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THE BHAGAVAD GITA  
AND THE  
EPISTLES OF PAUL

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EPISTLES OF PAUL

*Five Lectures*

by

RUDOLF STEINER

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## Contents

<i>Lecture I, December 28, 1912</i>	1
The Unified Plan of World History. The Merging of Three Spiritual Streams in the Bhagavad Gita.	
<i>Lecture II, December 29, 1912</i>	16
The Fundamental Concepts of the Gita, the Veda, Sankhya, and Yoga.	
<i>Lecture III, December 30, 1912</i>	37
The Joining of the Three Streams in the Christ Impulse.	
<i>Lecture IV, December 31, 1912</i>	60
The Essence of the Bhagavad Gita and the Sig- nificance of the Pauline Letters.	
<i>Lecture V, January 1, 1913</i>	81
The Spirituality of Maya. Krishna—the Luminosity of the Christ. Paul's Experience and Teaching of the Risen Christ.	

THE BHAGAVAD GITA  
AND THE  
EPISTLES OF PAUL

The Merging of Three Spiritual Streams  
in the Bhagavad Gita.

*December 28, 1912*

TODAY we stand at the point of founding the Anthroposophical Society, in its narrower sense.\* Just at this opportune moment we would do well to remind ourselves of the importance and significance of our cause. What the Anthroposophical Society desires to be for modern culture should not, indeed, be different in principle from what we have always cultivated within our circles here as theosophy. But perhaps giving it a new name may call to mind again the earnestness and dignity with which we intend to work within our spiritual movement. From this viewpoint the theme of this cycle of lectures has been chosen. At the beginning of our anthroposophical initiative we will discuss a subject which in the most manifold way is able to indicate the importance and meaning of our spiritual movement for the cultural life of the present time.

Perhaps some may be surprised to find two such different spiritual streams as the great Eastern poem of the Bhagavad Gita

\* Dr. Steiner is referring here to the expulsion of the anthroposophists from the Theosophical Society. A full account of these events can be found in G. Wachsmuth, *The Life and Work of Rudolf Steiner*, pp. 186-189, available from the Anthroposophic Press, Inc.

and the letters written by one so closely connected with the founding of Christianity, the Apostle Paul, brought together.\* We can best recognize the nearness of these two spiritual streams if we first indicate the place held in our time by the great Gita and everything connected with it, and then the inthrust of what laid the foundation of Christianity, the thought and work of Paul. Much in spiritual life today differs from what existed only a relatively short time ago, but just this difference makes necessary such a spiritual movement as anthroposophy.

Only think how, not long ago, when a man entered into the spiritual life of his time, he had to consider three thousand-year periods: one pre-Christian period, and two others, not quite completed, which have been saturated with the spiritual out-streaming of Christianity. What could such a man have said to himself who stood within the spiritual life of mankind up to a short time ago and could not justify a theosophical or anthroposophical movement as we mean it today? He could have said: At present something is entering spiritual life whose source can only be found in the thousand years preceding the Christian era. For not before this time do individual men as personalities have any meaning for spiritual life. However great and overpowering much in the spiritual streams of earlier times shone out to us, individualities did not stand out from what was the foundation for those streams. We need only look back to the spirituality of the old Egyptian or Chaldean-Babylonian epochs to find a continuity in their spiritual life. Personalities as such, spiritually vigorous, came into prominence only in the following Greek period. Great teachings, and a sweeping outlook into the far reaches of the cosmos are to be found in the Egyptian age, but only with the Greeks do outstanding figures begin to arise, like Socrates or Pericles, Phidias, Plato, Aristotle. Personality as such comes upon the scene. That is the outstanding characteristic of spiritual life in the last three thousand years. I mean by this not only

\* The title "Saint" has been omitted in mentioning the Apostle Paul. This is in keeping with the German edition, and its use appears irrelevant in the context of these lectures.

the important personalities, but the impress spiritual life makes upon every individual personality. If we may say so, emphasis is put upon personality during these three thousand years. Thereby the spiritual streams become significant in that personalities feel a need to take part in them, finding their inner comfort, hope, peace, inner bliss, and security through them.

Because, until a comparatively short time ago, we were only interested in history insofar as it proceeded from one personality to another, we had no deep understanding of what had occurred before the last three thousand years. With Greek civilization began that history that was the only history we had understood until a very short time ago, and at the turn of the first into the second millennium occurred all that was connected with the great being of Christ Jesus. In the first millennium the distinctive contribution of Greece predominated, whose source lay in the Mysteries. We have often described what flowed out from them to the great poets, philosophers, and artists in every domain. For if we rightly understand Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides we must seek the sources for understanding them in what flowed from the Mysteries. Likewise, to understand Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle we must seek the source of their philosophy in the Mysteries; not to speak of so towering a figure as Heraclitus. You can read about him in my book *Christianity as Mystical Fact*, how he relied entirely on the Mysteries.

Then we see how, with the second thousand years, the Christ impulse poured into spiritual development, gradually spreading through Greek culture and uniting itself with it. This second millennium so took its course that the powerful impulse of Christ united with what has come down to us as life and living tradition from the Greeks. We see how quite slowly Greek wisdom, feeling, and art were organically merged with this impulse of Christ. So passed the second thousand years.

Then the third millennium of personality-culture began. How differently does the Greek influence show its effects during this epoch! We see it when we consider such artists as Raphael, Michelangelo, and Leonardo da Vinci. No longer does one observe

Greek culture externally as something historically great, as was done in the second millennium. In the third, men had to turn directly to what came from Greece. We see how these three great artists let themselves be influenced by the great works of art coming to light again; how Greek culture was absorbed ever more consciously, in contrast to its unconscious influence felt in the second millennium. We see how this Greek influence was consciously embodied in a world conception, for instance, in the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas; how necessary it was for him to unite what flowed from Christian philosophy with that of Aristotle. Here too the Greek influence was assimilated so that together with the Christian influence it poured out in philosophical form, and with Raphael, Michelangelo, and Leonardo in artistic form. This whole line of development continued on through spiritual life, even when a certain religious opposition appeared with Giordano Bruno and Galileo. In spite of all this, Greek ideas and concepts kept cropping up everywhere, particularly in relation to viewing nature. It was a conscious absorption of the Greek influence. But this did not go back further than Greek times. In all the people, not merely in the educated or the more highly cultured but widespread among the simplest souls, such a spiritual life arose, consciously, out of the flowing together of Greek and Christian impulses. From university to peasant's hut concepts taken from Greek and Christian ideas made their way.

Then in the nineteenth century something quite unique entered; something actually formed and brought to light first by what is called *theosophy* or *anthroposophy*. There we see a single example of mighty forces in action. When for the first time the wonderful poem of the Bhagavad Gita became known in Europe, leading thinkers were enraptured by the greatness of this poem, by its profound content. It should never be forgotten that such a wise spirit as Wilhelm Humboldt could say after reading it that it was the most profound philosophical poem ever to come before his eyes. He made the beautiful comment that he was rewarded for living to be as old as he was, by having been able to become acquainted with the Bhagavad Gita, the great

spiritual song that sounded over from the primeval holiness of Eastern antiquity. How beautiful it is that slowly, even if not yet reaching a wide circle, much of Eastern antiquity poured out into the nineteenth century from the Bhagavad Gita. For this poem is not like other writings that came over from the ancient East; writings that always convey to us Eastern thought and feeling from one or another point of view. In the Bhagavad Gita, however, we meet with the flowing together of all the various streams and points of view to be found in Eastern thinking, perception, and feeling. That is the significance of the Bhagavad Gita.

Now let us look into ancient India. Overlooking unimportant features, we find, rising up out of dim, pre-historic times, three subtly differing spiritual streams. One definite stream we encounter in the earliest Vedas; then in the later Vedic poems we see its further development. It is a definite but, if we may put it so, a one-sided stream, which we will describe presently. Then we find a second stream in the Sankhya philosophy, and a third, different one in Yoga. Those that meet us as the Sankhya system of Kapila, the Yoga philosophy of Patanjali, and the Vedas, have distinctly different colorings, which bring about their one-sidedness, and through it actually their greatness. It is the harmonious inter-penetration of all three streams that comes to expression in the Bhagavad Gita. What each of these three streams has to give is to be found again in the Gita: not as a conglomerate, but as an harmonious blending into one organism, as if they had belonged together originally. It is the greatness of the Gita that it describes in such an all-inclusive way how the spiritual life of the East receives the contributions of these three streams. First I will briefly characterize what each of them can give us.

The Veda stream is most pronounced as a philosophy of unity, the most spiritual monism imaginable, and it comes to completion in the Vedanta. If we are to understand the Veda philosophy we must keep in mind that it is based on the idea that man finds the deepest within himself, actually as his own

Self. What he encompasses in ordinary life is a kind of expression, or imprint, of this Self, that is, that man can develop, and he gradually brings forth from the foundations of his soul the depths of his own Self. As if slumbering in him is his higher Self. It is not what present-day man knows directly, but what works in him as that toward which he is developing. When man will have achieved what lives in him as his Self he will become aware, according to the Veda philosophy, that this Self is one with the all-encompassing World-Self. That he not only rests with his Self entirely in this cosmic Self, but is one with it, relating to it in a twofold way. The vedantist conceives the relationship between man's Self and the World-Self as an in-and-out-breathing, we could say. As outside is air in general, and within us is the portion of it we have breathed in, so outside is the great Self actively alive in and permeating everything; and when we give ourselves to observing it we breathe it in. We breathe it in spiritually with every feeling we have of it; with everything we receive into our soul. All knowledge, wisdom, thinking, feeling, is spiritual breathing. What we take into our soul as part of the World-Self—but which remains bound up organically with it—is Atman, is breath, as indistinguishable from the general World-Self as the air we inhale is part of the air surrounding us.

As we breathe out physically, so does the soul go out in devotion to this World-Self, giving the best that it has, prayerfully and in sacrifice. That is spiritual out-breathing—Brahman. Atman and Brahman, like in-and-out-breathing, make us participants in the all-encompassing World-Self. A monistically-spiritual philosophy, which is at the same time a religion, meets us in the Vedas. Their blossom and fruit is that which brings such blessing to man, such assurance, to the innermost and the highest reaches of his soul; the feeling of union with the universal, world-encompassing-and-permeating Self, the undivided nature of the cosmos. The Vedic philosophy—we cannot say the Veda-Word since Veda means Word—deals with the unity of the world, with man's existence within the whole spiritual cosmos. The word Veda was itself breathed forth, according to the Vedic

highest formulation of knowledge  
connection between Human soul and World Self  
the word of God

conception, by the all-encompassing, unitary Being, and can be taken into itself by the human soul as the highest formulation of knowledge. Accepting the Veda-Word means taking in the best part of the all-powerful Self. It means becoming conscious of the connection between each human Self and the all-encompassing World-Self. What the Veda says is the Word of God, which is creative, and is born again in human knowledge. Thus, human knowledge is joined with the creative, permeating principle underlying existence. Therefore, what is written in the Vedas was considered as Divine Word, and he who was filled with it was the possessor of The Divine Word. In a spiritual way this Word came into the world, and was set forth in the Veda-books. Those who mastered these books took part in the world's creative principle.

The situation is different in Sankhya philosophy. When this first meets us, as handed down by tradition, we see exactly the opposite to a teaching of unity. We can compare it to the philosophy of Leibnitz. Sankhya philosophy is a pluralistic philosophy. The separate souls who confront us, human and divine, are not traced to a unified source in Sankhya philosophy but are considered as existing singly from eternity, so to say, or at least as souls whose origin is not sought in unity. The plurality of souls is what meets us in Sankhya philosophy. The self-dependence of each single soul is sharply brought out; the soul pursuing its development in the world enclosed within its own being. Against this pluralism stands what Sankhya philosophy calls the prakriti element. We cannot indicate it well by the modern word matter because this has a materialistic meaning. As used in Sankhya philosophy this is not the meaning intended in using the word substance, matter, which contrasts with the multiplicity of souls and yet does not lead back to unity. There is multiplicity of souls, and also what we can call the material basis, equal to a primal flood streaming through the world, spatially and in time, out of which souls take the elements of their outer existence. They must clothe themselves in this material element, which is not led back to a unity with the souls themselves. So it is that in



Sankhya philosophy this material element is primarily and carefully studied. Not much attention is given to the separate souls. Each is considered a reality, entangled and bound up with the material basis, and in this materiality it assumes the most varied forms, showing itself outwardly in the most varied ways. A soul clothes itself with this basic material element, which, like this single soul, has been thought of from eternity. The soul expresses itself in this material element, thereby taking on various forms. It is the study of these material forms that meets us especially in the Sankhya philosophy.

Above all then we have the most primeval form of this material element as a kind of primal, spiritual flood in which the soul submerges. If we were to look at the beginning of evolution we would find an undifferentiated material element, and a multiplicity of souls dipping into it to carry on their evolution. The first to meet us as form—not yet differentiated from the unity of the primal flood—is spiritual substance itself at the beginning of evolution. Next comes *buddhi* with which souls individually can clothe themselves. So that if we think of the soul clothed by the primal flood substance, its appearance is not yet distinguishable from the general surging flood. Since the soul is not only enclosed in this first form of the general flood but also in what can arise next, it can be ensheathed by *buddhi*.

The third element that takes form, whereby the soul can become more and more individualized, is *ahankara*. That is the continually descending form of primal matter. So we have primal matter, whose next form is *buddhi*, and the next, *ahankara*. A fourth form is *manas*; following are the sense organs; next the finer elements; finally, the material elements that we have in our physical environment. This, we may say, is the line of evolution as meant in Sankhya philosophy. Above is the most supersensible element of a spiritual primal flood, gradually condensing to the coarse elements from which the coarse human body is built. In between are the substances out of which our sense organs are woven, and the finer elements that give rise to our etheric or life-body. Note well that all this constitutes sheaths for the soul, as

meant by Sankhya philosophy. Even that which arose from the first primal flood is a sheath of the soul, wherein it is contained. Thus, when the Sankhya philosopher studies *buddhi*, *ahankara*, *manas*, and the senses, the finer and coarser elements, he means the ever densifying sheaths in which the soul comes to expression.

We must be clear that the way the Veda and Sankhya philosophies confront us is only possible because they were formulated in those ancient times when a primal clairvoyance existed, at least to a certain degree. These philosophies came into being in different ways. The Vedas depended on a primal, yet, for earliest humanity, a naturally existing inspiration that man had no part in creating, except that he prepared himself in his whole being to receive, quietly and passively, this divine inspiration that came by itself. It was otherwise in the development of the Sankhya philosophy. There one could say it was similar to our present method of learning, only that we are not permeated by clairvoyance, while they were. It was clairvoyant science, inspiration bestowed by grace from above, that produced the Veda philosophy. Science as we cultivate it today, but carried on by people endowed with clairvoyance—this was Sankhya philosophy. Therefore this latter left the purely soul element undisturbed. It said: In what one can study in the outer, supersensible form, souls express themselves, but we study these outer forms in which souls clothe themselves.

So we find a developed system of forms as they meet us in the world—as we in our science find the total of nature's facts—only that in the Sankhya philosophy one advances to a supersensible observation of phenomena. This philosophy is a science which, though attained through clairvoyance, remains a science of outer forms, not pressing on into the realm of the soul, which remains untouched by studying. One who devotes himself to the Vedas feels his religious life entirely united with the life of wisdom. Sankhya philosophy is science; is knowledge of forms in which the soul expresses itself. At the same time its adherents can feel, alongside their science, a religious devotion. How the

soul element then inserts itself into the forms—not the soul itself but the way it is inserted—this can be followed up in the Sankhya philosophy. How the soul increasingly guards its independence, or descends further into matter, can be discerned in Sankhya philosophy. One has to do with soul-nature, which indeed descends, but in the material forms protects its own being.

A soul-nature that has submerged in outer form but has proclaimed and revealed itself as soul-nature, lives in the *sattwa* element. A soul immersed in form, but which is, so to say, overwhelmed by the form and cannot rise above it, lives in the *tamas* element. When the soul can to a certain extent keep a balance between its own element and its expression in form, it lives in the *rajas* element. *Sattwa, rajas, tamas*, the three *gunas*, are the essential characteristics of what we call Sankhya philosophy.

Again it is otherwise with that spiritual stream that comes down to us as Yoga. This deals immediately with the soul's nature, and seeks ways of taking hold of the soul directly so that it rises from its present situation to ever higher stages. Thus, Sankhya observes the soul's sheaths, and Yoga leads it to ever higher stages of inner experience. Devotion to Yoga therefore signifies a gradual awakening of the higher forces of the soul so that it may experience what is beyond everyday life and can discover ever higher stages of existence. Yoga then is the way to the spiritual worlds; the way to freeing the soul from its outer forms: the way to its independent inner life.

Yoga is the other side of the Sankhya philosophy. It acquired its great importance when that inspiration from on high given by grace in the Vedas could no longer descend. Yoga had to be resorted to by those souls who, belonging to a later human epoch, no longer received any direct revelations but had to work their way up from lower stages to the heights of spiritual existence.

Thus, in the primeval Indian time there arose three sharply differentiated spiritual streams: the Veda, the Sankhya, the Yoga. Today we are called upon to bring them together again by lifting them out of the foundations of the soul and the depths of the cosmos in the way suited to our present age. You can find

all three streams again in our spiritual science. Only read what I sought to present in my *Occult Science*, in the first chapters on the human constitution, sleeping and waking, life and death; then you have what in today's meaning can be called Sankhya philosophy. Then read what is said there about the world's evolution from Saturn to our time and you have the Veda philosophy in modern terms. In the last chapters dealing with man's development you have Yoga expressed for the present time. Our age must unite in an organic way what radiates over to us out of ancient India in these three philosophical streams. For that reason we must also be concerned with the wonderful Bhagavad Gita, which in a deeply poetic way contains as if in a summary the three streams reaching so deeply into our age. We must seek something like congeniality between our spiritual striving and the deeper content of the Bhagavad Gita. Not only in the whole of our present-day spiritual streams are there points of contact with the older spiritual streams, but in details as well.

You will have recognized that in my *Occult Science* an effort was made to present things entirely out of their own inherent nature, never borrowing anything from history. Anyone who really understands what is said there concerning Saturn, Sun, and Moon cannot find any assertion taken from historical sources. Out of the subject itself are the statements made. But how remarkable it is that what bears the imprint of our age harmonizes in critical places with what sounds over to us from ancient times! Here is one small example. At a certain place in the Vedas we read somewhat as follows about cosmic evolution: "In the beginning darkness was enveloped in darkness; everything was an undifferentiated flood. There arose a great void, which was everywhere permeated by warmth." Now I ask you to recall what was taken from the event itself concerning the constitution of Saturn, where its substance was spoken of as comprised of warmth. Feel how what is newest in spiritual science coincides with what is said in the Vedas. The next passage runs: "Then the Will first arose, which was the first seed of thinking, connecting existence with non-existence. . . . And this connection is



found in the Will." Remember how in new terms the Spirits of Will were mentioned. In all that we have had to say in the present time we have not sought to be in accordance with the old; rather, the harmony has come of itself, because truth was sought there, and truth was sought again here on our own ground.

Now in the Bhagavad Gita we are met at once with a poetic glorification of the three spiritual streams we have described. In an important moment of world history—important for that ancient time—the great teaching that Krishna himself gave to Arjuna is presented to us. The moment is important because it was when the old blood-ties were loosening. In everything that will be said in these lectures on the Bhagavad Gita remember what has often been referred to, namely, how the ancient blood-ties, racial connections, tribal kinships, had special significance and only gradually did they cease. Recall everything said in my *The Occult Significance of Blood*. Loosening those blood-ties caused mighty warfare to break out, described for us in the Mahabharata, of which the Gita is an episode. There we see how the descendants of two brothers, still tied by blood, separate as to their spiritual direction; how that which through the blood had previously given them a unified point of view takes different paths, so ~~there is conflict, because conflict must arise through this separation~~ wherein the blood-ties also lose their importance for clairvoyant knowledge. With this separation then the later course of spiritual development sets in.

To those for whom the old blood-ties have no significance, Krishna appears as the great teacher. He is to be the teacher for the new age set free of the old blood-ties. Tomorrow we shall describe how he does this. Here we may say what the whole Gita poem shows, that Krishna deals with the three spiritual streams we have mentioned, as an organic unity, and imparts this to his pupil.

How then must this pupil appear before us? In one direction he looks up to his father, in the other to his father's brother. The cousins are no longer to stay close, they must separate, but now each line is taken hold of by a different stream. Arjuna is domi-

nated by the question, "How will it be when that which the blood-ties would hold together is no longer there? How is one's soul to find its place in spiritual life if this life can no longer flow along as before, under the influence of the old blood-ties? Everything must come to rain!" Or so it seems to Arjuna. That things must be different but without such an outcome is the content of the great teaching of Krishna.

Krishna now shows his pupil, who is to live through the transition from the one epoch to the other, how the soul, to maintain its harmony, must take in something from all three spiritual streams. The Vedic teaching of unity is rightly presented in the teaching of Krishna, likewise the essence of the Sankhya teaching, and of Yoga. For what lies behind all that we are to learn from the Gita? Krishna speaks somewhat like this: "There is a universal creative Word that contains the creative principle itself. As the air undulates and comes alive with the sound of man's voice when he speaks, the Cosmic Word surges and lives in all things, creating and ordering existence. So does the Veda principle breathe through all things. It can be taken up by man's understanding into his soul life. There is a ruling, surging Creator-Word, and an echo of this in the Vedas. This Word is the creative force in the world, and is revealed in the Vedas." ~~That is one part of the Krishna teaching.~~

Man's soul is able to understand how the Word comes to expression in the world's forms. Man learns to know the laws of existence in seeing how the separate forms show an orderly expression of the soul-spiritual. The teaching about these world-forms, about the laws underlying them and their ways of working—this is Sankhya philosophy, the other part of Krishna's teaching.

Even as he makes clear to his pupil that behind all existence is the World-Creative Word, he emphasizes that human understanding can recognize the separate forms; that is, can take World-Laws into his own being. World-Word—World-Law—echoing in the Vedas, in Sankhya—this Krishna reveals to his pupil. He also speaks to him of the way that leads the individual

pupil to the heights where he can share in knowledge of the World-Word. Krishna speaks also of Yoga. Threefold is his teaching: of the Word, of the Law, and of reverent devotion to the Spirit.

Word, Law, and Devotion—these are the three streams by which the soul can carry on its development. They will always be working on the soul in one way or another. We certainly have seen how the new spiritual science, in its new manner of expression, must seek these three streams. But the epochs of time differ, and the threefold form of the world-picture is brought to man's soul in the most varied ways. Krishna speaks of the World-Word, the Creator-Word; of the structure of existence; of the devotional deepening of the soul, of Yoga. The same trinity meets us again, only in a more concrete, living way, in a being thought of as walking the earth, embodying the divine Creative-Word! The Vedas approached humanity in abstract form. The divine Logos of which the Gospel of John speaks is the living, Creative-Word itself! What we encounter in the Sankhya philosophy as the lawful ordering of cosmic forms—transposed historically into the old Hebraic revelation—becomes what Paul refers to as the Law. Faith in the risen Christ proclaimed by Paul appears as the third member of the trinity. What Yoga is with Krishna is carried over by Paul in reality into Faith, which should take the place of the Law.

Thus, Veda, Sankhya, Yoga are the dawn of what later rose as the Sun. Veda arises again in the being of Christ Himself, appearing actually in historical development, not pouring abstractly into the expanses of space and time but as a single individuality, as the Living Word. In Sankhya philosophy we met The Law in what was shown there as the material basis, prakriti, evolved down to coarse substance. The Law reveals how the world came into being, and how individual man is formed within this world. This is expressed in the old Hebraic doctrine of the Law, in all that Moses represents. Insofar as Paul points to this Law of the ancient Hebrews he points to Sankhya philosophy. Insofar as he points to Faith in the Risen Christ he indi-

cates the Sun preceded by the dawn in Yoga. So in this remarkable way arises that which met us in its first elements as Veda, Sankhya, Yoga.

What came before us as the Veda appears in a new but now actual form as the living Word, out of which all things were made and without which nothing is made that was made, and which in the course of time became flesh. Sankhya appears as the historic, Law-founded representation of the way the world of phenomena, the world of coarse substances, came into being out of the world of the Elohim. Yoga is transformed into what was expressed by Paul in the words, "Not I but the Christ in me," which means that when the power of Christ permeates and absorbs the soul, man rises to the heights of the divine.

Thus we see the existence of a unified plan throughout world history; how Orientalism prepared it; how what first emerged in abstract form appeared in such a remarkable way in more concrete forms in the Christianity of Paul. We shall see that precisely through grasping the connection between the great Bhagavad Gita and the Epistles of Paul the deepest mysteries are revealed concerning what may be called the activity of the spirit in the collective education of the human race. Because one must feel such a new element in this new era, this modern age must go back beyond the time of Greece and develop understanding for what lay behind the first pre-Christian millennium, for what appeared as Veda, Sankhya, and Yoga. So, as Raphael in art, and Thomas Aquinas in philosophy had to turn back to Greek culture, we will see how in our time a conscious adjustment must be made between what the present time means to achieve, and what existed before the Greek age, reaching into the depths of Eastern antiquity. We can allow these depths of ancient culture to come nearer to our soul when we observe those different spiritual streams in their wonderfully harmonious unity, as they meet us in that greatest philosophical poem, as Humboldt said, the Bhagavad Gita.

## II

### The Fundamental Concepts of the Gita, the Veda, Sankhya, and Yoga.

*December 29, 1912*

AS MENTIONED yesterday, the Bhagavad Gita has been said to be the most significant philosophical poem ever produced, and anyone who studies it seriously will find this statement fully justified. Attention will be drawn in these lectures to the artistic merit of the Gita, but above all to the significance of its mighty underlying thoughts and the lofty knowledge of the world from which it grew and for whose glorification it was created. Looking thus into the foundations of the Gita becomes especially important because it is certain that in all its essentials, particularly those related to thought and knowledge, it is communicated to us from a pre-Buddhistic age. So we can say, it is the spiritual horizon surrounding the great Buddha, out of which he developed, that is characterized for us in the content of the Gita. It lets us see the spiritual constitution of the ancient, pre-Buddhistic Indian civilization.

We have already emphasized that the thoughts of the Gita are an organic blending of three spiritual streams, moving and living within one another in such a way that they are seen as one. What is found in the Gita as a unified whole, as a spiritual expression of primeval Indian thinking and perception, is a beautifully grand and immeasurable view of spiritual knowledge, so

vast that modern man not yet acquainted with spiritual science cannot but doubt the grandeur of its dimensions, for he has no possibility of gaining a point of view regarding these depths of knowledge. Ordinary modern methods of research do not help one to penetrate these depths. At most these methods only make it possible to look upon the Gita as a beautiful dream once dreamed by mankind, that may inspire wonder but can have no value for science.

Those who have studied spiritual science, however, will be amazed at the depths of the Gita, and will admit that in primeval ages the human spirit penetrated into knowledge that can only be attained again through the gradual development of spiritual organs. This arouses admiration for the insight shown in those past ages, because out of world content itself we are able now to rediscover and confirm the truth of it. How wonderful it really was that those primeval men were able to raise themselves to such spiritual heights!

To be sure, mankind in those days was especially favored in possessing the remains of an old clairvoyance that was still alive in human souls. Not only were men led into the spiritual worlds through the use of special exercises in meditation, but the science of that time was impregnated in a certain sense by the knowledge and ideas provided by the remains of the old clairvoyance. Today we recognize for quite other reasons the accuracy of what has been handed down to us from that source. But we must understand that in that ancient time delicate distinctions concerning the being of man were arrived at by other means than they are today. Subtle, astute concepts were drawn from what men could know, concepts that were clearly outlined and that could be applied to spiritual as well as to external physical reality. Thus, we find it possible to understand their ancient point of view if in some instances we only transpose the terms we use today for our changed point of view.

In our spiritual research we have sought to present things as they appear to contemporary, clairvoyant perception, so that our kind of spiritual science represents what can be attained

today by spiritually-minded men out of their own effort. In the early days of theosophical teaching less was done by means derived directly out of occult science than by methods aided by the designations and nuances of concepts used in the East, namely, those that had been carried over by old tradition from the time of the Gita right into our present time. For this reason the older form of theosophical development, to which have now been added our present methods of occult investigation, worked more through concepts preserved in tradition, especially the concepts of the Sankhya philosophy. The Sankhya philosophy itself, however, underwent a gradual change through the alteration of thinking in the East, and at the beginning of the Theosophical Movement the being of man and other secrets were described in the later terminology of Sankaracharya, the great reformer of Vedic and other Indian knowledge in the eighth century A.D. We will pay less attention today to the expressions chosen at the beginning of the Theosophical Movement, but in order to get to the foundations of the knowledge and wisdom of the Gita let us look rather into the primeval Indian wisdom found especially in the Sankhya philosophy.

We will best understand how the being and nature of man were considered in the Sankhya philosophy if we keep in mind the fact that a spiritual seed is inherent in every human being. This fact has often been expressed by saying that in the human soul forces are slumbering that will gradually emerge in the course of human evolution. The highest we can see now, and that man will in future attain, is called *spirit man*. Even when man has risen to the stage of spirit man he will still have to distinguish between the soul that dwells within him and spirit man itself, just as today a distinction must be made between our innermost soul and the sheaths that enclose it—the astral, etheric, and physical bodies.

Just as we consider these bodies as sheaths, distinguished from the soul itself—which for the present human cycle is divided into three parts, the sentient, intellectual, and consciousness souls—just as we thus distinguish between the threefold na-

ture of the soul itself and its system of sheaths, so in future we shall have to reckon with the soul itself that will then be divided in a way corresponding to our present sentient, intellectual, and consciousness souls, and the sheath nature will then have reached the stage of development we call spirit man. But the human sheath in which, so to say, the spirit-soul core of man's being will be enclosed—the spirit man—will only have significance for him in the future. Nevertheless, that into which a being is to develop is always in existence. The substance of spirit man, in which our souls will one day be ensheathed, has always been in the great universe and is there at the present time. Today other beings already have sheaths that will some day form our spirit man.

Thus, the substance of which the human spirit man will one day consist already exists in the universe. This fact, derived from our teaching, was already known to the old Sankhya doctrine. What exists in the universe in an undifferentiated, non-individualized state, flowing like spiritual water, filling space and time and providing the basis from which all forms past, present and future come forth, was known by the Sankhya philosophy as the highest form of substance. It is that substance which this philosophy considered as continuing from age to age. Just as we speak of the beginning of our earth evolution and of how all to which the earth has since evolved was present in spirit as substantial spiritual being, so did the Sankhya philosophy speak of its original substance, of its primordial flood, from which all forms, physical and super-physical, have developed. This highest form is not yet relevant for contemporary man, but, as has been shown, the day will come when it will be.

The next form that will evolve out of this primal flowing substance, coming from above downward, we recognize as the second principle of man, the *life spirit*—or to use an Eastern expression, *buddhi*. Again our teaching tells us that man will in the normal course develop *buddhi* only at a future stage. But as a spiritual form principle it has always been present in other superhuman beings, and was thus the first form differentiated from

the primal flowing substance. According to the Sankhya philosophy buddhi arose out of the first form of non-soul, substantial existence.

Now when we consider the further evolution of the substantial principle there appears a third form, which the Sankhya philosophy calls *ahankara*. Whereas buddhi stands, as it were, on the border of the principle of differentiation and merely suggests individualization, the form of *ahankara* appears as completely differentiated. When *ahankara* is spoken of, therefore, we must imagine buddhi as organized downward into independent, real, substantial forms that then exist individually in the world. To create a picture of this evolution let us imagine as the primal substantial principle an equally distributed mass of water. Then it wells up so that forms appear not as separate drops but as forms that emerge like little mounds of water from the common substance, with their bases still in the primal common flow. This condition would represent buddhi. If we further imagine these mounds of water detaching themselves into drops, into independent spheres, we would have the form of *ahankara*. Then, through a certain thickening of the individualized form of each separate soul-form of *ahankara*, there would originate what is designated as *manas*.

Here we must admit that the naming of these sheaths differs slightly from our designations. In considering human evolution from above downward according to our teaching, *spirit self*, *manas*, follows after life spirit, or buddhi. This designation is absolutely correct for the present cycle of humanity, and in the course of these lectures it will be shown why. We do not insert *ahankara* between buddhi and *manas*, but for our concepts we unite it with *manas* and the two together are called *spirit self*. In those past ages it was quite justifiable to consider them as separate for a reason that I shall only indicate today and later develop further. At that time one could not use the important characteristic that must be employed today if we want to be understood. I am speaking of the influences of Lucifer on the one side and of Ahriman on the other. This characteristic is abso-

lutely lacking in the Sankhya philosophy. For in a human constitution that had no occasion to look toward these two principles, because it could not yet feel any trace of their force, it was quite justifiable to slip in the differentiated form of *ahankara* between buddhi and *manas*. So, when *manas* is spoken of in the sense of the Sankhya philosophy it is not the same as when spoken of in the sense of Sankaracharya who considered *manas* identical with spirit self, even though *manas* differs in the sense of the Sankhya philosophy. We are still able to characterize clearly what *manas* actually is in this sense.

Let us then consider man living his physical existence in the sense world. In his physical existence he lives in such a way that he perceives the reality of his surroundings by means of his senses. Through his sense of touch, by means of his hands and feet, by handling things, walking and speaking, he has an effect upon the surrounding physical world. So expressed this agrees entirely with the Sankhya philosophy. But how does a man perceive the surrounding world by means of his senses? Well—with his eyes he sees light and color, light and dark, and the shape of things. With his ears he perceives sounds, with his olfactory organs he senses odors, and with his organs of taste he receives taste impressions. Each separate sense is a means of becoming aware of a particular part of the external world. He opens himself to it through these doors of his being called the senses. But with each sense he approaches one limited area of the world.

Something like a unifying principle in us combines these different areas of the outer world for us, as even our ordinary language shows. We speak, for instance, of warm and cold colors, although we know that this is only a manner of speaking and that in reality we become aware of cold and warmth through the organs of touch, and light and dark colors through the organ of sight. When we speak of warm and cold colors out of this feeling of inner relationship we are using terms appropriate to one sense in describing the others. We express ourselves in this way because in our inner being there is a kind of intermingling between what we perceive through sight and what im-

presses us through the sense of warmth. More delicately sensitive people, on hearing certain sounds, can inwardly form ideas of color. They may, for example, associate certain tones with red, others with blue. Some activity within us, therefore, holds together the separate senses and makes out of their separate activities a unity for the soul.

If one is sensitive one can go even further. There are people who may on entering a town experience an impression of yellow. In another town they may experience red, in others, white or blue. Much of the totality of our impressions expresses itself inwardly to us as color. The separate sense impressions are thus united inwardly in an overall collective sense that does not belong to any one sense alone. It lives in our inner being and floods us with its quality of wholeness, by incorporating the individual sense impressions into it. It may be called the inner sense. It may all the more be called so because all the usual inner experiences of sorrow and joy, passions and emotions, are united again with what this inner sense offers us, so that we can also describe some emotions as dark and cold, others as warm and full of light. Thus we can also say, our inner being in turn has an effect upon what forms the inner sense.

Therefore, in contra-distinction to the several senses directed to the different areas of the external world, we can speak of one that fills the soul. It is not connected with any single sense organ, but uses the whole being as its instrument. To describe this inner sense as manas is quite in harmony with the Sankhya philosophy. According to it, what organizes this inner sense into substance develops out of ahankara as a later product in the world of forms. So it can be said that first there was the primal flood, then buddhi, then ahankara, and then manas that is found within us as our inner sense. If we want to understand this inner sense we proceed today in such a way as to see how our separate sense perceptions join in a common inner sense.

This is the way we proceed today because our process of cognition travels along a reverse path as compared with that of ancient times. When we look at the development of our way of

knowing we see how it starts from the differentiation of the separate senses and then seeks to rise to the unified inner sense. Evolution was the other way around. In the developing world manas first evolved out of ahankara. Then the primal substances—the forces that formed the separate senses as we carry them within us—differentiated themselves. This does not refer to the material sense organs that belong to the physical body, but to the forces underlying these organs, the formative forces that are wholly supersensible. So when we descend through the stages of the evolution of forms we come down from ahankara to manas, in the sense of the Sankhya philosophy. Then manas differentiates into separate forms and yields those supersensible forces that build up our separate senses. Because the soul is involved in viewing these separate senses it is possible to bring the content of the Sankhya philosophy in line with our teaching.

This philosophy tells us that inasmuch as manas has differentiated into the separate world-forces of the senses, the soul has immersed itself in these different forms but has remained distinct from them. Inasmuch as it does so, and also submerges itself in manas, it works through, is interwoven with, and is entwined in, these sense forces. As a result the soul, as spirit-soul being, places itself in connection with the external world in order to feel pleasure and sympathy in it. For instance, the forces that constitute the eye have become differentiated out of manas. At an earlier stage, when the physical body of man did not exist in its present form—so says Sankhya philosophy—the soul was immersed only in the forces that constitute the eye. We know that the human eye of today was laid down germinally in the old Saturn time. Yet only after the withdrawal of the warmth organ, which is to be found today in a stunted form in the pineal gland, did the eye develop, which is to say, comparatively late. The forces out of which it evolved were already there in supersensible form and the soul lived within them.

The Sankhya philosophy also points out that because the soul lives in this principle of differentiation it is attached to and develops a thirst for existence in the external world. Through the



forces of the senses the soul is connected with the external world; hence, its inclination and longing for worldly existence. In a way, the soul sends feelers out through the sense organs, and by its forces is connected with outer existence. This connection by way of forces, understood as a real sum of forces, we understand to be the astral body of man. The Sankhya philosophy speaks of the combined working of the separate sense forces, which at this stage are differentiated from manas. Out of these sense forces the finer elements arise which we understand as the human etheric body. This etheric body is a comparatively late development.

So we must picture to ourselves that evolution has taken place in this order: Primal flood, buddhi, ahankara, manas, the substances of the senses, and the finer elements. In the outer world of the kingdom of nature these finer elements also exist in the plants as etheric body. In the sense of the Sankhya philosophy we have to imagine that the development of every plant has its origin in the primal flood, which has carried out a whole evolution from above downward. In the case of the plant, however, this all takes place in the supersensible, and only becomes real in the physical world when it densifies into the finer elements that live in its etheric body. With man it is different. In his present development the higher forms and principles of manas have already revealed themselves physically. The separate sense organs have appeared externally. With the plant there is first found that later product that arises when the sense substance densifies into the finer etheric elements, whose further densification produces the coarse elements of which all physical things consist that we encounter in the outer world.

When we go then from below upward we can see, in the sense of the Sankhya philosophy, how man is membered into a coarse physical body, into the finer etheric body, into an astral body (an expression not used in Sankhya philosophy but instead "force body," which constitutes the sense organs); next into an inner sense, manas; then in ahankara the principle underlying human individuality, which enables man to have not only an

inner sense for perceiving the separate areas of the senses in the outer world but also for feeling himself as a separate, individual being. Following ahankara come the higher principles that first appear in man as buddhi, and in what other Eastern philosophy customarily calls *Aima*, recognized in its cosmic meaning by the Sankhya philosophy as the spiritual primal flood previously described. Thus in the Sankhya philosophy the constitution of man is presented completely; how in the past, present and future his soul is ensheathed in the substantial, external nature principle, the word *nature* meaning not only the outwardly visible but all stages of nature up to the invisible.

In prakriti—that is, in all the forms from the coarse physical body up to the primal flood—dwells purusha, the spirit-soul element, which is imagined as being monadic in every individual soul. The separate monadic souls, therefore, are to be thought of as without beginning and without end, just as the material prakriti principle—which is not material in our materialistic sense—is also thought of as without beginning or end. A multiplicity of individual souls is thus imagined that plunged into the prakriti principle and developed downward from the highest differentiated form of the primal flood with which they surrounded themselves, to embodiment in coarse physical bodies. Having reached this lowest stage and having overcome the physical body, they turn back and evolve upward again, thus returning to the primal flood. Finally, they free themselves even from it and enter as free souls into pure purusha. When we allow this knowledge to act upon us we see that this primal ancient wisdom is based upon what we can attain again today by means of our meditation.

The Sankhya philosophy also shows that it has insight into the way the soul may be united with each of these form principles. The soul may, for example, be connected with buddhi in such a way that within buddhi it realizes its full independence, as much as is possible in it. In such a case the soul nature, not buddhi, predominates. The opposite may also occur. The soul may envelop its independence in a sort of sleep, envelop it in lassitude

and laziness so that the sheath nature is most prominent. This may also take place with external physical nature consisting of coarse substance. We need only observe man. There may be one who brings his soul and spirit to expression in such a way that every movement, gesture, and look communicated by the coarse physical body recedes before the fact that the spirit-soul nature is expressing itself within him. We have a man before us, whom we see in the coarse physical body that stands there. Yet in his movements, gestures and look something appears that makes us say, "This man is entirely spirit and soul, and he only needs the physical principle as a means of expression. The physical principle does not overpower him, he is everywhere the master over it."

This condition, in which the soul is master of the external sheath-principle, is the *sattwa* condition. It may manifest as well in the soul's relation to buddhi and manas as in its relation to the body with its fine and coarse elements. To say that the soul lives in *sattwa* means nothing else than a certain relation of the soul to its envelope, of the spiritual principle in the soul with relation to the nature principle, of the purusha principle in relation to the prakriti principle.

But we can also see how a man's coarse physical body quite dominates him. (No reference to moral characterizations is intended here, but only pure characterizations as they exist in the sense of Sankhya philosophy. When seen with spiritual eyes no moral consideration whatever is involved.) Such a man may appear to walk about weighed down by his physical body. He may have put on so much flesh that his whole appearance seems influenced by his weight, making it difficult for him to express his soul in his external physical body. When a man moves the muscles of his face in harmony with the speaking of his soul, the *sattwa* principle is master. When quantities of fat imprint a special physiognomy on a man's face, the soul principle is then overpowered by the external sheath condition, and the soul's relation to the nature principle is that of *tamas*. When a balance

exists between the *sattwa* and the *tamas* states, when neither the soul has mastery as in the *sattwa* state, nor the external sheath nature as in the *tamas* condition, when both are in equilibrium, the condition may be called *rajas*. *Sattwa*, *rajas*, and *tamas* are the three *gunas*, and are of special importance.

We must distinguish then between the characteristics of the separate forms of prakriti and the highest principle of undifferentiated primal substance, down to the coarse physical body. This sheath principle is one characteristic. The other is what the Sankhya philosophy characterizes as the relation of the soul nature to the sheaths, regardless of what the particular form of the sheath may be. This characteristic is revealed through the three conditions—*sattwa*, *rajas*, and *tamas*.

When the profound depths of such knowledge are brought into view and an attempt is made to visualize how deep an insight into the secrets of existence this science had in order that it might give such a comprehensive description of living beings, our souls become filled with admiration. We say to ourselves that it is one of the most amazing occurrences in the evolutionary history of mankind that a knowledge appearing again today in our spiritual science out of dark spiritual depths should have already existed in those ancient times, obtained as it was by different methods. All this knowledge existed previously, and it is perceived again when our spiritual attention is directed to those primeval times.

Let us now turn to the succeeding ages. We see what is usually referred to as the spiritual life of the different periods—the old Greek age, the following Roman age, and the Christian Middle Ages. We turn from these older cultures to modern times, to our age in which spiritual science brings us something that has grown out of the primal wisdom of mankind. As we survey all this we can say that often throughout these ages even the smallest glimmering of that primeval knowledge is lacking. Gradually the knowledge of that grandiose sphere of existence, with its supersensible, all-embracing, ancient perception, was

lost. Indeed, the purpose of evolution for three thousand years has been to replace that primal wisdom with external knowledge of the material, physical plane.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to see how, in the age of Greek philosophy, there still remained on the physical plane something like an echo of the old Sankhya knowledge. Echoes of the real nature of the soul are still to be found with Aristotle, but they are no longer such as can be clearly connected with the ancient Sankhya knowledge. Aristotle still divides the human being into the coarse physical body—though he scarcely mentions it—and into what he believes to be the soul-nature, whereas the Sankhya philosophy knows these are only the sheaths. Then there is the vegetative soul, which would coincide with the finer elemental body in the sense of the Sankhya philosophy. Where Aristotle believes he is expressing something soul-like he characterizes only the relations between soul and body, the gunas. In this he describes merely sheath-forms.

Then, that which reaches out into the sphere of the senses—into what we call the astral body—Aristotle indicates as a soul-principle. He no longer clearly distinguishes the soul from the bodily part, because for him the soul has already been submerged in the bodily shape. He differentiates rather the *aisthetikon*, and distinguishes further in the soul the *orektikon*, *kinetikon*, and *dianoetikon*.\* These to him are gradations of the soul, but there is no longer a clear distinction between the soul and its various sheaths. Aristotle believes he is presenting a classifica-

\* Frederick Hiebel explains these terms in the following way. "The human physical body as a mere mineral substance is *sarx*; this Greek word, *sarx*, for body, means that which is contained in the sarcophagus, the coffin. The principle which makes the body alive and lets it rise from the 'sarcophagus' is the *threptikon*: the vegetative or nutritive soul. Furthermore, the living being has the soul of sensitiveness, *aisthetikon*; the soul of desiring, *orektikon*; and the soul of moving and understanding, *kinetikon*. Man alone among all living beings has reason, *noesis*: this appears in its highest aspect as *dianoetikon*. The *dianoetikon* comes from the spiritual world, from *nous* . . ." *The Gospel of Hellas*, Anthroposophic Press, Inc., 1949, p. 247.

tion of the soul, while the Sankhya philosophy grasped the soul in its own being as a monad, and all its differentiations were, so to say, covered by the sheath, or the prakriti principle.

Therefore, with Aristotle there is no longer a remembrance of that primeval knowledge found in the Sankhya philosophy. When, however, in the material domain, he speaks of light and darkness in colors, what he has to say is like a surviving echo of the principle of the three conditions. There are some colors, he says, that have more darkness in them and others more light, and still others between these two. In the colors ranging between blue and violet darkness predominates over light, so a color is blue or violet because darkness prevails in it. It is green or greenish-yellow when light and darkness are more nearly in equilibrium. A color is reddish or orange when the light principle overrules the dark.

The Sankhya philosophy contains this principle of three conditions for the whole compass of world phenomena. It is *sattwa*, for example, when the spiritual predominates over the natural. Aristotle uses the same characteristic when speaking of colors. He did not use the word *sattwa*, but it would be correct to say that red and reddish-yellow represent the *sattwa* condition of light. This terminology was no longer used by Aristotle but he still retained the principle of the old Sankhya philosophy where green represents the rajas condition as regards light and darkness, and blue and violet, in which darkness predominates, represent the *tamas* condition. Even though Aristotle did not use these terms, the whole way of thinking that is found in the Sankhya philosophy regarding its spiritual grasp of world conditions, shone into him. Hence, his teachings on color were an echo of this old philosophy.

Even this echo, however, was lost. We find the first glimmering of the reappearance of the three conditions—*sattwa*, *rajas*, and *tamas*—in the external world of color in the hard battle that Goethe carried on. For after the old Aristotelian division of the world of color into conditions of *sattwa*, *rajas*, and *tamas* had

been completely obliterated, so to say, it reappeared in Goethe. Today Goethe's system of color, brought to birth out of the principles of spiritual wisdom, has been subjected to blasphemy by modern physicists. From their own standpoint, of course, they are right in disagreeing with Goethe. But it only shows that in these matters they have been abandoned by all the good Gods. That is fitting for contemporary physicists, who may therefore cast abuse upon Goethe's teachings concerning color.

If modern genuine science wanted to make any connection with occult principles it ought directly today to stand up for Goethe's theory of color. For in it is to be found again, in the midst of our scientific culture, what once reigned as the spiritual principle in the Sankhya philosophy. You can understand why many years ago I set myself the task of bringing forward Goethe's color theory to be evaluated as a physical science, while resting upon occult principles. For it is wholly relevant to say that Goethe's division of color phenomena represents the three states of sattwa, rajas, and tamas. So, gradually, as out of spiritual darkness into a new chapter of spiritual history, new methods bring forth what humanity once attained by entirely different means.

This Sankhya philosophy was pre-Buddhistic, as is obvious from the legend of the Buddha. The Indian teaching rightly relates that Kapila was the founder of the Sankhya philosophy. The birth of Buddha in the dwelling place of Kapila, in Kapila Vastu, indicates that he had his roots in the Sankhya teaching. His very birth placed him at the spot where that personality once worked who was the first to formulate the great Sankhya philosophy.

Now imagine the relation of this Sankhya doctrine to the other spiritual currents we have mentioned, yet not as many orientalists and as the Jesuit, Joseph Dahlmann, present it today. In various parts of ancient India lived men who had become differentiated in accordance with these three spiritual streams, since by that time the primal state of human evolution no longer existed. In northeast India, for example, human na-

ture was such that it inclined to the concepts given in the Sankhya philosophy. In an area more to the west the tendency was to conceive of the world according to the Vedic doctrine. The different spiritual nuances arise, therefore, out of the differently gifted human natures in the different parts of India. Only later, through the Vedantists having carried their work further, much out of the Sankhya philosophy had been worked in with the Vedas as we now have them. Yoga, the third spiritual current, arose because the old clairvoyance had gradually diminished and new ways to the spiritual world had to be sought. Yoga differs from the Sankhya point of view in that the latter is the view of a genuine science, a science of outer forms, which actually only grasps these forms and the way the human soul is inter-related with them. How the soul is to develop in order to reach to the spiritual worlds is indicated by Yoga.

What was an Indian man to do who at a comparatively later time wanted to develop himself in a way that would not be one-sided? What was he to do if he wished not merely to advance by concerning himself with external forms, but to raise his soul nature so as to achieve again the illumination that the Vedas had originally given as if by grace? An answer is provided by Krishna to his pupil Arjuna in the sublime Gita. Such a soul would have to undergo a development expressed like this:

"Yes, it is true that you see the world in its outer forms, and when you are permeated with the knowledge of the Sankhya philosophy you will see how these forms have developed out of the primal flow. You will also see how form after form changes. Your vision can follow the origin and dissolution of forms, your eyes see the birth and death of forms. But when you consider thoroughly how these forms change, how form after form arises and vanishes, then you are led to contemplate what comes to expression in all these forms. Accurate observation will lead you to the spiritual principle living in all these forms, transforming itself within them, sometimes more according to the sattwa condition, at other times more after the forms of the other gunas, yet always freeing itself again from these forms. Such a thorough

observation will direct you to something permanent, which, compared to form, is imperishable. The material principle, to be sure, is constant, but not the forms you see, which come into being, arise and fade. which go through birth and death. Yet the soul-spiritual element continues. Direct your attention to that!

"In order, however, to be able to experience this soul-spiritual element within and around you and to identify it with yourself, you must develop the slumbering forces in your soul. You must yield yourself to Yoga, which begins with looking up devotionally toward the soul-spirit element of existence, and with the practice of certain exercises leads to the development of these slumbering forces."

In this way the pupil rises from stage to stage by means of Yoga. Devotional reverence for the spiritual element of the soul is the other way that leads the soul forward to that spiritual element living in unity behind the changing forms—that element once proclaimed by the Vedas through grace and illumination. What is to be looked for behind all changing forms, the soul will again find through Yoga.

So a great teacher might have said to his pupil: "Study the knowledge given in the Sankhya philosophy, in its forms, in the gunas, considering the conditions of sattwa, rajas, and tamas, through the forms of the finest down to the coarsest substance. Study these with your understanding, then admit that there must be something permanent, something unifying in it all. Then by thinking you will have penetrated to the eternal.

"But you can also begin with devotion. By means of Yoga you can push on from stage to stage and ultimately reach the spiritual that is at the base of all forms. From two sides you can approach the eternal—through a thoughtful contemplation of the world, and through Yoga. Both will lead you to what the great teacher of the Vedas describes as the unitary Atman-Brahman that lives in the outer world as well as in the inmost being of the soul, which in oneness exists at the world's foundation. On the one side you will attain it by thinking through the San-

khya philosophy; on the other through devotion by means of Yoga."

As I have shown in my pamphlet *The Occult Significance of the Blood* it is possible to look back to those ancient times when clairvoyant power was still united with human nature through the blood. But mankind has gradually advanced from that blood-bound clairvoyance to a kind more truly soul-spiritual. In order not to lose this connection with the soul-spiritual, naturally attained in those ancient times of close tribal and folk blood-relationships, new methods and ways of teaching had to be found during the transition from the period of blood relationships to the time when these relationships no longer prevailed.

It is the sublime song of the Bhagavad Gita that leads to this transition to new methods and tells of the battle fought between the descendants of the two royal brothers of the lines of Kuru and Pandu. On one side is represented the age that was already past when the story of the Gita begins, that time in which the old Indian perception still existed and men still based their way of living upon it. In the blind King Dritarashtra of the house of Kuru we see the line that reaches over from ancient times into the new era. We see the King in conversation with his charioteer. He stands on the one side of the warriors. On the other side are the sons of Pandu who are related to the others by blood but who are fighting them because they are in a state of transition from the old times to the new.

King Dritarashtra, who is characteristically described as blind because it is not the spiritual in this line but the physical that is to be transmitted, is told by his charioteer what is happening on the other side among the sons of Pandu. To them is to pass, for future generations, what is of a more soul and spiritual nature. The charioteer tells the King how Arjuna, the representative of the Pandu warriors, is instructed by the great Krishna, the teacher of mankind. He tells him how Krishna gives to his pupil Arjuna all the knowledge of which we have been speaking; of the possibility of achieving again—if thinking and devotion are

developed through Sankhya and Yoga—what the great teachers of mankind had incorporated in the Vedas. In grandiose language, as much philosophical as poetical, we are told of the instruction given by Krishna, the great teacher of the new age that had abandoned the old blood relationships.

Here something else shines through to us out of those ancient times. In the basic considerations of the pamphlet *The Occult Significance of the Blood*, and elsewhere, I have indicated how the evolution of mankind proceeded from the time of the old blood relationships to later differentiations, whereby the striving of the soul was transformed. The noble song of the Bhagavad Gita leads directly to this transition. Through the instructions given to Arjuna by Krishna it is made clear how men, who no longer possessed the old clairvoyance dependent upon the blood, must press on to what is imperishable. The Gita thus stands as an illustration of what, from observing directly out of the events themselves, I have often spoken of as an important transition in the evolution of mankind.

What particularly attracts us in the Bhagavad Gita is with what penetrating perception it speaks of man's path, of the way he must take to gain the enduring in contrast to the transitory. At the beginning of the poem the charioteer, relating the happenings on the battlefield to King Dritarashtra, pictures Arjuna standing there, his soul torn over the prospect of having to fight the Kurus, his blood relatives.

Arjuna asks himself, "Must I fight against those who are linked to me by blood? Those who are the sons of my father's brothers? There are many heroes among us who must turn their weapons against their own relatives. On the opposite side there are heroes just as honorable who must direct their weapons against us."

In great torment he continues, "Can I win this battle? Ought I win it? Do brothers dare to raise the sword against each other?"

Then Krishna, the great teacher, comes to him and says, "First of all, give thoughtful consideration to human life and ex-

amine the circumstances in which you find yourself. In the temporal bodies of the Kurus against whom you are to fight, live soul beings who are eternal, who only express themselves in these temporal forms. In your fellow warriors also live eternal souls who only express themselves in the forms of the outer world. You will have to fight, for your law ordains it. This is for you to accomplish, decreed by the outer, earthly evolution of humanity. You must do battle; this is the will of the moment that signifies the transition from one period to the other. Should you mourn that forms fight against other forms? Forms in transition battling against other changing forms? Whatever of these forms will lead the others to death—what is death? What is life?—The changing of forms is death, and it is life. Similar are the souls of those who are to be victorious to those who will now go to their death. What is this victory and what is this death compared with that to which a thoughtful study of the Sankhya philosophy leads you? Compared to these eternal souls now opposing each other yet remaining beyond the reach of battle?"

In this magnificent manner, out of the situation itself, we are led to see how Arjuna is shown that he should not suffer torments in his innermost being, but only do his duty calling him to battle; that he should look beyond what is passing, and involves fighting, to the eternal that lives on, whether as conqueror or as the conquered. So a powerful tone is sounded in a unique way in the sublime Gita, a tone heralding a significant event in human evolution, the perishable confronting the imperishable.

We are on the right path when, instead of having abstract thoughts about the matter, we let its feeling content work upon us. We proceed in the right way when we perceive that Krishna in his instruction is trying to raise the soul of Arjuna from the stage at which it stands, entangled in the net of the transitory, to a higher stage in which it will feel itself elevated beyond everything transitory, even when the transitory presents itself to the soul directly involved in such a distressing form as victory or defeat, as inflicting death or suffering it.

In the Bhagavad Gita we can see verified a statement once



made about the philosophy set forth in it: "The Eastern philosophy was at the same time so much a religion in those ancient times that a person given to it, however great and wise he may have been, was not without the deepest religious fervor. And the simplest man, who only lived the religion of feeling, was not without a certain amount of wisdom."

This we feel when we see how the great teacher, Krishna, not only influenced the ideas of his pupil Arjuna, but also worked directly into his feeling, bringing him to contemplate the transitory and the torments of the transitory existence. In such a significant situation he raises Arjuna's soul to a height far above everything transitory, above all its miseries, pain, and sorrow.

### III

## The Joining of the Three Streams in the Christ Impulse.

*December 30, 1912*

THE significance of such a philosophical poem as the Bhagavad Gita, or similar works of world literature, can only be rightly valued by one to whom they are not mere theory but a destiny. And world conceptions may be destiny for mankind. In the last few days we have met with two varying concepts of world philosophy—not to mention a third, the Vedic—which are Sankhya and Yoga. When rightly viewed these two show in the most eminent way how world conceptions can become destiny for the human soul.

In the Sankhya philosophy one can bring together all that a man is able to achieve in knowledge, in conceiving ideas, in a survey of world phenomena—everything in which the life of the soul finds expression. When we also designate as such an aspect of knowledge what still remains of such knowledge in the normal man of the present day—what still remains of this world conception that can be expressed in ideas put in scientific form—although it stands at a much lower level spiritually than the Sankhya philosophy we can say that even in our own age we can still feel as destiny that which was felt as destiny in the Sankhya philosophy. Of course this will only be experienced as destiny by someone who in a one-sided way devotes himself to such a

philosophical study: one whom we might call strictly a scientist or a Sankhya philosopher.

What would be the soul experience of such a person, his attitude toward the world? These are questions that really can only be answered out of experience. One must know what takes place in a soul that devotes itself in such a one-sided way to one aspect of a world conception, thereby using all its powers to acquire a world conception in the sense characterized here. Then such a soul can study in detail the various forms of world phenomena; it can come to the most complete understanding of that which comes to expression as active forces in the world, as forms ever changing. If, in one of its incarnations, this soul through its capacities and karma only finds the opportunity to live into world phenomena so as to acquire knowledge chiefly through reasoning, this would in all circumstances lead to a certain coldness in the soul's whole life. This would happen whether or not it was illuminated by clairvoyance. According to the temperament of that soul it would take on more or less the character of ironical dissatisfaction with world phenomena. Or it might lose interest, and feel a general discontent with such knowledge as it proceeds from one phenomenon to another.

Everything that so many souls in our time feel when confronted by a science conditioned to scholarship, the coldness and barrenness that depresses them, the nagging dissatisfaction—all this can be perceived when we examine such a soul's attitudes. It would feel desolate and uncertain of itself. It might well ask itself: What if I gain the whole world and know nothing of my own soul; feel nothing, sense nothing, experience nothing, an emptiness within? To be crammed full of all the science in the world and yet be inwardly empty—that can be a bitter fate. That would be like being lost amid the phenomena of the world, like losing everything that would be of value to one's inner being.

This condition exists with many people who possess some sort of learning or abstract philosophy. It is found in those who, unsatisfied, and realizing their emptiness, have lost interest in all

their knowledge and seem to be miserable. It can also be found when someone meets us with an abstract philosophy and begins giving out information in abstract terms on the nature of the Godhead, of cosmology, and the human soul. We feel it is all in his head, that his heart has no part in it, that his soul is empty. We feel chilled when we meet such a soul.

Sankhya philosophy can lead to such a destiny; one that brings a person to realize that he is lost to himself, like one possessing nothing of his own, and from whose individuality the world can gain nothing.

Let us take the case of a soul seeking development in a one-sided way through Yoga, a soul lost, as it were, to the external world and disdaining to know anything about it. "What good is it to me," such a person says, "to learn how the world came into existence? I want to find out everything from out of my own self. I will advance myself by developing my own powers."

This person may perhaps feel an inward glow, and may often appear somewhat self-contained and self-satisfied. Be that as it may, in the long run he will not always be so self-complacent, but in time he will be prone to a sense of loneliness. When one who had led a hermit's life while seeking the heights of soul development, goes forth into the world and comes in contact everywhere with world phenomena, he may perhaps say to himself: What do all these things matter to me? Because he confronts these glorious revelations as an alien, without understanding, lonely, this one-sidedness will lead him to a fatal destiny.

How often do we meet such people! How can we really get to know a man who is using all his powers in the development of his own being, and thus, cold and indifferent, passes by his fellow-men as though he wished to have nothing in common with them? Such a soul can feel itself lost to the world, while to others he can appear excessively egotistical.

Only when one sees these life connections does one experience how world concepts become destiny. Behind such great disclosures and world views as are to be found in the Bhagavad Gita



and the Epistles of Paul we see the influence of destiny. We might say that if we only look a little behind the Gita and also the Epistles we find a direct ruling of destiny.

It is often indicated in the Epistles that the real salvation of soul development consists in the so-called "justification by faith" in contrast to the worthlessness of external works, because of what the soul can gain when it finds the connection with the Christ impulse; that is, when it takes into itself the great force that flows from a true understanding of the resurrection of Christ. When we meet this in the Epistles we feel that the human soul is thrown back upon itself and can be estranged from all external works, thus coming to rely entirely upon grace and justification by faith. But then, the external works are there in the world, and we do not wipe them out simply by turning away from them. We collide with them in the world. Again, destiny rings out in all its greatness! Only when things are looked at in this way can we realize the force of such utterances of mankind.

Now these two mighty works, the Gita and the Epistles, are outwardly quite different from each other, and this external difference acts, in every part of these works, upon the soul. We not only stand in wonder before the Gita for the reasons we have been considering, but also because it strikes us as being so poetically great and powerful. In every verse it radiates the great nobility of the human soul. Everything spoken by Krishna and his pupil Arjuna lifts us above everyday human experiences, above all passions and everything that disturbs the soul. We are transported into a sphere of serenity, clarity, calm dispassionateness, freedom from emotion, into an atmosphere of wisdom, when even one part of the Gita is allowed to work upon us. By reading it our whole humanness is raised to a higher stage. We feel all through it that we must first have freed ourselves from a good deal that is only too human if we wish to allow the divine character of the Gita to affect us in the right way.

With the Pauline Epistles all this is different. The sublimity of poetical language is lacking, as is the dispassionateness. When

we let the Epistles work upon us, we feel over and over again that what Paul says comes from a person who is passionately indignant at what has happened. Sometimes the tone is harsh and scolding, or one might even say, condemning. What is stated about the great concepts of Christianity—about grace, the law, the difference between the law of Moses and Christianity, the Resurrection—all this is put forth in a tone that is supposed to be philosophical, or in the nature of a philosophical definition. But it is not, because in every sentence one hears a Pauline note. Every sentence reminds us that a man is speaking who is either excited or is expressing justified anger over this or that which others have done. He speaks in such a way about the highest concepts of Christianity that we feel he is personally involved, and gives the impression of being a propagandist of these ideas.

Where could sentiments of such a personal nature be found in the Gita as are to be found in the Epistles when Paul writes to one of the communities, "How have we ourselves interceded for Christ Jesus! Remember that we have not become a burden to any; how we have labored day and night that we might not be a burden to any."

How personal all this is! A breath of the personal surely runs through these Epistles. In the sublime Gita, on the contrary, a wonderfully pure sphere is to be found—an etheric sphere—that borders on the superhuman, and at times extends into it. Outwardly therefore there are enormous differences between these two works. It would be the blindest prejudice to refuse to admit that through the great Song there flowed the union of mighty world concepts, and that something of lofty purity, impersonal, calm and passionless, was given to the Hindus. In contrast, in the very first documents of Christianity, the Epistles of Paul, we find an entirely personal and often passionate expression, utterly devoid of calm. Knowledge is not attained by turning away from the truth and refusing to admit such things, but rather by understanding them in the right way. Like an unshakable signpost let us therefore keep this contrast in mind during our following considerations.

It was pointed out in the lecture yesterday that the Gita contains the significant instruction given Arjuna by Krishna. Now who exactly was Krishna? This question above all must be of interest to us. It is impossible, however, to understand who Krishna was if one is not familiar with something I have already mentioned in different places, namely, that in earlier ages the system of giving names and designations was quite different from what it is now. Actually it does not matter in the least what a man is called today. Little is known about a man in our time by learning that he is called Miller or Smith. Also, everyone will admit that not much is really known about a man simply on hearing that he is a privy councillor, or something of the kind. Nor is much known about people simply because their designation indicates their social rank, or they are to be addressed as "Your Honor," "Your Eminence," or only "Dear Sir." In short, all these titles do not say much about a person, and it is easy to convince ourselves that other designations in use today do not reveal much either. In past ages this was different. Whether we use the terms of the Sankhya philosophy or those of our own anthroposophy we can start from either and make the following observations.

According to the Sankhya philosophy man consists of the coarse physical body, the finer elemental or etheric body, the body that contains the natural law-filled forces of the senses, the body called manas, ahankara, and so on. But when we observe men as they stand before us in this or that incarnation we find they are different. In one, the ether body is more strongly expressed; in another the laws of the senses predominate; in the third the inner sense of manas; in the fourth, ahankara. The other higher members we do not need to consider as they are not yet in general developed. Or, in our own language, there are people in whom the forces of the sentient soul are more active; then those of the intellectual soul; still others in whom forces of the consciousness soul predominate, others again in whom something inspired by manas plays a part, etc. These differences

are to be seen in one's whole manner of life, and point to the real nature of the man himself.

For reasons that are easily understood it is impossible at the present time to name a man according to his nature in the sense of what I have just said. With the widespread disposition of humanity as it is today, if one were to say that the highest a man could attain in the present cycle of his development was a trace of ahankara, everyone would be convinced that in his own being he expressed ahankara more clearly than anyone else. He would feel hurt if he were told that this was not yet the case because a lower principle still ruled in him. It was not so in olden times. A man then received a name indicating what was most essential in him. This was especially true when there was a question of putting him above others, perhaps by giving him the role of a leader. He would then be given a name expressing his most outstanding characteristic.

Suppose that in past ages there was a man who, in the most comprehensive way, had brought manas to expression within him; a man who had certainly experienced ahankara but had allowed this as an individual element to slip more into the background, so that for the sake of his effectiveness in the outer world he had brought his inner sense, manas, to the fore. According to the laws of the older, smaller evolutionary cycles—and only quite exceptional men could have embodied this—such a man would have been called upon to be a great law-giver, a leader of great masses of people. It would not have been enough to name him as one named other men, but instead according to his most outstanding capacity, "a manas-bearer," while another would be designated merely as "sense-bearer." One would have said: There is a manas-bearer, a "Manu."

A man's name in past ages must be understood as descriptive of the most prominent member he possesses of the human organization, that which is foremost in his particular incarnation. Suppose that what thus specially came to expression in a man was that he felt a divine inspiration; that he had to put aside all

question of ruling his studies and actions by what the external world decrees through the senses and through reasoning bound to the brain. Instead, in all things he listened to the Divine Word that spoke to him, and thereby made himself a messenger for the Divine Substance that would speak through him. Such a man would have been called a "Son of God." Even at the time of the Gospel of St. John, right at the beginning of the first chapter, such men were still called "Sons of God."

The essential point was that everything else was left out of consideration when the significant element was expressed. Everything else was unimportant. Consider two men, one just an ordinary man who allowed the world to act upon him through his senses and who then reflected upon it with the intellect bound to his brain, and the other an individual into whom the Word of Divine Wisdom had streamed. According to those ideas out of the past, one would say that the first man was born of a father and mother, begotten according to the flesh. With the other, the messenger of the Divine Substance, no consideration would have been given to the usual content of a biography as with the first man. To write such a biography of the second man would have been folly, for the fact of his fleshly body was only incidental, not the essential thing. His fleshly body was, so to speak, only the means through which he expressed himself to other men. For this reason it is said that the Son of God was not born of flesh but of a Virgin, directly from the spirit, and the essential element in him, which rendered him of value to humanity, was descended from the spirit. In past ages that element alone was stressed.

In certain schools of initiation it would have been considered a great sin to write an ordinary biography recounting everyday occurrences in the life of a person who was recognized as specially significant because of possessing the higher members of human nature. Anyone with even a faint feeling for the sentiments of those ancient times can only consider biographies such as those written today—of Goethe, for example—as being in the highest degree absurd. Let us remember that in those days men

lived with ideas and feelings such as these; then we can understand how this ancient humanity could be permeated with the conviction that a Manu, in whom manas was the prevailing principle, appeared but seldom and must wait long epochs of time before appearing again.

If we think of what can live in a human being of our era as the most essential part of him, which every man can dimly sense as the secret forces capable of raising him to heights of soul; if we think how this exists in most men only in rudimentary form and very rarely becomes man's essential principle; if we think of a personality who only from time to time appears in the world in order to be a leader of men, who is higher than all the Manus, who dwells as an essence in every man, and who as an actual person in outer life appears only once in a world epoch; if we let such a concept take shape it brings us near to the being of Krishna. Krishna is universal man. He is, one might almost say, all humanity thought of as a single being. Yet he is no abstraction.

When people today speak of mankind in general they speak of it in the abstract. Because we have become so largely ensnared in the sense world, abstraction has become our common fate. To speak of mankind in general is a vague concept that does not come to life. Those who speak about Krishna as man in general do not mean that kind of an abstract idea. They say, this being lives potentially in every man, but only once in every world-epoch does he appear and speak the language of man. With this being, however, it is not the external fleshly body, not the more refined elemental body, not the forces of the sense organs, not ahankara, not manas, that is significant. The important characteristic is what in buddhi and manas is directly connected with the great universal substance, with the divine that lives and weaves through the world.

From time to time beings such as Krishna, the great teacher of Arjuna, appear for the guidance of mankind. Krishna teaches the highest human wisdom, the highest that humanity can attain, and he gives it as his own nature, yet in such a way that it

harmonizes with every human soul. Everything contained in the words of Krishna is to be found as a predisposition in every human soul; so when a man looks up to Krishna he is looking up to his own highest Self. But he is also looking up to another being in whom he honors what he himself has the predisposition to become. This other is a separate being from himself and bears the same relationship to him as a God to man.

In this way must we conceive the relation of Krishna to his pupil. Then the key-tone of the Gita will sound out to us as though it concerned every soul; a tone ringing through every one in such an intimately human way as to make the soul feel guilty if it did not have a longing to listen to these great teachings. On the other hand, it all seems so calm and without emotion, so dispassionate, so sublime and wise, because the highest in every human being speaks here; that which is divine and yet appears incarnated once as a divine human entity in the evolution of humanity.

How exalted are these teachings! So much so that the Bhagavad Gita rightfully bears the name "Sublime Song." Here we meet with a teaching given in exalted words; that everything appearing as changes in the world, arising and passing away, birth and death, victory or defeat, still have expressed in them something imperishable, eternal, permanently existing. He who wishes to view the world rightly must struggle through the transitory and reach this eternal element. We have already met this in the reasoned reflections of the Sankhya philosophy on the permanence to be found in everything transitory, on the quality before God of the conquered and the victorious souls when the door of death closes behind them.

But Krishna also tells Arjuna that by another path the soul can be led away from thinking of everyday matters, and that is through Yoga. Thus, there are two paths by which the soul may develop. One is to pass from one phenomenon to another, making use of the wealth of related ideas, whether or not they are illuminated by clairvoyance. The other path is where a man turns his attention entirely away from the outer world, closes the door

of his senses, shuts out all that reason and understanding can say about the outer world, closes himself to all he can remember having experienced in his ordinary life, then endeavors to enter into his inmost being. By means of suitable exercises he tries to draw forth what rests within his soul. He directs his efforts toward the highest that can be imagined, which, out of the force of contemplation, seeks to rise. When this happens he rises by means of Yoga, ever higher, until he reaches those higher levels attainable by first making use of his bodily instrument. He attains those stages in which one is set free of all bodily organs and lives, as it were, outside the body in the higher principles of the human constitution. In this way he raises himself into a completely different form of life. The phenomena of life and their activities become spiritualized. He approaches ever nearer to his own divine nature, and enlarges his individual being to that of cosmic being—to God—in that he loses the limits of his own individuality and is merged in the All through Yoga.

The pupil of the great Krishna is then given methods by which he can rise in one way or another to these spiritual heights. First he is shown the difference between the two attitudes to be faced in the outer world. It is indeed a tremendous situation that the Gita here presents. Arjuna must fight his blood relatives. That is his outer destiny, his task, his karma, the sum of the deeds he must first accomplish directly in this situation. In these deeds he lives as external man, but the great Krishna teaches him that a man only becomes wise, only unites himself with the eternally divine, when he performs his deeds because they prove to be necessary in the outer course of nature and of human evolution. Even so, as a wise man he must free himself from them. He performs the deeds, but in him there is something that at the same time acts as onlooker, something that takes no part in the deeds but says: I do the work, but I could just as well say that I let it happen. One becomes wise by looking on at what one does as though it were being done by another; by not allowing oneself to be disturbed by the pleasure the deed gives, nor by the sorrow it causes.

"It is all the same," says Krishna to Arjuna, "whether you are in the ranks of the sons of Pandu or are there among the sons of Kuru. Whatever you do, as a wise man you must make yourself free from the Pandus and Kurus. If it does not affect you whether you are to act with the Pandus as though one of them, or with the Kurus as though you were a son of Kuru; if you can rise above all this and not be disturbed by your own deeds; if you can live in your deeds like a quietly burning flame protected from the wind, undisturbed by anything outside you, and your soul, undisturbed by its deeds, lives quietly beside them—then do you become wise. Then does your soul free itself from its deeds and no longer inquires as to their results."

For the results of one's deeds concern only our narrowly limited soul. But if deeds are performed because the development of humanity or world events require them, then they are performed without regard to consequences, whether they lead us to what is dreadful or glorious, to suffering or delight. This lifting oneself above one's deeds, this standing upright no matter what one's hands may carry out, even to what one's sword may do, or what one speaks; this uprightness of one's innermost self in face of everything one may speak or do with one's hands, this it is to which the great Krishna leads his pupil Arjuna.

Arjuna is directed to a human ideal presented in such a way that a man can say to himself: "I perform my deeds, but whether I or another performs them, I observe them. What happens by my hand or is spoken by my mouth, I see as objectively as I might watch a loose rock on a mountainside roll down into a ravine. Though I may be in a position to know this or that and to form concepts of the world, I remain quite separate from them. I can say, in me lives something that is united to me, that knows, but I look on as if it were another one who knows. In this way I free myself even from my knowledge. I can become free of my deeds, free of my knowledge, free of my understanding."

An exalted ideal of human wisdom is presented here! When the spiritual is finally reached, whether demons or holy spirits are encountered, they also can be looked upon externally. The

man stands there, free from everything going on around him, even in the spiritual worlds. He looks on, goes his own way, and takes no part in what engages him because he has become an onlooker. That is the teaching of Krishna.

As we have heard that these teachings are based on the Sankhya philosophy it is understandable that in many places this philosophy can be seen shining through, as when Krishna informs his pupil that the soul living in him has various ties: to the coarse physical body, to the senses, to manas, ahankara, and buddhi. But Arjuna himself is apart from them all. If he regards these entities as external, as sheaths surrounding him; if he is conscious that as a soul being he is independent of them all, then will he have understood something of what Krishna has tried to teach him. If he is aware that his connections with the outer world, with the world in general, were given him through the gunas, through tamas, rajas and sattwa, then he has learned that in ordinary life man is connected with wisdom and kindness through sattwa, with the passions, emotions, and thirst for existence through rajas, and that through tamas he tends to be lazy, idle, sleepy.

Why does a man in ordinary life feel enthusiasm for wisdom and kindness? Because he has a connection with that foundation of nature that is designated as sattwa. Why does he go through ordinary life joyful and eager for outer existence, for life's outer manifestations? Because he has a relation to life indicated by rajas. Why do others go through ordinary life sleepy, lazy, inactive, feeling oppressed by their corporeality and finding it impossible to rouse themselves any moment to prevail over their bodily natures? Because they are connected with the world of external forms, which in Sankhya philosophy is expressed through the condition of tamas.

The soul of the wise man, however, must become free from tamas. It must sever its connection with the external world expressed in sleepiness, laziness, and torpor. When this is done, then the soul is only connected with the external world through rajas and sattwa. If he further extinguishes his passions and

emotions, his thirst for existence, retaining only his enthusiasm for kindness, compassion, and knowledge, he remains connected with the external world through sattwa. But when a man has also become liberated from the urge to goodness and knowledge: when, as a good and wise man, he is independent of how he expresses himself in the outside world; when kindness has become a natural duty, and wisdom is as something poured out over him, then he has also broken his tie with sattwa. With the three gunas stripped off he has freed himself from all connection with every external form. Then he triumphs in his soul, and has come to understand something of what the great Krishna has wanted to make of him.

What then does a man grasp when he strives to become the ideal that Krishna holds before him? What does he come to understand? Does he understand the forms of the outer world more clearly? No, he had understood these before, but now he has raised himself above them. Is he able to comprehend more exactly the relation of the soul to external forms? No, he had already understood that, but now he has raised himself above it. It is not what he meets in the multitude of forms of the outside world, nor is it his connection with these forms that he now understands when he strips off the three gunas. All that belongs to earlier stages. As long as one remains in tamas, rajas, or sattwa one has a relationship with the natural foundation of existence. One adapts oneself to social relationships and to knowledge, and acquires the capacities for kindness and sympathy. But when one rises even above all that, one has stripped off all connections with the preceding stages. What comes before one then—what then does one comprehend? There comes before his eyes *just what these are not*.

What is it that is distinct from everything one acquires along the path within the gunas? What only can that be? It is none other than what one finally recognizes as his own being, for everything belonging to the external has been stripped away. In the sense of what has previously been said, this is Krishna himself. For he himself is the expression of what is highest in man.

That is to say, when man has worked up to the highest, he stands face to face with Krishna, the pupil to the great teacher, Arjuna to Krishna himself, who lives in all things that exist and who can truly say of himself, "I am not a solitary mountain. When I am among the mountains I am the most gigantic of all. When I appear upon earth I am not a single man but the revelation of the consummately human, who appears only once in a world-epoch as a leader of mankind. That am I, Krishna, the unity in all forms."

In this way the teacher himself sets forth his own being to his pupil. At the same time it is made clear in the Bhagavad Gita that this is an exalted revelation, the highest to which man can attain. So, to stand face to face before Krishna as did Arjuna is something that could come about through gradual stages of initiation. It would happen in the depths of a Yoga schooling. It can also be represented as flowing from the evolution of humanity itself, as given to man by an act of grace. Thus it is expressed in the Gita. As if in a sudden great leap Arjuna is lifted high and finds Krishna bodily before him. He does not appear as a man of flesh and blood, however, because such a man would represent the non-essential in Krishna. For what is essential is that which is essential in all men. But as the other kingdoms of the world represent fragments of man, so all that comprises the world apart from man is Krishna. The rest of the world disappears and Krishna stands there as The One. As the macrocosm is related to the microcosm, as mankind as a whole can be compared to the small everyday man, so does Krishna stand in relation to the individual man.

Should a man gain this conception through an act of grace, his human comprehension would not be sufficient to grasp it; because if one looks at the essential in Krishna—which is only possible to one possessing the highest clairvoyant power—he appears quite different from anything man is accustomed to see. As though man's vision of the human being, the vision of Krishna in his highest nature, were uplifted above all else, so there comes before us at that moment in the Gita the sublime

human being beside whom everything else in the world appears trivial in comparison. It is this awesome being before whom Arjuna stands, and his power of comprehension forsakes him. He can only stare, and haltingly try to express what he beholds. That is understandable, for by all the means he has known up to now he has not learned how to take in such a revelation and describe it in words. The way Arjuna puts into words out of the depths of his soul what he feels as he actually sees the great Krishna is one of the most magnificent outpourings ever given to humanity in connection with art and philosophy. In words he had never uttered before, words such as he was unaccustomed to speaking, could never have spoken before that moment because he had never seen such a sight, he stands there before Krishna and begins to utter the words that come to him to say:

"All Gods do I perceive in Thy body, O God!  
So also the host of beings;  
Lord Brahma enthroned upon his lotus,  
The Rishis, and the heavenly serpent.

I see Thee in countless forms, O God of All,  
With many arms, and bodies, eyes, and mouths,  
Forms with neither end, middle, nor beginning,  
I see Thee everywhere, O Infinite Form!

Thou—appearing to me in all these forms,  
With diadem, with cudgel and with sword,  
Like a flaming mountain radiating outward  
In all directions—stunned do I behold Thee.

Dazzled in my vision as by fire  
And the immeasurable brilliance of the sun,  
The everlasting, the highest one can know,  
The greatest good—all this Thou art—and more.

As guardian of eternal law and justice,  
As timeless, primal spirit Thee I see;  
Without beginning, middle nor the end,

Limitless power Thou hast, throughout all space.

Large as the moon—yes, even as the sun  
Itself Thine eyes are shining;  
And from Thy mouth there comes a stream  
Of radiant light like sacrificial fire.

I see Thee, how Thy radiant glow  
Streams out a warmth to fill all heaven and earth  
And spaces in between, and with it too  
The whole resounding with Thy vibrant power.

With Thee and heaven alone I stand, wherein  
The three worlds live, and to my gaze  
Thy awesome figure hovers over all  
While waves of wonder round about Thee roll.

I see how multitudes of Gods  
Come to Thee singing out Thy praises.  
Affrighted do I stand with folded hands  
As seers and The Blest to Thee sing songs of glory.

Adityas, Rudras, Vasus, Sadhyas, Viswas,  
Aswins, Maruts, Ushmapas, Gandarvas,  
Yakshas, Siddhas, Asuras, all The Blest,  
Praise Thee, and look to Thee in wonder.

A body so gigantic, many mouths,  
And arms and thighs and feet and many bodies,  
With many open maws and frightful fangs,  
Before all this the world and I, too, tremble.

Thou, The Heaven-shaking One, I see,  
The Radiant One, The Many-Armed,  
With great flaming eyes and fiery mouth—  
My soul is quaking!

No support, no peace I find, O Krishna,  
Who for me is Vishnu's very self.  
I look into Thy threatening being, which, firelike,

Works on beyond the end of all the ages.  
I am aware of Thee as I cannot be of anything else.  
O, have mercy on me, Lord of all the Gods,  
Thou habitable shelter for all worlds."

He turns and points to the sons of the Kuru tribe.

"These sons of the Kurus, this throng of noble heroes,  
Bhishma and Drona and the best warriors among us,  
They all, prostrate, worship Thee,  
Overwhelmed with all Thy fiery power and grandeur.  
Primal origin of universal being,  
I yearn to know Thee. I cannot comprehend  
What now I see,  
All that is here revealed to me."

In this way does Arjuna speak when he is alone with that which is his own being, when it appears objectively before him. We are confronted here with a great cosmic mystery—a mystery not because of its theoretical content but because of the overpowering feeling it arouses in us when we are able to grasp it correctly. It is so full of mystery that it must speak differently to all human feeling than ever in the world was anything spoken before.

When Krishna himself speaks, what resounds to the ear of Arjuna, rings out so:

"I am Time, who destroys all worlds.  
I am come to snatch men away.  
Although you bring them to death in battle, even without  
you,  
All the warriors standing in phalanx are prey to death.  
Arise then, unaffrighted!  
You shall win honor in conquering the foe.  
Exult over the beckoning victory!  
Not you will have slain them when they fall in battle.  
Through me they have already died, they all,

Before you can bring them to death.  
Be but my tool, my hand in this work,  
Drona, Jayardana, Bhishma, Karna,  
And the other heroes in war,  
I have slain them already. Now you go kill them,  
So that what I have done will appear in illusion, outwardly,  
When they fall dead in maya, killed by me.  
Now you kill them; so that which I have done  
Will seemingly appear as done by you.  
Fight! They will fall by your sword  
Whom I have killed!"

We know that the instruction given by Krishna to Arjuna among the sons of Pandu was related to the blind hero, Drita-rashtra, King of the Kurus, by Sanjaya, his charioteer. Continuing this report of what is happening on the battlefield Sanjaya says that when Arjuna had heard the words of Krishna he trembled, folded his hands, and though seized with fear bowed low to Krishna, and with faltering but reverent speech, said:

"With right doth the world rejoice in Thy glory  
And stand before Thee in fearsome awe.  
The Raja spirits, terrified,  
Flee in every direction, while the saintly hosts  
Bow before Thee. And why should they not do homage  
To the Primal Creator, more worthy even than Brahma!"

Truly we stand before a cosmic mystery. For what does Arjuna say upon seeing his own self before him in bodily form? He addresses his own being as though it were higher than Brahma himself. We are face to face with a mystery. For when a man peaks to his own being in this way his words must be understood without anything of the feelings, perceptions, ideas, thoughts of ordinary life entering into his understanding. Nothing could put a man in greater danger than to bring into these words of Arjuna a feeling such as he might otherwise have in



life. If he were to do this, not realizing this was something unique, not sensing it as the greatest cosmic mystery; if he were to meet Krishna—his own higher being—with but ordinary feeling, then insanity, megalomania, would be as nothing compared to the illness that would befall him.

“Lord of all Gods, Thou art everlasting—  
Eternal—The Highest—at once  
All that is, and all that is not.  
Thou art supreme—most ancient among spirits—  
The most sublime treasure in the whole universe.  
Thou art the One Who Knows, in consciousness.  
Thou embracest everything, every form existing,  
Thou art the wind—fire—death—the Moon—  
The ceaseless surging of the cosmic ocean.  
Not only the highest of the Gods Thou art  
But the ancestor of the highest, The Name Itself.  
Worship must be Thine, a thousand-thousand times—and  
more—

To every aspect of Thy being.  
Thou art all that ever a human can be,  
Powerful as only the total of all power can be.  
Thou bringest everything to perfection,  
Thou art All!

If, impulsively, I deem Thee my friend,  
Calling Thee Krishna, Yiva, friend, unmindful  
And too familiar before Thy greatness;  
If I do not rightly honor Thee in Thy travelling,  
Or in stillness when Thou art at rest;  
When Thou art with the most divine, or the commonplace;  
Whether Thou be alone or with other beings,—  
If in all this my reverence is faulty  
Forgive me, then, Immeasurable One!

Thou, Father of the World, Who set it in motion,

And in which Thou movest.  
Thou art the Teacher above every other Teacher,  
Incomparable in all three worlds.  
Prostrate before Thee I seek mercy, Lord God!  
From Him Who reveals Himself everywhere.  
In fearsome awe I tremble to see in Thee  
What has never before been beheld.

Show Thyself to me as Thou art. O God!  
Be merciful, Fountainhead of the Universe!”

Truly we are confronted with a mystery when one human being speaks to another in this manner. Again Krishna speaks to his pupil.

“I have revealed myself to you in mercy.  
Before you stands my highest being—  
Radiant—Primal—Immeasurable—  
Conjured up through my omnipotence.  
As you see me no other has ever seen.  
Through the forces now given you by grace  
You see me as never was I revealed.  
Neither in the Vedas, nor through sacrifices:  
Not by any holy dispensation.  
None has attained to me through study  
Nor through any kind of ceremony.  
Not after dreadful penance can one see  
My human form as you now see it.  
Mighty hero!  
Be not frightened nor bewildered  
At sight of my terrifying figure.  
Fearless and high-minded shall you behold me  
When again you see me in familiar shape.”

Then Sanjaya tells the blind Dritarashtra that when Krishna had spoken these words to Arjuna, the Immeasurable One, with-

out beginning and without end, supreme above all powers, vanished, and Krishna showed himself again in his friendly human form as though he wished thus to reassure the shocked Arjuna.

Arjuna spoke: "Now I see Thee once more before me in Thy human form. Now, consciousness and knowledge return to me, and I am myself again."

And Krishna said: "That shape of mine you have seen, which was so difficult for you to behold, is the form even Gods have endlessly longed to see. The Vedas do not indicate my shape, nor will it be attained by repentance, nor by charity, sacrifice, nor any kind of ritual. Through none of these am I to be seen in this form you have now seen. Only one who knows how to free himself from all Vedas, from repentances, charities, sacrifices, and ceremonials, and in solitude look upon me reverently—only he can recognize me in the form you have seen, and can become one with me. He who does as I have inspired him to do, who loves and honors me, who cares not for the world, and is full of love for all creatures—he it is who comes to me, O my son of the tribe of Pandu."

Here is a cosmic mystery communicated to mankind at a most significant cosmic hour: at a time when the old clairvoyance dependent upon the blood, ceases, and human souls must seek new paths to what is unending, to the eternal. So is this mystery brought to our attention, that at the same time we may observe all that can become dangerous to man when he is able to see his own being, which he himself has brought to birth.

If we grasp this deepest of human and cosmic mysteries, which reveals our own being through true self-knowledge, there stands before us then the greatest world riddle. But it may only be put before us when it is revered in all humility. No intellectual comprehension suffices to approach this cosmic mystery; only the right feeling. No one may approach this mystery, which speaks out of the Gita, who cannot do so reverently. This feeling alone makes possible a complete comprehension of it.

How—directly by means of what the Gita reveals about a cer-

tain stage of human evolution—fresh light can be thrown upon what is to be found at another stage as shown in the Epistles of Paul—this will occupy us in the further course of these lectures.

#### IV

### The Essence of the Bhagavad Gita and the Significance of the Pauline Letters.

*December 31, 1912*

**ALREADY** in the beginning of yesterday's lecture I pointed out how varied are the impressions we receive when we let the calm, dispassionate, wisdom-filled character of the Bhagavad Gita work upon us, then think of what pervades the Epistles of Paul: the personal opinions and aims, passionately expressed, often in a spirit of agitating propaganda, at times even with temperamental scolding, or with boiling rage. In the Gita the way its spiritual content comes to expression reveals a wonderful, artistically rounded form, so perfect that we can hardly conceive it more so, both as poetry and philosophy. In contrast, in the Pauline Epistles one often finds such an awkwardness of expression as makes it very difficult, a real hindrance, in ferreting out his deep meaning. In spite of all this it is true to say that these Epistles give the tone and establish the directives for the development of Christianity, as the harmonized tones of the Eastern world-concepts come to expression in the Gita.

Indeed, in the Epistles all the significant truths of Christianity are to be found; those regarding the Resurrection, the meaning of Faith as compared to the Law, the nature of Grace, the life of Christ in the soul or in human consciousness, and much else. All this is put in such a way that again and again, in presenting

Christianity, one must proceed from these Pauline Epistles. Everything in them relates to Christianity, as the Bhagavad Gita relates to the great truths about freeing oneself from the immediate activities of living, so that the soul may sink itself into observing everything, into contemplation, into raising itself to spiritual heights, and purifying itself—in short, in preparing itself for union with Krishna.

Everything here characterized shows how difficult it is to make a comparison between the two spiritual revelations. One who does so superficially would doubtless give a higher place to the Gita because of its purity, serenity, and wisdom. But, if he does so, it is as if he had before him a full-grown plant with a beautiful blossom, and beside it a seed, and then says: This plant with its gorgeous, fully-developed blossom is much more beautiful than the insignificant plant-seed. But it might be that out of the seed would come one day a still more beautiful plant and blossom. One does not make a true comparison when one looks directly from a fully matured plant to an entirely undeveloped seed. So it is if one compares the Bhagavad Gita and the Epistles of Paul. In the Gita is the fully ripened fruit, a wonderfully beautiful outgrowth of human evolution throughout thousands of years, which finally comes to a ripe, wise, and artistic expression in the sublime Gita. In the Epistles is the seed of something entirely new, which grows and must continue to grow. Only when one sees it as germinal, as prophetic of what could come of it after thousands and thousands of years of development into the future, can one sense the full significance of this steadily ripening seed laid into human soil by the Pauline Epistles. For a true comparison this has to be considered. Then it is also clear that what some day should be great had first to pour out of the human soul in a homely, chaotic form from the depths of the Christianity in these Epistles. Thus, the significance of the Gita and the Epistles for the collective evolution of mankind on earth must be judged differently; not merely according to the beauty, wisdom, and inner perfection of form to be found in a finished product.

For a comparison of the two world concepts given in the Gita and the Epistles one must first ask what is their main concern. Through being able to view in historical perspective everything connected with these concepts we see that their chief concern is with the entrance of man's ego into the stream of human evolution. If one traces this process one finds that in pre-Christian times this ego lacked independence; it was still rooted in hidden depths of the soul. Not yet was it possible for it to develop itself. This could only come about through the inthrust of what we call the Christ impulse.

That which can take place since the Mystery of Golgotha and was expressed in the words of Paul, "Not I but Christ in me," could not have existed previously in the human ego. But in the millennium before the Mystery of Golgotha, when the Christ impulse was drawing nearer, there was gradually prepared what then should occur through the entry of this impulse into the human soul. It was prepared in such a way as came to expression in the deed of Krishna. Within himself then, in the sense of the Pauline formula, "Not I but Christ in me," man had to seek the Christ impulse after the Mystery of Golgotha. Before that event it had to be sought as a revelation coming to him out of the cosmos, and the further back one goes in time the more brilliant, the more impulsive one finds this outer revelation to be.

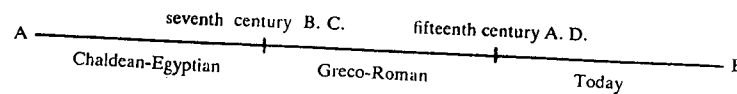
So we can say that previous to the Mystery of Golgotha a certain revelation came to mankind from outside like sunlight streaming down upon an object. In such a way did the light of the spiritual sun illuminate man's soul from outside enveloping it in light. After the Mystery of Golgotha the Christ impulse worked within the soul, like spiritual sunlight, as if the soul were a self-illuminating body radiating its light from within. Looked at in this way the fact of the Mystery of Golgotha becomes a significant border-line in human evolution. Before the Christ impulse entered the soul it was like a drop shining with the light radiating into it from every direction. After this Mystery, if the soul had taken in the Christ impulse, light streamed out from it as from an inner flame.

With this in mind we can express this whole relationship with the designations we learned to know in the Sankhya philosophy. If our spiritual eye is turned to a soul that before the Mystery of Golgotha was shone upon by spiritual light from every side, it appears to be in the sattwa condition. In contrast, after this Mystery had taken place, the soul appears as if the spiritual light were hidden in its depths, the soul's own nature concealing it. It is as if the soul substance ensheathed the light that contains the Christ impulse! Now is this not the situation up to our time, especially in our own time, in regard to everything man experiences externally? Observe a man today as he has to be occupied with outer knowledge and activities; then how, like a small flame giving a feeble light, the Christ impulse lies deep within him, enclosed by the other contents of his soul. In contrast to the pre-Christian condition called sattwa this relationship of spirit to soul is the tamas condition.

Viewed in this way what did the Mystery of Golgotha bring into human evolution? It transformed the manner of spirit-revelation from the sattwa condition to that of tamas. Through this, humanity advanced, but it also constituted, one might say, a deep fall, not occasioned by the Mystery but by humanity itself. The Mystery of Golgotha caused the tiny flame to grow ever brighter, but it appears to be faint compared to the powerful light that shone upon the soul from all sides before the event, because progressing human nature was sinking ever deeper into darkness. Thus, the Mystery of Golgotha is not to be blamed for the tamas condition of the soul as it relates to the spirit. Rather, this Mystery made it possible for the tamas condition to come again in the distant future into the sattwa condition, which is now being kindled from within outward.

In the sense of the Sankhya philosophy the rajas condition lies between that of sattwa and tamas, and is characteristic of the evolutionary period in which the Mystery of Golgotha occurred. As to the manifesting spirit, humanity itself went the way from light to darkness, from the sattwa to the tamas condition, during

the thousands of years surrounding the Mystery of Golgotha. To make it more exact:



If we indicate the evolution of mankind by the line A—B, up to about the eighth or seventh century B.C. all human culture was in the sattwa condition. Then began the age in which the Mystery of Golgotha occurred; and around the fifteenth or sixteenth century A.D. a transition to the tamas age definitely set in. Using our customary terms, the first epoch, which for certain spiritual revelations fell into the sattwa condition, coincided with what we call the Egypto-Chaldean period. What was of the rajas condition came in the Greco-Latin epoch; that of the tamas condition is in our own age. We know that in post-Atlantean times this Egypto-Chaldean era is the third, the Greco-Latin the fourth, and ours the fifth. There had to take place, we might say according to the plan of human evolution, a deadening of outer revelation in passing from the third into the fourth period. How was mankind actually prepared for the flashing-up of the Christ impulse?

If we wish to be clear about how man's spiritual relationships in the Egypto-Chaldean epoch differed from those of the following epochs, we must recognize that in this third period the people in all those lands, including India, still possessed a remnant of the old clairvoyance. That means, they not only saw the world through their senses and their intelligence bound to the brain, but also through the organs of the etheric body, at least under certain conditions between sleeping and waking. To picture a man of that era we must recognize that for everyone viewing the outer world of nature as we do now through our physical senses and reasoning, this was but one way of experiencing the world. They did not arrive at knowledge; they only looked at things as they were in action, side by side in space, and succes-

sively in time. To achieve knowledge they had to come into a certain condition, not cultivated as with us but quite natural, which happened as if by itself as the deeper forces of their etheric bodies were aroused so as to produce knowledge. Out of such knowledge emerged all the wonderful wisdom that appeared in the Sankhya philosophy; also what has come down to us in the wisdom of the Vedas, though this belonged to a more ancient time.

Thus, man attained knowledge in that time either by bringing himself into another state of consciousness, or feeling himself transported into it. He had his everyday consciousness in which he used his eyes and ears and carried on his activities with his ordinary intelligence. But he used these faculties only in his outer, practical affairs. It would not have occurred to him to attain knowledge, or science, by such means. For this he had to employ what came to him in another state of mind, wherein he activated his deeper forces.

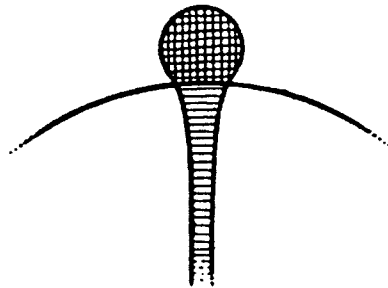
So, we can conceive man in that ancient time as having his everyday body, and within this his finer, spiritual body—his Sunday body, if I may put it so. With his everyday body he did his everyday work; with his Sunday body, woven only out of the etheric body, he perceived and developed his science. It would be correct to say that a man of that time would be astonished that we now obtain knowledge by means of our everyday body, never putting on our Sunday bodies when we want to know something about the world.

How then did a man of that time experience all these conditions? When he gained knowledge through his deeper powers—for instance, in developing the Sankhya philosophy—he did not feel as man today feels, who, when he wants to gain knowledge, has to strain his intellect and think with his head. To gain knowledge he felt himself to be in his ether body, which was only slightly extended into what today is the physical head but was more defined in the other parts of the body. Man then thought much more with the other members of his etheric body. In the head the ether body was the least developed, so that in

thinking a man felt lifted out of his physical body. But in such moments of forming knowledge, of scientific thinking, he felt also as if he were united with the earth. When he took off his everyday body and put on his Sunday body, he felt as though forces flowed through his whole being, as when forces coursing through our limbs and feet connect us with the earth, and when flowing through our hands and arms connect themselves with our body. He began to feel himself as part of the earth. On one side he was aware of thinking and knowing in his ether body, and on the other, that he was no longer a separated man but a part of the earth. He felt himself growing into the earth. Thus, the whole inner way of experiencing changed when a man put on his Sunday body and prepared to gain knowledge.

What then had to happen to bring this third epoch to a close and let the fourth one enter? If we wish to understand this it would be well if we felt our way into the old way of designating things.

A man in that ancient time who experienced what I have been describing would say, "The serpent has become active within me." His being had been extended into the earth. He felt his physical body not as the active part of him, but that a serpent-like appendage of himself stretched into the earth and the head was what stuck out of the earth. He felt this serpent being to be the thinker. He could indicate it so:



His ether body stretched into the earth like a serpent, and while

he as physical man was outside the earth, when he was thinking and understanding, he penetrated the earth and thought with his ether body. So, in ancient times, to apprehend something meant: "I stir into action the serpent within me; I feel my serpent nature."

What then had to happen to bring about the new way of knowing? It was to be no longer possible for man to feel himself extended into the earth through his limbs and feet. Also, feeling had to die away in his ether body, and had to pass instead into his physical head. If you correctly picture this change you will find it well expressed by saying, "One is wounded in the feet but with his own body he crushes the serpent's head." Which means, the serpent's head ceases to be the organ for thinking. The physical brain kills the serpent, which takes revenge by withdrawing man's feeling of belonging to the earth. It bites one on the heel.

At such times of transition from one form of human experience to another there is conflict, since the two forms still exist side by side. A father is still there after the son has lived for years, yet the son bears in him what derives from the father. The characteristics of the fourth, the Greco-Latin epoch, were present while those of the third epoch were still active in people and nations. Such intermingling naturally goes with evolution. But the influx of the new, and the old receding alongside it, brings it about that they do not understand each other well; the old does not understand the new. The new must protect itself from the old, must assert its life in the face of it. Yet while the new is there, the forefathers, who have not assimilated the new, project their qualities into their descendants. In this way we can characterize the transition from the third to the fourth period of human culture.

Now there had to be a hero, one may say, a leader who is an outstanding representative of this process of killing the serpent and being wounded by it, and who at the same time has to rebel against what, to be sure, is related to him, but whose faculties still shine into the new out of the past era. Humanity must go

forward in such a way that what generations are to experience some one person must first experience in its full greatness. Who was this hero who killed the head of the serpent and rebelled against the significance of the third epoch, leading mankind out of the old sattwa period into that of tamas? This hero was Krishna. How could this be more definitely indicated than by the oriental legend showing Krishna as a son of the Gods Mahadeva and Devaki, who entered the world amid wonderful happenings: that is, as a bringer of something new. Continuing with my analogy, he leads men to seek knowledge by way of their everyday bodies; he slays the Sunday body, the serpent. He has to resist what his kindred bring over into the new age. Such a person is something new—wonderful. So the legend relates how Krishna already at birth was surrounded by miraculous occurrences, and that his uncle, Kansa, sought to kill him. Here in his uncle we see the intrusion of the old forces that Krishna had to oppose in order to kill off the influences of the third epoch hindering mankind's evolution. He had to rebel against Kansa as being of the old sattwa era. Among the most significant miracles surrounding Krishna, the legend tells how the powerful serpent Kali wound around him, but he succeeded in crushing its head, whereby he was wounded on the heel. Thus the legend directly reflects an occult fact, as legends do. One should not give superficial explanations of legends, but really understand them, see them in the right relation to true knowledge.

Krishna is the hero of the declining third post-Atlantean epoch. The legend tells us that he appeared at the end of this age, so everything hangs together when rightly understood.  Krishna is the one who killed the old faculty of perception and cast it into darkness. He did this in his outer manifestations, bringing into eclipse what had surrounded mankind earlier as sattwa knowledge. He is shown in the Bhagavad Gita as the one who gives to one single person—to compensate for what he had taken away—instruction for attaining through Yoga what to normal humanity was being lost. Thus, for the world, Krishna is the destroyer of the old sattwa knowledge, and at the same time

he appears, at the end of the Gita, as the Lord of Yoga who leads the way again to the knowledge that has been left behind; that knowledge which can only be recovered if man ceases to be dominated by what he has drawn about him like everyday clothes, and returns to the old spiritual condition.

Such was the twofold deed of Krishna. As a world-historical hero he crushed the head of the old serpent knowledge and forced humanity to enter into the physical body. Whereas earlier everything contributing to man's egohood streamed into him from outside, from now on it would only be possible by means of the physical body to develop his ego as a free, self-dependent entity. Thus, Krishna was a world-historical hero. He restored to individual man for meditation, contemplation, and inner discovery, what was once lost. It is this, which enters in such a grand way in the Gita scene, that we let work upon our souls at the end of the lecture yesterday; Arjuna confronting his own nature, but seen outwardly, outspread through all space, without beginning or end.

If we examine the Gita exactly, we come to a place in the Gita that again makes us wonder at its limitless greatness. People today must find this passage impossible to explain. It is where Krishna reveals to Arjuna the nature of the avayata tree, the fig tree, saying that with this tree the roots grow upward and the branches downward; that its single leaves are those of the Veda book, which together contain the Veda knowledge. Now this is a peculiar passage. What does it mean?

To understand it we must go back to the old knowledge and see clearly its effects. Man today only gains knowledge through his physical organs. The old knowledge was gained, as we have said, through the etheric body. Not that the total man was etheric, but his knowledge came through that part of his ether body that was in the physical. Imagine for a moment that you are perceiving in your etheric body with its serpent. That was an objective fact, which no longer exists for man today. At present he observes much in his environment quite naturally, but look at him as he views the world. There is one thing he does not see.

No man can see his own brain when he is observing. No one can see the marrow of his own spine. But this impossibility ceases when one observes by means of the ether body. Then a new object appears, otherwise invisible: he sees his own nervous system. But he certainly does not see it as an anatomist at present sees it. Rather, he has the feeling: "There you are in your etheric nature; you look upward and see how the nerves spread into all the organs, collecting together up in the brain. You feel that it is a tree with its roots stretching upward, and its branches extended down into all the limbs!"

Actually, this is not experienced as small enough to be contained within our own skin, but as a great world-tree, the roots reaching out into space and the branches downward. One feels himself as serpent, seeing this nerve-system objectively before him. Remember that in earlier lectures I said that man, in a certain sense, is a plant upside down. We must put all our observations together to understand this remarkable scene in the Gita. Above everything one marvels at that ancient wisdom which today must be brought to light again by new methods out of the depths of occultism. Then one experiences what this tree reveals: what it is that grows out of it as leaves—the Veda knowledge, streaming into one from outside.

The wonderful picture of the Gita now stands before us: The tree with its roots going upward, its branches downward, its leaves containing knowledge, and man himself the serpent on the tree. Perhaps you have already seen this picture of the Tree of Life with the serpent. Everything has significance when one looks into all these ancient symbols. Here we encounter the tree, its roots extending upward, its branches downward. One has the feeling he is in the reverse position to the Tree of Paradise, and that has a deep meaning. For the Tree of Paradise stands at the initial point of another chapter of evolution, that which works on through the old Hebraic era into Christianity.

Here, then, is indicated the whole nature of ancient knowledge. When Krishna explicitly says to his pupil Arjuna, "Re-

nunciation is the power that makes this Tree visible to man," he indicates how man turns back to that ancient knowledge by giving up everything he has attained in the subsequent course of evolution, which we described yesterday. This is the glorious gift that Krishna makes to this single individual, his pupil Arjuna, as payment on account for what he had to take away from humanity in general for their everyday use. That is the essence of Krishna.

What must Krishna's gift to his individual pupil become? It must become sattwa wisdom. The more clearly Krishna gives this wisdom to Arjuna the more profound, serene, and passionless it will be. But it will be an old, revealed wisdom, given to man from outside in the wonderful words spoken by the noble Krishna himself, and expressed again in his single pupil's response.

Thus Krishna becomes the Lord of Yoga, who leads back to the primal wisdom of mankind. Always does he seek to overcome that soul-force that even in the sattwa age concealed the spirit. He wants to bring to his pupil what the spirit was in its primal purity before descending into material substance. So, only in spirit does Krishna stand before us in that dialogue with Arjuna that we presented yesterday.

With this we come to the end of that epoch that saw the last of the old spirituality. We could follow it so as to see the total spiritual light at its beginning, and then its decline into materiality, in order that man find his independence, his ego. When the spiritual light had come as far as the fourth epoch a kind of transition set in, a rajas connection between spirit and the outer soul faculty. In this period the Mystery of Golgotha occurred. Can one describe this era in terms of sattwa? No. One would miss just what belonged to that age. To express correctly something in the rajas age—using this term as in the Sankhya philosophy—one must not speak out of the state of detachment but out of the personal, out of indignation over this and that. In this way Paul spoke out of the rajas condition. Just feel the throb of many a





word in his letters to the Thessalonians, the Corinthians, the Romans; the struggling to get free of something, the rage, the personality characteristics often breaking through.

That is the style and character of these Epistles. They must be so, while the Bhagavad Gita must be detached and personality-free, since it is the finest blossoming of the declining age. But to every man it gives a substitute for what is being lost, and leads him back to the heights of spiritual life. Krishna had to give his own pupil the highest blossoming of the spirit because he was required to kill the old knowledge for humanity, to crush the head of the serpent. The sattwa condition had faded out by itself. It was no longer there. Anyone speaking of the sattwa condition while in the following rajas era could only have referred to it as something ancient. A person living at the beginning of the new age had to express what now was the determining influence. Personality had entered human nature, through its seeking knowledge by means of the organs and processes of the physical body it had begun to use. That personal element speaks from the Pauline Epistles. His personality thunders his indignation about everything bearing the darkness of materiality. His letters often reverberate with words of anger.

But this also means that these Letters cannot speak in the severely conclusive phrases, with the wisdom-filled, sharply delineated detachment to be found in the Bhagavad Gita. Such wisdom can only be spoken when a man is free from outer concerns and is lifted triumphantly to the spirit where he becomes one with Krishna. Thus can one describe the wisdom-filled path of Yoga to the greatest heights of soul. The new element in the world, the victory of the spirit over the merely soul-like, could only be described out of the rajas condition. He who first did so in a way vitally important to human history, described it with utmost enthusiasm in such a way that people knew he was deeply involved—shaken to his roots—as he confronted the manifestation of the Christ. In that moment he encountered it

personally. For the first time he confronted what henceforth would be working for thousands of years into the future. It took hold of him so as to personally seize upon all the powers of his soul. Therefore he did not describe it in the philosophical, wisdom-filled, definitive concepts of the Bhagavad Gita, but had to tell of the Resurrection of Christ as an event of direct, personal involvement.

Should it then not be a personal experience? Should Christianity not permeate the intimately personal, filling it with warmth and life? Truly, he who described the Christ event for the first time could only do so personally.

In the Gita the main thought lies in rising to spiritual heights through Yoga; everything else is only touched upon. Why is this? Because Krishna in giving his instruction deals with this one pupil, not with what other men feel as their relation to the spiritual. So Krishna describes what his pupil should become, achieving ever higher spiritual realms. What he describes leads to ever more mature conditions of soul, therefore to ever more impressive and beautiful pictures. Also, only in conclusion do we see the contrast between what is spiritual and what is demonic, which somewhat confirms the beauty inherent in the soul's ascent. All those out of whom only the material speaks, who live in materiality, who believe that with death all is finished—these are demonic in nature. But that is said merely to enlighten; the great teacher really is little concerned with it. Above all his task is the spiritualizing of the human soul. Only in passing may Yoga speak of its opponent.

Paul above everything has to do with humanity as a whole, which lives at the time when darkness is breaking in upon it. He has to orient his view to everything this epoch of darkness brings about in human life. He must show the contrast between this darkening influence common to all and the seedling to be brought to life in the human soul as the Christ impulse. He also is to point up every aspect of materialism, every possible vice that has to be battled against by what he has to give. This at

first is like a tiny, flickering flame in the soul, and can only gain strength if there is enthusiasm behind his words—words pressing to victory, revealing a personalized power of feeling.

So remote from each other are the presentations of the Gita and the Epistles; in the Gita detached impersonal description, but Paul must work personal expression into his words. This accounts for the tone and style of both, showing in almost every line. Artistic perfection can be achieved only after maturity. At the beginning of a development there is bound to be more or less chaos.

How is it that all this happened as it did? We find the answer if we return to the striking beginning of the Gita poem, where we saw how the related warriors opposed each other, man to man, the victors and the vanquished alike connected by blood-ties. The time had come for passing from the old blood-relationships on which clairvoyance depended, to differentiating and mixing the blood-streams as characterizes the new age. This involves a transformation of the outer physical nature of man and the changes in cognition necessarily connected with it. A different kind of blood-mixing, another meaning for blood now enters human evolution. If we study this passing from that ancient era to the new one (you may recall my booklet, *The Occult Significance of the Blood*) we find that the clairvoyance of ancient times was dependent on people having the same tribal blood; whereas with a mixing of tribes the old clairvoyance was destroyed and the new cognition, bound to the physical body, superseded it.

The beginning of the Gita points to something external that is bound to the human form. Especially in the Sankhya philosophy are such form transformations mentioned. What pertains to the soul is, so to say, left in the background, as we pointed out. Souls in their multiplicity simply exist behind the forms. We found a kind of pluralism in the Sankhya philosophy, which we could compare with the philosophy of Leibnitz in the modern age. If we thought ourselves into the soul of a Sankhya philosopher we could imagine him saying: "Here is my soul, expressing itself either in the sattwa, rajas, or tamas condition as it relates

to the forms of the external body." But this philosopher would observe that these forms change. One of the most significant changes shows in the different way of using the etheric body, or in the transition in blood-relations that we described. This is an outer change in form. The soul is not touched by what the Sankhya philosophy is concerned with. The outer changes of form suffice for considering the transition from the old sattwa era to the new rajas era on the boundary of which Krishna stands. Here it is the external transformations in form more external to the soul that come into consideration.

Outer changes in form were always to be considered when one epoch passed into another. With the transition of the Persian into the Egyptian era there was a change different from that of the Egyptian to the Greco-Latin. Further back, from the primeval Indian to the Persian, was a still different change in form, but a change did occur then also. In fact, it was merely a change in form that marked the passing of old Atlantis to the post-Atlantean world. One can follow this through the indications given in Sankhya philosophy, which show that the soul lives in these forms but is not influenced by them. Purusha remains untouched.

Thus we find a remarkable kind of change that Sankhya philosophy expresses through its own concepts. But behind it stands purusha, the individual soul quality of every person. So this philosophy merely says that this individual soul-element exists in the external relation of the three gunas—sattwa, rajas, tamas—but is not disturbed by them. The teachings of Krishna, Lord of Yoga, point continually to this soul-element—certainly. But knowledge as to the real nature of the soul is not forthcoming. Guidance as to how the soul should develop is the highest he imparts. Change in the outer forms; no change in the soul itself, only hinting at such a change. This hinting we discover in the following way.

When a man desires to rise through Yoga from the ordinary to the higher soul levels he must free himself from outer activities, from worldly knowledge; he must become his own observer. By

rising above all externalities the soul gains its inner freedom. This is the case with ordinary humanity. But with a person who enters upon initiation and becomes clairvoyant, this does not remain so. Outer materiality does not confront him, for it as such is maya. It is reality only for one who can use his own inner instruments.

Now what is it that takes the place of matter? That comes before us when we look at the initiation of olden times. While the ordinary man in his everyday life confronts matter—prakriti—the soul of one becoming initiated through Yoga faces the world of the Asuras, the world of demoniacal powers, which he has to fight. Matter is that which provides resistance. The Asuras, the powers of darkness, they are the enemy. But all that is only hinted at; there, so to say, we glimpse something of the soul, and we begin to feel what the soul is. For the first time then, in doing battle with the demons, the Asuras, this soul activity perceives its own being spiritually.

In our language we would designate this battle—though it appears only in miniature—as that which becomes visible as spirits in action, when matter shows its spiritual nature. Even in miniature it appears to be what we know as the soul's battle with Ahriman when it enters upon initiation. But even in doing this we remain entirely within the soul's being. Then, that which was formerly the material spirits grows to gigantic size, and the soul confronts a mighty foe. Soul stands against soul; the individual soul against Ahriman's kingdom in the wide expanse of the universe.

The lowest level of Ahriman's kingdom is what one fights in Yoga. But now Ahriman himself confronts us, observed as we express it; his full powers, his whole kingdom opposes the human soul. The Sankhya philosophy knows the relationship of the soul to outer materiality, when the latter has the upper hand, as the tamas condition. One initiated through Yoga is not only in this tamas condition; he is battling against certain demonic powers into which, to his view, matter has been changed. In our conception we see the soul not only when it relates to the spirit-

ual element in matter, but when it confronts the purely spiritual, the Ahrimanic element.

In the rajas state, according to Sankhya philosophy, matter and spirit are in balance. They swing back and forth, first one is high up, then the other. When this condition leads to initiation, then, in the spirit of the old Yoga, it would lead to an overcoming of rajas, into sattwa. For us it does not yet lead to sattwa, but here another battle begins, the battle with Lucifer. Now, as we view it, we confront purusha, which is only hinted at in the Sankhya philosophy. Not that we merely hint at it now; it actually stands right in the center of the battleground against Ahriman and Lucifer, soul opposing soul. Purusha appears to Sankhya philosophy as primevally distant.

When we go deeper into what there enters the soul's nature—still indistinguishable from the Ahrimanic and Luciferic elements—then in sattwa, rajas, tamas there are only the soul's relations to material substance. In our terms we now find the soul between Ahriman and Lucifer vigorously struggling and battling with them. This is something that could be seen for the first time in its whole magnitude, through Christianity.

In the old Sankhya teaching purusha was, so to say, left undisturbed. There the condition was described that arose when purusha clothed itself in prakriti. When we enter the Christian age and into its esoteric foundations we can penetrate purusha itself, characterizing its threefold form as the soul, the Ahrimanic and the Luciferic elements. We are now concerned with the inner condition of the soul itself in its struggle. What had to come lay in the transition occurring within the fourth epoch through the Mystery of Golgotha.

What then happened? With the passing of the third into the fourth epoch came what may be described as merely a change of form, yet it now involved the transition from prakriti to purusha itself, by which one inwardly felt how purusha was completely emancipated from prakriti. Man was not only torn away from his blood-ties but away from prakriti; set free of everything external to him. He must now come to terms with it in his inner

nature. Here the Christ impulse enters into him, the greatest transition that could have occurred in the whole of earth evolution. No longer does the question arise as to how the soul relates to matter—in sattwa, rajas, and tamas—for then the soul had not only to conquer tamas and rajas in order to lift itself above them in Yoga, but it was left to itself to fight against Ahriman and Lucifer. Then begins the necessity to come to terms with what the past epoch had required, and with the demands of the new age as this is represented in the song of the Bhagavad Gita. This poem shows us the conflict. There the human soul is revealed, living in its bodily sheaths whose forms are continually changing. As long as the soul lives in them it is ensnared by the ordinary life of prakriti. Then in Yoga the soul escapes this entanglement, breaks out of its restraining sheaths, and enters the spiritual sphere entirely free.

However, it is not enough that the soul merely frees itself. Here we have to consider what Christianity, the Mystery of Golgotha, brought into evolution for the first time. Through Yoga the soul would make itself free, then it could attain a vision of Krishna in his full power. But this would be Krishna as he was before Ahriman and Lucifer had attained their full power. A kind divinity still concealed the fact that on either side of Krishna—visible in the exalted way we described yesterday—stood Ahriman and Lucifer. Such concealment was possible in old clairvoyance because man had not yet descended into matter. But that condition can no longer continue. If now the soul merely passes through Yoga it would confront Ahriman and Lucifer and have to fight them. But the soul could not take its place beside Krishna without the help of that ally who does do battle with Ahriman and Lucifer. Tamas and rajas do not suffice. This firm ally is the Christ. Thus we see how the bodily nature frees itself from the body; or, we could also say, the bodily nature was darkened in the body when the great hero, Krishna, appeared. On the other hand, we see something more powerful; how the soul, abandoned to itself, becomes exposed to

the battle, something only visible in its own domain in the age when the Mystery of Golgotha took place.

I can well understand, my dear friends, that someone may say, "Truly, what still greater vision can there be than to see in the vision of Krishna man's highest ideal, the perfection of humanity?" There can be something higher. It is that which must stand by us, and permeate us, when we first confront the powers in the spirit—not merely tamas and rajas but the powers we must conquer if we are to gain this lofty human state. The force to help us is the Christ.

So, if one wills to see the highest only in what Krishna stands for, one is prevented from seeing something still higher only by his own inability to do so. Then too, the superiority of the Christ impulse over that of Krishna is shown in the fact that the being incarnated in Krishna was incarnated in his total humanness. Krishna was born and grew to manhood as the son of Visudeva. But in his whole human endowment lived that highest human impulse which we recognize as Krishna. But that impulse which must come to our aid when we confront Lucifer and Ahriman (this confrontation, which like all the other things we have described in our Mystery Dramas, exists only in its beginning and will be comprehensible for man in future)—that must be an impulse too great for mankind to contain as yet; an impulse that could not even live in such a body as Zarathustra could live in, but only when this body had attained the height of development, that is, when it has reached its thirtieth year. For this reason the Christ impulse cannot last throughout a whole life but only through its ripest years. Thus it is that this impulse was present in the body of Jesus for only three years. It is shown again directly in this fact that the Christ impulse stands higher than that of Krishna from birth onward.

As to how the superiority of the Christ impulse shows itself further we will have still more to say. But you will have seen, and felt, from what has already been described that the relation between the great Gita and the Epistles of Paul must in truth be

as we have indicated. Because the Gita is the ripe fruit of many previous epochs it can be a finished creation. The Epistles, being the first seeds of a ripening, more perfect and comprehensive period in history yet to come, are of necessity much more imperfect. So, in viewing the course of world history, one must recognize the imperfection of the Pauline Epistles when comparing them to the Gita; those most significant imperfections which should not be passed over. But also one should understand why these imperfections are inevitably there.

## V

The Spirituality of Maya.  
Krishna, the Luminosity of the Christ.  
Paul's Experience and Teaching of the Risen Christ.

*January 1, 1913*

**I**N THESE lectures we have considered two significant human documents—characterizing them only briefly as was possible in our limited time—and we have seen what impulses had to flow into evolution in order that these two documents, The Bhagavad Gita and the Epistles of Paul, could come into being. It is still important for our understanding of them to show a fundamental difference between the whole spirit underlying these documents.

We have already mentioned the teachings that Krishna was able to impart to his pupil Arjuna, teachings that could only be given to one person because of their intimate nature. Now, however, they are available to anyone because they come to light in the Gita. Of course, this was not the case at the time the poem was composed. Then these teachings did not reach all ears as they were only communicated by word of mouth. In those ancient times teachers were careful to ascertain a pupil's ripeness to receive such teachings. In our time that is no longer possible for any kind of instruction once it has come before the public in one way or another. We live in an age when spiritual life to a certain degree is open to all, which is not to say there is no

longer any occult science, only that it does not cease to be occult science when it is printed or spread abroad. Indeed there is plenty of occult science now. For example, Fichte's scientific teachings, available to anyone in print, are genuine occult teachings. Hegel's philosophy also is assuredly an occult teaching, as it is very little known and contains many expedients for keeping it secret. That is the case with many things in our time. These writings of Fichte and Hegel have very simple means for keeping them secret as they are so written that most people don't understand them and fall asleep after reading the first few pages. This is true of much else now, which many people think they know but really do not, so the things remain secret. In fact, such things as are contained in the Gita remain secret even though they have become known in the widest circles through print. In its mighty revelations one person perceives the evolution of his own nature; another sees in it only an interesting poem, and this reduces all its concepts and feelings to so much triviality. Let no one believe he has absorbed what lies in the words of the Gita when he has merely understood their literal meaning, which may be far from their real meaning. In this way the profundity of the poem in many respects protects it from being vulgarized. In any case it is certain that such teachings, expressed poetically, are for each person to work through for himself. He must experience them if he is to lift his soul to the point of finally experiencing a meeting with Krishna, the Lord of Yoga.

So, what The Great Teacher addresses to each person is a matter of individual concern. But it is otherwise with the Epistles of Paul when we view them from this standpoint. Everything there is directed to the community, to the many. But when we see into the innermost core of the Krishna teaching we find that it is to be expressed in the deep privacy of the individual soul. One can only achieve the meeting with Krishna as a solitary pilgrim if he is to find his way back to the primal revelations and experiences of mankind. That which Krishna can give must be given for each one singly.

This was not the case with the revelation given to the world

through the Christ impulse, which from the outset was to be thought of as directed to all humanity. The Mystery of Golgotha was not accomplished as a deed for single souls. When we consider all humanity from the beginning to the end of earth evolution, what took place on Golgotha occurred for all men. To the greatest possible extent it is a deed for the community of mankind. Therefore the style of these Epistles—apart from what I have already pointed out—must be different from that of the sublime Gita.

Bring vividly to mind once more the relationship of Krishna to Arjuna. As Lord of Yoga he gave him specific directions for lifting up his soul, step by step, so as to attain a vision of Krishna. Compare this now with a particularly pregnant section in the Epistles, where a group of followers goes to Paul and asks if this or that thing were true; whether they were in accord with what he had been teaching. And in Paul's instructions is a passage which in its greatness is equal throughout, even artistically, with what is in the sublime Gita, but it is in a quite different tone, a quite different way of expressing a soul experience. It is where Paul writes to the Corinthians about the variety in human talents present in a group, and how they must be brought to work together. Krishna said to Arjuna, "You must be so and so, do this or that, then step by step your soul will progress." Paul said, "One of you has this gift, another that, a third another; if these work together harmoniously like the members of a human body a spiritual wholeness results, which then can be permeated by the Christ." Thus, through their common situation, he could direct them to the idea of men working together, that is, as a plurality. He made use of a special opportunity to do this, namely, when the gift of "speaking with tongues" came up for consideration.

Now what is this "speaking with tongues" we find in the Pauline Epistles? It is none other than a survival of ancient spiritual faculties, which, in a renewed but fully conscious way, confront us again at the present time. In our methods of initiation, inspiration is a condition one may attain with the same clear con-

sciousness one has in the everyday use of his reasoning and sense perception, but it was otherwise in olden times. Then the person concerned spoke as if he were an instrument of higher spiritual beings, who made use of his organs of speech to express higher truths. Thus, one could say things he himself could not at all understand. Communications were made from the spiritual world that the transmitter did not need directly to understand. Right in Corinth such things were occurring. A condition had arisen there in which a number of people had this gift of "speaking-with-tongues."

Now with a person having this gift, what he brings forth is under all circumstances a revelation from the spiritual world. Nevertheless it can be that one person says this, another that, because there are many regions in the spiritual world. These differences in inspiration bring it about that the revelations do not always agree. Only when one enters the different regions in full consciousness does he discover how they harmonize. Therefore Paul admonishes his followers: "There are some who have this gift of speaking with tongues and there are others who can interpret the message. They should work together like the left hand with the right. We should not merely listen to the one spoken through, but also to those who may not have this gift but know how to interpret what one or the other spiritual region imparts." In this way Paul urges them on to achievements as a community, founded on their united efforts.

Connected with this speaking-with-tongues Paul gave that discourse which, as I said, is so wonderful that in certain respects it can be compared in still another way with the communications in the Gita. He said (I Cor. 12, 3-31):\*

"Concerning the spiritually gifted brethren I will not leave you without directions. You know that in the period of your paganism a blind desire led you astray, to dumb

\* The quotations from Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians have been translated from the German edition since what Rudolf Steiner offers is somewhat different from the usual English translations. As he has pointed out—for example, in his *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment*—the source of his spiritual research lies beyond the scope of the documents of external history.

idols. Wherefore I give you to understand that as little as one speaking in the spirit of God says 'Accursed be Jesus,' so little can he call Him 'Lord' except it be through the Holy Spirit.

"Now through grace there is a diversity of gifts, but only one Spirit. There is a diversity in men's achievements, but only one Lord. Individual men have a diversity of strength, but only one God is active in all these forces. To every man is granted manifestations of the Spirit, to each one's profit. Thus, to one is given words of prophecy; to another, knowledge. Again, there are those who live by faith; others have the gift of healing; others have the gift of prophecy; others have insight into the character of men; to others the gift of tongues; and others can interpret the speaking-with-tongues. But in every man works the one Spirit, apportioning to each his due. For as the body is one, with many members, all the single members forming together one body, so is it also with the Christ. For through the Spirit we are all baptized as one body, whether Jew or Greek, slave or free man. We are all filled with one Spirit, as the body consists not of one but of many members. If the foot were to say 'because I am not the hand I do not belong to the body,' nevertheless it does belong to the body. If the ear were to say, 'because I am not the eye I do not belong to the body,' it would even so belong to it. If the whole body were only eye, where then is the hearing? If the whole body were only hearing, where then is smelling? But God has given each member a particular place in the body, as He found it good. If there were only one member where would be the body?

"So, there are many members, and only one body. The eye dare not say to the hand, 'I do not need you!' Neither the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you'. Rather, the apparently weak members of the body are necessary, and those members we hold in low esteem prove to be especially important. God has put the body together and given to the



undistinguished members their significance, in order that there be no schism in the body but that all members work together in harmony and have care for each other. When one member suffers all suffer with it; and when one prospers all rejoice. But you now are the body of Christ. All of you together form His members. Some among you he has appointed to be apostles; others to be prophets; a third portion to be teachers; a fourth to be miracle-healers; a fifth to have other helping tasks; a sixth to be administrators of the community; and a seventh he has appointed to speak with tongues. Should all be apostles, or prophets, or teachers, or healers, or all speak with tongues? Should all be interpreters? Therefore it is right that the various gifts of grace work together—the more they do so the better.”

Then Paul speaks of the force that may be active in each one but also in the community; the force that brings together all the single members of the community as the strength of the body unites the separate members of the body. Nothing more beautiful did Krishna say to one man than Paul said to humanity with its variety of members. Then he speaks about the power of Christ that unites diverse individuals as the body unites its various members; the force which thereby can live in each one like the life-force in each member, yet also lives in the whole entity of a community.

This Paul characterized with powerful words:

“Indeed, I will show you the way higher than all the other ways. Though I could speak out of the spirit with the tongues of men or of angels and have not love, my speech would sound as brass and a clanging cymbal. And though I could prophesy, and reveal all mysteries, and communicate all the world’s knowledge; though I have such faith as would remove mountains, and have not love, it all would come to nothing. Though I gave to others all my spiritual gifts: yes, though I gave my very body to be burned, and have not love, everything would be in vain.

“Love endures. Love is kind. Love does not know envy,

nor boasting, nor vanity. It does not violate propriety, nor seek its own advantage. It does not let itself be provoked to anger. It bears no malice toward anyone; nor rejoices over injustice but only over truth. Love encompasses everything; permeates all beliefs; is hopeful in all things, and in all matters practices tolerance.

“Love, if it be love, is never lost. A prophecy ceases after it is fulfilled. What is spoken-with-tongues dies away when it no longer speaks to human hearts. Knowledge vanishes as soon as its subject is exhausted, because all knowledge is fragmentary; likewise all prophesying. But when that which is complete has come, then the fragments have lost their meaning.

“When I was a child I spoke as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child. Since I have become a man my world of childhood is past. Now we see only dark outlines in the mirror, but one day we shall see the spirit face to face. Now is my knowledge in fragments, but one day I shall know fully what I myself am. Lasting is Faith; lasting the certainty of Hope; and lasting is Love. But Love is the greatest of these, therefore it is supreme.

“All spiritual gifts may be yours. He who is able to prophesy must also strive to attain Love. He who speaks with tongues speaks not among men but among Gods. No one hears him just because he utters spiritual mysteries.”

We see that Paul understands the nature of speaking with tongues. He means: “The speaker is carried away into spiritual worlds and talks among Gods. He who prophesies speaks with men to edify them, exhort them, or give them consolation. The one speaking with tongues in a certain sense gives himself satisfaction in doing so; while the prophet edifies the community. Even if all of you were able to speak with tongues it is much more important that you prophesy. The prophet is greater than the speaker with tongues, unless the tongue-speaker is himself able to understand what he speaks in order that the community



understand it. Suppose I come to you as a speaker with tongues, of what use am I to you if I cannot tell you the significance of what I say as prophecy, as teaching, as revelation? My speaking would be like the tones of a flute, a zither, which you could not clearly distinguish one from the other. How is one to distinguish the playing of a flute or zither if they did not produce different sounds? If the trumpet did not give out a distinctive sound who would arm himself for battle? So it is with you. If you cannot put your tongue-speaking into a distinct language your speaking goes into thin air."

All this shows that the various spiritual gifts must be distributed among the members of the community, and that the members, as individuals, must work together. With this we come to that moment in human evolution when the revelation of Paul occurred, and we see how it must differ fundamentally from that of Krishna. The Krishna revelation is directed to the one individual, but actually to every person who is ripe to progress on the soul's path upward, as outlined by the Lord of Yoga. Ever again are we directed back to the primeval time of humanity, to which, according to the teaching of Krishna, we want to return in spirit. At that time man was less individualized, so one could assume that the same teaching and guidance was suitable for everyone. Paul confronted humanity when individuals were becoming differentiated, when they had to become differentiated, each with his own special capacities and gifts. No longer could one count on pouring the same thing into every single soul. One had to point to what ruled invisibly over all. That which is in no one man separately, but can be in every single one, is the Christ impulse. This force is again similar to a new group soul for humanity, but such a one as is consciously sought by humanity.

To make it clearer, let us imagine a number of Krishna-pupils in the spiritual world and a like number of those who have been deeply impressed by the Christ impulse. Each of the Krishna pupils has been set alight by the same impulse, given them by the Lord of Yoga. In spiritual life each is like the other. To one as to another the same instructions were given. But those stirred

by the Christ impulse are disembodied in the spiritual world, each with his own particular individuality, his own differentiated spiritual forces. So that also in the spiritual world one person can function in one way, another in another way. The leader of both, the one who pours himself into each one however individualized that one may be—this is the Christ. He lives in every soul, and at the same time hovers over them all. Thus, there is a differentiated community even when souls are disembodied; while the Krishna-pupils are a unity if they have received direction from the Lord of Yoga. The meaning of evolution, however, is that souls become more and more differentiated.

Therefore it was necessary that Krishna speak in another way. Basically he speaks as he did in the Gita to his pupil. But Paul has to speak otherwise; actually he speaks to every man. Then it is a matter of individual development whether each one, according to the degree of his maturity, stops with exoteric life only at this or that stage of his incarnation, or whether he embarks on esoteric development to raise himself to an esoteric Christianity. One can proceed further and further in Christianity to the most esoteric heights; but one begins on a different basis from that given in the Krishna teaching. There one starts from the standpoint of what he is as a human being, and raises his soul, however he can achieve it, as a single person. In Christianity, before he can even begin to advance, he enters upon a relationship to the Christ impulse, so that this transcends all else. The spiritual path to Krishna can only be followed by one who receives his instructions. Anyone can follow the path to Christ, because he brought the Mystery for all people; all can find a relationship to it. That, however, was something consummated on the physical plane. The first step therefore is taken on the physical plane; that is the main point.

Once a person grasps the world-historic significance of the Christ impulse one truly needs nothing from this or that Christian doctrine in order to proceed. Particularly in our time one can even take his start from an anti-Christian point of view, or a feeling of indifference. When one looks deeply into what our

time is able to bring to spiritual life; when one sees the contradictions and foolishness of materialism; then perhaps one is led most genuinely to the Christ these days, more so than if he came to Him through some special creed. Therefore, when it is said outside our circle that we set out from a special kind of Christian belief, it can be regarded as an especially vicious slander. For it is not a matter of starting out from some kind of denominational doctrine, but from the demands of spiritual life itself. Everyone—be he a Muslim, Buddhist, Jew, Hindu, or Christian—can understand the Christ impulse in its full meaning for humanity's evolution. This is exactly what we see penetrating Paul's entire concept and presentation. He is the personality who sets the tone for the first proclamation of the Christ impulse in the world.

Having described how the Sankhya philosophy was concerned with the changing of forms, with what pertains to prakriti, we may now say that Paul, in all that underlies his most meaningful Epistles, deals wholly with purusha, with what is of the soul. What the soul is destined to become, the manifold ways in which it is to develop throughout man's evolution, all this Paul sets forth in quite definite, conclusive ways. There is a fundamental difference between what oriental thinking was still able to produce, and what comes from Paul in such wonderful clarity.

Yesterday we pointed out that with Krishna everything depended on man finding the way out of the changing forms. But prakriti remains outside, as something foreign to the soul. All striving within this Eastern method of development, even within Eastern initiation, is toward becoming free from material existence, from the outer world of nature, which, according to the Veda philosophy, is maya, illusion. Everything outside us is maya, and Yoga is the way to become free of it. We have noted how, directly in the Gita, it is required that man free himself from everything he does, achieves, wills, and thinks; from what he desires and enjoys, and that in his soul he triumphs over ev-

everything external to him. The work he does falls away from him; so, resting in itself, it finds satisfaction in itself.

Thus, anyone who desires to develop himself according to the Krishna teaching has in mind becoming something like a paramahansa, a high initiate, who leaves behind all material existence and rises above all his deeds in the sense world; who lives in such a pure, spiritual state as to lose all thirst for incarnating again, because he no longer has any connection with what lives in this sense world as his work. Thus, we are confronted everywhere in the Gita with escape from this maya, this illusion; with the triumph over it.

But it is not like this with Paul. If he had encountered this Eastern teaching the following words would have risen from the depths of his soul: "So, you want to develop yourself away from everything that surrounds you, away from whatever you have accomplished in the outer world. Do you want to leave all that behind? Is it not the work of God? Is not all that above which you wish to lift yourself the creation of the Divine Spirit? When you disdain that do you not cast scorn upon God's work? Do not the revelations of God and His Spirit live everywhere in it? Did you not seek above all to reveal God in your own work, with love, and faith, and devotion? And now you desire to triumph over God's work?"

It would be good to inscribe deep in our own souls these words of Paul, which, if not actually spoken, ruled in the depths of his soul, for in them comes to light a vital nerve of what we know as Occidental revelation. Even in a Pauline sense we speak of the illusion that surrounds us. Indeed we say, "All about us is maya!" But we also ask, "Is this maya then not divine revelation, the work of Divine Spirit? Is it not blasphemy not to understand that in everything the divine spiritual is at work?"

Now the other question arises: Why is there maya? Why do we see illusion all around us? The Occident does not stop with asking if everything is illusion, it wants to know why. Here an

answer leads directly into the realm of the soul, into purusha. Because the soul once came under the power of Lucifer it sees everything through the veil of maya, and of itself spreads the veil of illusion over everything.

Is objectivity at fault then that we see maya? No. True objectivity would appear as a quality of soul if we were not under the power of Lucifer. It seems to be maya because we are not capable of seeing to the roots of what is spread about us. Lucifer's power prevents it. The fault does not lie with the Gods but with our own soul. You as soul have yourself changed the world into maya by the fact that you have succumbed to Lucifer. From the highest spiritual expression of this truth a direct line leads down to Goethe's words, "It is not the senses that deceive, it is judgment." The Philistines and the Zealots may oppose Goethe and his Christianity all they like, yet he still was entitled to say that he is one of the most Christian of men, because to the roots of his nature he thought like a Christian, right into that saying, "It is not the senses that deceive, it is judgment." The soul is at fault in that what it sees does not appear as truth but as maya. Thus, what in orientalism is simply an act of the Gods is diverted into the depths of the human soul where the great battle with Lucifer begins.

So, when we truly observe orientalism we see that in a certain way it is materialism, just because it does not recognize the spirituality in maya and wishes to rise above matter. Pulsing through the Epistles of Paul, however, is a teaching for the soul, even though in germinal form and therefore easily misunderstood in our *tamas*-time. It is this that in future will leave its imprint everywhere throughout the whole world. This unique nature of maya must be understood; for only then will it be thoroughly clear just what man's chief concern must be in the further progress of his evolution. Then one will understand what Paul meant in speaking of the first Adam, whose soul was victimized by Lucifer and thereby fell ever deeper into matter. This means nothing else than that it was ensnared in a false experiencing of matter.

Matter in the external world, as God's creation, is good. What takes place in that realm is good. But that which the soul experienced in the course of human evolution became more and more evil because in the beginning it was overpowered by Lucifer. Paul named Christ as the second Adam because He entered the world untouched by Lucifer and could therefore be that friend to men Who could gradually lead them away from Lucifer, that is, into a right relation to Lucifer. Paul could not communicate to people in his time everything he knew as an initiate. But whoever absorbs the contents of the Epistles will discover that more lies in their depths than comes to expression on the surface. That is because Paul had to speak to a certain community and must therefore reckon with their ability to understand. So there is much in his Epistles that seems to be contradictory. But if one penetrates their depths one will indeed find everywhere in them the impulse coming from the being of Christ.

Remember how we ourselves described the entrance of the Mystery of Golgotha into human life; how, to make it possible as we previously indicated, two differing children's histories were mentioned in the Matthew and Luke Gospels—because actually there were two Jesus children. We pointed out that according to their physical descent, "after the flesh" as Paul put it, the two Jesus boys stemmed from the House of David, the one from the Nathan, the other from the Solomon line, and that two Jesus boys were born at about the same time. In the one cited in the Matthew Gospel, Zarathustra was incarnated. The other described by Luke was not endowed with an ego such as specially characterizes a human being and as the other Jesus boy had, who was so highly developed because it was the ego of Zarathustra that lived in him. In the Luke Jesus-boy lived a part of man's being that had never before entered human evolution on earth.\*

Here we come to a point where it is somewhat difficult to find

\* See Rudolf Steiner, *The Spiritual Guidance of Man and Humanity, The Gospel of St. Luke*, and *The Gospel of St. Matthew* for a full exposition of the problem of the two Jesus children.

the right concept. But try to imagine how the soul incarnated in Adam—in what could be designated as Adam as meant in my *Occult Science*—how that soul succumbed to the temptation of Lucifer, symbolized in the Bible by the fall into sin in Paradise. One can get a picture of this. Then further, besides that human element that incarnated in Adam's body, another part remained behind, a human entity that did not enter a physical body but remained purely soul. You need only to imagine that before physical man arose within human evolution he was a soul, which then divided into two parts. The one part, a descendant of the common soul, incarnated in Adam, and thereby entered the on-going stream of incarnation, succumbing to Lucifer, and so on. For the other part of the soul, the wise world-rulership foresaw that it would not be good if it also were incarnated; it was held back in the soul-world, apart from the stream of incarnation. Only those initiated in the mysteries would have any connection with this sister-soul. Also, this soul, during evolution that preceded the Mystery of Golgotha, would not take ego experience into itself, since that comes only with incorporation into a physical body. Therefore, this soul possessed all the wisdom which could be experienced through the Saturn, Sun, and Moon periods of evolution. It possessed all the love a human soul can attain. It remained innocent of all the guilt that humanity can incur in the course of its incarnations for the purpose of development. This soul was then such a one as could not be encountered outwardly as a man, but could only be perceived by means of the old clairvoyance. In this way it could also be seen communing, one could say, in the Mysteries. Thus, there was a soul both within and yet above human evolution, visible only to spiritual perception; a primeval man, a veritable Superman!

It was this soul which, instead of an ego, incarnated in the Jesus-boy of the Luke Gospel. It was similar to an ego, acted quite naturally like an ego as it penetrated the body of Jesus, yet it was different from the usual human ego. I have already mentioned that this boy could at birth speak a language understand-

able by his mother, and other similar faculties were evident in him.

The Jesus-boy described by Matthew, in whom the Zarathustra ego lived, continued to grow up to his twelfth year; likewise the boy of the Luke Gospel. But the latter showed no special knowledge nor erudition, no particular gift for learning the external things people usually learn; rather, he bore within him divine wisdom and a supreme capacity for sacrifice. We know further that the body of the Matthew boy was forsaken by the Zarathustra ego, which in his twelfth year took possession of the body of the Luke boy. That is the moment indicated as his appearance before the learned ones in the temple, teaching them, while being lost from his parents. We also know that the Luke boy bore the Zarathustra ego within him up to his thirtieth year; that then this ego forsook the body of the Luke Jesus, and the sheaths that had surrounded it came into the possession of the Christ—a super-human Being from the hierarchies, Who only under such circumstances could live in a human body. For Him a body was provided that had been permeated up to its twelfth year by primeval wisdom, by powers of divine love, then was streamed through by all that the Zarathustra ego had attained during many incarnations through initiation. Through nothing perhaps does one acquire the right esteem, the right reverence, above all the right feeling for the being of Christ so much as when one tries to understand what kind of a bodily nature was necessary for this Christ-ego to be able to enter into humanity at all.

In this presentation of the being of Christ, given by the holy mysteries of the modern age, many have found Him to be less intimate, less human, than the Christ some people have honored as He is usually presented—familiar, near to man, embodied in the ordinary kind of human organism in which nothing like a Zarathustra ego lived.

Our teaching has been reproached for presenting Christ Jesus as combining forces from every region of the cosmos. Such re-

proach only arises from laziness in people's thinking, and feeling, which will not lift them up to their true heights. Besides, the greatest is only to be grasped after exerting the soul to the utmost, so as to attain that inner intensity of feeling needed to raise the soul even to approach the level of the greatest, of the highest there is. One's first feeling then is only heightened when the matter is seen in this light.

In addition, we know how these words of the Gospel are to be understood: "Divine powers are being revealed in the heights, and peace is spreading among men of good will." The tidings of peace and love resound as the Luke Jesus-child is born, for the Buddha is intermingled with his astral body; that being who had already lived through his last incarnation as Gautama Buddha and had risen to total spirituality. So that in the astral body of the Luke Jesus-boy the Buddha was revealed, showing how he had progressed up to the time of the event of Golgotha on earth.

So, we have pictured the being of Christ Jesus as it could be given to humanity for the first time, today we may say, out of the foundations of spiritual science. Paul, even though he was an initiate, had to speak in the more easily understood concepts of his time. He could not have assumed that a humanity would be able at that time to comprehend such concepts as we have been able to bring to your hearts today. That which came about through his inspiration was due to the initiation bestowed upon him by an act of grace. Because he had not attained it in the regular, prescribed schooling of the ancient mysteries, but through the risen Christ having appeared to him on his way to Damascus, I say this initiation took place through grace. But Paul's experience of this vision was such as to convince him that what had arisen from the grave in the Mystery of Golgotha lives on, bound up with the earth-sphere ever since that event. He recognized the resurrected Christ, and Him he proclaimed from that time onward.

How was it that Paul was able to see the Christ just as he did see Him? Here we must enter a little into the nature of such a manifestation as that of Damascus, for it was a quite special

kind. Only those people who do not want to learn about occult facts assume that everything visionary is the same; they do not distinguish between a vision such as Paul's and the many others that have appeared to the saints in later times. What actually was the reason Paul was able to perceive the Christ in the appearance of Damascus? What was there in it that convinced Paul it was the risen Christ?

This question leads back to another one, namely, what was necessary in order that the total being of Christ could descend completely into Jesus of Nazareth as indicated by the baptism by John in the Jordan? We have just said what was necessary to prepare the physical body in which the Christ was to dwell. But what was needed for the Risen One to appear to Paul in such a dense soul form? What was that ray of light, so to say, in which He appeared? What was it? Whence was it taken?

If we are to answer this question we must add several things to what I have already said. I told you of the sister-soul present along with the Adam-soul, which had entered the sequence of human generations. This sister-soul remained in the soul world. It was also the one incarnated in the Luke Jesus-boy. But this was not the first time, in the strict sense of the word, that this soul was embodied as physical man. Previously it had once been prophetically incarnated, and earlier still had been used as a messenger of the Holy Mysteries. It came and went among them; was cherished and cultivated, so to say, and sent out wherever something important was taking place among mankind. But it could only appear in the etheric body, and therefore, strictly speaking, could only be perceived as long as the old clairvoyance continued. That, however, did exist in earlier times, so this ancient sister-soul of Adam did not need to come down as far as the physical body in order to be seen. Thus, it actually appeared repeatedly within human evolution on earth; always sent forth by the Mysteries when important things were to be done. But it did not need to incarnate in ancient times while clairvoyance lasted. This incarnating became necessary for the first time when clairvoyance faded away during the transition

from the third to the fourth post-Atlantean epoch. Then it took on a kind of substitute embodiment in order to continue its functions after clairvoyance had ceased.

This sister-soul of Adam was embodied, so to say, in Krishna the only time when it had become physically visible, and then again it was embodied in the Luke Jesus-boy. So now we understand why Krishna spoke in such a super-human way; why he is the best teacher for the human ego; why he appears as an overcoming of the human ego; why his soul qualities are so sublime. Because in that exalted moment we described several days ago, he appeared as man not yet immersed in the stream of human incarnations. Then he appears again in order to be embodied in the Luke Jesus-boy. Thereby the height of perfection was reached when the most profound world-concepts of Asia, in the ego of Zarathustra and the spirit of Krishna, united in the twelve-year-old Jesus-boy. The one speaking to the learned men in the temple was not only Zarathustra speaking as an ego, but also one having all the resources Krishna had once drawn upon in proclaiming Yoga. He spoke about a Yoga now raised a step higher. He united himself with the power of Krishna, with Krishna himself, in order to continue developing up to his thirtieth year. Only then was that physical organism so completely matured as to be ready for the Christ to take possession of it. Thus do the spiritual streams of humanity flow together. So when the Mystery of Golgotha occurred, there was indeed a working together of the most important leaders of mankind, a summation, a synthesis, of spiritual life.

As Paul journeyed to Damascus it was the Christ who appeared to him. The flood of light that enveloped Him was Krishna. Because Christ took Krishna as his own soul sheath, through which he then continued to work, everything that once was the content of the sublime Gita streamed from him. So much in the revelations of the Testaments, even if in scattered fragments, comes from the ancient teaching of Krishna. But that teaching became something for all humanity because the Christ as such is not merely a human ego belonging to mankind,

but belonging to the higher hierarchies. For this reason also Christ belongs to those times when man was not yet separated from what now surrounds him as material existence, and through his own Luciferic temptation is enveloped in maya. A look back through the whole of evolution shows that in ancient times there was not yet that sharp division between the spiritual and the material; the material was still spiritual, and the spiritual—if we may put it so—was still manifesting itself outwardly. Because, in the Christ impulse something entered humanity that completely excluded such a sharp separation as existed in the Sankhya philosophy between purusha and prakriti, Christ became the leader in taking man out of himself, but also toward divine creation. Dare we say then that one must absolutely abandon maya when we recognize that it appears to have been given us through a fault of our own? No. For that would be a blasphemy against the spirit in the world. It would mean assigning to matter qualities that we imposed upon it ourselves under the veil of maya.—Instead, we should much rather hope that when we conquer in ourselves that which caused matter to become maya, we may again be reconciled with the world.

Do we not hear sounding out from the world around us that it is a creation of the Elohim? That on the last day of creation the Elohim looked, and found that all was good? It would be karma fulfilling itself if there were nothing but the teaching of Krishna, for nothing remains in the world that does not fulfill its karma. If in all eternity there had only been a Krishna teaching, the material world surrounding us, the manifestation of God—of which the Elohim said at the beginning of evolution, “Behold, all is very good”—would be met by man’s judgment, “It is not good, I must abandon it.” Human judgment would be placed above divine judgment. This is what we must learn to understand in the words that stand there as a mystery at the beginning of evolution, that we do not set human judgment above divine judgment. If ever all the things that could cling to us as guilt could fall away and only the one offence remain—that we blasphemed the creative work of the Elohim—the earth’s karma would have to

be fulfilled. Everything in future would have to crash down upon us, and thus karma would have to take its course.

That this should not happen, Christ came into the world. He came in order to bring us into true harmony with the world, that we might learn to overcome the power in Lucifer's temptations, to penetrate the veil of maya, to see divine revelation in its true form; that we recognize Christ as the One Who reconciles man and his world, and leads him into the reality of divine manifestation, so that through Him those primeval words may be understood: "Behold, it all is very good." In order that we learn to attribute to ourselves what we must never attribute to the world, for that we need the Christ. Could all other sins be lifted from us, this particular sin must be taken from us by Christ. Transformed into a moral feeling this reveals a new aspect of the Christ impulse. At the same time it shows why it became necessary for this impulse, as a Higher Soul, to envelop itself in the impulse of Krishna.

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My dear friends, such matters as I have brought before you in this series of lectures are not to be taken as mere theory, as a compilation of ideas and concepts to be absorbed. They should be received as a kind of New Year's gift, a gift to work influentially through the coming year. From these indications should flow a continuing experience of what one can understand of the Christ impulse and the way it throws light on the words of the Elohim, which sounded forth at the beginning of the creation of our world. This must be understood.

Look, too, at what at the same time has been our intention to show as the point of origin of our anthroposophical spiritual stream. Through it the way man can come by himself into self-knowledge will be made ever more widely known. Not yet can he achieve self-knowledge completely. Not yet can *anthropos* attain knowledge of anthropos, man gain knowledge of man, so long as he considers that what he has to bring about in his own soul is an affair to be played out between himself and external

nature. It is a requirement prepared by the Gods that we see our world immersed in maya. It is a matter for our own souls' higher self-knowledge that man be conscious of himself within his human situation. It is a concern of anthroposophy that through it we first experience what theosophy can be for mankind.

It should be with the greatest modesty that one feels impelled to belong to the Anthroposophical Movement; a modesty that reminds one that if he wants to jump over the concerns of the soul and take at once the highest step into the divine, his humility can easily vanish and pride and conceit take its place. May the Anthroposophical Society also be a starting point to this higher moral sphere. Above all, may it avoid the pride, vanity, ambition, and lack of earnestness which have so easily slipped into and been a burden to the Theosophical Movement in receiving the highest wisdom. May the Anthroposophical Society at the outset avoid such hindrances by observing what solving the problem of maya entails as a concern of the human soul itself.

One should feel that the Anthroposophical Society is the result of the deepest human modesty. Then out of this modesty will come the greatest earnestness in confronting the holy truths we shall reach when we enter the realm of the supersensible, the spiritual. Let us therefore regard the adoption of the name *Anthroposophical Society* with genuine humility, and say to ourselves: May whatever pride, conceit, ambition, dishonesty, which could have been working under the name of theosophy, be eradicated as we begin humbly to look up to the Gods and divine wisdom. May we dutifully seek likewise to know man and human wisdom when we reverently approach theosophy and dutifully devote ourselves to anthroposophy. This anthroposophy will lead us to the Gods. If through it we learn to see ourselves truly and devotedly, and see how we must struggle against all maya and error by means of severe self-discipline and training, then, as if written on a bronze tablet, there will stand above us the word *anthroposophy!* May it be an admonition to us that

above everything we should seek through anthroposophy self-knowledge, humbleness of self, and in this way endeavor to erect a structure founded upon truth, because truth only blossoms when self-knowledge in full earnestness puts its roots deep down in the human soul.

From what does all conceit, all untruthfulness, arise? They result from failure in self-knowledge. From what alone can truth and genuine reverence for the divine worlds and divine wisdom spring? Only from real self-knowledge, self-discipline, and self-development. May the forces streaming and pulsating through the Anthroposophical Movement serve this purpose.

For this reason has this particular cycle of lectures been given at the start of this Anthroposophical Movement. They should prove that we are not dealing with something narrow, but that just in our Movement our horizon can extend over those distances that encompass Eastern thought as well. But let us grasp this humbly, in the anthroposophical way of self-education, arousing our will to self-discipline and training. If, my dear friends, anthroposophy is taken up by you in this way it will lead to beneficial results. It will attain a goal bringing to every person and to every branch of human society, a measure of regeneration.

These words then bring to a close this series of lectures. But perhaps from them you can take much with you for times to come; much that will be fruitful for our Anthroposophical Movement for which you have come together in these days for the first time. May we always so meet together under the sign of Anthroposophy that we can always be justified in reaffirming the words with which we now conclude; words expressing a spirit of humility, of the desire for self-knowledge, as we now in this moment bring them before our souls as our ideal.

