

Commentary on the St John Gospel

CONTENTS – Clicking on a Lecture # will take you directly to that Lecture commentary – continuous scrolling through the complete document works as on other pages!

[Lecture 1](#)

[Lecture 2](#)

[Lecture 3](#)

[Lecture 4](#)

[Lecture 5](#)

[Lecture 6](#)

[Lecture 7](#)

[Lecture 8](#)

[Lecture 9](#)

[Lecture 10](#)

[Lecture 11](#)

[Lecture 12](#)

Introduction

The following are comments on Rudolf Steiner's lecture cycle on the St. John Gospel given in Hamburg at the time of Whitsun, May 18 to May 31, 1908.

Our consideration of this Gospel at Christmas 1986, during the thirteen Holy Nights, is perhaps the fourth or fifth time that we have taken up this gospel study here in the community. The first time was shortly after our founding. I believe it was about 1967, the winter of 1967, when Paul Allen went over the Greek text—reading, translating and commenting. It took him nearly nine months to do so. At first, I did not experience the community connected with the work on this Gospel. But that soon changed. Back then the group was relatively small, between ten and thirteen. The older members remaining from the group that first worked on this Gospel are Willi and Liesel Ringwald, Ilse Jurgens and Fritz Scharff. Ann and I also participated. On two or three other occasions we went over this gospel cycle, reading and commenting. The last time we went through it was 1978 at Christmas tide. So this is perhaps the fourth time.

In terms of my own experience, this was one of the first lecture cycles that I took up. This and the Kassel cycle were also the basis for my inner work for a period of nearly fifteen years, beginning after Ehrenfried Pfeiffer's death. He and I had spoken about St. John. In one of our earliest meetings, he pointed to the first nine lines of the Gospel. He also pointed to Rudolf Steiner's *How to Know Higher Worlds*, and said that he felt that all of the knowledge of Anthroposophy could be derived from the Gospel of St. John and *How to Know Higher Worlds*.

Lecture 1

Beginning with the first lecture, the direction is set by Rudolf Steiner indicating that we are able to understand this Gospel through our own independent means; that if real work has been done with Knowledge of the Higher Worlds, it is possible for us to meet what is to be revealed in this lecture cycle—it is all inscribed in the Akashic Record. Rudolf Steiner makes an analogy with the acquisition of the fundamentals of mathematics. With the proper preparation and tools, mathematics can be found *de novo*—starting from the beginning, anew—and the same holds true for the possibility of independent discovery of this Gospel. What is needed for both is an exact method, a methodology; and spiritual-scientific research, as well, is needed in the case of

this Gospel—a science of what is to be revealed in a spiritual-scientific revelation of what is “In the Beginning.” The exactness in mathematical research has to be carried over into spiritual-scientific research.

As we look to origins, for example, “In the beginning was mathematics,” we can speak comparatively of what was in the beginning with the world—of a being such as the Christ or of an activity such as the word, in speech. Intellectual formulations by those who are concerned about beginnings (origins) could be, “In the beginning is spirit,” “In the beginning is activity,” or “In the beginning is the individual.” This Gospel does not take such an intellectual approach, but poses a deep enigma pointing to something that is a great mystery to us, and that is the word. Though we use the word every day, this is an absolute secret. This Gospel, this revelation speaks to the questions of the Beginning and the Word. Rudolf Steiner has elsewhere indicated that we can start with “In the beginning is thought,” or “In the beginning is memory.” Each formulation is a different form of creative activity. In this lecture cycle, we will begin with the problem of “In the beginning is the Word” and take it immediately into the quest to discover what is the Logos. The Logos element and the Word seem very closely tied.

When we look at the first lecture, we can be struck by Rudolf Steiner’s directing our gaze to the Last Supper. Somehow the Last Supper is related to the mystery of the Logos and the Word. Our point of departure is in no way simple, superficial, or intellectual. We are thrown against our own intellectual inclinations. Rudolf Steiner indicates that our problem with the Last Supper is related to the problem of what is materiality, of what is sustenance through materiality; and what then is the relation of sustenance and materiality to the blood and the body of the Christ. Rudolf Steiner indicates that the meaning inherent in the Last Supper has been lost to us. This is the case particularly because of our materialistic tendencies, our whole inclination to see the story of Creation, the six days of the Creation, in a materialistic way. As a result of sense activity unpenetrated by spiritual activity, the process of the Mass, in which a spiritual activity is embedded—our sense of the Last Supper—has all been lost. The point is that the meaning of the Last Supper, of the Mass, of the process of the transubstantiation, has fallen out of our capacity to understand it. This unraveling of the secret of the Mass in relation to the earth, the mystery of the transubstantiation in relationship to the body and the spirit of Christ, belongs to humankind’s striving and travail.

Rudolf Steiner indicates that in respect to the St. John Gospel we are considering the Logos, the Word, and the Last Supper from the perspective of being on a mountaintop. We are looking at an immense vista or view of the world, humankind, and evolution.

Rudolf Steiner’s approach to these areas is by way of an interesting analogy. This is the first step toward the mystery of the Word and the Logos. He asks us to consider the seed. He brings the Logos doctrine in relation to the plant. The first line of thought is to consider that the plant grows to the flower, the flower gives rise to the seed, the seed gives rise to the flower, and so forth. Something of the Logos mystery is related to the ever-returning, to something that appears again and again, first in one form and then another—in plant, in flower, in seed. We can say that it is a delicate way of formulating the issue of recurrence in the domain of the seed. At the same time, we might also notice that if we take the plant as an archetype and we go from seed to flower to seed, and so forth, that there is another aspect, which is not just recurrence. We not only have seed to flower, but fruit as well. With fruit or the fruiting process, we not only have a recurring process, but the possibility of a higher stage of development—the fruit can nourish. If we consider the plant, not only in its recurrence, but in its fruiting, we can by analogy consider the human being. The human being may be said to recur, and as well, something in the human being can come to fruition. There is an eternal element that returns again and again; at the same time, there is not only a seeding and a flowering but also a fruiting, and this will also have to be taken into consideration.

The flowering and the fruiting processes, in a way, are taken together and can be spoken to in a delicate way, wherein we see that there is another step taken by the human being. This step—this higher development and unfolding of the human being—becomes apparent in the ability to speak. There is a fruition process, a crowning process, in our capacity to be transformed into a speaking being. We may therefore look to the speaking individual, to the word process, in order to see the ever-recurring, and at the same time the fruiting, that is a revelation of the Logos and the Word. We may tentatively say that the Logos appears as something ever-recurring, a kind of eternal element, which itself is not such a fruiting but is revealed in the fruiting in the human in the capacity to speak with words. The word might be considered to be the outer revelation of the Logos. The Logos exists as a kind of unspoken working element in the universe and arises out of the human being from the

depths as a kind of fruiting, word-forming process, as a revelation of the continual recurring of the eternal. From this point of view the eternal is connected with the Logos. The word is the transformation of the eternal in the human being, fruiting and presenting itself in the word process as it comes forth in the act of speech.

Lecture 2

In lecture two, Rudolf Steiner gives the first main nine lines of the Gospel as follows:

In the beginning was the Word,
And the Word was with God,
And the Word was a God,
This was in the beginning with God.
Through the same all things were made
And same through this Word nothing was made.
There was Life and Life became the Light of men,
And Light shone into the Darkness,
But the Darkness comprehended it not.

Considering this formulation is our task now. In this lecture, Rudolf Steiner not only talks about St. John and this formulation of the development of the world, he also indicates another individual who has much to do with Christianity. This individual is Paul. Rudolf Steiner indicates that Paul was the founder of esoteric Christianity. He was the teacher of Dionysius the Areopagite, who named the spiritual beings in the heavens. The first step, it would appear to me, is to look to esoteric Christianity and to the spiritual beings—the spiritual-hierarchical orders—about whom Dionysius spoke. This might be a necessary key to an understanding of the evolution of the earth. Not only do we have to consider the visible transformations that appear to our senses, but we also have to consider the transformations of the unseen, of the spiritual-hierarchical orders that participate in this process. It is from this point of view that we will make an attempt. We have to look to the world of the spiritual-hierarchical beings as well as the manifest, outer world.

We can begin by taking up the stages of evolution: Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth. (There will be future stages: Jupiter, Venus, and Vulcan.) The present physical revelation of the earth is only one aspect. The other aspect is the spiritual beings who are actually active in this whole process. We would then have to speak of the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones; the Kyriotetes, Dynamis, and Exusiai; the Archai, Archangels, and Angels. These are the beings about whom Dionysius spoke, and they are an essential element in esoteric Christianity. These are the beings who are active in the development of humanity and the world. The human being was involved, hidden, included, encompassed, indwelled in these spiritual-hierarchical beings from the beginning. This then gives us the secret of the inmost being of the human being—the human “I”. The human “I” quality is connected with the beings who remain unrevealed but are working in the outer visible world.

If we continue in this direction, we might say that in the beginning something of the inmost core of the human was embedded within the divine—within the world of the angelic beings. We might speak to a kind of Logos principle inherent, hidden, sequestered, included within the divine—included within the hierarchies, which is connected with the Godhead. We can point to the development of the physical out of this circumstance; the etheric as the next step, then the astral, and then the ego. The ego comes forth as the deepest secret of the Godhead connected with the Logos principle. Again we have to look to the world where the spiritual-hierarchical beings (their groupings have been numbered from one to nine) are at work. They and their number become important. It is out of this world that the manifested evolution develops. Within the spiritual-hierarchical world exists the working for a higher form of the manifest whereby the physical is transformed into spirit-man, the etheric into life-spirit, and the astral into spirit-self. This transformation and fruiting already appears in the cosmos. The evolution of the earth, from the stages of Saturn to Sun, Sun to Moon, and Moon to Earth, is accompanied by increasingly higher cosmic states of the human being. The secret of the human ego is how to bring this cosmic archetype of higher man out of the cosmos and into the individual unfolding of every human being. The Logos principle in the cosmos, working cosmically to bring forth the higher fruition forms of the human being, has to be brought to each human being so that each can as an individual work at this task.

What we need to include in this evolutionary picture is that not only the physical, etheric, astral, and the ego are given, but that

at every evolutionary stage there is the impulse for a higher form to be created at the same time. The higher forms of the human being remain in the bosom of the Godhead, or more correctly said, within the bosom of the spiritual-hierarchical world working in relation to the Godhead. The physical was given on Saturn. It was then taken back into the spiritual-hierarchical world to be transformed into spirit-man in the later part of that evolution. On Sun, the etheric was given forth and then taken back into the spiritual-hierarchical world as life-spirit. And the astral, on Moon, was given forth and then taken back into the spiritual-hierarchical world to be developed as spirit-self. This indicates that there is a kind of awaking, creative process in the first part of each evolution. The second part is tending toward the sleep state and a higher transformation of what has been given forth, but then it is taken back into the commons of the spiritual-hierarchical world. The beings of the spiritual-hierarchical world who in the beginning enter the evolutionary process on Saturn for the higher nature of man are the Spirits of Love, the Seraphim, and after them, the Spirits of Harmony. The Spirits of Love work into the senses of the physical on Saturn to create the human phantom. This is the first impulse to an ascending-fruiting process in man. It comes into man in the cosmos. There is no Ego through which this first impulse of the Logos impulse can work. These Seraphim beings are the Number One—there in the beginning, working out of the Godhead.

In order to understand the human being, we have to see that his membering is gradually given forth. The world then gradually comes forth, too, in an outer revelation. The outer circumstance becomes established, we may say, in the day-process of creation. The end result is that we have the relationships of the earth, planets, sun, and stars. Particularly we have the relationship of the sun, moon, and earth so that we have today what we know as “the day,” which includes the period of night as well as the period of day. As day and night are established in the day-process in evolution, there develops sleeping and waking in man. Waking becomes a revelation of man in his fourfold membering—ego, astral, etheric, and physical. Sleep becomes a process whereby the ego becomes more closely associated with the astral, and the etheric with the physical. The sleep state is connected with the nourishing process by the archetype of the higher cosmic man. This higher man nourishes and sustains man so that he can keep going when his four members are united. In normal waking consciousness the etheric and astral are more closely bound, while the ego and physical are more closely bound. In sleep there is a change: the etheric and physical are more closely bound, while the astral is more closely bound with the ego. We can say that in sleep the spirit-self element interdigitates itself into the astral to bring about a certain rectification, a purification. In sleep, while the ether body is penetrated by the life-spirit principle of the cosmos to be rejuvenated, the physical is connected with the spirit-man so that the form of the human being can be maintained. For me, the secret is what then can happen or could happen to the ego in sleep. Where does the ego go? Where does the ego belong? Into what domain does it fit? How does it evolve? This then points to the possibility that the ego is not sustained by spirit-self, life-spirit, or spirit-man, but is sustained out of the Godhead itself, out of the Light of the World, out of the Trinity. The ego in its relation to the physical during the day encounters the Logos principle, which in the beginning came to work directly into the physical so that the phantom could come about. Out of the working of the Spirits of Love, the human phantom was established. Through this, in sleep the ego can approach the Godhead itself.

A further possible step to consider is that in sleep, the depth of the world can reveal itself in the actual speech process. It could be said that the Logos principle works in relation to the ego in sleep, and something is brought over by the ego when waking to become Word. The silence of the sleeping man becomes the potentially speaking human being, revealing the depth of the ego in relation to the highest Godhead of the world in sleep. The ego brings something from this domain that can become active in speech when man awakes. In its depths, the Logos of sleep becomes revelation in waking and speech in the word process of the human being.

Our further consideration is to see how the Christ comes into existence and then makes his way through the different evolutions—through the membering of man, including the human ego—and still remains with the Trinity. Our beginning has been to see the Spirits of Love and Harmony as beings working cosmically as the Logos principle. Numbers One and Two are connected with the Son of God and the Father. We now need the new description of the hierarchies as given by Rudolf Steiner, even as we look back to the originator of this numbering and naming by Dionysius the Areopagite.

Lecture 3

Here the problem of sleep is brought up in connection with the earth and the mission of the earth. A basic formulation of the

mission of the earth is to transform a cosmos of wisdom into a cosmos of love. This is connected with the gradual establishing of the conditions of sleep and then interdigitating the Logos principle into sleep. The Logos principle is related to this transformation of wisdom into love.

Rudolf Steiner points us to the first lines of the John Gospel, where we have to deal with something in the beginning with God. This becomes Life, Light, and then Darkness. Let us try to approach this by considering Earth-evolution itself and then go back to Saturn-evolution.

Beginning with the earth, we can speak of the periods of Polaria, Hyperborea, Lemuria, and Atlantis. The time of Atlantis is the beginning of real Earth-evolution. At each step in this process, spiritual beings of a high order extract cosmic bodies from the earth. Planets exit from the earth and then ever denser states of matter slowly come into existence. Electricity, magnetism, and gravity enter into matter as it is increasingly densified. A kind of falling process occurs. At the same time that the planets are exiting, spiritual beings evolve with their work. As the planets exit, other spiritual beings are drawn into the condensation process from the warmth to the airy to the watery and finally to the solid. Only in Atlantis is the solid attained.

At the same time, there is a process in the etheric world that brings about condensation or densification. A totipotent life ether exists in Polaria. Out of this comes tone ether, light ether, and finally light ether that densifies to warmth ether. The progressive evolution of the etheric from light to tone to life ether occurred during the pralayas. During Earth-evolution a part of the ether that does not densify but evolves into higher forms accompanies the exit of the sun from the earth. With this exit, life and tone ethers in particular, and some light ether, are taken along by the Elohim, or the Spirits of Form. This is done so that a higher state of existence can unfold. In this whole process, the Jahve-Elohim or Jehovah remains with the earth. Into this higher state of existence on the sun, six go with the sun and one goes with the moon and earth. Into this higher state of existence on the sun, where the higher ethers are, we can find the principles of man living as an archetype for man's evolution and transformation. It is in this sphere that spirit-self, life-spirit, and spirit-man, which have formed in the ascending curve of the three previous evolutions, reside within the cosmos, within the bosom of the gods. In the descending activity of the ethers, the soul nature of man is unfolding as a cosmic process. The sentient soul, intellectual soul, and consciousness soul evolve out of the astral through the working of the life, tone, and light ethers in which the third hierarchy is at work (Archai, Archangels, and Angels). The etheric densifies from life to tone to light, and finally warmth. Cosmic soul principles—sentient, intellectual, and consciousness soul principles also develop at the same time. On the earth, the states of materiality are forming. Slowly the animal, plant and mineral kingdoms are pressed out, excreted out, of the cosmos. Finally, during the time of Atlantis, man is able to incarnate only when the light ether has densified to warmth ether. The ego is then given out of the bosom of the Exusiai into the warmth and warmth-ether forms. The human being begins to take on materiality in the conditions of warmth, air, water and solid. Man is able to become a physical man; his "fall" is completed in Atlantis. Man's origin was in the bosom of the hierarchies, and his first intention was to live as an Angel-being within the hierarchical world.

In the time of Atlantis, the four states of materiality are established. The kingdoms gradually come forth. Man stands on earth for the first time. Around him the planets begin to find the relationships as they are today. Sun, Moon, and Earth begin the activities that establish the twenty-four hour day. With this, for the first time, sleep can begin to unfold as we know it today.

With the establishment of sleep, man is able to go out into the cosmos in his soul-spiritual being, in his astral body—ego-organization. His basic bodily configuration, his astral body, his etheric body, and physical body, comes to be cared for by the spiritual beings who care for the higher members of man—spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man—which remain in the spirit-world and in the condition of sleep. The basic bodily nature of man is nourished. The ego-organization of man then approaches the higher sun-ether principle at work in sleep. We might consider this sun-ether domain as that which can nourish the ego-organization; that which might be considered the womb of worlds. The ego does not enter into this domain fully in sleep, but approaches it. The sun-sphere with the higher etheric forms and the higher archetypal form of man, that is, mostly life and tone ether, is the world in which the six Elohim are at work. This is the sphere that the human ego tends in sleep, while at the same time the members that remain lying in bed, that is, the sentient body (a part of the astral body) and the etheric and physical bodies, are then nourished. They are sustained and maintained by the spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man. The Logos principle is at work at night. When man awakens, he makes use of these same forces in speech. This is all kind of a life-wisdom process,

we might say.

In order to take up the problem of wisdom and how all is transformed through love, it is worthwhile to go back to Saturn-evolution. We can speak to seven steps through Saturn. There are two soul-states that preceded the seven, but they are conditions not connected with time. We have been given the indication that these are pure soul and pure soul-light-astral conditions. This precedes the actual activity of the Thrones, the Spirits of Will, in their sacrifice, which exists in an etheric condition and commences evolution. They give forth their substance first as courage and then as will substance. This substance is taken hold of by the Spirits of Wisdom, enlightened and penetrated by wisdom. The Spirits of Motion and the Spirits of Form enter this wisdom-penetrated substance. It is the working of the Spirits of Form into this wisdom-motion-filled will substance that results in a kind of warmth substance, which began as courage and then will substance. This warmth is through and through penetrated by wisdom. Into this warmth substance the Archai can incarnate. This is a kind of state of darkness. Forms of warmth are present. Next, the Archangels enter the dark forms to bring light. For the first time there is light in this darkness. This light is penetrated through and through by the Spirits of Love so that what has been given in the previous dark forms out of a kind of wisdom- motion-form principle is penetrated by the inner light of the Archangels and the Spirits of Love. In this process the senses of man are born; and by the working of the Beings of Love, the Seraphim, the phantom of man is created. Here we have the darkness that transforms itself into the light, and it is the love principle of the Spirits of Love that penetrates this light. This love is inherent in the phantom-sense configuration of man as a physical being. The next stage is that the Angels penetrate these phantoms, bringing a kind of a smelling-metabolic activity to these light-phantom forms, and they thereby become living. The Cherubim, the Spirits of Harmony, work in this light-become-living. And all of this is then taken back into the Spirits of Will so that there is a kind of a light-life phantom activity. This all is returned to the Godhead during pralaya. This is the Word of God. In this way, we then see that we have a process occurring where there is darkness penetrated by Archangelic light and love and then Angel-life with harmony. The darkness, by the deeds of love and harmony, is taken back to the Godhead as Logos activity. The Spirits of Will offer the phantom of man, as the darkness, the light; and the life to God, as the Word.

In sleep the physical body, which rests in the bed, is penetrated by all that has happened on Saturn as the activities of the Logos, so that the phantom is maintained. (The same process can be followed for the other members of man in the evolutions of Sun and Moon.) Darkness, Light and life are aspects of the phantom — the maintainer of the true form of man. It is into this physical principle of the darkness, light and life that the Logos has to work for man to become the Word of God. Here the Spirits of Love are at work, at the beginning, taking up what was at first penetrated by the activities of the Spirits of Wisdom. There is a transformation from wisdom at work to love at work. This phantom is crucial for the development of the human being as an ego. Gradually the Spirits of Love have to work through the human etheric and astral principles in subsequent evolutions. Finally through the inclusive work of the six Sun-Elohim and the one Moon-Elohim, the human principle of the ego can be transformed by the Seraphim-Elohim being known as the Christ. Christ is not only the six plus the one Elohim. Christ is a being of all the hierarchies above the Elohim—inclusive of the Seraphim (from the beginning, who is born out of the Father God of the World in the coming forth of this world).

For those who are unfamiliar with Occult Science, the above line or trend in thought may be puzzling. As I can fathom it, Occult Science is a science, but of the spirit. It has inherent in it a mathematical exactness. I am here trying to rely on the exactness of this treatise to further understand what exists in this St. John cycle. Note can be taken that not only Dionysius presented the naming and working of the hierarchies, but Rudolf Steiner did as well, giving new names and indicating the activities in the names. The world of the hierarchies is named, numbered, and described by activity. This trend in dealing with the hierarchies is taken further in what Rudolf Steiner presents in this cycle. In a way, this cycle extends and deepens what is given in Occult Science. Rudolf Steiner indicates that Occult Science is written from the point of view of the Holy Grail. The St. John Revelation, he indicates, is given from the direction taken by the Rosicrucians or the St. John Christians. Each trend or point of view supplements the other. Both belong to the path of the esoteric Christian.

One other point to be made is that I have spoken to events in the evolutions where pralaya is concerned. Rudolf Steiner indicates that the pralaya periods are the sleep state of the evolving earth. He also indicates that we cannot penetrate this

domain. He does, however, give sufficient indications that point to an ascending evolution of the physical and etheric, which follows the ascending evolutionary process in the second half of each planetary evolution. The Spirits of Love, the Seraphim, commence the first ascending evolutionary process (involution) at the “beginning” of man. Pralaya is an extension of the involutory process and, in the case of Saturn, points to a return to the Godhead. I think of this return as a “Son” birth (Born of God Father).

Lecture 4

Rudolf Steiner begins the lecture by considering the St. John formulation of the evolutionary process indicated by “In the beginning.” Rudolf Steiner indicates that the Lazarus event is in the center of this Gospel and is significant in the evolution of man and the world. Before the Raising of Lazarus, we have the Signs. After the Raising, we have the Last Supper, the Sufferings, and the Mystery of Golgotha. The beginning of the Gospel concerns the cosmos, its coming into being and its relation to Christ. The first half is further developed with the gradual penetration of Christ into the human sheaths. The latter half also concerns the Christ as the human sheaths are transformed in the Sufferings and then the penetration of the earth and cosmos by the Christ at the Mystery of Golgotha, the Resurrection, and Ascension. In the middle of the Gospel, we have the mystery of John.

John as a problem has been considered by many. There are essentially two Johns—John, the Baptist, and John, the Disciple of Christ and author of the Gospel. Here we will consider John the Disciple Whom Christ Loved to be connected with Lazarus. This love relationship between this being, John, and the Christ is exceedingly important. It is obvious that the Baptist relationship to the Christ is also exceedingly important.

We know that John the Baptist was raised in rather special circumstances among the Essenes. It seems that bread and honey were his basic sustenance. Wilderness is an outer physical expression reflecting an inner wilderness, a purification process. John had to go through a struggle with his own soul in a solitude process that brought him into a new relationship with the world. In the history of man we have the coming forth of the physical world and the forming of man with the bloodline, the line that gives man his race-identity. By this means, man’s ego content then becomes a memory carried by a particular people—a particular bloodline. In the case of John, a new impulse must be found. He is born of a race, of a bloodline, but this is transformed on his spiritual path in the experiences of solitude. In his solitude (and his diet of bread and honey) he comes then to something of the essence and inner beingness of his own ego and ego-consciousness. His identity is not with Abraham, as a Father, but with the spiritual world out of which he is then born. We can say that an individual who goes on a path of solitude comes to his inmost being with the sense of being born out of God. The other birth we can speak of is he who is born of man as a Son of Man. So we can or might consider the birth of an individual man from two possible sources. One is to be born of God, the other is to be born of man as a Son of Man. Neither is a physical birth. Both are higher births. To be born of God is to take the path of solitude through the wilderness. To be born as a Son of Man means to be born out of the transformation of the human organization, the human bodily organization. The latter birth requires the higher transformation of the physical into a phantom structure, the living into a light body and the soul body into life. This higher form of the bodily nature of man requires the cosmic higher principles—spirit-self, life-spirit, and spirit-man—to indwell the ordinary human sheaths. Then an individual can be born again as a Son of Man.

In order to develop this in relationship to Lazarus and John, we would have to first look at John as the Baptist who went the path of solitude. He lived for a while after the Baptism, engaging with some of the events of the gradual incarnation of the Christ, but then he was beheaded. As a beheaded being, he then enters into the spiritual world; this ego then enters into the domain of the spiritual. There his true being, which through the solitude-practice had already been able to enter the spiritual world before the beheading, begins to be born of God. On the other hand, we have the Lazarus individual who is ill, sitting at the gate, as it were, a disciple of the Christ, but not really evidencing himself. Lazarus then goes into a kind of sleep-death state, a trancelike state, a kind of old form of initiation where the etheric is somewhat separated from the head. This sleep-trance state permits the higher Logos principles—the cosmic principles of spirit-man, life-spirit and spirit-self—to begin to become active in a very intense way through the forces of Love emanating from the Christ. Then the spirit-man principle begins to work its way into the physical that is in the trance state; the life-spirit into the etheric that has separated; and the spirit-self into the soul element that is in death sleep. Because the etheric is separated from the physical, the ego also somewhat separates from the

principle of the astral body so that in this sleep state the ego begins to experience direct relationship with God. God and this being, the “I-ness” and this being, tend to be one. The “I” then does not identify further with the bloodline, with the physical hereditary line, but with the Logos principles that are active in the human being in this trance initiation process. We can say that for three days these higher principles, which are very much connected with the Christ being, worked into the bodily organization of man—the physical, etheric and astral bodies—so that something of the Son of Man could be born. At the same time the ego nature is raised into the Godhead so that this ego can be born of God. This state of Lazarus, I would like to suggest, was one in which then the ego of the Lazarus being could step aside (like the Nathan-Ego) and permit the Baptist-ego (who had previously entered the sphere of God) to once more descend. He who was born of God could be born again as the Son of Man. This being who was born of God can be called forth by the Christ as the Son of Man. Out of the spoken word, Christ enables the cosmic principles to transform the ordinary human sheaths. The sick Lazarus is healed; but more, the Ego-being of the Baptist is born into this healed organization to become the “Disciple Whom the Lord Loved.”

The Christ asking Lazarus to come forth indicates the Word process. The Christ being, who is working out of the sphere of the Logos, can now work in the domain of the outer world in the Word. The Word now heals in the act of speaking. It enables that which is sick unto death to arise. The Word enables John to be born as a Son of Man. We then have the Disciple Whom the Lord Loved. The whole tending of the Logos principle to be infused into man to create a birth as the Son of Man is the work of the Spirits of Love (Seraphim). This pouring of Love, of the higher Logos principle, into man in the Word process is an Act of Love. The description of Lazarus, now John, as the Disciple Whom the Lord Loved indicates the process by which the union is made between the higher members in the cosmos and the special but ordinary lower members of man. I take it that illness rendered Lazarus open for such an infusion.

Spirit-man is infused into the physical, life-spirit into the ether, spirit-self into the astral. Into this Son of Man can descend the Ego-being who had lived in solitude and thereby could enter the spiritual world of the Godhead. It is he, John, who could be born as the Son of Man. This is the beginning of a new initiation—the being of the Christ becomes the initiator. Every man can now become a Disciple Whom the Lord Loves.

This is the central event in the whole Gospel, indicating the working of the Christ being who has been strengthened through the Signs. He can call forth a being who is born of two, that is of God and of man. This is the working through man. It is the working and transforming of man. It is not yet a working into the world. It is not yet a working into the cosmos. This is yet to come.

With this line of consideration I have suggested that the beheaded John, who Dr. Steiner indicated worked as a folk-spirit in the Jewish people, could now begin to work as a group-spirit for the disciples, no longer working in the bloodline. He became a new group-spirit. He actually became an ego-being, an “I-being” in relationship to God. In relationship to the Christ, he was born to life, the “Am” element of the Christ. And that John might have a phantom physical structure in the world itself, he had to meet the love activity of the Christ, as Christ had been working through evolution from the beginning for the renewal of the human phantom. In this way the “I” is of God, the “Am” is of the life of the Christ, and the physical is of the love from Christ. The disciple can then say, “I am Loved,” setting the stage for further evolution. He who goes the path of solitude—the path of the ego—can be born of God, can become a disciple whom the Lord loves. This is a new beginning, born of love.

This direction in thought is a mirror of what Rudolf Steiner has given about the Baptism process. There the ego-being of Zarathustra stepped aside for the incarnation of the Christ. We might likewise consider the ego-being of Lazarus stepping aside so that the ego-being of John, who is Born of God, can enter into the bodily principles of Lazarus, which have become a Son principle through the work of Love. This permits Lazarus–John to bring totally new impulses to that which is a group around the Christ as the twelve disciples. We are thereby also introduced to the possibility of a totally new group-soul at work.

The domain in which a soul-spirit such as Lazarus or John enters because of the relation with the Christ, I am inclined to consider as the higher ether spheres, which were formed by the six Elohim bringing about the exit of the sun during evolution. The ethers taken along were predominantly tone ether (number ether) and life ether (word ether). For the moment, I would like to suggest that this domain could also be called the “spirit lodge.” Something of the Godhead is at work in this world, and

something of the pure male can be found. Nothing whatsoever of a sexual element is involved. Here the astral takes on more of the male element—hence the Son of God quality or Born of God designation.

It is important to keep in mind that it is not only man and the outer world that is evolving, but the inner world of the hierarchies and the Godhead itself. The indication that this is a “beginning” as Word, and that the Word became Life – Light – Darkness certainly points to a changing process in relation to the Word that in the beginning was with God.

Lecture 5

The lecture opens with the first Sign, which is called the Marriage at Cana. At the same time, Dr. Steiner points to the Lazarus event, to the Raising of Lazarus, who is the Disciple Whom the Christ Loved. With this brief introduction, the initiation process of the Persians is brought into focus. Seven stages of initiation are quickly recounted by Rudolf Steiner. These seven steps are known as the stage of the Raven, the Occultist, the Warrior, the Lion, the People, the Sun Hero, and the Father. With the recounting of the seven stages, it is possible to have the impression that this is connected with the matter of the Raising of Lazarus and the Marriage at Cana. In between, mention is made of Nathaniel, who is represented at the stage of a Being of the People, which is the fifth stage of initiation. This is where one speaks of the Persian, Israelite, and so on. My inclination is to include Nicodemus in that picture. Both of these figures, Nathaniel and Nicodemus, I am inclined to lump into the category of individualities who have attained the fifth stage of initiation. Their soul can function as the group-soul of a people. They can sit under the fig tree, the tree of initiation, and are able to become mobile outside their body—“at night” in the etheric-astral world. In order to speak of this group-soul being, I am inclined to look to the stage of human development whereby the individual can not only incorporate an Angelic being into his soul, but there is the capacity to incorporate an Archangelic being into the soul. This is a night process: the process of night when the Angel enters the sentient soul; the Archangel, the intellectual soul; and the Archai, the consciousness soul. The incorporation of these different spiritual beings into the soul during initiation is connected with the Mystery of Golgotha. This is the process by which the Christ enters into the being of man on the earth. This is the stage of initiation, as depicted in the Persian initiation process, that I am inclined to see as the stage where the Christ is at work: penetrating the third hierarchy.

The next stage of development is that of the Sun Hero, where one might consider the Archai Beings who then come into the Time-Spirit process, but relate the time process to eternity. We might consider the Archangel beings being raised from a nation-people stage to a world-people stage—a new kind of race impulse. At this point in the Gospel, we might consider the incarnation process of the Christ as penetrating through man but beginning in the soul with the Angels, Archangels and Archai. I bring up this line of thought because it seems to me that it could be possible to look at the Marriage at Cana in relation to the Sun Hero stage of the ancient Persian initiation. The Marriage at Cana could then be looked at as a transition from an old form of uniting in marriage for the sake of the bloodline to one where a totally new form of social process might emerge. We might consider that it is not a uniting at an Angel level, nor at an Archangel level, but it is a uniting at an Archai level that comes in contact with eternity. The Time-Spirit process with a seed for eternity enters marriage for the first time. It is not only a coming together so that there can be the furtherance of a bloodline, but there is a coming together so there can be the birth of a spirituality and spiritual beingness that transcends the bloodline. It is in this way that we might look at the matter of the Marriage at Cana as Rudolf Steiner presents it in relation to the stages of initiation of the Old Persian culture and the gradual incarnating process of the Christ. The Christ on entering man and penetrating the principles that work into his soul at night, that is, the Angels, Archangels and Archai, brings about new forms of relationships—new fundamental social relationships arising out of the spirit, not out of the blood. This is a means by which the soul is purified, a means by which a spiritual impulse enters the human soul.

In order to take up the Marriage further, we now have to consider the properties of wine and water. In the case of water, we know that it belongs to the earth. It is the outer manifestation of the etheric. Wine is also a liquid, but it has principles that are brought into it which are of a very different nature. The wine is a sun derivative that originates in the earth itself. The vine is of the earth, but the grape is more of the domain of the sun. Light and form enter into the life of the vine. The sun gives light but imprints form, so that in a grape we see the multiplication of life and form in the bunch of grapes.

The grape is a manifestation of a multiple individuation process. It is not quite individual. It is like the personality impulse—the

spirit-personality impulse—that developed on Old Saturn where mulberry-like forms, mulberry heat forms, unfolded. More so than in the case of the mulberry, in the grape there is the interplay of the earth and water with its life, and with the sun in the multiplication of its individuated forms. The principle of individuation, a kind of a personality-individuation, that presents itself in the grape is the bunch of grapes. The grape, the fruit, not only has life, but also a skin and a color, indicating formative and color activities (in the skin) of the outer planetary world. This grape can be brought into darkness and transformed into wine, where what is of sugar becomes more and more individuated in the process of alcohol production. The drinking of wine brings something of a life that bears individuated form into the human organization. It brings about a kind of individuation of the human being (through physical means). This takes the human soul out of the group-soul process of a people. Dr. Steiner indicates that when wine is consumed and marriage takes place, there is an impulse to bring a kind of individualization to the uniting souls. This does not transform the bloodline process, but it brings something of a person-individual element into the bloodline. Marriage is for the sake of the birth of another human being. It perpetuates the bloodline. The use of wine brings about the birth process of the person—the individuality. This can be active in marriage, as well, and can be brought to the soul-to-be-born. (See current research on the effect of alcohol on the fetus.)

When we go then to the Marriage at Cana, we see the Christ unable to bring life into the water. Augmented by the etheric principle of the Mother of Jesus, there is very living water at the Marriage. One can say that the Christ being did not yet himself have the etheric forces able to enliven the water consumed at the Marriage, and therefore required the support of the Mother. The etheric of the earth is not yet penetrated by the Christ. At the same time, there is an interplay between the Mother and the Son that has to take another step as the process of the marriage comes about. Through this marriage process something new has to come about between Son and Mother as well. The Son principle, we can say, is working into time, but is of the eternal. The Mother principle has to unite with it. This union that will occur between Mother and Son is not yet at the Marriage, but is to come. What is of strength in the Mother can work in the Marriage. What is of strength in the Christ being, working in Light and Life, can act in the water—the etheric—to bring about spirit-form impulses that work spiritually into the being of those being married or participating in the marriage. This is a spirit-wine impulse. Light and life, which works formatively into the grape, works into the souls of man. The real egos of the individuals who are being married are being stimulated. The principles of form and life are stimulated as the two unite.

With the awakening of the ego, there is another possibility of union that can occur within the souls of those who marry. This is a union, a uniting or a marriage of the spirit and soul—of man and woman—of each single human being. This is a spiritual uniting process and is the one that is to occur between the Son and the Mother and between the spirit and the soul—but the time is not yet at hand. This points to a new form of uniting within men themselves, so that they can in further ages unite with one another in freedom for the sake of the incarnation of spiritual beings, not through procreative processes of the past, through sexual procreative processes, but through the processes that are connected with the Word. There is the opening of a new vista here, the uniting of the soul and spirit of each, so that in the future, in new social relationships where there is human converse and speech, a new form of birth can occur. Spiritual beings can be born. Here the birth is out of the Godhead. The birth is not out of man—man merely furnishes the possibility of this process for the sake of higher spiritual beings. Undoubtedly, our procreative process will be changed.

At the Marriage at Cana we see that two souls are uniting in marriage out of the bloodline. There is a transition here, where the water is penetrated by the Christ light-form plus the Mother's etheric radiations. The Christ is able to bring the individual light-form (archangelic activity) with which the Mother can unite. This is a transition process: the uniting in the individual soul between the consciousness soul and the spirit-self. This gives a direction to Earth-evolution as it goes into the sixth cultural epoch. The Marriage sets the stage for the future of men who can come together in common activity that is not based in the physical, the blood. The Marriage at Cana is a transition process.

There is another way to approach this Marriage. The "I"-principle was brought into the human organization by Jehovah furnishing the hereditary form element in man. In this way a kind of individuated element can be carried in the blood of a people. This "I"-principle of Jehovah is then carried by the life or the physical-etheric makeup of the human being so that it is actually the form principle in the blood that gives the principle of "I" to each. The "I AM" is given by Jehovah. The "I AM"

here lives in the bloodline. The future is that the “I” is connected not with the bloodline, but with the spirit, with the soul element, the spiritual-soul element. This spirit-soul element is furnished by the Angels, Archangels, and Archai. They become the “AM,” while the “I” is born out of the next hierarchy of spiritual beings—the Elohim, the six Elohim. This sphere brings about the birth of the “I,” which is spiritual. The “AM” principle is of the third hierarchy domain, the Angel sphere. Of course, this has to be supported by the etheric, but in order for this to come about, the Christ has to penetrate farther into the earth so that the waters of the earth and the etheric of man are completely penetrated by the Christ principle, by his Life-Spirit. This is also yet to come in the development of the Christ-Incarnation process.

What is spoken about here is that Christ brings something of a higher spiritual element, the spirit-self, to man. At first this happens in sleep: that the soul element, the consciousness soul, can have the impulse to unite with the spirit-self. The Christ has to penetrate the third hierarchy, and then the soul is prepared for uniting with the spirit-self. This uniting of the soul with the spirit is a higher form of marriage. The group element of sleep has to be penetrated by the individual. The Christ must work in order for the individual to remain awake in sleep—to attain the consciousness soul not out of the angelic world, but out of individualized angelic activity. Man needs angelic activity in thinking, group archangelic consciousness in feeling, and time archai consciousness in willing in order to enter sleep out of the individualized soul activity. This is being prepared by the Christ—the soul is being saved by the Christ. The preparation is being made for the individual’s marriage with the higher self, the spirit-self.

Therefore, a new institution of marriage (uniting) has to come about so that not only can there be a birth process in relation to the physical and etheric (the hereditary bloodline), but there has to be a precursor for such a marriage between the soul and the spirit within each individual. This new impulse for uniting comes from the Elohim—the six Elohim who are active within the sphere of the Christ. Therefore, we find the six pits of water, or the six vessels, at the Marriage.

There is another way to formulate this. That is, that the “I”-principle was brought into the human organization through Jehovah carrying the hereditary form element into man so that he has a kind of individuated element within the blood of a people. From the one side, the “I”-principle of Jehovah is then carried by the substance and life of the blood. It is Jehovah who in the substance of the blood speaks the principle of “I” as a being and in the life of the blood, the “AM.” The “I AM” can be seen as the substance (in hereditary form) and life of the blood. In this way, the personal-individuality of man is born. In the process of the incarnation of the Christ, the person-individuality, can become ego-individuality by being brought into relation with the cosmic principles of the soul—the sentient-, intellectual-, and consciousness-soul principles, which are penetrated by the third hierarchy in sleep. The “I” of man can by this deed become a soul being who weds the spirit—the spirit-self. The beings from the sphere of the Exusiai must penetrate the soul domain of man—rooted in the Angels, the Archangels and the Archai. This is a new “I AM” principle, which can be incorporated (not overshadowed) by man. The next step of the Christ is to penetrate the human etheric body. This requires that the day-waking soul has to be taken up.

We have become used to speaking about the sentient-, intellectual- and consciousness-soul elements. This configuration is what we have as a higher form of the soul, evolved particularly in sleep, through culture or spiritual practice. The more bodily or ordinary waking consciousness involves a lower form of soul life that we can speak of as the soul body. In the lecture cycle Microcosm and Macrocosm, Rudolf speaks of a waking-perceiving sentient body (under the influence of planetary Mercury beings); an inwardizing-intellectualizing sentient body (under the influence of planetary Venus beings); and an activity-doing sentient body (under the influence of planetary Moon beings). Planetary Mars beings bring about sleep to develop the sentient soul. Planetary Jupiter beings bring about dreaming to help evolve the intellectual soul. The Planetary beings of Saturn can influence man by bringing about sleepwalking, but the more normal activity of these beings is to assist in the development of the consciousness soul.

If we consider Christ’s activity in these “meetings in the night” as penetrating man’s higher soul constitution with the spiritual beings involved, we might look at the penetration of the day-soul constitution as a next step. This is a step toward the penetration and transformation of the human etheric organization of waking life.

Christ could not yet penetrate the waking etheric organization at the Marriage. But, after living with the image of the Good Samaritan, the woman at the well, I tend to see this as a next step in the Christ’s penetration of man’s constitution. The water of

the well—given to the Christ by the woman of a mixed bloodline (an etheric principle) is an indication of the waking soul life that begins the transformation of the etheric (the physical to a lesser extent.) Through this step of the event between the Christ and the Samaritan woman, the life-spirit principle of Christ can work more strongly into the lower human etheric organization. The path is through the soul of another human being—the Samaritan Woman.

We are pointing to the fact that Christ brings something of a higher soul element, the spirit-self element to man, at first in sleep and then bringing something of the life-spirit element into the etheric makeup of the human being. New life can be gained, even during the time of wakefulness. At first, the Christ permits an individuation process within the sentient, intellectual and consciousness soul in sleep.

Spiritual beings of the third hierarchy come to be active in the soul configuration — not only higher planetary spirits. Christ's next exercise is to bring this higher soul element for the transformation of the lower soul activities. This in turn has a deep influence on the life processes of man. These processes are then no longer only influences from the Jehovah-Elohim being who had brought a kind of physical-personal individuation process into existence.

From this point of view, the Signs become a gradual penetration of the Christ into the sheaths of man, transforming them, ensouling them, and thereby individuating them. Slowly there is mastery of the outer physical world as well. This is seen in the Sign of the Samaritan woman, where the water, or the etheric principle of the earth can be penetrated, and those consuming it can be nourished by the mastery of the ether-watery nature of the earth. This, however, still remains in connection with the human principle. It is not yet the stage at which Christ can walk on water or master the elements (calm the storm). It is still dependent on the social circumstance where there is a mixture of blood, where there is a woman.

All of these Signs, with resultant activities, develop so that Christ can gain forces, strength, life, so that he can have mastery over the physical, etheric, and astral natures of man. This is necessary so that a transformation can occur, a raising process, as with Lazarus, can come about. This can develop only gradually. It occurs first through the spiritual beings that live in the soul of man—that is, the Archai, the Archangels and the Angels—then slowly in the sheaths of man, and finally into the outer world of nature.

Lecture 6

The lecture opens with the scene of Nicodemus. We touched on this in lecture five, pointing to the fact that the stage where a person is a leader of a people, as an Israelite or a Persian, is the fifth stage of initiation in the Old Persian Mysteries. We indicated that the Marriage at Cana points to this fifth stage, but raises it to the sixth stage, that of the Sun Hero. We indicated, too, that the Nathaniel being indicates a fifth stage and suggested that this is also true of Nicodemus, though Nicodemus is raised from the fifth stage into the sixth stage. As Nathaniel is able to commune at night, is able to connect with the community of the Archangelic beings, so we can say the same is true of Nicodemus. In this case, Nicodemus, now through Christ, is brought into relationship with a higher sphere of night activity. This is the Archai stage of night activity. In addition, there is a further transformation of the sleep, or the Archangelic beingness, of Nicodemus, so that he can come into relationship with the sleep-working of the six Elohim, who are pointed to in the Marriage at Cana. The Christ has to be able to raise a Nicodemus into the sphere of the Sun Hero so that gradually the Mother principle can enter there also, can as a soul being come into relationship with the spirit — with the Spirit-Sun. We can say the Sun Hero domain is a domain in which the true “I” quality comes alive.

With
this
line
of
thinking
it
is
then
possible
to
suggest
that
the
“I
Am”
principle,
which
was
pointed
to
in
the
last
considerations,
is
developed
further.
The
“I”
and
the
“AM,”
the
ego
principle
in
relationship
to
the
etheric,
we
can
say,
takes
another
step
in

the considerations here. To follow this up, we would have to ask, “what is the origin of the etheric?” To answer this, we would have to go back to the Old Sun and see that the Spirits of Wisdom poured forth their beingness. They already did this on Saturn, penetrating all of what is physical with an element of wisdom; but in the case of the Sun, this wisdom is given forth as life, as an etheric principle, which has light inherent in it as well. This is not the light of consciousness, or the astral light. It is a kind of etheric-light-wisdom principle, which wafts and weaves in relationship to the whole of evolution as life and takes a particularly highly developed direction when the sun exits from the earth during Hyperborea.

To follow up this process of the development of the etheric, we need then to go back to the Old Sun to consider that on the Sun the etheric was given forth by the Spirits of Wisdom. This ether-wisdom substance is received by the Throne-Cherubim beings. Thereby the etheric gradually goes through a process in which it is raised from purely light-wisdom to a penetration by the Seraphim beings. By this means, life-light is penetrated by the element of love. This is a direction of the whole of Sun-evolution where at the beginning, we have the ether (first given in an astral condition) given by the Spirits of Wisdom and then gradually transformed by the Spirits of Love—the Seraphim. At this latter stage, the Sun is penetrated by the beings of the highest hierarchy, that is, the beings of the Spirits of Love and Spirits of Harmony. Through this a transformation of the etheric occurs. The principle we know as the life-spirit comes into being as a higher human-cosmic principle to be evolved for man. This is a preparation so that in the pralaya sleep stage between Sun- and Moon-evolutions the etheric can be evolved into a higher etheric state, which is called tone ether. During the Moon-evolution, this tone ether and light-ether element work through the whole of evolution to be again evolved to a higher stage at the end of Moon-evolution. As pralaya develops, at the end of Moon-evolution, tone ether becomes life ether. In the beginning of the Earth-evolution, then we have the introduction of life ether as a basis for the development of the earth. The physical is penetrated by life, a living, life-filled materiality. A kind of living warmth is the beginning of the Earth-evolution. The etheric element that is at work at the beginning of evolution has in its potentiality all the other stages of the etheric, that is tone and light ethers. As Earth-evolution progresses, first we have life ether, then tone ether and then light ether. These etheric components differentiate the astral into sentient soul, intellectual soul, and consciousness soul in the cosmos. These are cosmic soul principles. It is not until the time of Lemuria that warmth ether is devolved or transformed into a lower state, or what we can call warmth ether. At this point, the human ego is then born out of the beingness of the hierarchy of the Spirits of Form. Warmth ether is needed for this birth. Ether substance is necessary. Man’s essential egoness is born into this etheric component, that is, warmth ether. This makes it possible for the ego, working through the etheric, to take up the warmth-physical substantiality. Gradually the airy, then the watery, and finally the solid can be incorporated into man. The form of the warmth-ether streams conform to the later human circulatory system. Slowly, and for the first time, man can set his foot on the earth. We can say he falls out of Paradise. Important here is to see that the “I” is a principle of the human ego given out of the Spirits Form but is able to establish itself in the sphere of the warmth-ether element. This is the “I AM” principle of man, which for the first time makes it possible for the independent human ego to be established in the etheric. This process of establishing the ego in the etheric is a new basis for the “AM.” This is a kind of waking process—particularly as the physical substance is drawn into the etheric circulating system. At the same time, the human ego is surrounded with the soul principles (consciousness soul, intellectual soul, and sentient soul). The three principles are still cosmic and become the cosmic vehicles for man’s sleep. This is the beginning of the sleep state of man. Man is asleep as an ego in the cosmic sentient-, intellectual- and consciousness-soul elements. These cosmic entities have to be gradually transformed in man so that man can take up sentient-, intellectual- and consciousness-soul impulses into the waking state. The astral body of man has to become a sentient body. The transformation of the cosmic-soul principles of sleep and the creation of waking-soul principles in the sheaths of man is begun during the night. Here the consciousness-soul, Archaic cosmic sleep vehicle is penetrated by the Spirit-Sun element—the Christ-spirit impulse. This allows the individuality of man—the ego—to slowly penetrate the astral and form a sentient body. Slowly the sentient body, the sheath of our waking state, becomes transformed by the ego. The night cosmic experience of the ego is brought into the bodily astral sheath to create the sentient body. The “I” (ego) and the “AM” (etheric) transform the astral so that it becomes completely penetrated by egoity and by love. The Sun-Spirit element at work in the cosmic sleep vehicles (the Elohim at work in the third hierarchy of the soul vehicles) make it possible for the Ego in the etheric to transform the astral and to create a sentient body. In waking consciousness the sentient body has love brought to it. The ego or “I” can bring over the forces of love. The “I” of man, the “AM” of man (etheric cosmic) can bring love (cosmic astral) to wakeful consciousness. “I AM LOVE” can come out of sleep. I see the Nicodemus scene, as a

transformation of sleep, which began on Atlantis. This sleep needs to take up what is necessary for a life—not only of wisdom, but of love as well.

All of this points to the time of evolution when the planets established their current relationships, the relationships between sun, moon, and earth. This was the time of Atlantis. At this time the ego incarnated for the first time, requiring the wisdom element of the “AM” element to become warmth ether. The astral soul elements that were cosmic, became individuated slightly. The soul constituents have been penetrated by the elements of love. The Spirits of Love and Harmony played into this. As this activity proceeded, so that sleep-man becomes a cosmic-sun being, slowly man incarnated to begin the birth-waking process. Before the birth process, sleeping and waking were determined by the relation between sun, moon and earth. When the sun was more active in relation to the earth, there was sleep. When the moon was more active, there was waking. In the middle of Atlantis, birth with the alternating states of waking and sleeping came about. This process of waking and sleeping—birth and death—has to be transformed through the Christ.

With this as a background, we might return to the Marriage at Cana. As the sleep state is transformed, the waking state can then gradually follow. A transformation of the waking astral organization can progress. Astral body can become soul body, which in turn can become sentient body. As the waking astral body is transformed, the human etheric begins a transformation as well. In the cosmos, the soul members arise out of the etheric states (penetrated by the third hierarchy). These were then saved by the Spirits of Love and Harmony (refer to the Nicodemus discussion). In man, in waking consciousness the soul members arise out of the ego. The soul members bring about a transformation of the etheric organization. If we now turn to the Marriage, we can consider the transformation of the astral body of the Mother of Jesus. Through the Marriage, a transformation is initiated. The astral body becomes soul body. Through Christ’s love, the astral becomes pure soul body. The soul body next becomes virginous. As a further step, the soul body becomes Holy—the soul body becomes sentient body. Through the influence of the Christ, the Mother of Jesus begins a waking soul transformation, becoming virginous and then holy. With this progression, the Virginous and Holy Mother of Jesus can begin the transformation of the etheric organization of her bodily sheaths. New wisdom-ether impulses—out of the sphere of the Spirit-Sun—can begin. By these steps, the holy-virgin soul can be penetrated and transform the human etheric into wisdom. Love and harmony transform life into wisdom. The virgin becomes a Virgin-Holy-Sophia. This all comes about through Christ’s relation with the Mother of Jesus. The Christ radiating outwardly to the Mother of Jesus is at the same time working into the higher ether states of the sun where the Nathan Mother is being born. (This is the soul of the Nathan Mother, who died very young.) Here the Divine Sophia is being born in the higher reaches of the sun ether spheres. She is being born of God. Here the Mother principles are going through transformations, while the Christ is developing and evolving as well. Waking is being transformed; birth as well. The departed Nathan Mother is being born in death through the incarnating activities of the Christ. Spirit-self is being brought to man, but life-spirit as well. This must all occur. This strengthening of the Christ force in relation to the physical world, as well as the spiritual world, must unfold. In this process the soul world, expressed by the transformation of the Mother principle, is being born for the freedom of man. The Raising of Lazarus requires further development of the Christ. The Signs point to this development.

Lecture 7

In order to take up this lecture in a meaningful way, I have had to look at the incarnation of the Christ in broad outline. Christ had to first penetrate into man, and then gradually into nature, and then finally into the earth and cosmos. The goal is that the Christ becomes the spirit of the earth and the spirit of a cosmic body.

If we think about the spirit of a cosmic body, then we have to ask what is the constitution of this spirit? From indications Rudolf Steiner has given elsewhere the physical body of such a spirit is furnished by the Spirits of Form. The Spirits of Movement constitute the etheric body. The Spirits of Wisdom constitute the astral body. The soul qualities of the cosmic spirit, that is the sentient, intellectual and consciousness elements of the cosmic body, are constituted by the Spirits of Will, Harmony and Love. The highest membering, spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man, penetrate into the region of the Trinity. Therefore, in considering the mystery of the incarnation of a spiritual being so that the earth can become a cosmic body whose spirit is the Christ, a very definite process has to be undertaken, and the world of the hierarchies and the Godhead has to be looked at.

It seems to me that by considering the Signs—particularly those connected with the events before the Raising of Lazarus—we

have the perspective that the human soul, then the life processes of man, and finally the body of Jesus, were penetrated. And as the body is penetrated and transformed, the astral, etheric and finally the physical of the earth is also entered and penetrated. It is just in considering this process of the becoming of a cosmic spirit or a planetary spirit that Rudolf Steiner points to the six Elohim. It seems to me of great importance that we consider the seventh Elohim, the Jehovah-Elohim. At the separation of the moon, Jehovah had connected his being with the moon and the human physical organization. The Jehovah-Elohim furnished the forces necessary for the blood-hereditary stream. On the other hand, the six Elohim in taking the sun out of the earth, began the development of the higher ether spheres of the sun. These higher ether spheres had to be brought into relationship with the earth and the Mystery of Golgotha. Rudolf Steiner speaks about the seer looking from cosmic heights at the earth and seeing a change in the earth's aura as the blood of Christ penetrated the earth substance itself. He points to this in this lecture as well as elsewhere, but here particularly goes further to point out that we are treading on the Body of the Christ as we walk the face of the earth. The higher ether spheres, mediated by the six Elohim, are brought in relation to the earth, overshadowed, enfolded by the Jehovah-Elohim, at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha.

This lecture is very much connected with this process. To develop this line of thought further, I would bring the Healing of the Blind and the Forgiving of the Adulteress into relationship with each other—something suggested in this lecture.

I found it helpful to enumerate the Signs, beginning with the Marriage at Cana, followed by the Nicodemus sleep scene, the Good Samaritan Woman at the Well, the Healing of the Nobleman's Son, the Healing of the Man at the Pool of Bethesda, the Feeding of the Five Thousand, the Healing of the Man Born Blind, and the Raising of Lazarus. These are Signs that are connected with the gradual penetration of the Christ being into the being of man and the earth as well.

I have tried to show that the Marriage at Cana, involving the Mother, points to a kind of purification process, to the gradual transformation of the human astral organization by the ego. This higher soul evolution (astral transformation) that occurs with the Mother culminates in the scene at the cross where the Christ unites the Mother with St. John. To me this indicates that the soulness of man—his thinking, feeling and willing—in its depths, in relationship to Angel, Archangel, and Archai, is being penetrated even in the beginning with the first Sign. At the same time we might consider that the life processes of the Mother are becoming involved. The soul begins to transform the etheric. The Marriage at Cana suggests a possible transformation in the reproduction process. The Nicodemus scene points to the sleep process and suggests an alteration in the life-maintaining process. The Good Samaritan scene with the taking of water and drinking, points to nourishing. The Healing of the Nobleman's Son points to a new maintaining-growing process that should come about in man. The events at the pool at Bethesda indicate a transformation of the willing-warming process of life. A totally new form of nourishing process is pointed to in the Feeding of the Five Thousand. In the Healing of the Man Born Blind, Rudolf Steiner pointed out how the spittle gains in healing forces as the breathing is strengthened through the deadening of the air. Here the breathing process is penetrated. Finally, in the Raising of Lazarus there is a whole new process of laying away or excreting of what is not man and taking hold of what is truly man, which belongs to the ego. What is retained—human nature—is ego-penetrated. In these Signs, we might consider how gradually the life processes—the seven life processes of the etheric body—are penetrated. The physical is also transformed in the enactment of the Signs. The transformation of Sleep, Marriage, Healings, and Feeding all are connected with the physical-bodily configuration and its maintenance. There is an indication that man's sense system, which is the bodily basis for the ego, is penetrated (eg., the healing of the blind man). This penetration of man's sheaths, the transformation of the soul, and the extension of Christ's workings into the domain of the physical is all needed to accomplish the Raising of Lazarus. Therefore we note that the soul, the life, and the bodily nature of man are being penetrated. The scenes of the Samaritan Woman, the Feeding of the Five Thousand and the Healing with Clay suggest an extension of the Christ forces into the world of nature (water, fish, bread, clay). This all suggests an evolution and a strength of this spiritual ego-being of the Christ working through the soul, the life processes, the human physical body, and into the body of the earth. Gradually the Christ becomes the planetary spirit of the earth, and thereby the earth can become or remain a cosmic body. (There is the tendency since the time of the Fall for the earth to fall out of evolution.)

The scene of the Adulteress is interesting when we consider the working of the Christ forces into the domain of the etheric and physical of the earth. Rudolf Steiner elsewhere indicates that when the Christ bends over to write in the sand of the earth, he (Christ) is actually inscribing into the Akashic Record—into the Book of Life connected with the earth. This act by the Christ

enables the adultress to come into a new relation with karma. The Christ does not judge, but writes in the Book of the Earth—into the Book of Life. Christ is able to help this soul-being (the adultress) to take up error out of self-knowledge. Error when written into the Book of the Earth, the Book of Life, becomes a cosmic process—an objective fact. When seen in relation to the perfection of the Christ, the sinner, the one who has erred, can correct the wrong through knowledge. This last miracle points to the Christ's union with the earth and its life, as well as eternity.

This seventh lecture would seem to revolve around the gradual penetrating of man and the earth—the working into the etheric-astral components of the earth. These can provide an eternal memory for the earth. This gives a kind of cosmic memory process so that man can form his own judgment. Man can take responsibility for correcting his own error. The earth, however, must remain a cosmic body—with a spirit and an eternal memory.

In this way, we use a contemplative approach to the Christ becoming a planetary spirit. He thereby becomes the guide and Lord of Karma. He becomes the Master of Karma, enabling the transformation of error through freedom. He allows man to take responsibility for correcting his own errors. This requires the penetration of the earth by the Christ. The life- and the sentient-being (cosmic) aspects have to be taken up as well. The Christ thereby becomes the planetary spirit of our earth. He becomes the Lord of Karma as well. Knowledge becomes a basis for freedom. The law is replaced by individual responsibility.

Lecture 8

We have come to the point where we speak of the earth as the body of the Christ. Also, we have considered Christ as a planetary spirit. And now we will see that at the Mystery of Golgotha the constitution of the earth has changed. We have indicated that in the Signs the Christ is, for the most part, penetrating man. This culminates in the Raising of Lazarus. From the Raising of Lazarus to the Mystery of Golgotha, there is a progressive penetration of not only man, but the earth and the surrounding cosmos. In dealing with the sins of man by writing in the sand of the earth and thereby altering the destiny of the human being from law to freedom, Christ brings a totally new impulse into the earth as a cosmic body. The whole direction, configuration and activity of man has to change. This progression of the penetration of man, then the earth, and then the etheric-astral sphere of the earth, where the Book of Life can be inscribed, points to something like the soul of the earth. Christ's relation to each individual sin gives the possibility of freedom for man to take up his karma—not out of law. This indicates that we have to consider with more accuracy, more depth, the gradual incarnation of man himself, the process by which man became a real man of the earth.

For this reason, the lecture begins with Atlantis and the circumstances of Atlantis. It was then that for the first time the sun, moon and earth assumed their relationships as they exist today. Time begins to assume the current course as the sun and earth and moon develop their movement relationships. An indication of the major change at this time in Atlantis was the appearance of the rainbow. This means that the water precipitates out. The air separates. Light and darkness interact. The phenomena of sun-light-air, moon-water, and earth-solid-darkness interplay so that the higher ether form appears in the rainbow. Before that, the ether process connected with the rainbow was revealed not in the rainbow, but as a bearer of spiritual beings. Rudolf Steiner often indicates that at that time there was a natural clairvoyance, with nebulous objects and spiritual beings presenting themselves. With the appearance of spiritual beings within the consciousness of man, there was no need for religion. There was no need for initiation. There was no need for anything to enable man to find a relationship with the spiritual. The spiritual was immediately there. Much more of the problem was leading man onto the earth, permitting the door to close on the spiritual world.

We might consider now the Oracles of Atlantis: The Oracles of Moon, Venus, Mercury, Sun, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn were there so that man could become more of a true earthly being while maintaining a connection with the spiritual world. He needed to develop the faculty to perceive the rainbow so that the rainbow could become a sign of man's initiation process. Man had to be led to the earth. This permitted man to become more of an earthly being. At the same time the Oracles were fulfilling this task of enabling man to become an earthly being. They had also to enable the possibility of man to retain a connection with the gods. We would have to consider that at this time sleep began to assume its present form. Slowly there came to man a consciousness of earth circumstances that constituted wakefulness, and a kind of dream state unfolded in relationship with the spiritual beings of the suprasensible world. This was sleep. The first forms of coming consciously into sleep would be known as

initiation, and the first forms of waking into day life would be helping man to assume a purely physical human consciousness. My inclination is to think that the Oracles or the Mystery centers of Atlantis were the places where our current sleeping and waking cycle was actually established. This paralleled the unfolding of the present-day relation between sun, moon and earth. The latter relationship unfolded out of the work of higher spiritual beings than the leaders of man in the Oracles. As time progressed, these avatar beings ascended to the sphere of the moon.

The main Mystery centers of Atlantis were the Sun Mystery. I have the impression that certain Mystery centers led more into man, and others more out to the cosmos, thereby establishing waking and sleeping. I gather this from Rudolf Steiner's indications in *Microcosm and Macrocosm*. The Sun Mystery held the balance in man, giving rise to the changes of consciousness and bringing about a change in the etheric configuration.

We have in this lecture the indication that this is the time when the human ether body slowly began to conform to the physical configuration of the head. I tend to relate this to activities in the Sun Mystery. The process of gaining clairvoyance now is to loosen the etheric from the head. However, the goal is not just loosening the etheric (a beheading), but doing it in such a way that it is a conscious process. As the shrinking of the etheric was a Mystery-center process, so gradually the further Mysteries of post-Atlantis had to permit the re-expansion. Again, avatars, hierophants, and gurus came to work with individual men for this purpose. Another way to establish the contraction and the beginning of re-expansion of the etheric so that the initiation process could become a more democratic process was to establish the impulses for culture—cultural epochs. For this to occur a fundamental impulse for this development had to come out of the Sun Mystery. It was not only the select who would be permitted to develop balanced faculties—initiation—but this had to be bestowed on all of mankind. Here the Sun Mystery, overshadowed by the Christ as an avatar being, brought this impulse of freedom.

What we are speaking to is a major impulse arising out of the Sun Oracle of Atlantis. It was Manu who migrated from Atlantis as it gradually sank beneath the water. The migration (a major one, there were others) passed by Ireland, then through northern Europe to northern Asia near the Turfan Desert. From what I can construct, it is there that Manu established the center out of which could flow impulses for culture—impulses for the cultural development of mankind could begin. The development needed was on the one hand that mankind could come to the earth, and on the other hand, mankind could then be permitted to return to the spiritual world where there could be a communion, a contact with spiritual beings. Three significant figures in this migration from Atlantis to northern Asia were Zarathustra, Buddha, and Scythianos. They are very significant followers of the individuality known as Manu.

Rudolf Steiner indicated that Manu was able to take the etheric organizations of all the highly developed initiates of the seven Oracles of Atlantis and implant them into the seven individuals who became the Holy Rishis of the ancient Indian culture. These seven individuals contained the etheric bodies of the high initiates, so that individuals could have an etheric experience of the spiritual world; so that the whole culture pointed back to the divine spiritual world where Brahma or Shiva or God appeared as a single unitary being. The whole direction was to the spiritual world. The physical world was not yet that important. This is the basis for our first post-Atlantean culture. This is a first “Sun-Day.”

In order for the next step in cultural evolution to occur, the past could no longer be perceived as a unity with Brahma. There had to come forth the being of Zarathustra, who then established the ancient Persian culture, directing the consciousness of man to the interplay between the light domain of the sun with Ahuro Mazdao and the earthly domain of Oramuzd, darkness. Light and darkness became the main cultural factor indicating the interplay between sun and earth. The relation of the sun and the earth was experienced when the earth could for the first time be cultivated. This indicates the gradual descent of the human soul-spiritual being; the beginning of man's capacity to deal with the earth itself, meaning that nomadic culture was given up and slowly a culture of the earth or agriculture could come about. Zarathustra was then a leader of the culture that presented the twofoldness of existence, the interplay between God and Man, or Sun and Earth. The indication from Rudolf Steiner is that the first cultural epoch, that is the ancient Indian epoch, occurred during the time when the sun at the spring equinox rose in the constellation of Cancer. The ancient Persian epoch began when it began to rise in the constellation of Gemini. This was the second “Sun-Day.”

Our third cultural epoch, that of the Egyptian-Chaldean-Babylonian times begins with the spring equinox sun rising in the constellation of Taurus. Here man becomes more of a physical being. He arrives more at earth consciousness. This was accomplished by embalming the human being after he died so that the soul did not penetrate too deeply into the spiritual world. The returning human soul is then ensured of a very close relationship with the earth itself. With this, the light of the spiritual world disappears and earth consciousness dawns, is awakened, but there is no light within the earth itself. The earth comes to be known as the dark earth or alchemy. Alchemy becomes the secret of this darkness. The initiation process occurs within this darkness, within the inner sanctuaries of the pyramids. There is an experience in this initiation-culture that there is the birth of a child being, the Horus being, born to Isis and Osiris. There is a birth within the darkness itself. Here is a hint of what is to come with the Mystery of Golgotha. The spiritual world is removed, and the human soul has to begin to look inward for the birth of the son element from the two principles of the soul, that is, the mother and the father. The mother and the father in this case are Isis and Osiris, who are mother and father on one hand, and at the same time, they are brother and sister. This means that there is a conceptual birth process that has not to do with anything of a sexual nature, but is of the domain of brother and sister—purely of a kind of soul-spiritual birth. It is into this process that the Mystery of Golgotha enters. Where soul (mother/sister) and spirit (father/brother) unite, a third will appear. Now a threefold element emerges in culture. The unity of the first gives way to the twofold of the second epoch. A three-folding comes forth on the third “Sun-Day.”

The next stage in culture is enacted whereby the initiation process is not enacted within the depths of the earth, but begins to experience the spiritual world outwardly in the domain of light. In the Greek temple, full of light and air, we have the dwelling place of the gods. The temple is the sphere of the gods, the light is the living element. The breathing of light gives the basis for the experience of the gods. Man is going through a change where he becomes a citizen of the earth. He is a person. He begins to have his own domain of rights. At the same time, he is a member of a polis, which means a group that is living independently of blood ties and tries to begin to live in a social process. Social laws and the rights of individuals begin to determine that association. The movement is away from agriculture, from the dark earth, to the light of the Greek culture where man emerges as an individual, as a citizen, as a member of a polis; and in the Roman culture he even goes so far that he can create a will. The testament of the will comes into being. So at this time, the temple is the dwelling place of the gods, and the city-state develops where man becomes a citizen in association with others. He has his rights and he has his human will. This is the descent into matter, and is the period in which the “Incarnation” can take place. This is the time in which the Christ incarnates. Man now belongs to the earth—his consciousness is of the earth. He is still determined by the blood, but to this another element has been added so that he can become free. He becomes a member of a group that is non-blood determined, and he begins to have his own personal rights and his own personal will. It is into this polis process, the personality process, the world of human rights and personal will, that the Christ must incarnate—as well as the bloodline of the Hebrew People. Christ incarnates into the culture where there is a strict bloodline. This furnished a first foothold in mankind, but then he has to work into much more pagan-like elements in the Greek and Roman cultures. There the Mystery centers had gone into the temples and were still guiding.

After the fourth “Sun-Day,” the Mystery centers had to fall away. General culture now has to begin to bring spiritual impulses to mankind. The temple gives way to the cathedral and the church. An ascending impulse comes into existence. The four “Sun-Days” are Advent “Days.” They prepare the way for the “Christ-Mass.” The fourth “Sun-Day” occurs during the time when the spring equinox sun rises in the constellation of Pisces.

The first step in the ascending cultural process is that of the fifth cultural epoch, ours. Here we can picture the cathedral—the Gothic cathedral with its curved arches, which expresses the gesture of man’s hands in prayer. The congregation is a group that is not blood-determined, but seeks to be penetrated by the spirit that transcends the blood, that transforms the blood. The Mass with Communion is instituted so that man can once more approach the domain of the gods. The cathedral with its activities becomes the beginning of an ascending cultural impulse. The dark earth with the pyramid, the light atmosphere with the temple, give way to the closed house of God where man can commune as a group together, not blood-tie united, but can come together in prayer, transforming and transcending the blood tie. The bloodline is governed by the outer determinants of marriage, birth and family life. The temple culture still requires initiation. The church culture, or the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean cultural epoch permits man to come together in day-consciousness. There in the church or cathedral an outer representation of

the old Mystery initiation process can be taken hold of through the senses. This permits a step into freedom in connection with attaining to spiritual experience. This change from the temple initiation process to the church communion process is at a deeper level guided by the Mystery of Golgotha where there is an enactment that enables man to become free, to be able to find freedom in the process of initiation. It is actually the Mass that is the outer representation of this initiation process that is enacted on Golgotha by the Christ. Mass and Communion become an outer form, an outer representation that is made possible by Christ's sacrifice at the Mystery of Golgotha.

Lecture 9

We have indicated that man in his development gradually became a physical earthly being. In the previous lecture, we had the indications that through the cultural process he gradually became identified with the earth—his etheric-physical configurations corresponded. The cultural periods of India, Persia and Egypt culminated in the complete descent of the human ego into the physical body in the Greek period, when man really became a personality. This incarnation into the physical was very much aided and supported by the cultivation of the hereditary stream so that the human being could be gradually identified with the blood—with the bloodline. The ultimate expression of this is when the bloodline is followed back through Abraham to God. In order to make an ascent in evolution, another identity besides a personality would have to be found. It is perhaps better said that rather than have the human being be identified as a personality, who has a blood-lineage relationship that can go back to the God principle, an identity would have come that sets aside the line of the blood. This new line would have to link the individuality with God directly—via the spirit. We would have to then say that the identity is not with a bloodline through Abraham, but through an entity with which the individuality or the ego can identify. This would mean that it is important for the human being who can say “I” to himself to then find the relationship with the Godhead in a spiritual way, that is through what is called the “I AM.” This “I AM” is a spiritual entity, a being who is an “I”; who lives as an “AM”; and, one can say, whose root is in the domain of love. The way then to speak is that something of the ego “I”-principle lives in the etheric (“AM”) with the spiritual beingness of a kind of astral principle that is love. This identifies and links the ego with the etheric and with a spirituality that is near to the Godhead, which is alive within the first hierarchy. There live the Spiritual Beings of Love and Harmony. Therefore, the “I AM” formulation speaks to the Spirits of Form, on the one hand, which are within the second hierarchy. The Spirits of Wisdom have given their being in the etheric. This etheric is transformed by the Spirits of Form—the Elohim. Into this the ego of man can be born for a higher life, so that the purified soul (sentient, intellectual and consciousness soul principles) can be indwelt by the Spirits of Love. The “I” is the ego of man—the “AM” is the higher etheric and the love is the transformed soul—the consciousness soul that is love-filled.

In the lecture given by Rudolf Steiner, he again goes through the cultural epochs. He again points to the Egyptian civilization, the time preceding the point in which man is finally a personality. He then goes on to the Greco-Latin period, and from the Greco-Latin period to the fifth cultural period, which is ours. The development of man, the expression of man in his relationship to the world, can then be expressed in architectural forms: the pyramid, the temple, and the Gothic cathedral. Why Rudolf Steiner chooses these three forms of building structures as an expression of these cultural periods, it seems to me can be found when one sees that architecture is actually the expression of the human form that comes into being at the time of death. It is a kind of expression of the phantom in the various cultural epochs.

It might be helpful now to take up the lecture in relation to the Feeding of the Five Thousand. This is one of the Signs.

The Feeding of the 5,000 can suggest a direction to contemplate the manner in which man in the fifth cultural epoch will begin to take up an ascending impulse in evolution. Let us take a look at this feeding of the 5,000 and try to see a possible occult meaning in this Sign. If we consider that the Christ Jesus is with his disciples and goes about feeding 5,000 people with two fishes and five loaves of bread, having twelve baskets with pieces of bread remaining, it seems to me that this scene makes no sense. However, to think of the Sign in another way, we might go about it as follows. The Christ being is now standing before man with “the five” who possesses the three naughts, “000”. We might say that this is man of the fifth cultural epoch who has to begin to solve a threefold problem. He has to consider three questions that lead to nothing, to darkness, to the abyss. We might consider that the nothingness is darkness threefolded; it is uncomprehending. (See the three darkneses of the mystic.) We will come back in a minute to these three nothingnesses, but let us first progress now to the two fishes. These point to the animal world—the world of water—and to our two feet, as well as the constellation of the Fish (Pisces). The activity to unfold

is in the spring equinox sun rising in the constellation of Pisces—the water-ether world and the animal-astral world is in question. It is our own cultural epoch that is in question. It is our own nourishment that can be addressed. We eat both bread and fish, not bread alone; we take in the unrefined astral world. The astrality of the fish has not yet been transformed by light and form (that is, purified), as is the case with wine. In this Sign, Christ is just in the process of penetrating the light that can transform the lower astral of the outer world into a higher form. The wheat—already a deed of Mystery center creation—is light-penetrated, but the vine has not yet been penetrated, or is in the process. We can say that we need to be fed by the fishes, the lower astral, as we are dependent on the animal kingdom for our nourishment. The fact that we are not able exist only on bread, the fact that we cannot be nourished by the product of the vine, suggests that we still have another step to make in our evolution. Here the fish and the eating of fish indicate that something of the earth-water element transformed by the animal is needed. The higher form of nourishment by “wine,” the plant and spirit, is not there. The Last Supper and Communion is a transformation and preparation.

We have in this scene an indication that man is being nourished through the five senses. The five loaves of bread indicate the five senses and the specially prepared substance in the bread. The bread points more to the etheric-physical aspect of nourishment; while the fish, the astral-etheric. This is a nourishing process that enables the awakening of the five day-senses, but also points to the senses that are still asleep (therefore the fish consumption). The seven senses that are still in dream and slumbering consciousness must awaken. The awakening is beginning with the feeding. The five loaves of bread are transformed into pieces assembled in the twelve baskets. All twelve senses can be nourished with the help of the Christ. They will be nourished by bread alone, but only if the Christ mediates the process. The Christ has to penetrate both the vine and the wine in order for it to become the pure plant astral that is needed to nourish the seven sleeping senses. When these senses are awakened, then the Life that forms the wine and the Light that ripens the grape can become nourishment. Animal substance is no longer needed. The Sign can point to Christ’s role in the awakening of the senses and the transformation of the nourishing process.

Let us retrace our steps and start out again with the Indian epoch, where the human in his spiritual pursuits, in his inmost being, finds his direct relationship with God, with Adam Kadmon. In the Persian epoch, the human becomes a duality—man and woman—and appears as after the Fall. The earth is tilled. The sun shines onto the earth; alternately the earth is dark. The twofold constitution, male and female, begins to play a role in the inner development of the human. During the Egyptian epoch, a threefolding principle appears—man, woman, and child. We have in the third cultural epoch the human principles of father, mother, and son. This is evidenced in the Osiris-Isis-Horus Mystery. Here we have not only light and darkness or sun and earth, but we have the mother, father, and the additional principle of the child. This three-folding permits man to look to the stars. Sun and earth are transcended. Something from the stars guides man, not only the interplay between earth and sun. (The moon belongs to the earth.)

We can look at this threefoldness in another way—not only look at the father-mother-child principles. We can look at the Osiris-Isis-Horus Mystery with the view that this is not the usual form of union of male and female. Isis and Osiris are not only male and female, but father and mother, brother and sister as well. The union here is something of the universal principle that divides man—man and woman—the union is not male or female. Through the son, we have father and mother—not man and woman or male and female. Something of more cosmic dimensions is now indicated; sexual reproduction is not the principle. Cosmic principles, father and mother, unite for the appearance of the third. Isis points to the eternal of womanhood (moon-earth—mother) while Osiris points to the eternal of manhood (earth-sun-star—father). (This is an image of the Lemurian period, which is reflected in the ancient Egyptian cultural epoch). To man (astral) and woman (etheric), a child is born—the ego is born—born of the spirit, born of the spiritual world. This is the first ego birth of man—born of the Exusiai. This Lemurian event is reflected in the Egyptian Sun Mysteries.

If we then look to the next cultural period, which is the Greek period, we have a circumstance in which man steps before the world as a person. This person is now threefolded in his inner being. Outwardly, man becomes a member of the polis, he acquires rights and is granted individual will. What man had as a great inner mystery (soul-spirit, as child) in the inmost sanctuaries of the Sun Mysteries of Egypt becomes overt in the Greek-Roman period: as citizen, individual will, and rights. What was revealed to man in the Egyptian Mystery of the Sun—the birth of the child to man and woman—becomes an outer

revelation in the social-soul, the spirit-will, and the child's rights. The Mystery of the Sun is placed in broad daylight, and there it is totally hidden. The social process is born out of the Mysteries to become a revealed secret. In the midst of the outer secret, the incarnation of the Christ takes place. The Christ element is born into the threefold aspect of the social structure of that time, as well as into that of man. It is He who must bring light to the three darknesses.

The next epoch, the fifth, will find this birth of the Christ into the outer world transformed to the inner being of man. The threefold nature of the human soul—thinking, feeling and willing—becomes the three zeros – the three nullities – the three unknowns – the three darknesses. Man in his inner soul configuration becomes a threefold mystery. This threefold mystery—threefold darkness—leads man to the question of the “I,” the “I-being”—the “I AM” of man. This quest of the “I”—the nature of the “I”—is born out the inner experience of the three unknowns in the soul of man: thinking, feeling and willing. As these three are sustained, nourished and grow, they become the ground—the “AM” into which the “I” can be born. Thus the consciousness-soul is born. For this to happen the twelve senses need to be nourished.

The outer reflection of this “000” man is in the cathedral, where man is a member of a congregation (willing), where he prays (feeling), and where he takes communion (thinking). In the House of God, man can experience his own trinity.

In the Feeding of the Five Thousand, the Christ stands within the “Greater House of God” to so nourish the senses that man can come to experience his inner trinity. Man's own “I” can be born into this trinity to become a soul-conscious “I.” Christ as Light and Life can nourish man for the birth of the human “I.” The “I” can be awakened out of sleep, can be born as a conscious-self-conscious being. Outwardly man gains object consciousness.

In this Sign, I am inclined to see a harbinger of the fifth epoch where a new sense life and a new soul life can unfold. The birth of the “I” occurs within the House of God where the Christ becomes the Light and the Life. The “I” is born of God, not of the physical line of heredity. The architectural form of the cathedral enables this to take place. Through the communion process lives the Light and the Life of Christ. The birth of the “I” in the threefold soul occurs within the House of God, where a threefold social process must take place: congregation, prayer and communion.

Lecture 10

What we are dealing with again and again is the matter of the being of the Christ, of the Father and the Mother of the Christ, and how this all relates to mankind and the earth with its evolution. Rudolf Steiner himself poses this question of what is the Holy Spirit? What do we really mean when we speak of the Father and the Mother of Jesus? In order to take up the subject he goes back to Atlantis.

As we have done in several of our contemplations we can again go back to this Atlantean period. In fact we can go back further, we can go back to Polaria, Hyperborea, Lemuria and then to Atlantis. In Atlantis is the first stage of true Earth-evolution. Polaria stands in the light of Saturn; Hyperborea, Sun; Lemuria, Moon. We can then follow these steps in Earth-evolution by the indication that in Polaria there was a preparation for the exit of the sun. The sun exited in the Hyperborean time with Saturn being drawn out of this. The moon exited the earth at the time of Lemuria, and only at the time of Atlantis do we have the relation between the sun, moon, and earth that we have today. The other planets unfolded after Hyperborea, out of the sun.

It is during the Atlantean period that we have the Oracles established. The Oracles imprint something of the cosmos and planetary life into man, so that we have the planetary-men of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Mercury, Venus, and Moon. These planetary-men then migrate to various areas of the earth. The earth is thereby differentiated. The men develop different organ faculties as they gradually connect with the different areas of the earth. The races evolve then out of the planetary influence in relation with the earth. The Oracles of Atlantis are guided by leading avatar beings. They give a major impulse to man. Men during Atlantis are at a point of development where their ego being comes into contact with earth substance. This touching of the earth has to progress until man becomes a truly earthly man, an ego-man of the earth. This happens during the middle of Atlantis. From this time onward men are led onto the different regions of the globe to become races. The next step in evolution is that of cultural development. Cultural periods follow. Out of the Sun Oracle of Atlantis comes the impulse for cultural evolution. Post-Atlantean cultural epochs unfold: Indian, Persian, Egyptian, and finally the Greco-Latin epoch. It is during this latter epoch that we have the incarnation of the Christ being and the Mystery of Golgotha. During these first four epochs, man

is becoming a truly earth-ego being. It is at this time that sleep becomes totally darkened; the spiritual world recedes from man. The earthly sphere becomes a province and man becomes a thinker for himself, so that he can say “I think.” The revelations of the spiritual world cease. Ideas are no longer inspired. The individual finds himself not as a member of the cosmos, but a citizen of a polis. Man begins to have his rights and an individual will. Into this darkening of the spiritual world for man we have the events around the Mystery of Golgotha. The preceding epochs, the first, second, and third epochs, are in a way a preparation for the descent of the Christ. His Incarnation is in the fourth. Three more epochs follow the fourth. We are living during the fifth cultural epoch. It is during our epoch that man begins an ascent. Man has become truly a sense being, an individual being, a sense-bound individual with a major materialistic thrust. His upward climb will come through the practices of culture and religious life. This religious life can be depicted in the praying, folded hands, in man as a member of a religious congregation and as an individual who partakes in the process of the transubstantiation of the Mass. Religious life and culture should enable man to be penetrated again by something spiritual. The outer world should also become transformed in order to take in a spiritual impulse.

We have looked at the Feeding of the Five Thousand as an indication that with the taking-in of food—the substances of the world—the Christ-spiritualizing impulse lives in the outer world. Within man, in digestion, his ego can find a connection with this “I Am” principle of the outer world. His own “I” and beingness rings in symphony with the “I Am” in the outer world. Man can come to speak of himself as an “I Am” related to a kind of Cosmic Principle that lives in the outer world, which enables the arising of an “I-Am” within his own organization. We now have to examine the question as to how did this all come about? How did this Christ being actually come into the outer world circumstance? How was he born there?

A way to approach this could be to consider the four major evolutions, the four major stages of the earth: Saturn, Sun, Moon, and Earth itself. In the middle of each evolution we have the birth of spiritual beings. On Saturn the Archai are born; on Sun, the Archangels; on Moon, the Angels; and finally, the ego or man on Earth. It is and was the Spirits of Will or Courage who give of their substance on Saturn. This was penetrated by wisdom to lay the basis for the incarnation of the Archai during the Saturn period. It is after the middle of this Saturn period that an ascending evolution begins. This occurred because the Spirits of Love penetrate the phantom configuration of man, which developed after the middle of Saturn with the birth and activity of the Archangels. This penetration of the warmth, the somewhat individuated substance of Saturn, is undertaken by the Spirits of Love. They work with the Archangels who form the first phantom of man by enlightening the senses. The Spirits of Harmony next penetrate this phantom so that it becomes living. The Spirits of Will further transform it in order that the phantom can become an active entity. This phantom being of man evolves so that at the end of Saturn-evolution we have the first appearance of spirit-man. We can see that it is after the middle of the Saturn development that the Spirits of Love transform the evolution that has been penetrated with wisdom to become penetrated by and with Love. Wisdom-working is supplanted by the activity of Love. The result on Saturn is the development of spirit-man, out of the phantom.

A similar process can be seen on Sun after the birth of the Archangels. Again an upward evolution develops out of an impulse of the first hierarchical beings closest to the Godhead. Again an ascending evolution unfolds. The life-spirit as a higher evolved member of man comes into existence—cosmic existence. It is the higher transformation of the etheric organization of man. I like to call this a transformation or involitional process during the second half of Sun-evolution. On Moon the same occurs after the birth of the Angels. Beings of the highest rank in the first hierarchy, those immediately in relationship to the Godhead, enable an ascending evolution. There occurs the transformation of the astral so that the spirit-self emerges into existence. In all three evolutions we have the involitional result of spirit-man, life-spirit, and spirit-self as cosmic principles. These principles have evolved and developed out of the working of the Spirits of Love and Harmony. It is as if a goal of the evolutionary process is to bring whatever evolves into relation with the Spirits of Love and Harmony. On earth we can see that there is descending evolution.

The ego slowly enters the earth. The first incarnation of the ego occurs during Lemuria. The first incarnation of man as an independently evolving ego begins in Atlantis. This independent ego stage appears in its fruition during the Greek cultural epoch. Man then becomes closed off from the spiritual world. He has to become active out of himself. It is during this period when the Christ has to bring an ascending impulse to man. Christ has to give an ascending impulse so that man’s soul elements

can evolve further and the bodily sheaths can be transformed to spirit-man, life-spirit, and spirit-self. Mighty cosmic activity has to be brought to man. New life and new impulses are needed. The earth as well needs new life. Christ's organization has to penetrate man's astral, etheric and physical make-up. Impulses of love, harmony, and will stream into man out of cosmic heights. Christ brings these mighty activities to develop man's soul and his sheaths. That which is born in the process of bringing about the ascending evolution is the Christ being. He is Spirit-Love, Spirit-Harmony, Spirit-Will, Wisdom, Movement, and Form. He is born out of the cosmic hierarchical world as the Son of God, the Son of God-Father. The Father then is actually of the Godhead itself, differentiating this sphere of the divine with the birth of the "Only Begotten." The Christ being is constituted of the hierarchical beings. The Christ is born so that gradually man can come forth as an ego and become active (will-filled) to bring about tendencies in evolution. Man can thereby become a true individual being and then work out of the impulses of will, harmony, and love to create an ascent. Then the individual human being can gradually be born of the "I Am," of the Christ being, who is born as Son of the God-Father. The Christ being and the Spirits of Love, Harmony, and Will unite with the six Elohim in the process of being born of the Godhead to be able to bring the germinal cosmic principles of spirit-self, life-spirit, and spirit-man to the human being who as ego stands on the earth. This enables the transformation of that which is descending into that which is ascending.

When man incarnates on the earth to become a physical being he then is born into a bloodline. The being who enables this development within the bloodline is a highly developed Elohim. This Jehovah-Elohim, at the time of the separation of the moon, goes with the moon to work within the developing human being in order to develop the hereditary bloodline impulse. This enables the human ego to be born and to experience the individualization process that lives within a given bloodline. In this way Abraham can trace his being back to the Father, the creator of the world. This is the Father, who created the foundation for the world. This is the Father-Ground of the World. In this way the individual is led to go backward through the line of Abraham, to the Father. The Ego or "I" becomes identified with Father Abraham. The "I"ness of the individual becomes one with Father Abraham.

If we are now to surmount the identity of the human being with the bloodline, with the Abrahamic Father principle, we must find a new principle out of which the "I"ness of man can emerge. We will have to seek a new birth for the ego principle. In order to do so we have to consider how the six Elohim drew the sun out of the Earth-evolution. They created a sun-sphere activity to become the guide for another form of birth. Here the birth of the ego is not into the physical, but into the etheric, the higher etheric that is evolved in the sphere of the sun. This sun ether becomes a kind of cosmic Mother principle. We might consider that as the Christ is born of the God-Father to create the ascending involutory higher forms of man, he is born of a cosmic Mother element by the higher sun sphere. Again the Christ being is born of the God-Father principle as a being who works in the cosmos. Because the Elohim have worked to create the higher sun domain, create an etheric principle, thereby the Christ being can be born of an etheric Mother principle. For the Christ being this is a soul birth, and this permits the Christ to work into the soul principles of man. Christ can work into the souls of man—first at night and then during the day. The first birth is of the Father-God. Because the Elohim have worked for a higher Sun-evolution, the higher ether states become a Mother principle for the birth of the Christ. In this way he becomes born not of the Father but of the Mother.

If we reason in this fashion, we can see that the Christ is not born of the Mother of Jesus. The woman who gave rise to the sheaths of Jesus cannot not then come into a true relationship with the Christ being. The Mother principle of Christ will have to be found within the sphere of the sun, within the domain in which the six Elohim work into the higher elements (that is tone, life-ether, and higher soul-ether states). Into this new etheric domain the Seraphim, the Cherubim, and the Thrones can be born anew; the ground furnished by the work of the Elohim. The Elohim evolve an etheric principle—it is an etheric principle that is needed for a new birth. The Thrones on Saturn had evolved such an etheric principle. This permitted our world evolution out of the Godhead—a birth out of the Father-Ground. The etheric evolved by the Elohim becomes the Cosmic-Mother principle of the Christ. The Father principle that flows through the line of Joseph and the Mother principle that follows through the Mary line are the Father and the Mother of the Christ.

The Christ being comes in relation to the Father-Ground at the time of the Baptism. He is born into the bloodline of the House of David. This line can be traced back to Abraham and to the Father-Ground of the World. Through the Baptism, Christ is born

not of the Godhead, but born of the Father-Ground. This being born to or out of the Father-Ground is connected with the stream of heredity and can be traced back to Abraham. Here the work of the Jehovah-Elohim is of import. This gives us some contrast with the birth of Christ out of the Father-God and to the Mother Principle in the sun-ether world. The contrast is to consider that as the Christ incarnates into the body of Jesus, where the hereditary line belongs to Abraham, he then is born of the Father-Ground of Existence. This is the basis for the physical incarnation.

But another step has yet to be taken so that Christ can be seen as born as Son of Man. In order for this to come to be he has to pass through the Signs and Sufferings. As the Christ transforms the sheaths into which he has incarnated he brings the cosmic-germs of spirit-self, life-spirit, and spirit-man into these sheaths. By this process he becomes Born of Man. By this means the Christ is born of man or becomes a Son of Man. That which is born of man is a higher evolved organization—the life-spirit, spirit-self and spirit-man. This becoming a Son of Man would seem to indicate what will happen to all mankind. Mankind will pass through the phases of the transforming of his soul, his own physical, his etheric and astral organizations. A next step in unfolding is to develop the spirit-self.

If we turn to the epochs, we can note that the Indian epoch belongs to the development of the etheric organization, and to the Persian, the astral organization. The soul configurations are developed by the Egyptian (the sentient soul), the Greek Epoch (the intellectual soul) and the present epoch (the consciousness soul). It is the next epoch (the sixth) that will help to develop spirit-self; and the seventh epoch, life-spirit. Our concern then becomes how do we help the human being become a Son of Man. We have to take what has come from the bloodline but also what can come from the Christ so that we can consciously work toward the evolving of the higher members (spirit-self, life-spirit, and spirit-man).

From what we are given in this lecture we can look on the process of initiation in a new way. In the fourth epoch, during the catalytic death-sleep of initiation, definite stages of initiation were experienced. On the first day of the death-sleep, the etheric-astral and ego of the neophyte could witness how the past world flowed into the third and fourth cultural epochs. This was the first day of initiation, the first day of catalytic sleep—a view into the past. The second day of initiation awoke the neophyte to the events of the fourth and fifth cultural epochs, or the time of the incarnation of the Christ being and what would follow. In catalytic sleep the neophyte could come to a visionary initiation experience of the very incarnation of the Christ into the human sheaths. On the third day of initiation the neophyte could begin to peer into the future—the fifth and sixth cultural epochs. With this the neophyte could prophetically witness the advent and influence the spirit-self in the development of mankind. Here a visionary experience of the future is given. This enables the neophyte on awakening (becoming healed) to have a new relationship with his existence. He not only lives in the past and the present but also the future. This makes it possible for the future to draw toward the initiate. We can say that this becomes the experience of the Holy Spirit. We have to approach the problem of how the Christ sends the Holy Spirit so that man can have some sense for the future. This is not a birth, related to the Father-God, nor to a birth from the Cosmic-Mother principle. It is not a being born of man as a Son of Man. We have to look to a birth connected to the Holy Spirit.

Lecture 11

This then is a commentary on lecture eleven of the St. John's Gospel. It is a continuation of the problem of the Mother and Father of Jesus, the problem of the Holy Spirit. As this subject is pursued we now look to the Christian Initiation. Here Rudolf Steiner indicates the seven stages of initiation. The first is the Washing of the Feet, the second is the Scourging, then the Crowning with Thorns; the fourth sign of initiation is that of the Stigmata, the fifth is the Mystical Death, the sixth is the Resurrection, and the seventh is the Ascension.

We can come to experience this Christian initiation as identical with Christ's passing through his Sufferings and Death. For man to pass through these stages he has to remove himself from the world. Man has to be served by others in order to carry on an inner spiritual life such as this. Christ becomes the hierophant. Rudolf Steiner indicates that there were other paths, that of the Yogas and the more modern path, that of the Rosicrucian. My impression is that Anthroposophy unites all three.

On the Yoga path we have very much a breathing-thought-contemplative activity, that has to be trained. This is transformed into a light breathing. On the Christian path we have a deepening of the feelings. On the Rosicrucian path we have the possibility of standing in life, being in life, going through life, and still experiencing an initiation process that is primarily based

on the will—but is still Christian.

Before going much further I would like to suggest that we seek the identity of Christ as a hierophant. In initiation, we are born out of Christ; Christ becomes a kind of Father-like being for the birth of the human soul. One is born of the Sun-God. He also becomes a Father principle for the birth of the human spirit. We will have to take this up in the last lecture. Here I want to suggest that we are dealing with the birth out of the Christ. Another way to express this is to say that we die in Christ. The *In Christo Morimur* is actually a birth process in relationship to the Christ. It is a kind of soul birth process. In the *Per Spiritum Sanctum Revivimus* we are not only born of Christ as a Son-Father-like being but we can say that we are being born in relation to the Holy Spirit, a Mother-like being. Therefore the Father-Son-Mother (Holy Spirit) element belongs to our initiation process—with the Christ acting in the central role. From one view I would like to consider the birth out of the Father as belonging to older initiations. The Son initiation process belongs to the Sufferings and the Death events of the Christ, while the birth in relation to the Mother-Spirit principle is of our times. However they all three belong together—and were formulated as such by the Rosicrucian.

Now let us go to the stages of initiation as given in the lecture:

The Washing of the Feet. It would seem to me that this is dealing with the gradual unfolding of something in the etheric organization of man. The sense that the feet are washed, that something runs over the feet, is not such a highly developed acquisition in spiritual life. The fact that we stand in relationship to the world around us, to the kingdoms around, and we find a relationship with the world and kingdoms, can point to an intimate etheric relationship. In such an intimate relationship we sense the life processes that weave in all of nature and weave into the very feet of our organization. The etheric nature of earth and the mineral-plant kingdom can play into and become a part of our experience in relationship to nature. It is a very delicate but important experience. It is one of the early Christian experiences and brings about the possibility of spirituality, of entering the suprasensible.

The next stage, *The Scouring*, we can sense, furnishes us with experiences of suffering, being beaten on all sides, not in a superficial way but in a most painful way in the on-going process of life. Experiencing being beaten again and again is not uncommon, but it is not realized by many as they turn away from an inward life to one that is connected with the superficial outer world. The very light, the very processes that are not immediately of the earth but waft themselves in the atmosphere around us, can become conscious by our meetings with good-willed friends as well as the difficult blows of life. It is possible to experience being beaten so that one is bruised on one's whole periphery—even light can become painful. Not only the bounds of one's skin but other bounds become awakened. There awaken painful experiences with the world and the senses. Levitation may begin. The development of a skin boundary in relation to the whole world, and particularly to one's fellow human beings, points to severe painful experiences through our senses. Our boundary is not our skin—but our senses. Scouring unfolds. As I am expressing this here I am not pointing to a pre-Christian cloistered existence, withdrawn in a cell, but to an ongoing aspect of life. Small hints from life, but important ones, help establish the bounds of the human being. These bounds are not physical.

The Crowning of Thorns is another step. Through the crowning trials, piece by piece, elements of courage can be acquired. The head becomes pierced with pain, as if bleeding. Discomfort, unimaginable pains of the sinuses, eyes, and so forth, mix with every portal; every sense portal of the human being become painful, and it requires courage in order to continue along the way. We can say that one is not only taking a beating in life, but that it goes deeply inwardly. To hold oneself erect in this process gives rise to the whole head being pierced with thorns.

These three stages of initiation or these three steps of initiation, I would like to suggest, establishes a kind of etheric form to the human being. One starts with the feet in relation to nature, then the whole organization in relation to one's fellow man and surroundings, and slowly to processes of the head in relation to the starry world and light. Humility, suffering and courage become a deeply ingrained element in the soul, while the life is strengthened to carry this. We might consider that these can follow the human being who begins to concentrate on a spiritual path. The concentration can become an actual faculty of the soul. Anyone who tries to concentrate can go through similar experiences in relationship to the head, the feet, and the whole organization. From all sides there are the running waters of life, there is a being accosted from all sides in the effort of concentration; and in the use of the head, one can become full of crowning pains. All of this, it would seem to me, does nothing

but speak to the first act in spiritual life: that of concentration-contemplation.

My descriptions here, of course, do not follow the agonies of the Christian Mystic—withdrawn from life.

I will bypass the Stigmata for a moment. Let us turn to the Mystical Death and the Resurrection. It would seem to me that here we are dealing with a much more inward act of the human makeup. It is here that the great emptiness, void, absolute inner mystery of nullity, I would say, of the first nullity, which gives rise to the second, even third, begins to unfold. Here as substance dies into our own being the question of the Trinitarian makeup of the world unfolds. The suffering and passing into the empty death-like experience of the transformation of substance becomes a deep inner experience. This slowly enables the sense that we can awaken to something out of the depths of our being. Everything is gone; all disappears; one stands absolutely empty. We can live in emptiness at an abysmal depth out of which can arise bestial elements. Hopefully, we have overcome the three beasts of our soul-trial so that a higher revelation can occur—the Trinitarian nature of existence. This, I would say, is the Mystical Death; and it belongs to the core of the digestive process, which enables nature to die into man. Here the Father-Ground of existence can begin to unfold. In the Resurrection can appear the sense of the unity—the arising out of death into life. Here the whole of life processes, not only of the earth, begin to waft in the soul. Breathing life and light has to weave into the soul. A new nourishing by light and life must occur. The sense of the oneness with the earth and what is in connection with the earth unfolds. A new birth into light and life can begin. A Son-Father principle comes into play. The Father-Ground is not lost.

In Ascension there is a sense of not only being able to pick up our bed and walk, not only being able to breathe, see and heal, but the sense of being able to be at-one with all that weaves in light and the world around us. A sense of being resurrected from death and of being born in the light itself becomes a kind of Mother principle experience. In the Ascension experience, the degree of joy and lightness is contrasted with the abysmal emptiness and death experience in the Mystical Death, the trials and sufferings of the first three stages. These last three stages of the Mystical Death, the Resurrection and the Ascension, I would like to suggest, can be implanted in the processes of meditation on the path of meditation as given by Rudolf Steiner. Meditative enlightenment can be filled with these experiences.

The first stages of initiation belong more to the practices of contemplation-observational concentration. The washing of the Feet, the Scourging and the Crowning of Thorns belong more to the struggles with our bodily nature; our purification is involved and at the same time a new “life” has to unfold. Our own self-sustaining has to be struggled for so that there can be sustaining in death. A “de novo” creation has to come into existence. There is first an establishing of meditation through contemplation-concentration. (Experiences of the first three stages.) Then letting this waft in one’s being so that something from our inwardness can answer the activity of concentration to the contemplative concentration. This inner ringing establishes the meditation. The contemplative-questioned-concentration is given a living answer in meditation. In this way I would like to bring the inwardness of the Christian initiation stages toward the path of the striving Anthroposophist. This is not yet initiation but a slight reflection of the Christ event in meditative work.

I would like to point now to the stage of the Stigmata. This stage weaves between the polarity of the stages we have been considering (Washing of the Feet, Scourging and Crowning of Thorns on one side and Death, Resurrection, and Ascension on the other.) It becomes a point or stage of balance. The Stigmata appears on the surface: five bleeding points (hands, feet and chest). These five points can be imagined as the corners of two approximating triangles. This configuration is a balancing in itself. If the triangles are moved they express a hexagram. Here the ego mediates the two extremes: on the one side, we have the pole of death; on the other, the pole of life. Concentration establishes death-meditation-life from another side; the ego mediates the astral and the etheric. The human ego itself balances the tendency for the astral to dip too deeply into the etheric or the etheric to overcome the astral. The first three stages and the last three stages have to be balanced. This activity brings about the Stigmata. The blood (inward) is drawn to the surface in five bleeding points. An outer expression is given to the bounds of the human being. This establishes man in the cosmos—as a cosmic being in the etheric organization. The first three stages have to be resolved into a hexagram configuration by the ego-astral activity of man. This draws the blood (physical) to this configuration. In the next stages the hexagram has to be transformed by the ego into the pentagram. This transformation of the hexagram to the pentagram has been spoken to by Zeylmans (van Emmichoven) in his treatise on the Foundation Stone. I

would connect the pentagram more with the last three stages of initiation: Death, Resurrection, and Ascension. This pentagon configuration is more connected with the etheric configuration of the Ego active within man on the earthly plane. This is drawn from the depths of man. The hexagram form—the more outer astral-ego-etheric configuration—lies on man's surface. The fourth stage, with the stigmata, point to a possible balance of the depth and surface.

What Dr. Steiner has brought together as a Christian path points to not only a Christian path, but to elements of the Rosicrucian path and a contemplative Yoga path as well. He points to three paths and elaborates the Christian path; but he presents a totally new one. I have tried to share some of my contemplations and thoughts about this.

My considerations of what Rudolf Steiner has given for the St. John-Rosicrucian path establishes Christ as the birth principle of our soul. Our inmost soul element is born out of Christ. This initiation establishes the principle *In Christo Morimur* as an outer death process that is actually a birth process in the domain of the human soul. Here light and life become the sustenance for a life with Christ.

I would suggest that the very way in which Rudolf Steiner establishes even the first preparatory exercise, in Knowledge of the Higher Worlds, goes in this direction. In concentrating on the growing and the dying plant this has to be able to echo in the soul. Slowly the light of the sun and moon have to arise out of concentration leading over to meditation. This enables man to be born into the etheric at work in the plant—the astral as well. He asks that we concentrate on life and death (the etheric and the astral). This is not just looking at an object. A contemplative concentrated observation is needed. This is a purification process. What arises in this activity has to echo within one's own etheric organization, where the life of the moon and the light of the sun can arise. I would like to suggest the very first exercises in Knowledge of the Higher Worlds are consistent with what is given in this lecture. The experience of the stage of the Washing of the Feet lies not too far along on this path. The way in which Rudolf Steiner points to the enactment of the exercises establishes the Ego as the balancing agent active in concentration and meditation. I believe the Stigmata stands as an Ego-balancing point (between the Washing of the Feet and Ascension) in the stages of Christian initiation.

We might in conclusion pursue here this initiation process that might carry man from the third to the fourth, the fourth to the fifth, and the fifth to the sixth cultural epoch. The sixth cultural epoch is to establish the central role of the spirit-self. Man has to be carried from cultures of the soul (sentient, intellectual, and consciousness) into cultures of the spirit. The Holy Spirit needs to be our guide. A new principle has to be born to every man. Out of the future cultural evolution every man will develop the spirit-self. For those who wish to be responsible to this future, initiation is given—to ensure the future.

If we contemplate the results of initiation we can see that it establishes new relations with the spiritual world and with the spiritual beings. It is possible not only to have the revelation of the spiritual world but to bring something back from the spiritual world so that new processes, new forms, social activities, new work activities, new impulses can be brought into the world. All these new elements can enter daily activities. What is new should take place and can be brought into relation with the past and the future. As well, all activities in life can begin to swing between past and future. What arises only out of the past can be drawn into the future. The individual who acts in this way might be said to be homeless. It would seem to me that those walking the earth out of this sense of homelessness are trying to establish a conscious relation with the spiritual world. Objectivity becomes a must; everything is beyond individual whim. What is done is done for the world, in total objectivity, and not dependent on one's own personal likes or dislikes. All of this points to a relationship that is beyond our immediate environment. In order to manage this homelessness, small communities need to be established as a beginning. The relationship between individuals who are building a small community can rise to brotherhood unfolding in a much larger scale. The first Christian communities were small communities. Brotherhood was stressed. Brother/sisterhood is known as a principle of close ties. This closeness needs to grow out of the spirit. Spirit culture is needed. New relationships between any human beings, be it father, mother, son, brother, sister or friend, need footing in the spirit. As the sense of brotherhood develops, the devotion for the unity of the earth can unfold—not a single garment shall be parted. This has to become a deep experience so that the unity of the earth can be unfolded and a brotherhood sustained. For this, a culture of the spirit is needed, and this can give rise to the culture of our times and the future—the culture of initiation.

Lecture 12

The lecture begins by speaking of the Virgin Sophia, the Holy Spirit, and the matter of concentration and meditation. A concern is how the astral imprints itself in the etheric body. In the past, initiation was carried out through man being put into a catalytic state. The etheric was slightly loosened from the head. What the purified astral body experienced in the spiritual world was imprinted into the loosened etheric body. Prior to the time of initiation practices, man was able to commune with the gods—He lived with the gods. In this very distant past, man could not bring the spiritual over into the physical. Avatar-beings overshadowed man in very olden times to permit something of the spirit to flow into the physical world. This overshadowing was replaced by the initiation practices. These practices essentially ended at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. A new direction for bringing spiritual impulses into the world came with the Mystery of Golgotha.

Rudolf Steiner indicates that meditation and concentration is a process of purification, I would like to suggest that living into the Signs and Sufferings of Christ is a purification process as well. From a slightly different perspective I have tried to indicate how concentration could be considered a purification process, and how in meditation this is then imprinted in the etheric. A process of enlightenment begins to unfold. This is not initiation as is necessary for today. For initiation, enlightenment has to lead into life. Purification and enlightenment can as well unfold by continually living with the St. John Gospel's inspired imaginations. There is yet another way, too, and this I would call the path of Sophia. The path of Philosophy is a way of purification and knowledge—enlightenment. There are other Sophias: Theosophia, Anthroposophia and Cosmosophia. These later paths enable us to remain within life, within the walk of life, approaching the world of the spirit—the Holy Spirit. This path to the spirit is not a passive one as was pointed to in the Feeding of the Five Thousand. Nor is it one built on substance as we have before us in the Last Supper. This path via the Sophia does not either rely on memory, as in the case of Communion in the Mass. Rather I see the Sophia path pointed to in the St. John Gospel in the interplay of St. John and the Mother of Jesus—with Christ mediating from the Cross.

In order to take up this Sophia path of purification, meditation and initiation I think it important to follow up the theme of the Mother of Jesus, the Virgin Sophia, the Holy Sophia, and the Holy Spirit in relation to John. I will try to go this way by contemplating the Christ born of the God-Father as the “Only Begotten,” the Christ born of the Father-Ground of the World, the Christ born as the Son of Man, and the Christ who was born of the Mother to become the Father of the Holy Spirit. This fourfold Christic or “I Am” development might help us to approach the Holy Sophia and the Holy Spirit.

Let us begin by considering Christ born of God-Father as the “Only Begotten Son.” To do this let us look to the coming forth of our current world processes. The Thrones sacrifice their substance, which gives birth to the four evolutionary stages of our earth. The Thrones are joined by the Kyriotetes, Dynamis, and Exusiai in progressive evolutionary sacrifices and givings. We have to leave the Angels, Archangels, and the Archai aside for the moment. In the latter part of Saturn-evolution, the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones enter the creative process to bring forth the phantom of man. This is in the beginning with God. This taking hold of what was given in the outset of Saturn by the Seraphim and the Cherubim brings about a change within the Godhead. Within eternity—the timeless—man in his first configuration (phantom form) comes forth, but born out of time. Within eternity a Son-element begins. Through the deeds of the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones, God becomes a Father to a Son. As evolution progresses, beings from the domains of Kyriotetes, Dynameis and Exusiai become members of this Son. When the Son-Christ penetrates the earth then the Exusiai, Dynameis, Kyriotetes, Thrones, Cherubim, Seraphim and Father-God ascend to become the Spirit of the Earth. This is the result of the Mystery of Golgotha. Time is brought to eternity. The Seraphim with their penetration of the Saturn substance give the first impulse to bring that which is created by the deeds of the Thrones in an ascending process to God—thereby initiating the process of Fatherhood.

If we look at the development of the higher principles of man, that is, the spirit-man, and then in other evolutions the life-spirit, and then the spirit-self, we are dealing with the Logos principle that is from the beginning—the Word of God.

If we now go to the Christ who is born of the Father-Ground of the World, we have to look at the evolutions themselves: Saturn, Sun, Moon, and Earth. We have to consider how Christ penetrates the principles established in each evolution: the physical, the etheric, and the astral. Through the penetration of that which is given as the substance of each evolution, Christ becomes born of the Father-Ground. In order to understand this we have to consider the Elohim, the Jehovah-Elohim, who went with the evolutions and the evolution of the earth. This enabled the earth substances to be taken up by the Ego. In order for this to happen the moon had to be withdrawn from the earth. Jehovah could then work into the bloodline, the hereditary principle of

man. Through the deeds of the Jehovah-Elohim there could occur the birth of the human Ego. With the Incarnation of the Christ (the six Elohim) in a human form and then the passing over into the earth itself, the Christ is born of the Father-Ground of the World. The six Elohim unite with the Jehovah-Elohim to be born of the Father-Ground. This is a birth of the Father-Ground of the World—not of the God-Father. The six Elohim at work in the higher etheric spheres permit a Father principle to come into the Godhead: these six Elohim, in uniting with the Jehovah-Elohim, permit a birth to occur to that which has been given as the Father-Ground. The Son is born in the process.

Here I am considering the Christ born of the Father-Ground of the World. It is necessary to see that the Thrones gave their substance. This was penetrated by the Spirits of Wisdom. This wisdom substance went through Sun- and Moon-evolutions to be penetrated on Earth-evolution by the Jehovah-Elohim. That which goes through these evolutions and is penetrated by the Jehovah-Elohim I am calling the Father-Ground. To this physical substance of Saturn we have to add the etheric of the Sun-evolution and the astral of Moon-evolution. This descending stream is penetrated by the Jehovah-Elohim to become the Ground of World-unfolding—the Father-Ground. As the ascending processes of evolution give rise to the God-Father principle, so the descending evolution gives rise to the Father-Ground of the World. Christ is born as Son to the God-Father. He is born of the Father-Ground of Existence. A God of the heights and depths emerges.

Another aspect of the Christ being can be considered, as he is also born as a Son of Man. This is the step not where the earth is transformed but where the human bodily constitution is metamorphosed. A higher form is brought into existence. The bodily nature is raised to the spirit with the Raising of Lazarus; as has already been indicated, the forces of the Christ are raised to such a degree that the cosmic germs—brought about by the Logos—can be infused into an earthly human being. Christ's spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man can be brought into relation to the organism into which he is incarnating—this works into Lazarus through love. By this process, the Christ being is born as a Son of Man. Within man, the six Elohim unite with the Jehovah-Elohim to bring about a Son of Man—this permits the birth as a Son of Man. The transformation of the ordinary bodily sheaths by the spirit-self, life-spirit, and spirit-man is a birth process. Outwardly it is reflected in the “Raising.” This assures future man that what has been born as higher spirit in cosmic evolution, as cosmic principles, can be brought to man and can penetrate his human nature so that each can be born as a Son of Man. This spirit body is the body of the son who is born of man.

Let us now turn to the soul element that belongs to the spirit body—the body of the Son of Man. I have spoken of the soul of man previously. From Rudolf Steiner's indications in *Microcosm and Macrocosm* I have termed the ordinary soul as the sentient-perceiving body, sentient-intellectualizing body and sentient-doing body. These soul-body formations are determined by the human etheric constitution. They formed out of the astral body by the condensation of the states of matter as a result of the densification of the earth. The higher soul constitution of man is brought about by sleep, culture and spiritual striving. The human ego is essential in this higher metamorphosis of the astral body. This higher human soul constitution is called sentient-, intellectual- and consciousness-soul. The cosmic soul principles come into existence as the sun is taken out of the earth during Hyperborea. The cosmic etheric principles—life, tone, and light ethers—transform the astral into its higher forms, as soul activities for the beings of the third hierarchy. These soul-body and cosmic-soul principles are saved by the Christ being as he penetrates the Angelic world; the soul-body activities giving rise to the activities of walking, speaking, and thinking. The later human soul activities of willing, feeling, and thinking have a cosmic origin and are redeemed by Christ. (See *The Pre-Earthly Deeds of Christ*.) The outer soul activities (sentient-body related activities) (walking-speaking-thinking) and the inner higher soul-related activities (thinking-feeling-willing) were already Christ-penetrated before the Mystery of Golgotha; they became established in man as soul with the development of culture and the approach of the Mystery of Golgotha. Christ is the being fundamentally connected with the birth and the development of the human soul, and this soul of man already has the potential for becoming the soul of the Son of Man. Man's soul was already saved, we can say, before the Fall. Man's soul already has the possibility of being related to the Son of Man, the Logos, the Word that has become flesh. The soul of ordinary man already contains essentials that belong to the soul of the Son of Man.

Let us turn now to the spirit of the Son of Man. For this we need to consider the Sun-evolution and the events connected with the etheric. In the beginning, Sun-evolution came into existence through the activities of the Spirits of Wisdom. The Spirits of Wisdom gave of their substance—as ether substance—what had potential for evolution, for development, for involution. The

evolution of the etheric occurred during the pralaya periods, the times between the outer evolving cosmic states. During Sun-evolution we have light ether. Between Sun- and Moon-evolutions—during pralaya—tone ether comes into existence (during cosmic sleep). In the cosmic sleep between Moon- and Earth- evolutions, life ether is evolved. Earth-evolution begins with an etheric substance which is totipotential. With the progression of Earth-evolution, life ether first emerges, then tone ether and then light ether. From Polaria to Lemuria these three ether principles come forth. Finally light ether is densified to warmth ether. Into this warmth ether the Elohim can give of their substance for the birth of the human Ego. Prior to the densification of light ether to warmth ether, the six Elohim take the sun, with tone- and life ethers, to create a sphere for even higher etheric principles to develop. This higher ether sphere of the sun is the Mother Principle for the birth of the Christ. The six Elohim are not the Christ, but become a part of the Christ by furnishing the Etheric-Mother principle for the birth of the Christ as spirit.

At this point I would like to take up the matter of the Mothers. It is necessary to follow the evolution of the Mothers. We have just been considering the Mother principle of Christ as spirit. This occurs before the Mystery of Golgotha. The second mother is the Mother Mary of the Nathan line of the House of David. The third Mother Mary is the mother of the Solomon line of the House of David. The Mother of the Nathan line dies very young (24-26 years old.). She dies shortly after the Temple Scene. After years of contemplation I would like to offer the view that her soul-spirit rises into the domain of the Christ-Mother principle to become the Divine Sophia. The Solomon Mary lives on: from the Scene in the Temple, to the Baptism, to the Mystery of Golgotha, and beyond. She lives with her son—the Zarathustra-Ego being—who indwells the sheaths of the Nathan Jesus. She lives through the departure of the Zarathustra-Ego and the incarnation of the Christ. During this eighteen-year process her soul once more becomes virginous, becomes purified. With the Crucifixion her soul becomes penetrated and overshadowed by the Divine Sophia to become the Virgin Sophia, and she is prepared to enter the ether-spheres, which are to become the world penetrated by the Resurrected Christ. Her further unfolding is to become the Holy Sophia as the Christ enters the world of Ascension. I see the Solomon Mary as always overshadowed by the Divine Sophia (the original Mother-Mary of the Nathan-Adam-Kadmon Jesus).

My further contemplations lead me to the view that the Nathan-Mother-Mary in ascending into the ether world of the sun to become the Divine Sophia (consider Isis) establishes a kind of Mother Lodge. With the beheading of John the Baptist, his soul-spirit rises into this sun-ether sphere to unfold a Spirit Lodge. With the Mystery of Golgotha, the Christ not only penetrates the earth but the higher ether-sun sphere. In that sphere he becomes a Father. The Baptist spirit-soul being is called out from this world of the Lodge by the Christ at the time of the Raising of Lazarus. The Lazarus being steps aside to permit the incarnation of this Baptist soul-spirit. At the same time the Divine Sophia, also born of this higher ether world, is approaching the Solomon Mary so that her soul might be overshadowed, might become illuminated with Holy Wisdom. A mother element comes out of this high sun world—a son element as well—that is the soul-spirit being of John the Evangelist. Mary—the Solomon Mother—is overshadowed; Lazarus the Raised is indwelled. Mary is overshadowed by the Mother principle of the Spirit; Lazarus is indwelled by the John spirit, born as son of the higher ether world where Christ has been rising to become a Father. At the Foot of the Cross in the midst of the Mystery of Golgotha the Mother is united with the Son. Christ becomes the Father in relation to the higher ether world—the world of the Holy Spirit. This world is brought to Mary by the Divine Sophia—this world indwells Lazarus as John. Christ sends the Holy Spirit to those who have become purified and raised (enlightened). The Mother of Jesus, the Mother element, finds a new union with the Son John, not at a marriage but at the foot of the Cross. In the light of the Mystery of Golgotha, the Mother principle, the Son principle and the Father principle find new meaning and can bring new impulses.

This approach to the Christ and the Spirit of the Son of Man asks that each can be born as a Son of Man; that is, the transformation of the physical, etheric and astral through the active ego has to begin. The higher and lower soul principles (the sentient bodies and the sentient-, intellectual- and consciousness-soul principles) have already been penetrated by the pre-earthly deeds of Christ. Christ has already been at work in the lower Angelic spheres to transform and save the soul of man—the soul of the Son of Man. In passing through the Signs and Sufferings connected with the Mystery of Golgotha new spiritual principles are born to the Christ through the fact that Christ has sent the Holy Spirit to man. This is one aspect of the spiritual quest of man—the principles of the Holy Sophia. The Sophias (Philosophia, Anthroposophia, Theosophia and Cosmosophia) become available to each one of us in the spiritual quest for wisdom. For an approach to the overshadowing

Spirit has to be grasped in the light of consciousness; and through this process man can unite with the spirit-self.

The other aspect of man's quest for the spirit is through the path of love—the path of conception as portrayed by the Disciple Whom the Lord Loved. This is a path of indwelling love; it is the path of a conception out of the Christ who is the Being of Love—who is active in the sphere of the Father. This being, conceived of love and inspired through wisdom, is a new domain within the spirit of the Son of Man. The Mother of Jesus and the John-Disciple at the foot of the Cross can become our own quest in the process of Intuition as a Son of Man.

The effort here has been to use Spiritual Science, with its revelations of the nature of man, his makeup, and the spiritual-hierarchical beings of the world, to think through the problem of the Father, Son, and Mother-Holy Spirit. This is a path that tries to rise from a basis in scientific revelation to a reasoning through art to find religion in contemplation. Each will have to tread his own path, but perhaps this effort can encourage others to embark on a similar quest for rightfulness. This is not to claim that what is presented here is right, but it is an effort to bring a right element to the problem of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.