

# Sunrise Apocalypse

At the Gates of the Spiritual World

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“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found anymore in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him....Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil has come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time” (Rev. 12: 9-12).

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## **Introduction**

Are you someone in your 20s or 30s, or perhaps even in your 40s, for whom life does not seem to be working out quite as you planned? You were told in elementary and high school that if you worked hard and were studious in school, the world would open its doors to you, giving you a good job, a wife and kids, a nice house in the suburbs, and a happy retirement with a good pension and medical benefits- just like it did for your parents. Somehow something has gone wrong, and no matter how hard you try, you just can't seem to get ahead. You did well in school, handed out stacks of resumes, but still can't seem to land that elusive career you really want. Or perhaps you're in a dead-end job or partially employed, with no pension and benefits, and can't get more than your foot in the door with an employer you would love to have a career with. You're paying rent for a shoebox and living day to day, paycheque to paycheque, or worse still, you're living at your parent's house, maybe in the same room that you grew up in as a child, and can't seem to get ahead at all. To top it all off, there's the older generation, your parents and grandparents, and all those grey-hair baby boomers on TV, telling you what you're doing wrong. The conversation always starts the same way - "When I was young, I had nothing. I worked hard and saved my pennies, and now look- I have a house and money and comfort. I did it all by myself without any handouts or free rides. Why can't you do the same? *What's wrong with you?*" Yes, somewhere in the conversation it's either openly stated, or subtly implied that this is your fault. For some reason, you just don't

have the same skills, the same get-up-and-go as your parents did. They look at you in a strange way, like there's a piece of the puzzle missing. You must be doing something wrong, but they just can't figure out what.

Deep down you know something *is* wrong, but it's not you- it's the world you live in. You feel it like a faint drumbeat, like an ancient army marching in the distance, heading towards humanity ready to lay siege on the world as we know it. You can't put your finger on it, you can't take a picture of it, but it's there- in your heart. You can sense it like a faint smell in the air, like a slow ache in the earth- the world is about to change. The older ones, the generations before you, they don't sense this *at all*. For the most part, they have no idea. They think the world will carry on its merry way as it did for them. The economy will keep growing, factories will keep producing, and the comfortable urban life they have known will keep on going far into the future, over the horizon. They are wrong. The world is not going to continue on its merry way, and things *are* going to change dramatically during your lifetime. The path that our parents and their parents have walked during their life is a very short one in comparison to the history of human civilisation, and it is a path that is not sustainable- it's just too destructive. In addition to this, there are forces in the world that are actively trying to control the masses, to make a society dependent on the whims of the super rich and powerful for everything. They want to take away those precious freedoms that previous generations have taken for granted. The Covid-19 pandemic is the first salvo in an assault on the

freedoms and liberties. The political and corporate powers of the world have an agenda, and that agenda is to make the masses completely subservient to their will.

This book is about what the future will look like, how the world will need to chart a new path with values different than those of the last couple of generations. As you probably already know and feel, the easy ride of the past is over- things for you are going to be a lot harder than for your parents and their parents, but where there is hardship, there is often opportunity. Your generation will be the one that creates a sustainable economy, begins to heal the earth from the ravages it has been subjected to in the last century, and will also have a new understanding of the spiritual world that is now re-opening its gates that have been closed to humanity for over 2000 years. The clairvoyance of the ancients, who spoke of gods and angels, devils and demons, will again arise in human beings, whose spiritual eyes are again opening. The great modern teacher of humanity, Rudolf Steiner, the greatest human being to tread upon the face of the earth for a thousand years, has shown humanity this new path. His teachings, based on direct contact with beings from the spiritual world, will be spoken of throughout this book. Living a simple community life, connected both to the earth and the spirit is what the future holds. To reject this kind of life, to remain in our large cities, living life in an electronic world of illusion, where forces of evil wish to enslave us and bend us to their will, will ultimately lead to suffering and chaos. The sun is setting on the age in which we are now living, and the rays of a new age are beginning to shine on the

horizon. It is an age whose success will depend upon you, the youth of the world, to regain that spiritual vision of the ancients. This book is a signpost that will guide you along the true modern path of spirituality, and give you the means to open the spiritual eyes of the soul, which have been slumbering for over two thousand years.

## **CHAPTER 1- HOW DID WE GET HERE? (The story we are told)**

Before a discussion can take place of the real unseen forces that are changing today's world so rapidly, and the reasons why these changes are taking place, a brief outline of economic and social history over the last two centuries needs to take place. More changes have taken place in the last century than in the last four or five centuries before it. The world at the turn of the twentieth century was a world in which the horse and carriage was still the dominant form of transportation. There were no telephones, airplanes, televisions, radios or, of course, computers. Life was much simpler, and the majority of the population was still strongly connected to the land. Today that connection has been almost completely severed for the majority of us in Western society. Many children grow up in urban areas not knowing where the food they eat comes from, or worse still, eating a heavily processed diet devoid of nutritional value. In the 1950s and 60s growing up in an urban area meant living in a house with a yard that in all likelihood had a garden, which would have been tended by the entire family. High-density apartment complexes with very little or no green space have become the norm in today's packed urban environments. According to UN statistics, at the turn of twentieth century, only 15% of the world's population lived in cities. By 2007, that number rose to more than 50%, and with countries like China urbanising at unprecedented rates, this number will continue to rise in the near future. Living in cities has also changed the nature of work. People who farm

for a living has declined dramatically over the last 50 years, and the number of farms in the U.S has shrunk from over 7 million in the 1930s to around 2 million today<sup>1</sup>. The nature of farming has also changed. Farms are now larger and often only do one thing, like growing wheat or raising cattle. In the past, farms did a little of everything-most farms one hundred years ago had cows, chickens, grew corn or grain and vegetables. Today's monoculture farms damage the environment by having to use chemical fertilizers and pesticides, depleting the soil and attracting pests through growing only one crop year over year. These large farms use machines more than people, and this mechanization of agriculture has also contributed to the migration of large populations of people into cities.

Rapid industrialisation after World War I created more factory jobs, where large populations needed to be in close proximity. This trend of industrial employment came to, what I would call, the Golden Age of industrialisation after World War II. It was a time when the union movement in North America and Europe gained strength, and jobs and prosperity continued until the onset of the 1980s. In Canada, the Winnipeg general strike of 1919 ushered in a series of labour reforms that eventually led to universal health care, retirement pensions, and a fair wage for work done. In the 1950s and 60s, not only were jobs plentiful, but they paid well

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[http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe50s/life\\_11.html](http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe50s/life_11.html)

and allowed for a traditional family where Dad went to work and Mom stayed at home to raise a family. Inflation adjusted income has plummeted since the 1980s, and now, for most families, the prospect of having a single income household, where one parent works and another stays home, is no longer a possibility. Young children spend less time being nurtured by a parent, and more time in front of a television or computer screen, with the result being higher levels of stress and an enormous increase in childhood afflictions- autism, attention deficit disorders, anxiety, depression and obesity. All of this has happened over the last few decades, and it has not come about by accident.

The start of the decline in wages and the standard of living that so many of us have felt over the last decades can be pinpointed to the presidency of Ronald Reagan. In the figure of Reagan, we can see the embodiment of the new mantra of economics- that of globalism, open markets, and deregulation. This new economic doctrine was broadly called supply-side economics. When Reagan became president, his chief goal was the lowering of tariffs and the opening up of economic markets all over the world, which the masses were told would increase economic growth and prosperity to all. Behind this, however, another question was being asked by corporate America, a question that did not have as a goal the betterment of society for all. This question embodied the true goal of globalization and instead of bettering society, the answer to this to this question has impoverished the masses and transferred power to the super rich. Simply put, the question was 'how can we increase profits?'

When this question is understood as the driving force for the policies of Ronald Reagan and of all of the presidents who subsequently followed him, then the economic path that has been followed by Western economies since the early 1980s can be clearly understood. When Reagan came to power, inflation was high and economic growth had slowed. The almost unhindered prosperity of the past decades, which started at the end of World War II, showed signs of slowing, and when Reagan took the reins as president, the world's economy was in recession. Turbulent times are often used as the impetus for the those with power in the world to make changes that result in an increase of their own power and wealth. This was certainly the case during the time of the Reagan presidency. The actions of Reagan must be seen through the lens of the corporate elite- the richest companies and people in the world. This corporate elite used the economic recession of the early 1980s to weaken the union movement in North America, and to open labour markets in parts of the world where this labour could be put to work at a fraction of the cost as those in Western markets.

One of Reagan's first acts was the destruction of the air traffic controller's union (PATCO), who were on strike for higher wages when Reagan took office. Deregulation of labour laws allowed for this demolition to take place, and since that time, unions in most sectors of the economy have been obliterated, or rendered completely ineffective to defend their members. In addition, tariffs were lowered around the globe through a series of trade agreements between countries (GATT and NAFTA, chief

among these trade deals). These new agreements allowed corporations to move their factories outside North America and Europe into cheaper labour markets, with the result being that goods could be produced at much lower wages and sold at much higher profits into Western markets. This trend has continued unabated since Reagan's presidency. The result of this economic policy has been a decline or stagnation in real wages for ninety percent of the labour force, while the wealth accumulated by the few at the top has been staggering. As a result of these policies, poverty has increased dramatically in most Western economies. Minorities have been disproportionately affected by this increase in poverty, and the protests witnessed around the world in 2020 are not only a reaction against police actions against minorities, but also against the growing anger in the declining living standards that so many in society are falling into. There are now hundreds of anti-poverty and anti-globalisation organizations around the world, and many of these organizations are becoming more militant in their demands for change. The super rich now influence all political aspects of Western society, and part of this influence is to proclaim that all of society is benefitting from the changes that are taking place. During the recession of the early 1980s, the ideas of globalisation were accepted by a large part of the population. Opening markets and allowing the free flow of goods and services around the world, without trade barriers, was convincingly pitched as something that would be of benefit for all. Four decades later, the true purpose and impact of globalisation is clear and cannot

be papered over in rhetoric- most of the world is poorer than it was before globalisation.

### **Covid-19 and Control (the next step)**

The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic has ushered in a new wave of controls and surveillance that have been brought at the behest of Western governments, who, in turn, are controlled by their corporate masters. It is not the intention of this book to go into the scientific data on the efficacy of the vaccine, or the effectiveness of lockdowns and vaccine passports, but to understand the present crisis that has engulfed the world, the Covid-19 pandemic must be discussed. Readers who would like to further their understanding of the truth that the corporate media is trying to hide from us can look to scientists like Dr. Geert vanden Bossche, Dr. Robert W. Malone, Dr. Pierre Kory, Dr. Peter McCullough, and Dr. Paul E. Marik. The social media channels Peak Prosperity (Dr. Chris Martenson), Dark Horse podcast (Bret Weinstein), The Joe Rogan Experience (Joe Rogan), InfoWars (Alex Jones) and independent news platforms Breaking Points and The Hill are all excellent sources of information that provide balanced and scientifically backed information, free from the corporate influence that has rendered traditional cable news providers as nothing more than propaganda outlets for the corporate agenda now unfolding. Robert F. Kennedy's book *The Real Anthony Fauci* is also an excellent source on information, backed by hundreds of scientific research studies published in respected journals.

The ability to think clearly and have a strong sense for what is truth and what is illusion forms the foundation upon which the path to developing oneself spiritually rests. This will be discussed in greater detail later in this book. For example, all of my family members have been vaccinated, at least twice, and in some instances three times over the last year. Almost all of them have now contracted the omicron variant. In all cases with my family, a few days of bedrest was all that was needed to recover fully. Objective, clear thinking dictates that the vaccine was not effective in preventing those who received it from getting Covid-19. A logical conclusion drawn from this information would be that the vaccine does not work, but governments are still strongly urging their populations to get fully vaccinated, and, as of early 2022, vaccine passports are still in place, even though the evidence clearly indicates that neither the vaccines or lockdowns prevent transmission of Covid-19. What is happening here? These measures are now starting to have significant impacts on the global economy, causing inflation, supply shortages, and personal suffering in the form of depression, anxiety, anger, and mental and physical ailments related to living in prolonged isolation. How can these measures be justified? One clear and obvious answer is that pharmaceutical and technology companies are using the pandemic to increase their wealth and power. This is true, and the wealth inequality between the rich and poor that started in the 1980s with the Reagan presidency has increased immensely during the pandemic, with the super-rich padding their bank accounts with billions of dollars of tax payer money. But is this where the story ends? Is this simply a case of the

rich getting richer and increasing their power, or is there more happening here than meets the eye? This book will explore the deeper purposes of what is now unfolding in the world, and unveil the spiritual events that are happening in the spiritual world, and whose gates, as has been mentioned, are now opening again, for the first time in over two thousand years.

Behind the events that are now unfolding, there is an unseen battle raging in the spiritual world between forces of good and evil. The results of this spiritual battle are reflected in the physical world through events like vaccine mandates, which are the latest tool that is being used to control and subjugate the masses. The cold war ushered in a wave of surveillance under the pretext of routing out communism, and increased dramatically the powers of the U.S. government to investigate any citizen it viewed as a threat with little or no judicial oversight. This pattern was also repeated after 9/11, with the threat label being changed from communist to terrorist. The government actions that are now being inflicted upon society are far more severe than any that have been witnessed since the end of World War II. To restrict millions of people from travelling, working, or entering shopping malls and restaurants, has dramatically increased the power of governments, while placing enormous pressure on hundreds of millions of people in the Western world to comply and be vaccinated, or to be treated as second class citizens. When these measures go too far, when people are pushed to the breaking point, history has shown us that the results are always the

same- unrest, upheaval and violence shake the very foundations of society.

### **The Unlearned Lessons of the Past**

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 is the most recent example of how, if the gap between the rich and powerful and the masses becomes too wide, anarchy results. When such events as the Bolshevik Revolution are looked at from a historical perspective, the solutions to averting such disasters are always easy to see. The extremes in the social classes immediately preceding the Bolshevik Revolution can be clearly seen in Russian literature of the time. Two novels, Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, and Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* paint two completely different pictures of Russian society in the late 1800s. *Crime and Punishment* was originally published in 1866, and *Anna Karenina* in 1877, just over a decade later. In *Crime and Punishment*, the poverty into which the main characters are immersed is appalling- children starving and living in the streets, people wearing only rags for clothing, high unemployment and jobs available not paying enough to meet the basic needs of life. In contrast to this, in *Anna Karenina* the wealth was also appalling. Servants stand at order to help in even the most basic aspects of life- cooking, dressing and even shaving. The triviality of the concerns of the elite in *Anna Karenina* reflect a life in which a moral rot erodes aristocratic life. Petty gossip and meaningless social engagements fill the lives of the characters in *Anna Karenina*, where in *Crime and Punishment* characters are faced with the daily struggle of providing for their basic

needs of survival. Amazingly, these two realities exist in the same city- St. Petersburg. Although these two novels are based on fictional characters and events, they are accurate descriptions of what life was like in Russia at the turn of the century.

A lack of compassion and understanding for the plight of the poor in Russia over several centuries ultimately led to the complete obliteration of the Aristocracy in Russia. Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* was published in 1867, a year after *Crime and Punishment*, and was viewed as a rejection of the elite by the common classes in Europe. This book, published in Germany, was widely taken up in Russia, and became the manifesto of the Bolshevik Revolution. The match which set all of Russian society aflame was World War I. All of the elements which bring about anarchy and revolution in society were in place- an indifferent class of wealthy elites, a populace pushed to the brink of destitution, and in *Das Kapital*, a perceived solution to this destitution of the poor. World War I and the appearance of Vladimir Lenin was the final component that set in motion one of the most important changes that has occurred in the modern world. Lenin's ability to rouse the masses into action, and create a system of government based on the principles found in *Das Kapital* created Soviet Russia, and although this system of government ultimately failed, its influence in the politics and militarism of the twentieth century was enormous.

The parallels that brought about the French Revolution and also the complete obliteration of the monarchy in

France at the end of the 1700s were lessons seemingly completely forgotten by the upper classes in Russia. As was the case in Russia, the societal conditions that brought about the French Revolution were hauntingly familiar- an indifferent Aristocracy, oblivious to the suffering and hunger of the masses, the incredulous and frivolous spending of Marie Antionette and King Louis XVI, coupled with literature which promoted equality and democratic values all fomented the masses to revolt. As with Lenin in Russia, the charismatic figure Maximilien Robespierre, a gifted orator, focused and organised the discontent among the masses into a force that brought about huge changes in Europe that eventually resulted in the democratic systems that are still in place in Western Societies today. Ironically, Robespierre became increasingly paranoid and obsessed with power, and at the time of his death was a completely transformed political figure. This increasing paranoia and obsession with power and control, ultimately turned him into a bloodthirsty tyrant, sending tens of thousands of French citizens to the guillotine. His death at the hands of those in his own political party paved the way for a brief end to French democracy, with the appearance of Napoleon Bonaparte who declared himself Emperor of France in 1804. When this historical lens is then shifted to the conditions that are now becoming widespread in today's society, we can again see parallels to the conditions that brought about the popular revolutions in France and Russia.

Today, as in the past, there is an elite upper class, awash in wealth that has been accumulated at the expenses of

the masses. Today's labour force works for less money than four decades ago, as the costs of food and shelter, the central needs to ensure a good standard of living, have increased at a far higher rate than wages. Nowhere in the Western world is income inequality higher than in the United States. Income of the top one percent of the population is a staggering thirty times higher than the average income earned by a worker in middle class America. Globally, the richest one percent of the population owns more wealth than the bottom fifty percent, which amounts to almost four billion people. Taxes for the wealthy have plummeted in the last several decades across all Western democracies, while at the same time health care costs for an ageing population have increased from five percent of GDP in 1960 to over eighteen percent in 2018. The tax rate for the richest in society peaked at a high of about seventy percent in the 1950s, and now rests at an all time low of about twenty-five percent. Warren Buffet, one of the wealthiest men in the world, and one of the few among the super rich with at least some moral values, has argued for higher taxes for the wealthy, lamenting that his tax rate is lower than his secretary's.

The conditions that brought about the French and Russian revolutions came about through, for the most part, a complete ignorance of what was happening in the countries in which these revolutions took place by those in power. Poor crops in France created mass hunger, while in Russia, many of the granaries of peasants were emptied to feed armies during the war. Poor financial management by both France and Russia also brought

both of these countries to the brink of financial ruin. These factors played an enormous role in bringing the masses to such a condition of anger and destitution that they took up arms and revolted. However, these conditions were not brought about to deliberately impoverish the masses and to further enrich the elite. There was, of course, a tragic apathy and ignorance to the plight of the poor exhibited by the wealthy in France and Russia, but their actions, or lack there of, cannot be said to have been the result of a deliberate agenda to impoverish the masses for the sole purpose of their further enrichment and empowerment. This cannot be said of the current accumulation of wealth at the expense of the masses that has taken place in Western society since the policies enacted by Ronald Reagan.

Globalisation in the West over the last decades has had one goal in mind- to increase the wealth and power of the super rich. This goal could not have been achieved without the impoverishment of the majority of the population, and this was done deliberately and consciously by the rich and powerful in the West. Wealth and power are two sides of the same coin in modern society- one does not exist without the other. To this end, the wealthy in the West gain most of their wealth from the stock market, not directly from the income generated by the companies they own. Captains of industry make their money from granting themselves huge amounts of stocks, bonds and derivatives, and then profit from increases in the value of these stock market tools through profits reported by the companies of which they are board members and CEOs. These profits are subject

to almost no taxation. In order for this to take place, deregulation and slashing of corporate taxes was undertaken by politicians in positions of power, again under the guise that lower tax rates for the wealthy ultimately benefit all. This is a great mistruth, and lower taxes of the rich and powerful in Western countries has resulted in a decline in health care, pensions, and welfare support for the poor and marginalised in society. In the 1950s and 60s, there was a concept of corporate citizenship, where corporations were expected to contribute to the welfare of the countries and citizens in which they operated and made profits. This concept was turned on its head with the advent of globalisation. Now, corporations threaten to open factories and hire workers in poor countries if their agenda of increasing profits in the Western countries in which they sell their goods is not met. Outsourcing of higher paying manufacturing and public sector jobs has been a hallmark of the decline of the standard of living for the bottom sixty percent of those in Western societies. This leads us to a great truth which has been known by the elite but kept from us—there can be no super rich without an impoverishment of the masses. It is this deliberate impoverishment of the general population that brings about a simple one-word question: Why?

What is the goal of the elite to enrich themselves to such a high degree? For the vast majority of us, the question is baffling. What increase in life's material needs can be attained by one who increases their wealth, from let us say 100 million dollars to 200 million dollars? What possible benefit in life can be achieved by such a stiving?

The answer, quite obviously, is none. How many more cars, or summer villas, or jet planes can increase in a meaningful way the life of one who has reached a level of wealth in which there is no object that cannot be obtained in life? To understand the mindset of those few in the world who have acquired such egregious wealth is difficult for most. To knowingly and continuously impoverish those from whom you profit, simply for the purpose of accumulating more wealth is one of the most destructive elements in our society today. It is a moral crime.

To further understand why this is happening in the world, and to find solutions to the state of affairs in which the world is now immersed, we must depart from what has been knowledge that can be attained from the physical world. I have painted a picture of the world in which we now live in broad strokes, and more detailed information on the state of affairs outlined in this chapter is readily available on the internet and in books. Authors like Naomi Klein, Michael Moore, Oliver Stone, and Noam Chomsky have covered the evolution of the globalisation of the world in great detail, and those who are interested in a more detailed description of what has so briefly been described here can further their understanding through these authors. It is common knowledge that income and the standard of living for most of the population in the West has been declining over the last decades. Searching for this information is also not necessary for most- they only have to look at their own life struggles to know that this is true. It has been my intention in this chapter to simply reiterate

what is widely known and to lay the foundation upon which an understanding of the real underlying causes of the times in which we are now living can be built. To understand these causes, we must look into the world lying behind the physical world in which we live. This world is the spiritual world and its gates, which have been closed to humanity for over 2000 years, are now opening again.

## **CHAPTER 2- THE SPIRITUAL HISTORY OF THE WORLD**

When historians today are asked about the sources of the various myths and religions of the world and their origins, the common answer is that previous and ancient cultures developed these myths and religions to answer the great questions of life. They are essentially part of a story telling culture. The ancients, so we are told, had many of the same questions that we have today: Where have we come from? What happens after we die? Is there an afterlife? Why do we suffer? The ancients developed myths and religions, built temples and, in many cases, structured entire cultures on these myths and religions. Today, we have science and a far greater understanding of the world than the ancients, and with this rational, scientific understanding of the world, we no longer need to develop myths and religions to fill the void of understanding the meaning of life. The main problem with this theory that we are now given, and which is espoused as the view of the enlightened modern human being, is that the assumption is made that our consciousness, the way that we perceive the world, has not changed. It is assumed that the consciousness we have now is identical to the consciousness of the ancient Egyptian or Indian many thousands of years ago. This is a tremendous leap of faith, and this assumption creates a great paradox: that evolution in terms of the physical world can explain the origins of all life, but that the inner human being is immobile, unchanging and does not evolve. The human consciousness of today, so the theory goes, is the same as that of the days of old, with the

exception that over time we have now acquired a great deal of knowledge and wisdom through observation of the physical world over many centuries. This assumption of the unchanging nature of human consciousness over time is the greatest error that is made by modern thinkers and historians who try to understand the ancient world and its cultures. Before going further in this spiritual history of the world, it is now necessary to introduce the being of Rudolf Steiner, whom I consider to be the most important human being to walk upon the face of this Earth for many hundreds of years.

Rudolf Steiner was one who could see into the spiritual world, and the great multitude of beings that inhabit this unseen world. He was born in 1861, and made contributions in a wide range of fields including education, agriculture, medicine, religion, art, architecture, history and the true nature of the world and the human being. The history of the world cannot be truly understood without understanding the spiritual evolution of the human being. Steiner spoke of this evolution and its relation to the history of the world in many of his books and lectures. The simplistic view of the modern historian, one that sees ancient religions and myths as merely the story telling of a primitive and undeveloped humanity, completely misunderstands the true nature of the ancients, who had spiritual vision and whose cultures were deeply, one could say completely, influenced by this spiritual vision. Egyptian hieroglyphs depicting ancient gods communicating with human beings, Greek sagas like *The Odyssey*, Teutonic Myths, *The*

*Bhagavat Gita*, and *The Bible* are all examples of the spiritual history of the world, which is now almost completely misunderstood. Rudolf Steiner was able to restore that understanding of the true nature of our spiritual past, which will be critical to the future health and prosperity of the world in which we now live. All of the following discussions that will now take place that relate to the spiritual world can be assumed to be derived from the teachings of Rudolf Steiner. Where such spiritual information is given in relation to the world today, it can be assumed that this too, has been extrapolated from the teachings of Rudolf Steiner, whom although dead for almost a century, spoke of the dawn of a new spiritual age which is now just beginning, and will unfold for several centuries to come.

The spiritual history of the world, the myths and sagas, speak of a time when human beings could see into the spiritual world. The different chakras or lotus flowers spoken of in ancient Hinduism are the spiritual organs which all human beings have, but have been in a sort of spiritual hibernation for thousands of years. To understand the reason for this, we can look back to the *Book of Genesis* in *The Old Testament*, to gain an understanding of the consciousness of the ancient human being. We are told that Adam, the original human being, lived for over nine hundred years: "So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and then he died" (Gen 5:5). Other patriarchs in *The Old Testament* also had very long lives. Seth, Enoch, Cain, Noah and others lived for over 900 years. Religious scholars try to explain this usually in relation to sin. The

argument goes that as humanity accumulated more and more sin, the lives of human beings in years began to drop, for as we are told in the New Testament, “the wages of sin are death” (Rom 6:23). Those who claim to have a rational and scientific mindset ascribe the long lives of the patriarchs as perhaps a translation error, or often use this information to support the notion that believing in any world beyond that which presents itself to the physical senses and can be subjected to scientific scrutiny is sheer folly, and is an example of the primitive and simplistic nature of ancient humanity. In order to understand the true nature of this mystery of the longevity of the patriarchs, we must understand the nature of the evolution of the consciousness of humanity.

In the remote past, patriarchs like Adam, Seth and Enos, who were ascribed exceptionally long lives must not be considered as human beings living in a single physical body for many centuries. Instead, these long lives must be viewed in relation to what Rudolf Steiner termed the group soul nature of ancient humanity. The ancient human being did not have the consciousness that allowed the use the word ‘I’. When we utter the word ‘I’, we are conveying that we live in our physical body as an individual human being with a sense of self, contained within and not extending beyond our skin. This was not the case for the ancients. The long lives that they lived are instead a reflection of how humanity at that time lived in a more tribal or community-based consciousness. When we are told that a patriarch lived for many centuries, this must be understood as not the consciousness of an individual, but of the group soul of a

community of human beings. The lives of the individuals in that community were, in all likelihood, shorter than the lives we live today, but the consciousness of the individual was one which encapsulated the consciousness of the community. The life of Adam, for example, must be viewed as the consciousness of many human beings spanning for many centuries. One human being living on Earth at that time would know of the knowledge, memories and history of his or her forefathers. Moreover, such a human being would also have knowledge of the reality of the spiritual beings that influenced the lives and culture of that time through this ancient memory of the lives of long passed ancestors. To refer to oneself as an 'I', as an individual would have been impossible for the ancient; that capacity simply did not exist. Furthermore, and related to this, thoughts at that time were never considered to be self generated as they are in the human being of today. One did not feel that thoughts came from within, but that they were rather radiated into one from spiritual beings in the spiritual world. In order for the human being to evolve to the point where today we feel that our thoughts are our own, and that we feel ourselves as an individual human being enclosed within our own physical body, the gates to the spiritual world gradually had to be closed.

The beginning of this process can be witnessed in *The Old Testament* in the declining longevity of the patriarchs. In the early chapters of Genesis, as has been described, the Patriarchs lived for many centuries, but in the later chapters, lifespans become considerably shorter- Abraham lived only 175 years, Moses 120 years, and

King David died at the age of 70. Here we are witnessing the gradual change from a group soul consciousness, to one where the human being became more individualised. This process continued for millennia, and the consciousness that we have today as human beings, where we feel ourselves strongly as an individual and completely closed off from the spiritual world, has only existed since around the fifteenth century. This change of human consciousness and the parallel closing of spiritual consciousness that accompanied it, is described in the different Yugas or ages of Hinduism.

The first of these ages, Satya Yuga, also known as the golden age, was one where humanity still had direct vision of, and lived communion with, the spiritual world. This occurred shortly after the period described in the antediluvian chapters of the Old Testament, where the ancient civilisation of Atlantis came to an end. The great flood of *The Old Testament* was the Biblical description of this event, which modern science describes as the Ice Age. Modern scholars uniformly describe Atlantis, our knowledge of which is chiefly from Plato's works *Timaeus* and *Critias*, as a fictional allegory. But Atlantis did exist, and the human being during that time was very differently constituted, both physically and spiritually, than is the case today (Steiner gives a great deal of detail regarding the nature of Atlantis in his book *An Outline of Occult Science*). As the great flood receded, the first of what can be called historic civilisations, that of Ancient India, arose. Ancient India is where our known, recorded history begins, and the spiritual consciousness of the ancient Indian is reflected in works like *The Bhagavad*

*Ghita* and the *Vedas*, even though these works were written long after the times they describe. During Satya Yuga, humanity still had direct vision and dialogue with the multitude of spiritual beings that inhabit the spiritual world. The silver age, Treta Yuga, occurred during ancient Persia, and although humanity still had vision into the spiritual world, the gates of this world were already starting to close, and as a result, the different spiritual organs or chakras of the human being were gradually placed into a state of hibernation. The culture of ancient Greece only had a shadowy and vague perception of the spiritual world (this was the age of Dvapara Yuga, or the bronze age), and as vision of this world receded, the feeling of self, defined as a single being able to say 'I' to itself, gradually increased. This sense of self can be seen reflected in the concept of the citizen within the state, governed using a system of laws reflecting the concept of justice, the pillars upon which Greek culture rested. Kali Yuga, or the dark age began around 3000 B.C., and during this period of time, vision into the spiritual world was almost completely extinguished in humanity, with the exception of a handful of initiates who were tasked with keeping the spiritual flame alive, cloistered from the great masses.

During Kali Yuga, the age of reason, also known as the Enlightenment, began. Science and scientific methodology based completely on what the senses can perceive and what can be ultimately measured in the physical world developed into the form that still exists today. The Industrial Revolution, where the steam engine, the revolution of the textile industry, the birth of the

factory, and gas lighting and electricity were invented transformed almost every facet of life in Western civilisation. One of the early philosophers of the Age of Reason was Rene Descartes, who famously stated 'I think, therefore I am'. Within these words, we can see the embodiment of the human being as an individual reach its full development. During the Enlightenment, doubts as to the existence of God or of a spiritual world grew among not only scholars and philosophers, but among the general public. Many scholars place the end of the Age of Reason on the date of the beginning of the French Revolution, in 1789. By the end of the Age of Reason, the great achievements in science and technology became more and more the means through which wealth was accumulated at the expense of the masses. The British Empire is an excellent example of this, where entire continents were subjugated and exploited for the enrichment of the elite in British society. Here, in our very briefly sketched spiritual history of the world, we come back to where we started- the French and Russian revolutions, where the impoverishment of the masses occurred because of a complete lack of compassion and sense of moral responsibility to one's fellow human being.

Discontent among the masses again continues to be on the rise, as the same story repeats itself, where the poor become poorer, the rich become richer, and tension is again rising sharply in the world. The desire for a just and equal society has perhaps never been stronger. Now, parallel with this discontent fermenting in society, another momentous event has occurred. It is unseen, but

its effect will ultimately shake the world to its very foundations. This event is the end of Kali Yuga, or the dark age. The mighty gates of the spiritual world are again slowly, inexorably, creaking open. As the gates of the spiritual world slowly open, the necessity of humanity understanding this event and developing again spiritual organs of perception, allowing for vision into the spiritual world, will be essential in preventing the human race from stumbling from one catastrophe to another in the future. The past great events of humanity, the revolutions and the wars, cannot be considered as being the outcome of the thoughts and actions of human beings without the influence of the spiritual world. Spiritual beings have, throughout human history, poured their influences into human beings, who in turn act in ways that bring about the great events of history. The French Revolution, bloody as it was, was willed by various beings in the spiritual world. It was an event that needed to happen, and through it, humanity gained concepts which further developed the individual and the systems of government that we have today, which are a reflection of this sense of being an individual among other individuals in a society. Louis XVI and Marie Antionette were personalities whom the spiritual world placed in French society to bring about the events of the French Revolution. Their weaknesses and faults are symbols of aristocratic failure, but this weakness was needed to bring about change. Today, however, humanity is being pulled back over the threshold of the spiritual world, and if this process continues to occur unconsciously in humanity, beings and forces of evil will work in the subconsciousness of the human soul,

creating strife and continuing the disparity and suffering that is growing so rapidly in the world today. This lack of compassion for the welfare of the masses by those in positions of power is one of the results of viewing the world in a materialistic way. *The Origin of the Species*, Charles Darwin's great work, first published in 1859, has had a huge impact on this materialistic perception of the world. The concept of a world beyond that of the physical senses, one where spiritual beings, good and evil, work in the affairs of human beings is now considered to be the idle fancy of the unenlightened.

Nowhere in the annals of human history can there be found a work that has materialised the thinking of human beings more than *The Origin of the Species*. This work was written at the height of materialistic culture in the 1800s, and it continues to have an all-pervading influence on scientific thinking. How can we reconcile this incredible materialisation of thinking, which has darkened any real spiritual understanding of the world for such large segments of the population, with the end of Kail Yuga, which Steiner precisely indicated occurred in 1899, less than fifty years after the publication of *The Origin of the Species*? In *The Origin of the Species*, the impulse of materialism which has, on one hand, brought about a deepening of our understanding of the material world through scientific methodology, has also closed the souls of countless human beings to the possibility that a spiritual world exists at all. *The Origin of the Species* has become the foundational work upon which the materialistic view of the world is now founded. There is often to be found among scientists and researchers in

the fields of medicine, astronomy, physics and biology a smug confidence in a view of the world that refuses any acceptance of existence beyond the physical senses. Exceedingly intelligent scientists and laymen who ascribe to Darwin's work hold the view that any religious or spiritual sentiments are merely the result of unintelligent and unenlightened views of the world.

With the re-opening of the gates of the spiritual world, it is exactly this kind of scientific methodology that must now be applied when developing ourselves spiritually. In the meditations and exercises that are given later in this book, sound judgement and discernment are one of the pillars upon which spiritual development takes place. Correctly assessing our feeling life in an objective way while in meditation, and at the same time having the discernment to know the difference between true spiritual experience and illusion is essential for any meaningful development to take place. The ancient clairvoyance of humanity, which consisted of dreamlike visions of the spiritual world, where the sense of individuality which we now have did not exist, will today be replaced by a clairvoyance which is based on the free will and free-thinking individual, who will use the intellect to develop mediative images based on spiritual realities which will in turn develop our slumbering spiritual organs. This will be discussed in greater detail later in this book. This is the true and right path which humanity now must take. Through the dark age of Kali Yuga, while humanity lost its spiritual vision, it gained at the same time the ability to start making decisions out of the depths of the individual, not as a compulsion poured

into it from the spiritual world. This has brought about one of the most important tasks of humanity- to be able to act out of true freedom.

An act cannot be considered to be free if it is done at the behest of another human or spiritual being. A truly free act can only be performed by one who is aware not only of their own identity as an individual, but also with the conscious knowledge of the true nature of the world, which encompasses an understanding of the existence of the spiritual world. As we have seen, humanity now has the ability to act out of a true sense of being an individual, but to the future evolution of the human race must be added a true understanding of the human being and the spiritual world, and, ultimately, clear vision into this world. With the work of Rudolf Steiner, collectively contained in the body of work called Anthroposophy, humanity can now act in accordance with a true knowledge of the existence of the spiritual world. Rudolf Steiner is the first modern Initiate who has, through his destiny, been given the task of again showing humanity the path back to the spiritual world. But how is it that one person can read a lecture by Rudolf Steiner and feel the truth contained in it, can be moved to the bottom of his or her soul by the beautiful description of this yonder spiritual world, while another can read the same lecture and not feel the truth wrought words and the holiness in the descriptions of the spiritual world described by Steiner? It is here that we must delve into the work of the archangel Michael before his rulership on earth began, where he instructed souls living in the spiritual world between death and rebirth. With the end of Kali

Yuga, another exceedingly important event happened in the spiritual world-the beginning of the spiritual rulership of the great archangel Michael. The influences that guide and forge human development are poured out into humanity through seven archangel beings, who rule in succession throughout Earth's history. Each of the archangels brings a different character to the development of humanity, and their rulership lasts for just over three centuries. Each of us has our own guardian angel, whose task it is to help guide individual development, but the archangels, beings in rank and power above the angels, guide entire groups of people, rather than the development of the individual. Michael is the greatest of these beings, and his task is to develop the cosmic intelligence of humanity. His rulership of earthly affairs began in 1879, corresponding to the end of Kali Yuga. The previous rulership of humanity was under the guidance of the archangel Gabriel, who influenced humanity through the blood, or more specifically through the forces of heredity. Michael is a being who is deeply connected with the impulse to spiritualize again the human race, and during his rulership over the next century or so, great events and happenings will occur. We are now living in one of the most important times for the human race. We are at a great crossroads, and the paths we take in the near future will determine the fate of the human race.

### **CHAPTER 3- THE PRESENT TIME AND THE SPIRITUAL SCHOOL OF MICHAEL**

Gabriel's rulership of humanity began at the end of the 1500s and lasted until Michael's rule commenced, in the late 1870s. During these three hundred years, Gabriel influenced humanity through chiefly the forces of heredity, as mentioned above. This influence produced in humanity many of the great advances that occurred in the field of natural science. Preformation theory, developed in the 1700s, stated that all of the traits found in an animal or human being were contained either in sperm or in the egg and that all of the traits contained in an organism were the result of a combination of the male traits contained in sperm, and the female traits contained in the egg. Preformation eventually superseded the theory of epigenics, which stated that all development of an organism was unfolded within the organism itself, without influence from parent organisms. Gregor Mendel, considered the father of modern genetics, was an Augustinian friar who conducted research on pea plants in the 1850s and 60s. His work confirmed that genetic traits were carried from both male and female qualities resulting from the cross breeding of male and female flower parts in peas. His work, techniques, and terminology are still widely used today, an example of which is the widespread use of hybrid F1 seeds in agriculture. Even though Mendel and Darwin were contemporaries, they were not aware of each other's work, but the idea of natural selection in Darwin's *Origin of the Species* can be seen as an extension of the archangel Gabriel's influence in the field of heredity. A

keystone of the Theory of Evolution is that random genetic variation occurs when generations of living organisms transfer their genetic information to their offspring over long periods of time.

This Gabriel-inspired scientific work, which has, on the side of our physical life, so deepened our understanding of life on earth, has now, for the past 150 years, continued during the time of Michael's rulership and the end of Kali Yuga. Much of the tremendous scientific understanding and technological innovation, inspired by Gabriel, which has brought about in so many ways great benefit to humanity, now, under the rulership of Michael, runs the risk of falling prey to evil spiritual powers that are now working freely and deeply on earth in human affairs. To understand this, the great battle that occurred between Michael and his adversary, Ahriman, who wishes to alter the rightful and benevolent path of humanity must be understood. One of the greatest foes in our time to the God-willed path of human evolution that leads to the proper spiritual evolution of the human race is through the influence of the being of Ahriman and the host of beings who serve him. Ahriman is a powerful ancient being of evil, first revealed in the Zoroastrian religion of ancient Persia, who desires to permanently close humanity to knowledge and perception of the spiritual world. He is a highly intelligent being who is fully aware of the existence of the spiritual world in which he dwells, but uses deception and deceit to cover the eyes of humanity from truth and knowledge of the spiritual world. He wishes to create his own materialistic kingdom here on earth, where humanity is severed from

the truth of its own spiritual existence. Ironically, for Ahriman to be effective, knowledge of his existence must be blotted out. Truly, the greatest feat of Ahriman has been to deceive the world into believing that he does not exist. Ahriman's influence into the affairs of humanity has greatly intensified since the end of the nineteenth century, where he was defeated by Michael in a great spiritual battle in the spiritual world, and was cast out from that realm and thrown down to the earth by Michael and his hosts. This great battle is described in *The Book of Revelation* (also known as the Apocalypse of St. John) in chapter 12 vs 7-9:

*And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

Rudolf Steiner, with his clairvoyant abilities, was able to peer into the spiritual world and understand the significance of this great event for the earth and its inhabitants. Ahriman's influence in earthly affairs has coincided with the advent of Michael's rulership on earth and the end of Kali Yuga and the beginning of the Age of Light, which is just now commencing. How is it that at a time when the gates of the spiritual world are again opening, and spiritual vision can again be attained by human beings, that at the same time, a being like Ahriman enters strongly into the affairs of human beings, seeking to prevent this outcome from

happening? It is here that we also must come to understand that freedom and spiritual vision will not be available to all human beings on earth. It is the destiny of our spiritual evolution that certain parts of humanity will fall away from the path of light, and will fall into darkness. For those who are aware of this, and know themselves to be on the path of light and goodness, there must also be the tragic awareness that many human beings will fall into darkness, in order that the rest of humanity can act out of true freedom, for there is no freedom in a world without choice. In the book of Exodus, where the Israelites are freed from their bondage in Egypt, the will of God is expressed not only in the actions of Moses and the instructions given to Moses by God, but also through God working through the Pharaoh:

*And I will harden the Pharaoh's heart, and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh will not heed you [Moses], so that I may lay my hand on Egypt and bring my armies and My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgements. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out my hand on Egypt and bring out the children of Israel from among them. (Exodus 7:3-5)*

It is indeed a hard and painful truth to understand that in order for the good to come about, evil must also exist, and that evil ultimately brings about suffering in those through whom it works. It was only through the tenth plague, where the first born of all of Egypt died, including the Pharaoh's own son, that God finally released His grip on the heart of the Pharaoh and the enslavement of the Israelites from Egypt ended. Those of us who are graced with true knowledge of

the world, must, at the same time, feel a great moral responsibility to those who are destined by their fate to tread the path that will ultimately lead to suffering when they pass through the gate of death and enter the spiritual world. We must not feel that it is through our own actions, our own choices, that we have been shown the true path that will eventually lead to our own enlightenment, spiritual blessing and fulfillment.

When we have found the true path, given in the age in which we now live by the great archangel Michael through Rudolf Steiner, we can only at that point say that we are at the beginning of what we can call the ability to act out of true freedom. The way in which we have arrived at this point cannot be considered as an act of freedom. It is an act of grace. Here we must also understand another momentous truth that works and weaves through all of humanity. It is the concept of karma- that great Buddhist teaching that when understood correctly, is the concept that our own actions in a previous life affect our current or future later lives, and also our life in the spiritual world between death and rebirth. If we act in a moral and noble way on earth, not only toward our fellow human beings, but also to animals and the environment, we sow the seeds that will not only bring about our own well-being in the future, but will also help us to develop ourselves spiritually as our own spiritual evolution unfolds. This, however, does not mean that we are immune from suffering in our current our later lives. Karma can, in certain cases, work in one life through illness or misfortune to help us develop strength, or a certain moral attribute that will help us fulfill our spiritual destiny. Having said this, it is a spiritual law that if we injure, harm, or act immorally in one life, a detrimental effect will ultimately occur in a future

life, and that the harm created must eventually be corrected, but it must also be understood that for some, karma means acting in a way that will bring about suffering on earth.

A good example of this is the destruction of the earth that is taking place through global warming and environmental degradation. The Bible tells us the following:

*We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come. And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants and prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth. Rev. 11: 17-18*

There are many websites and sources of information that attempt to debate the truth of global warming. Ironically, some of the most vehement reaction against attempts to stop global warming and destruction of the environment come from the so-called Christian right in America. But there is a simple exercise that we can all follow if we are truly seeking the truth- that is to look at our own past. As a person who is over fifty, I can look back to my earlier memories as a child and young adult, and I know that the earth was colder where I lived. I do not want to go into great detail regarding this, but the important point is that if we have reached an age where we can look back several decades in our lives, it is impossible, if we are truly honest with ourselves, to deny that the earth is warming. This will ultimately lead to enormous catastrophes on earth in the not-too-distant future,

and will plunge humanity into economic ruin. New York, large parts of Florida, Shanghai, countries like Bangladesh and Holland, will all, at some point, be partially or completely submerged by rising sea levels. Droughts and floods will cause entire agricultural areas of the earth to become barren, which will in turn cause the great cities of the earth to be plunged into chaos and anarchy, as people desperately try to find food and shelter. We have been forewarned of this coming catastrophe for decades, and yet carbon dioxide levels continue to increase, and politicians continue to prevent any real progress from taking place. Christians above all should understand the reality of global warming and environmental degradation, as the pouring out of the vials the wrath of God are reflections of the environmental degradation of the earth. In particular, the pouring out of the fourth vial onto the Sun causes the earth to be scorched (Rev. 16:8). How is it that some people deny something that is so obvious? Here we come back to that great truth, that in order for the good to come about, evil must occur and must be overcome by the good forces in the world.

Earlier in this book, a discussion of the Bolshevik and French revolution was discussed, where the wealthy and powerful of the world showed little regard and sympathy for the poor and downcast in their respective societies. This lack of consideration and empathy is a moral defect, it demonstrates a lack of compassion and the desire to help one's fellow human being. We can see this trait again in our world- the super-rich and those in political power, with very few exceptions, have no desire to help the poor and down trodden in the world, and show a complete lack of regard for the earth itself and knowingly damage the environment and

the future generations of the earth for their own profit. We must again realize that God has hardened the hearts of those in power in order to achieve goals that will eventually bring about positive change in the world and advance the spiritual evolution of humanity. Those who on earth live a life of excess wealth and comfort, at the expense of their fellow human beings and of the well-being of the earth, will, ultimately, suffer greatly in their life after death, and in subsequent incarnations on earth. Our actions here on Earth prepare us for the quality of our life in the spiritual world after death. Now, as humanity again approaches the opening gates of the spiritual world, it will become increasingly essential to know the true nature of the world, and the spiritual beings who are now battling for the human soul. It is with this understanding that the importance of the work given by Rudolf Steiner can be framed. Rudolf Steiner's deep Initiate spiritual wisdom forms a huge body of work that has been sent to humanity from the spiritual world, and is the guide through which humanity can prepare to again enter the spiritual world. Anthroposophy not only gives the true spiritual background of events that have shaped human evolution since ancient times, but also provides humanity with the instructions by which the spiritual organs, currently slumbering in the depths of every human being, can again be developed and awakened. This path consists in moral development and meditation, fit for the constitution of the modern human being. Here we also must understand a deep spiritual truth: beings of evil can only work in human beings when their identity and actions are hidden, and beings of good can only work in human beings when human beings are conscious of

them, and request and work in full consciousness and cooperation with these good spiritual beings. It is only through consciously striving to understand the true nature of the world, and developing ourselves in accordance with the nature of the times in which we live, that we can truly say we are acting out of freedom.

With this knowledge, we must also understand the great and sobering truth that the majority of humanity does not yet act in a truly free way, and will be subject to the influences of destructive spiritual powers in the world. Those who seem to be blessed with wealth, affluence and power are in truth, if in their actions they act in a way that hurts the earth or exploits their fellow human beings, are burdened with a painful karma, which will ultimately cause them to suffer in future lives and in the spiritual world between death and rebirth. These human beings are truly unfree and are most often under the influence of Ahriman. The life that we live in the spiritual world after death is prepared by our life on earth, and the super rich and elites of the world who use their power in immoral ways to exploit the earth and their fellow human beings will pay a dear price for their actions when they pass through the gate of death. This is illustrated in *Luke 16:14-15* where Christ addresses the Pharisees: *Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money also heard all these things and they derided Him [Christ]. And He said to them: You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.* Further in the same chapter we are told of a rich man and of the beggar Lazarus:

*So it was the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said 'Father Abraham have mercy on me and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame'. But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us (Luke 16 :22-26).*

In this passage it is clear that the accumulation of wealth is an unspiritual striving and results in suffering in the spiritual world. When this wealth is accumulated in an immoral way, where the earth is damaged and fellow human beings suffer and are impoverished as a result of this accumulation, the suffering of the one who has accumulated wealth in this way is proportional to the destruction and suffering rendered through this accumulation of wealth. In this passage there is also another great truth regarding life in the spiritual world. The conditions in which we find ourselves after death are fixed, and cannot be changed until we again incarnate on earth. The 'great gulf' described in this passage illustrates this point, and the suffering of the rich man will continue throughout his life between death and a

new birth. It is not possible to repent in the spiritual world, it can only be done here, in the physical world while incarnated in a physical body. In the spiritual world we set karmic goals, in part as a result of the conditions in which we find ourselves between physical incarnations. We can aspire in a future incarnation, for example, to be more ethical in our actions to our fellow human beings and to work in our physical life for the betterment of the earth, instead of our own enrichment. This is also true of spiritual understanding. Even though we live in and cannot deny the existence of the spiritual after death, true understanding of the spiritual world can only be obtained through physical incarnation on earth.

In his series of lectures titled *Life Between Death and Rebirth*<sup>2</sup> given in 1913, Steiner discusses the tragedy of those who live a materialistic life and who do not strive for a comprehensive view of the world, which includes a true understanding of the spiritual world:

*Today there are still many people who maintain that a spirit-soul life may exist after death, but they wonder why they should concern themselves with it now. We can simply live on earth with all that it*

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<sup>2</sup> Sixteen lectures given in various cities in Europe during 1912-1913. From the Volume: *Occult Investigation of Life Between Death and Rebirth*. Translated from shorthand reports unrevised by the lecturer, by R. M. Querido. (Vol. 140 in the Bibliographic Survey, 1961). Available online at: [https://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA140/English/AP1968/LifBet\\_index.html](https://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA140/English/AP1968/LifBet_index.html).

*offers and simply wait and see whether other forms of existence do come about after death!... If during earthly life we do not occupy ourselves with thoughts relating to the super-sensible [to the spiritual world], if during our life we have been completely immersed in the external sense world, if we only lived in our intellect inasmuch as it was directed to the physical world, then we make it impossible for ourselves between death and a new birth to encounter certain beings and to receive abilities from them for a subsequent life. The realm beyond remains dim and dark for us, and we are unable to find the forces of higher hierarchies in the darkness. Man, then between death and a new birth, passes by those beings from whom he should receive forces for his next earthly life. (Rudolf Steiner, Life Between Death and Rebirth Lecture XI, March 2, 1913).*

This darkness experienced in the spiritual world after death by the materialistic person creates a great soul fear in the dead, which lasts for their entire sojourn in the spiritual world between death and a new birth. Additionally, the forces which make our physical body strong, and which grant us intelligence for our future incarnation on earth are given to us by spiritual beings in our life after death. In the present time, these forces can only be robustly acquired by human beings who have developed an understanding of the spiritual world from a previous physical incarnation on earth. Without this understanding, the conscious communion with spiritual beings who grant us these gifts for our subsequent incarnation cannot take place properly, with the result

being a future life on earth with a weak physical body and a stunted intellect and feeling life. This one of the great tragedies of our time. During the dark age, *Kali Yuga*, the human soul could pass through the gates of death without this conscious knowledge of the spiritual world and not suffer as a result of this lack, but know, with the end of *Kali Yuga*, and the re-opening of the spiritual world and the spiritual organs of the human being, it is a necessity that this understanding of the true nature of the spiritual world be acquired in physical incarnation, in order for the human being to develop properly, in accordance with the times in which we live.

It is only when we understand this great change in the world and in human evolution that is currently taking place and that will continue to take place for the next several centuries, that we can truly begin to tread the path to spiritual enlightenment and also act in a truly free way. True freedom requires choice, and the evils in the world today provide humanity of the present and the future with choice- to either take the path of darkness, seeking only physical possessions and pleasures, or the path of light, where, instead of placing merit and energy into things of the physical world, we turn our attention to spiritual, divine goals, where the development of the human being can unfold in accordance with the good powers at work in the universe. This path must also be viewed as the true path to happiness and human fulfilment, for the short-term enjoyment of the materialist creates long term suffering, where the human being is ultimately dragged down into the realm of evil spiritual beings that seek to divert humanity from the

divine path. It is with a sense of tragic irony that we must understand that there has to be certain number of human beings who are compelled to act in an unfree way in order that others may be able to find true freedom through choosing the path of the spirit over the path of materialism. This can be seen clearly in what is taking place during the current pandemic. The political leaders and their corporate masters who are subjugating the masses to lockdowns, forced vaccinations and creating fear in the world, are doing so without a true impulse of freedom. They are compelled to work for forces of evil in the world in order to provide choice for the rest of humanity- it is part of their karma. Figures like Anthony Fauci, Bill Gates, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, and a host of other political and corporate leaders, who have acquired great wealth and power, while creating suffering for humanity and the earth, sow the seeds of suffering in their souls in their future. This group of elites, who so enjoy the riches of the physical world, have had a dark shadow cast over their souls, and have been given over to evil beings and forces in the world for the purpose of creating the choice between good and evil, in order that humanity may truly become free. They act out of a pathological compulsion, with little or no moral grounding, impelled into them through Ahrimanic beings.

These great and powerful figures will become blind beggars in the realm of the spirit, and it is with this understanding that we should not regard these individuals with contempt and scorn, but with compassion and pity, as they shall suffer greatly in the

future, for actions which today must rightly be seen as evil, but will ultimately lead the human race to the gates of the spiritual world in full consciousness and freedom. It is with this foreknowledge that we can now discuss the great spiritual school of the Archangel Michael. As humanity gradually began to develop personalised thinking, where individuals felt that their thoughts were a result of their own actions, and not shone into them from the spiritual world- at the same time there was a preparation in the spiritual world for humanity to again have the opportunity to enter into and have direct vision of the spiritual world. With this sense of individuality that has developed as a result of *Kali Yuga*, there has, as has been mentioned, the condition where we feel that the thoughts that we develop are our own, created through our own volition. This is only partially true, and will be discussed later in this book when the path of spiritual enlightenment through meditation will be dealt with. This perception that our thoughts are our own must be seen in the light of human will. It is only within the human will that true freedom can be found. An essential step in our future development will come about through controlling our thoughts by the use of our will. For the ancients, this was not a possibility, for they, with their spiritual vision, perceived that their thoughts were not their own, but were instead shone into them from spiritual beings. Humanity today believes that they control and generate their own thoughts, but this is an illusion. We in truth do not control our thinking life. It is as if we were on 'autopilot' with our thinking life. Thoughts enter into us and give us direction in our life for our daily activities, and they also form the basis of

our identity. Whether we are a liberal or conservative, religious or agnostic, comes about through the thoughts that are constantly passing through our minds. Can we truly say that we generate these thoughts? Are we truly the creators of these thoughts? Do we truly use our will to create our thoughts, as we use our will to swing a hammer or walk down the street? If we observe our thoughts process as a scientist would observe and collect data, in a truly objective way, we would realize that most of our thoughts are not created by a willed process, but rather in an unconscious way. Our thoughts mostly enter into our being like a breeze coming through an open window.

An act of will must be, above all, a conscious act—thoughts pour into us constantly, and these thoughts are the result of what we perceive through our physical senses, whether through our observation of nature, of other human beings, or through our media devices, thoughts are constantly flowing through our souls. One of the most basic of exercises given by Rudolf Steiner in his book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment*<sup>3</sup> is that of preventing thoughts from passing through us, unless we will them and deem these thoughts as necessary. When this exercise is tried for even a few minutes, it becomes clear how our thinking is not something that we will. The opposite is true— it takes

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<sup>3</sup> Knowledge of the Higher World and its Attainment, Rudolf Steiner. Anthroposophical Press. Available online at: [https://wn.rsarchive.org/Books/GA010/English/AP1947/GA010\\_index.html](https://wn.rsarchive.org/Books/GA010/English/AP1947/GA010_index.html).

a great deal of effort to prevent thoughts from constantly streaming through us. Thinking only essential thoughts is a crucial prerequisite for developing the organs of spiritual perception, for if our thoughts are not willed by us, from whence do they come? For the answer to this, we must understand the great spiritual being of Michael, and his task in the cosmos. Michael is the most powerful of all of the archangels, and his dwelling place and sphere of influence is the Sun. As mentioned previously, all of the planetary archangels and Michael pour their influences into humanity and give a direction and character to human culture. Each of these ages of the archangels takes place in succession, each age lasting around three centuries. Michael is the current ruling archangel, and his reign began in 1879, at about the same time that *Kali Yuga* ended. In addition to being an archangel that influences the direction of human culture, Michael also had another extremely important function—he is the bearer of the cosmic intelligence. The last cultural age of Michael occurred during the time of Alexander the Great. He felt that his thoughts were given to him by Michael and that he was himself an instrument of the archangel Michael. In Alexander's time the concept that we produced our own thoughts was an impossibility. The ancients had a dim perception that their thoughts were not their own, and were impelled into their consciousness by higher spiritual beings. In a figure like Alexander, we see how one who was destined to advance the evolution of the world was powerfully inspired, in this case by Michael. But with this understanding, we can also say that Alexander did not act in a truly free way. He consciously carried out the wishes of Michael for the

benefit of humanity, but did so in a way that not truly free.

For humanity to evolve and develop towards being truly free beings, it was necessary for *Kali Yuga* to come about so we could feel ourselves as individuals who were the masters of our own destiny and thought life. As has been alluded to, this is still largely an illusion, but a necessary one in order for humanity to develop and become a truly free being. In parallel with the advent of *Kali Yuga*, Michael had to gradually relinquish his administration of the cosmic intelligence. For millennia Michael had inspired the cosmic intelligence into humanity, carefully guiding the evolution of the world, in conjunction with still higher spiritual powers, and, of course, the Godhead itself. A curtain gradually fell over the spiritual eyes of humanity, and one of the chief results of this was that human beings ceased to feel that their thoughts were radiated into their being from the spiritual world. Through this darkening of the spiritual organs of humanity the concept of the individual took place. This transition began in the eighth and ninth centuries, and the rise of scholasticism is one of the results of this change in thinking, and of the growing sense of individualism. Saint Thomas Aquinas, that great Dominican scholar, struggled to comprehend the new relationship between God and man that was taking place as a result of this change in human consciousness. The cosmic intelligence continued to gradually fall away from Michael into the souls of the human race. This can be visualised as a cloud resting in the sky gradually sinking to the earth and becoming fog. Humanity became

immersed in this fog of thought and the collective wisdom of the cosmos became earthly. With this came the great industrial and scientific advancements of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The steam engine, telegraph, the automobile and countless other inventions happened as a result of this falling away of the cosmic intelligence from Michael. As this event happened, Ahriman, the great adversary of humanity and of Michael, was also gradually given access to the cosmic intelligence, now becoming earthly and in the possession of humanity.

While Michael administered the cosmic intelligence, he prevented Ahriman from having access to it, and from using it to influence humanity, but as Michael's dominion of the cosmic intelligence fell away, Ahriman was granted the power to work on the earth and in so doing, to creep into the cosmic intelligence and there influence the affairs of humanity. This also was a process that took place gradually, and Ahriman's influence can be seen in many of our inventions- industrialisation is itself an Ahrimanic process, and its destructive influence can now be clearly seen in how it is now degrading and destroying the environment. Before *Kali Yuga*, Ahriman's influence was in many ways beneficial- we have greatly benefitted from the advances of science and industry that have taken place during the last archangel age of Gabriel, as has been previously alluded to. During *Kali Yuga* Ahriman's influence can, for the most part be termed as justified, and has served to help in the evolution of the human race, but after the end of *Kali Yuga* in 1899, Ahriman's influence has become increasingly destructive and evil. The advent of World

War I was largely inspired by Ahriman (Rudolf Steiner's series of lectures *The Karma of Untruthfulness* delves into this subject in great detail), and it is now imperative that the influence of Michael be permitted to enter again into human affairs. Michael can no longer work in our thoughts and into our intelligence without our being not only conscious of it, but by our consciously willing this influence to take place, through meditation, proper for the age in which we live (this will be discussed in detail later in this book). We must open the door of our souls to Michael and allow him to work in our being. It has been stated above that one of the great spiritual truths of our time is that evil works through influences that the human being is not aware are taking place, and that in order for the good spiritual impulses to work in the human being in true freedom, they must be consciously brought into the human being through conscious effort and will. So long as people are not aware of the spiritual influences that are working on earth, and so long as people are not aware that the spiritual gates have again been opened, giving humanity the opportunity to see into the spiritual world again, evil will continue to rampage unabated on the earth. How can Michael be permitted to enter again into human souls to help us, in full consciousness, spiritualize our souls again? It is through the great body of work given to us by Rudolf Steiner, collectively known as Anthroposophy. What, in truth, is Anthroposophy? It is the great teaching of the archangel Michael.

When Michael was the administrator of the cosmic intelligence, he regulated the direction this intelligence

could take. It is true that through this intelligence weapons of war were created, and that through this intelligence wars took place and human beings suffered as a result of their relations to one another, but these actions cannot be said to be evil. For example, the suffering, pain and death caused by the campaigns of Alexander were done in order to advance human evolution. Alexander brought to the rest of the world the treasures of Greek culture. Art, philosophy, medicine, architecture and advancements in agriculture are some of the gifts that were bestowed upon an uncivilized world by Alexander. While the cosmic intelligence was governed by Michael, it was at the same time spiritualized. It was woven through and through with the beneficent impulses of the gods. This content of the cosmic intelligence, in its pristine and pure form, before it was allowed to fall to the earth and be sullied and infiltrated by Ahriman, was brought before a group of human beings in the spiritual world in the fifteenth century. These souls were living between physical incarnations, and they were taught, given the contents of the cosmic intelligence, by Michael himself. This teaching was called by Steiner the great spiritual 'Michael School,' and those who attended this spiritual school were those who belonged to Michael's sphere of influence. Human beings belong to and are influenced by the various archangels that shape human culture. All human souls belong to the spiritual stream of one of the leading archangels of the human race. These archangels work from various cosmic bodies in the solar system as follows: Oriphiel (Saturn), Anael (Venus), Zachariel (Jupiter), Raphael (Mercury), Samael (Mars), Gabriel

(Moon), and Michael (Sun). They are listed in the order in which they appear in their rulership of human culture, not in the spatial distance of the various cosmic bodies in the solar system. Michael is the greatest of these archangels, and this is reflected by his seat of power in the Sun.

The great Michael School in the spiritual world taught those who participated in it the true spiritual ground of the world in which we live. There is no physical world, no rainfall or wind, no animals, and no human thoughts, without the conscious activity of some spiritual being. In short, the totality of the physical world in which we live is the creation of spiritual beings in the spiritual world. Even time itself is created and regulated by the archai, a rank of spiritual beings above the archangels (Michael himself is now in the process of advancing to the rank of archai, but to delve into this would go beyond the scope and intention of this book). Thus, the true spiritual nature of the world was taught to those souls who belonged to the Michael stream in the fifteenth century, while down below on earth, the knowledge of the spiritual world was fading rapidly and the gates of the spiritual world were closing. It is the mission of those in the Michael stream (those who belong to this stream of Michael will henceforth be referred to as Michaelites) to again bring this knowledge back to humanity, for the benefit of all. For a spiritual awakening will happen to humanity, regardless of the success or failure of the Michaelites in carrying out this task of momentous importance. Humanity will again collectively cross the threshold and enter the spiritual world again, and if not

properly prepared for this re-opening of the gates of the spiritual world, great suffering will befall the human race. Ahriman, who Michael cast out from the spiritual world at the end of the nineteenth century, is now working freely and without restriction on the earth (Rev 12:7-9). The events of the world wars of the twentieth century are but a precursor to the woes that will befall humanity if the task of the Michaelites is delayed or if it fails. This task, the most monumental of tasks that has ever been granted to a group of human beings, must be done out of freedom, for this is the will of God- that humanity must come not only to a spiritual understanding of the world, but also must again develop the ability to see into the spiritual world, just as we can see in and perceive in the physical world with our senses, and that this must be accomplished as an act of free will.

Failure of this task to be carried out in a timely manner will result in higher and higher levels of strife, disease, warfare, subjugation of the masses, and mental illness throughout humanity. Humanity will cross the threshold of the spiritual world regardless of whether it is done consciously or unconsciously. If humanity crosses into the spiritual world unconsciously, without first having been prepared to do so, the result would be catastrophic. Steiner spoke frequently of the absolute importance of a being properly prepared to enter into and behold the spiritual world. The overwhelming intensity of spiritual vision, and the lack of protection from the influences of evil beings in the unprepared soul, would drive many to madness, or to a fear so shattering and great that their ability to function in the physical world would be deeply

compromised. For the prepared, the entry into the spiritual world, although still fraught with some danger, can be done safely, and the great beauty and love that radiates from that world can be received properly in the soul that has strengthened its will and morality through esoteric meditative exercises, which will be discussed later in this book. To say that Ahriman has free reign to work on the earth means nothing more than to say that he is working in the souls of countless human beings who are unaware of his activity. This has resulted in the souls of those whom he affects of being filled with negative emotions like hatred, anger, anxiety, and the parent of all these emotions, fear. Fear is the greatest tool that Ahriman has at his disposal, and through fear Ahriman creates the ideal conditions for his activity.

Ahriman works from two directions in the human soul—the first of these directions is to create the illusion in the human being that nothing exists beyond what can be perceived in the physical world by the physical senses. Ahriman is the great deceiver in the spiritual world. The countless advancements in the sciences that have brought us so much benefit have also created the idea that all life in the world has come about through natural processes. This is, of course, most easily recognized in Darwin's *Theory of Evolution*, where all life is ultimately seen as the result of the accidental collisions of atoms in some primordial ooze eons ago. This book was published in 1859, at a time that Steiner has called the height of materialistic thinking. During this age, which was ruled by the archangel Gabriel, materialistic thinking reached its zenith, and the advancements in science and

technology were truly impressive. Ahriman has now crept into this materialistic thinking, with the result being that there is now a vehement anti-spiritual current that courses through much of humanity. This current carries within it a great disdain for any spiritual or religious thinking and feeling that searches for divine and spiritual origins to the great riddles of life. Those who carry this sentiment view those who have the sense that there is more to life than meets the eye as unintelligent fools, who have yet to receive true enlightenment. They see religious and spiritual life as the slag of previous cultures who, because of their primitive understanding of the world, made up fairy tales regarding the origins of life which have formed the content of the various myths and religions of the world. This type of thinking suits Ahriman well. It is within this unspiritualised environment that he is able to work most effectively.

Another tool that Ahriman uses to meet his ends on earth is that of inculcating fear in as many human beings as possible, creating division and strife amongst different groups of people. In his lecture *The Ahrimanic Deception* Steiner says the following: "*The second means that he [Ahriman] employs is to stir up all the emotions that split men into small groups- groups that mutually attack one another.*" The Covid-19 pandemic has created greatest fear, animosity and division amongst human beings since the World Wars, and this division is not based on animosity between nations, but is now between people who live in the same community, and often between family members. Creating fear amongst beings is most

easily done in those who are materialistic in their thinking- those who do not have spiritual views and see the universe as a great mechanism based on the laws of the material world. Such human beings, when they reach the end of their lives are most often filled with fear and anxiety, as they have convinced themselves throughout their lives that there is nothing beyond the physical world. As death approaches, their fear grows as they realise the material world in which they have placed all their faith will soon abandon them. For those with a true faith and knowledge of the world, this fear is much lessened or often does not exist at all. Those who are not spiritual often fall prey to Ahriman's desire to inject fear into the human soul. What is the effect of inculcating fear into the masses? From the point of view of the physical world it allows for a greater control of human beings by those who are in authority and power.

The current Covid-19 pandemic is an excellent example of this. The restrictions and censorship that have occurred as a result of Covid-19 are truly remarkable. Over a two-year period, mask wearing, mass vaccination, segregation, discrimination and a current of anger, fear, and cultural strife has been created, all because of the fear of death created by Covid-19. This environment inculcates the perfect conditions for Ahriman's work and purposes. It is at this point that we must discuss the ultimate goal of Ahriman: to incarnate in a human body on earth and to thwart the will of the beneficent powers in the cosmos. In a lecture given on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1919

titled *The Ahrimanic Deception* <sup>4</sup> Steiner says the following:

*It would be a triumphant experience for him [Ahriman] if the scientific superstition that grips all circles today and by which men even want to organise their social science, should prevail into the third millennium. He would have the greatest success if he could then come as a human being into Western civilization and find the scientific superstition.*

What is here meant by scientific superstition? It is the notion that mathematics and science can explain all processes in the known world, from the smallest atom to the formation of galaxies, and that these laws somehow prove that there is nothing beyond the physical, material world. It is also the proliferation of a Darwinistic view of the world. A true view of the world acknowledges that all physical processes can be measured and that mathematical, physical and chemical laws govern the universe, but that these laws are not the means by which the universe has been created. These laws of nature and the universe are rather seen as the expression of spiritual beings and of the Godhead, who have created the physical world. The fear of death that is incubated so effectively in the materialistic soul also serves another purpose apart from that of giving governments and those in power the ability to subjugate and control the masses.

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<sup>4</sup> Available online at:

[https://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/AhrDec\\_index.html](https://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/AhrDec_index.html).

Fear itself is nourishment for Ahrimanic beings. The mantle of fear that has been created in the world offers the most comfortable abode in which these Ahrimanic spirits can carry out their work within the souls of human beings. As an aside, it is interesting to look at how countries that have the highest rates of not only Covid-19 vaccinations, but also lock downs, vaccine passports and other measures of control and subjugation also have the highest rates of Covid-19 infection (if there are doubts as to this claim, this can be investigated on *The World in Data* website. Sweden, who removed all restrictions in August, 2021 is a good example of this). All of these restrictions create fear and anxiety in subjected populations, and this fear creates the perfect conditions for illness. There are many studies that show that increased fear, anxiety and stress can weaken the immune system, leaving the body more susceptible to disease and infection. Steiner often spoke of the relationship to the role played by fear and susceptibility to infectious diseases. He commented on the true, spiritual nature of illnesses, both infectious and non-infectious, many times throughout his life. The great influenza pandemic, which occurred immediately after World War I, and killed more people than the war itself did, was spoken of by Steiner in its spiritual aspects on several occasions. An excellent book that contains many of the instances Steiner spoke of the true nature of infectious disease and pandemics has been compiled by Daniel Hindes under the title *Viral Illness and Epidemics in the*

*Work of Rudolf Steiner*<sup>5</sup>. Hinde wrote this book in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In the series of quotes that follow, taken from Hinde's book, Steiner describes how fear creates the ideal environment into which infectious diseases can thrive. This environment, so impregnated with fear, also serves the purposes of Ahriman.

*There is no better way to encourage germs than to go to sleep with a materialistic mindset. Well, there is at least one means that is just as effective. And that is to live in the epicenter of an epidemic or endemic disease outbreak and to absorb nothing other than images of the disease around you, and to live in a state of being solely filled with a feeling of fear towards the disease. (p. 72, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1914).*

*If you really want to encourage germs, you can do nothing better than to take purely materialistic ideas into your sleep and thereby invoke Ahrimanic forces that radiate into the organism and become the encouragers of germs....If instead a noble disposition spreads so that selfish fear recedes and loving help works among people, who now take that into their sleep-not fear-imaginings, but what loving help does- this instead harms the Ahrimanic enemies of man. And it is in fact true that if you acted like this you*

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<sup>5</sup> *Viral Illness and Epidemics in the Work of Rudolf Steiner*, Daniel Hinde. Aelzina Books, 2020.

*would discover just what an effect the spread such a sentiment could have on ending pandemics (p. 75 lecture May 9,1914).*

When the Covid-19 pandemic is viewed through a spiritual lens, and the true nature of the forces that are inherent in the Covid-19 pandemic are revealed, then, with this understanding we can not only combat the spread of pandemic diseases through spiritual development, we can also hinder the activity of evil forces that are the true underlying cause of the Covid-19 pandemic. Here the question must be asked: what is the spiritual purpose of the current Covid-19 pandemic? Whether one believes that Covid-19 was a deliberate or accidental phenomenon, there are no accidents in the will of spiritual beings. The Covid-19 pandemic must be viewed as a tool being used by Ahrimanic forces to facilitate his incarnation. We must as a culture be prepared for this incarnation of Ahriman in a human, physical body. This incarnation will occur sometime in the near future, and the events that have enveloped humanity as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic must be viewed as a loud clarion call that the incarnation of Ahriman is near at hand. Steiner said the following in his lecture series *The Influences of Lucifer and Ahriman*<sup>6</sup> in 1919:

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[https://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA191/English/AP1993/InLuAr\\_index.html](https://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA191/English/AP1993/InLuAr_index.html).

*Just as there was an incarnation of Lucifer in the flesh and an incarnation of Christ in the flesh, so, before only a part of the third millennium of the post-Christian era has elapsed, there will be, in the West, an actual incarnation of Ahriman: Ahriman in the flesh. Humanity on earth cannot escape this incarnation of Ahriman. It will come inevitably. But what matters is that men shall find the right vantage-point from which to confront it (Lecture 1).*

*Those who still do not recognize the gravity of the present situation in the world are also, in a certain respect, helping to prepare for Ahriman's incarnation. Many things in external life to-day bear witness to this. The Ahrimanic incarnation will be greatly furthered if men fail to establish a free and independent spiritual life and allow it to remain entangled in the economic or political life. For the Ahrimanic power has everything to gain by the spiritual life being even more closely intermingled with these other spheres. To the Ahrimanic power a free spiritual life would denote a kind of darkness, and men's interest in it, a burning, raging fire. The establishment of this free spiritual life is essential in order that the right attitude, the right relationship, may be adopted to Ahriman's incarnation in the future (Lecture 2)*

It is here that we must also understand a fact of extreme importance- that for the first time in human history we have been granted the power to truly shape our own destiny. Never in human history has

the human race been granted the opportunity to act in true freedom, without the hidden hand of the spirit guiding our actions one way or another. This freedom is not available to all human beings. Such is the nature of the will of God, which also must be seen through the actions of evil spiritual beings, in order to bring about the possibility of true freedom. The great majority of human beings have not received the impulse from the spiritual world to act in a truly free way. Without knowledge of the spiritual world given to humanity by Rudolf Steiner, the Initiate given the task to convey this information in the times in which we now live, true freedom can never be achieved by human beings. Most of us live with the illusion that we do indeed act in a free way, that we make our own decisions, and that we are the masters of our destiny- but this is an illusion. The life we live, the careers we undertake, the people we meet, the families we belong to, the accidents that befall us and the opinions and thoughts that form who we become as human beings are part of our karma. People often ascribe to chance those meetings and events that shape our life in deep ways. We perhaps meet our future spouse on a bus when going to work because our car has broken down, and through this meeting we raise children and our life is completely transformed. This so-called chance meeting has been planned by us in our life before birth in the spiritual world in conjunction with mighty spiritual beings. It is very difficult to fathom for many that the malfunctioning of a car and the subsequent meeting of two people at a specific time

at a specific place could be planned decades, sometimes centuries in advance by our own souls in the spiritual world with the help of mighty spiritual beings. Yet it is so, and to those who do not believe in the concept of karma and destiny, there is no opportunity to act in a truly free way. Now, in our time, there has been given to humanity the seed through which true freedom and love can germinate and develop within humanity.

This freedom will only be developed through the conscious striving of human beings to gain knowledge of the spiritual world and to consciously work at developing the organs of spiritual perception again. We live at one of the most important crossroads in human history. Ahriman has been cast down to the earth to work in the materialistic soul, condemning it to a future of increased suffering, while at the same time, the gates of the spiritual world are opening and the organs of spiritual perception, the chakras, are again starting to light up, to awaken from a slumber that has lasted for over two thousand years. These chakras cannot and will not be opened properly and safely without a conscious effort of will in each human being. For this return to the spiritual world is to be done as a truly free act for those who have been granted, through grace, true knowledge of the ways of the world. Those who have this impulse to true spirituality, who have through grace, been placed into to the spiritual stream of Michael will be those who have the great task to again bring spirituality to humanity.

It is only when this is understood that a human being can take the first steps in true freedom. Those who feel this spiritual impulse coursing through their souls must on the one hand feel the greatest sense of gratitude to the spiritual world for the gift of being placed into the small group of human beings who will be able to understand true spirituality and freedom, while at the same time we must also feel the great weight of responsibility for the task that has been allotted to us, for the whole of humanity is depending on the stream of the Michaelites to plant the seed that will bring humanity spirituality, freedom and true love.

How is one to know if it is their task to acquire spiritual knowledge and to work at opening their spiritual senses again? Many materialists, when contemplating any notions of a spiritual world beyond the physical ask a very simple question: Where is the proof that any spiritual world exists? What is meant by this statement? How can one 'prove' that the spiritual world exists? When this question is asked by the materialistic thinker, the true request is to prove the existence of a spiritual world through the physical senses and the material world. The spiritual world cannot, of course, be measured or weighed, cannot be seen or touched or heard using the physical senses. It is the very nature of spiritual knowledge that it cannot be apprehend through physical means, for if it could, it would be not be of the nature of the spirit, but of the physical. It is as if one were to ask the weight of an object not

by weighing it, but by listening to it- an inherently impossible act- using a sense not made for the task demanded of it. The first perceptions that occur in spiritual life are those that happen through our life of feeling. The sense of destiny that we have initially comes through our feeling life. When we read something profoundly spiritual, say from *The Bible* or *The Bhagavad Gita*, we have a feeling for its holiness and beauty. This does not occur for the materialist. They could read the same passage and feel antipathy towards it- deriding it as the drivel of a childlike view of the world that has been long outgrown by the modern, cultured human being. It is our feeling life that gives us our first spiritual experiences. We feel the truth of spiritual knowledge and this truth guides us in our further development. The materialistic thinker would have long ago put this little book down, scoffing at it and ridiculing such views as are expressed here. If you are still reading, and if you find truth in these words, if these words resonate in your heart and fill you with a fire of purpose, then you are perhaps one those sleeping Michaelites whose task is to awaken and fight alongside the great archangel Michael, to wrest humanity from the clutches of Ahriman and his hosts, and to bring spirituality back to humanity again. How can this be done? What is the spiritual path? The following chapter will show you how to develop spiritual organs again, through meditative practices that are meant for the human being of today who has a fully developed thought life and sense of self.

## **Chapter 4- MEDITATION AND SPIRITUAL LIFE- THE PATH OF INITIATION**

In ancient times spiritual knowledge and vision were as concrete a reality as the physical world is to us today. To deny the existence of the spiritual world in ancient times would have been as impossible as denying the existence of a tree that we see before us while walking in the forest. The spiritual organs of perception were operating in the ancients in the same way that our organs of sight, taste, touch or hearing are operating in the modern human being. Our spiritual organs are currently in a state of what can be called hibernation. As has been described, there was a necessity for the spiritual organs to be closed off in humanity. This allowed the human being to become an individual and to live and think in an independent way. To call oneself 'I' in the human being of ancient times was an impossibility. This ancient human being felt as if they were the creation of spiritual beings, that life and form were breathed into them by the spiritual beings of the rank of Elohim, as is described in *The Book of Genesis* in *The Bible*, and that the content of their being was an extension of these beings. Hence, it was impossible for human beings of old to consider any actions to be their own- the impulse to action were shone into them from other, higher beings. How was it that ancient clairvoyance worked? To understand this, we must discuss the bodily sheaths that form the human being.

We are all, of course, familiar with our physical body. Through it all of our senses are active- we can feel pleasure or pain, warmth and cold, hear, see, touch and smell the world around us. No sane person would deny the existence of our physical body, but to have a true and complete knowledge of the human being, to the physical body we must also add three other bodies which we are not, in our current state of consciousness, able to perceive. To the physical body we must add what is called by Steiner the etheric or life body. Through the etheric body all life exists. Without an etheric body, all living things perish. Death, is in fact, the act of the etheric body leaving the physical body, whether that body belongs to a plant, animal or human being. All living things that die do the same thing- they return to the realm of the mineral kingdom. The decomposition that occurs when a living thing dies occurs because the etheric body is no longer present to keep the physical body from decaying back down to the mineral realm. All minerals, all rocks and stones, all inorganic matter has only a physical body. Therefore, we can say that the lifeless, mineral kingdom lies at the foundation of existence. What if we then add to this physical body the etheric or life body? We then have the plant kingdom. Plants are able to conduct photosynthesis, absorb nutrients from the soil, and procreate through seed production through having an etheric body, which sets it apart from the mineral kingdom. The plant world could not exist without the mineral, physical kingdom-its existence is dependent on it.

The next kingdom above that of the plants is the animal kingdom. What is it that sets the animal apart from the plant? It is the ability to move about and the ability to actively experience the physical world through the senses. Lower animals, like ants for example, have senses that allow it to see, smell (the sense of smell in an ant is experienced through its antennae), and they exhibit social behaviour. To the higher animals can be added the ability to experience bodily pain and pleasure (like when a cat basks in the sun), and to also experience fear, anger, and pleasure (as when a cat is stroked it not only experiences physical well-being, but also a well-being rooted in its feeling life). All of these experiences, which set the animal apart from the plant, are the result of the animal having what Steiner calls an astral body. The astral body gives animals the ability to move about in the world, and to also feel and sense in the world. The astral body can also be called a soul body, in that we can have a life of higher feeling where fear, anger, happiness and sadness can be experienced. Thus, the animal consists of physical, etheric and astral bodies. The animal and plant kingdoms have a symbiotic relationship- they are co-dependent for their existence. Many animals need plants for their nutrition, and without insect pollination many plant species could not exist. Here we come to the last constituent that is exclusive only to the human being. What is it that sets the human being apart from the animal?

The human being is able to think and to reason, and is also able to use the word 'I' to describe itself. The animal cannot be said to have any experience of self in the sense the human being does, and its actions are a result of what is happening in its environment or through its own instinct, which gives it the impulse to procreate, or to hibernate, or fly south in the winter, for example. For the human being the ability to reason and think and to have a sense of self sets it apart from the animals. Some may argue that some animals 'think', in that they are seemingly able to reason, like a rat that finds its way through a maze, but this is not thinking in the human sense. Thinking first and foremost presupposes language. Without language there is no thought. This can be clearly seen in the development of the child. The process of developing thought in a child begins with labeling, where the names of things are learned (dog, cat, mom, dad, etc.) From there, links are made between these labels- both dogs and cats have four legs, fur, two eyes, and dogs and cats are animals. This is when we can say that thought truly begins to develop in the child. The young child is a threefold being consisting of physical, etheric and astral body, and the ego only slowly moves into and embeds itself into the astral and etheric body as the child grows older and develops into adulthood. The process of developing thinking is a critical part of the unfolding of the ego in the human being, but to thought and the sense of self that sets us apart from the animal, we must also add the ability to act as a moral being to what makes a human being 'human'.

The voice of conscience that we have, that prevents us from harming our fellow human beings and gives us moral impulses to love other beings, to be filled with love and a sense of beauty for all of creation, this is also an essential part of what makes us human in the fullest sense. Those who do not have this sense of morality and compassion for their fellow human beings, those who do not care for the earth or feel that ascetic sense of beauty for the world around them are deficient human beings- they are incomplete. The super- rich and powerful in the world, of whom we have spoken at length in this book cannot be viewed as complete human beings. To act in a way that hurts the earth and fellow human beings, to do this consciously is a pathological condition, and no one can truly tread the path of spiritual development without this moral sense of doing good in the world, of helping our fellow human beings and the earth. This is the foundation upon which all spiritual endeavor rests.

Those who harbour thoughts of anger, hatred, envy, and greed will never achieve much on their path of spiritual development. We may be able to hide these feelings from our fellow human beings, but to the spiritual world all of our feeling life and moral impulses are clearly visible, and these beings are constantly observing us. Therefore, one of the most important rules to be observed by the student in his or her spiritual development is that all immoral impulses that we may harbour in the depths of our soul must be assiduously rooted out. All ill feelings

that we have about people around us- all anger, impatience, all demeaning thoughts that we have must be removed from the soul. This is the first and most important step in spiritual development. Without this step, all the meditations and methods to develop seership will fail utterly. We cannot develop our spiritual organs without the help of spiritual beings, and hatred, anger, impatience, disdain, and a slovenly, lazy attitude slay any spiritual forces that we have previously developed, and push benevolent spiritual beings away from us, who would aid us in our spiritual seeking. Indeed, these feelings must be seen as being poured into us from Luciferic and Ahrimanic spiritual beings who wish to retard our development and bend us away from the path of the spiritual beings who have our best interests in mind and wish for us to develop along the path of goodness and happiness- which is, at the same time, and most importantly, the path of love.

Where anger, hatred, impatience and disdain slay spiritual forces in us, fostering and nurturing feelings of love, patience, compassion, and morality all develop spiritual forces in us. Benevolent spiritual beings draw near to us at times when we are filled with and consciously developing these feelings within our soul. These beings will work with us to develop and awaken our spiritual organs, so that they can be used for the benefit of humanity and all of the countless spiritual beings who populate the cosmos- even unto those who have been impelled by God to hinder the progress of humanity. All those

who endeavor to follow the meditative path to be disclosed in this book must also be forewarned- that as we develop our spiritual life through meditation and control of thought, we will, at the same time, draw the attention of malevolent spiritual beings, who wish to hinder our progress in this regard. This is the path of development that has been outlined by the Gods. The man who pushes a cart full of stones up a hill becomes stronger than one who pushes an empty cart. That is the way of the world- hindrances and suffering often serve to strengthen us and make us better and stronger human beings. The actions of the Ahrimanic beings have already been discussed. These beings wish to cast a veil over any spiritual understanding of the world. Their desire is that human beings remain blind to the spiritual world, and believe in only a Darwinistic, spiritless, and Godless universe. To this end they have been successful in their endeavors with a great deal of humanity. Those human beings who are through and through materialists, and those who are in power and are accumulating wealth and trying to subjugate the world are completely under the influence of Ahriman. These souls are dry and prosaic- their feeling lives are arid and lacking in compassion, and they do not have a strong feeling life. For them, a beautiful sunset goes unnoticed, there is no heartfelt sense of beauty that radiates the healthy soul at such an image. The world for the human being under the sway of Ahriman is dry, cold, lifeless and bereft of strong feelings of love, beauty and compassion.

Those who have found the spiritual path through grace and their karma, those who truly feel the pulse of the spiritual world around them, in the earth and water, in the plants and animals, and in their fellow human beings- those who are truly on this path largely emancipate themselves from the clutches of Ahriman. For spiritual seekers, the adversary is not Ahriman, but his brother Lucifer. Where Ahriman wishes to blind us to great event now taking place- that of the gates of the spiritual world opening, Lucifer wishes for us to live a life akin to a daydream, where we take no interest in the physical world around us. This type of soul often lives a happy go lucky life, not wishing to work and make a living, but instead living a life of unfulfilled goals and ambitions, floating in a world of feeling and emotion, without wanting to engage their will in the necessary but sometimes mundane aspects of life. The soul overly influenced by Lucifer often develops an unhealthy sense of self, where egoism and derision of their fellow human being takes place. This is a danger to the spiritual seeker, who may realize that they know spiritual truths of the world, but this same seeker may also hold the masses who do not have this knowledge in contempt, seeing them as lesser human beings. This type of feeling is cast into the soul by Lucifer. Both Lucifer and Ahriman play an important role in human development, and it is only when one of them takes a greater control of the life of soul that their influences become harmful and destructive. This leads to another great spiritual truth- that of living one's life in balance.

The student of the spirit understands the necessity of living in a world that is filled with Ahrimanic influences, like computers and machines that are now a part daily life, but is able to use these tools for the needs of life, and perhaps even the betterment of self and humanity. The student must also be able to hold in check the Luciferic impulses, which can enwrap the soul in a spiritual fog, hampering and weakening the will and making life on earth meaningless. Perhaps most important of all these preliminary considerations is the strict control of thought and feeling by the student of the spirit. All negative thoughts and feelings of our fellow human beings have a withering effect on spiritual development. To hate a human being, no matter how heinous their actions towards us or others cannot but cripple spiritual striving. This is not to say that we do not recognize hateful or evil actions when we observe them, but we must also not be engulfed in our thought and feeling life by such observation. We must be in control of our feelings and thoughts, to the point where thoughts and feelings that are arbitrary, fanciful, egotistical and unnecessary to our life are prevented from running rampantly through our soul. Steiner tells us:

*In the soul and thought world, feelings and thoughts react upon each other just as do physical objects in the physical world...There can be no progress, however, in the path to higher knowledge unless we guard our thoughts and*

*feelings in just the same way we guard our steps in the physical world...All arbitrary flitting to and fro in thought, all accidental ebbing and flowing of emotion must be forbidden... (p. 42-3)<sup>7</sup>*

This, at first glance may be viewed as a simple undertaking, but in reality, it is exceedingly difficult to achieve. To live an entire day without having negative thoughts about someone we personally know, or of an event we have seen on the news takes an immense effort of will. This goal alone may take years or more to achieve. Undertaking the control of thoughts and feelings must, in the beginning be done in small segments- perhaps for only five or ten minutes at a time. Time and again failure will occur, as the life of thought and feeling for most is something that we have never given much attention to. To stop thoughts from running rampant through our soul takes an effort of consciousness that needs to be developed, like developing the physical endurance to run a marathon. The path to the spiritual world in the beginning is developed through reading spiritual literature, like that given by Rudolf Steiner in anthroposophy, and this cognitive understanding usually takes place in a relatively short period of time. Once this cognitive understanding of how to develop oneself

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<sup>7</sup> Knowledge of the Higher World and its Attainment, Rudolf Steiner. Anthroposophical Press, 1947 edition. Available online at:  
[https://wn.rsarchive.org/Books/GA010/English/AP1947/GA010\\_index.html](https://wn.rsarchive.org/Books/GA010/English/AP1947/GA010_index.html)

spiritually has taken place, the vast majority of spiritual endeavor takes place in developing the spiritual organs of perception through our will. The control of thoughts and feelings, and the meditative exercises here described are conducted through the faculty of a strengthened will. The development of will power and the development of the spiritual organs of perception go hand in hand with one another.

All of what has been spoken of here regarding the proper state of soul that the student needs to develop before setting foot on the true esoteric spiritual path, proper for the times in which we live, is spoken of at great length by Rudolf Steiner in his fundamental and essential book *'Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment'* mentioned above. This book forms a vital foundation for the spiritual seeker, upon which a true spiritual life can be developed. It is not a book that is only read once, and then put down. Its content strengthens the soul every time it is read, and forms a well spring of moral fortitude, inspiration and instruction that the student of the spirit cannot often enough come back to for guidance. The brief description of meditative practice and development of the will is here only sketched in limited detail. This book should not be considered as an end goal in spiritual development, but merely as a sign post that points the way to spiritual development and fulfilment. It is through the content of anthroposophy given by Rudolf Steiner that the student will find the resources,

inspiration and direction to become a truly whole and spiritual human being.

The last issue that needs to be discussed before a true and esoteric path of development can be here conferred is that of the diet and lifestyle that needs to be led by one the path of enlightenment. First and foremost, in this regard is the complete abstinence from the consumption of alcohol and the use of recreational drugs. Alcohol and drugs have a paralyzing and withering effect on the spiritual organs of perception that the student of the spirit develops through control of the life of feeling and thought, and through meditative exercises. Any progress made in developing these organs will be swiftly destroyed by the consumption of these substances. For many, particularly the young, this may be a difficult transition to make. Casual consumption of alcohol and marijuana is widespread in today's society. It may be that a gradual transition to a lifestyle free of alcohol and marijuana needs to be undertaken by the student. This was the case for me in my youth. In my circle of friends alcohol and marijuana consumption was a part of the social fabric of my youth. When I came to the spiritual life through Steiner, and became aware of the harm to spiritual life that was caused by alcohol and drugs, I faced a dilemma. As I reduced my consumption of alcohol and marijuana, I at the same time was perceived differently by those in my social circle. The less that I took part in the consumption of alcohol and marijuana, the more I felt myself as an outsider

in my social group. This can be a very difficult process for one who wishes to change their life and to embark on a spiritual path, but at the same time also feels the necessity and importance of having friends, and meeting a soul mate. Gradually, my former circle of friends fell away, and I spent many weekends at home, reading Rudolf Steiner's works and developing an esoteric life, while my friends were out partying and socializing. It was often a lonely time, but it was a choice that I consciously made that gave me more meaning than my previous life had. It may be a hard choice for some, but for those who truly wish to have a spiritual life, it is an essential choice that must be made at some point on the spiritual path.

The second and also essential requirement for spiritual development in regards to lifestyle is the adoption of a vegetarian diet. We have spoken of the different sheaths of the human being, and the effect that the consumption of meat has on the astral body of the human being prevents the spiritual organs of perception from forming. In his lecture cycle *The Effect of Occult Development Upon the Self and the Sheaths of Man*<sup>8</sup> given in March of 1913, Steiner states the following:

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<sup>8</sup> The Effect of Occult Development upon the Self and the Sheaths of Man, The Hague, March 20-29, 1913. Rudolf Steiner Publishing, London, 1945.

*Above all, it becomes a matter of experience that when meat is eaten our physical body has more to bear, more to drag about, as it were, than when we eat vegetable food....The will to eat meat means: 'I so pledge myself to the earth-existence that I renounce all heaven, and prefer to be wholly and solely engrossed in the conditions of earthly experience (p. 12)*

The consumption of a plant-based diet allows the student to enter into a connection with the entire cosmos, to unite with the spiritual processes and beings that live in the solar system. Steiner adds the following:

*From what has been said you will gather that in the case of occult, esoteric, or anthroposophical development, it is extremely important not to chain oneself to the earth, as it were, not to make the heaviness of the earth a part of our individual nature through the enjoyment of an animal [meat] diet, if, according to the individual condition and conditions of heredity, it can be dispensed with; the actual decision can, of course, only be made according to the personal conditions of the individual (p. 25).*

The decision to adopt a vegetarian diet is somewhat more nuanced than that of abstaining from the consumption of drugs and alcohol. There are no circumstances where the consumption of alcohol, for example, can be said to be of benefit to the human being.

All alcohol consumption has a negative effect on physical health, even though this negative effect is negligible when alcohol is consumed in small amounts. The same cannot be said for the development of a spiritual life in relation to the consumption of alcohol-even small amounts can have catastrophically negative effects on spiritual life. In the case of meat, it is somewhat different. There are those who, as Steiner sates, due to hereditary conditions, may need to consume some meat, but it must also be said that anyone who is able to meditate in an effective way will also have the strength in their whole organism to refrain from the consumption of meat. It must also be noted, that as the student progresses in his or her development, the consumption of meat becomes repugnant. Steiner states the following:

*Hence it comes about that progress in the inner anthroposophical life gradually produces a sort of disgust for animal food. It is not necessary to forbid animal food to anthroposophists, for the healthy progressing life of instinct gradually turns against animal food... (p.15).*

The student on the spiritual path should not become a vegetarian if this causes a negative change in either their physical or emotional life. If the adoption of a vegetarian diet causes frequent craving for meat, then that is a sign that the student is not yet ready for a vegetarian diet. In the natural course of the development of a spiritual life, the student will find the consumption of meat unpleasant. Having said this, one more detail needs to be discussed

in regards to vegan diets and the adverse effect these diets can have on the life of the soul. Where meat chains us to the earth and prevents us from developing an esoteric life and the spiritual organs of perception, a diet that omits the consumption of dairy products can also have a negative effect. Steiner states:

*In order that we may not become too eccentric when striving for psychic development, in order that we may not become too estranged from human feeling and human effort on earth, it is well for us to load ourselves in a certain way like travelers upon the earth, by the use of milk and milk-products (p. 26).*

Here again the importance of living a life in balance must be emphasized for the student. A life too rooted in the earth, devoid of a connection with the cosmos has its polar opposite in the life of one who wants nothing to do with the earth and becomes a dreamer who floats above the affairs of the earth, whose feet do not touch the ground so to speak. Therefore, the limited consumption of dairy products will aid the meditator in finding that essential balance between being an active member of the earth and earthly affairs, and of developing a relationship with the spiritual world.

We are now ready to enter into the concrete methods for developing a spiritual life and the organs of perception that give us access of the spiritual world. In *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment* in the section titled *Preparation*, spiritual exercises are given that work directly on the spiritual organs of perception. The first of

these exercises involves focusing attention alternately on all that we can observe that is in a state of growth, specifically where a plant is blooming, and then on that which in the plant world is in a state of decay and withering. This exercise can be conducted out in the natural world or indoors. A plant that is in a state of rigor and bloom is placed along plant matter that is decaying. Dead or withering leaves, or compost work well in this regard. The student focuses all of their attention on that which is blooming, and must banish everything else from the soul. All thought, all feeling must be completely silenced. When this is done, say for a few minutes, a feeling will arise in the soul which is akin to the feeling evoked from watching a beautiful sunrise. We then can close our eyes and allow this feeling to reverberate in our soul. Attention is then transferred to that which is in a state of decay, the student again focusing intently and banishing all other thoughts and feelings. Here the student will have a different feeling, akin to the slow rising of the moon on the horizon. A small amount of time is then given to allow this feeling to reverberate in our soul. By conducting this exercise on a regular basis, the student will gradually open the organs of spiritual perception. Steiner states the following:

*Indeed, the more often the attention be fixed alternately upon something growing, blossoming, and flourishing, and upon something else that is fading and decaying, the more vivid will these feelings become. And just as the eyes and ears of the physical body are built by natural forces out of living matter, so*

*will the organs of clairvoyance build themselves out of the feelings and thoughts thus evoked (p. 39).*

Through conducting this exercise, spiritual perception into the astral plane gradually occurs:

*Growth and decay are no longer facts which make definite impressions on him as of old, but rather they form themselves into spiritual lines and figures of which he had previously suspected nothing. And these lines and figures have, for the different phenomena, different forms. A blooming flower, an animal in the process of growth, a tree that is decaying, evoke in his soul different lines... Two students who have reached the corresponding stage of development will always see the same lines and figures under the same conditions (p. 40).*

It is important that the student try not to intellectualize what has been experienced in the foregoing exercise. All meditations given by Steiner work slowly on the soul and spiritual organs of the student. The student must allow these meditations to work in the soul quietly and calmly. When a meditation is completed, the student should carry out all duties of the day, in the same way, and not ponder deeply on what effect has occurred in the soul. These effects will not be perceptible until months or even years later. This should not in the slightest cause impatience or frustration in the student. All of the meditative exercises here described, along with the betterment of the human being in relation to spiritual

development also has the effect of casting a calm and loving atmosphere in the world. To meditate and better the self also, at the same time, brings beneficial forces into the world and allows spiritual beings of goodness to influence the world in a positive way. This should be viewed by the student as a more important goal in spiritual development than the development of the self.

Two more meditative exercises will here be briefly discussed, both of which are also given in *Knowledge of the Higher World and its Attainment*. Under the heading *Enlightenment* Steiner gives another meditation to further develop the spiritual organs of perception. In this meditation, the student observes a beautifully formed crystal and compares the feeling thus evoked with that evoked from the observation of an animal. Steiner gives the following instructions:

*The student should endeavor, at first, to direct his whole attention to a comparison of the stone in the following manner. The thoughts here mentioned should pass through his soul accompanied by vivid feelings, and no other thought, no other feeling must mingle with them and disturb what should be an intensely attentive observation. The student says to himself: 'The stone has a form; the animal also has a form. The stone remains motionless in its place. It is instinct (desire) which causes the animal to change its place. Instincts, too, are served by the form of the animal.*

*Its organs and limbs are fashioned in accordance with these instincts. The form of the stone is not fashioned in accordance with desires, but in accordance with desireless force (pp. 50-1).*

By observing the animal and the crystal alternately, with rapt attention, distinct feelings will arise in both the animal and the crystal. In the mediation regarding the blooming plant and decaying matter, the feelings evoked are described as being akin to a sunrise and a moonrise. With the meditation involving the animal and crystal, the feelings that arise are akin to those observed through the observation of certain colors. The feeling that is observed by the student when focusing on the crystal is akin to the color blue, while the observation of the animal evokes the color red. The observation of the plant in this exercise will evoke a feeling that lies between that of the animal and the crystal. House pets work well for this exercise, as does the observation of animals in a natural setting (squirrels, birds, cows, horses, etc.). I have also conducted this exercise using fish in an aquarium. The observation of animals on a computer or television will prove to be utterly ineffective. The student must work with what can be observed in her or his own environment, and if this means that, for example, a housefly is the only animal that is available for this exercise, then this should be used.

Earlier in this book, it was mentioned that ‘proof’ of the existence of a spiritual world so often demanded by those who are materialistic in their thinking is, of course,

not possible. The materialistic thinker asks for physical proofs of that which has no physicality, namely the existence of spiritual beings and spiritual experience itself. With these meditations, the observations of feelings evoked by these exercises can furnish the student with evidence of something that exists beyond the physical realm. It is the feeling life that is first developed when the spiritual organs of perception are worked upon. Direct spiritual vision only comes later. We often in life talk of feelings that are evoked by color—yellow is a warm color, blue is cool, red often is used to denote anger. There is truth to these observations. If the student intensely observes different colors, if all other thoughts and feelings are excluded, and a high level of focus and intensity is applied, the observation of various colors will elicit different feelings in the soul. The same can be said of the meditations here described. Where we wish to weigh and measure in the physical world, our life of feeling on our path to the spirit is not only an essential part of our development, but also can give us a surety that we are indeed on the right path. Any person who with sincerity and focus attempts these exercises, will, over time, develop distinct feelings through these preparatory meditations.

Where the mediation of blooming and decaying plant matter develops the perception of spiritual forms, the meditation of the animal and crystal develops further our ability to see into the spiritual world. Steiner describes it as follows:

*The organs thus formed are spiritual eyes. The student gradually learns, by their means, to see something like soul and spirit colors. The spiritual world with its lines and figures remains dark as long as he has only attained what has been described as preparation; through enlightenment this world becomes light (p. 52).*

It should also be noted that the feelings evoked by this meditation should not be mistaken to be the perception of what we see as colors on the physical world. The perception of color through the eyes is a perception in the physical world. In the mediation just described, there is no perception of color through the physical eye; it must be borne in mind that the experience of color by the soul is what is here meant. This also applies to the final preparatory mediation that will now be described.

In this meditation, the observation of a seed and a plant takes place. The student places a seed and a plant in front of him/herself for observation. Steiner states:

*Out of the seed, if planted in the soil, a plant of complex structure will grow. Let him build up this plant in his imagination, and reflect as follows: What I am now picturing to myself in my imagination will later on be enticed from the seed by the forces of earth and light. If I had before me an artificial object which imitated the seed to such a deceptive degree that my eyes could not distinguish it from a real seed, no forces of earth or light could*

*avail to produce from it a plant....All that will ultimately grow out of the seed is now secretly enfolded within it as the force of the whole plant....The real seed, therefore, contains something invisible which is not present in the imitation (pp. 60-1).*

The student then observes a healthy, vigorous plant. In the observation of the plant, the student thinks (from Steiner):

*Now let him fill his mind with the thought that the time will come when this plant will wither and die. 'Nothing will be left of what I now see before me. But this plant will have developed seed, which in their turn, will develop into new plants. I again become aware that in what I see, something lies hidden which I cannot see. I fill my mind entirely with the thought: this plant, with its form and colors, will in time be no more. But the reflection that it produces seeds teaches me that it will not disappear into nothing. I cannot at present see with my eyes that which guards it from disappearance, any more than I preciously could discern the plant in the grain of the seed. Thus there is something in the plant which my eyes cannot see. If I let this thought live within me, and if the corresponding feeling be coupled with it, then in due time, there will again develop in my soul a force which will ripen into a new perception (pp. 64-5).*

The seed will appear enveloped in a small luminous cloud, and will be experienced as a kind of spirit flame, the center of which evokes the impression of the color lilac, and the edges the color blue. The plant will also be enveloped in a spiritual cloud-flame, correspondingly larger, which will evoke the impression of a greenish-blue color at the center, and a yellowish-red on the edges. Again, these are not colors that will be experienced by the physical eye, but are the corresponding spiritual experience of these colors that lives in the soul.

This now concludes the preliminary exercises given by Steiner in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment*. To this it must be again emphasized that the control of thoughts and feelings must occur concurrently with the practice of these meditative exercises. This control of thoughts and feelings also implies that the thoughts and feelings that are to be allowed to pass through the soul are those of a moral character. Thoughts and feelings of kindness, love, sympathy, fidelity, and compassion are what is meant here. To this must be added the development of a positive attitude. Seeing the world in a positive light, approaching all of the tasks that present themselves to our daily life, no matter how pedestrian, with a positive attitude is essential on the path to higher knowledge. All of this can be summed up in the golden rule of spiritual development given in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*: 'For every step that you take in the pursuit of higher knowledge, take three steps in the perfection of your own character' (p.69). Negative thoughts and a negative attitude poison the waters of our soul, and cripple any efforts that we may take in

developing ourselves spiritually. The golden rule indicates that the first and most important step in spiritual development is the improvement of our own character.

The mediations that have here been given are preparatory in that they form the spiritual organs of perception, and also give the student a positive and moral disposition, without which, no spiritual progress can be made. What will now be discussed is a different form of meditation called Imaginative meditation (the process of developing imaginative clairvoyance will now be designated as Imagination with a capital 'I', distinguishing it from the lower process of creative imagination, where human creativity in the physical world is meant). Where the preparatory meditations form the spiritual organs, Imaginative meditations provide the content of spiritual perception. They are the link to beholding spiritual events and beings. To understand this, it is instructive to first look at how the ancient clairvoyance of humanity functioned. In the human being who lived on the earth in ancient Indian or Persian times, thousands of years ago, the connection between the ego and the astral, etheric, and physical bodies of the human being was much closer. Steiner describes this in his cycle of lectures titled *'Materialism and the Task of Anthroposophy'*<sup>9</sup>:

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<sup>9</sup> Materialism and the Task of Anthroposophy, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, (seventeen lectures given in Dornach, Switzerland April 2-June 5, 1921). Copyright 1987. Available

*... in that age he [the ancient human being] was more intimately connected with his physical body, his etheric, and astral bodies than he is today. When he woke up in the morning, he submerged with his ego and astral body into his physical and etheric bodies. A close connection developed between his ego and astral body and his etheric body and physical corporeality. And he not only dwelled in his physical body, he also lived in the forces that worked within the latter' (p.158).*

This closer connection that the ego of the ancient had with their other sheaths allowed for an experience of the spirituality that is contained in the physical body to be experienced. All that exists in the physical world is the result of the active working of spiritual beings. The mineral world and natural world are filled with elemental beings that allow for the growth and decay of plants to take place. Steiner describes in his beautiful series of lectures titled '*Man as Symphony of the Creative Word*<sup>10</sup>' how spiritual beings are the creators of all that exists in the plant world. The roots of the plant are formed and developed by elemental mineral beings

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online at:

[https://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA204/English/AP1987/MaTask\\_index.html](https://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA204/English/AP1987/MaTask_index.html).

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[https://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA230/English/RSP1970/ManSym\\_index.html](https://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA230/English/RSP1970/ManSym_index.html).

called gnomes, the leaves and stem of plants are developed by elemental water beings called undines, flower and blossom by elemental air beings called sylphs, and seeds are formed by fire beings called esoterically salamanders. With the closer connection the ancient had with his physical body, the spirituality that lived in the physical world was experienced automatically, just as when today we open our physical eyes, we cannot but help to see the physical world around us. The ancient could therefore see the spiritual beings in the natural world, as well as the minerals, plants and animals that these spiritual beings occupy and create. Steiner gave the following example:

*Assume that such an ancient clairvoyant ate a plum; this plum contains etheric forces. If a person eats a plum today, he is not aware of what goes on within this plum. The ancient clairvoyant ate a plum; it was then in his stomach, was digested, and he experienced how the etheric forces in the plum passed over into his body. He cosmically participated in this experience (p. 158 ibid).*

For the ancient, the denial of the existence of the spiritual world would be akin to a person of today whose eyes functioned normally denying the existence of a plant or stone in front of them. The ancient also felt spiritual forces in the air, water and in the rays of the sun and stars- felt the entire cosmos filled with spiritual beings and forces. How is it now that we no longer have this ancient clairvoyance, and how has this affected the

human being of today? As has been discussed, ancient humanity had no sense of self, was not able to understand the concept of being an individual, of calling oneself 'I'. This change into having a sense of self came about gradually, and the concept of the citizen of the state in Greek and Roman culture is a reflection of this change taking place in the human being. The process that brought about this change in human consciousness was the loosening of the connection that the ego had with the physical and etheric bodies of the human being. Through this loosened connection, the ego or I of the human being no longer felt the spiritual forces that coursed through the physical world. This process was planned and carried out by higher spiritual beings to ultimately make the human being free. As long as the human being lived in the spiritual world, the development of individual identity could not take place. Let us say, as a simple analogy, we make a vegetable soup. We cut up carrots, tomatoes, potatoes to make the soup. When we look at the totality of the soup, we do not look at its individual ingredients, we simply collectively call it 'soup'. If we then take a small piece of carrot from the soup, we stop calling that individual carrot soup, we call it a carrot. In the same way, by taking the human being out of his immersion in the spiritual world, the individual as separate from the cosmos comes about. In exchange for this sense of self, the human being loses its spirituality and no longer perceives the spiritual world and its beings. The result of this is the intellectual development of humanity that has brought about the great inventions and discoveries of industry, technology and science over the last several centuries. The great irony of this is that

the act of separating the ego from the other sheaths of the human being must be viewed as making the human being more spiritual. Through this separation the human being now lives almost completely in the intellectual realm. It is a great illusion to believe that our thoughts are somehow generated in our brain by the firing of synapses between neurons. Thoughts are completely spiritual in nature and pour into us from the spiritual world. The brain is simply the way in which these thoughts are transmitted to our ego, where we can there perceive them. Thus, through this separation of the ego from the other bodily sheaths we live more completely in the spiritual world with our ego, but do not realize it. The great irony of this spirituality is the notion that the spiritual world does not exist. Steiner describes it this way in *Materialism and the Task of Anthroposophy*:

*Why have we developed materialism? And why did ancient humanity not have materialism? The ancients did not have it because they dwelt within the matter of the body; modern men have materialism because they dwell only in the spirit, because they are completely free of a cosmic connection to their [physical] body. Materialism actually comes about because the human being became spiritual, but spiritual in a rarified manner (p. 162).*

The human being today no longer sees or feels the spirituality in matter because the ego has been loosened from the physical body, and without this perception of the spirit in matter, the materialistic view of the world

we have today has evolved. The question now arises as to how the humanity of today can find its way back to the spiritual world as an individual within the spiritual world. This would equate to, in the simple soup analogy, of the carrot returning to the soup, but now with full knowledge of its being a carrot within the soup. The preparatory exercises develop the spiritual organs of perception, but the process of imaginative meditation can be described as that of giving light and direction for these organs of perception to behold the spiritual world. The old atavistic or instinctive clairvoyance of the ancient, where spiritual perception came through the physical body cannot be returned to by humanity. In the far distant future, the physical body will fall away, and we will gain a higher member of our being, above the ego. At this point, humanity will enter into its angelic stage. Buddha is the prototype for this future evolution of humanity-the being of Buddha no longer needs to incarnate in a physical body, and works in humanity through the astral body, pouring beneficial impulses into receptive souls on the earth. Just as the individual human being has undergone many incarnations, so too does the earth go through incarnations. There have been three previous incarnations of the earth, called esoterically ancient Saturn, ancient Sun, and ancient Moon. The present earth incarnation stands in the middle of these incarnations, and there will be three subsequent incarnations of the earth esoterically called Jupiter, Venus, and finally Vulcan. As the human being dies and enters the spiritual world after an earthly life and prepares for a subsequent incarnation, so too will the earth experience a sort of death, a disillusionment where

it goes through a spiritual sort of resting stage known as a pralaya, after which it again becomes active in a new and evolved form. Humanity will enter its angelic stage on the future incarnation of the earth known as Jupiter. It would go beyond the scope of this book to enter into a detailed description of the spiritual history of the earth and the human being, and to develop this understanding should be considered, for the student, an essential task. This spiritual history of the earth and the human being can be found in the fundamental anthroposophical book by Rudolf Steiner *An Outline of Occult Science*<sup>11</sup> and also in his lecture series titled *The Spiritual Hierarchies and the Physical World; Reality and Illusion*<sup>12</sup> (referred to henceforth as *The Spiritual Hierarchies*). It is only mentioned here to illuminate why the human being cannot go back to its former atavistic stage of clairvoyance. To do so humanity would lose its sense of self, and in the process, the development of true freedom, an essential task allotted to humanity.

The future development of clairvoyance for the human being lies in the process of developing imaginative

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[https://wn.rsarchive.org/Books/GA013/English/AP1972/GA013\\_index.html](https://wn.rsarchive.org/Books/GA013/English/AP1972/GA013_index.html).

<sup>12</sup> *The Spiritual Hierarchies and the Physical World* (ten lectures in Düsseldorf, April 12-18); *Reality and Illusion* (five lectures in Berlin October 31-December 5, 1911)

Anthroposophic Press, 1996.

<https://www.amazon.ca/Spiritual-Hierarchies-Physical-World-Illusion/dp/0880104406>

clairvoyance. In *Materialism and the Task of Anthroposophy* Steiner states the following:

*People have to now work their way anew into the spiritual world. The possibility distinctly exists for them to look into this spiritual world. What people earlier had attained from their physical and etheric bodies as well as from their astral body in regard to an instinctive view of the cosmos can be attained again today (lecture 9, p.166).*

Imaginative clairvoyance is developed through the taking in of spiritual content through the intellect and then forming imaginative pictures of this content. Anthroposophy is filled with spiritual content that can be formed into these imaginative pictures. For example, the various incarnations of the earth and the spiritual beings and processes involved in these former earth incarnations, given in *The Spiritual Hierarchies* form excellent content for developing imaginative clairvoyance. The essential point in developing these Imaginations is that they have no connection to the physical world. I can, for example, form a vivid image of a tiger in my imagination, and even though I have never seen a real tiger, I know that they exist in the physical world. This type of imagining, based on something material, does not aid in the development of Imaginative clairvoyance, which shines a light, so to speak, into the spiritual world so that spiritual beings and events can be perceived by the spiritual organs formed by the preparatory exercises. Only by developing Imaginations

that are direct spiritual truths and realities in the spiritual world, with no corresponding physical reality, can we develop true imaginative sight into the spiritual world. When we think and form images here in the physical world, most believe that these thoughts and images are our own private concern, invisible to those around us. This is not the case in the spiritual world.

In the spiritual world, we discover that thoughts are as real as physical objects in the physical world. If we have negative thoughts about another human being, these thoughts act in the same way as if we were to strike that human being in the physical world. Negative thoughts act destructively in the spiritual world and positive, loving and compassionate thoughts help to build our spiritual organs and create harmony in the spiritual world. Even though we may believe that our thoughts carry no impact beyond our own being, this is not so. If we harbour negative thoughts and emotions about someone in our life, we not only hamper our own spiritual development, but the astral body of the one to whom we direct these thoughts is also negatively affected. Even if that person is thousands of miles away, these thoughts and emotions immediately find their way into the astral body of the person in question, and these negative emotions are sensed in the astral body of the one to whom they are directed, and create an atmosphere where these negative emotions are then reciprocated and sent back into our own astral body. This creates a cycle of negative emotion that can result in a deep hatred and loathing for our fellow human beings that is very difficult to break. These negative and hateful thoughts

cripple our own spiritual development. Steiner tells us in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* that it is just as harmful to have hateful thoughts and feelings towards our fellow human being as it is to physically strike our fellow human being. This point has been alluded to already, but it cannot be repeated often enough that any meditative exercise, whether it be a preparatory exercise or one of Imaginative meditation will not be successful in a soul filled with negative and fearful emotions. Having said this, process of Imaginative meditation can now be discussed.

When we first create a thought that is a spiritual reality, but has no corresponding physical component, we develop spiritual forces within us. In *Materialism and the Task of Anthroposophy* Steiner states the following:

*Assume that you are reading something like 'An Outline of Occult Science'. Imagine that you try to place yourself into these descriptions with your ordinary intellect. You take it in with the intellect, which is only linked to the isolated human body. But you do take something in that you could not receive through this intellect, since throughout the past few centuries this intellect did not comprehend itself. Now you take something in that is incomprehensible on the basis of those concepts that the intellect derives from the external sense world. It does become comprehensible, however, when the intellect on its own makes the effort to understand it, initially neither agreeing or disagreeing but only*

*comprehending. After all, the effort is on understanding these things. Initially, you need simply understand them, if you do, then you create something with the insight the ego has gained that extends into the night. Then, during the night, you no longer remain dull as is the case with the merely intellectual attitude towards the world; then, from the time of falling asleep until waking up, you dwell in a different content in the delicately filtered spirituality. Then, you awaken and find that the possibility has been added- small though it is each time- of inwardly acquiring what you have struggled to understand intellectually. With each passing night, every time we sleep, something of an inner relationship is added, we acquire an inward connection. Each time, upon falling asleep, we bear the after effect of our daytime comprehension with us into the world beyond corporeality. In this way, we acquire a relationship to the spiritual world, a relationship completely out of [physical] reality... For it is only when we turn to Imagination that this spirituality receives its first content (lecture IX pp. 167-8).*

The human being, in ancient times, was able, through receiving spiritual impulses directly through the physical body, to carry these spiritual impulses into the spiritual world during sleep and through this process perceive content from the spiritual world. This is no longer possible through the loosening of the ego from the etheric and physical bodies that has occurred over the last millennium. This process has now been replaced by

that of Imagination. This process of Imagination begins with taking, as Steiner mentions above, spiritual content that has no corresponding physical reality. Let us create here a concrete example. In both *An Outline of Occult Science* and in *The Spiritual Hierarchies and the Physical World, Reality and Illusion* Steiner describes in detail the first incarnation of the earth known esoterically as ancient Saturn. The description that will here be developed into an Imagination is taken from *The Spiritual Hierarchies and the Physical World, Reality and Illusion*<sup>13</sup> which gives a more detailed account of ancient Saturn.

Ancient Saturn was created by the Godhead as the first embodiment of the earth. Mighty spiritual beings of the first hierarchy are impelled by God to create ancient Saturn. This creation takes place through the creative Word. In the prologue of the Gospel of Saint John we read:

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made (John 1:1-3).*

In these mighty words we can understand the power of the Word in the spiritual world. God sends out to the first hierarchy the Word, which in this case gives the beings of the first hierarchy the impulse to create ancient Saturn.

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<sup>13</sup> The description here given can be found in lecture one of part two of this lecture series (lecture date October 31, 1911).

These beings are truly mighty, enormously powerful and magnificent, and gaze directly on and receive instruction from the Godhead. The Imagination of the Godhead can be that which we are given in the *Book of Revelation* (Ch. 4; vs 2-6).

*And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and sardine stone: and there was a rainbow around the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto a crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and about the throne were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.*

To this can also be added the description of the beasts in verses seven through nine. We now form this image as powerfully as we can in our soul. From this Godhead proceeds the Word of God to create ancient Saturn, where the first beginnings of the human being are created. This mighty Word is received by the Seraphim,

highest of all spiritual beings outside of the Godhead<sup>14</sup>. The Seraphim then pass the Word onto the Cherubim and Thrones, the two other ranks of spiritual beings that form the first hierarchy. The Thrones then kneel as in prayer before the Cherubim and sacrifice their will substance to the Cherubim, which can be Imagined as a kind of smoke rising from the kneeling Thrones received by the Cherubim. From this smoke is created a great warmth, and also the first beings of the third hierarchy, known as Archai. The Archai then create time. The first embodiment, or incarnation of earth then occurs. A great globe of warmth is created, which as yet only has the element of time within it. The element of space is created in the next incarnation of the earth, known as ancient Sun. Within this body of warmth is contained the first

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<sup>14</sup> The spiritual hierarchies are those that are described in the Bible and in other religions. There are three hierarchies, each hierarchy containing three ranks of being. The beings of these hierarchies are as follows, starting from the most powerful and closest to the Godhead: First Hierarchy- Seraphim (spirits of love), Cherubim (spirits of harmony), Thrones (spirits of will). Second Hierarchy: Dominions (spirits of wisdom, also known anthroposophically as Kyriotetes), Virtues or Might (spirits of movement, also known anthroposophically as Dynamis), Powers or Elohim (spirits of form). Third hierarchy: Principalities (spirits of time also known as Archai), Archangels (beings who create space and govern cultural ages), Angels (beings closest to the human being who protect us). The human being is the first being of the fourth hierarchy, designated as the hierarchy of freedom and love. Our development will be complete after the seven incarnations of the earth.

seeds of the human physical body, as yet containing no materiality. Here we have created, first with our thoughts and then our imagination, an Imagination that will bring us into the realm of the spiritual world. In *The Spiritual Hierarchies* Steiner says the following<sup>15</sup>:

*The Thrones or Spirits of Will kneel before the Cherubim with complete devotion that arises not out of a feeling of insignificance but out of the consciousness that they have something that they can sacrifice. The Thrones in this willingness to sacrifice, which is based upon strength and courage, kneel before the Cherubim and offer up their sacrifice to them. The Thrones send the sacrifice up as effervescent warmth, flaming warmth, so that the smoke from the fire of sacrifice blazes upward to the winged Cherubim! So may we picture this reality. And now, arising from this sacrifice, as if we were speaking a word into the air and this word were time, but time as beings- from the totality of these occurrences – the Spirits of Time or Archai emerge. This sending forth of the Archai is a powerful image. And this image, placed before our soul, is extremely potent for certain Imaginations that can bring us ever deeper into the realm of hidden knowledge.*

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<sup>15</sup> *The Spiritual Hierarchies and the Physical World; Reality and Illusion*, ten lectures in Dusseldorf, April 12-18, 1909; Five lectures in Berlin, October 31- December 5, 1911. Anthroposophic Press, 1996

*This transformation of the ideas we receive into Imaginations, pictures, is what we must accomplish. Even if the pictures we make are primitive, even if they are anthropomorphic, even if these beings we try to portray look like winged persons- that is beside the point. It doesn't matter. Whatever needs to be added to our efforts will eventually be given to us. What our Imaginations should not have will disappear. If we simply allow ourselves to be immersed in such pictures, that activity itself will actually guide us to such beings (p. 180).*

This is how Imaginative meditation works. During the process of Imagination, the student should not intellectualize on the meaning of the Imagination that is created. It is best to simply allow the Imagination to develop, and then to hold it in the soul, without any other thoughts or images entering. The Imagination is then ended, and the student completely empties the soul of all content for a time. When this is done, spiritual content can enter. We, at first, may not perceive that anything has happened in the course of this meditation, but when we go to sleep, we then bring the spiritual world closer to us. For when we form Imaginations of this type, which have a corresponding spiritual reality, and no correspondence in the physical world, spiritual beings *perceive* our Imaginations. From the spiritual world it is as if from out of a great desert, where nothing exists, from the barrenness of our materialistic soul, a great oasis arises filled with gardens and teeming with life and meaning. Spiritual beings immediately perceive this

Imagination as something through which they can work and connect with us. This is the way of modern Initiation, of the modern path of perceiving the spiritual world again. Steiner states in *Materialism and the Task of Anthroposophy* 'For it is only when we turn to Imagination that this spirituality receives its first content. This spirituality, which is filtered to the extreme, must first receive its content' (p.168).

We first form our spiritual organs through the preparatory exercises described above and found in full detail in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment*. To this is then added the practice of forming Imaginations. It is not necessary that the process of preparation be completed before that of developing Imaginations can begin. It is actually beneficial for both of these spiritual processes that they are carried out concurrently, as is convenient for the schedule of the student. We can now understand the complete futility of the notion of asking for spiritual proofs in terms of the physical, material world. It is *because* the process of Imagination has only a spiritual reality that it can work effectively in our soul and bring us to perceive the spiritual world again. It must also be strongly emphasized that patience must be exercised with regards to all spiritual development. The foregoing examples of meditative exercises will beneficially affect all who undertake them, so long as work to develop the self morally and ethically as described, constantly takes place. Where one student may see spiritual results very quickly, for most, this process will be slow, taking many years of hard and determined work. This must not

discourage the student, and it must be borne in mind that the practice of these meditative exercises not only helps the student develop into a more perfect being of love and compassion with insight into the spiritual world, but that developing an esoteric life benefits all of humanity. By meditating in this way, a portal from the spiritual world to the earth is opened, allowing beneficial spiritual beings access to the earthly realm, where they can battle against Ahriman and his evil influences. Helping all of humanity in this way must be considered as more important than the benefits the meditative path provides for the individual student. How this is so will be discussed in the following and final chapter of this book.

## **CHAPTER FIVE- THE SALVATION OF THE HUAMAN RACE AND THE APOCALYPSE OF ST. JOHN**

In the previous chapter the way by which the individual human being can again perceive the spiritual world was described. To develop a spiritual life in the way outlined by Rudolf Steiner and as defined in this book, is the greatest and most important task a human being can undertake today. A great doctor may find a cure to disease, a scientist may develop technologies that truly help the world, but now, with the opening of the gates of the spiritual world, and the completely free reign that Ahriman has been given, no task is more urgent than that of allowing beneficial spiritual beings and forces to work in the earthly realm. This is done through the development of meditative practice correct for the age in which we now live. It was previously discussed how the powers that oppose the proper development of the human being work unconsciously in the souls of countless human beings on earth. Those who are materialistic in their thinking, believing that nothing beyond the physical-material realm exists are most easily influenced by Ahriman and his hosts. It is in the materialistic soul, completely unaware of the spiritual world, in which Ahriman is able to work freely. The destiny of the human being is to become the hierarchy of freedom and love, but an act of love cannot be done without the conscious freedom to carry out this act. Because of this, the archangel-archai being Michael and his hosts, who work for the freedom of the human being, who wish that the human being not suffer, who want true meaning and true happiness for humanity - these

beings cannot work in the human being without each individual human being consciously allowing these beneficent beings access to their souls through the spiritual path here described. It is the great task of this age- to unite again with the spiritual world, and the longer that this does not occur in a large number of human beings, the greater will be the suffering and destitution that will befall the human race. Steiner states ominously in *Materialism and the Task of Anthroposophy*:

*It becomes evident, for example, in such books as my Theosophy or An Outline of Occult Science that the attempt is always made to change modern thinking so that thinking can be aroused to Imagination, hence, to life. Otherwise, humanity would be laid waste completely.... This is indeed the profound and fateful challenge for modern civilization, namely, that we should realize that, on the one hand, thinking tends to become a shadowy element into which human beings increasingly withdraw, and that, on the other hand, what passes over into the will actually turns only into a form of surrender to human instincts. The less thinking is capable of Imagination, the more will the full interest of what lives outside in society be abandoned to the instincts (p. 181).*

When the human soul abandons itself to instincts, it becomes less human and more animal in nature. Fear, anger, lust, and aggression are passions that will overcome the unprepared soul as Ahriman, the great dragon described in *The Apocalypse of Saint John*, who

was cast to the earth at the end of the nineteenth century, ravages the world. It is only through acquiring true spiritual knowledge given by Rudolf Steiner in the content of Anthroposophy, and then using this knowledge to develop oneself spiritually and meditatively, that the forces of evil that are so clearly working in the world can be opposed and conquered. Here we come full circle, and can look again with true spiritual knowledge at the events that are unfolding in our time, and understand the dangers that are inherent in these events.

At the beginning of this book, an historical outline of the events that brought us to the point at which we now stand was briefly given. This outline looked at what was happening from the vantage point of the physical plane. We can now look at these same events from the vantage point of the spiritual world. Seen from the spiritual world, the Covid-19 pandemic is revealed in its true purpose- to create fear and division in humanity. Fear and hatred are spiritual nutrition for Ahriman, while love and courage are spiritual nutrition for Michael and his hosts. Ahriman, through creating fear and hatred strengthens his hold on human beings, and drives the human race into the abyss, where we will be engulfed by savagery and barbarity. The great corporate captains of the earth, and those who are in positions of power, are those who are aware of the true nature and design of the events that are currently unfolding. The lockdowns, forced vaccinations, the vaccine passports and economic turmoil that have pitted human beings against one another and created such an intense level of fear are not

arbitrary in nature- they have been planned to carefully create the conditions in which we now find ourselves. Among these elites, there is a small group that knows of the spiritual world, and those in this small group work consciously to bring Ahriman's influences into the world. They are also aware that Ahriman will incarnate in a human body, and work to create conditions on earth that will be most favourable to this incarnation. These individuals consciously know that they are bringing evil into the world, and they embrace evil and deliberately serve Ahriman and help to fulfil his goals. These few individuals belong to secret societies and cults, where they perform what Steiner refers to as black magic rituals, using and enslaving the souls the dead who have crossed the threshold with no spirituality, to increase their evil power and influence in the world<sup>16</sup>. The vast majority of the elite and powerful who are materialistic in nature are not aware of these secret brotherhoods of evil, but the few who are members of these brotherhoods greatly magnify and increase the influence that Ahriman wields in the world. It goes beyond the scope of this book to discuss this further, and to know these practices occur should be knowledge that the student on the path is aware of. The only way that these evil practices can be countered is by strengthening morality, by becoming a

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<sup>16</sup> See for example 'Secret Brotherhoods and the Human Mystery of the Double' by Rudolf Steiner  
<https://blackwells.co.uk/bookshop/product/Secret-Brotherhoods-and-the-Mystery-of-the-Human-Double-by-Rudolf-Steiner-Johanna-Collis/9781855843011>.

more compassionate and perfect human being, and by taking up the meditative and moral path outlined here.

All of the protest and outrage that has been witnessed during the pandemic, all of the social justice movements that wish to see change in the world and to bring about a more just society, are impotent in the face of Ahriman's growing power. This is not to say that protesting in the streets against issues of social justice or vaccine passports should not be done; there is a benefit that is gained when the public at large expresses its dissatisfaction at the corporate elites who are creating a dystopian world filled with fear and anxiety. But the protests themselves are most often the expression of fear, anxiety and anger, and it must be understood that all forms of fear and anxiety serve Ahriman. The student who mediates quietly in a candlelit room, cloistered from all of the negativity that is coursing through culture, pours light and love into the world, directly from spiritual beings who wish to help humanity, and this light and love is by far more powerful than protests in the street. The single seeker on the path of the spirit, who consciously betters themselves, and brings spiritual light and love into the world through Imaginations is more effective at countering evil and bringing positive change in the world than a thousand protesters in the street. It is only in this way that the mighty being of Michael can enter into the hearts of human beings and defeat Ahriman. The battlefield that will either secure the victory for Michael or for Ahriman is the human soul itself.

Evil forces pour into the world, and create a poisoned spiritual atmosphere rife with fear and hatred, that is spiritually breathed in by all human beings. By meditating and bringing the being of Michael and the Christ into world affairs, the poisoned spiritual atmosphere created by Ahriman is neutralized, and in its place an atmosphere of love, courage, compassion and morality is created. It is in this atmosphere that healing can take place, and we can again find peace, love, harmony, meaning and happiness. If enough people turn to the true spiritual path given by the spiritual world through Rudolf Steiner, the tide can be turned, and Ahriman can be defeated. For this to happen, those who were in the Michael school must awaken from their slumber, to take up their spiritual sword and shield, and battle against the forces of Ahriman. This is a battle against allowing fear and hatred to engulf our souls. Imaginative meditation is the most effective way to bring these beneficent forces into the world, and *The Apocalypse of Saint John* is filled with Imaginations that can be used in this way. The word apocalypse in Greek means revelation, hence *The Apocalypse of Saint John* is often called *The Book of Revelation*. What is it that is revealed? *The Book of Revelation* is an Initiation document, and through it the spiritual world can work on the soul of the individual human being, and can also more broadly influence all of human culture.

In addition to giving the world the body of work known as Anthroposophy, Steiner also worked at the renewal and re-spiritualization of Christianity. A circle of priests, mostly from Catholic and Protestant congregations,

joined with Steiner in 1924, where he gave a series of lectures titled *The Book of Revelation and the Work of the Priest*<sup>17</sup>. The priests who joined Steiner felt the spiritual degradation that had enveloped the various religious denominations, and there lived in their souls a deep desire to again receive the spiritual impulses that should flow into Christianity.

The degradation of the various Christian religions is most evident in the loss of understanding of the being of Christ. In most Western denominations the human figure of Jesus is often referred to, but the being of Christ has been forgotten. The Christ being is a cosmic spiritual being, who entered the human being of Jesus at the baptism on the Jordan (Luke, 1:5-12). This is also the same being referred to as the Word, described above in the Imagination of the first earth incarnation known as ancient Saturn- *And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14)*. This being created the world as we know it, and also created the human being at the behest of God. In America and elsewhere in the world, there is now what is referred to as the 'religious right' a group of so-called Christians who are affiliated with politicians and movements that espouse, among other things, American

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<sup>17</sup> *The Book of Revelation and the Work of the Priest*, Eighteen Lectures, conversations and question-and-answer sessions in Dornach from 5 to 22 September 1924, reconstructed from notes taken by the participants. Rudolf Steiner Press, London. 1998

militarism, reductions in taxation on wealthy corporations, and support of the oil and gas industry, ignoring and resisting attempts to heal the environment. None of these policies can be said to have any reflection in the teachings of Christ in the New Testament of the Bible, where helping the poor, living in peace with others in the world, rejecting the accumulation of wealth, and caring for the earth are all expressed repeatedly. This is mentioned here in this book to avoid confusion for readers who may mistakenly believe that Christianity is reflected in these various political and religious conservative movements. Those who identify or belong to these movements are often Christian in name only, and in truth serve the purposes of Ahriman. It is one of the great aims of Ahriman that the true meaning of the Bible be lost to humanity, and that the being of the Christ and his influence on human beings goes unnoticed. The being of Christ is an ancient and mighty being who now works on the earth, as He entered into the being of Jesus at the baptism on the Jordan. When Christ Jesus was crucified, He united with the earth, and today works in the spiritual atmosphere of the earth, accessible to all who seek. This being must be considered as a being of love and compassion, who works to bring peace and harmony into the world. With this being said, we can now enter into several of the Imaginations that are in *The Book of Revelation*, and discuss their true meaning.

In the third lecture of *The Book of Revelation and the Work of the Priest* Steiner describes how the priests he was working with should approach *The Book of Revelation*:

*'The Book of Revelation is unique, but as I allow it to work on me every one of its images, every Imagination becomes one with my own 'I'. The moment then comes when this revelation can be not only the experience of the human 'I', but also its creation. What we have to do is approach this Book of Revelation in an anthroposophical sense. Today, there is no other way of gaining access to it' (p.39).*

With this quote in mind, we can now discuss the one of the first of Imaginations that we are given in the Book of Revelation. We read the following: *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, and the first and the last...'* (Rev 1:11). What is the meaning of 'I am the Alpha and the Omega?' Here we come upon the creation of the human being, starting with the foundation of the physical body on ancient Saturn. This laying of the physical body can be called the Alpha, as it is where the creation of the human being begins. The Omega will occur when the incarnations of the Earth have been completed, with the final incarnation of the earth called Vulcan, occurring in the far distant future. To these words we can add the following image to complete the Imagination:

*Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the Chest with a golden band. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire. His*

*feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice was the sound of many waters. He had in his right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me 'Do not be afraid, I am the First and the Last'. (Rev. 1:12-17).*

Here we are given the spiritual image of Christ in all of His immense power. By contrast, the crucifixion of Christ must be seen as an act of sacrifice, where a God experiences death, and in the process unites with the earth and the destiny of the human race. We experience in the Imagination of Christ in *The Book of Revelation* the understanding that it is the Word, which becomes the Christ on earth, that has created the human being. Instead of seeing Jesus as an historical figure, as current religious denominations do, with no or little ability to kindle our spiritual life, we have instead in *The Book of Revelation* the true and powerful life creating image of the Christ. We can also understand that we, as human beings, are created out of the substance of the Christ, that it is the Christ who has given to us His being so that we can exist through the Word.

This Imagination is treated like other Imaginations- the process is always the same. We form the image first through our thinking, and then pictorially with our imagination. We then clear all thoughts and

images from our soul and focus with the greatest intensity we can muster on the Imagination we have created. Even trying to focus for five minutes without letting any other image or thought interrupt our Imagination is extremely difficult. After this focus on the Imagination is completed, the student then creates an absolutely silent space, where nothing- no thoughts or images enter, and in this silence we create the space into which the Imagination and the spiritual beings associated with it can work into our being. As a simple allegory, we cannot pour water into a cup that is full- we must first empty the cup of its contents. Similarly, we cannot receive impulses and content from the spiritual world so long as our soul is filled with thoughts, images and emotions associated with the material world. We must empty our soul completely so that spiritual content can then enter. The spiritual forces that are thus allowed to enter into our soul from our Imaginative meditation then work on in our sleep, bringing beneficent forces into the world. Steiner says the following in the *Book of Revelation and the Work of the Priest*:

*And when this Book of Revelation is rightly taken in...when it has been taken into the astral body and especially into the 'I' organization, then 'I' and astral body will carry this Revelation- which, as I told you in the first lecture, comes directly from the spiritual world and is actually a kind of letter, a direct verbal Revelation including visions-*

*then 'I' and astral body will carry it out into the world of the earth's aura when they are in the sleeping state. This means, dear friends, that all those who have taken The Book of Revelation into their inner understanding have gradually been enshrining it in the ether of the earth's aura, so that now the presence of Christ working on in the earth's aura provides this aura of the earth with its fundamental keynote (lecture nine, p. 125).*

This is the dilemma of freedom in the modern age- Christ and Michael and all of the spiritual beings associated with them cannot engage and help in the affairs of the earth without the expressed conscious activity of the human being facilitating the entrance of the good spiritual forces into the earthly realm. When this is done, the mighty being of Christ Himself can then work in the aura of the earth and 'provide this aura of the earth with its fundamental keynote', as Steiner says. This means that the fear, anxiety and hatred generated in the unconscious activity of human beings can be replaced by forces of love, courage and compassion. This transformed spiritual atmosphere would, if the activity of enough people occurred who understood the importance of spiritual development and Imagination, change the world completely. The forces of evil that are so plainly and blatantly working to create fear and division, and who wish to subjugate the masses- these forces of

evil would wither and die in this spiritual atmosphere of love, courage and compassion, created by those on the true spiritual path.

There are, of course, many other images that could here be discussed, all of them working in a similar way to the two examples given above. What is, for example, the meaning of the seven churches? These churches did exist in the ancient world, but the spiritual meaning of them is that of the seven different post-Atlantean cultural ages of the earth. This description of the meaning of the seven churches is given by an earlier lecture series Steiner gave to members of the Anthroposophical society in 1908 titled *The Apocalypse of St. John*<sup>18</sup>, and these cultural ages are spoken of in great detail in *An Outline of Occult Science*. These cultural ages are what comprises our history of the world as we now know it. After the destruction of Atlantis (what is called by scientists the ice age), the earth reformed again and became the earth as we know it today, with oceans and solid land masses. The first of the cultures that arose with the newly solidified earth was that of ancient India, followed by Persia, Egypt, Greece and now, our own age, that of the fifth post-Atlantean cultural age. Two more cultural ages will follow ours, at which point the greater cycle of earthly evolution in which we now live (the fifth

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[https://wn.rsarchive.org/Religion/GA104/English/APC1958/ApoJon\\_index.html](https://wn.rsarchive.org/Religion/GA104/English/APC1958/ApoJon_index.html).

post-Atlantean age) will end with the War of All Against All, described in *The Book of Revelation* as the battle that takes place at Armageddon (Rev. 16:16). Each of these cultures became the center of learning and development for humanity, and each of these letters describes one of these ages. Our own age, the fifth post-Atlantean corresponds to the letter given to the church in Sardis (Rev. 3:1).

In the history of the Earth, we have the great seven planetary conditions previously described. With each of these planetary conditions are smaller aspects of evolution known as rounds. The rounds that comprise earthly evolution are as follows: Ancient Hyperborean, Hyperborean, Lemurian, Atlantean, post-Atlantean (our age), sixth epoch, seventh epoch. Within our post-Atlantean age (round) we have the seven cultural epochs outlined (ancient India, Persia, etc.). Knowledge of this true history of the earth, which expands far beyond our current understanding of the history of humanity of the last several thousand years is described by Steiner in detail in *An Outline of Occult Science*, *Theosophy* and many other anthroposophical publications, and must be considered as foundational knowledge for the spiritual seeker. This very brief sketch of the various historical epochs and incarnations of the earth is given to simply fill out the images that we are given of the seven churches and their meaning in *The Book of Revelation*. Having said this, although it is illuminating to have a true understanding of the content given in *The Book of*

*Revelation*, it is not essential to the creating of the Imaginations that are given.

It would be a mistake to approach the Imaginations of *The Book of Revelation* with the notion of trying, at the outset, to decipher them to gain an understanding of the times in which we are now living, or of past or future historical happenings. It is true that these images do contain prophetic information- this is of course an important aspect of *The Book of Revelation*, and through Imagination this information will gradually be given to us as the Imaginations are diligently worked upon and ripen in our souls. For example, at the time of writing this book, a great deal of debate has occurred regarding the meaning of vaccine passports. Many are asking if this is a sign of the mark of the beast, given in chapter sixteen (Rev. 13:16-17). Those who are not vaccinated have been prevented from going to sporting events, restaurants, and from traveling. Could this lead to more restrictions and to a system where those without the passport could be prevented from buying and selling? The answer to this is, of course, yes, and it may be that what we are witnessing is indeed the development of the mark of the beast, but from an esoteric, meditative point of view, thinking constantly in terms of what does this or what does that image in *The Book of Revelation* mean damages our ability to gain spiritual insight from the Imagination itself. The true meaning of many the Imaginations has been given by Steiner in both the lecture cycles he gave on *The Book of*

*Revelation.* This knowledge can be used to give us some clarity into the Imaginations themselves, but this is secondary to the process of Imaginative meditation, which is a process that uses thought to initially create the Imagination, but which must then eliminate all thinking if it is to be effective.

As was discussed in the forming of the Imagination of ancient Saturn, Steiner tells us not to ponder or attempt to derive meaning from Imaginations that we create. The meaning of the Imagination will be given to us by the spiritual world when we have been deemed ready to receive it. We can use the information that has been given to us by an Initiate, in this case Rudolf Steiner, when we form our meditations, and it is important and helpful to know the times in which we are living in relation to *The Book of Revelation*, as they are given by an Initiate. The point to be made here is that attempting to glean intellectual meaning from Imaginations that we create is counter-productive, as the Imagination, once developed, must be allowed to mature through the will, which both creates the Imagination and prevents thoughts from interfering in this process. Having made this clear, we can now look at information given by Steiner regarding the sounding of the trumpets. In *The Book of Revelation and the Work of the Priest* Steiner communicates that we are now in the age of the sounding of the seventh trumpet. He says the following:

*The sixth angel began to sound his trumpet at the beginning of the 1840s, and he will continue to sound it until the events I spoke about yesterday take place at the end of the twentieth century [the beginning of the rulership of Michael and the casting out of the Dragon, which indicates the beginning of the sounding of the seventh trumpet], when the trumpet of the seventh angel will begin to sound. We are definitely already within the realm of the woes (Lecture 13, p.179).*

The seventh trumpet started to sound at the end of the twentieth century, roughly twenty years ago. In *The Book of Revelation*, a great deal happens during the sounding of the sixth and seventh trumpets. During the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which is now occurring, the following Imaginations transpire: The woman clothed with the Sun gives birth to a male child (Rev. 12:1-5), Satan is thrown out of heaven (Rev. 12:7-9), the woman clothed with the Sun is persecuted by the dragon (Rev. 12:13), the seven headed beast rises up out of the sea, as does the two horned beast rise from the earth (Rev. 13:1-18). Given the knowledge from Steiner that we are living in the time of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, these Imaginations should be considered key as to gaining a spiritual understanding of the times in which we are now living. Of particular importance to the student on the path of spiritual enlightenment is the Imagination of the woman clothed in the sun. Steiner tells us the following regarding this Imagination:

*The important change that took place in the middle of the Atlantean period is that before the middle of that period the cosmic female was seen in the spiritual aura of the sun, 'the woman clothed with the sun'. Putting it this way corresponds exactly with what happened in the supra-earthly world, in the heavens: The woman clothed with the sun giving birth to a male child'. The apocalypticist rightly calls him a male child, and this is the same being who later went through the Mystery of Golgotha [the Crucifixion of Christ] and who had earlier gone through other forms of existence... But in those times [ancient times] the initiates who saw and understood such a thing said: For the heavens that is the birth of the Christ, for us it is the birth of our 'I' (lecture twelve, pp. 171-2).*

Here, the seed of the 'I', the ego, is planted, and over many centuries it developed into that consciousness which we now have. Today, we live in what Steiner calls our lower 'I', that shapes us as an individual in the physical plane. This lower 'I' dies with the physical body at the time of our death, but this lower 'I' is a reflection of our higher 'I', the true seat of our ego which is imperishable. To develop ourselves spiritually, to develop spiritual vision is, at the same time to live in our higher 'I' in the physical world. This is the deeper meaning of initiation. In the Imagination of the woman clothed with the sun, there are several meanings which run parallel with one another. On the one hand, we can see in this

Imagination the birth of the Christ being within earthly evolution. It is the development of the cosmic Word of God. From this it can be understood that the birth of our own consciousness, our own 'I', is the result of the creative work of the Christ. In the birth of the male child, we witness the ancient birth of the Christ, but at the same time this Imagination represents the birth of our higher self, our higher 'I' that lives in and has a conscious perception of the spiritual world. To be an initiate is to shed our lower 'I', as a butterfly sheds its cocoon, and to be transformed into a being that lives in the higher 'I', in both the physical and spiritual world. This higher 'I' does not perish with death- it is imperishable. The Imagination of the birth of the child by the woman clothed with the sun is a powerful spiritual representative of this. *In The Book of Revelation and the Work of the Priest Steiner* goes into greater detail on the meaning of this and many Imaginations that occur in *The Book of Revelation*, and anyone who wishes to undertake these Imaginative meditations must consider as essential reading both lecture series given on *The Apocalypse of Saint John*. The last concept that will be discussed in this book is that of divine wrath.

It is a common complaint of those who read a document like *The Book of Revelation* that the seven vials of wrath and the destruction and suffering that these vials cause, shows a lack of compassion and love on behalf of the Godhead. What kind of God allows human beings to be covered with grievous sores, or rivers and oceans to be

poisoned, as is depicted in the pouring out of the vials of divine wrath? It is a difficult concept and can broadly be characterized by the question: Why does God allow suffering? In understanding the deeper meaning of the pouring out of the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth, we can have a clearer understanding of the role that human suffering plays in our own development. Steiner says the following in *The Book of Revelation and the Work of the Priest*:

*In its substance and in its being, and in so far as it is the cosmos of the human being, the universe consists of pure love, it is nothing other than pure love. In the part of the divine that is associated with the human being we find nothing except pure love...we can well imagine the age of materialism since the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth century, and also the culmination of materialism during the 1840s; we can well imagine the further ramifications of materialism after that with all that has been in human thought and action, with all those terribly destructive forces that have been raging in humanity since the middle of the nineteenth century, even though many still hardly notice it at all. Over this weaves divine love unfolding in the light.... Dear friends, take some absolutely pure water, some crystal-clear water, and then take a dirty sponge, a sponge that has dirt in it. Put the sponge into the crystal-clear crystal- pure water, dip it into the water and then squeeze it to let the water flow out again: now the water is dirtied, is muddied.... Here is the picture:*

*Crystal-clear water, sucked up by the dirty sponge, becomes muddied, undrinkable water. Divine love appearing in the light, sucked up in the era of consciousness soul development by all those ingredients of evil that rage in humanity either latently or manifestly, becomes divine wrath (lecture 15, p. 210-11).*

To this concept of divine love, where the pure love of the spiritual world, a love that in reality is the driving force of all creation, to this concept we must also add the concept of freedom. Evil has been allowed into the world in order that we may chose the path of love and freedom, and the result of this is that the pure love of the divine spiritual world has been polluted by the evil so prevalent in the world today. This divine love then becomes divine wrath, but this divine wrath must not be considered as the vindictive action of a God who wishes to punish the human race because it has not prevented evil from penetrating so deeply into culture. Rather, it must be considered as a means by which we are protected from our own self-destruction. Steiner states:

*The secret of the next age is that divine love will appear in the form of divine wrath because of what happens within humanity. It will appear in the form of the divine wrath which will give protection from all material constructs that will arise as the result of the materialistic consciousness soul era: by causing those constructs to perish it will give*

*protection against further damaging effects.... That fulfillment will be the pouring out of the divine wrath in the age when- far more so than in ours- what human beings do will influence what happens in nature.... For if, at this time the divine love were seemingly to have mercy on the weakness of human beings, this would in reality be no true mercy. It would amount to turning a blind eye to all the consequences so richly deserved by human thoughts and deeds, which would be the most loveless act of all, since then humanity would truly perish (lecture 15 p. 211-13).*

The next age Steiner spoke of in 1924 when he gave these lectures has now begun. The seventh trumpet is sounding, and it is clear to see that our actions today are having a profound influence on nature. The droughts, floods, fires and extreme weather events, all predicted by scientists, are occurring more frequently and with more intensity with each passing year. In my home in British Columbia, Canada a heat wave with temperatures of forty-five degrees Celsius caused months of raging forest fires, and was then followed in the fall by devastating flooding that badly damaged thousands of acres of farmland and washed away large sections of major transportation highways, crippling the province for months afterwards. Events like these are happening around the world. These enormous changes that we are witnessing in our

environment are the result of the materialistic culture that we have been immersed in for the last several centuries. The sounding of the seventh trumpet indicates that this materialistic culture is coming to an end. The immorality that is part and parcel of our materialistic culture, and which is the hallmark of the political and corporate powers that rule the world will, if unchecked, destroy the human race. The outpouring of the vials of wrath involves the destruction and alteration of nature, and with this destruction, also the downfall of the world order under which most of the human race is now captive. This must be seen as an act of grace from the Gods, for into this destruction the seeds of a truly moral, compassionate and spiritual culture can be sown.

The destruction that is part of the sounding of the seventh trumpet must not be seen as written in stone as to its duration or severity. We can never forget that humanity is the hierarchy of freedom and love. Each hierarchy of beings contributes in one aspect to the evolution of all creation. The first hierarchy, the mighty and sublime Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones, in all their great power, are not free beings. They have created the solar system, but are not able to act in an independent way. They behold the Godhead and take directives from it, and any notion of refusing the will of the Godhead is an impossibility for the first hierarchy. It is only the

human race, and only the human race at this time in its evolution, that can be said to have the ability to act in a free way. As has been stated several times already, to be truly free one must have choice. God has given us choice in the form of goodness and evil. To choose the divine path of goodness must be considered an act of absolute freedom. This cannot be said of the path of evil. Very few have a true understanding of what it means to actively choose the evil path. To do so means to suffer in the future. Evil is part of the karma that will ultimately create freedom for the human race, while at the same time strengthening the forces of goodness in the world. The destruction of the environment that will inevitably take place in the future will assure that the will of God will ultimately prevail. The environment will eventually recover, as the earth contains great forces of healing within it, but through this destruction, the economic world order infused with Ahrimanic influences will crumble. Through this destruction, a truly just and moral society will arise from the ashes of the totalitarian technocracy that is now taking shape before our eyes. We are told today that the future will be filled with technological wonders- where we will live in a virtual universe and be more and more severed from the beauty of the natural world. For those on the spiritual path the opposite must take place. The future must be one where we again connect with and nurture the earth, unplugging from all of the

electronic static which deafens and blinds our spiritual organs of perception.

The incarnation of Ahriman through a human body must first be experienced and endured by the human race. This event will happen- it is inevitable and part of the what the human race must experience through its evolution. The degradation of the earth that is now taking place is the result of the moral ruin of large groups of human beings, and is caused by Ahriman's influence on these unfree human beings. One cannot be separated one from the other. The amplification of fear, anger and subjugation that has occurred under the excuse of a pandemic must be seen as only the first in a series of events that will happen over the coming years and must be understood as a sign that Ahriman is indeed very close to fulfilling his destiny. With this there must also be the understanding that God has given us the freedom to influence these events dramatically. We have the power to overcome this darkness- to minimize the destruction that will take place if an awakening to the opening of the gates of the spiritual world occurs.

We can greatly lessen the impact that Ahriman's incarnation will have on the world, and the environmental destruction that will ensue if this incarnation occurs unchallenged. The events that occur in the Apocalypse must be seen as

malleable, that the outcomes of these events occur on a continuum, and that if we, as human beings chosen by Michael to fight the dragon Ahriman awaken and rise up to the challenge that has been placed at our feet, if we develop our morality, if we meditate and spiritualize ourselves, and understand the immense power inherent in Imaginative meditation, we can turn the tide of evil that is pouring so powerfully in the world today. There is no more important endeavor in the world than understanding the times in which we are living, and the spiritual awakening that must occur if we are not to fall into the abyss of chaos, destruction and suffering. This is the challenge of the times, and to those who understand and feel the truth of what has here been spoken- to those who feel it to the depths of their souls, know this: The sounding of the seventh trumpet is now taking place. It is a call to awaken spiritual forces that have been slumbering within humanity for over two thousand years. To hear this clarion trumpet call, to awaken in our souls the spiritual forces that live in us, is to fulfil the karma that has been granted to us by the Gods. We are the vanguard of a new age of spiritual awakening. To those who have a spiritual understanding hear these words- awaken to your destiny and join with the great being of Michael for the salvation humanity!