

Pathwork Guide Lecture No. 22
An Unedited Lecture
January 31, 1958

SALVATION

Greetings in the name of the Lord. I bring you blessings, my friends. Blessed is this hour. Angels of God always have had the opportunity to speak and to manifest to human beings. There are many who do not deny the possibility of such manifestations by undeveloped spirits, but, illogically enough, they deny that a communication with higher developed beings, whatever you may call them, should be possible. This is very shortsighted, for the laws of nature and the universe must work alike for good or for evil or for the many stages in between. It is only a question what conditions are prepared and fulfilled. If a person denies any communication with any incarnated entity, this belief may be a wrong one, but at least there is some consequence in it. But to admit the possibility of one and exclude the possibility of the other is unreasonable. There are many ways, indeed, how you can test with what spirits you are communicating. And anyone who wants to judge must, under all circumstances, take the trouble to study this vast subject of how to test spirits, and only then will he be in a position to determine where they come from. I have, at times, spoken about this subject, and I will do so again in the future. However, for the time being, I only wish to say this: if you still lack the necessary knowledge to determine with what spirits you are communicating, what laws are involved, how you can tell, etc., you can ask your heart right now. Because here you will get the answer to some extent, provided you do not let your doubts shade your feelings. If your feelings are receptive and open, you will be able to find and feel harmony or disharmony, love, patience, wisdom, and humility -- or the opposite of all this. But your heart will only be able to speak to you thus and confirm to you what you wish to know if you are receptive, open, and put all prejudice aside for the moment.

And now, my friends, I will continue the series of lectures I have started some time ago. Last time I spoke about the creation of this earth, how it came into existence, how mankind gradually evolved. I told you that this earth is a product, a picture so to speak, of the longing of the spirits who have fallen off and who have lived in darkness for a long time. And I have also said that this earth is equally a product of the longing of the spirits who remained in the world of God, for the fallen brothers and sisters to come back into divine light. And thus you can find here on earth beauty, love, and harmony; and you can also find the opposite, again with all the shades in between. This is the proof that this earth sphere is a product of God's world and the longing of the fallen spirits to reunite with God. And on this earth sphere, man has the possibility with his free will to develop and to decide what side to follow. In his own nature, there are of course both currents: the good current that once came from God in its own perfection, and the evil current that was accumulated, so to speak, during and after the fall. And between these two currents, the conscious self stands and has the possibility to decide to either take the line of least resistance, which is always man's lower nature, or to follow his higher self, which must be the difficult and narrow path. I have also mentioned that communication with the world of the spirit has always existed, but at the beginning, when this earth sphere was relatively new, it was impossible for man to commune with God's world because there were still too many impure and unpurified currents and attitudes in the

soul, too many evil desires, too much blindness to fulfill the necessary conditions. And that is why God has always sent beings on this earth who were not fallen spirits. Some of the great prophets, some of the so-called saints belonged into this category. And they did not only bring the wisdom, the love, and purity with them to leave their mark upon this earth sphere, but, due to these conditions, they had the possibility to have communication with angels of God. This is briefly what I have said in my last lecture. It is the essence which will prepare you for what I have to say to you tonight.

So now, I would like to tell you about the salvation of Jesus Christ and what it really means. There are indeed very few people who realize the full significance of this salvation, least of all the organized churches who have mostly completely misunderstood what this salvation is. There are many people who believe that Christ died on the cross for the sins of everyone else and that thus no one is responsible or accountable for his sins, faults, and weaknesses, etc., for Christ has atoned for him through His death. This, of course, my friends, cannot be. It would be utterly senseless. After the explanation of the real story of the salvation, you will not only see that this is a comfortable misunderstanding, but you will clearly perceive how this misunderstanding could have come about.

I have also mentioned that the salvation was not only done on this earth sphere but in every sphere in existence. Long before this earth sphere existed and after the so-called fall of the angels, which I have gone into greater detail some time ago, God's plan was ultimately that every single one of those fallen beings should have the means to come back to Him, back to light and harmony. But this could only be done if God's laws would never be broken, not even for the purpose of bringing back the fallen creatures. And this was indeed a very difficult task to follow through. I also explained that each being, put into creation by God, was created perfectly in one way. Each being represented one divine aspect. And the purpose was that, with the power these spirits were endowed with, they were themselves to extend this perfection in other realms. Let us say, for instance, one being was perfect in love, another in wisdom, and so on and so forth. Now, with this divine power we all once had, the aim was to make ourselves perfect in every other respect and thus become Godlike at one time. And by so doing, additional worlds of beauty would come into existence -- spiritual worlds. For as you know, every thought, every feeling, every ambition, every act is form in spirit and thus creates a world. You also know that a number of spirits have used this divine power for this purpose. And a number of other spirits have used the divine power in the opposite way, and thus the fall came into existence. After this fall, Christ, who, of course, existed in the spirit world long before He was born as man, organized, if I may use this expression, all the spirits in God's world, to use all their strength and their perfection in their particular field for the help of this plan of salvation. In other words, the pure spirits, instead of continuing and extending their own growing perfection, postponed this ultimate goal for the purpose of using their power for arranging and working for this plan of salvation -- on this and on every plane in existence. And now, of course, I am still talking of the divine spheres.

In the spheres of darkness, some time had to go by before anything could be done. Enough spirits had to have this certain longing for light before lighter worlds, still in the realm of Lucifer, came into existence. Without this longing, unconscious and blind as it was at the beginning, nothing could change, no matter what would have been arranged by the world of God. In your language, millions and millions of years went by before, due to this longing, gradually this earth sphere came into existence. And the more souls came to live on earth because they were ready to do so, low as their development still was, the more general and individual development proceeded. For merely by

living on this earth sphere, they came, for the first time since after the fall, into contact with something divine, subdued as this manifestation may have been for the most part. In the meantime, Christ was busy preparing and working in the spirit world of God, planning ahead and sending various pure spirits to live on earth, as well as organizing the teachings that should be brought to mankind through these pure spirits now incarnated, either through inspiration and guidance or through communications with God's world. It is impossible for you to imagine how minutely everything had to be worked out, how painstaking this work was so that everything was in accordance with the divine laws of justice.

At that time, no matter how far a human being developed spiritually, when returning to the Beyond, they were still under the dominion of Lucifer. For as I have explained thoroughly the last time, every divine aspect was turned into its opposite quality. Therefore free will, which is divine, was turned into dominion. And of course Lucifer would not give up this dominion he held over his followers. If, for instance, a human being, due to his changing attitude and growing harmony with God, would begin to produce light and beautiful spheres in the spirit world, even these spheres were still belonging to the kingdom of Lucifer because he did not relinquish his power over this person. Furthermore, no one was, at that time at any rate, so far developed that he would only produce spheres of light. He would produce and own several spheres, so to speak -- harmonious and disharmonious ones. And, incidentally, this happens with each one of you, with every human being. Wherever there are faults, weaknesses, blindness, according spheres come into existence. Wherever you are pure and purified, beautiful spheres are being created by you. And you will not only own the best, but also the worst you have built. Any relatively highly developed human being might thus have a number of light spheres, but even these spheres were still under the dominion of Lucifer as long as the salvation work in this respect was not finished. By the way, the so-called hells are constituted not only of one sphere of only dire darkness and misery, but, as there are many gradations in the divine spheres, the same holds true for the luciferic ones.

When enough beings who were ready and really consciously cognizant of God desired to have complete union with God, the time was ripe for the greatest part of the plan of salvation to take place, which Christ took upon Himself. The reason was not only His infinite love and compassion with all His fallen brothers and sisters, but also the following: during the process of the fall, this first spirit who has fallen, called Lucifer, developed an intense jealousy towards Christ. Thus it was logical that Christ Himself should prove His love by His great sacrifice and work, not only to all the other fallen creatures, but also to Lucifer himself, who through this deed alone would one day in the far, far away future find it possible to return to God and ultimate happiness. Christ was made by God the king of the universe and as such He was ready to have not only the highest privileges, but also the strongest responsibilities. By carrying the heaviest burden alongside His exalted position, He gave another example for the world.

Thus, when the time was ripe, He faced Lucifer. And now, my friends, I must ask you not to think all this could not have been that way because it sounds all too human. All you have and know as human beings, not only in subjects and objects, in abstract and concrete ideas, in language, but also in any sort of forms you know is only a limited imitation of what existed in spirit before this material world, only in much greater variety. And often human beings think, when we mention these things that spirits talk or have certain objects and so on, that this is too human, too concrete. And yet, in spirit, as I have said repeatedly, everything is concrete! Everything is form! While, in your world, only material objects have form, and the so-called abstract things do not have form, for

they are invisible to you. This is not so in spirit. Love is a form. When you have a beautiful thought, it will create one form. When you have a wicked thought, it will create another form -- a concrete form for us. And therefore I beg you to keep this in mind and not to think this is just childish because Lucifer and Christ would not talk together like two human beings. It may not be in exactly the same way as when two human beings talk; the procedure may be different. It is a spiritual procedure. This, of course, is impossible to translate into human language. Therefore, the language I have to use must be limited to your understanding.

So, to get back: Christ would face Lucifer and would tell him: "Now, there are so and so many spirits who do not wish to remain faithful to you. They desire to go back to God. Therefore, you should let them free." Lucifer would not agree to that. He maintained that he does not recognize divine law and would use his power as he saw fit. So Christ said, "In this case, there must be a war between us, between your forces and the forces of the divine world." But the chances should be evenly distributed, and that means, as mentioned before, that the divine forces must be numerically in the minority for the simple reason that the forces of good are infinitely stronger than the forces of evil, perhaps twenty to one. If you have one absolutely purified being against twenty very impure beings, the strength of this one pure being would outweigh the strength of these twenty impure ones. However, Lucifer said, "Even if such a war should take place and even if the divine forces should win and take my power away, I will thereby not recognize the law of God as being just." And as you know by my previous lectures, this constituted an essential part in the plan of salvation since no one should be eternally damned, not even Lucifer himself. And so that no eternal damnation would ever be possible, Lucifer himself would have to admit at all times the absolute justice of the divine laws. Therefore, Christ asked him, "In what way would you consider the divine powers to be just?" And Lucifer answered, "If such a war took place after there has been one being of the world of God, if you wish, living like a man without any protection at certain crucial times, and without guidance by the world of God, and, as a man where a great part of the knowledge is dimmed out, where matter stands in the way, he would remain faithful to God in spite of my own temptations and in spite of greatest hardship and misery to go through if remaining faithful to God. There must be the most difficult conditions possible. I will offer this person every possible worldly power and release of all hardships befalling him if he forsakes God. If anyone would remain faithful to God under such conditions, which I doubt very much -- in fact, I say it is impossible -- then I will have my battle with you, and I will recognize God's laws as being utterly just." You must know, my friends, that each living human being has at all times guardian spirits of the world of God. With some people, they may not be able to come too close due to their own attitude, but nevertheless they are there even if they are in the background and they watch out that nothing befalls their protégée that is not according to God's laws of justice or that the person may be too weak to endure. To be left alone on this earth sphere without the support of God's spirit world and on top of that having to resist all attacks, challenges, hardships, and temptations that the powers of darkness could think of, seemed indeed an impossible task to fulfill. And no human being has ever had to go through anything like it even in the remotest degree. Therefore, Christ cannot be compared with any other person who ever lived, no matter how pure or how wonderful the teachings may have been. For Christ has shown in deed and in fact what others have taught, and this under infinitely more difficult circumstances than anyone else ever had to bear!

So these were the conditions Lucifer put up in order to recognize God's laws as being just. If this seemingly impossible task should really be fulfilled, then this battle could take place; and if he

should lose this battle, then Christ could make His terms and he, Lucifer, would not doubt God's justice in every respect.

So this was then the plan. And Christ took it upon Himself although Lucifer did not specify that it had to be Him, for the before-mentioned reasons. My friends, if you study the Scriptures from this point of view, you will get an entirely different understanding out of it. And I am quite sure that the reason of the life and death of Christ will thus make sense to you because otherwise it would not make any sense that He should die on the cross for sins that others have committed. For if you have committed a sin, you yourself have to straighten it out, and no one else can or should do it for you! If someone else would do it for you, it would not mean any purification for you. You would not have the strength you gain through the process of self-purification, which alone will protect you from committing sins again. For as long as the evil root is not torn out, it must again produce impure fruits. And the tearing out of evil roots can only be done by yourself. So that was not the reason Christ suffered and died. You will also understand why He was left completely alone for a long time. And naturally, as a man, He did not have the same knowledge He had as a spirit. If He would have had that same knowledge, the task would not have been so difficult. Of course, since He is the highest being in creation, He had some knowledge -- and a great deal of spiritual strength and wisdom. But there would be no purpose at all to life on earth if -- and this applies to everyone -- the same spiritual knowledge were available as when being not in the flesh. So Christ did not know exactly what was involved while He lived on earth. In the course of the years, He received some knowledge. He had a vague idea, like anyone of you might have a vague idea -- "I have this task to fulfill" -- but what may come of it, how it will end, what the exact meaning is, you will not know. And He did not know that either, and He was not supposed to know it while being incarnated. After a certain time, all the angels of God had to leave Him. They were with Him for some time of His life but not when the really difficult task began. And I have also explained to you that the teachings He brought were important and wonderful, but this was an additional facet of His life. It was a sideline, so to speak. Whenever anything happens in strict accordance with the will of God, there is not merely one good reason and purpose, but many factors play a role, many good purposes are fulfilled with one divine deed. This, again, applies to everyone. But to bring the teachings did not constitute His reason for living as a man. Beautiful as the teachings are, they were not new. Other people before have brought in the essence the same teachings. He adjusted them according to the present times then and considering the ever evolving development of mankind, but that was all. As I have explained, the task was that, quite alone, cut off completely from the world of God, He had to resist the temptations of Lucifer, who put the greatest effort imaginable into his goal to bring Christ to fall. He used every device possible, he organized all his helpers, and believe me, my friends, even though he certainly lacks wisdom and insight, Lucifer is not stupid nor without great resources in his own dark powers. On one side, Christ saw nothing but suffering, physical suffering and psychological suffering, humiliation as you cannot imagine. And this humiliation and psychological suffering was a great deal worse than the physical suffering, as bad as it was! On the other hand, He had all the temptations of the world of darkness. Of course, Christ was what you would call psychic -- to the maximum degree. His mediumistic qualities were more strongly developed -- and not just in one department, but in every department -- than any one else before or after. This was an advantage as long as God's world was close to Him, but when He was cut off from it, this was merely an additional hardship, for all the manifestations coming to Him originated from the world of darkness. Clairvoyantly He came in contact first with high emissaries from the luciferic world and later with Lucifer in person, who showed himself as a beautiful being and who offered Him all the worldly advantages He might desire and instant release of all His sufferings if He

would accept Lucifer and give up His idea of God. Lucifer taunted Him in the worst moments of His sufferings: "Where is your God of love and justice? If He existed, would He allow His beloved son to go through all of this? If your God cannot offer you more, are you not better off with me? Look what I have to offer you. Your God can only offer you intense suffering and hardship in every possible respect," and so on and so on. Can you not imagine what this meant? If Jesus would have known the exact significance of His task, it would not have been half as difficult to resist. And this exactly should not be the case. On the other hand, to have several doubts at these crucial times, doubts about everything -- His true identity, that there was some wise and good purpose in all His hardships which He could not understand at this time, and in short, about everything He had learned in the years previously -- was inevitable. Often He wondered whether He was not under some illusion, whether all His previous knowledge was not the product of imagination, etc. And always Lucifer would be instantly at His side on these occasions and strengthen such thoughts. Being a man, having matter between Him and absolute truth, it is easily perceivable how extremely hard it was for Him to remain faithful to God and not give in. If the conditions of His task were not such that even He must have doubted at times, His task would not have been so infinitely magnificent! Therefore, Christ had to have the same obstacles of matter as every other human being, only intensified to a maximum degree! Material substance is a curtain, and man has to grope to open that curtain. Jesus Christ had to do the same, only in conditions that, even with these explanations, you cannot vaguely appreciate how extremely difficult they were. To remain on the right path under these circumstances without fully understanding -- my friends, you cannot really know what it means. And having the humility to put God, in spite of all these passing thoughts of doubt, above everything, even above His suffering and above His not understanding why, was the task. And indeed it seemed almost impossible that anyone could do it. But Jesus Christ did!

With this, Christ had not only fulfilled the conditions by which the world of darkness could never, at any time, claim that God's laws are not just, but, at the same time, He also set an example for everyone born after Him, my friends! So when you are in suffering and you do not understand why, if you can think of Jesus Christ in connection with the true story of His salvation and if you can bring yourself to imagine His sufferings as something real, not some imaginary legend, but as real as your own sufferings, only so much worse, perhaps then it will be so much easier for you to follow in His footsteps, to follow in His path and remain in humility and let God take over, wherever your life is concerned.

After Christ had successfully completed His task on this earth sphere -- I could talk hours and hours about His life on earth, my friends, about his sufferings, about His death, but perhaps, if you read the Bible now, your own imagination can give you a better idea of the deep significance and reality of all this -- immediately following His death, a number of things took place on earth, so-called "miracles" that should show mankind that a major phase in the history of creation was over and a major new phase had begun. After His physical death, Christ returned into the world of spirit. And having fulfilled the conditions, He, with a relatively small amount of specialized spirits in this respect, had a spiritual battle in the world of darkness. Now this again, my friends, may sound too human for you, that spirits should have wars. Where do you think wars come from? They again are only an outpicturing of spiritual war. And although, of course, a spiritual war does not take place in exactly the same manner as a material war on earth, the spiritual essence is there. How it happens is again impossible to describe because you are lacking the perception and understanding and I am lacking the possibility to express myself in human language. So I can only word it in a sort of a condensed way that may sound symbolical, and it may be symbolical to a certain extent, but

nevertheless, a war has taken place between Christ and Lucifer. You have to use, let us say, your imagination, your inner vision not to take it literally as though a war with guns or with spears or whatever, as you have on earth, has taken place in exactly that form. No, of course not, but anyway, there was a spiritual war. Again Lucifer had to admit the justice of the ways of God's world, for, as mentioned before, Christ came to fight under even conditions. It would have been in His power not to take any risks by using greater strength, more helpers, let us say; but He did not for the same reason that He undertook this life on earth -- so as to preserve God's justice even in the eyes of Lucifer. The chances were even, and this was so apparent that not even Lucifer could deny it. That was so important, for the plan is, as I said, in a long, long time to come for which you have no numbers available in years, that Lucifer himself must ultimately come to the point when he, too, will return to God as the very last of all fallen off creatures, as he was the first to turn away from the laws of God.

So you see that Jesus Christ has fulfilled the plan of salvation in every sphere. In each sphere the task was a different one -- in various spheres of the world of God, where the manifold preparations were made; on this earth sphere; and in the world of darkness. After this battle was over, new conditions were set up which are reigning since that time after Christ's life and death on earth and His battle with Lucifer afterwards. In your history you will read that after the third day, Christ went up to heaven after His descent into hell. These various single details that were preserved are in a way a confirmation for you although the time element is not quite exact. The time is always "translated," so to speak, for in spirit, time, if there is such a thing, is individual, psychological, and very different. But this does not matter, mankind has made a symbol of these three days. These new conditions were that every human being had the possibility to turn to God during his development on earth, going from one life to the other. Lucifer had all the rights to tempt man to succumb to him by succumbing to his own lower nature, but should man resist, he would not be a subject anymore of the luciferic world, but the doors were now open so that he could unite with his Creator and inhabit the divine worlds once more. Even the traps and temptations that Lucifer could use were from that time on limited to remain in accordance with divine law. God's spirit world now has the right to interfere so that these divine laws are observed in exactitude, so that the activities of the powers of darkness are limited and stand ultimately under the jurisdiction of God. That Lucifer still has a certain amount of freedom is necessary not only for the now so often explained reason that he must always recognize divine justice, but also as a necessary means for development. For evil has to be tasted to the brim in many cases before it can be overcome out of free will and the being's own initiative. This desire to overcome must grow through ever mounting enlightenment in each individual's soul, and this, alas, is often only possible after going through darkness. That such enlightenment cannot come in one lifetime, goes without saying! To accomplish the perfection that is needed to enter into the kingdom of God -- this perfection that was lost during the fall -- to shed all the darkness that has come upon a soul, this can never be done in one lifetime. So many, many lives or incarnations are indeed necessary. This life on earth is like a school where from one class to the other you develop. Sometimes you may stay for a while in one class, and then you may have one or several incarnations in succession where you accomplish a great deal. The human beings, incarnated from the world of darkness, first come with very low and coarse instincts in them and only after many incarnations work off karmas. Often after some suffering and a number of divine influences, the attitude will begin to change, slowly but surely. When the senses have begun to refine themselves a little bit, then the real work of self-finding and self-purification begins, and for this phase, again, many an incarnation, always under changing conditions and circumstances, is necessary. Even in this secondary phase, many beings

have not yet the strength to find God in reality. There is still too much of the lower self present not to succumb to the influences of the luciferic world, whether this comes in the form of direct inspiration or through human, unwitting instruments. Thus it will take again a considerable amount of lives to awaken sufficiently to strengthen one's own will power for the all-important purpose of self-purification. And only then will come a further phase in which this process of very gradual purification begins. In each life, conditions are prepared that a certain side of the lower self has the opportunity to perfect itself best. So you see, it cannot be any other way, for it would be impossible to reach in one lifetime the necessary perfection to enter the kingdom of God for good. With each life, even in the worst cases, something is gained even if it can only be fully exploited at a later period: the period when a being declares: "My path leads to God. I will not listen to my lower self." This lower self is constantly and magnetically in touch with the world of darkness just as the higher self -- which is much further in the background, much more difficult to attain or to reach through all these layers of imperfections -- is in constant contact with the divine world. And the outer personality, with the will power, with the capability to decide one way or another, has the means to one day make the decisive step, "I declare myself for God, for my higher self with everything that that entails," disregarding the laziness, the comfort, the way of least resistance, to give in to one's faults. And whether these faults are still murder, stealing, wickedness or whether these faults are now only selfishness, jealousy, envy, resentment, laziness or whatever else makes no difference in principle. Anyone really declaring and deciding and remaining in this decision to follow this path to God, since the salvation of Christ, cannot remain a subject of the luciferic world. And Lucifer will have no power over such a being, whether on earth or whether in the spirit world. This is the way Christ has opened the door. And by this, you may also understand why it was said that Christ has saved you from your sins. This is right only if it is understood in the way that your great sin of falling, of not remaining faithful to God, of becoming part of this world of darkness at one time, this sin of the fall, has not the eternal exclusion of the divine worlds as a consequence. From this, Christ has indeed saved you, and for this you certainly have all the reason in the world to be grateful to Him. Through Him you now have the possibility, by your own efforts and development, to cross the threshold. In that sense it is correct. But if it is interpreted that Christ has died for all your sins and all your faults, then it is very wrong.

This is very briefly the story, or, better, the history of the creation of the universe, the fall, the creation of this earth sphere, and the salvation through Jesus Christ. At the beginning of this series, I asked you, my friends, to give me all questions you have in mind after I have finished, all questions pertaining to this subject and that have not been answered by the content of these lectures. I would like to suggest that you think about it, you reread my words, which of course is so essential, for there is so much missed when you just hear it the first time, and then for the next time you prepare your questions, and I will then gladly answer them as well as all other questions that we may not have the opportunity to deal with tonight. Is there something, however, that just occurs to you now?

QUESTION: Yes. May I ask the question whether the story in the "Pistis Sophia" corresponds and is a genuine story with what you said?

ANSWER: As you can very well judge for yourself, there is a great deal of truth in it.

QUESTION: Would it be recommended if the participants would read the "Pistis Sophia?"

ANSWER: Yes, certainly.

QUESTION: And the "Arcania Celestia?"

ANSWER: Certainly, it would be a very good idea. May I suggest that the participants, all who are interested, gather like you have done some time ago for the lectures that you, my friend, have given, and that you read it, excerpts of it, and discuss it. Afterwards you may have discussions about the subject. This should be handled in the form of a discussion group where you first read something and afterwards have a discussion about it. Would you be willing to do that?

QUESTION: Yes.

ANSWER: I would suggest that after this session you make arrangements for time, place, and so on in an orderly way. And later on there can be other books or themes. This would be extremely useful as an additional spiritual activity, and it will contribute a great deal to everyone's understanding. And let me tell you, my friends, the understanding of these matters is much more relevant and personal than you may first think. Anyone who knows my lectures will have observed that I very rarely speak about these things. Generally, I speak about the human soul, about the spiritual laws as they apply to the human soul and the individual human life. And I will return to this type of lecture from next time on with only occasional deviations when I will again deal with such apparent general questions. But all those general questions should extend your comprehension about the individual soul. All I have discussed here and that my good friend [a member of the group] will bring to you from a different angle is very relevant for each and every individual's belief, and not only merely by the fact that to understand these essential things will shed a great deal of light on points hidden thus far. By this light, you will be enabled to have a purer and more harmonious relationship with God. It will eliminate certain doubts about the justice of God, how all this evil is possible, why does He permit this evil, and so forth. And if these questions are cleared up, you can turn with a freer heart to your Creator and thus find the strength that you so badly need for your personal development. But not only for this purpose is it important for you to have some understanding about these questions, basic as it may be; you see, in every individual's soul, this whole story I have told you in these four major stages is going on all the time, every day, almost every hour. And if you can, through meditation, find out the personal, not only similarity, but actual repetition of all this in your own soul, you will have gained a great step forward. Any more questions?

QUESTION: Not in connection with this. I wondered whether the individual spirit, incarnated or not, is aware of its continuing identity?

ANSWER: Oh yes, certainly. Definitely.

QUESTION: Also, the same spirit, separately, even unknown to the incarnated individual, continues to know whatever he knows when he is not incarnated?

ANSWER: A spirit who is not incarnated has a much greater self-knowledge than an incarnated being because the more development has proceeded, the greater self-awareness becomes. It is an error to believe that a spirit in his highest form of development has no self-knowledge. It is quite the contrary. The higher the development, the greater the degree of self-awareness.

QUESTION: Yes, I understood that. I did not phrase the second question right, apparently. What I meant is, while a spirit is incarnated, does he have separate knowledge of himself even if the conscious personality does not know about it?

ANSWER: I see what you mean. This is a very important question. It depends here very much on the development of the individual. Anyone who is going on the spiritual path I am always advocating -- eventually the time must come for him when he will find his own spirit, or his real identity, which I often also call the higher self or the divine spark. As long as man is still groping in darkness and takes as the whole personality just the outside being and perhaps some of his subconscious, which for the most part belongs to the lower self, then he is not sufficiently developed. When development proceeds as it should, the time must come when you first discover, so to speak, like a different person, the subconscious. This is the first step. And this of course is not always pleasant. Because the subconscious has a life of its own, it even thinks to a degree in its own limited and blind way -- and this quite differently from the conscious mind. This often comes at first as a shock unless one is prepared to expect just this, prepared also by strengthening and by gathering of spiritual truth and knowledge, for instance the knowledge that this is still not the ultimate self. And only after this lower self, the subconscious, is met and faced thoroughly, understood, and rearranged where there is need for it -- and this is a long process -- then you will very slowly, very seldom at first, but later more and more, penetrate into your own higher self, your true and permanent identity. And if development progresses further, this higher self, your own holy spirit, will be more and more on the surface and will manifest in conjunction with your conscious being, with your brain or intellect in which your outer will power reigns. Whether the outer and active personality is in contact with the higher self or not is only a question of development and of personal striving. The difference is this: if you have identified yourself with your higher self, then you hold the reigns; you are indeed master over yourself, over life as a whole. But if you are, subconsciously and unbeknown to your intellect, driven by your emotions, by your subconscious, by your lower self; if you act without understanding why you act in this way or why you think that way and so on; then you are not the driver of your life, but you are being driven. You are not the master, but a slave. So, of course it is possible to have the true identity of the spirit manifest. I will say it is not only possible, but this is the goal of the spiritual path. Does that answer your question?

My friends, we will leave the other questions for next time. Since I did not want to break up this lecture again, there is not enough time for all your questions tonight, and next time we will have more time for your questions, according to how many there are to deal with.

With this, my friends, I retire into my world. And I beg all of you, each one of you, go to God and do not forget that He can be so near you. He is near you, only you are often not near Him! And it only depends which way you are looking to find light and salvation in your own problems. I will help you further with any problem anyone of you may have. Be in peace, my friends, be in God!

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