

The Bhagavad Gita
and the
Epistles of Paul

RUDOLF STEINER

THE BHAGAVAD GITA AND THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL

By Rudolf Steiner

Five Lectures, 28th December 1912 to 1st January
1913

Given in Cologne

Translated from shorthand reports unrevised by the lecturer, from the German edition published with the title, *Die Bhagavad Gita und die Paulusbriefe* (Vol. 142 in the Bibliographic Survey, 1961).

This translation has been authorized for the Western Hemisphere by the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung, Dornach, Switzerland.

CONTENTS

I. The uniform plan of World History. The Confluence of three spiritual streams in the Bhagavad Gita. 28 Dec., 1912

II. The basis of knowledge of the Gita, the Veda, Sankhya, Yoga. 29 Dec., 1912

III. The union of the three streams in the Christ Impulse, the Teaching of Krishna. 30 Dec., 1912

IV. The nature of the Bhagavad Gita and the significance of the Epistles of St. Paul. How the Christ Impulse surpasses the Krishna Impulse. 31 Dec., 1912

V. The spiritual nature of Maya. Krishna — the Light-Halo of Christ. The Risen One. 1 Jan., 1913

The Bhagavad Gita and the Epistles of St. Paul

THE, Western reader should not be discouraged by the long preparation before the Epistles are reached or by the intricacies of the old Oriental philosophy at the beginning of the lectures. It is most important to unite the two lines of thought and teaching; and the student who is patient with the first lectures will be correspondingly rewarded in the stupendous revelation opened out, to him at the close. This short course of lectures is, without exaggeration, an occult or spiritual development in itself. It was the first course given to the new Anthroposophical Society after the separation from the Adyar or Indian section of Theosophy, and well marks a great step taken towards the real union of East and West.

LECTURE I

The uniform plan of World History.
The Confluence of three spiritual streams in the
Bhagavad Gita.

28 December, 1912

WE stand today, as it were, at the starting-point of the foundation of the Anthroposophical Society in the narrower sense, and we should take this opportunity of once more reminding ourselves of the importance and significance of our cause. It is true that what the Anthroposophical Society wishes to be for the newer culture should not in principle differentiate it from that which we have always carried on in our circle under the name of theosophy. But perhaps this giving of a new name may nevertheless remind us of the earnestness and dignity with which we intend to work in our

spiritual movement, and it is with this point in view that I have chosen the title of this course of lectures. At the very outset of our anthroposophical cause we shall speak on a subject which is capable of indicating in manifold ways the remarkable importance of our spiritual movement for the civilisation of the present day.

Many people might be surprised to find two such apparently widely different spiritual streams brought together, as the great Eastern poem of the Bhagavad Gita and the Epistles of one who was so closely connected with the founding of Christianity, the Apostle Paul. We can best recognise the nearness of these two spiritual streams to one another if, by way of introduction, we indicate how at the present day, is to be found, on the one hand, that which appertains to the great Bhagavad Gita poem, and on the other the Paulinism which originated with the beginning of Christianity.

Certainly much in the spiritual life of our present time differs from what it was even a comparatively short time ago, but it is just that very difference

that makes a spiritual movement such as Anthroposophy so necessary.

Let us reflect how a comparatively short time ago if a man concerned himself with the spiritual life of his own times he had in reality, as I have shown in my Basle and Munich courses, to study three periods of a thousand years each; one pre-Christian period of a thousand years, and two other millennia, the sum of which is not yet quite completed; two thousand years permeated and saturated with the spiritual stream of Christianity. What might such a man have said only a short time ago when contemplating the spiritual life of mankind when, as we have said, there was no question of a theosophical, or anthroposophical movement as we now understand it? He might have said: "At the present time something is making itself prominently felt which can only be sought for in the thousand years preceding the Christian era." For only during the last thousand years before the Christian era does one find individual men of personal importance in spiritual life. However great and powerful and mighty

much in the spiritual streams of earlier times may appear to us, yet persons and individuals do not stand out from that which underlies those streams. Let us just glance back at what we reckon in not too restricted a sense, as the last thousand years before the Christian era. Let us glance back at the old Egyptian or the Chaldean-Babylonian spiritual stream; there we survey a continuity so to speak, a connected spiritual life. Only in the Greek spiritual life do we find individuals as such standing out as entirely spiritual and living. Great, mighty teachings, a mighty outlook into the space of the Cosmos; all this we find in the old Egyptian and Chaldean-Babylonian times, but only in Greece do we begin to look to separate personalities, to a Socrates or Pericles, a Phidias, a Plato, an Aristotle. Personality, as such, begins to be marked. That is the peculiarity of the spiritual life of the last three thousand years; and I do not only mean the remarkable personalities themselves, but rather the impression made by the spiritual life upon each separate individuality, upon each personality. In these last three thousand years it has become a question of personality, if we may

say so; and the fact that separate individuals now feel the need of taking part in the spiritual life, find inner comfort, hope, peace, inward bliss and security, in the various spiritual movements, gives these their significance. And since, until a comparatively short time ago, we were only interested in history inasmuch as it proceeded from one personality to another, we got no really clear understanding of what occurred before the last three thousand years. The history, for which alone we had, till recently, any understanding, began with Greece, and during the transition from the first to the second thousand years, occurred what is connected with the great Being, Christ Jesus. During the first thousand years that which we owe to Greece is predominant, and those Grecian times tower forth in a particular way. At the beginning of them stand the Mysteries. That which flowed forth from these, as we have often described, passed over into the Greek poets, philosophers and artists in every domain. For if we wish rightly to understand AEschylus, Sophocles, Euripides we must seek the source for such understanding in that which flowed out of the

Mysteries. If we wish to understand Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, we must seek the source of their philosophies in the Mysteries, not to speak of such a towering figure as that of Heraclitus. You may read of him in my book, *Christianity as Mystical Fact*, how entirely he depended upon the Mysteries.

Then in the second thousand years we see the Christian impulse pouring into spiritual development, gradually absorbing the Greek and uniting itself with it. The whole of the second thousand years passed in such a way that the powerful Christ-impulse united itself with all that came over from Greece as living tradition and life. So we see Greek wisdom, Greek feeling, and Greek art slowly and gradually uniting organically with the Christ-impulse. Thus the second thousand years ran its course. Then in the third thousand years begins the cultivation of the personality. We may say that we can see in the third thousand years how differently the Greek influence is felt. We see it when we consider such artists as Raphael, Michael Angelo and Leonardo da Vinci.

No longer does the Greek influence work on together with Christianity in the third thousand years, as it did in the culture of the second; not as something historically great, not as something contemplated externally was Greek influence felt during the second thousand years. But in the third thousand we have to turn of set purpose to the Greek. We see how Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo and Raphael allowed themselves to be influenced by the great works of art then being discovered; we see the Greek influence being more and more consciously absorbed. It was absorbed unconsciously during the second thousand years, but in the third millennium it was taken up more and more consciously. An example of how consciously this Greek influence was being recognised in the eyes of the world is to be found in the figure of the philosopher, Thomas Aquinas; and how he was compelled to unite what flowed out from Christian philosophy with the philosophy of Aristotle. Here the Greek influence was absorbed consciously and united with Christianity in a philosophic form; as in the case of Raphael, Michael Angelo and Leonardo da Vinci, in the

form of art. This whole train of thought rises higher through spiritual life, and even takes the form of a certain religious opposition in the cases of Giordano Bruno and Galileo.

Notwithstanding all this, we find everywhere Greek ideas and conceptions, especially about nature, cropping up again; there is a conscious absorption of the Greek influence, but this does not go back beyond the Greek age. In every soul, not only in the more learned or more highly educated, but in every soul down to the simplest, a spiritual life is spread abroad and lives in them, in which the Greek and Christian influences are consciously united. From the University down to the peasant's cottage Greek ideas are to be found united with Christianity.

Now in the nineteenth century something peculiar appeared, something which requires Anthroposophy to explain it. There we see in one single example what mighty forces are at play. When the wonderful poem of the Bhagavad Gita first became known in Europe, certain important thinkers were enraptured by the greatness of the

poem, by its profound contents; and it should never be forgotten that such a thoughtful spirit as William von Humboldt, when he became acquainted with it, said that it was the most profoundly philosophical poem that had ever come under his notice; and he made the beautiful remark, that it was worth while to have been allowed to grow as old as he to be enabled to become acquainted with the Bhagavad Gita, the great spiritual song that sounds forth from the primeval holy times of Eastern antiquity. What a wonderful thing it is that slowly, although perhaps not attractive as yet to large circles, so much of Eastern antiquity was poured out into the nineteenth century by means of the Bhagavad Gita. For this is not like other writings that came over from the ancient East which ever proclaim Eastern thoughts and feelings from this or that standpoint. In the Bhagavad Gita we are confronted with something of which we may say that it is the united flow of all the different points of view of Eastern thought, feeling and perception. That is what makes it of such significance.

Now let us turn back to old India. Apart from other less important things, we find there, in the first place, three shades, if we may so call them, of spiritual streams flowing forth from the old Indian pre-historic times. That spiritual stream which we meet with in the earliest Vedas and which developed further in the later Vedantic poems, is one quite definite one — we will describe it presently — it is, if we may say so, a one-sided yet quite distinct spiritual stream. We then meet with a second spiritual stream in the Sankhya philosophy, which again goes in a definite spiritual direction; and, lastly, we meet a third shade of the Eastern spiritual stream in Yoga. Here we have the three most remarkable oriental spiritual streams placed before our souls. The Vedas, Sankhya, and Yoga.

The Sankhya system of Kapila, the Yoga philosophy of Patanjali and the Vedas are spiritual streams of definite colouring, which, because of this definite colouring, are to a certain extent one-sided, and which are great because of their one-sidedness. In the Bhagavad Gita we have the harmonious inter-penetration of all three spiritual

streams. What the Veda philosophy has to give is to be found shining forth in the Bhagavad Gita; what the Yoga of Patanjali has to give mankind we find again in the Bhagavad Gita; and what the Sankhya of Kapila has to give we find there too. Moreover, we do not find these as a conglomeration, but as three parts flowing harmoniously into one organism, as if they originally belonged together. The greatness of the Bhagavad Gita lies in the comprehensiveness of its description of how this oriental spiritual life receives its tributaries from the Vedas on the one side, on another from the Sankhya philosophy of Kapila, and again on a third side from the Yoga of Patanjali.

We shall now briefly characterise what each of these spiritual streams has to give us.

The Veda stream is most emphatically a philosophy of unity, it is the most spiritual monism that could be thought of; the Veda philosophy which is consolidated in the Vedanta is a spiritual monism. If we wish to understand the Veda philosophy, we must, in the first place, keep

clearly before our souls the fact that this philosophy is based upon the thought that man can find something deeper within his own self, and that what he first realises in ordinary life is a kind of expression or imprint of this self of his; that man can develop, and that his development will draw up the depths of the actual self more and more from the foundations of his soul. A higher self rests as though asleep in man, and this higher self is not that of which the present-day man is directly aware, but that which works within him, and to which he must develop himself. When man some day attains to that which lives within him as “self,” he will then realise, according to the Vedaphilosophy, that this “self” is one with the all-embracing self of the world, that he does not only rest with his self within the all-embracing World-Self, but that he himself is one with it. So much is he one with this World-Self that he is in two-fold manner related to it. In some way similar to our physical in-breathing and out-breathing does the Vedantist picture the relationship of the human self to the World-Self Just as one draws in a breath and breathes it out again, while outside there is the

universal air and within us only the small portion of it that we have drawn in so outside us we have the universal, all-embracing, all-pervading Self that lives and moves in all things, and this we breathe in when we yield ourselves to the contemplation of the spiritual Self of the World. Spiritually one breathes it in with every perception that one gets of this Self, one breathes it in with all that one draws into one's soul. All knowledge, all thinking, all perception is spiritual breathing; and that which we, as a portion of the world-Self, draw into our souls (which portion remains organically united to the whole), that is Atman, the Breath, which, as regards ourselves, is as the portion of air that we breathe in, which cannot be distinguished from the general atmosphere. So is Atman in us, which cannot be distinguished from that which is the all-ruling Self of the World. Just as we breathe out physically, so there is a devotion of the soul through which the best that is in it goes forth in the form of prayer and sacrifice to this Self. Brahman is like the spiritual out-breathing. Atman and Brahman, like in-breathing and out-breathing, make us sharers in the all-ruling World-Self. What

we find in the Vedantas is a monistic spiritual philosophy, which is at the same time a religion; and the blossom and fruit of Vedantism lie in that which so blesses man, that most complete and in the highest degree satisfying feeling of unity with the universal Self powerfully weaving through the world. Vedantism treats of this connection of mankind with the unity of the world, of the fact of man's being within a part of the whole great spiritual cosmos. We cannot say the Veda-Word, because Veda means Word, but the Word-Veda as given is itself breathed forth, according to the Vedantic conception, from the all-ruling unitary Being, and the human soul can take it into itself as the highest expression of knowledge. In accepting the Veda-Word the best part of the all-mighty "Self" is taken in, the consciousness of the connection between the individual human self and this all-mighty World-Self is attained. What the Veda speaks is the God-Word which is creative, and this is born again in human knowledge, and so leads it side by side with the creative principle which lives and weaves throughout the world. Therefore, that which was written in the Vedas was

valued as the Divine Word, and he who succeeded in mastering them was considered as being a possessor of the Divine Word. The Divine Word had come spiritually into the world and was to be found in the Veda-Books; those who mastered these books took part in the creative principle of the World.

Sankhya philosophy is different. When one first meets with this, as it has come down to us through tradition, we find in it exactly the opposite of the teaching of the Unity. If we wish to compare the Sankhya philosophy to anything, we may compare it to the philosophy of Leibnitz. It is a pluralistic philosophy. The several souls mentioned therein — human souls and the souls of Gods — are not traced back by the Sankhya philosophy to unitary source, but are taken as single souls existing, so to speak, from Eternity; or, at any rate, their origin is not traced back to Unity. The plurality of souls is what we find in the Sankhya philosophy. The independence of each individual soul carrying on its development in the world enclosed within its own being, is sharply accentuated; and in contrast

to the plurality of souls is that which in the Sankhya philosophy is called the Prakriti element. We cannot well describe this by the modern word “matter,” for that has a materialistic meaning. But in Sankhya philosophy we do not mean to convey this with the “substantial” which is in contrast to the multiplicity of souls, and which again is not derived from a common source. In the first place, we have multiplicity of souls, and then that which we may call the material basis, which, like a primeval flood, streams through the world, through space and time, and out of which souls take the elements for their outer existence. Souls must clothe themselves in this material element, which, again, is not to be traced back to unity with the souls themselves. And so it is in the Sankhya philosophy that we principally find this material element, carefully studied. Attention is not so much directed to the individual soul; this is taken as something real that is there, confined in and united with this material basis, and which takes the most varied forms within it, and thus shows itself outwardly in many different forms. A soul clothes itself with this original material element, that may

be thought of like the individual soul itself as coming from Eternity. The soul nature expresses itself through this material basic element, and in so doing it takes on many different forms, and it is in particular the study of these material forms that we find in the Sankhya philosophy. Here we have, in the first place, so to speak, the original form of this material element as a sort of spiritual primeval stream, into which the soul is first immersed. Thus if we were to glance back at the first stages of evolution, we should find there the undifferentiated material elements and immersed therein, the plurality of the souls which are to evolve further. What, therefore, we first find as Form, as yet undifferentiated from the unity of the primal stream, is the spiritual substance itself that lies at the starting-point of evolution. The first thing that then emerges, with which the soul can as yet clothe itself individually, is Budhi. So that when we picture to ourselves a soul clothed with the primal flood-substance, externally this soul is not to be distinguished from the universal moving and weaving element of the primeval flood. Inasmuch as the soul does not only enwrap itself

in this first being of the universal billowing primal flood but also in that which first proceeds from this, in so far does it clothe itself in Budhi. The third element that forms itself out of the whole and through which the soul can then become more and more individual, is Ahamkara. This consists of lower and lower forms of the primeval substance. So that we have the primeval substance, the first form of which is Budhi, and its second form which is Ahamkara. The next form to that is Manas, then comes the form which consists of the organs of the senses; this is followed by the form of the finer elements, and the last form consists of the elements of the substances which we have in our physical surroundings. This is the line of evolution according to Sankhya philosophy. Above is the most supersensible element, a primeval spiritual flow, which, growing ever denser and denser, descends to that which surrounds us in the coarser elements out of which the coarse human body is also constructed. Between these are the substances of which, for instance, our sense organs are woven, and the finer elements of which is woven our etheric or life-body. It must be carefully

noticed that according to the Sankhya philosophy, all these are sheaths of the soul. Even that which springs from the first primeval flood is a sheath for the soul; the soul is at first within that; and when the Sankhya philosopher studies Budhi, Ahamkara, Manas, the senses, the finer and the coarser elements, he understands thereby the increasingly dense sheaths within which the soul expresses itself.

We must clearly understand that the manner in which the philosophy of the Vedas and the Sankhya philosophy are presented to us is only possible because they were composed in that ancient time when an old clairvoyance still existed, at any rate, to a certain extent. The Vedas and the contents of the Sankhya philosophy came into existence in different ways. The Vedas depend throughout on a primeval inspiration which was still a natural possession of primeval man; they were given to man, so to speak, without his having done anything to deserve them, except that with his whole being he prepared himself to receive into his inner depths that divine inspiration that

came of itself to him, and to receive it quietly and calmly. Sankhya philosophy was formed in a different way. That process was something like the learning of our present day, only that this is not permeated by clairvoyance as the former then was. The Veda philosophy consisted of clairvoyant knowledge, inspiration given as by grace from above. Sankhya philosophy consisted of knowledge sought for as we seek it now, but sought for by people to whom clairvoyance was still accessible. This is why the Sankhya philosophy leaves the actual soul-element undisturbed, so to say. It admits that souls can impress themselves in that which one can study as the supersensible outer forms, but it particularly studies the outer forms, which appear as the clothing of those souls. Hence we find a complete system of the forms we meet with in the world, just as in our own science we find a number of facts about nature; only that in Sankhya philosophy observation extends to a clairvoyant observation of facts. Sankhya philosophy is a science, which although obtained by clairvoyance, is nevertheless a science of outer forms that does

not extend into the sphere of the soul: the soul-nature remains in a sense undisturbed by these studies. He who devotes himself to the Vedas feels absolutely that his religious life is one with the life of wisdom; but Sankhya philosophy is a science, it is a perception of the forms into which the soul impresses itself. Nevertheless, it is quite possible for the disciples of the Sankhya philosophy to feel a religious devotion of the soul for their philosophy. The way in which the soul element is organised into forms-not the soul element itself, but the form it takes-is followed up in the Sankhya philosophy. It defines the way in which the soul, more or less, preserves its individuality or else is more immersed in the material. It has to do with the soul element which is, it is true, beneath the surface, but which, within the material forms, still preserves itself as soul. A soul element thus disguised in outer form, but which reveals itself as soul, dwells in the Sattva element. A soul element immersed in form, but which is, so to say, entangled in it and cannot emerge from it, dwells in the Tamaselement; and that in which, more or less, the soul element and its outer expression in

form, are, to a certain extent, balanced, dwells in the Rajas-element. Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, the three Gunas, pertain to the essential characteristics of what we know as Sankhya philosophy.

Quite different, again, is that spiritual stream which comes down to us as Yoga. That appeals directly to the soul-element itself and seeks ways and means of grasping the human soul in direct spiritual life, so that it rises from the point which it has attained in the world to higher and higher stages of soul-being. Thus Sankhya is a contemplation of the sheaths of the soul, and Yoga the guidance of the soul to higher and ever higher stages of inner experience. To devote oneself to Yoga means a gradual awakening of the higher forces of the soul so that it experiences something not to be found in everyday life, which opens the door to higher and higher stages of existence.

Yoga is therefore the path to the spiritual worlds, the path to the liberation of the soul from outer forms, the path to an independent life of the soul within itself. Yoga is the other side of the Sankhya philosophy. Yoga acquired its great importance

when that inspiration, which was given as a blessing from above and which inspired the Vedas, was no longer able to come down. Yoga had to be made use of by those souls who, belonging to a later epoch of mankind, could no longer receive anything by direct revelation, but were obliged to work their way up to the heights of spiritual existence from the lower stages. Thus in the old primal Indian times we have three sharply-defined streams, the Vedas, the Sankhaya, and the Yoga, and today we are called upon once more to unite these spiritual streams, so to say, by bringing them to the surface in the way proper for our own age, from the foundations of the soul and from the depths of the Cosmos.

You may find all three streams again in our Spiritual Science. If you read what I have tried to place before you in the first chapters of my *Occult Science* about the human constitution, about sleeping and waking, life and death, you will find there what in our present-day sense we may call Sankhya philosophy. Then read what is there said about the evolution of the world from Saturn down

to our own time, and you have the Veda-philosophy expressed for our own age; while, if you read the last chapters, which deal with human evolution, you have Yoga expressed for our own age. Our age must in an organised way unite that which radiates across to us in three so sharply-defined spiritual streams from old India in the Veda-philosophy, the Sankhya philosophy, and Yoga. For that reason our age must study the wonderful poem of the Bhagavad Gita, which, in a deeply poetical manner, represents, as it were, a union of these three streams; our own age must be deeply moved by the Bhagavad Gita. We should seek something akin to our own spiritual strivings in the deeper contents of the Bhagavad Gita. Our spiritual streams do not only concern themselves with the older ones as a whole, but also in detail. You will have recognised that in my *Occult Science* an attempt has been made to produce the things out of themselves. Nowhere do we depend on history. Nowhere can one who really understands what is said find in any assertion about Saturn, Sun, and Moon, that things are related from historical sources; they are simply

drawn forth from the matter itself. Yet, strange to say, that which bears the stamp of our own time corresponds in striking places with what resounds down to us out of the old ages. Only one little proof shall be given. We read in the Vedas in a particular place, about cosmic development, which can be expressed in words somewhat like the following: "Darkness was enwrapt in darkness in the primal beginning, all was indistinguishable flood-essence. Then arose a mighty void, that was everywhere permeated with warmth." I now ask you to remember the result of our study of the evolution of Saturn, in which the substance of Saturn is spoken of as a warmth-substance, and you will feel the harmony between the so-called "Newest thing in Occult Science," and what is said in the Vedas. The next passage runs: "Then first arose the Will, the first seed of Thought, the connection between the Existent and the Non-existent, ... and this connection was found in the Will ..." And remember what was said in the new mode of expression about the Spirits of Will. In all we have to say at the present time, we are not seeking to prove a concord with the old; the

harmony comes of itself, because truth was sought for there and is again being sought for on our own ground.

Now in the Bhagavad Gita we find, as it were, the poetical glorification of the three spiritual streams just described. The great teachings that Krishna himself communicated to Arjuna are brought to our notice at an important moment of the world's history — of importance for that far-distant age. The moment is significant, because it is the time when the old blood-ties were loosening. In all that is to be said in these lectures about the Bhagavad Gita you must remember what has again and again been emphasised: that ties of blood, racial attachment and kinship, were of quite special significance in primeval times, and only grew less strong by degrees. Remember all that is said in my pamphlet, *The Occult Significance of Blood*. When these blood-ties begin to loosen, on account of that loosening, the great struggle began which is described in the Mahabharata, and of which the Bhagavad Gita is an episode. We see there how the descendants of two brothers, and hence, blood

relations, separate on account of their spiritual tendencies how that which, through the blood, would formerly have given them the same points of view, now takes different paths; and how, therefore, the conflict then arises, for conflict must arise when the ties of blood also lose their significance as a help for clairvoyant perception; and with this separation begins the later spiritual development.. For those to whom the old blood-ties no longer were of significance, Krishna came as a great teacher. He was to be the teacher of the new age lifted out of the old blood-ties. How he became the teacher we shall describe tomorrow; but it may now be said, as the whole Bhagavad Gita shows us, that Krishna absorbed the three spiritual streams into his teaching and communicated them to his pupil as an organised unity.

How must this pupil appear to us? He looks up on the one side to his father, and on the other side to his father's brother the children of the two brothers are now no longer to be together, they are to separate now a different spiritual stream is to take

possession of the one line and the other. Arjuna's soul is filled with the question: how will it be when that which was held together by the ties of blood is no longer there? How can the soul take part in spiritual life if that life no longer flows as it formerly did under the influence of the old blood-tie? It seems to Arjuna as if everything must come to an end. The purport of the great teachings of Krishna, however, is to show that this will not be the case, that it all will be different. Krishna now shows his pupil — who is to live through the time of transition from one epoch to another, that the soul, if it is to become harmonious, must take in something of all these three spiritual streams. We find the Vedistic unity interpreted in the right way in the teachings of Krishna, as well as the principles of the Sankhya teaching and the principles of Yoga. For what is it that actually lies behind all that we are about to learn from the Bhagavad Gita? The revelations of Krishna are somewhat to this effect: There is a creative Cosmic Word, itself containing the creative principle. As the sound produced by man when he speaks undulates and moves and lives through the air, so

does the Word surge and weave and live in all things, and create and order all existence. Thus the Veda principle breathes through all things. This can be taken up by human perception into the human soul-life. There is a supreme, weaving Creative-Word, and there is an echo of this supreme, weaving Creative-Word in the Vedistic documents. The Word is the creative principle of the World; in the Vedas it is revealed. That is one part of the Krishna teaching. The human soul is capable of understanding how the Word lives on, in the different forms of existence. Human knowledge learns the laws of existence by grasping how the separate forms of being express, with the regularity of a fixed law, that which is soul and spirit. The teachings about the forms in the world, of the laws which shape existence, of cosmic laws and their manner of working, is the Sankhya philosophy, the other side of the Krishna teaching. Just as Krishna made clear to his pupil that behind all existence is the creative cosmic Word, so also he made clear to him that human knowledge can recognise the separate forms, and therefore can grasp the cosmic laws. The cosmic

Word, the cosmic laws as echoed in the Vedas, and in Sankhya, were revealed by Krishna to his pupil. And he also spoke to him about the path that leads the individual pupil to the heights where he can once again share in the knowledge of the cosmic Word. Thus Krishna also spoke of Yoga. Threefold is the teaching of Krishna: it teaches of the Word, of the Law and of reverent devotion to the Spirit.

The Word, the Law, and Devotion are the three streams by means of which the soul can carry out its development.

These three streams will for ever work upon the human soul in some way or another. Have we not just seen that modern Spiritual Science must seek for new expression of these three streams? But the ages differ one from the other, and in many different ways will that which is the threefold comprehension of the World be brought to human souls. Krishna speaks of the Cosmic Word, of the Creative Word, of the fashioning of existence, of the devotional deepening of the soul, — of Yoga. The same trinity meets us again in another form, only in a more concrete, more living way — in a

Being who is Himself to be thought of as walking the Earth — the Incarnation of the Divine Creative Word! The Vedas came to mankind in an abstract form. The Divine Logos, of whom the Gospel of St. John speaks is the Living and Creative Word Itself! That which we find in the Sankhya philosophy, as the law to which the cosmic forms are subject, that, historically transposed into the old Hebrew revelation, is what St. Paul calls the Law. The third stream we find in St. Paul as Faith in the risen Christ. That which was Yoga in Krishna, in St. Paul was Faith, only in a more concrete form — Faith, that was to replace the Law. So the trinity, Veda, Sankhya and Yoga were as the redness of the dawn of that which later rose as sun. Veda appears again in the actual Being of Christ Himself now entering in a concrete, living way into historical evolution, not pouring Himself out abstractly into space and the distances of time, but living as a single Individual, as the Living Word. The Law meets us in the Sankhya philosophy, in that which shows us how the material basis, Prakriti, is developed even down to coarse substance. The Law reveals how the world

came into existence, and how individual man develops within it. That is expressed in the old Hebrew revelation of the Law, in the dispensation of Moses. Inasmuch as St. Paul, on the one hand, refers to this Law of the old Hebrews, he is referring to the Sankhya philosophy; inasmuch as he refers to faith in the Risen One, he refers to the Sun of which the rosy dawn appeared in Yoga. Thus arises in a, special way that of which we find the first elements in Veda, Sankhya and Yoga. What we find in the Vedas appears in a new but now concrete form as the Living Word by Whom all things were made and without Whom nothing is made that was made, and Who, nevertheless, in the course of time, has become Flesh. Sankhya appears as the historical representation based on Law of how out of the world of the Elohim, emerged the world of phenomena, the world of coarse substances. Yoga transformed itself into that which, according to St. Paul, is expressed in the words; "Not I, but Christ in me," that is to say when the Christ-force penetrates the soul and absorbs it, man rises to the heights of the divine.

Thus we see how, in a preparatory form, the coherent plan is present in world-history, how the Eastern teaching was a preparation, how it gives in more abstract form, as it were, that which, in a concrete form, we find so marvelously contained in the Pauline Christianity. We shall see that precisely by grasping the connection between the great poem of the Bhagavad Gita and the Epistles of St. Paul, the very deepest mysteries will reveal themselves concerning what we may call the ruling of the spiritual in the collective education of the human race. As something so new must also be felt in the new age, this newer age must extend beyond the time of Greece and must develop understanding for that which lies behind the thousand years immediately before Christ — for that which we find in the Vedas, Sankhya and Yoga. Just as Raphael in his art and Thomas Aquinas in his philosophy had to turn back to Greece, so shall we see how in our time, a conscious balance must be established between that which the present time is trying to acquire and that which lies further back than the Greek age, and stretches back to the depths of oriental

antiquity. We can allow these depths of oriental antiquity to flow into our souls if we ponder over these different spiritual streams which are to be found within that wonderfully harmonious unity which Humboldt calls the greatest philosophical poem the Bhagavad Gita.

LECTURE II

The basis of knowledge of the Gita, the Veda,
Sankhya, Yoga.

29 December, 1912

THE Bhagavad Gita, the sublime Song of the Indians, is, as I mentioned yesterday, said by qualified persons to be the most important philosophic poem of humanity, and he who goes deeply into the sublime Gita will consider this expression fully justified. We shall take the opportunity given by these lectures to point out the high artistic merit of the Gita, but, above all, we must realise the importance of this poem by considering what underlies it, the mighty thoughts and wonderful knowledge of the world from which it grew, and for the glorification and spreading, of which it was created. This glance

into the fundamental knowledge contained in the Gita is especially important, because it is certain that all the essentials of this poem, especially all relating to thought and knowledge are communicated to us from a pre-Buddhistic stage of knowledge, so that we may say: The spiritual horizon which surrounded the great Buddha, out of which he grew, is characterised in the contents of the Gita. When we allow these to influence us, we gaze into a spiritual condition of old Indian civilisation in the pre-Buddhist age. We have already emphasised that the thought contained in the Gita is a combined out-pouring of three spiritual streams, not only fused into one another, but moving and living within one another, so that they meet us in the Gita as one whole. What we there meet with as a united whole, as a spiritual out-pouring of primeval Indian thought and perception, is a grand and beautiful aspect of knowledge, an immeasurable sum of spiritual knowledge; an amount of spiritual knowledge so vast that the modern man who has not yet studied Spiritual Science cannot help feeling doubts as to such an amount of knowledge and depth of

science, having no possible standard with which to compare it. The ordinary modern methods do not assist one to penetrate the depths of knowledge communicated therein; at the most, one can but look upon that here spoken of as a beautiful dream which mankind once dreamt. From a merely modern standpoint one may perhaps admire this dream, but would not acknowledge it as having any scientific value. But those who have already studied Spiritual Science will stand amazed at the depths of the Gita and must admit that in primeval ages the human mind penetrated into knowledge which we can only re-acquire gradually by means of the spiritual organs which we must develop in the course of time. Their admiration is aroused for the primeval insight that existed in those past ages. We can admire it because we ourselves are able to re-discover it in the universe and thereby confirm the truth of it. When we rediscover it and recognise its truth, we then confess how wonderful it really is that in those primeval ages men were able to raise themselves to such spiritual heights! We know, to be sure, that in those old days mankind was specially favoured, in that the

remains of the old clairvoyance was still alive in human souls, and that not only through a spiritual meditation attained by using special exercises were men led into the spiritual worlds, but also that the science of those days could itself, in a certain sense, be penetrated by the knowledge and ideas which the remains of the old clairvoyance brought. We must confess that today we recognise, for quite other reasons, the correctness of what is there communicated to us, but we must understand that in those old times delicate distinctions as regards the being of man were arrived at by other means; ingenious conceptions were drawn from that which man was able to know: conceptions clearly outlined, which could be applied to the spiritual as also to external physical reality. So that in many respects, if we simply alter the expressions we use today to suit our different standpoint, we find it possible to understand the former standpoint also.

We have tried, in bringing forward our spiritual knowledge, to present things as they appear to the present day clairvoyant perception; so that our sort

of Spiritual Science represents that which the spiritually-minded man can attain today with the means at his command. In the early days of the Theosophical Movement less was done by means of what was drawn straight from occult science than by such methods as were based on the designations and shadowy conceptions used in the East, especially those which, by means of old traditions, have been carried over from the Gita-time in the East into our present day. Hence the older form of theosophical development (to which we have now added our present method of occult investigation) worked more through the old traditionally-received conceptions — especially those of the Sankhya philosophy. But just as this Sankhya philosophy itself was gradually changed in the East, through the alteration in oriental thought, so, at the beginning of the Theosophical Movement the being of man and other secrets were spoken of and these things were specialty described by means of expressions used by Sankaracharya, the great reformer of the Vedantic and other Indian knowledge in the eighth century of the Christian reckoning. We need not devote

much attention to the expressions used at the beginning of the Theosophical Movement, but in order to get to the foundations of the knowledge and wisdom of the Gita, we shall devote ourselves today to the old primeval Indian wisdom. What we meet with first, what, so to speak, is drawn from that old wisdom itself, is especially to be found in the Sankhya philosophy.

We shall best obtain an understanding of how Sankhya philosophy looked upon the being and nature of man if, in the first place, we keep clearly before us the fact that there is a spiritual germ in all humanity; we have, always expressed this fact by saying that in the human Soul there are slumbering forces which, in the course of human evolution, will emerge more and more. The highest to which we can at present aspire and to which the human soul can attain, will be what we call Spirit-Man. Even when man, as a being, has risen to the stage of Spirit-Man, he will still have to distinguish between the soul which dwells within him and that which is Spirit-Man itself; just as in everyday life today we have to distinguish

between that which is our innermost soul and the sheaths which enclose it; the Astral Body, the Etheric or Life-Body, and the Physical Body. Just as we look upon these bodies as sheaths and distinguish them from the soul itself, which for the present cycle of humanity is divided into three parts: sentient soul, intellectual reasoning soul, and consciousness soul — just as we thus distinguish between the soul-nature and its system of sheaths — so in future stages we shall have to reckon with the actual soul, which will then have its threefold division fitted for those future stages and corresponding to our sentient soul, intellectual soul, and consciousness soul, and the sheath-nature, which will then have reached that stage of man which, in our terminology, we call Spirit-Man. That, however, which will some day become the human sheath, and which will, so to say, enclose the spiritual soul-part of man, the Spirit-Man, will, to be sure, only be of significance to man in the future, but that to which a being will eventually evolve is always there, in the great universe. The substance of Spirit-Man in which we shall some day be ensheathed, has always been in

the great universe and is there at the present time. We may say: Other beings have today already sheaths which will some day form our Spirit-Man; thus the substance of which the human Spirit-Man will some day consist exists in the universe. This, which our teaching allows us to state, was already known to the old Sankhya doctrine; and what thus existed in the universe, not yet individualised or differentiated, but flowing like spiritual water, undifferentiated, filling space and time, still exists, and will continue to exist, this, from which all other forms come forth, was known by the Sankhya philosophy as the highest form of substance; that form of substance which has been accepted by Sankhya philosophy as continuing from age to age. And as we speak about the beginning of the evolution of our earth (recollect the course of lectures I once gave in Munich on the foundation of the Story of Creation), as we speak of how at the beginning of our earth-evolution, all to which the earth has now evolved was present in spirit as substantial spiritual being; so did the Sankhya philosophy speak of original substance, of a primordial flood, from which all

forms, both physical and superphysical, have developed. To the man of today this highest form has not come into consideration, but the day will come, as we have shown when it will have to be considered.

In the next form which will evolve out of this primeval flowing substance, we have to recognise that which, counting from above, we know as the second principle of man, which we call Life-Spirit: or, if we like to use an Eastern expression, we may call Budhi. Our teaching also tells us that man will only develop Budhi in normal life at a future stage; but as a super-human spiritual form-principle it has always existed among other entities, and, inasmuch as it always existed, it was the first form differentiated from the primeval flowing substance. According to the Sankhya philosophy the super-psychic existence of Budhi arose from the first form of substantial existence. Now if we consider the further evolution of the substantial principle, we meet as a third form that which the Sankhya philosophy calls Ahamkara. Whereas Budhi stands, so to speak, on the borders

of the principle of differentiation and merely hints at a certain individualisation, the form of Ahamkara appears as completely differentiated already so that when we speak of Ahamkara we must imagine Budhi as organised into independent, real, substantial forms, which then exist in the world individually. If we want to obtain a picture of this evolution we must imagine an equally distributed mass of water as the substantial primeval principle; then imagine it welling up so that separate forms emerge, but not breaking away as fully formed drops, forms which rise like little mounts of water from the common substance and yet have their basis in the common primeval flow. We should then have Budhi; and inasmuch as these water-mounts detach themselves into drops, into independent globes, in these we have the form of Ahamkara. Through a certain thickening of this Ahamkara, of the already individualised form of each separate soul-form, there then arises what we describe as Manas.

Here we must admit that perhaps a little unevenness arises as regards our naming of things.

In considering human evolution from the point of view of our teaching, we place (counting from above) Spirit-Self after Life-spirit or Budhi. This manner of designation is absolutely correct for the present cycle of humanity, and in the course of these lectures we shall see why. We do not insert Ahankara between Budhi and Manas, but for the purpose of our concept we unite it with Manas and call both together Spirit-Self. In those old days it was quite justifiable to consider them as separate, for a reason which I shall only indicate today and later elaborate. It was justifiable because one could not then use that important characteristic that we must give if we are to make ourselves understood at the present day; the characteristic which comes on the one side from the influence of Lucifer, and on the other from that of Ahriman. This characteristic is absolutely lacking in the Sankhya philosophy, and for a construction that had no occasion to look towards these two principles because it could as yet find no trace of their force, it was quite justifiable to slip in this differentiated form between Budhi and Manas. When we therefore speak of Manas in the sense of the

Sankhya philosophy, we are not speaking of quite the same thing as when we speak of it in the sense of Sankaracharya. In the latter we can perfectly identify Manas with Spirit-Self; but we cannot actually do so in the sense of Sankhya philosophy; though we can characterise quite fully what Manas is.

In this case we first start with man in the world of sense, living in the physical world. At first he lives his physical existence in such a way that he realises his surroundings by means of his senses; and through his organs of touch, by means of his hands and feet, by handling, walking, speaking, he reacts on the physical world around him. Man realises the surrounding world by means of his senses and he works upon it, in a physical sense, by means of his organs of touch. Sankhya philosophy is quite in accordance with this. But how does a man realise the surrounding world by means of his senses? Well, with our eyes we see the light and colour, light and dark, we see, too, the shapes of things; with our ears we perceive sounds; with our organ of smell we sense

perfumes; with our organs of taste we receive taste-impressions. Each separate sense is a means of realising a particular part of the external world. The organs of sight perceive colours and light; those of hearing, sounds, and so on. We are, as it were, connected with the surrounding world through these doors of our being which we call senses; through them we open ourselves to the surrounding world; but through each separate sense we approach a particular province of that world. Now even our ordinary language shows us that within us we carry something like a principle which holds together these different provinces to which our senses incline. For instance, we talk of warm and cold colours, although we know that this is only a manner of speaking, and that in reality we realise cold and warmth through the organs of touch, and colours, light and darkness through the organs of sight. Thus we speak of warm and cold colours, that is to say, from a certain inner relationship which we feel, we apply what is perceived by the one sense to the others. We express ourselves thus, because in our inner being there is a certain intermingling between

what we perceive through our sight and that which we realise as a sense of warmth — more delicately sensitive people, on hearing certain sounds can inwardly realise certain ideas of colour; they can speak of certain notes as representing red, and others blue. Within us, therefore, dwells something which holds the separate senses together, and makes out of the separate sense-fields something complete for the soul. If we are sensitive, we can go yet further. There are people, for instance, who feel, on entering one town, that it gives an impression of yellow another town gives an impression of red, another of white, another of blue. A great deal of that which impresses us inwardly is transformed into a perception of colour; we unite the separate sense-impressions inwardly into one collective sense which does not belong to the department of any one sense alone, but lives in our inner being and fills us with a sense of undividedness whenever we make use of any one sense-impression. We may call this the inner sense; and we may all the more call it so, inasmuch as all that we otherwise experience inwardly as sorrow and joy, emotions and

affections, we unite again with that which this inner sense gives us. Certain emotions we may describe as dark and cold, others as warm and full of light. We can therefore say that our inner being reacts again upon what forms the inner sense. Therefore, as opposed to the several senses which we direct to the different provinces of the external world, we can speak of one which fills the soul; one, of which we know that it is not connected with any single sense-organ, but takes our whole being as its instrument. To describe this inner sense as Manas would be quite in harmony with Sankhya philosophy, for, according to this, that which forms this inner sense into substance develops, as a later production of form, out of Ahamkara. We may, therefore, say: First came the primeval flood, then Budhi, then Ahamkara, then Manas, which latter we find within us as our inner sense. If we wish to observe this inner sense, we can do so by taking the separate senses and observing how we can form a concept by the way in which the perceptions of the separate senses are united in the inner sense.

This is the way we take today, because our knowledge is pursuing an inverted path. If we look at the development of our knowledge, we must admit that it starts from the differentiation of the separate senses and then tries to climb up to the conjoint sense. Evolution goes the other way round. During the evolution of the world, Manas first evolved out of Ahamkara and then the primeval substances differentiated themselves, the forces which form the separate senses that we carry within us. (By which we do not mean those material sense-organs which belong to the physical body, but forces which underlie these as formative forces and which are quite supersensible.) Therefore when we descend the stages of the ladder of the evolution of forms, we come down from Ahamkara to Manas, according to the Sankhya philosophy; then Manas differentiates into separate forms and yields those supersensible forces which build up our separate senses. We have, therefore, the possibility—because when we consider the separate senses the soul takes a part in them — of bringing what we get out of Sankhya philosophy into line with that which our teaching

contains. For Sankhya philosophy tells us the following: In that Manas has differentiated itself into the separate world-forces of the senses, the soul submerges itself — we know that the soul itself is distinct from these forms — the soul immerses itself into these different forms; but inasmuch as it does so, and also submerges itself into Manas, so it works through these sense-forces, is interwoven with and entwined in them. In so doing the soul reaches the point of placing itself as regards its spiritual soul-being in connection with an external world, in order to feel pleasure and sympathy therein. Out of Manas the force-substance has differentiated which constitutes the eye, for instance. At an earlier stage, when the physical body of man did not exist in its present form (thus Sankhya philosophy relates) the soul was immersed in the mere forces that constitute the eye. We know that the human eye of today was laid down germinally in the old Saturn time, yet only after the withdrawal of the warmth organ, which at the present day is to be found in a stunted form in the pineal gland, did it develop — that is to say, comparatively late. But

the forces out of which it evolved were already there in supersensible form, and the soul lived within them. Thus Sankhya philosophy relates as follows: in so far as the soul lives in this differentiation principle, it is attached to the existence of the external world and develops a thirst for this existence. Through the forces of the senses the soul is connected with the external world; hence the inclination towards existence, and the longing for it. The soul sends, in a way, feelers out through the sense-organs and through their forces attaches itself to the external world. This combination of forces, a real sum of forces, we unite in the astral body of man. The Sankhya philosopher speaks of the combined working of the separate sense-forces, at this stage differentiated from Manas. Again, out of these sense-forces arise the finer elements, of which we realise that the human etheric body is composed. This is a comparatively late production. We find this etheric body in man.

We must therefore picture to ourselves that, in the course of evolution the following have formed:

Primeval Flood, Budhi, Ahamkara, Manas, the substances of the senses, and the finer elements. In the outer world, in the kingdom of nature, these fine elements are also to be found, for instance, in the plants, as etheric or life-body. We have then to imagine, according to Sankhya philosophy, that at the basis of this whole evolution there is to be found, in every plant a development starting from above and going downwards, which comes from the primeval flood. But in the case of the plant all takes place in the supersensible, and only becomes real in the physical world when it densifies into the finer elements which live in the etheric or life-body of the plant; while with man it is the case that the higher forms and principles already reveal themselves as Manas in his present development; the separate organs of sense reveal themselves externally. In the plant there is only to be found that late production which arises when the sense substance densifies into finer elements, into the etheric elements; and from the further densifying of the etheric elements arise the coarser elements from which spring all the physical things we meet in the physical world. Therefore reckoning

upwards we can, according to Sankhya philosophy, count the human principles, as coarse physical body, finer etheric body, astral body (this expression is not used in Sankhya philosophy. Instead of that the formative-force body that builds the senses is used) then Manas in an inner sense, then in Ahamkara the principle which underlies human individuality, which brings it about that man not only has an inner sense through which he can perceive the several regions of the senses, but also feels himself to be a separate being, an individuality. Ahamkara brings this about. Then come the higher principles which in man only exist germinally, — Budhi and that which the rest of Eastern philosophy is accustomed to call Atma, which is cosmically thought of by the Sankhya philosophy as the spiritual primeval flood which we have described. Thus in the Sankhya philosophy we have a complete presentation of the constitution of man, of how man, as soul, envelopes himself in the past, present and future, in the substantial external nature-principle, whereby not only the external visible is to be understood, but all stages of nature, up to the most

invisible. Thus does the Sankhya philosophy divide the forms we have now mentioned. In the forms or in Prakriti, which includes all forms from the coarse physical body up to the primeval flood, dwells Purusha, the spirit-soul, which in single souls is represented as monadic; so the separate soul-monads should, so to say, be thought of as without beginning and without end, just as this material principle of Prakriti — which is not material in our materialistic sense — is also represented as being without beginning and without end. This philosophy thus presents a plurality of souls dipping down into the Prakriti principle and evolving from the highest undifferentiated form of the primeval flood in which they enclose themselves, down to the embodiment in a coarse physical body in order, then, to turn back and, after overcoming the physical body, to evolve upwards again; to return back again into the primeval flood, and to free themselves even from this, in order to be able as free souls to withdraw into pure Purusha.

If we allow this sort of knowledge to influence us, we see how, underlying it, so to speak, was that old wisdom which we now endeavour to re-acquire by the means which our soul-meditations can give us; and in accordance with the Sankhya philosophy we see that there is insight even into the manner in which each of these form principles may be united with the soul. The soul may, for instance, be so connected with Budhi that it realises its full independence, as it were, while within Budhi; so that not Budhi, but the soul-nature, makes itself felt in a predominating degree. The opposite may also be the case. The soul may enwrap its independence in a sort of sleep, envelop it in lassitude and idleness, so that the sheath-nature is most prominent. This may also be the case with the external physical nature consisting of coarse substance. Here we only need to observe human beings. There may be a man who preferably cultivates his soul and spirit, so that every movement, every gesture, every look which can be communicated by means of the coarse physical body, are of secondary importance compared to the fact that in him the spiritual and

soul-nature are expressed. Before us stands a man — we see him certainly in the coarse, physical body that stands before us — but in his movements, gestures and looks there is something that makes us say: This man is wholly spiritual and psychic, he only uses the physical principle to give expression to this. The physical principle does not overpower him; on the contrary, he is everywhere the conqueror of the physical principle. This condition, in which the soul is master of the external sheath-principle, is the Sattva condition. This Sattva condition may exist in connection with the relation of the soul to Budhi and Manas as well as in that of the soul to the body which consists of fine and coarse elements. For if one says: The soul lives in Sattva, that means nothing but a certain relation of the soul to its envelope, of the spiritual principle of that soul to the nature-principle; the relation of the Purusha-principle to the Prakriti-principle. We may also see a man whose coarse physical body quite dominates him — we are not now speaking of moral characteristics, but of pure characteristics, such as are understood in Sankhya philosophy, and which do not, seen with spiritual

eyes, bear any moral characteristic whatever. We may meet a man who, so to speak, walks about under the weight of his physical body, who puts on much flesh, whose whole appearance is influenced by the weight of his physical body, to whom it is difficult to express the soul in his external physical body. When we move the muscles of our face in harmony with the speaking of the soul, the Sattva principle is master; when quantities of fat imprint a special physiognomy to our faces, the soul-principle is then overpowered by the external sheath principle, and the soul bears the relation of Tamas to the nature principle. When there is a balance between these two states, when neither the soul has the mastery as in the Sattva state, nor the external sheath-nature as in the Tamas condition, when both are equally balanced, that may be called the Rajas condition. These are the three Gunas, which are quite specially important. We must, therefore, distinguish the characteristic of the separate forms of Prakriti. From the highest principle of the undifferentiated primeval substance down to the coarse physical body is the one characteristic, the characteristic of the mere

sheath principle. From this we must distinguish what belongs to the Sankhya philosophy in order to characterise the relation of the soul nature to the sheaths, regardless of what the form of the sheath may be. This characteristic is given through the three states Sattva, Rajas, Tamas.

We will now bring before our minds the penetrating depths of such a knowledge and realise how deep an insight into the secrets of existence a science must have had, which was able to give such a comprehensive description of all living beings. Then that admiration fills our souls of which we spoke before, and we tell ourselves that it is one of the most wonderful things in the history of the development of man, that that which appears again today in Spiritual Science out of dark spiritual depths should have already existed in those ancient times, when it was obtained by different methods. All this knowledge once existed, my dear friends. We perceive it when we direct the spiritual gaze to certain primeval times. Then let us look at the succeeding ages. We gaze upon what is generally brought to our notice in the

spiritual life of the different periods, in the old Greek age, in the age following that, the Roman age, and in the Christian Middle Ages. We turn our gaze from what the older cultures give down to modern times, till we come to the age when Spiritual Science once again brings us something which grew in the primeval knowledge of mankind. When we survey all this we may say: In our time we often lack even the smallest glimmering of that primeval knowledge. Ever more and more a mere knowledge of external material existence is taking the place of the knowledge of that grand sphere of existence and of the supersensible, all-embracing old perception. It was indeed the purpose of evolution for three thousand years, that in the place of the old primeval perception the external knowledge of the material physical plane should arise. It is interesting to see how upon the material plane alone — I do not want to withhold this remark from you — there still remains, left behind, as it were, in the age of Greek philosophy, something like an echo of the old Sankhya knowledge. We can still find in Aristotle some echoes of real soul-

nature; but these in all their perfect clarity can no longer be properly connected with the old Sankhya knowledge. We even find in Aristotle the distribution of the human being within the coarse physical body; he does not exactly mention this, but shapes a distribution in which he believes he gives the soul-part, whereas the Sankhya philosophy knows that this is only the sheaths; we find there the vegetative soul which, in the sense of the Sankhya philosophy would be attributed to the finer elemental body. Aristotle believes himself to be describing something pertaining to the soul; but he only describes connections between the soul and the body, the Gunas, and in what he describes he gives but the form of the sheaths. Then Aristotle ascribes to that which reaches out into the sphere of the senses, and which we call the astral body, something which he distinguishes as being a soul-principle. Thus he no longer clearly distinguishes the soul-part from the bodily, because, to him, the former has already been swamped by the bodily shape; he distinguishes the *Asthetikon*, and in the soul he further distinguishes the *Orektikon*, *Kinetikon*, and the *Dianetikon*.

These, according to Aristotle, are grades of the soul, but we no longer find in him a clear discrimination between the soul-principle and its sheaths; he believes he is giving a classification of the soul, whereas the Sankhya philosophy grasps the soul in its own being as a monad and all the differentiations of the soul are, as it were, at once placed in the sheath-principle, in the Prakriti principle.

Therefore, even Aristotle himself in speaking of the soul part no longer speaks of that primeval knowledge which we discover in the Sankhya philosophy. But in one domain, the domain of the material, Aristotle still has something to relate which is like a surviving echo of the principle of the three conditions; that is, when he speaks of light and darkness in colours. He says: There are some colours which have more darkness in them and others which have more light, and there are colours between these. According to Aristotle, in the colours ranging between blue and violet the darkness predominates over light. Thus a colour is blue or violet because darkness predominates over

light, and it is green or greenish-yellow when light and darkness counterbalance each other, while a colour is reddish or orange when the light-principle overrules the dark. In Sankhya philosophy we have this principle of the three conditions for the whole compass of the world-phenomena; there we have Sattva when the spiritual predominates over the natural. Aristotle still has this same characteristic, in speaking of colours. He does not use these words: but one may say: Red and reddish-yellow represent the Sattva condition of light. This manner of expression is no longer to be found in Aristotle, but the principle of the old Sankhya philosophy is still to be found in him; green represents the Rajas condition as regards light and darkness, and blue and violet, in which darkness predominates, represent the Tamas-condition of light and darkness. Even though Aristotle does not make use of these expressions, the train of thought can still be traced which arises from that spiritual grasp of the world conditions which we meet with in the Sankhya philosophy. In the colour teaching of Aristotle we have therefore an echo of the old Sankhya

philosophy. But even this echo was lost, and we first experience a glimmering of these three conditions, Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, in the external domain of the world of colour, in the hard struggle carried on by Goethe. For after the old Aristotelian division of the colour-world into a Sattva, Rajas and Tamas condition, had been entirely buried, so to say, it then reappears in Goethe. At the present time it is still abused by modern physicists, but the colour-system of Goethe is produced from principles of spiritual wisdom. The physicist of today is right from his own standpoint when he does not agree with Goethe over this, but he only proves that in this respect physics has been abandoned by all the good Gods! That is the case with the physics of today, which is why it grumbles at Goethe's colour teaching.

If one wished today really to combine science with occult principles, one would, however, be obliged to support the colour theory of Goethe. For in that we find again, in the very centre of our scientific culture, the principle which once upon a time reigned as the spiritual principle of the Sankhya

philosophy. You can understand, my dear friends, why many years ago I set myself the task of bringing Goethe's colour theory again into notice as a physical science, resting, however, upon occult principles; for one may quite relevantly say that Goethe so divides the colour phenomena that he represents them according to the three states of Sattva, Rajas, Tamas. So gradually, there emerges into the new spiritual history discovered by the modern methods, that which mankind attained to once upon a time by quite other means. The Sankhya philosophy is pre-Buddhistic, as the legend of Buddha brings very clearly before our eyes; for it relates, and rightly, the Indian doctrine that Kapila was the founder of the Sankhya philosophy. Buddha was born in the dwelling place of Kapila, in Kapila Vastu, whereby it is indicated that Buddha grew up under the Sankhya teaching. Even by his very birth he was placed where once worked the one who first gathered together this great Sankhya philosophy. We have to picture to ourselves this Sankhya doctrine in its relation to the other spiritual currents of which we have spoken, not as many Orientalists of the

present day represent it, nor as does the Jesuit, Joseph Dahlmann; but that in different parts of ancient India there lived men who were differentiated, for at the time when these three spiritual currents were developing, the very first primeval state of human evolution was no longer there. For instance, in the North Eastern part of India human nature was such that it inclined to the conceptions given in the Sankhya philosophy; more towards the West, human nature was of that kind that it inclined to conceive of the world according to the Veda doctrine. The different spiritual “nuances” come, therefore, from, the differently gifted human nature in the different parts of India; and only because of the Vedantists later on having worked on further and made many things familiar, do we find in the Vedas at the present time much of Sankhya philosophy bound up with them. Yoga, the third spiritual current, arose as we have often pointed out, because the old clairvoyance had gradually diminished, and one had to seek new ways to the spiritual worlds. Yoga is distinguished from Sankhya in that the latter is a real science, a science of external forms,

which really only grasps these forms and the different relations of the human soul to these forms. Yoga shows how souls can develop so as to reach the spiritual worlds.

And if we ask ourselves what an Indian soul was to do, who, at a comparatively later time wanted to develop, though not in a one-sided way, who did not wish to advance by the mere consideration of external form, but wanted to uplift the soul-nature itself, so as to evolve again that which was originally given as by a gracious illumination in the Vedas — to this we find the answer in what Krishna gave to his pupil Arjuna in the sublime Gita. Such a soul would have to go through a development which might be expressed in the following words: “Yes, it is true thou seest the world in its external forms, and if thou art permeated with the knowledge of Sankhya thou wilt see how these forms have developed out of the primeval flow: but thou canst also see how one form changes into another. Thy vision can follow the arising and the disappearing of forms, thine eyes see their birth and their death. But if thou

considerest thoroughly how one form replaces another, how form after form arises and vanishes, thou art led to consider what is expressed in all these forms; a thorough inquiry will lead thee to the spiritual principle which expresses itself in all these forms; sometimes more according to the Sattva condition, at other times more after the forms of the other Gunas, but which again liberates itself from these forms. A thorough consideration such as this will direct thee to something permanent, which, as compared to form, is everlasting. The material principle is indeed also permanent, it remains; but the forms which thou seest, arise and fade away again, pass through birth and death; but the element of the soul and spirit nature remains. Direct thy glance to that! But in order that thou shouldst thyself experience this psychic-spiritual element within thee and around thee and feel it one with thyself, thou must develop the slumbering forces in thy soul, thou must yield thyself to Yoga, which begins with devotional looking upwards to the psychic-spiritual element of being, and which, by the use of certain exercises, leads to the

development of these slumbering forces, so that the pupil rises from one stage to another by means of Yoga.” Devotional reverence for the psychic-spiritual is the other way which leads the soul itself forwards; it leads to that which lives as unity in the spiritual element behind the changing forms which the Veda once upon a time announced through grace and illumination, and which the soul will again find through Yoga as that which is to be looked for behind all the changing forms. “Therefore go thou,” thus might a great teacher have said to his pupil, “go thou through the knowledge of the Sankhya philosophy, of forms, of the Gunas, through the study of the Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, through the forms from the highest down to the coarsest substance, go through these, making use of thy reason, and admit that there must be something permanent, something that is uniting, and then wilt thou penetrate to the Eternal. Thou canst also start in thy soul through devotion; then thou wilt push on through Yoga from stage to stage, and wilt reach the spiritual which is at the base of all forms. Thou canst approach the spiritual from two different sides; by

a thoughtful contemplation of the world, or by Yoga; both will lead thee to that which the great teacher of the Vedas describes as the Unitary Atma-Brahma, that lives as well in the outer world as in the inmost part of the soul, that which as Unity is the basis of the world. Thou wilt attain to that on the one hand by dwelling on the Sankhya philosophy, and on the other by going through Yoga in a devotional frame of mind.”

Thus we look back upon those old times, in which, so to speak, clairvoyant force was still united with human nature through the blood, as I have shown in my book, *The Occult Significance of Blood*. But mankind gradually advanced in its evolution, from that principle which was bound up in the blood to that which consisted of the psychic-spiritual. In order that the connection with the psychic-spiritual should not be lost, which was so easily attained in the old times of the blood-relationship of family stock and peoples, new methods had to be found, new ways of teaching, during the period of transition from blood-relationship to that period in which it no longer held sway. The sublime song of

the Bhagavad Gita leads us to this time of transition. It relates how the descendants of the royal brothers of the lines of Kuru and Pandu fought together. On the one side we look up to a time which was already past when the story of the Gita begins, a time in which the Old-Indian perception still existed and men still went on living in accordance with that. We can perceive, so to say, the one line which arose out of the old times being carried over into the new, in the blind King Dritarashtra of the house of Kuru; and we see him in conversation with his chariot-driver. He stands by the fighters of one side; on the other side are those who are related to him by blood but who are fighting because they are in a state of transition from the old times to the new. These are the sons of Pandu; and the charioteer tells his King (who is characteristically described as blind, because it is not the spiritual that shall descend from this root but the physical), the charioteer relates to his blind King what is happening over there among the sons of Pandu, to whom is to pass all that is more of a psychic and spiritual nature for the generations yet to come. He relates how Arjuna, the representative

of the fighters, is instructed by the great Krishna, the Teacher of mankind; he relates how Krishna taught his pupil, Arjuna, about all that of which we have just been speaking, of what man can attain if he uses Sankhya and Yoga, if he develops thinking and devotion in order to press on to that which the great teachers of mankind of former days have described in the Vedas. And we are told in glorious language, as philosophical as it is poetical, of the instructions given through Krishna, through the Great Teacher of the humanity of the new ages which have emerged from the blood-relationship. Thus we find something else shining from those old times across to our own. In that consideration which is the basis of the pamphlet, *The Occult Significance of Blood*, and many similar ones, I have indicated how the evolution of mankind after the time of blood-relationship took on other differentiations, and how the striving of the soul has thus become different too. In the sublime song of the Bhagavad Gita we are led directly to this transition; we are so led that we see by the instructions given to Arjuna by Krishna, how man, to whom no longer belongs the old clairvoyance

dependent upon the blood-relationship, must press on to what is eternal. In this teaching we encounter that which we have often spoken of as an important transition in the evolution of mankind, and the Sublime Song becomes to us an illustration of that which we arrived at by a separate study of the subject.

What attracts us particularly to the Bhagavad Gita is the clear and emphatic way in which the path of man is spoken of, the path man has to tread from the temporary to the permanent. There at first Arjuna stands before us, full of trouble in his soul; we can hear that in the tale of the charioteer (for all that is related comes from the mouth of the charioteer of the blind King). Arjuna stands before us with his trouble-laden soul, he sees himself fighting against the Kurus, his blood-relations, and he says now to himself: "Must I then fight against those who are linked to me by blood, those who are the sons of my father's brothers? There are many heroes among us who must turn their weapons against their own relations, and on the opposite side there are just as honourable heroes,

who must direct their weapons against us.” He was sore troubled in his soul “Can I win this battle? Ought I to win, ought one brother to raise his sword against another?” Then Krishna comes to him, the Great Teacher Krishna, and says: “First of all, give thoughtful consideration to human life and consider the case in which thou thyself now art. In the bodies of those against whom thou art to fight and who belong to the Kuru-line, that is to say, in temporal forms, there live soul-beings who are eternal, they only express themselves in these forms. In those who are thy fellow-combatants dwell eternal souls, who only express themselves through the forms of the external world. You will have to fight, for thus your laws ordain; it is ordained by the working laws of the external evolution of mankind. You will have to fight, thus it is ordained by the moment which indicates the passing from one period to another. But shouldst thou mourn on that account, because one form fights against another, One changing form struggles with another changing form? Whichsoever of these forms are to lead the others into death — what is death? and what is life? The

changing of the forms is death, and it is life. The souls that are to be victorious are similar to those who are now about to go to their death. What is this victory, what is this death, compared to that to which a thoughtful consideration of Sankhya leads thee, compared to the eternal souls, opposing one another yet remaining themselves undisturbed by all battles?" In magnificent manner out of the situation itself, we are shown that Arjuna must not allow himself to be disturbed by soul-trouble in his innermost being, but must do his duty which now calls him to battle; he must look beyond the transitory which is entangled in the battle to the eternal which lives on, whether as conqueror or as conquered. And so in a unique way is the great note struck in the sublime song, in the Bhagavad Gita; the great note concerning an important event in the evolution of man kind, the note of the transitory and of the everlasting.

Not by abstract thought, but by allowing the perception of what is contained in this to influence us, shall we find ourselves upon the right path. For we are on the right path when we so look upon the

instructions of Krishna as to see that he is trying to raise the soul of Arjuna from the stage at which it stands, in which it is entangled in the net of the transitory. Krishna tries to raise it to a higher stage, in which it will feel itself uplifted beyond all that is transitory, even when that comes directly to the soul in such distressing manner as in victory or defeat, as giving death or suffering it. We can truly see the proof of that which some one once said about this Eastern philosophy, as it presents itself to us in the sublime poem of the Bhagavad Gita: "This Eastern philosophy is so absolutely part of the religion of those old times that he who belonged to it, however great and wise he might be, was not without the deepest religious fervour, whilst the simplest man, who only lived the religion of feeling, was not without a certain amount of wisdom." We feel this, when we see how the great teacher, Krishna, not only influences the ideas of his pupil, but works directly into his disposition, so that he appears to us as contemplating the transitory and the troubles belonging to the transitory; and in such a significant situation we see his soul rising to a

height from which it soars far beyond all that is transitory, beyond all the troubles, pain and sorrows of the transitory.

LECTURE III

The union of the three streams in the Christ
Impulse, the Teaching of Krishna.

30 December, 1912

THE whole meaning of a philosophical poem such as the Bhagavad Gita can only be rightly understood by one to whom such things as are laid down therein, or in similar works of the world's literature, are not merely theories, but a destiny; for man's conceptions of the world may become destiny.

We have in the last few days made acquaintance with two different conceptions of world-philosophy (not to mention a third, the Vedantic) two different nuances of world-philosophy which, if we look at them in the right way, show us most

strikingly how a world-philosophy may become a destiny for the human soul. With the concept of the Sankhya philosophy one may connect all that a man can attain to in knowledge, perception of ideas, survey of the world-phenomena; all in which the life of the soul expresses itself. If we describe that which at the present day still remains to the normal man of such knowledge, of a world-philosophy in which the concepts of the world can be expressed in a scientific form, if we describe that which stands at a lower level spiritually than Sankhya philosophy we may say that even in our own age, in so far as our destiny permits, we can still feel the effects of Sankhya philosophy. This will, however, only be felt by one who, as far as his destiny allows him, gives himself up to a one-sided study of such a branch of world-philosophy; a man of whom it might in a certain respect be said: He is a one-sided scientist, or a Sankhya philosopher. How does such a man stand as regards the world? What does he feel in his soul? Well, that is a question which can really only be answered by experience. One must know what takes place in a soul that thus devotes itself one-

sidedly to a branch of world-philosophy, using all its forces to acquire a conception of the world in the sense just characterised. Such a soul might study all the variations of form of the world-phenomena, might have, so to say, the most complete understanding of all the forces that express themselves in the world in the changing forms. If a soul in one incarnation confines itself to finding opportunity through its capacities and its karma so to experience the world-phenomena that, whether illuminated by clairvoyance or not, it chiefly acquires the science of reason, such a tendency would in all circumstances lead to a certain coldness of the whole soul life. According to the temperament of that soul, we shall find that it took on more or less the character of ironical dissatisfaction concerning the world phenomena, or lack of interest and general dissatisfaction with the knowledge that strides on from one phenomenon to another. All that so many souls of our time feel when confronted with a science consisting merely of learning; the coldness and barrenness which then depresses them, all this we see when we investigate a soul-tendency such as is

presented here. The soul would feel devastated, uncertain of itself. It might say: What should I have gained if I conquered the whole world, and knew nothing of my own soul, if I could feel nothing, perceive nothing, experience nothing; if all were emptiness within! To be crammed full of all the science in the world and yet to be empty within; that, my dear friends, would be a bitter fate. It would be like being lost among the world phenomena; it would be like losing everything of value to one's own inner being.

The condition just described we find in many people who come to us with some sort of learning or of abstract philosophy. We find it in those who, themselves unsatisfied and realising their emptiness, have lost interest in all their knowledge, and seem to be suffering; we also meet it when a man comes to us with an abstract philosophy, able to give information about the nature of the Godhead, cosmology and the human soul in abstract words, yet we can feel that it all comes from the head, that his heart has no part in it — his soul is empty. We feel chilled when we

meet such a soul. Thus Sankhya philosophy may become a destiny, a destiny which brings it man near being lost to himself, a being possessing nothing of his own and from whose individuality the world can gain nothing.

Then again let us take the case of a soul seeking development in a one-sided way through Yoga, who is, so to say, lost to the world, disdainful to know anything about the external world. "What good is it to me," says such a person, "to learn how the world came into existence? I want to find out everything in my own self; I will advance myself by developing my own powers." Such a person may perhaps feel an inward glow, may often appear to us somewhat self-contained, and self-satisfied. That may be; but in the long run he will not always be thus, on the contrary, in time, such a soul will be liable to loneliness. When one having led a hermit's life while seeking the heights of soul-life goes forth into the world, coming everywhere in contact with the world-phenomena, he may perhaps say: "What do all these things matter to me?" and if then, because of his being

unreceptive to all the beauty of the manifestations and not understanding them he feels lonely, the exclusiveness leads to a fateful destiny! How can we really get to know a human being who is using all his power towards the evolution of his own being and passes his fellowman by, cold and indifferent, as though he wished to have nothing in common with them? Such a soul may feel itself to be lost to the world; while to others it may appear egotistical to excess.

Only when we consider these life-connections do we realise how the laws of destiny work in the conceptions of the world. In the background of such great revelations, such great world-philosophies as the Gita and the Epistles of St. Paul, we are confronted by the ruling of these laws of destiny. We might say: if we look behind the Gita and the Epistles of St. Paul, we can see the direct ruling of destiny. How can we trace destiny in the Epistles?

We often find indicated in them that the real salvation of soul-development consists in the so-called “justification by faith” as compared to the

worthlessness of external works; because of that which the soul may become when it makes the final connection with the Christ-Impulse, when it takes into itself the great force that flows from the proper understanding of the Resurrection of Christ. When we meet with this in the Epistles, we feel, on the other hand, that the human soul may, so to say, be thrown back upon itself, and thus be estranged from all external works and rely entirely on mercy and justification by faith. Then come the external works; they are there in the world; we do not do away with them because we turn from them; we join forces with them in the world. Again destiny rings out to us in all its gigantic greatness. Only when we look at things in this way do we see the might of such revelations to mankind.

Now these two revelations to humanity, the Bhagavad Gita and the Epistles of St. Paul, are outwardly very different from one another; and this external difference acts upon the soul in every part of these works. We not only admire the Bhagavad Gita for the reasons we have briefly given, but because it strikes us as something so

poetically great and powerful; because from every verse it radiates forth to us the great nobility of the human soul; because in everything spoken from the mouths of Krishna and his pupil, Arjuna, we feel something which lifts us above everyday human experiences, above all passions, above everything emotional which may disturb the soul. We are transported into a sphere of soul-peace, of clearness, calm, dispassionateness, freedom from emotion, into an atmosphere of wisdom, if we allow even one part of the Gita to work upon us; and by reading the Gita we feel our whole humanity raised to a higher stage. We feel, all through, that we must first have freed ourselves from a good deal that is only too human if we wish to allow the sublime Gita to affect us in the right way. In the case of the Pauline Epistles, all this is different. The sublimity of the poetical language is lacking, even the dispassionateness is lacking. We take up these Epistles and allow them to influence us, and we feel over and over again how what is wafted towards us from the mouth of St. Paul comes from a being, passionately indignant at what has happened. Sometimes the tone is

scolding, or — one might say — condemnatory; in the Pauline Epistles this or that is often cursed; there is scolding. The things that are stated as to the great concepts of Christianity, as to Grace, the Law, the difference between the law of Moses and Christianity, the Resurrection — all this is stated in a tone that is supposed to be philosophical, that is meant to be a philosophical definition but is not, because in every sentence one hears a Pauline note. We cannot in any single sentence forget that it is spoken by a man who is either excited or expressing righteous indignation against others who have done this or that; or who so speaks about the highest concepts of Christianity that we feel he is personally interested; he gives the impression that he is the propagandist of these ideas. . Where could we find in the Gita sentiments of a personal kind such as we find in the Epistles in which St. Paul writes to this or that community: “How have we ourselves fought for Christ Jesus! Remember that we have not become a burden to any, now that we laboured night and day that we might not be a burden to any.” How personal all this is! A breath of the personal runs through the Pauline Epistles.

In the sublime Gita we find a wonderfully pure sphere—an etheric sphere—that borders on the superhuman and at times extends into it. Externally, therefore, there are powerful differences, and we may say that it would be blindest. prejudice not to admit that through the great Song that once was given to Hinduism, flows the union of mighty fateful world-philosophies, that through the Gita something of a noble purity, quite impersonal, calm and passionless, was given to the Hindus; while the original documents of Christianity — the Epistles of St. Paul — bear, as it were, an entirely personal, often a passionate character, utterly devoid of calm. One does not attain knowledge by turning away from the truth and by refusing to admit such things, but rather by understanding them in the right way. Let us, therefore, inscribe this antithesis on a tablet of bronze, as it were, during our subsequent considerations.

We have already pointed out in yesterday's lecture, that in the Gita we find the significant instruction of Arjuna by Krishna. Now who exactly is

Krishna? This question must, above all, be of interest to us. One cannot understand who Krishna is if one does not make oneself acquainted with a point which I have already taken the opportunity of mentioning in various places; that is, that in earlier ages the whole system of giving names and descriptions was quite different from what it is now. As a matter of fact, it does not now in the least matter what a man is called. For we do not in reality know much about a man in our present time by learning that he bears this or that well-known name, that he is called Miller or Smith. We do not really, know much about a man — as everyone will admit — by hearing that he is a Privy Councillor, or anything else of the kind. We do not necessarily know much about people because we know to what social rank they belong.

Neither do we know much of a man today because he has to be addressed as “your honour” or “your Excellency” or “my lord”; in short, all these titles do not signify much; and you may easily convince yourselves that other designations that we make use of today are not very important either. In

bygone ages this was different. Whether we take the description of the Sankhya philosophy or our own, we can start from either and make the following reflections.

We have heard that, according to Sankhya philosophy, man consists of the physical body, the finer elemental or etheric body, the body that contains the regular forces of the senses, the body which is called Manas, Ahamkara, and so on. We need not consider the other, higher principles, because they are not, as a rule, developed yet; but if we now consider human beings such as we see them in this or that incarnation, we may say: Men differ from each other, so that in one that which is expressed through the etheric body is strongly predominant, and in another that which is connected with the laws regulating the senses, in a third that which pertains to the inner senses, in a fourth Ahamkara. Or, in our own language, we may say that we find people in whom the forces of the sentient soul are particularly prominent; others in whom the forces of the intellectual or mind-soul are more particularly active; others in whom the

forces of the consciousness soul predominate and others again in whom something inspired by Manas plays a part, and so on. These differences are to be seen in the whole manner of life which a man leads. They are indications of the real nature of the man himself. We cannot at the present time, for reasons which are easily understood, designate a man according to the nature which thus expresses itself; for if one were, for instance, to say at the present day, men's convictions being what they are, that the highest to which a man could attain in the present cycle of humanity was a trace of Ahamkara, each one would be convinced that he himself expressed Ahamkara more clearly in his own being than other people did, and it would be mortifying for him if he were told that this was not the case, that in him a lower principle still ruled. In olden times it was not thus. A man was then named according to what was most essential in him; especially when it was a question of putting him over others, perhaps by giving him the part of a leader, he would be designated by dwelling especially on the essential part of his being just described.

Let us suppose that in olden times there was a man who, in the truest sense of the words, had brought Manas to expression within him, who had certainly in himself experienced Ahamkara, but had allowed this as an individual element to retire more into the background and on account of his external activity had cultivated Manas; then according to the laws of the older, smaller, human cycles — and only quite exceptional men could have experienced this — such a man would have had to be a great law-giver, a leader of great masses of people. And one would not have been satisfied to designate him in the same way as other men, but would have called him after his prominent characteristic, a Manas-bearer; whereas another might only be called a senses-bearer. One would have said: That is a Manas-bearer, he is a Manu. When we come across designations pertaining to those olden times, we must take them as descriptive of the most prominent principle of a man's human organisation, that which most strongly expressed itself in him in that particular incarnation. Suppose that in a particular man what was most specially expressed was that he felt

divine inspiration within him, that he had put aside all question of ruling his actions and studies by what the external world teaches through the senses and by what reason teaches through the brain, but listened instead in all things to the Divine Word which spoke to him, and made himself a messenger for the Divine Substance that spoke out of him! Such a man would have been called a Son of God. In the Gospel of St. John, such men were still called Sons of God, even at the very beginning of the first chapter.

The essential thing was that everything else was left out of consideration when this significant part was expressed. Everything else was unimportant. Suppose we were to meet two men; one of whom had been just an ordinary man, who allowed the world to act upon him through his senses and reflected upon it afterwards with the intellect attached to his brain; the other one into whom the word of divine wisdom had radiated. According to the old ideas we should have said: This first one is a man, he is born of a father and mother, was begotten according to the flesh. In the case of the

other, who was a messenger of the Divine Substance, no consideration would be given to that which makes up an ordinary biography, as would be the case with the first who contemplated the world through his senses and by means of the reason belonging to his brain. To write such a biography of the second man would have been folly. For the fact of his bearing a fleshly body was only accidental, and not the essential thing; that was, so to speak, only the means through which he expressed himself to other men. Therefore we say: The Son of God is not born of flesh but of a Virgin, he is born straight from the Spirit; that is to say, what is essential in him, through which he is of value to humanity, descends from the Spirit, and in the olden times it was that alone which was honoured. In certain schools of initiation it would have been considered a great sin to write an ordinary biography, which only alluded to everyday occurrences, of a person of whom it had been recognised that he was remarkable because of the higher principles of his human nature. Anyone who has preserved even a little of the sentiments of those old times cannot but consider

biographies such as those written of Goethe as in the highest degree absurd. Now let us remember that in those olden times mankind lived with ideas and feelings such as these, and then we can understand how this old humanity was permeated with the conviction that such a Manu, in whom Manas was the prevailing principle, appears but seldom, that he must wait long epochs before he can appear.

Now if you think of what may live in a man of our present cycle of humanity as the deepest part of his being, which every man can dimly sense as those secret forces within him which can raise him up to soul-heights; if we think of this, which in most men exists only in rudiment, becoming in a very rare case the essential principle of a human being—a being who only appears from time to time to become a leader of other men,, who is higher than all the Manus, who dwells as an essence in every man, but who' as an actual external personality only appears once in a cosmic epoch; if we can form such a conception as this, we are getting nearer to the being of Krishna. He is man

as a whole; he is — one might almost say — humanity as such, thought of as a single being. Yet he is no abstract being. When people today speak of mankind in general, they speak of it in the abstract, because they themselves are abstract thinkers. The abstract being is we ourselves today, ensnared as we are in the sense-world, and this has become our common destiny. When one speaks of mankind in general, one has only an indistinct perception and not a living idea of it. Those who speak of Krishna as of man in general, do not mean the abstract idea one has in one's mind today. “No,” they say, “true, this Being lives in germ in every man, but he only appears as an individual man, and speaks with the mouth of a man once in every cosmic age. “But with this Being it is not a question of the external fleshly body, or the more refined elemental body, or the forces of the sense-organs, or Ahamkara and Manas, but the chief thing is that which in Budhi and Manas is directly connected with the great universal cosmic substance, with the divine which lives and weaves through the world.

From time to time Beings appear for the guidance of mankind such as we look up to in Krishna, the Great Teacher of Arjuna. Krishna teaches the highest human wisdom, the highest humanity, and he teaches it as being his own nature, and also in such a way that it is related to every human being, for all that is contained in the words of Krishna is to be found in germ in every human soul. Thus when a man looks up to Krishna he is both looking up to his own highest self and also at another: who can appear before him as another man in whom he honours that which he himself has the predisposition to become, yet who is a separate being from himself and bears the same relationship to him as a God does to man. In this way must we think of the relationship of Krishna to his pupil Arjuna, and then we obtain the keynote of that which sounds forth to us out of the Gita; that keynote which sounds as though it belonged to every soul and can resound in every soul, which is wholly human, so intimately human that each soul feels it would be ashamed if it did not feel within it the longing to listen to the great teachings of Krishna. On the other hand, it all seems so

calm, so passionless, so dispassionate, so sublime and wise, because the highest speaks; that which is the divine in every human nature and which yet once appears in the evolution of mankind, incorporated, as a divine human being. How sublime are these teachings! They are really so sublime that the Gita rightly bears the name of the “Sublime Song” or the “Bhagavad Gita.” Within it we find, above all, teachings of which we spoke in yesterday's lecture, sublime words arising from a sublime situation; the teaching that all that changes in the world, although it may change in such a way that arising and passing away, birth and death, victory or defeat, appear to be external events, in them all is expressed something, everlasting, eternal, permanently existent; so that he who wishes to contemplate the world properly must raise himself from the transitory to this permanence. We already met with this in Sankhya, in the reasoned reflections as to the permanent in everything transitory, of how both the conquered and the victorious soul are equal before God when the door of death closes behind them.

Then Krishna further tells his pupil, Arjuna, that the soul also may be led away from the contemplation of everyday things by another path, that is, through Yoga. If a soul is capable of devotion, that is the other side of its development. One side is that of passing from one phenomenon to another and always directing the ideas, whether illuminated by clairvoyance or not, to these phenomena. The other side is that in which a man turns his whole attention away from the outer world, shuts the door of the senses, shuts out all that reason and understanding have to say about the world, closes all the doors to what he can remember having experienced in his ordinary life, and enters into his innermost being. By means of suitable exercises he then draws up that which dwells in his own soul; he directs the soul to that which he can dimly sense as the highest, and by the strength of devotion tries to raise himself. Where this occurs he rises higher and higher by means of Yoga, finally reaching to the higher stages which can be attained by first making use of the bodily instruments; he reaches those higher stages in which we live when freed from all bodily

instruments, when, so to say, we live outside the body, in the higher principles of the human Organisation. He thus raises himself into a completely different form of life. The phenomena of life and their activities become spiritual: he approaches ever nearer and nearer to his own divine existence, and enlarges his own being to cosmic being, enlarges the human being to God inasmuch as he loses the individual limitations of his own being and is merged in the ALL through Yoga.

The methods by which the pupil of the great Krishna may rise by one of these ways to the spiritual heights are then given. First of all, a distinction is made between what men have to do in the ordinary world. It is indeed a grand situation in which the Gita places this before us. Arjuna has to fight against his blood-relations. That is his external destiny, it is his own doing, his Karma, which comprises the deeds which he must first of all accomplish in this particular situation. In these deeds he lives at first as external man; but the great Krishna teaches him that a man only

becomes wise, only unites himself with the Divine Eternal if he performs his deeds because they themselves in the external course of nature and of the evolution of humanity prove to be necessary; yet the wise man must release himself from them. He performs the deeds; but in him there is something which at the same time is a looker-on at these deeds, which has no part in them, which says: I do this work, but I might just as well say: I let it happen. One becomes wise by looking on at what one does as though it were being done by another; and by not allowing oneself to be disturbed by the desire which causes the deed or by the sorrow it may produce. "It is all one," says the great Krishna to his pupil Arjuna, "whether thou art in the ranks of the sons of Pandu, or over there among the sons of Kuru; what ever thou doest, thou must as a wise man make thyself free from Pandu-ism and Kuru-ism. If it does not affect thee whether thou art to act with the Pandus as though one of them, or to act with the Kurus as though thou were thyself a son of Kuru; if thou canst rise above all this and not be affected by thine own deeds, like a flame which burns quietly

in a place protected from the wind, undisturbed by anything external: if thy soul, as little disturbed by its own deeds, lives quietly beside them, then does it become wise; then does it free itself from its deeds, and does not inquire what success attends them.” For the result of our deeds only concerns the narrow limitations of our soul; but if we perform them because humanity or the course of the world require them from us, then we perform these deeds regardless as to whether they lead to dreadful or to glorious results for ourselves. This lifting oneself above one's deeds, this standing upright no matter what our hands may carry out, even — speaking of the Gita situation — what our swords may carry out or what we may speak with our mouth; this standing upright of our inner self regardless of all that we speak with our mouth and do with our hands, this it is to which the great Krishna leads his pupil Arjuna. Thus the great Krishna directs his pupil Arjuna to a human ideal, which is so presented that a man says: “I perform my deeds, but it matters not whether they are performed by me or by another — I look on at them: that which happens by my hand or is spoken

by my mouth, I can look on at as objectively as though I saw a rock being loosened and rolling down the mountain into the depths. Thus do I stand as regards my deeds; and although I may be in a position to know this or that, to form concepts of the world, I myself am quite distinct from these concepts, and I may say: In me there dwells something which is, it is true, united to me and which perceives, but I look on at what another is perceiving. Thus I myself am liberated from my perceptions. I can become free from my deeds, free from my knowledge and free from my perceptions. A high idea of human wisdom is thus placed before us! And finally, when it rises into the spiritual, whether I encounter demons or holy Spirits, I can look on at them externally. I myself stand there, free from everything that is going on even in the spiritual worlds around me. I look on, and go my own way, and take no part in that in which I take part, because I have become a looker-on. That is the teaching of Krishna.

Now having heard that the Krishna teaching is based upon the Sankhya philosophy, it will be

quite clear to us that it must be so. In many places one can see it shining through the teaching of Krishna; as when the great Krishna says to his pupil: The soul that lives in thee is connected in several different ways; it is connected with the coarse physical body, it is connected with the senses, with Manas, Ahamkara, Budhi; but thou art distinct from them all. If thou regardest all these as external, as sheaths surrounding thee, if thou art conscious that as a soul-being thou art independent of them all, then hast thou understood something of what Krishna wishes to teach thee. If thou art aware that thy connections with the outer world, with the world in general, were given thee through the Gunas, through Tamas, Rajas, and Sattva, then learn that in ordinary life man is connected with wisdom and virtue through Sattva, with the passions and affections, with the thirst for existence through Rajas; and that through Tamas he is connected with idleness, nonchalance and sleepiness. Why does a man in ordinary life feel enthusiasm for wisdom and virtue? Because he is related to the basic nature characterised by Sattva. Why does a man in ordinary life feel joy and

longing for the external life, feel pleasure in the external phenomena of life? Because he has a relation to life indicated through Rajas. Why do people go through ordinary life sleepy, lazy and inactive? Why do they feel oppressed by their corporality? Why do they not find it possible continually to rouse themselves and conquer their bodily nature? Because they are connected with the world of external forms which in Sankhya philosophy is expressed through Tamas. But the soul of the wise man must become free from Tamas, must sever its connection with the external world expressed by sleepiness, laziness and inactivity. When these are expunged from the soul, then it is only connected with the external world through Rajas and Sattva. When a man has extinguished his passions and affections and the thirst for existence, retaining the enthusiasm for virtue, compassion and knowledge, his connection with the external world henceforth is what Sankhya philosophy calls Sattva. But when a man has also become liberated from that tendency to goodness and knowledge, when, although a kindly and wise man, he is independent of his outward

expression even as regards kindness and knowledge; when kindness is a natural duty and wisdom as something poured out over him, then he has also severed his connection with Sattva. When, however, he has thus stripped off the three Gunas, then he has freed himself from all connection with every external form, then he triumphs in his soul and understands something of what the great Krishna wants to make of him.

What, then, does man grasp, when he thus strives to become what the great Krishna holds before him as the ideal-what does he then understand? Does he then more clearly understand the forms of the outer world? No, he had already understood these; but he has raised himself above them. Does he more clearly grasp the relation of the soul to those external forms? No, he had already grasped that, but he has raised himself above it. It is not that which he may meet with in the external world in the multitude of forms, or his connection with these forms, which he now understands when he strips off the three Gunas; for all that belongs to earlier stages. As long as one remains in Tamas,

Rajas, or Sattva, one becomes connected with the natural rudiments of existence, adapts oneself to social relationships and to knowledge, and acquires the qualities of kindness and sympathy. But if one has risen above all that, one has stripped off all these connections at the preceding stages. What does one then perceive, what springs up before one's eyes? That which one perceives and which springs up before one is what these are not. What can that be which is distinct from everything one acquires along the path of the Gunas.

This is none other than what one finally recognise as one's own being, for all else which may belong to the external world has been stripped away at the preceding stages. In the sense of the foregoing, what is this? It is Krishna himself; for he is himself the expression of what is highest in oneself. This means that when one has worked oneself up to the highest, one is face to face with Krishna, the pupil with his great Teacher, Arjuna with Krishna himself: who lives in all things that exist and who can truly say of himself: "I am not a solitary mountain, if I am among the mountains I

am the largest of them all; if I appear upon the earth I am not a single man, but the greatest human manifestation, one that only appears once in a cosmic age as a leader of mankind, and so on; the unity in all forms, that am I, Krishna.” — Thus does the teacher himself appear to his pupil, present in his own Being. At the same time it is made clear in the Bhagavad Gita that this is something great and mighty, the highest to which a man can attain. To appear before Krishna, as did Arjuna, might come about through gradual stages of initiation; it would then take place in the depths of a Yoga schooling; but it may also be represented as flowing forth from the evolution of humanity itself, given to man by an act of grace, as it were, and thus it is represented in the Gita. Arjuna was uplifted suddenly at a bound, as it were, so that bodily he has Krishna before him; and the Gita leads up to a definite point, the point at which Krishna stood before him. He does not now stand before him as a man of flesh and blood. A man who could be looked upon as other men would represent what is nonessential in Krishna. For that is essential which is in all men; but as the other

kingdoms of the world represent, as it were, only scattered humanity, so all that is in the rest of the world is in Krishna. The rest of the world disappears and Krishna is there as ONE. As the macrocosm to the microcosm, as mankind, as a whole, compared to the small everyday man, so is Krishna to the individual man.

Human power of comprehension is not sufficient to grasp this if the consciousness of it should come to man by an act of grace, for Krishna, if one looks at the essential in him — which is only possible to the highest clairvoyant power — appears quite different from anything man is accustomed to see. As though the vision of man were uplifted above all else to perceive the vision of Krishna in his highest nature, we catch sight of him for one moment in the Gita, as the great Man, compared with whom everything else in the world must appear small; He it is before whom stands Arjuna. Then the power of comprehension forsakes Arjuna. He can only gaze and haltingly express what he beholds. That is to be understood: for by means of the methods he has used until now, he

has not learned to look at such as this, or to describe it in words; and the descriptions that Arjuna gives at this moment when he stands before Krishna, must be thought of thus. For one of the greatest artistic and philosophical presentations ever given to humanity is the description of how Arjuna, with words which he speaks for the first time, which he is unaccustomed to speak, which he has never spoken before because he has never come within reach of them, expresses in words drawn from the deepest parts of his being what he feels on seeing the great Krishna: “All the Gods do I perceive in Thy, body, O God, so also the multitude of all beings. Brahma the Lord, on His Lotus-seat, all the Rishis and the Heavenly Serpent. With many arms, bodies, mouths and eyes, do I see Thee everywhere, in countless forms, neither end, middle nor beginning do I see in Thee, O Lord of everything! Thou appearest to me in all forms, Thou appearest to me with a diadem, a club, a sword, as a flaming mountain radiating out on all sides, thus do I see Thee. My vision is dazzled, as radiant fire by the brilliance of the sun, and

immeasurably great. The Everlasting, the Highest that can be known, the Greatest Good; thus dost Thou appear to me in the wide universe. The Eternal Guardian of the Eternal Right art Thou. Thou standest before my soul as the Eternal Primeval Spirit. Thou showest me no beginning, no middle and no end. Thou art eternally everywhere, infinite in force, infinite in the distances of space. Thine eyes are, as big as the moon, yea, as big as the sun itself, and out of Thy mouth there radiates sacrificial fire. I contemplate Thee in Thy glow and I perceive how Thy glow warms the universe which I can dimly sense between the ground of the earth and the breadth of heaven, all this is filled with Thy power. I am alone there with Thee, and that world in Heaven wherein the three worlds dwell is also within Thee, when Thy wondrous, awful Figure displays Itself to my sight. I see whole multitudes of Gods coming to Thee, singing praises to Thee, and I stand there afraid, with folded hands. All the hosts of seers call Thee blessed, and so do the multitude of saints. They praise Thee in all their hymns of praise. The Adityas, Rudras, Vasus, Sadkyas,

Visvas, Aswins, Maruts, Ushmapas, Ghandaxvas, Yakshas, Siddhas, Asuras, and all the Saints praise Thee; they look up to Thee full of wonder: Such a gigantic form with so many mouths, arms, legs, feet; so many bodies, so many jaws filled with teeth; the whole world trembles before Thee and I too tremble. The Heaven-shattering, radiating, many-armed One, with a mouth working as though it were great flaming eyes, thus do I behold Thee. My soul quakes. I cannot find security or rest, O great Krishna, Who to me art Vishnu Himself. I gaze into Thy menacing innermost Being, I behold It like unto fire, I see how It works, how existence works, what is the end of all times. I gaze at Thee so, that I can know nothing of anything whatever. Oh! be Thou merciful unto me, Lord of Gods, Thou House in which worlds do dwell.” He turns towards the sons of the race of Kuru and points to them: “These sons of the Kuru all assembled here together, this multitude of kingly heroes, Bhishma and Drona, together with our own best fighters, they all lie praying before Thee, marvelling at Thy wondrous beauty. I am fain to know Thee, Thou Primal Beginning of existence. I cannot

comprehend that which appears to me, which reveals itself to me.” Thus speaks Arjuna, when he is alone with Him Who is his own being, when this Being appears objectively to him. We are here confronted with a great cosmic mystery, mysterious not on account of its theoretical contents, but on account of the overpowering sensations which it should call up within us if we are able to grasp it aright. Mysterious it is, so mysterious that it must speak in a different way to every human perception from how anything in the world ever spoke before.

When Krishna Himself caused to sound into the ears of Arjuna that which He then spoke, it sounded thus: “I am Time, which destroys all worlds. I have appeared to carry men away, and even if thou shalt bring death to them in battle, yet all these warriors standing there in line would die even without thee. Rise up, therefore, fearlessly. Thou shalt acquire fame and conquer the foe, Exult over the coming victory and mastery. Thou wilt not have killed them when they fall dead in the battle; by Me they are all killed already, before

thou canst bring death to them. Thou art only the instrument, thou fightest only with the hand The Dronas, the Jayadanas, the Bhishmas, the Karnas, and the other warrior heroes whom I have killed, who are already dead — now kill thou them, that my actions may appear externally when they fall dead in Maya; those whom I have already killed, kill thou them. That which I have done will appear to have been done by thee. Tremble not! Thou art not able to do anything which I have not done already. Fight! Those whom I have already killed will fall by thy sword.” We know that all there given in the way of instruction to the sons of Pandu by Krishna to Arjuna, is related as though told by the charioteer to Dritarashtra. The poet does not directly relate: “Thus spake Krishna to Arjuna ”; the poet tells us that Sandshaya, the charioteer of Dritarashtra, relates it to his blind hero, the king of the Kurus. After Sandshaya related all this he then spoke further: “And when Arjuna had received these words from Krishna, reverently with folded hands, tremblingly, stammering with fear and bowing deeply, he answered Krishna: “With right doth the world

rejoice in Thy glory, and is filled with reverence before Thee. The Rajas” (these are spirits) “flee in all directions, furious. The holy Hosts all bow down before Thee. Wherefore should they not bow down before the First Creator, Who is even greater than Brahma? Truly we are confronting a great cosmic mystery; for what says Arjuna when he sees his own self before him in bodily form? He addresses this own Being of his as though it appeared to him higher than Brahma Himself. We are face to face with a mystery. For when a man thus addresses his own being, such words must be so understood that none of the feelings, none of the perceptions, none of the ideas, none of the thoughts used in ordinary life must be brought to bear upon the comprehension. Nothing could bring a man into greater danger than to bring feelings such as he may otherwise have in life to bear upon these words of Arjuna. If he were to bring any such feelings of everyday life to bear upon what he thus expresses, if this were not something quite unique, if he did not realise this as the greatest cosmic mystery, then would lunacy and madness be small things compared to the illness into which

he would fall through bringing ordinary feelings to bear upon Krishna, that is to say, upon his own higher being. “Thou Lord of Gods, Thou art without end, Thou art the Everlasting, Thou art the Highest, Thou art both Existence and Non-existence, Thou art the greatest of the Gods, Thou art the oldest of the Gods, Thou art the greatest treasure of the whole universe, Thou art He Who knowest and Thou art the Highest Consciousness. Thou embracest the universe, within Thee are all the forms which can possibly exist, Thou art the Wind, Thou art the Fire, Thou art Death, Thou art the eternally moving Cosmic Sea, Thou art the Moon, Thou art the highest of the Gods, the Name Itself, Thou art the Ancestor of the highest of the Gods. Worship must be Thine, a thousand, thousand times over, and ever more than all this worship is due to Thee. Worship must come to Thee from all Thy sides, Thou art everything that a man can ever become. Thou art full of strength as the totality of all strength alone can be, Thou perfectest all things and Thou art at the same time Thyself everything. When I am impatient, and taking Thee to be my friend, I call Thee Krishna:

call Thee Yiva, Friend; ignorant of Thy wonderful greatness, unthinking and confiding I so call Thee, and if in my weakness I do not reverence Thee aright, if I do not rightly reverence Thee in Thy wanderings or in Thy stillness, in the highest Divine or in everyday life, whether Thou art alone or united with other Beings, if in all this I do not reverence Thee aright, then do I implore pardon of Thy Immeasurableness. Thou Father of the world, Thou Who movest the world in which Thou movest, Thou Who art more than all the other teachers, to Whom none resembles, Who art above all, to Whom nothing in the three worlds can be compared; prostrating myself before Thee I seek Thy mercy, Thou Lord, Who revealest Thyself in all worlds. In Thee I gaze at That which never has been seen, I tremble before Thee in reverence. Show Thyself to me as Thou art, O God! Be merciful, Thou Lord of Gods, Thou Primal Source of all worlds!”

Truly we are confronted with a mystery when human being speaks thus to human being. And Krishna again speaks to his pupil: “I have revealed

Myself to thee in mercy, My highest Being stands before thee, through My almighty power and as though by enchantment it is before thee, illuminating, immeasurable, without beginning. As thou now beholdest Me no other man has ever beheld Me. As thou beholdest Me now, through the forces which by my grace have been given to thee, have I never been revealed, even through what is written in the Vedas, thus have I never been reached by means of the sacrifices. No libation to the Gods, no study, no ceremonial whatsoever has ever attained unto Me, no terrible expiation can lead to beholding Me in My form as I now am, as thou now beholdest Me in human form, thou great hero. But fear must not come to thee, or confusion at the sight of My dreadful form. Free from fear, full of high thoughts thou shalt again behold Me, even as I am now known unto thee, in My present shape.” Then Sandshaya further relates to the blind Dritarashtra: When Krishna had thus spoken to Arjuna, the Immeasurable One — without beginning and without end, sublime beyond all strength — vanished, and Krishna showed Himself again in

his human form as though he wished by his friendly form to reassure him who had been so terrified. And Arjuna said: “Now I see Thee once more before me in Thy human shape, now knowledge and consciousness return to me and I am again myself, such as I was.” And Krishna spoke: “The shape which was so difficult for thee to behold, in which thou hast just seen Me, that is the form for the sight of which even Gods have endlessly longed. The Vedas do not indicate My shape, it will neither be attained by 'repentance, nor by charity, neither by sacrifice, nor by any ritual whatsoever. By none of these can I be seen in the form in which thou hast just seen Me. Only one who knows how to go along the way in freedom, free from all the Vedas, free from all repentances, free from all charities and sacrifices, free from all ceremonials, keeping his eyes reverently fixed upon Me alone, only such an one can perceive Me in such a shape, he alone can recognise Me thus, and can also become entirely one with Me. Whosoever behaveth thus, as I put it into his mind to behave, whosoever loveth and honoureth Me, whosoever doth not care for the

world and to whom all beings are worthy of love, he comes to Me, O thou, My son of the race of Pandu.”

We are confronted with a cosmic mystery of which the Gita tells us that it was given to mankind at a most significant cosmic hour, that significant cosmic hour when the old clairvoyance which is connected with the blood, ceases: and human souls must seek new paths to the everlasting, to the intransitory. Thus this mystery is brought to our notice so that we may at the same time realise by means of its presentation all that can become dangerous to man when he is able to see his own being brought to birth out of himself. If we grasp this deepest of human and cosmic mysteries — which tells of our own being through true self knowledge — then we have before us the greatest cosmic mystery in the world. But we may only put it before us if we are able to reverence it in all humility. No powers of comprehension will suffice, none will enable us to approach this cosmic mystery; for that the correct sentiment is necessary. No one should approach the cosmic

mystery that speaks from out the Gita who cannot approach it reverentially. Only when we can feel thus about it do we completely grasp it. How, starting from this point of view one is able in the Gita to look at a certain stage of human evolution, and how, just by means of what is shown to us in the Gita, light can also be thrown upon what we meet with in a different way in the Epistles of St. Paul — that it is which, is to occupy us in the course of these lectures.

LECTURE IV

The nature of the Bhagavad Gita and the significance of the Epistles of St. Paul. How the Christ Impulse surpasses the Krishna Impulse.

31 December, 1912

AT the beginning of yesterday's lecture I pointed out how different are the impressions received by the soul when, on the one hand, it allows the well-balanced, calm, passionless, emotionless, truly wise nature of the Bhagavad Gita to work upon it, and on the other hand that which holds sway in the Epistles of St. Paul. In many respects these give the impression of being permeated by personal emotions, personal views and points of view, by a certain, for the whole collective evolution of man on earth, agitating sense of propagandism; they are even choleric, sometimes stormy. If we allow the

manner in which the spiritual content of both is expressed to work upon us, we have in the Gita something so perfect, expressed in such a wonderful, artistically rounded way, that one could not well imagine a greater perfection of expression, revealed poetically and yet so philosophically. In the Epistles of St. Paul, on the other hand, we often find what one might call an awkwardness of expression, so that on account of this, which sometimes approaches clumsiness, it is extremely difficult to extract their deep meaning. Yet it is nevertheless true that that which relates to Christianity in the Epistles of St. Paul is the keynote for its development, just as the union of the world-conceptions of the East is the keynote of the Gita. In the Epistles of St. Paul we find the significant basic truths of Christianity as to the Resurrection, the significance of what is called Faith as compared with the Law, of the influence of grace, of the life of Christ in the soul or in the human consciousness, and many other things; we find all these presented in such a way that any presentation of Christianity must always be based on these Pauline Epistles. Everything in them

refers to Christianity, as everything in the Gita refers to the great truths as to liberating oneself from works, to the freeing of oneself from the immediate life of action, in order to devote oneself to contemplation, to the meditation of the soul, to the upward penetration of the soul into spiritual heights, to the purification of the soul; in short, according to the meaning of the Gita, to the union with Krishna. All that has just been described makes a comparison of these two spiritual revelations extremely difficult, and anyone who merely makes an external comparison will doubtless be compelled to place the Bhagavad Gita, in its purity, calm and wisdom, higher than the Epistles of St. Paul. But what is a person who makes such an outward comparison actually doing? He is like a man who, having before him a fully grown plant, with a beautiful blossom, and beside it the seed of a plant; were to say: "When I look at the plant with its beautiful, fully-developed blossom, I see that it is much more beautiful than the insignificant, invisible seed." Yet it might be that out of that seed lying beside the plant with the beautiful blossom, a still more beautiful plant with

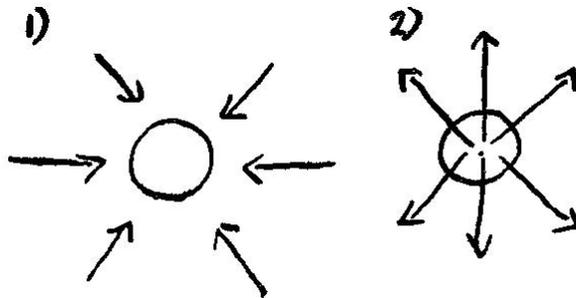
a still more beautiful blossom, might some day spring forth. It is really no proper comparison to compare two things to be found side by side, such as a fully-developed plant and a quite undeveloped seed; and thus it is if one compares the Bhagavad Gita with the Epistles of St. Paul. In the Bhagavad Gita we have before us something like the ripest fruit, the most wonderful and beautiful representation of a long human evolution, which had grown up during thousands of years and in the Epistles of St. Paul we have before us the germ of something completely new which must grow greater and greater, and which we can only grasp in all its full significance if we look upon it as germinal, and hold prophetically before us what it will some day become, when thousands and thousands of years of evolution shall have flowed into the future and that which is planted as a germ in the Pauline Epistles shall have grown riper and riper. Only if we bear this in mind can we make a proper comparison. It then also becomes clear that that which is some day to become great and which is first to be found in invisible form from the depths of Christianity in the Pauline Epistles, had

once to pour forth in chaotic fashion from the human soul. Thus things must be represented in a different way by one who is considering the significance on the one hand of the Bhagavad Gita, and on the other of the Pauline Epistles for the whole collective evolution of man on earth, from the way they can be depicted by another person who can only judge of the complete works as regards their beauty and wisdom and inner perfection of form.

If we wish to draw a comparison between the different views of life which appear in the Bhagavad Gita and the Epistles of St. Paul, we must first inquire: What is the chief point in question? The point in question is that in all we are able to survey historically of the two views of life, what we are chiefly concerned with is the drawing down of the "ego" into the evolution of mankind. If we trace the ego through the evolution of mankind, we can say that in the pre-Christian times it was still dependent, it was still, as it were, rooted in concealed depths of the soul, it had not yet acquired the possibility of developing itself.

Development of an individual character only became possible when into that ego was thrown, as it were, the impulse which we describe as the Christ-Impulse. That which since the Mystery of Golgotha may be within the human ego and which is expressed in the words of St. Paul: "Not I, but Christ in me," that could not formerly be within it. But in the ages when there was already an approach to the Christ-Impulse — in the last thousand years before the Mystery of Golgotha — that which was about to take place through the introduction of the Christ-Impulse into the human soul was slowly prepared, particularly in such a way as that expressed in the act of Krishna. That which, after the Mystery of Golgotha, a man had to look for as the Christ-Impulse in himself, which he had to find in the Pauline sense: "Not I, but Christ in me," that he had, before the Mystery of Golgotha, to look for outside, he had to look for it coming to him as a revelation from cosmic distances. The further we go back into the ages, the more brilliant, the more impulsive was the revelation from without. We may therefore say: In the ages before the Mystery of Golgotha, a certain

revelation came to mankind like sunshine falling upon an object from without. Just as the light falls upon this object, so did the light of the spiritual sun fall from without upon the soul of man, and enlightened it. After the Mystery of Golgotha we can speak of that which works in the soul as Christ-Impulse, as the spiritual sunlight, as though we saw a self-illuminated body before us radiating its light from within. If we look at it thus, the fact of the Mystery of Golgotha becomes a significant boundary line in human evolution. We can represent



the whole connection, symbolically. If we take this circle (Diagram 1) as representing the human soul, we may say that the spiritual light streams in from without from all sides into this human soul. Then

comes the Mystery of Golgotha, after which the soul possesses the Christ-Impulse in itself and radiates Forth that which is contained in the Christ-Impulse (Diagram 2). Just as a drop which is illumined from all sides radiates and reflects this illumination, so does the soul appear before the Christ-Impulse. As a flame which is alight within and radiates forth its light, thus does the soul appear after the Mystery of Golgotha, if it has been able to receive the Christ-Impulse.

Bearing this in mind we can express this whole relation by means of the terms we have learnt in Sankhya philosophy. We may say: If we direct our spiritual eye to a soul which, before the Mystery of Golgotha, is irradiated from all sides by the light of the spirit, and we see the whole connection of this spirit which pours in upon the soul from all sides radiating to us in its spirituality, the whole then appears to us in what the Sankhya philosophy describes as the Sattva condition. On the other hand, if we contemplate a soul after the Mystery of Golgotha had been accomplished, looking at it from outside as it were, with the spiritual eye, it

seems as though the spiritual light were hidden away in its innermost depths and as if the soul-nature concealed it. The spiritual light appears to us as though veiled by the soul-substance, that spiritual light which, since the Mystery of Golgotha, is contained in the Christ-Impulse. Do we not perceive this verified up to our own age, indeed especially in our own age, with regard to all that man experiences externally? Observe a man today, see what he has to occupy himself with as regards his external knowledge and his occupation; and try to compare with this how the Christ-Impulse lives in man, as if hidden in his inmost being, like a yet tiny, feeble flame, veiled by the rest of the soul's contents. That is Tamas as compared with the pre-Christian state, which latter, as regards the relation of soul and spirit, was the Sattva-state. What part, therefore, in this sense does the Mystery of Golgotha play in the evolution of mankind? As regards the revelation of the spirit, it transforms the Sattva into the Tamas state. By means of it mankind moves forward, but it undergoes a deep fall, one may say, not through the Mystery of Golgotha, but through itself. The

Mystery of Golgotha causes the flame to grow greater and greater: but the reason the flame appears in the soul as only a very small one — whereas before a mighty light poured in on it from all sides — is that progressing human nature is sinking deeper and deeper into darkness. It is not, therefore the fault of the Mystery of Golgotha that the human soul, as regards the spirit, is in the Tamas condition, for the Mystery of Golgotha will bring it to pass in the distant future that out of the Tamas condition a Sattva condition will again come about, which will then be set aflame from within. Between the Sattva and the Tamas condition there is, according to Sankhya philosophy, the Rajas condition; and this is described as being that time in human evolution in which falls the Mystery of Golgotha. Humanity itself, as regards the manifestation of the Spirit, went along the path from light into darkness, from the Sattva into the Tamas condition, just during the thousand years which surrounded the Mystery of Golgotha.

If we look more closely into this evolution, we may say: If we take the line a-b as the time of the evolution of mankind, up to about the eighth or seventh century before the Mystery of Golgotha, all human civilisation was then in the Sattva condition.

7th Century B.C. 15th, 16th Century A.D.
A-----x-----x-----B

Chald-Egypt. Graeco-Latin Period. Our own age.

Then began the age in which occurred the Mystery of Golgotha, followed by our own age some fifteen or sixteen centuries after the Mystery of Golgotha. Then quite definitely begins the Tamas age, but it is a period of transition. If we wish to use our customary designations we have the first age — which, in a sense, as regards certain spiritual revelations, still belongs to the Sattva condition — occurring at the same epoch as that which we call the Chaldean-Egyptian, that which is the Rajas-condition is the Graeco-Latin, and that which is in the Tamas condition is our own age.' We know, too, that what is called the Chaldean-

Egyptian age is the third of the Post-Atlantean conditions the Graeco-Latin the fourth, and our own the fifth. It was therefore necessary one might say, in accordance with the plan of the evolution of mankind, that between the third and fourth Post-Atlantean epochs there should occur a deadening, as it were, of external revelation. How was mankind really prepared for the blazing up of the Christ-Impulse? How did this preparation really occur?

If we want to make quite clear to ourselves the difference between the spiritual conditions of mankind in the third epoch of humanity — the Chaldean-Egyptian — and the following epochs, we must say: In this third age in all these countries, in Egypt as well as in Chaldea, and also in India, there still was in humanity the remains of the old clairvoyant power: that is to say, man not only saw the worlds around him with the assistance of his senses and of the understanding connected with the brain, but he could also still see the surrounding world with the organs of his etheric body, at any rate, under certain conditions,

between sleeping and waking. If we wish to picture to ourselves a man of that epoch, we can only do so by saying: To those men a perception of nature and of the world such as we have through our senses and the understanding bound up with the brain was only one of the conditions which they experienced. In those conditions they gained as yet no knowledge, but merely, as it were, gazed at things and let them work, side by side in space and one after another in time. If these men wanted to acquire knowledge they had to enter a condition, not artificially produced as in our time, but occurring naturally, as if of itself, in which their deeper-lying forces, the forces of their etheric bodies, operated for producing knowledge. Out of knowledge such as this came forth all that appears as the wonderful knowledge of the Sankhya philosophy; from such a contemplation also went forth all that has come down to us in the Vedas — although that belongs to a still earlier age. Thus the man of that time acquired knowledge by putting himself or allowing himself to be put into another condition. He had so to say his everyday condition, in which he saw with his eyes, heard

with his ears, and followed things with his ordinary understanding; but this seeing, hearing and understanding he only made use of when occupied in external practical business. It would never have occurred to him to make use of these capacities for the acquiring of knowledge. In order to acquire knowledge and perception he made use of what came to him in that other condition in which he brought into activity the deepest forces of his being.

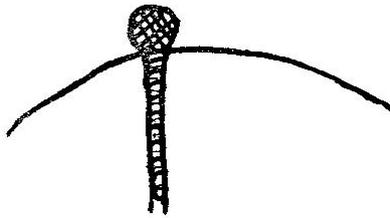
We can therefore think of man in those old times as having, so to say, an everyday body, and within that everyday body his finer spiritual body, his Sunday body, if I may use such a comparison. With his everyday body he did his everyday work, and with his Sunday body — which was woven of the etheric body alone — he perceived and perfected his science. One would be justified in saying that a man of that olden time would be astonished that we in our day hew out our knowledge by means of our everyday body, and never put on our Sunday body when we wish to learn something about the world. Well, how did

such a man experience all these conditions? The experiencing of these was such that when a man perceived by means of his deeper forces, when he was in that state of perception in which, for instance, he studied Sankhya philosophy, he did not then feel as does the man of today, who, when he wishes to acquire knowledge must exert his reason and think with his head. He, when he acquired knowledge, felt himself to be in his etheric body, which was certainly least developed in what today is the physical head, but was more pronounced in the other parts; man thought much more by means of the other parts of his etheric body. The etheric body of the head is the least perfect part of it. A man felt, so to say, that he thought with his etheric body; he felt himself when thinking, lifted out of his physical body; but at such moments of learning, of creative knowledge, he felt something more besides; he felt that he was in reality one with the earth. When he took off his everyday body and put on his Sunday body, he felt as though forces passed through his whole being; as though forces passed through his legs and feet and united him to the earth, just as the forces

which pass through our hands and arms unite them with our body. He began to feel himself a member of the earth. On the one hand, he felt that he thought and knew in his etheric body, and on the other he felt himself no longer a separate man, but a member of the earth. He felt his being growing into the earth. Thus the whole inner manner of experiencing altered when a man drew on his Sunday body and prepared himself for knowledge. What, then, had to happen in order that this old old age — the third — should so completely cease, and the new age — the fourth — should come in? If we wish to understand what had to happen then, it would be well to try to feel our way a little into the old method of description.

A man who in that olden time experienced what I have just described, would say: “The serpent has become active within me.” His being lengthened out into the earth; he no longer felt his physical body as the really active part of him; he felt as though he stretched out a serpent-like continuation of himself into the earth and the head was that which projected out of the earth. And he felt this

serpent being to be the thinker. We might draw the man's being thus: his etheric body passing into the earth, elongated into a serpent-body and, whilst outside the earth as physical man, he was stretched down into the earth during the time of perceiving and knowing, and thought with his etheric body.



“The serpent is active within me,” said he. To perceive was therefore in the olden time something like this: “I rouse the serpent within me to a state of activity; I feel my serpent-nature.” What had to happen, so that the new age should come in, that the new method of perceiving should come about? It had to be no longer possible for those moments to occur in which man felt his being extended down into the earth through his legs and feet; besides which perception had to die out in his etheric body and pass over to the physical head. If you can rightly picture this

passing over of the old perception into the new, you will say: a good expression for this transition would be: "I am wounded in the feet, but with my own body I tread under foot the head of the serpent," that is to say, the serpent with its head ceases to be the instrument of thought. The physical body and especially the physical brain, kills the serpent, and the serpent revenges itself by taking away from one the feeling of belonging to the earth. It bites one in the heel.

At such times of transition from one form of human experience into another, that which comes, as it were, from the old epoch, comes into conflict with that which is coming in the new epoch; for these things are still really contemporaneous. The father is still in existence long after the son's life has begun; although the son is descended from the father. The attributes of the fourth epoch, the Graeco-Latin were there, but those of the third, the Egyptian-Chaldean epoch, still stirred and moved in men and in nations. These attributes naturally became intermingled in the course of evolution, but that which thus appears as the newly-arisen,

and that which comes, as it were, out of the olden times, continue to live contemporaneously, but can no longer understand each other properly. The old does not understand the new. The new must protect itself against the old, must defend its life against it; that is to say, the new is there, but the ancestors with their attributes belonging to the old epoch, still work in their descendants, the ancestors who have taken no part in the new. Thus we may describe the transition from the third epoch of humanity to the fourth. There had therefore to be a hero, as we might say — a leader of humanity who, in a significant manner, first represents this process of the killing of the serpent, of being wounded by it; while he had at the same time to struggle against that which was certainly related to him, but which with its attributes still shone into the new age from the old. In the advance of mankind, one person must first experience the whole greatness of that which later all generations experience. Who was the hero who crushed the head of the serpent, who struggled against that which was important in the third epoch? Who was he who guided mankind out of

the old Sattva-time into the new Tamas-time? That was Krishna-and how could this be more clearly shown than by the Eastern legend in which Krishna is represented as being a son of the Gods, a son of Mahadeva and Devaki, who entered the world surrounded by miracles (that betokens that he brings in something new), and who, if I may carry my example further, leads men to look for wisdom in their everyday body, and who crushes their Sunday body — the serpent; who has to defend himself against that which projects into the new age from his kindred. Such a one is something new, something miraculous. Hence the legend relates how the child Krishna, even at his birth, was surrounded by miracles, and that Kansa, the brother of his mother, wished to take the life of the child. In the uncle of the child Krishna we see the continuance of the old, and Krishna has to defend himself against him; for Krishna had to bring in the new, that which kills the third epoch and does away with the old conditions for the external evolution of mankind. He had to defend himself against Kansa, the inhabitant of the old Sattva age; and amongst the most remarkable of the miracles

with which Krishna is surrounded, the legend relates that the mighty serpent Kali twined round him, but that he was able to tread the head of the serpent under foot, though it wounded his heel. Here we have something of which we may say the legend directly reproduces an occult fact. That is what legends do; only we ought not to seek an external explanation, but should grasp the legend aright, in the true light of knowledge, in order to understand it.

Krishna is the hero of the setting third Post-Atlantean epoch of humanity. The legend relates further that Krishna appeared at the end of the third cosmic epoch. It all corresponds when rightly understood. Krishna is therefore he who kills out the old perception, who drives it into the darkness. This he does in his external phenomena; he reduces to a state of darkness that which as Sattva-knowledge, was formerly possessed by mankind. Now, how is he represented in the Bhagavad Gita? He is there represented as giving to a single individual, as if in compensation for what he has taken away from him, guidance as to how through

Yoga he can rise to that which was then lost to normal mankind. Thus to the world Krishna appears as the killer of the old Sattva-knowledge, while at the same time we see him at the end of the Gita as the Lord of Yoga, who is again to lead us up to the knowledge which had been abandoned; the knowledge belonging to the old ages, which we can only attain when we have overcome and conquered that which we now put on externally as an everyday dress; when we return once more to the old spiritual condition. That was the twofold deed of Krishna, He acted as a world-historical hero, in that he crushed the head of the serpent of the old knowledge and compelled man to re-enter the physical body, in which alone the ego could be won as free and independent ego, whereas formerly all that made man an ego streamed in from outside. Thus he was a world-wide historical Hero. Then to the individual he was the one who for the times of devotion, of meditation, of inner finding, gave back that which had at one time been lost. That it is which we meet with in such a grand form in the Gita, which at the end of our last lecture we allowed to work upon our souls, and

which Arjuna meets as his own being seen externally; seen without beginning and without end — outspread over all space.

If we observe this condition more clearly we come to a place in the Gita which, if we have already been amazed at the great and mighty contents of the Gita, must infinitely extend our admiration. We come to a passage which, to the man of the present day, must certainly appear incomprehensible; wherein Krishna reveals to Arjuna the nature of the Avayata-tree, of the Fig-tree, by telling him that in this tree the roots grow upwards and the branches downwards; where Krishna further says that the single leaves of this tree are the leaves of the Veda book, which, put together, yield the Veda knowledge. That is a singular passage in the Gita. What does it signify, this pointing to the great tree of Life, whose roots have an upward direction, and the branches a downward direction, and whose leaves give the contents of the Veda? We must just transport ourselves back into the old knowledge, and try and understand how it worked. The man of today only has, so to say, his present knowledge,

communicated to him through his physical organs. The old knowledge was acquired as we have just described, in the body which was still etheric, not that the whole man was etheric, but knowledge was acquired through the part of the etheric body which was within the physical body. Through this organism, through the organisation of the etheric body, the old knowledge was acquired. Just imagine vividly that you, when in the etheric body, could perceive by means of the serpent. There was something then present in the world, which to the man of the present day is no longer there. Certainly the man of today can realise much of what surrounds him when he puts himself into relation with nature; but just think of him when he is observing the world: there is one thing he does not perceive, and that is his brain. No man can see his own brain when he is observing; neither can any man see his own spine. This impossibility ceases as soon as one observes with the etheric body. A new object then appears which one does not otherwise see — one perceives one's own nervous system. Certainly it does not appear as the present-day anatomist sees it. It does not appear as

it does to such a man, it appears in such a way that one feels: “Yes! There thou art, in thy etheric nature.” One then looks upwards and sees how the nerves, which go through all the organs, are collected together up there in the brain. That produces the feeling: “That is a tree of which the roots go upwards, and the branches stretch down into all the members.” That in reality is not felt as being of the same small size as we are inside our skin: it is felt as being a mighty cosmic tree. The roots stretch far out into the distances of space and the branches extend downwards. One feels oneself to be a serpent, and one sees one's nervous system objectified, one feels that it is like a tree which sends its roots far out into the distance of space and the branches of which go downwards. Remember what I have said in former lectures, that man is, in a sense, an inverted plant. All that you have learnt must be recalled and put together, in order to understand such a thing as this wonderful passage in the Bhagavad Gita. We are then astonished at the old wisdom which must today, by means of new methods, be called forth from the depths of occultism. We then experience

what this tree brings to light. We experience in its leaves that which grows upon it; the Veda knowledge, which streams in on us from without.

The wonderful picture of the Gita stands out clearly before us: the tree with its roots going upwards, and its branches going downwards, with its leaves full of knowledge, and man himself as the serpent round the tree. You may perhaps have seen this picture, or have come across the picture of the Tree of Life with the serpent; everything is of significance when one considers these old things. Here we have the tree with the upward growing roots, and the downward-turning branches; one feels that it goes in an opposite direction to the Paradise-tree. That has its deep meaning: for the tree of Paradise is placed at the beginning of the other evolution, that which through the old Hebrew antiquity passes on into Christianity. Thus in this place we are given an indication of the whole nature of that old knowledge, and when Krishna distinctly says to his pupil Arjuna “Renunciation is the power which makes this tree visible to mankind,” we are shown

how man returns to that old knowledge when he renounces everything acquired by him in the further course of evolution, which we described yesterday. That it is which is given as something grand and glorious by Krishna to his only individual pupil Arjuna as a payment on account, whilst he has to take it from the whole of humanity for the everyday use of civilisation. That is the being of Krishna. What then must that become which Krishna gives to his single individual pupil? It must become Sattva wisdom; and the better he is able to give him this Sattva wisdom, the wiser, clearer, calmer and more passionless will it be, but it will be an old revealed wisdom, something which approaches mankind from without in such a wonderful way in the words which the Sublime One, that is to say, Krishna Himself, speaks, and in those in which the single individual pupil makes reply. Thus Krishna becomes the Lord of Yoga, who leads us back to the ancient wisdom of mankind, and who always endeavours to overcome that, which even in the age of the Sattva, concealed the spirit from the soul, who wishes to bring before his pupil the spirit in its

ancient purity, as it was before it descended into substance. Thus in the spirit only does Krishna appear to us in that mutual conversation between Krishna and his pupil to which we referred yesterday.

Thus we have brought before our souls the end of that epoch, which was the last one of the ages of the old spirituality; that spirituality that we can so follow that we see its full and complete spiritual light at its beginning, and then its descent into matter in order that man should find his ego, his independence. And when the spiritual light had descended as far as the fourth Post-Atlantean epoch, there was then a sort of reciprocal relationship, a Rajas relationship between the spirit and the more external soul-part. In this epoch occurred the Mystery of Golgotha. Could we describe this epoch as belonging to the Sattva-condition? No! For then we should not be describing just what belonged to that epoch! If anyone describes it correctly, as belonging to the Rajas-age — making use of that expression of Sankhya philosophy — he must describe it

according to Rajas, not in terms of purity and clearness, but in a personal sense, as aroused to anger about this, or that, and so on. Thus would one have to describe it, and thus did St. Paul portray it, in the sense of its relation to Rajas. If you feel the throbbing of many a saying in the Epistles to the Thessalonians, to the Corinthians, or to the Romans, you will become aware of something akin to rage, something often like a personal characteristic pulsating in the Epistles of St. Paul, wrenching itself away from the Rajas-condition — that is the style and character of these Epistles. They had to appear thus; whereas the Bhagavad Gita had to come forth clear and free from the personal because it was the finest blossom of the dying epoch, which, however, gave one individual a compensation for that which was going under, and led him back into the heights of spiritual life. Krishna had to give the finest spiritual blossoms to his own pupil, because he was to kill out the old knowledge of mankind, to crush the head of the serpent. This Sattva-condition went under of itself, it was no longer there; and anyone, in the Rajas age who spoke of

the Sattva-condition spoke only of that which was old. He who placed himself at the beginning of the newer age had to speak in accordance with what was decisive for that time. Personality had drawn into human nature because human nature had found the way to seek knowledge through the organs and instruments of the physical body. In the Pauline Epistles the personal element speaks; that is why a personality thunders against all that draws in as the darkness of the material; with words of wrath he thunders forth, for words of wrath often thunder forth in the Epistles of St. Paul. That is why the Epistles of St. Paul cannot be given in the strictly limited lines, in the sharply-defined, wise clearness of the Bhagavad Gita.

The Bhagavad Gita can speak in words full of wisdom because it describes how man may free himself from external activity, and raise himself in triumph to the spirit, how he may become one with Krishna. It could also describe in words full of wisdom the path of Yoga, which leads to the greatest heights of the soul. But that which came into the world as something new, the victory of the

spirit over that which merely pertains to the soul within, that could at first only be described out of the Rajas-condition; and he who first described it in a manner significant for the history of mankind, does so full of enthusiasm; in such a way that one knows he took part in it himself, that he himself trembled before the revelation of the Christ-Impulse. The personal had then come to him, he was confronted for the first time with that which was to work on for thousands of years into the future, it came to him in such a way that all the forces of his soul had to take a personal part in it. Therefore he does not describe in philosophic concepts, full of wisdom, such as occur in the Bhagavad Gita, but describes what he has to describe as the resurrection of Christ as something in which man is directly and personally concerned.

Was it not to become personal experience? Was not Christianity to draw into what is most intimately personal, warm it through and through, and fill it with life? Truly he who described the Christ-Event for the first time could only do so as a personal experience. We can see how in the Gita

the chief emphasis is laid upon the ascent through Yoga into spiritual heights; the rest is only touched upon in passing. Why is this? Because Krishna only gives his instructions to one particular pupil and does not concern himself with what other people outside in the world feel as to their connection with the spiritual. Therefore Krishna describes what his pupil must become, that he must grow higher and higher, and become more and more spiritual. That description leads to riper and riper conditions of the soul, and hence to more and more impressive pictures of beauty. Hence also it is the case that only at the end do we meet with the antagonism between the demoniacal and the spiritual, and it confirms the beauty of the ascent into the soul-life; only at the conclusion do we see the contrast between those who are demoniacal and those who are spiritual. All those people out of whom only the material speaks, who live in the material, who believe that all comes to an end with death, are demoniacal. But that is only mentioned by way of enlightenment, it is nothing with which the great teacher is really concerned: he is before all concerned with the spiritualising of

the human soul. Yoga may only speak of that which is opposed to Yoga, as a side-issue. St. Paul is, above all, concerned with the whole of humanity, that humanity which is in fact in the oncoming age of darkness. He has to turn his attention to all that this age of darkness brings about in human life; he must contrast the dark life, common to all, with that which is the Christ-Impulse, and which is first to spring up as a tiny plant in the human soul. We can see it appearing in St. Paul as he points over and over again to all sorts of vice, all sorts of materialism, which must be combated through what he has to give. What he is able to give is at first a mere flickering in the human soul, which can only acquire power through the enthusiasm which lies behind his words, and which appears in triumphant words as the manifestation of feeling through personality. Thus the presentations of the Gita and of the Pauline Epistles are far removed from each other; in the clearness of the Gita the descriptions are impersonal, while St. Paul had to work the personal into his words. It is that which on the one hand gives the style, and tone to the Gita, and on

the other to the Pauline Epistles; we meet it in both works, almost, one might, say in every line. Something can only attain artistic perfection when it has acquired the necessary ripeness; at the beginning of its development it always appears as more or less chaotic.

Why is all this so? This question is answered if we turn to the wonderful beginning of the Gita. We have already described it; we have seen the hosts of the kindred facing each other in battle, one warrior facing another, yet both conqueror and conquered are related to one another by blood. The time we are considering is that of the transition from the old blood-relationship, to which belongs the power of clairvoyance-to that of the differentiation and mingling of blood which is the characteristic of our modern times. We are confronted with a transformation of the outer bodily nature of man and of the perception which necessarily accompanies this. Another kind of mingling of blood, a new significance of blood now enters into the evolution of mankind. If we wish to study the transition from that old epoch to

the new — I would remind you of my little pamphlet, *The Occult Significance of Blood* — we must say that the clairvoyance of olden times depended upon the fact that the blood was, so to say, kept in the tribe, whereas the new age proceeded from the mixing of blood by which clairvoyance was killed, and the new perception arose which is connected with the physical body. The beginning of the Gita points to something external, to something connected with man's bodily form. It is with these external changes of form that Sankhya philosophy is mostly concerned; in a sense it leaves in the background that which belongs to the soul, as we have pointed out. The souls in their multiplicity are simply behind the forms. In Sankhya philosophy we have found a kind of plurality; we have compared it with the Leibnitz philosophy of more modern times.

If we can think ourselves into the soul of a Sankhya philosopher, we can imagine his saying: “My soul expresses itself in the Sattva or in the Rajas or in the Tamas condition with respect to the

forms of the external body.” But this philosopher studies the forms. These forms alter, and one of the most remarkable changes is that which expresses itself in the different use made of the etheric body, or through the transition as regards blood-relationship we have just described. We have then an external change of form. The soul itself is not in the least affected by that with which Sankhya philosophy concerns itself. The external changes of form are quite sufficient to enable us to consider what takes place in the transition from the old Sattva age to that of the new Rajas, on the borders of which stands Krishna. It is the external changes of form which come into consideration there.

Outer changes of form always come into consideration at the time of the change of the ages. But the changes of form took place in a different way during the transition from the Persian to the Egyptian epoch from what they did in that from the Egyptian to the Graeco-Latin; still an external change of form did take place. In yet another manner took place the transition from the Ancient

Indian to the Persian, but there too there was an external change of form. Indeed it was simply a change of form which occurred when the passing-over from the old Atlantis itself into the Post-Atlantean ages took place. A change of form: and we could follow this by holding fast to the designations of the Sankhya philosophy, we can follow it simply by saying: The soul goes through its experiences within these forms, but the soul itself is not altered thereby, Purusha remains undisturbed. Thus we have a particular sort of transformation which can be described by Sankhya philosophy according to its own conceptions. But behind this transforming there is Purusha, the individual part of the soul of every man. The Sankhya philosophy only says of this that there is an individual soul-part which is related through the three Gunas-Sattva, Rajas and Tamas — with external form. But this soul-part is not itself affected by the external forms; Purusha is behind them all and we are directed to the soul itself; a continual indication of the soul itself is what meets us in the teaching of — Krishna, in what he as Lord of Yoga teaches. Yes, certainly I but the

nature of this soul is not given us in the way of knowledge. Directions as to how to develop the soul is the highest we are shown; alteration of the external forms; no change in the soul itself, only an introductory note.

This first suggestion we discover in the following way if man is to rise through Yoga from the ordinary stages of the soul to the higher, he must free himself from external works, he must emancipate himself more and more from outer works, from what he does and perceives externally; he must become a “looker-on” at himself. His soul then assumes an inner freedom and raises itself triumphantly over what is external. That is the case with the ordinary man, but with one who is initiated and becomes clairvoyant the case does not remain thus; he is not confronted with external substance, for that in itself is maya. It only becomes a reality to him who makes use of his own inner instruments. What takes the place of substance? If we observe the old initiation we meet with the following: Whereas man in everyday life is confronted with substance,

with Prakriti — the soul which through Yoga has developed itself by initiation, has to fight against the world of the Asuras, the world of the demoniacal. Substance is what offers resistance; the Asuras, the powers of darkness become enemies. But all that is as yet a mere suggestion, we perceive it as something peeping out of the soul, so to say; we begin to feel that which pertains to the soul. For the soul will only begin to realise itself as spiritual when it begins to fight the battle against the demons, the Asuras.

In our language we should describe this battle, which, however, we only meet with in miniature, as something which becomes perceptible in the form of spirits, when substance appears in spirituality. We thus perceive in miniature that which we know as the battle of the soul when it enters upon initiation, the battle with Ahriman. But when we look upon it as a battle of this kind, we are then in the innermost part of the soul, and what were formerly material spirits grow into something gigantic; the soul is then confronted with the mighty foe. Soul then stands up against Soul, the

individual soul in universal space is confronted with the realm of Ahriman. It is the lowest stage of Ahriman's kingdom with which one fights in Yoga; but now when we look at this as the battle of the soul with the powers of Ahriman, with Ahriman's kingdom, he himself stands before us. Sankhya philosophy recognises this relationship of the soul to external substance, in which the latter has the upper hand, as the condition of Tamas. The initiate who has entered initiation by means of Yoga is not only in this Tamas state, but also in battle with certain demoniacal powers, into which substance transforms itself before his sight. In this same sense the soul, when it is in the condition not only of being confronted with the spiritual in substance, but with the purely spiritual, is face to face with Ahriman. According to Sankhya philosophy, spirit and matter are in balance in the Rajas condition, they sway to and fro, first matter is above, then spirit, at one time matter weighs down the scales, then spirit. If this condition is to lead to initiation, it must lead in the sense of the old Yoga to a direct overcoming of Rajas, and lead into Sattva. To us it does not yet lead into Sattva, but to the

commencement of another battle-the battle with what is Luciferic.

And now the course of our considerations leads us to Purusha, which is only hinted at in Sankhya philosophy. Not only do we hint at it, we place it right in the midst of the field of the battle against Ahriman and Lucifer: one soul-nature wars against another. In Sankhya philosophy Purusha is seen in immense perspective; but if we enter more deeply into that which plays its part in the nature of the soul, not as yet distinguished between Ahriman and Lucifer; then in Sattva, Rajas and Tamas we only find the relation of the soul to material substance. But considering the matter in our own sense, we have the soul in its full activity, fighting and struggling between Ahriman and Lucifer. That is something which, in its full greatness can only be considered through Christianity. According to the old Sankhya teaching Purusha remains still undisturbed: it describes the condition which arises when Purusha clothes itself in Prakriti. We enter the Christian age and in that which underlies esoteric Christianity and we penetrate into Purusha

itself, and describe this by taking the trinity into consideration: the soul, the Ahrimanic, and the Luciferic. We now grasp the inner relationship of the soul itself in its struggles. That which had to come was to be found in the transition in the fourth epoch, that transition which is marked through the Mystery of Golgotha. For what took place then? That which occurred in the transition from the third to the fourth epoch was something which can be described as a mere change of form; but now it is something which can only be described by the transition from Prakriti into Purusha itself, which must be so characterised that we say: “We feel how completely Purusha has emancipated itself from Prakriti, we feel that in our innermost being.”

Man is not only torn away from the ties of blood, but also from Prakriti, from everything external, and must inwardly have done with it. Then comes the Christ-Impulse. That is, however, the greatest transition which could take place in the whole evolution of the earth. It is then no longer merely a question of what might be the conditions of the

soul in relation to matter, in Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, for the soul no longer has merely to overcome Tamas and Rajas to raise itself above them in Yoga, but has to fight against Ahriman and Lucifer, for it is now left to itself. Hence the necessity to confront that which is presented to us in that mighty Poem — the Bhagavad Gita — that which was necessary for the old times-with that which is necessary for the new.

That sublime Song, the Bhagavad Gita, shows us this conflict. There we are shown the human soul. It dwells in its bodily part, in its sheaths. These sheaths can be described. They are that which is in a constant state of changing form. The soul in its ordinary life lives in a state of entanglement, in Prakriti, In Yoga it frees itself from that which envelopes it, it overcomes that in which it is enwrapped, and enters the spiritual sphere, when it is quite free from its coverings. Let us compare with this that which Christianity, the Mystery of Golgotha, first brought. It is not here sufficient that the soul should merely make itself free. For if the soul should free itself through Yoga, it would

attain to the vision of Krishna. He would appear in all his might before it, but as he was before Ahriman and Lucifer obtained their full power. Therefore a kind divinity still conceals the fact that beside Krishna — who then becomes visible in the sublime way described in our last lecture — on his left and on his right there stand Ahriman and Lucifer. With the old clairvoyance that was still possible, because man had not yet descended into matter; but now it can no longer be the case. If the soul were now only to go through Yoga it would meet Ahriman and Lucifer and would have to enter into battle with them. It can only take its place beside Krishna when it has that ally Who fights Ahriman and Lucifer; Tamas and Rajas would not suffice. That ally, however, is Christ. Thus we see how that which is of a bodily nature freed itself from the body, or one might also say, that which is bodily darkened itself within the body, at the time when Krishna, the Hero, appeared. But, on the other hand, we see that which is still more stupendous; the soul abandoned to itself and face to face with something which is only visible in its own domain in the age in which the Mystery of

Golgotha occurred.

I can well imagine, my dear friends, someone saying: “Well, what could be more wonderful than when the highest ideal of man, the perfection of mankind, is placed before our eyes in the form of Krishna! “There can be something higher — and that it is which must stand by our side and permeate us when we have to gain this humanity, not merely against Tamas and Rajas, but against the powers of the spirit. That is the Christ. So it is the want of capacity to see something greater still, if one is determined to see in Krishna the highest of all. The preponderating force of the Christ-Impulse as compared with the Krishna-Impulse is expressed in the fact that in the latter we have incarnated in the whole human nature of Krishna, the Being which was incarnated in him. Krishna was born, and grew up, as the son of Visudeva; but in his whole manhood was incorporated, incarnated, that highest human impulse which we recognise as Krishna. That other Impulse, which must stand by our side when we have to confront Lucifer and Ahriman (which confrontation is only

now beginning, for all such things, for instance, as are represented in our Mystery Dramas, will be understood psychically by future generations), that other Impulse must be one for which mankind as such, is at first too small, an Impulse which cannot immediately dwell even in a body such as one which Zarathustra can inhabit, but can only dwell in it when that body itself has attained the height of its development, when it has reached its thirtieth year. Thus the Christ-Impulse does not fill a whole life, but only the ripest period of a human life. That is why the Christ-Impulse lived only for three years in the body of Jesus. The more exalted height of the Christ-Impulse is expressed in the fact that it could not live immediately in a human body, as did Krishna from his birth up. We shall have to speak further of the overwhelming greatness of the Christ-Impulse as compared with the Krishna. Impulse and how this is to be seen. But from what has already been characterised you can both see and feel that, as a matter of fact, the relation between the great Gita and the Epistles of St. Paul could be none other; that the whole presentation of the Gita being the ripe fruit of

much, much earlier times, may therefore be complete in itself; while the Epistles of St. Paul, being the first seeds of a future-certainly more perfect, more all-embracing world-epoch, must necessarily be far more incomplete. Thus one who represents how the world runs its course must recognise, it is true, the great imperfections of the Pauline Epistles as compared with the Gita, the very, very significant imperfections — they must not be disguised — but he must also understand the reason those imperfections have to be there.

LECTURE V

The spiritual nature of Maya. Krishna — the
Light-Halo of Christ. The Risen One.

1 January, 1913

DURING this course of lectures we have brought before our souls two remarkable documents of humanity, although necessarily described very briefly on account of the limited number of lectures; and we have seen what impulses had to flow into the evolution of mankind in order that these two significant documents, the sublime Gita and the Epistles of St. Paul, might come into existence. What it is important for us to grasp is the essential difference between the whole spirit of the Gita and that of the Epistles of St. Paul. As we have already said: — in the Gita we have the teachings that Krishna was able to give to his pupil

Arjuna. Such teachings can only be given and should only be given to one person individually, for they are in reality exactly what they appear in the Gita; teachings of an intimate nature. On the other hand, it may be said that they are now within the reach of anyone, because they appear in the Gita. This naturally was not the case at the time the Gita was composed. They did not then reach all ears; they were then only communicated by word of mouth. In those old days teachers were careful to ascertain the maturity of the pupil to whom they were about to communicate such teachings; they always made sure of his being ready for them. In our time this is no longer possible as regards all the teachings and instructions which have in some way come openly to light. We are living in an age in which the spiritual life is in a certain sense public. Not that there is no longer any occult science in our day, but it cannot be considered occult simply because it is not printed or spread abroad. There is plenty of occult science even in our day. The scientific teaching of Fichte, for instance, although everyone can procure it in printed form, is really a secret

teaching; and finally Hegel's philosophy is also a secret doctrine, for it is very little known and has indeed many reasons in it for remaining a secret teaching; and this is the case with many things in our day. The scientific teaching of Fichte and the philosophy of Hegel have a very simple method of remaining secret doctrine, in that they are written in such a way that most people do not understand them, and fall asleep if they read the first pages. In that way the subject itself remains a secret doctrine, and this is the case in our own age with a great deal which many people think they know. They do not know it; thus these things remain secret doctrine; and, in reality, such things as are to be found in the Gita also remain secret doctrine, although they may be made known in the widest circles by means of printing. For while one person who takes up the Gita today sees in it great and mighty revelations about the evolution of man's own inner being, another will only see in it an interesting poem; to him all the perceptions and feelings expressed in the Gita are mere trivialities. For let no one think that he has really made what is in the Gita his own, although he may be able to

express in the words of the Gita itself what is contained in it, but which may itself be far removed from his comprehension. Thus the greatness of the subject itself is in many respects a protection against its becoming common. What is certain is that the teachings which are poetically worked out in the Gita are such that each one must follow, must experience them for himself, if, through them, he wishes to rise in his soul, and finally to experience the meeting with the Lord of Yoga, with Krishna. It is therefore an individual matter; something which the great Teacher addresses to one individual alone. It is a different thing when we consider the contents of the Epistles of St. Paul from this point of view. There we see that all is for the community, all is matter appealing to the many. For if we fix our attention upon, the innermost core of the essence of the Krishna-teaching we must say: What one experiences through this teaching, one experiences for oneself alone, in the strictest seclusion of one's own soul, and one can only have the meeting with Krishna as a lonely soul-wanderer, after one has found the way back to the original revelations and

experiences of mankind. That which Krishna can give must be given to each individual.

This is not the case with the revelation given to the world through the Christ-Impulse. From the beginning the Christ-Impulse was intended for all humanity, and the Mystery of Golgotha was not consummated as an act for the individual soul alone; but we must think of the whole of mankind from the very beginning to the very end of the earth's evolution, and realise that what happened at Golgotha was for all men. It is to the greatest possible extent a matter for the community in general. Therefore the style of the Epistles of St. Paul, apart from all that has already been characterised, must be quite different from the style of the sublime Gita. Let us once more picture clearly the relationship between Krishna and Arjuna. He gives his pupil unequivocal directions as Lord of Yoga as to how he can rise in his soul in order to attain the vision of Krishna. Let us compare with this a specially pregnant passage in the Pauline Epistles, in which a community turn to St. Paul and ask him whether this or that was true,

whether this could be considered as giving the right views about what he had taught. In the instructions which St. Paul gives, we find a passage which may certainly be compared in greatness, even in artistic style with what we find in the sublime Gita; but at the same time we find quite a different tone, we find everything spoken from quite a different soul-feeling; It is where St. Paul writes to the Corinthians of how the different human gifts to be found in a group of people must work in cooperation. To Arjuna, Krishna says “Thou must be so and so, thou must do this or that, then wilt thou rise stage by stage in thy soul-life.” To his Corinthians St. Paul says: “One of you has this gift, another that, a third another; and if these work harmoniously together, as do the members of the human body, the result is spiritually a whole which can spiritually be permeated with the Christ.” Thus through the subject itself St. Paul addresses himself to men who work together, that is to say, to a multitude; and he uses an important opportunity to do this-namely, when the gift of the so-called speaking with tongues comes under consideration.

What is this speaking with tongues that we find spoken of in St. Paul's Epistles? It is neither more nor less than a survival of old spiritual gifts, which, in a renewed way, but with full human consciousness, confront-us again at the present time. For when, among our initiation-methods, we speak of Inspiration, it is understood that a man who attains to inspiration in our age does so with a clear consciousness; just as he brings a clear consciousness to bear upon his powers of understanding and his sense-realizations. But in olden times this was different, then such a man spoke as an instrument of high spiritual beings who made use of his organs to express higher things through his speech. He might sometimes say things which he himself could not understand at all. Thus revelations from the spiritual worlds were given, which were not necessarily understood by him who was used as an instrument, and just that was the case in Corinth. The situation had there arisen of a number of persons having this gift of tongues. They were then able to make this or that prediction from the spiritual worlds. Now when a man possesses such gifts everything

he is able to reveal by their means is under all circumstances a revelation from the spiritual world, yet it may, nevertheless, be the case that one man may say this and another that, for spiritual sources are manifold, One may be inspired from one source and another from another, and thus it may happen that the revelations do not correspond. Complete harmony can only be found when these worlds are entered in full consciousness. Therefore St. Paul gives the following admonition: "Some there are who can speak with tongues, others who can interpret the words spoken. They should work together as do the right and left hands, and we should not only listen to those who speak with tongues, but also to those who have not that gift, but who can expound and understand what someone is able to bring down from the spiritual sphere." Here again St. Paul was urging the question of a community which might be founded through the united working of men. In connection with this very speaking with tongues St. Paul gave that address which, as I have said, is in certain respects so wonderful that in its might it may well compare,

though in a different way-with the revelations of the Gita. He says (1 Cor. xii. verses 3-31): “As regards the spiritually gifted brethren, I will not leave you without instructions. You know that in the time of your heathendom, it was to dumb idols that you were blindly led by desire. Wherefore I make clear to you: that just as little as one speaking in the Spirit of God says: Accursed be Jesus; so little can a man call Him Lord but through the Holy Spirit. Now there are diversities of gracious gifts, but there is one Spirit. There are diversities in the guidance of mankind, but there is one Lord. There are differences in the force which individual men possess; but there is one God Who works in all these forces. But to every man is given the manifestation of the Spirit, as much as he can profit by it. So to one is given the word of prophecy, to another the word of knowledge; others are spirits who live in faith; again others have the gift of healing, others the gift of prophecy, others have the gift of seeing into men's characters, others that of speaking different tongues, and to others again is given the interpretation of tongues; but in all these worketh

one and the same Spirit, apportioning to each one what is due to him. For as the body is one and hath many members, yet all the members together form one body, so also is it with Christ. For through the Spirit we are all baptised into one body, whether Jew or Greek, bond or free, and have all been imbued with one spirit; so also the body is not made of one but of many members. If the foot were to say: Because I am not the hand therefore I do not belong to the body, it would none the less belong to it. And if the ear were to say: Because I am not the eye I do not belong to the body, none the less does it belong to the body. If the whole body were only an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were a sense of hearing, where would be the power of smell? But now hath God set each one of the members in the body where it seemed good to Him. If there were only one member, where would the body be? But now there are truly many members, but there is only one body. The eye may not say to the hand: I do not require thee! nor the head to the feet — I have no need of you; rather those which appear to be the feeble members of the body are necessary,

and those which we consider mean prove themselves to be specially important. God has put the body together and has recognised the importance of the unimportant members that there should be no division in the body, but that all the members should work harmoniously together and should care for one another. And if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, and if one member prosper, all the members rejoice with it. "But ye," said St. Paul to his Corinthians, "are the Body of Christ, and are severally the members thereof. And some God hath set in the community as apostles, others as prophets, a third part as teachers, a fourth as miraculous healers, a fifth for other activities in helping, a sixth for the administration of the community, and a seventh He set aside to speak with tongues. Shall all men be prophets, shall all men be apostles, shall all be teachers, all healers, shall all speak with tongues, or shall all interpret? Therefore it is right for all the gifts to work together, but the more numerous they are the better."

Then Paul speaks of the force that can prevail in the individual but also in the community, and that holds all the separate members together as the strength of the body holds the separate members of the body together. Krishna says nothing more beautiful to one man than St. Paul spoke to humanity in its different members. Then he speaks of the Christ-Power, which holds the different members together just as the body holds its different members together; and the force that can live in one individual as the life-force in every one of his limbs, and yet lives also in a whole community; that is described by St. Paul in powerful words: “Nevertheless I will show you,” says he, “the way that is higher than all else. If I could speak with tongues of men or of angels and have not love, my speech is but as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal, and if I could prophesy and reveal all secrets and communicate all the knowledge in the world, and if I had all the faith that could remove mountains themselves and had not love, it would all be nothing. And if I distributed every spiritual gift, yea, if I gave my body itself to be burnt, but were lacking in love, it

would all be in vain. Love endureth ever. Love is kind. Love knoweth not envy. Love knoweth not boasting, knoweth not pride. Love injureth not what is decorous, seeketh not her own advantage, doth not let herself be provoked, beareth no one any malice, doth not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth only in truth. Love envelopeth all, streameth through all beliefs, hopeth all things, practiseth toleration everywhere. Love, if it existeth, can never be lost. Prophecies vanish when they are fulfilled, what is spoken with tongues ceases when it can no longer speak to human hearts; what is known ceases when the subject of knowledge is exhausted, for we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I felt as a child; when I became, a man the world of childhood was past. Now we only see dark outlines in a mirror, but then we shall see the spirit face to face; now is my knowledge in part, but then I shall know completely, even as I myself am known. Now abideth Faith, the certainty of Hope, and Love; but Love is the greatest of these,

hence Love is above all. For if you could have all spiritual gifts, whoever himself understands prophecy must also strive after love; for whoever speaks with tongues speaks not among men, he speaks among Gods. No one understands him, because in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.” We see how St. Paul understands the nature of speaking with tongues. His meaning is: The speaker with tongues is transported into the spiritual worlds; he speaks among Gods. Whoever prophesies speaks to men to build up, to warn, to comfort; he who speaks with tongues, to a certain extent satisfies himself; he who prophesies builds up the community. If you all attain to speaking with tongues, it is yet more important that you should prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, for he who speaks with tongues must first understand his own speaking, in order that the community should do so. Supposing that I came to' you as a speaker with tongues, of what use should I be to you if I did not tell you what my speaking signifies as prophecy, teaching and revelation! My speaking would be like a flute or a zither, of which one could not

clearly distinguish the sounds. How could one distinguish the playing of either the zither or of the flute if they did not give forth distinct sounds? And if the trumpet gave forth an indistinct sound, who would arm himself to battle? So it is with you; if you cannot connect a distinct language with the tongue-speaking, it is all merely spoken into the air.

All this shows us that the different spiritual gifts must be divided amongst the community, and that the members as individuals, must work together. With this we come to the point at which the revelation of Paul, through the moment in human evolution in which it appears, must differ absolutely from that of Krishna. The Krishna-revelation is directed to one individual, but in reality applies to every man if he is ripe to tread the upward path prescribed to him by the Lord of Yoga; we are more and more reminded of the primeval ages of mankind, to which we always, according to Krishna-teaching, return in spirit. At that time men were less individualised, one could assume that for each man the same teaching and

directions would be suitable. St. Paul confronted mankind when individuals were becoming differentiated, when they really had to become differentiated, each one with his special capacity, his own special gift. One could then no longer reckon on being able to pour the same thing into each different soul; one had then to point to that which is invisible and rules over all. This, which lives in no man as a separate individual, although it may be within each one, is the Christ-Impulse. The Christ-Impulse, again, is something like a new group-soul of humanity, but one that must be consciously sought for by men. To make this clearer, let us picture to ourselves how, for instance, a number of Krishna students are to be distinguished in the spiritual worlds, from a number of those who have been moved in the deepest part of their being by the Christ-Impulse. The Krishna pupils have every one of them been stirred by one and the same impulse, which has been given them by the Lord of Yoga. In spiritual life each one of these is like the other. The same instructions have been given to them all. But those who have been moved by the Christ-Impulse, are

each, when disembodied and in the spiritual world, possessed of their own particular individuality, their own distinct spiritual forces. Therefore even in the spiritual world, one man may go in one direction and one in another; and the Leader of both, the One Who pours Himself into the soul of each one, no matter how individualised he may be, is the Christ, Who is in the soul of each one and at the same time soars above them all. So we still have a differentiated community even when the souls are discarnate, while the souls of the Krishna pupils, when they have received instructions from the Lord of Yoga, are as one unit. The object of human evolution, however, is that souls should become more and more differentiated.

Therefore it was necessary that Krishna should speak in a different way. He really speaks to his pupils just as he does in the Gita. But St. Paul must speak differently. He really speaks to each individual, and it is a question of individual development whether, according to the degree of his maturity, a man remains at a certain stage of his incarnation at a standstill in exoteric life, or

whether he is able to enter the esoteric life and raise himself into esoteric Christianity. We can go further and further in the Christian life and attain the utmost esoteric heights; but we must start from something different from what we start from in the Krishna-teaching. In the Krishna-teaching you start from the point you have reached as man, and raise the soul individually, as a separate being; in Christianity, before you attempt to go further along the path you must have gained a connection with the Christ-Impulse-feeling in the first place that this transcends all else. The spiritual path to Krishna can only be trodden by one who receives instructions from Krishna; the spiritual path to Christ can be trodden by anyone, for Christ brought the mystery for all men who feel drawn towards it. That, however, is something external, accomplished on the physical plane; the first step is, therefore taken on the physical plane. That is the essential thing. Truly one need not, if one looks into the world-historical importance of the Christ-Impulse, begin by belonging to this or that Christian denomination; on the contrary one can, just in our time, even start from an anti-Christian

standpoint, or from one of indifference towards Christ. Yet if one goes deeply into the spiritual life of our own age, examining the contradictions and follies of materialism, perhaps one may genuinely be led to Christ, even though to begin with one may not have belonged to any particular creed. Therefore when it is said outside our circle that we are starting from a peculiar Christian denomination, this must be regarded as a special calumny; for it is not a matter of starting from any denomination, but that in response to the demands of the spiritual life itself, everyone, be he Mahomedan or Buddhist, Jew or Hindu, or Christian, shall be able to understand the Christ-Impulse in its whole significance for the evolution of mankind. This desire we can see deeply penetrating the whole view and presentation of St. Paul, and in this respect he is absolutely the one who sets the tone for the first proclamation of the Christ-Impulse to the world.

As we have described how Sankhya philosophy concerns itself with the changing forms, with that which appertains to Prakriti, we may also say that

St. Paul, in all that underlies his profound Epistles, deals with Purusha, that which pertains to the soul. What the soul is to become, the destiny of the soul, how throughout the whole evolution of mankind it evolves in manifold ways, concerning all this St. Paul gives us quite definite and profound conclusions. There is a fundamental difference between what Eastern thought was still able to give us, and what we find at once with such wonderful clearness in St. Paul. We pointed out yesterday that, according to Krishna, everything depended on man's finding his way out of the changing forms. But Prakriti remains outside, as something foreign to the soul. All the striving in this Eastern method of development and even in the Eastern initiation, tends to free one from material existence' from that which is spread outside in nature; for that, according to the Veda-philosophy, is merely maya. Everything external is maya, and to be free from maya is Yoga. We have pointed out how in the Gita it is expected of man that he shall become free from all he does and accomplishes, from what he wills and thinks, from what he likes and enjoys, and in his soul shall

triumph over everything external. The work that man accomplishes should equally fall away from him, and thus resting within himself, he shall find satisfaction. Thus, he who wishes to develop according to the Krishna teaching, aspires to become something like a Paramahansa, that is to say, a high Initiate who leaves all material existence, behind him, who triumphs over all he has himself accomplished by his actions in this world of sense; and lives a purely spiritual existence, having so overcome what belongs to the senses that he no longer thirsts for reincarnation, that he has nothing more to do with what filled his life and at which he worked in this sense-world. Thus it is the issuing forth from this maya, the triumphing over it which meets us everywhere in the Gita, With St. Paul it is not so.

If he had met with these Eastern teachings, something in the depth of his soul would have caused the following words to come forth: “Yes, thou wishest to rise above all that surrounds thee outside, from that also which thou formerly accomplished there! Dost thou wish to leave all

that behind thee? Is not then all that the work of God, is not everything above which thou wishest to lift thyself created by the Divine Spirit? In despising that, art thou not despising the work of God? Does not the revelation of God's Spirit dwell everywhere within it? Didst thou not at first seek to represent God in thine own work, in love and faith and devotion, and now desirest thou to triumph over what is the work of God?"

It would be well, my dear friends, if we were to inscribe these words of St. Paul-which though unspoken were felt in the depths of his soul-deeply into our own souls; for they express an important part of what we know as Western revelation. In the Pauline sense, we too speak of the maya which surrounds us. We certainly say: We are surrounded by maya: but we also say: Is there not spiritual revelation in this maya, is it not all divine spiritual work? Is it not blasphemy to fail to understand that there is divine spiritual work in all things? Now arises the other question: Why is that maya there - ? Why do we see maya around us? The West does not stop at the question as to whether all is maya:

it inquires as to the wherefore of maya. Then follows an answer that leads us into the centre of the soul — into Purusha: Because the soul once came under the power of Lucifer it sees everything through the veil of maya and spreads the veil of maya over everything. Is it the fault of objectivity that we see maya? No. To us as souls objectivity would appear in all its truth, if we had not come under the power of Lucifer. It only appears to us as maya because we are not capable of seeing down into the foundations of what is spread out there. That comes from the soul's having come under the power of Lucifer; it is not the fault of the Gods, it is the fault of our own soul. Thou, O soul, hast made the world a maya to thyself, because thou hast fallen into the power of Lucifer. From the highest spiritual grasp of this formula, down to the words of Goethe: “The senses do not deceive, but the judgment deceives,” is one straight line. The Philistines and zealots may fight against Goethe and his Christianity as much as they like; he might nevertheless say that he is one of the most Christian of men, for in the depths of his being he thought as a Christian, even in that very formula:

“The senses do not deceive, but the judgment deceives.” It is the soul's own fault that what it sees appears as maya and not as truth. So that which in Orientalism appears simply as an act of Gods themselves, is diverted into the depths of the human soul, where the great struggle with Lucifer takes place.

Thus Orientalism, if we consider it aright, is in a certain sense materialism, in that it does not recognise the spirituality of maya, and wishes to rise above matter. That which pulses through the Epistles of St. Paul is a doctrine of the soul, although only existing in germ and therefore capable of being so mistaken and misunderstood as in our Tamas-time, but it will in the future be visibly spread out over the whole earth. This, concerning the peculiar nature of maya, will have to be understood; for only then can one understand the full depth of that which is the object of the progress of human evolution. Then only does one understand what St. Paul means when he speaks of the first Adam, who succumbed to Lucifer in his soul, and who was therefore more and more

entangled in matter-which means nothing else than this: ensnared in a false experiencing of matter. As God's creation external matter is good: what takes place there is good. But what the soul experiences in the course of human evolution became more and more evil, because in the beginning the soul fell into the power of Lucifer. Therefore St. Paul called Christ the Second Adam, for He came into the world untempted by Lucifer, and therefore He can be a guide and friend to men's souls, who can lead them away from Lucifer, that is, into the right relationship to Him. St. Paul could not tell mankind at that time all that he as an Initiate knew; but if we allow his Epistles to work on us we shall see that there is more in their depths than they express externally. That is because St. Paul spoke to a community, and had to reckon with the understanding of that community. That is why in certain of his Epistles there seem to be absolute contradictions. But one who can plunge down into the depths, finds everywhere the impulse of the Christ-Being. Let us here remember, my dear friends, how we ourselves have represented the coming into existence of the Mystery of Golgotha.

As time went on we recognised that there were two different stories of the youth, of Christ Jesus, in the Gospel of St. Matthew and that of St. Luke, because in reality there are two Jesus-boys in question. We have seen that externally — after the flesh, according to St. Paul, which means through physical descent — both Jesus-boys descended from the stock of David; that one came from the line of Nathan and the other from that of Solomon; that thus there were two Jesus-boys born at about the same time. In the one Jesus-child, that of St. Matthew's Gospel, we find Zarathustra reincarnated: and we have emphatically stated that in the other Jesus-child, the one described by St. Luke, there was no such human ego as is usually to be found, and certainly not as the one existing in the other Jesus-child, in whom lived such a highly evolved ego as that of Zarathustra. In the Luke-Jesus there actually lives that part of man that has not entered into human evolution on the earth. *[See also *The Spiritual Guidance of Mankind*, the *Gospel of St. Luke*, the *Gospel of St. Matthew*.]

It is rather difficult to form a right conception of this but we must just try to think how, so to speak, the soul that was incarnated in Adam, he who may be described as Adam in the sense of my *Occult Science*, succumbed to Lucifer's temptation, symbolically describe in the Bible as the Fall of Man in Paradise. We must picture this. Then we must picture further, that side by side with that human soul-nature which incarnated in Adam's body, there was a human part, a human being, that remained behind and did not then incarnate, that did not enter a physical body, but remained "pure soul." You need only now picture how, before a physical man arose in the evolution of humanity, there was one soul, which then divided itself into two parts. The one part, the one descendant of the common soul, incarnated in Adam and thus entered into the line of incarnations, succumbed to Lucifer, and so on. As to the other soul, the sister-soul, as it were, the wise rulers of the world saw beforehand that it would not be good that this too should be embodied; it was kept back in the soul world; it did not therefore take part in the incarnations of humanity, but was kept back. With

this soul none but the Initiates of the Mysteries had intercourse. During the evolution preceding the Mystery of Golgotha this soul did not, therefore, take into itself the experience of an ego, for this can only be obtained by incarnating in a human body. None the less, it had all the Wisdom that could have been attained through the Saturn, Sun, and Moon periods, it possessed all the love of which a human soul is capable. This soul remained blameless, as it were, of all the guilt that a man can acquire in the course of his incarnations in human evolution. It could not be met with as a human being externally; but it could be perceived by the old clairvoyants, and was recognised by them: they encountered it, so to say, in the mysteries. Thus, here we have a soul, one might say, that was within, but yet above, the evolution of mankind, that could at first only be perceived in the spirit; a pre-man, a true super-man.

It was this soul which, instead of an ego, was incarnated in the Jesus-child of St. Luke's Gospel. You will remember the lectures at Bale; this fact was already given out there. We have therefore to

do with a soul that is only ego-like, one that naturally acts as an ego when it permeates the body of Jesus: but which in all it displays is yet quite different from an ordinary ego. I have already mentioned the fact that the boy of St. Luke's Gospel spoke a language understood by his mother as soon as he came into the world, and other facts of similar nature were to be observed in him. Then we know that the Matthew-Jesus, in whom lived the Zarathustra ego, grew up until his twelfth year, and the Luke-child also grew up, possessing no particular human knowledge or science, but bearing the divine wisdom and the divine power of sacrifice within him. Thus the Luke-Jesus grew up not being particularly gifted for what can be learnt externally. We know further that the body of the Matthew-Jesus was forsaken by the Zarathustra ego, and that in the twelfth year of the Luke-Jesus his body was taken possession of by that same Zarathustra-ego. That is the moment referred to when it is related of the twelve-year-old Jesus of Luke's Gospel, that when his parents lost him he stood teaching before the wise men of the Temple. We know further that this

Luke-Jesus bore the Zarathustra ego within him up to his thirtieth year; that the Zarathustra ego then left the body of the Luke-Jesus, and all its sheaths were taken possession of by Christ, a superhuman Being of the higher Hierarchies, Who only could live in a human body at all inasmuch as a body was offered Him which had first been permeated up to its twelfth year with the prehuman Wisdom-forces, and the pre-human divine Love-forces, and was then permeated through and through by all that the Zarathustra ego had acquired through many incarnations by means of initiation. In no other way, perhaps, could one so well obtain the right respect, the right reverence, in short, the right feeling altogether for the Christ-Being, as by trying to understand what sort of a body was needed for this Christ-Ego to be able to enter humanity at all. Many people consider that in this presentation, given out of the holy mysteries of the newer age about the Christ-Being, He is thus made to appear less intimate and human than the Christ-Jesus so many have honoured in the way in which He is generally represented-familiar, near to man, incarnate in an ordinary human body in which

nothing like a Zarathustra ego lived. It is brought as a reproach against our teaching that Christ-Jesus is here represented as composed of forces drawn from all regions of the cosmos. Such reproaches proceed only from the indolence of human perception and human feeling which is unwilling to raise itself to the true heights of perception and feeling. The greatest of all must be so grasped by us that our souls have to make the supremest possible efforts to attain the inner intensity of perception and feeling necessary to bring the Greatest, the Highest, at all near to our soul. Our first feelings will thus be raised higher still, if we do but consider them in this light. We know one other thing besides. We know how we have to understand the words of the Gospel: "Divine forces are being revealed in the Heights, and peace will spread among men of goodwill." We know that this message of peace and love resounded when the Luke-Jesus appeared, because Buddha intermingled with the astral body of the Luke-Jesus; Buddha, who had already lived in a being who went through his last incarnation as Gautama Buddha and had risen to complete

spirituality. So that in the astral body of the Luke-Jesus, Buddha revealed himself, as he had progressed up to the occurrence of the Mystery of Golgotha on earth.

Thus we have the Being of Christ Jesus presented before us in a way only now possible to mankind from the basis of occult science. St. Paul, although an Initiate, was compelled to speak in concepts more easily understood at that time; he could not then have assumed a humanity able to understand such concepts as we have brought before your hearts today. His inspiration, however, was derived from his initiation, which came about as an act of grace. Because he did not attain this through regular schooling in the old mysteries, but by grace on the road to Damascus when the risen Christ appeared to him, therefore I call this initiation one brought about by grace. But he experienced this Damascus Vision in such a way that by means of it he knew that He Who arose in the Mystery of Golgotha lives in the sphere of this earth and has been attached to it since that Event. He recognised the risen Christ. From that time on

he proclaimed Him. Why was he able to see Him in the particular way he did? At this point we must enter somewhat into the nature of such a vision, such a manifestation as that of Damascus: for it was a vision, a manifestation of a quite peculiar kind. Only those people who never wish to learn anything of occult facts consider all visions as being of one kind. They will not distinguish such an occurrence as the vision of St. Paul from many other visions such as appeared to the saints later. What really was the reason that St. Paul could recognise Christ as he did when He appeared to him on the way to Damascus? Why did the certain conviction come to him that this was the risen Christ? This question leads us back to another one: What was necessary in order that the whole Christ-Being should be able completely to enter into Jesus of Nazareth, at the baptism by John in the Jordan? Now, we have just said what was necessary to prepare the body into which the Christ-Being could descend. But what was necessary in order that the Arisen One could appear in such a densified soul-form as he appeared in to St. Paul? What, then, so to speak,

was that halo of light in which Christ appeared to St. Paul before Damascus? What was it? Whence was it taken?

If we wish to answer these questions, my dear friends, we must add a few finishing touches to what I have already said. I have told you that there was, as it were, a sister-soul to the Adam-soul, to that soul which entered into the sequence of human generations. This sister-soul remained in the soul world. It was this sister-soul that was incarnated in the Luke-Jesus. But it was not then incarnated for the first time in a human body in the strictest sense of the words, it had already been once incarnated prophetically. This soul had already been made use of formerly as a messenger of the holy mysteries; it was, so to say, cherished and cultivated in the mysteries, and was sent whenever anything specially important to man was taking place; but it could only appear as a vision in the etheric body, and could only be perceived, strictly speaking, as long as the old clairvoyance remained. In earlier ages that still existed. Therefore this old sister-soul of Adam had no need

at that time to descend as far as the physical body in order to be seen. So it actually appeared on earth repeatedly in human evolution: sent forth by the impulses of the mysteries, at all times when important things were to take place in the evolution of the earth; but it did not require to incarnate, in ancient times, because clairvoyance was there. The first time it needed to incarnate was when the old clairvoyance was to be overcome through the transition of human evolution from the third to the fourth Post-Atlantean age, of which we spoke yesterday. Then, by way of compensation, it took on an incarnation, in order to be able to express itself at the time when clairvoyance no longer existed. The only time this sister-soul of Adam was compelled to appear and to become physically visible, it was incorporated, so to speak, in Krishna; and then it was incorporated again in the Luke-Jesus. So now we can understand how it was that Krishna spoke in such a superhuman manner, why he is the best teacher for the human ego, why he represents, so to speak, a victory over the ego, why he appears so psychically sublime. It is because he appears as human being at that

sublime moment which we brought before our souls in the lecture before last, as Man not yet descended into human incarnations. He then appears again to be embodied in the Luke-Jesus. Hence that perfection that came about when the most significant world-conceptions of Asia, the ego of Zarathustra and the spirit of Krishna, were united in the twelve-year-old Jesus described by St. Luke. He who spoke to the learned men in the Temple was therefore not only Zarathustra speaking as an ego, but one who spoke from those sources from which Krishna at one time drew Yoga; he spoke of Yoga raised a stage higher; he united himself with the Krishna force, with Krishna himself, in order to continue to grow until his thirtieth year. Then only have we that complete, perfected body which could be taken possession of by the Christ. Thus do the spiritual currents of humanity flow together. So that in what happened at the Mystery of Golgotha, we really have a co-operation of the most important leaders of mankind, a synthesis of spirit-life. When St. Paul had his vision before Damascus, He Who appeared to him then was the Christ. The halo of

light in which Christ was enveloped was Krishna. And because Christ has taken Krishna for His own soul-covering through which He then works on further, therefore in the light which shone there, in Christ Himself, there is all that was once upon a time contained in the sublime Gita. We find much of that old Krishna-teaching, although scattered about, in the New Testament revelations. This old Krishna-teaching has on that account become a personal matter to the whole of mankind, because Christ is not as such a human ego belonging to mankind, but to the Higher Hierarchies, Thus Christ belongs also to those times when man was not yet separated from that which now surrounds him as material existence, and which is veiled to him in maya through his own Luciferic temptation. If we glance back over the whole of evolution, we shall find that in those olden times there was not yet that strict division between the spiritual and the material; material was then still spiritual, and the spiritual — if we may say so — still manifested itself externally. Thus because, in the Christ-Impulse, something entered into mankind which completely prevented such a strict separation as

we find in Sankhya philosophy between Purusha and Prakriti, Christ becomes the Leader of men out of themselves and towards the divine creation. Must we then say that we must unconditionally give up maya now that we recognise that it seems to be given us through our own fault? No, for that would be blaspheming the spirit in the world; that would be assigning to matter properties which we ourselves have imposed upon it with the veil of maya. Let us rather hope that when we have overcome in ourselves that which caused matter to become maya, we may again be reconciled with the world.

For do we not hear resounding out of the world around us that it is a creation of the Elohim, and that on the last day of creation they considered: and behold, all was very good? That would be the karma to be fulfilled if there were nothing but Krishna-teaching (for there is nothing in the world that does not fulfil its karma). If in all eternity there had been only the teaching of Krishna, then the material existence which surrounds us, the manifestation of God of which the Elohim at the

starting-point of evolution said: “Behold all was very good,” would encounter the judgment of men: “It is not good, I must abandon it!” The judgment of man would be placed above the judgment of God. We must learn to understand the words which stand as a mystery at the outset of evolution; we must not set the judgment of man above the judgment of God. If all and everything that could cling to us in the way of guilt were to fall away from us, and yet that one fault remained, that we slandered the work of the Elohim; the earth-Karma would have to be fulfilled; in the future everything would have to fall upon us and karma would have to fulfil itself thus. In order that this should not happen, Christ appeared in the world, so to reconcile us with the world that we may learn to overcome Lucifer's tempting forces, and learn to penetrate the veil; that — we may see the divine revelation in its true form; that we may find the Christ as the Reconciler, Who will lead us to the true form of the divine revelation, so that through Him we may learn to understand the primeval words: “And behold, it is very good.” In order that we may learn to ascribe to ourselves that

which we may never again dare to ascribe to the world, we need Christ; for if all our other sins could be taken away from us: yet this sin could only be removed by Him. This, transformed into a moral feeling, is a newer side of the Christ-Impulse. It shows us at the same time why the necessity arose for the Christ-Impulse as the higher soul to envelope itself in the Krishna-Impulse.

An exposition such as I have given you in this course, my dear friends, should not be taken as mere theory, merely as a number of thoughts and ideas to be absorbed; it should be taken as a sort of New Year's gift, a gift which should influence our New Year, and from now on it should work as that which we can perceive through the understanding of the Christ-Impulse, in so far as this helps us to understand the words of the Elohim, which resound down to us from the starting point, from the very primeval beginning of the creation of our earth. And look upon the intention of the course at the same time as the starting point of our Anthroposophical spiritual stream. This must be

Anthroposophical because by means of it will be more and more recognised how man can in himself attain to self-knowledge —. He cannot yet attain to complete self-knowledge, not yet can Anthropos attain to knowledge of Anthropos, man to the knowledge of man, so long as this man can consider what he has to carry out in his own soul as an affair to be played out between him and external nature. That the world should appear to us to be immersed in matter is a thing the Gods have prepared for us, it is an affair of our own souls, a question of higher self-knowledge; it is something that man must himself recognise in his own manhood, it is a question of Anthroposophy, by means of which we can come to the perception of what theosophy may become to mankind. It should be a feeling of the greatest modesty which impels a man to belong to the Anthroposophical movement; a modesty which says: If I want to spring over that which is an affair of the human soul and to take at once the highest step into the divine, humility may very easily vanish from me, and pride step in, in its place; vanity may easily install itself May the Anthroposophical Society

also be a starting point in this higher moral sphere; above all, may it avoid all that has so easily crept into the theosophical movement, in the way of pride, vanity, ambition, and want of earnestness in receiving that which is the highest Wisdom. May the Anthroposophical Society avoid all this because from its very starting point, it has already considered that the settlement with maya is an affair for the human soul itself.

One should feel that the Anthroposophical Society ought to be the result of the profoundest human modesty. For out of this modesty should well up deep earnestness as regards the sacred truths into which it will penetrate if we betake ourselves into this sphere of the supersensible, of the spiritual. Let us therefore understand the adoption of the name “Anthroposophical Society” in true modesty, in true humility, saying to ourselves Let all that remains of that pride and lack of modesty, vanity, ambition and untruthfulness, that played a part under the name of Theosophy, be eradicated, if now, under the sign and device of modesty, we begin humbly to look up to the, Gods and divine

wisdom, and on the other hand dutifully to study man and human wisdom, if we reverently approach Spiritual Science, and dutifully devote ourselves to Anthroposophy. This Anthroposophy will lead to the divine and to the Gods. If by its help we learn in the highest sense to look humbly and truthfully into our own selves and see how we must struggle against all maya and error through self-training and the severest self-discipline, then, as written on a bronze tablet may there stand above us the word: Anthroposophy! Let that be an exhortation to us, that above all we should seek through it to acquire self-knowledge, modesty, and in this way endeavour to erect a building founded upon truth, for truth can only blossom if self-knowledge lays hold of the human soul in deep earnestness. What is the origin of all vanity, of all untruth? The want of self-knowledge. From what alone can truth spring, from what can true reverence for divine worlds and divine wisdom alone come? From true self-knowledge, self-training, self-discipline. Therefore may that which shall stream and pulsate through the Anthroposophical movement serve that purpose.

For these reasons this particular course of lectures has been given at the starting point of the Anthroposophical movement, and it should prove that there is no question of narrowness, but that precisely through our movement we can extend our horizon over those distances which comprise Eastern thought also. But let us take this humbly in self-educative anthroposophical fashion, by creating the will within us to discipline and train ourselves. If Anthroposophy, my dear friends, be taken up among you in this way, it will then lead to a beneficial end and will attain a goal that can extend to each individual and every human society for their welfare. So let these words be spoken which shall be the last of this course of lectures, but something of which perhaps many in the coming days will take away with them in their souls, so that it may bear fruit within our Anthroposophical movement, within which you, my dear friends, have, so to speak, met together for the first time. May we ever so meet together in the sign of Anthroposophy, that we have the right to call upon words with which we shall now conclude, words of humility and of self-

knowledge, which we should now at this moment place as an ideal before our souls.