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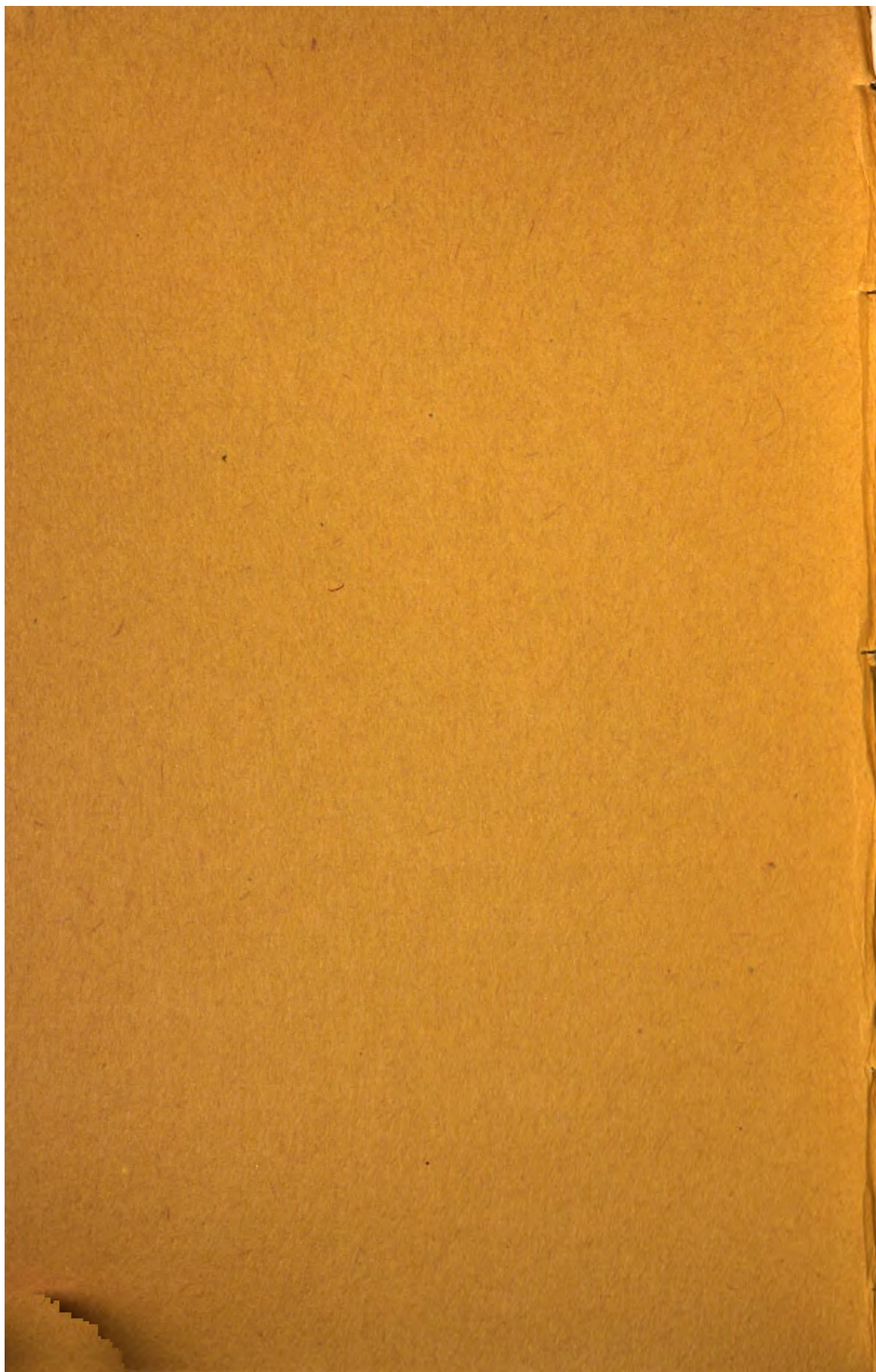
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**THE CHRIST MYSTERY
IN RELATION TO
THE SECRET OF PENTECOST**

*A Lecture given in Christiania
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THE CHRIST MYSTERY IN RELATION TO THE SECRET OF PENTECOST

WHEN we look back in the historic evolution of mankind, we are struck by certain events of a greater or lesser kind entering into the life of all humanity. The greatest of all is that event which we describe as the Mystery of Golgotha, through which Christianity entered into the stream of human evolution.

At the time when it took place, the Mystery of Golgotha was understood quite differently from what it was in later times, and now it must again be understood in a new way. Indeed, to perceive the Mystery of Golgotha truly in our time is particularly the task of Anthroposophy.

We must transplant ourselves into ancient times when men had an utterly different consciousness from what they have to-day. Let us transplant ourselves three or four thousand years into the past. In that time men had an instinctive consciousness of the fact that they had lived in the spiritual world before they came down into a physical body on the

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Earth. Every man knew that within him was a being of soul and spirit, sent down by Divine powers into this Earth-existence. Moreover, men had a different consciousness of death. Being able to look back in memory upon their life in soul and spirit preceding the earthly life, they knew that that in them which had lived before the earthly life would also live on beyond their death. In those ages there existed certain schools, which were at the same time religious centres. We refer to them as the Ancient Mysteries. In these schools and religious centres, men were instructed in those things which they might know about the life they had lived before they descended to the Earth. Thus they became aware that they had lived, before their earthly life, among the stars and spiritual beings, even as they live on Earth among the plants and animals, mountains and rivers. Man said to himself: "I came down from the world of stars into this Earth-existence." But he knew that the stars were not merely physical; he knew that every star was inhabited by spiritual powers with whom he was connected in spiritual worlds before he came down to Earth. And he knew that when he laid aside his physical body at death he would have to return again into the world of stars—the spiritual world.

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Moreover, they beheld the greatest of the stars in the Sun—the Sun with all its spiritual Beings, among whom the loftiest was that one whom they named the “Sublime Being of the Sun.”

Out of the Mysteries, they received this teaching: “It is the sublime Being of the Sun who gives men the power, before they come down to Earth, to find their true way back again after death into the spiritual and starry worlds.” The teachers in the Mysteries said to their pupils, and these in turn said to mankind in general: “It is the spiritual force of the Sun, it is the spiritual Light, that will carry you beyond your death. You brought it with you when you descended through birth into this Earth-existence.”

Many were the prayers, many the sublime doctrines proceeding from the teachers in the Mysteries, in praise or in description of the sublime Being of the Sun.

The teachers in the Mysteries said to their pupils and these in turn said to all mankind: “Man when he has passed through the Gate of Death must penetrate first into the sphere of the lower stars, the lower beings of the stars. Then, however, he must reach even beyond the Sun; but he cannot do so unless the force of the Sun Being is given to him.” The hearts

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of those who understood these teachings were fired most of all when they could pray to the Spirit of the Sun, who gave them immortality. The poems, hymns and exercises in religious devotion, which were directed to the Sun, had an unique value, penetrating deep into the feeling-life of man. Man felt himself united with the God of the great Universe whenever he was allowed to perform the service of the Sun.

In those nations in which the service of the Sun was customary, ceremonies, cults and rituals were enacted, which were especially adapted to this religious worship. The service consisted as a rule in this:—the image of the God was laid into the grave and taken out again after a few days, as a sign that there is a God in the great Universe, namely, the Sun God, who re-awakens men ever and again when they are about to fall a prey to death. In accomplishing this ritual the priest of the sacrifice said to his pupils, and these in turn said to the remainder of mankind: “This is the sign that you, before you came down to Earth, were in a spiritual realm wherein the Sun God dwelt.” They said to the believers: “Look upward! behold the shining Sun! That is only the outward manifestation of the Sun Being. Behind the outward radiance is the Eternal God of the Sun,—He who

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assures to you your immortality.” So the men who received these teachings knew that they had descended from spiritual worlds into this earthly world ; that they had forgotten the worlds wherein the Sun-God lived. “ At birth you left the kingdom of the Sun-God behind you—but you shall find it again when you pass through death, by virtue of the force which He has implanted in your hearts ”—so said the priests to the believers.

Moreover, the priests initiated in these Mysteries knew that the sublime Being of the Sun, of Whom they spoke to the believers, was the same of Whom men would afterwards speak as the Christ: but before the Mystery of Golgotha it was different. The priests said to the believers : “ If you would know aught of Christ, you cannot seek on Earth ; you must rise to the secrets of the Sun. Only beyond this Earth can you find the Mysteries of Christ.” Nevertheless it was comparatively easy for the men of that time to believe in such a teaching, for they still had a kind of instinctive memory of the realm of Christ from which they had descended to the Earth.

Mankind, however, is subject to evolution. The instinctive memory of the pre-earthly spiritual life was gradually lost. And so, eight hundred years before the Mystery of Golgotha, there

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were very few who still had this instinctive memory.

Imagine for a moment, my dear friends : Man passes through death, he goes out into the starry places. By-and-bye he comes into the regions whence he sees the stars from the other side,—the Sun, too, from the other side. We see the Sun from the Earth : after death we go out into the cosmic spaces and see it from the other side. Now when we see the Sun from the other side, we see it not as a physical disc, but as a kingdom of spiritual beings. Before the Mystery of Golgotha, after death and before birth, man saw from the other side the Christ within the Sun. The teachers in the Mysteries could remind their pupils of this vision of the Christ. They could awaken in them the idea : “ Before I was on Earth, I beheld the Sun from the other side.”

So it was in ancient times, before the Mystery of Golgotha. But now there came a time when this memory could no longer be awakened in men. It happened about eight hundred years before the Mystery of Golgotha. Men became less and less able to call to life the memory : “ Before we came down on to the Earth we beheld the Christ from beyond the Sun.” And now the teachers in the Mysteries could nevermore come forward, saying : “ Look

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upward to the Sun, that is the manifestation of Christ" for men would no longer have understood them. And for the men on Earth it was as if they had been deserted by the Christ power. It was as if they could no longer call to life any memory at all of the spiritual worlds.

At this moment, my dear friends, there first came over men what we may call the fear of death. Formerly, while they had seen the physical body die, they knew well that they as souls came from the realm of Christ and would not die. But now, men became filled with anxiety as to the fate of the immortal and eternal being within them. It was as though the union between man and Christ were cut off. It was so, because men could no longer look up to the spiritual worlds, while in the earthly world the Christ was nowhere to be found.

At this time, my dear friends, when men could no longer find the Christ in realms beyond the Earth, beyond the Sun, Christ in His infinite grace and compassion came down to Earth, so that men might find Him upon Earth.

At this moment something happened in cosmic evolution, with which nothing else is to be compared that men can know. All the Beings that are above man: Angels, Archangels, Archai, and so on up to the highest

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Beings, underwent in the spiritual worlds only transformations, only metamorphoses. They were not born, they did not die. In the ancient Mysteries it was said: "Men alone know birth and death: the Gods only know metamorphoses, they do not know birth or death."

Since, therefore, men could no longer reach up to Christ, Christ came down to men on Earth. To this end it was necessary that He as a God should undergo what Gods till then had never undergone, namely, birth and death. Christ became the soul of a man, of Jesus of Nazareth. He went through birth and death. That is to say, for the first time a God went the way of human death. That is the essential thing in the Mystery of Golgotha: It is not only a concern of men, it is a concern of the Gods. The Gods resolved: "One of us—the sublime Being of the Sun Himself—shall unite His Destiny with mankind, so much so as to pass through birth and death."

Since that time, men can always turn their gaze to what took place on Golgotha and find on Earth what they would otherwise have lost, —for their consciousness no longer reaches upward to the Heavens—namely, the Christ. Those who first witnessed the Mystery of Golgotha still had a last heritage—an old

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instinctive consciousness of what was happening. They were the Disciples and Apostles of Christ. They knew : “ The same Being whom in former times we could only find when we were able to look up in spirit to the Sun—we find Him now when we understand in the true way the birth, life and passion of Christ Jesus.”

Thus at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha there remained a few men who knew that He who was present as Christ in Jesus of Nazareth was the sublime Being of the Sun come down on to the Earth. Until the fourth century after the Mystery of Golgotha, men were still aware that Christ who is the Being of the Sun and Christ who lived in Jesus of Nazareth are one and the same Being. I repeat—until the fourth century after the Mystery of Golgotha. We may feel it especially deeply when we learn through spiritual science how fervently the men of the first Christian centuries were wont to pray : “ Thanks be to the Christ Being from whom we should otherwise have been severed upon Earth—thanks be to Him that He came down from spiritual worlds to us on Earth.” But when the fourth century after the Mystery of Golgotha had passed, men could no longer comprehend how the sublime Being of the Sun—the Christ—is the Divinity who assures immortality to man.

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Then, from the fourth century until our own time, mankind had only the outer Word of the Gospel, which tells us historically that there was a Mystery of Golgotha. Nevertheless, it worked throughout the centuries so strongly that men could turn their hearts through the outer Word of the Gospel to the Mystery of Golgotha.

To-day, however, we are approaching a time when humanity, having learned so much about the secrets of Nature, would become entirely estranged from the Word of the Gospel if a new way to Christ were not laid out for them. Anthroposophy, by leading man once more to a knowledge of the spiritual world, would fain prepare this new way to Christ. For you must see, the Christ Event is only to be understood as something spiritual. It is a spiritual fact. Whoever cannot understand it as a spiritual fact, cannot understand the Christ Event at all. Through anthroposophical knowledge we can transplant ourselves again into the time when Christ Jesus walked in Palestine and underwent His earthly destiny. We can gaze into the hearts and minds of the Disciples and Apostles, who knew, according to their instinctive way of knowledge: "The Being who formerly inhabited the Sun has now descended to the Earth and has walked among us. What

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was formerly only to be found upon the Sun has walked among us as Christ Jesus. It has come down to Earth." So the Disciples said to themselves: "From the eye of Jesus of Nazareth the warmth-giving power of the Sun speaks to us and when He walks among us it is as though the Sun itself were sending forth its light and power into the world." Those who could understand this said to themselves: "In a human being there lives and moves among us the Sun-Being who was formerly only to be attained when man looked up from Earth into the spiritual world."

Because the Disciples and Apostles could say this, they also stood in a right relation to the death of Christ; they had a true understanding of His death. Therefore they could still remain disciples of Christ Jesus, even when He had passed through death upon this Earth. We know by spiritual science that when Christ had left the body of Jesus of Nazareth, He wandered among His disciples in a spiritual form and taught them still. Nevertheless, after a time the Disciples and Apostles lost the power they had received, which had enabled them to receive His teaching even when He only appeared to them in a spirit-body. There came a moment in their life when the disciples of Christ Jesus said to them-

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selves : “ We saw Him, and now we see Him no more. He came down to us, came down from Heaven on to the Earth. Where has He gone ? ”

This moment, when the disciples believed that they had lost again the Presence of the Christ, is recorded in the Christian festival of the Ascension. It is a record of the fact of consciousness, that the sublime Spirit of the Sun, who had wandered upon Earth in the human being Jesus of Nazareth, had vanished again from before the Disciples.

When the Disciples of Christ had undergone this experience, there came over them a grief with which no other grief that can possibly exist on Earth can be compared.

In the ancient Mysteries, when they celebrated the cult of the Sun, when they had laid the image of the God into the Earth to raise it forth again after a lapse of days, their souls were overcome with sadness at the death of the God. Yet was this sadness not to be compared with the sadness that now overcame the hearts of Christ's Disciples.

You see, my dear friends, all really great knowledge is born of pain, anxiety and suffering. If, with the means of knowledge which are described in anthroposophical Spiritual Science, we try to take the path into the higher worlds,

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then, too, we only reach our goal by passing through pain and suffering. Without having suffered much, and thereby becoming free from the power which pain has to oppress us, we cannot know the spiritual world.

Thus in the time of which we are told as the ten days following the Ascension, the Disciples of Christ suffered infinitely much because the sight of Him had vanished from them. Out of this pain, out of this infinite grief, there then sprang forth what we call the Mystery of Pentecost. Having lost the sight of Christ in their instinctive outward clairvoyance, the Disciples found Him again through grief and pain—found Him again within them, in their inner experience, consciousness and feeling.

Let us look back once more into former ages. Before the Mystery of Golgotha men had a recollection of their pre-earthly life. They knew that they had received from Christ in the pre-earthly life the power to achieve immortality. But now, at this later time, men knew that they could not look back into the spiritual world, into the pre-earthly life, by their own human power. And the Disciples of Christ now turned to all that they held in memory about the Mystery of Golgotha. Out of this memory and pain there arose once more in their souls the vision of what man had lost,

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inasmuch as he no longer had the instinctive clairvoyance.

The men of old had said : “ Before we were born on Earth we were with Christ. From Him we have the power of immortality.” The Disciples of Christ now said—ten days after they had lost the outer vision of the Christ—“ We have seen the Mystery of Golgotha. This gives us the power once more to feel our immortal being.” That is expressed symbolically in the tongues of flame.

Through Spiritual Science, therefore, we can recognize this, too, in the secret of Pentecost : the Mystery of Golgotha had now taken the place of the Sun-Myth of the Ancient Mysteries.

That Christ is the sublime Being of the Sun, became especially clear to St. Paul when he experienced the revelation of Damascus. St. Paul was a pupil of the Initiates in the old Mysteries. He had understood that Christ is only to be found when one reaches clairvoyantly into the spiritual world. And now he said : “ Here are disciples declaring that the Being of the Sun has lived in a man on Earth and has passed through death. This cannot be, for the sublime Being of the Sun can only be seen outside the Earth.”

So long as he held to this belief, out of his knowledge of the Ancient Mysteries, St. Paul

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fought against Christianity. But by his revelation near Damascus it was made clear to him : Christ can be seen even if one is not transplanted into the spiritual world. Christ, therefore, has really come down on to the Earth. From this moment onward St. Paul knew that the Disciples of Christ Jesus were speaking truly when they said that the sublime Being of the Sun had now come down from Heaven on to the Earth.

If Christ had not appeared on Earth, if He had simply remained as the Divine Being of the Sun, mankind on Earth would have fallen into decay. Increasingly, as time went on, mankind would only have believed in the existence of material things : “ the sun is a material thing,” “ the stars are material things.” . . . For men would have entirely forgotten that they themselves had come down from the pre-earthly existence—from the world of stars, the world of spiritual being.

But it is only possible for a certain length of time to hold such thoughts, that all things are material. If, for example, all men were to believe—if only for a century—that all things are material, they would lose the inner forces of the spirit within them ; they would become as it were paralysed and ill. So it would actually have happened with mankind.

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Mankind would have become paralysed and weak if Christ with infinite compassion had not descended from the spiritual world to the Earth.

You will say: "But many human beings know nothing of the Christ, they have no faith in Him. How is it, then, with them? Why have they not become paralysed, morbid and weak?"

The answer is that when the Mystery of Golgotha took place Christ appeared on Earth not merely in order to give man a certain teaching, but in order to undergo the actual fact of His appearance upon Earth. He died for all men. The physical constitution of all men—even of those who did not believe in Him—was improved, nay, saved by the event of Golgotha.

Hitherto one could be a Chinaman, a Japanese, or Hindu, wishing to know nothing of the Christ, and yet—Christ died for all men.

But in the future this will no longer be possible in the same way, for in the future conscious knowledge will become far more essential to mankind than hitherto. More and more, in the future evolution of mankind, will it become necessary for all men to attain a certain knowledge of spiritual life and spiritual being. Anthroposophical spiritual research is

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striving towards such a knowledge as can lead all men alike into the spiritual world.

With this knowledge it is possible once more to recognize the Christ. And if we have the true Anthroposophy, we recognize Him in such a way that our description of Him can be intelligible to all men. With Christianity as it was hitherto proclaimed, one could go to Africa or Asia ; isolated individuals may there have confessed their faith in Christ, but the great mass of the peoples rejected what was thus brought to them. They could not understand what the missionaries were saying.

What kind of religion had the peoples ? The religions had arisen within the several nations. They were religions, therefore, which only the single nations could understand, for within each nation some particular sacred place or sacred personality was revered. So long as the ancient Egyptians worshipped their God in Thebes, they had to go to Thebes to worship at the sanctuary of this God. So long as Zeus was worshipped in Olympia, they had to go to Olympia to worship him. Likewise the Mohammedan must go to Mecca. Even in Christianity a little of this principle is still preserved. But if we understand Christianity aright, we know : the Sun shines over all men —the Sun shines over Thebes, over Olympia,

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over Mecca. Physically the Sun can be seen in like manner everywhere ; and so, too, the sublime Being of the Sun, the Christ, can spiritually be worshipped.

Thus will Anthroposophy reveal to mankind that the Being, who before the Mystery of Golgotha was only to be attained with instinctive, extra-earthly faculties, is attainable by man since the Mystery of Golgotha by the faculty of knowledge which man can acquire on the Earth itself.

Mankind will understand once more that "The Kingdom of the Heavens has come down to Earth." People will not speak in a nebulous, mystical way of the millenium, but they will understand that what was formerly to be found on the Sun is to be found henceforth on Earth, and they will say : "Since the Mystery of Golgotha—since He descended to the Earth we have Christ dwelling upon this Earth, even among men." Man will be able to feel anew, again and again, what the Disciples felt as the secret of Pentecost. Christ Himself has come down on to the Earth. His power is arising in our hearts as the power which assures immortality to men.

Then, however, we must also be able to take in full earnestness and in their deep significance the words of Christ—in such a sentence, for

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example, as this: "I am with you all days, even unto the end of earthly times." If we can take this in full earnestness, in all its spiritual depth, then we shall find our way through to the perception that Christ was not only here at the beginning of our era, but that He is always here. He speaks to us even now, if only we will hear Him.

To this end, however, we must learn once more through spiritual science to behold a spiritual in every material creature—a spiritual behind the stone, a spiritual behind the plant, a spiritual behind the animals, a spiritual behind the human being, a spiritual behind the clouds, a spiritual behind the stars, a spiritual behind the sun. When we penetrate through matter to find the spiritual once more in its reality, we shall also open our souls to the voice of Christ, Who would fain speak to us if only we will hear.

Anthroposophy can tell us of the Spirit that is there behind all Nature. Therefore Anthroposophy can also tell us of the Spirit that works in all the earthly history of mankind. It is only through the Mystery of Golgotha that the Earth has once more attained its sense and meaning. Before the Mystery of Golgotha the sense of the Earth was on the Sun, since the Mystery of Golgotha the sense of the Earth is

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united with the Earth itself. This is what Anthroposophy would bring to mankind as the everlasting secret of Pentecost. When men are ready to seek the spiritual world once more with Anthroposophy, then will they find the Christ again as an ever-present Christ, in the way that is right and necessary for the humanity of our present time.

But in this age if human beings do not turn their hearts to spiritual knowledge, they will lose the Christ. Hitherto Christianity did not depend on conscious knowledge. Christ died for all men. He did not deny man. But if men to-day reject Him in their life of knowledge, they are denying Him.

Since it was granted to us on this occasion to be together at the Whitsun Festival, I have thus wanted to speak to you to-day of the Christ Mystery in relation to the secret of Pentecost. People often speak of Anthroposophy as though it were an enemy of Christianity. But if you really receive the spirit of it, you will find that Anthroposophy above all will open the hearing, the heart, the entire soul of man once more to the Mystery of Christ.

My dear friends, Anthroposophy would fain share the destiny of Christianity itself. But it is necessary that the men of to-day should no

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longer merely look to the dead word which speaks to them of Christ. It is necessary that they should turn their hearts to a knowledge which can lead them to the Light itself—the Light in which the living Christ is contained, not the historic Christ who lived so many centuries ago on Earth, but the living Christ who lives on Earth and among men now and in every moment of the future, because, having been their God, He has become their Divine Brother.

Let us therefore receive this into our thoughts of Whitsuntide:—Through Anthroposophy we shall seek the way to the living Christ, feeling that the secret of the first Whitsuntide can be renewed in every anthroposophist inasmuch as the knowledge of Christ dawns in his own heart and he feels himself warmed and illumined through and through by the fiery tongue of Christian universal knowledge.

Thus let our path to the Spirit through Anthroposophy be at the same time our path to Christ through the Spirit. If a small number of human beings earnestly hold faith in this, then will the secret of Pentecost take root in an ever larger number of people of the present time and still more of the future. Then will there come about what is so greatly needed for the health and healing of mankind. Then

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will the healing Spirit speak to a new human understanding—that Spirit whom Christ Himself has sent us, who heals the sickness of the souls of men. Then will there come what all mankind is needing—the universal Pentecost.

