have said during the day brings you into a relationship at night with the archangeloi, or archangels. And your thinking brings you in the same way into a relationship with your angel being, or the angeloi.

One’s experiences during sleep are independent of time. There is no need to say: Okay, but what about this possibility? At night I go to sleep; something makes a noise and wakes me up; in this case I certainly cannot complete my review of the day in retrospect. Well, it is completed nevertheless, because the time relationships are entirely different. In a moment, we can experience what otherwise may continue for hours if one’s sleep were undisturbed. During sleep the time relations are quite different from those of

the day. Therefore, one must say that, with each period of sleep, one reexperiences in retrospect what was lived through here in the physical world since the last period of sleep, but now in spiritual way and substance. Once the conscious life of concepts dissipates into the cosmos a few days after death, human beings live through the very experiences that they had during the one-third of life spent in sleep. I have, therefore, always had to explain how people need a third of their earthly life in order to live through what they experienced during the nights of their lives. Naturally, it is essentially like the day life, but it is experienced differently. And at that time, as the second condition after death, one lives through this retrogression, as the entire life back to birth is experienced once again in a third of the time. Then, once souls have returned to the time of birth, they enter a state I described to you here in another context; one enters a condition in which every concept of the world is essentially altered.

Do not think that it is a less interesting environment than that of earth. Of course, the starry heavens are magnificent, the mountains and the seas are grand, but what the essence of what the inner human being contains in a single small vessel is grander and mightier than all our earth environment; between death and a new birth, we are surrounded by this in all its majestic grandeur. A human being *is* the world between death and a new birth, and must be the world, because we prepare the next earthly life. Together with beings of the higher hierarchies, we must help prepare the future earthly human being. Here we are busy with our outer culture and civilization; we make boots or coats, use the telephone, fix people's hair, give lectures, do something artistic, or whatever belongs to our present civilization. Similarly, between death and rebirth, together with beings of the higher hierarchies, we prepare what the human being is to become, what we ourselves will be in the physical body during our next earthly life. You see, here on earth we are in a specific place, and we are surrounded by the

world. Through ordinary consciousness, we know ourselves very little indeed. We know the world we perceive through the outer senses. Perhaps, you will argue that anatomists know the inner part of the human being very well, but this is not really true; they know only the outer aspect of the inner being. The true inner part is completely different. Isn't it true that, when today you recall something that you experienced ten years ago, you have something that lives in your soul in your memory? It is condensed—a brief memory of perhaps a very, very extended experience. But now it is merely a soul picture of something that you passed through in earthly life.

Now you go into yourself—not into your memories, but into your physical organism, or what seems to be a physical organism—and you observe the wonderful construction of your brain, your lungs, and so on. Within you there, stirred up as it were, are not the experiences of this earthly life, but all rolled together as the whole cosmos, the entire universe. The human being is really a microcosm of the universe. The whole universe is rolled together into our organs. But human beings are unaware of this with ordinary consciousness. When we are on earth, we can remember our experiences. We do not know that we ourselves, in our physical nature, are the embodied “memory” of the whole cosmos. Once the reverse journey through life has been completed, as I have just described it, then, between death and a new birth, we enter a cosmic life, where we are not surrounded, as we are now, by the world—its mountains, clouds, stars, seas, and so on—but where our environment is made up of the mysteries of the inner human being; everything related to the mysteries that remain hidden during earthly life now constitute our environment. On the earth, as you know, we live inside our skin, and we know about the stars, clouds, mountains, rocks, animals, and plants. Between death and a new birth, we know about the human being. All the mysteries of the human being become our environment.

That is the goal of spirituality; it is infinitely greater and more magnificent than the aims of earthly society. The ancients had good reason to call the human physical body a “temple of the gods,” because, between death and a new birth, our physical human body is formed with the gods, or beings of the higher hierarchies. This is what we do and where we are with our I being—among beings of the higher hierarchies, working on humankind with the beings of the higher hierarchies. We move as if we were among the beings of the higher hierarchies, spirits among spirits.

Our activities there, of course, always proceed according to what we have accomplished in our earthly life; we see this in a certain sense in the relationship between our sleep and waking life. Just consider how chaotic dreams are. I am not minimizing the value of the wonderfully varied multiplicity and grandeur of dreams; but we must nevertheless recognize that dreams, compared to earthly life—in whose images dreams are clothed—are chaotic. Just recall the dream I mentioned earlier as an example. (Volkelt described this dream, according to a report from Württemberg, but we know of such, do we not?) A woman from the city visited her sister, the wife of a country parson, and in her dream she went with her sister to hear a sermon at church. But everything was very odd; after the Gospel was read and the pastor entered the pulpit, he did not start preaching; he lifted wings instead of arms, and eventually began to crow like a cock.

Or recall another dream in which a woman reported her dream of thinking about what sort of good thing she should cook for her husband. Nothing occurred to her until she remembered that she had kept an old pickled grandmother in the attic—but she would still be very tough. You see how strangely chaotic a dream can be. But what does it really mean that dreams are so chaotic?

While we are asleep, we are, with our I being and astral body, outside of the physical and ether bodies. During that time, we

experience again in reverse—especially in terms of moral significance—all that we have done, said, and thought throughout the day; we live through this in reverse order. We are preparing our karma for our next earth life, and this appears in pictures even as we sleep. But those pictures are still very mixed up; as we awake and are about to reenter into the physical body, the image does not yet fit properly. In other words, we are unable to conceive things in conformity with the macrocosm; rather, we imagine something entirely different, say a “pickled grandmother.” This happens because, with regard to what we formed during sleep, we do not understand its adaptation to the human physical body; adaptation to the physical body is extremely difficult, and we acquire this through our mutual efforts, which I described, with the beings of the higher hierarchies between death and rebirth. In that realm, the spirit self must readjust what otherwise frequently appears awkwardly in dreams, when sleep consciousness is completely overcome, and we are plunged without our cooperation into our old physical body. Between death and a new birth, this soul spiritual self must penetrate all the mysteries of the physical body, so that the body can be built up in the right way. After all, one’s parents and grandparents are really not alone in forming the body; this belief is one of the great mistakes of science. We are justified in making such a statement, for how does science present that human development? It claims that the basis of material substance is molecular, built as a complex of atoms. The albumen molecule, contained in the embryo cell, is the most complicated of all (of course, scientists cannot describe it, though they do point out its complexity), and because it is so complicated, it can give rise to a human being. That is the simplest way to explain the human being. It is simply claimed that the entire human being is contained in the molecule—a very complicated molecule. In fact, however, if a human being is to originate from it, the albumen molecule must revert to complete chaos, becoming so much disorganized “dust.”

In the outer world, we find organized matter in crystals, plants, and so on. Before anything can arise, even a plant or animal, matter must first completely return to dust. Only when it has lost a definite form can the entire cosmos work on that tiny bit of stuff, creating in it an image of itself. How does this happen, then for the human being? Between death and a rebirth, we form this human image and all its mysteries, and into this we weave our karma, and then we send this image into the body of our mother. So first we form the spirit seed, though this is very large compared to the physical seed, and it descends into matter, which has become chaotic. These are the facts, not what modern physiology imagines.

During the time I am describing, the I being lives as a spiritual being among spiritual divine beings; it is actively coming to know fully the inner human being for the next earthly life. Those images of grand and majestic spiritual experiences appear marvelously in the child as individual movements toward equilibrium. It is very interesting to see how the primal powers, or archai, work from life between death and rebirth into a child's whole effort to attain balance—or, more trivially, when a child "learns to walk." Anyone who can see an image of the spiritual in everything earthly can also look at a child's efforts to walk, use the hands, and so on, and see those spiritual actions that we performed between death and rebirth, seeking spiritual equilibrium as an I being among higher I beings.

Then we finish with the conditions in which we are spirits among spirits, where we prepare our manifestation in the earthly body, through which we again become human beings with our various qualities and karmic experiences. Once we have passed through these conditions in the world between death and rebirth, a condition appears in the pre-earthly life whereby we can no longer distinguish the spiritual beings with whom we have worked for so long; there is only a general perception of spirit. We know then, for certain, that we live in a spirit world; but, because we are now

approaching earthly life, the impression from the spiritual world becomes much more uniform; one no longer has perceptions of particular, individual spirit beings.

I can express myself through a trivial comparison so that we will better understand one another; but please be very clear that in doing so, I refer, nevertheless, to something very exalted. If a small cloud appears somewhere off in the distance, you describe it as “a little cloud”; but as you approach it, you become aware that it is actually a swarm of gnats. Then you can distinguish separate individuals. In the spiritual world between death and rebirth, it is just the opposite; you first distinguish the individualities of spirit beings, then your impression becomes more general. In other words, *manifestation* of the spiritual replaces *experience* of the spiritual.

Indeed, this condition separates us, as it were, from the spiritual world, because we are already looking for our way back to earth; this state is reflected in us as the inner basis of human speech. Consider our speech. It begins with the larynx (not exactly, but approximately), and the other speech organs begin to move. Behind this, however, is something essential, lying in the heart behind the larynx; it lies in the breathing process and all that is related to it. Just as learning to walk and seeking equilibrium is an earthly image of our movements in the spirit world, what lies behind speech is an earthly image of the manifestation in which we perceive divine spirit beings only as a vague mass. So when children learn to walk, they reexperience a state they went through between death and rebirth.

We remain above after we have sent down the spiritual seed of our physical body, waiting as it gradually unites with the mother's body through conception. Just before earthly embodiment, we assemble the ether body from all the cosmic regions. That action—*attracting the ether body within the suprasensory world*—is expressed through the activity of a child learning to think.

Now you have the three succeeding states. There is the *experience* in the spirit world seen in learning to walk. There is *manifestation* of the spiritual world seen in learning to speak. (For this reason, the aspect of Cosmic Word behind speech is called “Cosmic Logos,” the inner World. It is the manifestation of the universal Logos, in which the spiritual expresses itself, as do the gnats in the swarm ‘of gnats; it underlies speech.’). And then, there is our *activity* in forming our ether body, which actually thinks in us; we think the whole night through, but we are absent with our I being and astral body. This is the last part that we gather for ourselves before descending to earth, and that activity extends into our thinking. Thus, as they learn to walk, speak, and think, infants organize into the physical body what they bring from the pre-earthly existence.

This leads to real spiritual knowledge and, at the same time, to artistic and religious comprehension of the world—we are able to relate each event in our sensory existence to the spiritual world. I have often compared those who prefer to speak of the divine spiritual only “in general” to a man who goes into a meadow where daisies, dandelions, wild chicory, are pointed out, but he says, “I’m not interested in all of that; they’re simply flowers.” They are all just flowers, but something in the “flower being” is differentiated. It is like this in the spirit world. Of course, it is easy to say that something spiritual lies behind everything sensory and physical, but that is not the point. We should know more and more about the spirit lying at the foundation of various sensory, physical phenomena. This is the only way we, who come from spirit, can take hold of the physical course of life.

Through this principle, our Waldorf school methods, for example, are unique in actually considering the human being. This will appear even more clearly once this educational method is developed for the children’s earliest years. It would have to be adapted to the process of learning to walk, learning to speak, and learning to think, and to the evolution of these faculties. Similarly,

at the present time, we naturally adapt our method to children older than six or seven, so that we consider questions such as these: What is embodied in this child at this moment? What is expressed each week and each month of this child's life before birth? Thus these educational methods are really developed from spirit. This is one of the many impulses we must rediscover if humanity does not wish to continue its downward course. We must find a way back to the spirit realm; but we cannot do this unless we consciously find ways and means to act and speak from the spirit.

During the time immediately after the Atlantean catastrophe, human beings—each individual—lived from the spirit, because, based on one's time of birth, each could be told the nature of one's karma. At that time, astrology did not signify the superficiality that it often represents today; rather, it indicated a living experience of the activities of the stars and how they affected them. Consequently, those of the mystery temples revealed to the people as individuals how they should live. Astrology had a vital meaning for individual human experience. Then came the time around the sixth to fourth centuries before Christianity, when people no longer experienced the mysteries of the starry heavens; they experienced instead the course of the year. What do I mean by this? They knew from direct perception that the earth is not merely the lump of dirt that modern geology imagines. Plants could never grow on such an earth, not to mention the manifestation of animals and human beings. None of these could exist, because the earth of the geologists is simply a rock; and nothing will grow directly on a rock unless the whole cosmos affects it; it must be united with the whole universe. What people must relearn today was known ancient times; the earth is an organism and has a soul.

And it is true that this earth soul has its particular destiny. Suppose it is winter here—that it is Christmastime and the winter solstice. This is the time when the earth soul is united fully with the earth. When snow covers the earth and a mantle of cold sur-

rounds the earth, the earth soul is united with the earth and rests within it. It is also true, therefore, that the earth's soul, resting within the earth, sustains the life of a multitude of elemental spirits. Today, naturalists believe that, when I plant seeds in the earth in the autumn, they merely lie there until the following spring. But this is not true; the earth's elemental spirits must protect those seeds throughout winter. This is all related to the fact that, during the winter, the earth's soul is united with the earth's body.

Now consider the opposite season—midsummer and St. John's season. Just as we inhale and exhale air, so that air is first within us and then outside, so the earth breathes in her soul during winter. And at the height of summer and St. John's season, the earth soul is entirely breathed out into the far reaches of the cosmos. At that time the earth's body is "empty" of its soul. The earth in her soul lives with cosmic events, the course of the stars, and so on. Therefore, in ancient times there were the winter mysteries, in which people experienced the union of the earth's soul with the earth; and then there were the summer mysteries, in which they were able to perceive the mysteries of the universe, from the experience that the earth's soul shared with the stars, because the human souls of initiates were allowed to follow the earth's soul out into the cosmic spaces.

The fragments of ancient tradition that still exist show us that people were conscious of these things. Quite some time ago, but I frequently sat here in Berlin with an astronomer who was very well known in this area. He started a great stir about the Easter festival by saying that it was very disturbing that the Easter festival did not fall each year at least on, say, the first Sunday in April—that it should not be on the first Sunday following the spring full moon. Naturally, it never helped to offer reasons against his argument; at the root of the matter was a fear that, if Easter occurs at a different time each year, it would confuse the debit and credit columns of the ledger. This movement had grown quite a bit. I once men-

tioned the fact here that, on the first page of the ledger, one finds the words “with God,” but what we find in these books is not exactly “with God.” In those days, when the Easter festival was established according to the stars, the first Sunday after the spring full moon was dedicated to the Sun. At that time, there was still a consciousness that, during the winter, the earth’s soul is in the earth, and that during St. John’s season, the earth’s soul is completely outside in cosmic spaces. During spring, therefore, it is on the way out into cosmic spaces, and the spring festival, Easter, cannot be established only in relation to the earth on a specific day, but must be regulated according to the constellations of stars. There is a profound wisdom in this that comes from a time when, as a result of the ancient instinctual clairvoyance, people could still perceive the spiritual reality during the course of the year. We must regain this, and we can do this a certain sense by taking hold of what needs to be done today in connection with exactly the things we have discussed together here.

I have often said here that, of the spiritual beings with whom we are united each night as I described—for example, through speech with the archangels—specific beings become the ruling spiritual powers throughout certain periods of time. In the last third of the nineteenth century, the time of Michael began. At that time, the spirit who is usually called Michael became the determining spirit in the affairs of human civilization. These conditions are repeated in a cyclic way. In ancient times, people knew something about all these spiritual processes. The ancient Hebrew age spoke of Yahweh, but always spoke of the “countenance of Yahweh,” and “countenance” meant the archangels who, in fact mediated between Yahweh and the earth. When the Jews expected the Messiah on earth, they knew that it was the time of Michael—that Michael was the agent of Christ’s activity on earth. They misunderstood, however, the deeper significance of this. Now, since the 1870s, it is time again on earth for Michael to be the ruling

spiritual power in the world, and the time has come for us to understand how to bring spirituality into our actions and to arrange our life according to the spirit. This means serving Michael, and not ordering our lives merely according to a materialistic perspective. It means being aware that Michael, whose mission is to overcome of the low ahrimanic forces as his mission, must become our “genius” for the evolution of civilization.

How can Michael become this? He can become our guiding spirit if we call to mind how we can reconnect with the course of the year in a spiritual sense. There is indeed great wisdom in the whole cosmic course, in that we can unite the spring festival with the festival of the resurrection of Christ Jesus. The traditional connection, as I have often explained, is wholly correct: The spring festival, or Easter festival, *must* occur on a different day each year, precisely because it is viewed from the other world. We on earth, however, maintain the narrow view that “time” goes along at an even pace, that one hour is always the same length as any another. We determine time by means of our earthly expedience: mathematics. In the actual spiritual world, however, the cosmic hour is alive. There, one cosmic hour is not equal to another, but may be longer or shorter. Consequently, it is always possible to err by determining, from our earthly perspective, something that should be fixed according to the heavens. The Easter festival has been established correctly, in accordance with the heavens.

What kind of a festival is this? It is the festival intended to remind us—and at one time it did remind humanity with great clarity—that a god descended to earth, took up his abode in the man Jesus of Nazareth, so that, at a time when human beings were approaching the development of the I being, they would be able in a suitable way to find their way back through death into the spiritual life. I have frequently explained this here. The Easter festival is, therefore, the festival when people see death, with immortality following, in the Mystery of Golgotha. We view this spring festival

in the right way when we think this way: Christ affirmed human immortality when he conquered death; but, as human beings, we understand the immortality of Christ Jesus correctly when we appropriate this understanding during the earth life. In other words, we must vitalize, in our souls, our relationship to the Mystery of Golgotha and free ourselves from the materialistic concept that would separate the Mystery of Golgotha from all spiritual meaning. People today no longer want to acknowledge “Christ” at all, but only “Jesus, the humble man of Nazareth.” People would feel embarrassed, as it were, in the presence of their own scientific instincts, if they were to concede that the Mystery of Golgotha involves a spiritual mystery at the center of earthly existence—that is, God’s death and resurrection.

We can feel this autumn just as intensely as we do spring. And if we feel in spring, at Easter time, the death and resurrection of the God, then we can also feel in the autumn the resurrection and death of the human soul; we can experience resurrection during earthly life so that we can pass through death in the right way. Then, however, we must also understand what it means for us that today the earth’s soul is breathed out into the cosmic spaces during St. John’s season during summer, to be united with the stars and then return. Those who understand the mystery of this seasonal succession through the year know that the Michael force, which in former centuries did not descend to earth, now comes down through natural forces. So we are able to meet the autumn and the falling leaves when we perceive the Michaelic force descending from the clouds to earth. Indeed, the name *Michael* can be found in the calendars on this date, and Michaelmas is also a festival day among the rural folk. But we cannot experience the present moment spiritually and in such a way that earthly human events are closely connected with natural events unless we can understand the year’s progression to the degree that we can also reestablish the annual festivals through the year, just as people his-

torically established them through ancient dreamlike clairvoyance. The ancients understood the year, and, based on the mysteries I have merely outlined today, they established Christmas, Easter, and the St. John's Festival. At Christmastime people exchange gifts and so on; but I have frequently explained in the Christmas and Easter lectures I have given here how little of these ancient institutions remains with today's humanity; everything has become mere tradition and exoteric. If we come to understand the festivals again—which today we merely celebrate but do not understand—through knowing the course of the year spiritually, we will also gain the power to establish a festival that will have real meaning for today's humanity. This will be the Michael festival at the end of September, just as autumn approaches, the leaves become withered, the trees become bare, and nature moves toward decay, just as we move toward the sprouting of the Easter season. We will have the power to establish such a festival if we can perceive in decaying nature how the earth's soul unites with the earth and how the earth's soul brings Michael with it from the clouds. If we have the force to create such a festival from the spirit and bring it once again into the social life of our community, we will have started something among us that has spirit as its source. This would be more significant than any kind of social reflection, which, in today's confused conditions, cannot lead anywhere unless spirit is present. If a group of intelligent people were come together and reestablish on earth something from the cosmos, it might lead to something like a festival of Michael, which would be equal to the Easter festival, but an autumn festival and a counterpart of the Easter festival. If people could agree on something motivated only by the spirit world—something created out of the full, joyous human heart in the immediate present that would also reestablishing common interest among people—this would also lead to something that will reunite people socially. For in ancient times, the festivals created strong bonds among human beings. When we experience this

fact spiritually, we prepare ourselves to experience other things spiritually as well. This is why it is so important today for people to gain the possibility of experiencing, at the outset, the Mystery of Golgotha as purely spiritual. They will experience other spiritual facts and find the way into spirit worlds through the Mystery of Golgotha. Then, however, beginning with the Mystery of Golgotha, the people must understand the Resurrection while still living on earth; and, if they understand the Resurrection through feeling while still alive, they will be enabled to pass through death in the proper way. In other words, death and resurrection in the Mystery of Golgotha should teach people to reverse the condition; during life they must experience resurrection within the soul, so that they may then pass through death in the right way. That experience is the opposite of the Easter experience. During the Easter season, we should be able to immerse ourselves in the death and resurrection of the Christ. As human beings, however, we also need to be able to immerse ourselves in what is for us resurrection of the soul, so that the resurrected human soul may pass correctly through death. As we acquire the true Easter mood during spring as we see plants germinate and sprout, the way nature is resurrected and how it overcomes the death of winter, if we have experienced summer in the right way, we will be able to gain a sense of certainty that the soul has then ascended into cosmic spaces. Then, we approach autumn, with September and the autumnal equinox; the leaves that were budding and turning green in spring now become brown and yellow and fall; the trees stand partly denuded as nature dies. But we understand this slowly dying nature by looking deeply into the process of decay and into the approach of the snowy covering of the earth. And we say to ourselves: The earth soul is now returning to the earth, and it will be entirely within the earth by the winter solstice.

Just consider what has been done and what has been said and thought on behalf of the festivals for all of civilization. This has

been woven gradually into the physical world through the establishment of festivals directly from the spirit. If people today could decide in a worthy way to establish a Michael festival at the end of September, it would be an act of the greatest significance. To this end, people would have to have courage not only to argue over exoteric social organizations and such, but also to do something that will unite earth and heaven, and this will also reconnect matter and spirit. Then, because spirit would be returned to earthly affairs, something would happen among humankind that would provide a powerful impulse to extend our civilization and our life as a whole. Of course, this is no time to go into detail about all that this would imply for science, religion, and the arts, but, created in grand style from spirit, such a renewed festival would affect those areas, just as the ancient festivals did. Such a creation from the spiritual world would be much more important than anything developed today through social tirades. What would such a creation mean? Well, it means much in terms of a deep observation of the human soul when I see a person's intentions or if I understand a person's words correctly. If we can learn today by observing how the cosmic course as a whole functions in the approaching autumn, if we can decipher the whole face of the universe, and out of that knowledge act creatively, we will disclose not only human volition in the creation of such a festival, but we will also reveal the spiritual volition of the gods themselves. This is how spirit can resume its place in the life of humankind.