

Apocalypse Today: The Actuality of the Revelation of John

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Prologue

Apocalypse means “unveiling” or “revelation.” What is being unveiled? On the one hand, the true essence, the hidden divine qualities of the human being and humanity that could not be realized until now. On the other hand, the anti-God qualities of human beings and humanity, whether manifest or hidden, that had prevented the realization of the true essence until now. Also the way is revealed on which this realization takes place. It is revealed how the obstacles to the unfolding of the true essence are removed and how, in parallel, the true essence comes to light.

Finally, the background of these events is also revealed. Human beings and humanity emerged from the divine world and should have developed in accordance with it. Present humanity has developed differently, separated from the divine world, and thus got into a miserable situation. Its true essence has been buried; it has taken on an untrue essence that is exposed to death and all the evils of the transient earthly world. This is the reason why the events described in the Apocalypse occur. They reveal how the human being and humanity can dissolve their untrue nature and recover their true nature, which is in harmony with the divine world.

Thus, the Apocalypse is by no means the depiction of a tremendous judgment on “evil” humanity that was not obedient to the laws of God and of the salvation of “good” people who remained faithful to God. Rather, it is an *invitation* to all human beings to be totally transformed and “transfigured” so that the present, mortal human being is corrected and the original, immortal human being, who was one with God, is restored to the proper inherent purpose. The proper inherent purpose is to be “perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48). People can and must cooperate in the realization of this inherent purpose by walking a “path” together with the divine powers, allowing themselves to be changed and renewed by them. Without their cooperation, redemption and perfection do not happen. A mere belief in an external redeemer and in a redemption that has already taken place does not help.

The Apocalypse describes the ancient mystery path that used to be secret and only possible for individuals but which has become public since Jesus,

the Christ. Jesus, the “Lamb” of the Apocalypse, made it public, paved it himself through his earthly life, and thus made it possible for all humanity. One could also say, The Apocalypse describes the “initiation” of humanity, its gradual way up to the refound unity with God. If it were not so, why would the apocalypticist describe the individual stages of this way in such a detailed and differentiated way? Did he only want to depict that God has insatiable “wrath” against “evil” humanity and only finds satisfaction after an endless series of “punishments”? On the contrary: The at first sight senseless catastrophes are corrections and after the dismantling of the old, enable the building up of the new. All seven layers of the ordinary human being must be “dismantled” on this path in a logical, organic order so that a new sevenfold human being can be “built up.” And this process happens seven times, each time on four levels: on the levels of the spirit, the soul, the life forces, and the physical body.

If people do not cooperate with the corrections, they remain in the old condition, separated from God. If they rebel against the corrections, these will hit them all the worse. But if they cooperate, they recognize that divine standards and powers are at work behind the corrections and that these powers enable them to build a new human being that is once again one with God. Thus John demonstrates the sevenfold initiation path on the different levels already at the beginning in the form of the “seven letters to the churches in Asia” and afterwards through the four times seven series of the apocalyptic events. With the Apocalypse, he gives a detailed example of the basic formula of the Christian mystery path, as all evangelists cite it in a central place of their texts (for example Matthew 16:25): “Those who want to lose their [untrue] life for my sake [for the sake of the true human being, who is invested as the true self in every human being] will find it [true life].”

Everything hidden and dark in the unconscious of the human being and humanity must be “unveiled” in this way and brought to the light of consciousness so that the human being can recognize and dissolve it in the light. It is not about sensational catastrophes but about the unveiling of the consequences that the present humanity has brought about itself by its separation from God. Through this, it can recognize and dissolve the roots of separation and its consequences. At the same time, it is about the unveiling of the light-being of God and of the human being, which becomes possible

through the unveiling of the present darkness-being of the human being, so that a new human being again corresponding to the light-being of God can be consciously built up.

Thus, it turns out that behind the images of the Apocalypse is hidden a large, comprehensive system of describing and explaining the world. As a writing of original Christianity, it proves that this Christianity is not a dogmatic faith but a religion based on clear insights into the structure of the divine world and the earthly world and their mutual relationship. The cosmology, anthropology, and sociology of this religion, as well as its science of history unfolded especially in the Apocalypse correspond in many respects to present empirical reality better than modern insights. Christianity offers an overall framework for world events, a world paradigm into which all individual developments can be organically inserted.

This paradigm is particularly revealing and true insofar as it knows a perfect divine-spiritual world and an imperfect earthly-material world. Accordingly, it also knows an original, immortal humanity and a “fallen” mortal, earthly humanity – the inhabitants of the present earth. The inherent purpose of the earth humanity is to become the original humanity again on a higher level. It can become so if with divine help, it dissolves the present disproportion between the two worlds so that the earthly-material world, totally transformed and rebuilt, becomes again the expression of the divine-spiritual world. The description of this process is the main theme of Christianity and the Apocalypse.

Clarifications

Visual Language

The Apocalypse tells a story in pictures. Those who want to understand it must learn to understand the pictures as expressions of the actual contents. Repeatedly, John himself explains the meaning of certain images that are not readily understandable. For example, an angel says to him, “Write what you have seen and what it *means*: the mystery of the seven stars [...] along with the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches” (1:19-20). In Chapter 5, verse 8, John speaks of the “incense” of the 24 elders, “*signifying* the prayers of the saints.” In 19:8, a “voice” tells him the shining pure linen in which the bride of the Lamb is clothed are “the righteous acts of the saints,” and in 20:2, John himself calls the “dragon” “the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan.”

Why does John use this pictorial language, and how does he come to his pictures? He perceives with soul-spiritual organs, spiritual “eyes and ears” so to speak, soul-spiritual facts that are hidden, “veiled,” to the normal sense-consciousness. But in order to bring what is seen and heard in this way, what is “revealed” to him, as close as possible to the sense-consciousness of his readers, he uses images that are taken from the sense-world. By means of analogies or correspondences, they express soul-spiritual facts in a parable-like manner and can therefore form a bridge on which the ordinary sense-consciousness gains at least a hint of certain ideas about the conditions and events in the soul-spiritual world.^[1]

People of that time thought even more in images than people today, who are used to thinking in concepts and ideas. For the latter, therefore, the images of the Apocalypse must be translated into concepts and ideas. But once people have understood them, the pictures will develop unsuspected powers. They will notice that the pictures can often express the truth more strongly and more accurately and above all more clearly than concepts. But whether they approach the text via concepts or images: They must always be aware that with their present consciousness, they can only approximately

grasp the meaning in the Apocalypse because the reality of what John sees and hears is different from the reality of the sensory world.

All unspoiled people know that the expressions of another person, which can be perceived through the senses, are expressions of soul-spiritual characteristics and impulses. A living soul with feelings and thoughts looks at them through the eyes of the other person; an understandable sense is contained in the words of the other person, and a directing will works behind their movements. The observers do not know exactly what the self of the other is like and whether it hides or shows them the truth. But they tacitly assume that the other has a self and an I-consciousness. They accept a connection between bodily expression and state of soul and try *indirectly*, through the other's bodily expression of their inner being, to perceive this inner being and to feel this state of soul within themselves.

But there is also the possibility that people develop higher organs out of their soul-spiritual disposition with which they *directly* perceive soul-spiritual qualities and processes in the other. At all times, there have been people who had such organs. John, the author of the Apocalypse, belonged to them. This kind of perception is different from the one to which we are accustomed. Such people do not face other people – and also things – as objects but are one with the beings and things, just as, to speak scientifically, two fields of force interpenetrate: the field of the observer and that of the being or thing. Paul, for example, describes such a state with the words, “then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known” and contrasts it with the normal state: “For now we see a mirror, dimly” (1 Corinthians 13:12).

This special state is the direct perception of soul-spiritual qualities through resonance without the interposition of sense perception. One can imagine that such people *experience* the soul states, feelings, thoughts, intentions of another within themselves because their whole soul has become the resonating organ of perception. Poets and artists are not far from this ability of perception. They are at least able to evoke all conceivable states of the human soul within themselves and to project them outward in their works.

There are three ways to develop such inner organs of perception, which differ significantly in reliability and range.

Some people, so-called mediums, can possess refined earthly senses from birth that also perceive the subtle areas of the earthly world, the so-called beyond. This ability is called, among other things, aura reading or clairvoyance. The question is however whether they possess also the yardstick to be able to judge and correctly classify what they see. Is it about states of the earthly beyond or is it of divine origin?

The second possibility is that people develop their ordinary consciousness by exercises. They can bring their *egocentric* thinking, feeling, and willing into a state in which by resonance, they can perceive, yes, influence thinking, feeling, and willing of other people and beings of the beyond – or without their doing, they are used as a perceiving tool by otherworldly beings. Nowadays, such procedures and processes are called “channeling.” It is obvious that these “occult” abilities are dangerous for themselves and for others because they originate from egocentric intentions or can make them prisoners of the world on this side or on the other side. In any case, because of their egocentricity, they will only get to know the world of this side and the world beyond, never the divine world because their egocentric state and that of the divine world exclude each other. Resonance with it is not possible.

But thirdly, people can allow their divine being, which usually slumbers unconsciously in them, to develop. This does not happen by forcing and practicing, nor by mediumistic overshadowing, but by walking a path as it is also described in the Apocalypse (Chapters 2 and 3, see last section of this book) or in the biblical gospels, for example, in the form of the “Beatitudes” (Matthew 5:1-9). At a certain stage of this journey, their spiritual eye opens and they “see God.” “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God” (Matthew 5:8). They will indeed be able to judge, unlike an “aura reader” or highly developed egoist, which soul characteristics in other people also correspond to this divine being and which arise from egocentric thinking, feeling, and willing.

Such a higher organ, a “spiritual eye,” not only directly perceives soul-spiritual processes in other *people* but also similar processes in the *universe* and in the *celestial bodies*. One only has to read Jakob Böhme or Hildegard von Bingen to find this possibility realized. That also the celestial bodies and the diverse radiations in space could be expressions of

soul-spiritual qualities, as the expressions of people with soul and spirit are – this thought is generally decidedly rejected as *anthropomorphic* by the modern, scientifically educated person.

But is it legitimate to exclude such a possibility from the outset? Legitimate would be only to say: With our *senses and instruments*, which are calibrated to the world of appearances, we cannot perceive soul-spiritual qualities in the cosmos. Human beings have emerged from the whole cosmos and the celestial body earth. Should not then also their soul-spiritual qualities originate from the universe and the earth? The general opinion is that they have developed in evolution from chemical-physical elements. But so far nobody could *explain* the soul-spiritual qualities of human beings from physical-chemical processes. Why should it not be so that they have emerged as a microcosm from the macrocosm?

And if it is so that all qualities of the macrocosm are contained in the human microcosm, then vice versa, the microcosm should also be able to recognize the macrocosm. Can it be excluded that human beings can develop higher organs with which they *directly* perceive the soul-spiritual qualities and processes in the cosmos and in the celestial bodies? That even *all* human beings have the possibility to develop such organs because they have a disposition for them that would only have to be developed? People with such effective organs would perceive completely different qualities than only the material forms and conditions of the celestial bodies and space, namely, soul-spiritual qualities.

From this disposition in them, which is called the “image of God” in the Old Testament (Genesis 1:27), a new, immortal soul could arise, free from thoughts, feelings, and expressions of will directed only to earthly, transient goals. It would be like a clear mirror, an *unfolded* “image of God” that can experience and “see” God. Itself a small, infinite power field, it is permeated by the great, infinite power field of God and conversely, permeates it. Hence Paul’s description, “then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known” (1 Corinthians 13:12).

John, author of the Apocalypse, possessed this perception. There were moments when the soul-spiritual sense was opened in him. He described this opening again and again explicitly, for example with the words, “I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open” (4:1). This particular state of

consciousness is rendered in some German translations with the German word for “rapture” (4:2) – a highly misleading word, as if it were some kind of intoxication or convulsion or ecstatic state of happiness. Literally translated, the Greek expression for it is, “I *became* in the Spirit.” Most English translations read, “I was in the spirit.” Better would be, “I became another in the spirit” or “I was raised in the spirit,” for the old consciousness of John merged into a new, other consciousness; it was taken up by or in the spirit. The large power field “God” put the small power field “image of God” into resonance and made itself perceptible to it – and vice versa.

John thus “sees and hears” the soul-spiritual properties and processes in the universe. He perceives that there also, beings with spirit and soul exist. And he “looks” and “hears” with organs of perception that have emerged from his divine soul. He can therefore *distinguish* whether he sees ungodly beings and processes, which serve only their own *power*, the egocentricity of their ego, or divine beings and processes, which embrace all beings in *devotion* and love. Everything that serves its own power is for him a dark counter-world to the world of God, a “world of darkness.” The world of God, however, is the “world of light” in which divine wisdom and love reign. When John says, “there in heaven a door stood open,” he is referring to the divine world, the “world of light,” in which human beings are one with God.

World of Light and World of Darkness

Compared to the “light” state of oneness with God, today’s humanity lives in a world of “darkness,” as John the Evangelist calls it (John 1:5), for people now are not aware of their true, divine self, and it is not directly active – one could say, it is “as if dead”: They have only senses for the transient earthly world and the possibility to recognize and perceive earthly soul characteristics in others. They are subject to death and the power of the world with all its associated evils and conflicts. Present humanity as a whole and its world correspond to this state of the individuals.

The Apocalypse can be understood only if a distinction is made between a divine and an earthly world, a world of light and a world of darkness, in which human beings live *now* according to their consciousness and being. Only the divine principle that has become latent, the disposition to the “image of God” in their inner being, still belongs to the divine world of light and is eternal. Everything else, their egocentric willing, thinking, feeling, and their associated form, the body with its senses, is transient and belongs to the earthly world of darkness. Also all well-meant, noble thoughts, feelings, and behaviors belong to it as far as they originate from the egocentric self. The world of darkness thus consists of the relatively evil and the relatively good in comparison to the absolutely good of the world of light in which there is no evil.

The Apocalypse describes the effort of the world of light, accompanied by tremendous shocks, to purify the world of darkness, to penetrate it, and to dissolve its inherent power until it has again become an expression of the world of light. As a result, there is a great division in humanity. Some cooperate with the world of light and are drawn up from the world of darkness to the world of light – they are the so-called “saints.” Others fight against the world of light or are held back by the world of darkness.^[2] The author of the Apocalypse also “saw and heard” this world of darkness and experienced it as a soul-spiritual reality. The whole Apocalypse is the representation of the relationship between divine and earthly world, the world of light and the world of darkness. The world of darkness has also emerged from the divine world of light, but it has become independent from

it and no longer conforms to its laws. Therefore, the Apocalypse describes how the relationship between the divine and the earthly world gradually changes: The divine world corrects the earthly world, and the latter consents to it or resists it, just as all human beings are free to resist the influences from the divine world or to allow themselves to be corrected in order to return to the state of the true self, the “image of God.”

The Divine World

First of all, John “sees” the divine world of light, “heaven.” He has developed an organ of perception which corresponds to this divine world. If people’s thoughts, sensations and intentions swirl chaotically, these people will not have a direct resonance to the environment and will not directly experience its soul states. Even if their *egocentric* thinking, feeling, and willing have been put in order by exercises, they will directly perceive soul states but only the soul states of the dark world. With thinking, feeling, and willing, John lives from the divine world, however. His soul has become calm like a new, spiritual eye. Therefore he sees the structure of the divine light world and can distinguish it from the world of darkness. And now he tells his readers about his perceptions.

The “One” on the Throne

He captures what he has seen in pictures; yes, it forms itself in his consciousness “in the spirit” to *corresponding*, analogous pictures that can give to the ordinary consciousness a hint of another reality. He reports, “there in heaven a door stood open [...] and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne” whose appearance resembled a shining “carnelian” and “jasper” (4:1-3).

Now what could this image of “one” sitting on a throne in heaven mean? John shies away from pronouncing the name “God” because the “One” is too great and exalted for him. But this “One” sits on a “throne.” In a modern seer looking at the “One” other images would arise. The idea of God as a ruler in heaven sitting on a throne would be too childlike and above all, too burdened, for today’s human beings. They have had to torture themselves through centuries with the idea of God as an omnipotent personality and father-authority who establishes commandments, rewards obedience, and punishes violations. Such a conception is unworthy of the “One” according to the experiences of modern humanity. It is an image taken from the realm of the earthly father-child relationship with which earthly, quite un-divine ruling interests have also been justified again and again.

A modern seer, influenced by the natural sciences, would therefore perhaps speak of an infinite soul-spiritual “field,” the expression of which is the divine world of light, a “field” of unshakable firmness. To characterize this firmness in his own way, John speaks of a “throne.” He thereby refers to the all-supporting, creative power of the “One” similar to what people experience in themselves, very attenuated, as “will.” John thus perceives a *power field* at the foundation of and spread out in the whole universe that in today’s terminology can be called “will,” namely an unfathomable will. It is indestructible, an eternal, unshakable power of unfathomable depth. That is why Jakob Böhme, who experienced something similar, speaks of the *Ungrund* or “unground,” the ground without a ground.

This power, the divine will, has no cause and is un-conditioned, completely free, without beginning and end. All possibilities that can be realized at some time are contained in it, and therefore it is inexhaustibly creative.

The “One” on the throne “looks like jasper and carnelian,” like a precious stone of highest purity and clarity. Later (21:11), John speaks in the same sense of the “glory” of the New Jerusalem, which has “a radiance like a very rare jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal.” This image expresses that the “One,” besides the divine will, is also the transparent soul substance filling the whole universe, shining like a precious stone, the primal energy, the divine life, the world soul.

Modern people would express it thus: The “One” is from the outset in itself twofold. It consists of two fields: a power field, the will, and a life field, the world soul. Both fields work together. The world soul, the “Mother,” receives creative impulses from the “Father” in order to develop and form them. In esoteric Judaism, she is called Sophia, “Wisdom,” who as “companion” of the Father brings forth in good order the fruits from the seeds of the Father, for from the cooperation of “Father” and “Mother,” the “original ideas” emerge as fruits, which work behind and in the myriads of celestial bodies and beings of the universe. In their totality, they form a light field. They are the matrices for the formations in the universe, which are filled with consciousness.

It is like a reflection. The creative impulses of the divine will project themselves in the divine life of the primordial substance and thus bring forth

reflection, consciousness, light, which differentiates itself in innumerable forms. That is why the “One,” who on the one hand sits on a throne (the power field) and on the other hand resembles a shining gemstone (the life field), is thirdly also surrounded by a rainbow (the light field), green like an “emerald.”

The rainbow is an Old Testament image for “mercy,” God’s devotion to the creation (Genesis 9:12-17). It shines as a sevenfold graded color spectrum over and in the whole universe and is transformed, attenuated divine consciousness, which serves the world and humanity as a light field.

[3] The still dependent beings that have emerged from the “One” could not directly bear its will and wisdom. Therefore, it sends them its light in a milder form so that they can assimilate it and continue to develop in a living way. This is the activity of divine love, which is available to all and promotes all according to their respective capacities. That is why the rainbow shimmers green like an emerald. It symbolizes the certain hope that one day the goal of human development will be reached: the direct, conscious unity with the divine world of light, the threefold field of power, life, and light.

All three fields, power field, life field, and light field, do not exist one after the other or separately from each other. They are three aspects of the “One” that interpenetrate each other and by whose constant interaction, the whole creation comes into being, is maintained, and develops uninterruptedly.

John therefore sees a threefold Godhead: threefold as groundless foundation of will (throne), living wisdom (pure soul substance), and promoting activity (rainbow) in the whole universe. It is an expression of these three fields working in the universe from within.

John also sees the beings emerging from the threefold “One,” among others, human beings. The power field of the divine “will” gives them their existence; the life field of the divine “wisdom” gives them the possibility of unfolding, and the light field of the divine “activity” brings them consciousness and thus freedom and independence.

Thus the original human beings are born out of the “One” as its image and likeness. They are from the outset male-female like the “One” itself and in their core endowed with all the qualities of the “One,” which are to become conscious and active in them (compare Genesis 1:27-28).

But the present human beings are not conscious of the “One” and therefore cannot act as they should. The original God in the human being has become a spark of will, wisdom, and activity that only glows dimly in the heart. It is prevented from flaring up by the egocentric activity, knowledge, and will of earthly human beings. If people lived with will, wisdom, and activity, that is, with spirit, soul, and body, in harmony with the threefold Godhead, they would give it perfect expression and be one with it, just as Jesus once said, “The Father and I are one” (John 10:30).

As a creative, free, unconditional will, they would be one with the free, creative will of God; as living, building souls, they would be embedded in the receiving, shaping wisdom of God, and in the light of cognizant consciousness, they would participate in the divine activity to express the will and wisdom of God. Their self would be an infinite “true self” in harmony with the great infinite self of God. Like cells in an organism, they would absorb and reflect all the powers and attributes of God. They would be un-conditioned and free like God, microcosms in the macrocosm.

John thus does not “see” any phenomena that are outside of himself in the visible sky. He stands as subject in the center of the perceived and is at the same time part of it. The throne with the “One” stands in the perceiver himself and is its center. As a small triple field lying concentrically in the large one, the seer has a share in the large divine field and all smaller fields arising from it, which penetrate each other. He is, after all, “*in the spirit*” and lives out of the will, wisdom, and activity of the “One” who encompasses and permeates the All and is everywhere at all times. One could compare this state of the seer approximately with that of a swimmer in an infinite sea who feels all currents working in it in their own being and takes part in them.

Seen in this way, God is also like a “person” infinitely spread out in the universe with will, wisdom, and activity in whom the true selves of all human small “persons” are embedded like cells in an organism. If they were unfolded, they would recognize God just as they are recognized by God since as infinite, eternal, microcosmic fields, they are permeated by the great macrocosmic field and draw strength, life, and light from it just as they, vice versa, permeate the whole great macrocosmic field and provide it with strength, life, and light.

At present, however, humanity lives from the fields of the world of darkness. Their consciousness is limited and filled with self-centeredness. That is why in the course of time, as John describes, a great correction comes from the world of light whereby the world of darkness is changed and having become new, can again become a suitable expression of the world of light.

“Correction” is also to be understood figuratively, for it is not only for beings and their characteristics that John uses images taken from the visible physical world. He also expresses their *effects* by means of images, namely by means of *time words* as they are used in ordinary everyday life. In the non-physical realms of the world, beings act on other beings *directly* without the use of language or tools. Force acts directly on force, life on life, consciousness on consciousness, for there, beings “made up” of fields interpenetrate each other, and when one acts on another, one field acts on another, often one of higher vibration on one of lower vibration. For example, when God “speaks,” “Let there be light!,” this is not with articulate audible words but is a direct expression of God’s *being*: God’s will “speaks out,” and from the divine power field “will,” an effect goes out on the life field “wisdom” from which the light field “consciousness” emerges (Genesis 1:2-3). Thus God does not create with hands or tools as earthly people do and does not work on substances from the outside. God moves beings and things from the inside, just as human thinking sets the limbs of the outer body in motion from the inside.

And when a divine being changes and corrects a situation or a human being, this also does not happen through words or tools but through direct effects of force upon force. An ordered power field acts upon a disordered or opposing one and causes its lines of force to change. In this, the divine will exercises no compulsion. The divine wisdom, an all-encompassing, building intelligence, stands behind it, indeed incorruptible but not blindly causally active. It is free and also leaves the beings emerging from it free to accept or reject its corrections.

Prophecy

People usually understand the Apocalypse as the result of a prophetic vision. But what is prophecy? John, the author of the Book of Revelation, is not a clairvoyant in the usual sense. He does not foresee future events as if he had past, present, and future before his eyes like a large photograph that he could zoom in on at any point.

In every human being, the “image of God,” the soul-spiritual structure of the divine world, is laid out as a possibility. In one individual, this possibility is still quite unconscious; in another, it begins to be realized; in a third, it is fully developed. Through the resonance principle, this third individual can “see” the course of this development and all its phases or detours and dead ends in others or in the great human context. This third individual has experienced within themselves the regularity of this development of their spiritual principle, the deviations from it, and the activity of the soul-spiritual factors involved in it, their interaction or opposition. Some factors in and outside the soul want to prevent this development, others to promote it.

Now, when a person such as John, who broadly views this lawfulness in himself, looks into the world, he perceives different stages of development in other people or in the whole of humanity – and can predict which stages of development still lie ahead of a person or of humanity. He can “see” what conflicts are inherent in the other person or in humanity, whether the person concerned is at the moment on a detour or deviation or even in opposition to the law of development. He will not look at all this from the outside as if it were a photograph but will experience and describe it like a great painting that arises from inner sources.

He looks at what will and must still happen in the future – whereby he will also take into account the human freedom to cooperate or to counteract. But he is not able to say in which direction and how strong free will will have an effect. Therefore, he cannot clearly locate the recognized regularity in space and time. It is not possible for him to state how long a developmental period will last or when any crisis point will occur. That is why Jesus said in

this context, “But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father” (Matthew 24:36).

This, then, is the prophecy of John. By virtue of the processes experienced within himself, by virtue of the regularity of these processes, he can predict: He “sees” the future of the development of the individual or of humanity. He puts what he sees into pictures. Their totality is the Apocalypse.

Prophets of the Old Testament, above all Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Zechariah, had likewise seen lawful developments in the future in themselves and outside of themselves and had chosen suitable pictures for them. John falls back again and again on such already existing pictures. But this does not mean that he “copied” from the Old Testament prophets. He has only often experienced the same soul-spiritual structures and developments as they had and uses the old images to convey his own vision.

But again and again, he also finds his own images and describes further developments that could not yet be experienced by the earlier prophets. He is in a different position than they. They had indeed seen within themselves the coming of a redeemer, the Messiah, as a necessary development. But they themselves had not yet temporally met with the Redeemer and had not completed the development made possible by him. John, however, *has* experienced the Redeemer and can therefore speak quite differently and more clearly about his activity and its consequences than his predecessors, for one’s own inner state and level of development determine the range and clarity of the “spiritual eye.”

This can be illustrated by an analogy from everyday life. For every child, puberty will come some day. The biological personality development runs lawfully towards it. All adolescents are free to react to it in their own way. Most of them will be unsettled at first. But some will gradually make friends with their new condition and learn to live meaningfully from it; others are overcome by the new life opportunity and neglect their daily duties, a third group will not be able to cope with the unfamiliar forces and get into conflict situations. All this can be foreseen and described as a possibility in younger ones by anyone who has experienced puberty. A child who has not yet experienced it can at least suspect it.

It is the same with the development of the “image of God” in human beings. It is present as a disposition in the heart. It will become awake one day; it *must* become awake because it is the inherent purpose of human beings to develop this disposition and to become the “image of God.” This goal of development is anchored in human beings by God from whom they came forth. But there are innumerable possibilities to miss the straightforward development, to resist it, or also to promote it. In this, human beings are free, as God is free. Many inner and outer enemies will want to prevent the unfolding while inner and outer friends support it.

The temporal duration of these processes cannot be specified. But in the long run, through many experiences with deviations and their consequences, human beings will come to the insight what their own inner being, their true self, wants from them: It wants to be realized. “Become who you are!” it says to them. Their insight will grow, life by life, incarnation by incarnation, until they are actively ready for realization. The longer they drag it out, the more they will have to suffer, for all deviations from the inner compass bring painful consequences of destiny and imprisonment in it, while any conformity to the inner compass and appropriate action mean freedom and happiness. It is exactly the same with a people, a culture, or the whole of humanity.

John can predict all this “prophetically” because he knows the forces at play in human beings in their totality. He knows towards what goal they are striving, what inner and outer obstacles build up before the goal, how people can react to them, and that however long it takes, they will finally recognize and fulfill their inherent purpose. What has come forth directly from God cannot perish. It is eternal as God is.

The “Scroll with the Seven Seals”

In the Apocalypse, a “scroll” with seven closed seals that is “in the right hand of the one seated on the throne” plays a central role (5:1). The “scroll” is also an image. It illustrates the future history of the development of the world and of humanity. One could also say that the scroll contains the “developmental plan” of God for the world and humanity. However, this is

not a precisely determined plan that takes place automatically. People will and must freely cooperate in it, and depending on how they do so, the plan will be fulfilled in a shorter or longer time with more or fewer detours and setbacks.

In the case of a plant too, the finished growth is already predetermined in the seed, and its unfolding can be delayed or even prevented by unfavorable circumstances. But the plant cannot consciously cooperate in its growth. Human beings, on the other hand, can. They will fulfill their inherent purpose even if it takes eons. The disposition to the “image of God” can never be completely overridden, unlike a plant, which may wither away entirely, for the “image of God” is imperishable, and the divine world will intervene correctly and helpfully to ensure its unfoldment in spite of all obstacles.

The “scroll” with the seven seals is “written on the inside and on the back.” That means, God’s developmental plan for humanity refers to its inner, soul-spiritual development as well as to its outer, material-physical development.

Now “a mighty angel” appears, who asks “with a loud voice”: “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” (5:2). But “no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll.” John, “seeing” this process, “began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy.” Why did he weep? Because he wants God’s developmental plan for the world and humanity to be both *recognized* as well as *carried out*. The divine-spiritual disposition within each person and all of humanity *wants* to unfold, and John is distressed that a glorious great possibility, indeed necessity, in the development of the universe is neither recognized nor realized at the moment – like a gardener who is distressed that a seed for a plant the gardener has planted has not yet sprouted or perhaps will not sprout at all.

But it turns out that a “Lamb” standing before the throne is worthy to break the seven seals and open the scroll. One of the elders before the throne declares that this Lamb is “the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David” who “has conquered” (5:5). And all the surrounding divine beings further declare that the Lamb is worthy to open the book because he “was slaughtered” and ransomed for God by his blood people from all the tribes of the earth.

The “Lamb” is none other than Jesus, the Christ, the “Lion of the tribe of Judah.” And it is worthy to open the “scroll” because it has “conquered” by being “slaughtered.”

Before Jesus, the Christ, voluntarily incarnated into an earthly body, the divine and earthly worlds were separate for human consciousness. It could not see God and could neither recognize nor participate in the divine developmental plan for the world and humanity. One could also say, The vibration of the earthly world could not receive the vibration of the divine world because the two vibrations were incompatible. The earthly self, built up from the vibrations of the earthly world, suppressed through its egocentricity and entanglement in the transient earthly world the true self, the disposition in the human heart, from which the originally intended “human being,” conscious in the divine world, was to arise.

A wrong relationship had arisen between the earthly self and the true self, such that the earthly self, which was supposed to be the servant of the true self, dominated the latter and practically eliminated it completely. The disposition to the true self was as if “dead.” But Jesus, always connected with the divine spirit, incarnated into an earthly I-personality and went a path on which he reversed this wrong relationship and replaced it with the correct one. In his divine powers, he dissolved the egocentricity of the earthly self and its ties to the perishable world, liberated his own imperishable true self from the supremacy of the perishable self, and made it a servant to the true self. In other words, he let his self-identity “die” and “resurrected” with his true, eternal identity, his true self.

Since he triggered the enmity of the earthly world on his way, he was crucified: The Lamb was “slaughtered.” But he consented to this sacrifice because only under this condition could his path lead to the goal: to voluntarily let his self-identity “die” and his true identity “resurrect.” Thereby he opened the same path to all other people. Since then, in his divine powers, they too could let their true self that was suppressed by the egocentric self be revived by letting, also through the divine powers of the Lamb, the egocentricity of the ego be broken and its attachments to the perishable world be dissolved.

Throughout his life, Jesus let his “blood,” that is, his divine soul powers, flow for others by healing them and freeing them from bondage in the

earthly world – provided they cooperated with him. Thus, through his “blood,” he “ransomed” people who became his disciples from all the tribes of the earth, enabling them to fulfill their actual inherent purpose as true selves: to cooperate in the “kingdom of God” and to act as “priests” for others until they too became priests and fellow citizens of the kingdom (5:10).

As the first human being, he had accomplished the transfiguration of the *whole* human being down to the material body: the dismantling of the old, mortal egocentric being according to spirit, soul, *and* body, and the building up of a new, immortal being according to spirit, soul, *and* spiritual body. His disciples could now likewise recognize and promote in his powers the divine plan of development for world and humanity. They could open the “scroll” and read and help carry out the plan described in it. In the end, after having gone this way of transfiguration, the whole of humanity would have consciously found again the original unity with God.

In another image, the evangelists had already described this process. When Jesus finally let his old self die and thereby made possible the resurrection of his true self, “the curtain of the temple was torn” (see for example Matthew 27:51). Until now, the earthly self, subjected to the “law,” had blocked the effects of the divine world into the earthly world. The ego subjected to the “law” had itself been the curtain in front of the holy of holies, in front of the divine world. But when Jesus dissolved this ego and the external law, this curtain was torn. Jesus dissolved the separating blockade between the divine and earthly worlds by his true self, whose home is the divine world, transforming the ego and making it the servant of the true self again.

Since then, the vibrations from the divine world can flow unhindered into the earthly world and become active there. The true self can recognize these vibrations, receive them, and cooperate with them. Step by step, the divine plan of development can thus be read and realized. The Lamb has loosened the seven seals of the “scroll” one by one. All those who walk the same path as the Lamb with its indispensable help, its “blood,” can also open the seven seals, recognize the developmental plan, and cooperate.

There are seven seals corresponding to the seven blockages that cause separation from the divine world in earthly humanity and earthly human beings and prevent the inflow of the divine vibrations. The number 7 is a

symbolic number, as in general in the whole Apocalypse, special numbers inherited from the Jewish-esoteric tradition play a great role. The fact that these numbers have a special meaning is not a human invention but is based on the structure of the world.

According to esoteric experience, human beings are sevenfold beings: They possess a material body as the lowest layer, which is animated and permeated by a life energy as the second layer. This in turn is permeated by feelings and sensations, the third layer, which fourthly, is permeated by the layer of thoughts. Above this, in human beings, provided they live in harmony with the divine world, lie three further layers called in modern esotericism “human spirit” (divine activity), “life spirit” (divine wisdom), and “divine spirit” (divine will). Together, these three last or highest layers make up the true, divine self, which is practically inactive in people’s present state. In its place operates the earthly self, which should direct thought, feeling, life, and action but is inevitably dependent on illusions, passions, and drives. This is an essential aspect of the wrong relationship between the ego and the true self.

The sevenfold structure of human beings corresponds in turn to the sevenfold structure of the world in which the seven “spirits of God” operate. They are “sent out into all the earth” (5:6) to ensure the developmental plan for humanity there.

All seven layers of humanity currently follow the earthly laws of egocentricity and are thoroughly transient. They form the blockages to the effectiveness of the seven divine spirits who want to restore the state of harmony with the divine world. These seven layers of the earthly human being *are* therefore the seven seals that the Lamb Jesus opened when he released the earthly I-personality into which he had incarnated from its egocentricity and its ties to the earthly world.

Thereby the Lamb cleared the way for the seven divine spirits, then for the seven trumpet angels working on the soul level, then for the seven harvest angels on the level of the life energies, and finally for the seven angels with the “bowls of wrath” working on the level of the body. On all four levels, since then, the divine world works in the seven layers of earthly human beings separated from God, and depending on their nature, it meets with

cooperation or resistance, for people are free to react this way or that way. Their different reactions are shown in the apocalyptic events.

End Times

Until the time of Jesus, human beings had become more and more deeply entangled in the material world. Their material body had become increasingly dense and could serve less and less for the expression of their soul-spiritual abilities and qualities. On the contrary, it almost completely prevented this expression. The wrong relationship between their true self and their earthly self had reached a critical point.

With Jesus, however, the great reversal began, the dissolution of this wrong relationship. Since then, the development of humanity strives for the restoration of the original relationship: for the unity with the divine world of which the transformed earthly world is again to become the expression. Therefore, the course of humanity is heading towards this “good end” even though the resistance of many people to the influences from the divine world may still cause tremendous catastrophes.

Therefore, since the resurrection of Jesus, we have actually *always* been in the “end times,” and the Apocalypse describes their lawful course.

Within this great end times, however, there are always smaller end times because in every single human being, in every group, every people, and every culture the same regularity can show up and take place depending on their state of development and maturity. Accordingly, the Apocalypse is not exclusively about a description of the final end of the world or the so-called “Last Judgment.” Just as in the economy, for example, cyclical developments have their beginning, take a lawful course, and can culminate and end in lesser or greater catastrophes, in limited or global crises, so there are rhythmic curves in the course of development of the culture and consciousness of individuals, peoples, or the whole of humanity.

The Apocalypse represents such end times, not necessarily the very last one of the whole of humanity, nor necessarily the one in a certain phase of the Roman Empire. One need by no means relate the apocalyptic events only to the Roman Empire in which John lived, nor only to the cultural developments of humanity in the distant future. Their images rather fit to all greater or lesser end times, also to the crises of modern times. They can and must therefore also be related to the present. Would they otherwise have

any meaning for us? They are not to be expected only in the future; they are always already current reality.^[4]

Salvation and Disaster

The modern media, for example, apocalyptic films, have already recognized this topicality but have one-sidedly presented only horror scenarios. The Apocalypse, however, always describes both sides in a balanced way: the horrors of all end times on the one hand and the divine harmony and order on the other hand, which is ultimately the basis and goal of the development of the world and humanity. This harmony forms the lasting, calm, reassuring background of all catastrophic events. The divine love is unshakable. It is not interested in a “punishment” of the “bad” people, certainly not in a final downfall of humanity in blood and tears. It is rather interested in a dissolution of the earthly disorder through the restoration of the divine order. The dissolution may be terrible, but it is a prerequisite for the restoration. The dismantling of disorder must necessarily take place in order to make room for construction.

Thus, divine love works behind the apparent divine “wrath” of all disasters and corrections, for corrections and rebuilding are in the primal interest of the world and humanity. Should then the evils, sufferings, conflicts, pains, wars, diseases, disappointments of the present, and the psychic disruptions connected with them continue into infinity? Should death gather its harvest forever? This disorder must be dissolved so that the lost order and harmony can be regained and death can be abolished.

In this way, the Apocalypse represents the salvation and disaster of the development of humanity. It shows how at first, the disaster breaks in more and more strongly and seems to gain the upper hand but finally is defeated and replaced by salvation. The development of disaster and salvation run parallel and interpenetrate each other for a long time until at the end, there is a great separation: The people and beings who belong to salvation are separated from those who have fallen into disaster, and salvation is won. And since the Apocalypse by no means describes the final end of humanity, it can be expected that also the souls who have fallen into disaster for the time being will be included in the restoration after appropriate purification in later end times.

Predestination?

The development of salvation and disaster and the affiliation of a person to one or the other are by no means predetermined. Just as individuals can recognize inner laws of development in their own life and react differently to them, so can groups or the whole of humanity in times of the end. The divine order corrects the earthly disorder according to a lawful balancing of tensions when the latter become too great. And people have the freedom to behave positively or negatively in the face of these corrections. Those who resist them cause corresponding reactions on the part of the divine world, possibly terrible processes.

But the divine world has no interest in threatening or punishing. Even its lawful corrections are of such a nature that they can lead people to the insight into the necessity and glory of the divine order in the world and in human beings. They do not want anything else, for those who experience the negative consequences of their misbehavior can also recognize which behavior corresponds to their actual nature, the nature of humanity, and thus to their own happiness. Therefore, there is always the possibility to cooperate with the powers that want to restore the original harmony, and if people get into seemingly hopeless situations due to the corrections on the part of the divine world, the latter will even help them, if they are willing to repent, through special people and spiritual schools that are in conscious relationship with the divine world and release healing powers.

Whoever accepts the corrections and follows the divine order attains salvation and cooperates in a new order of things. On the other hand, whoever stubbornly continues to resist, causes all the more bloody catastrophes and gets further into disaster. The Apocalypse is not an inevitable fate but an invitation to reversing course and re-orientating. Again and again, it talks about the fact that people should “repent” – another expression for “reversing course.”

It wants to show its readers the connection between their own misconduct and the consequences in order to awaken their insight. “Misconduct” does not mean that they are violating an external, authoritarian law but that they are acting against their own inner identity,

their own happiness, and their own vocation. They are free to gain this insight and to realize their own happiness in harmony with the divine order, which is also the order of their true self – or to suffer even more and longer until they eventually realize their own good after all.

Cooperation with the corrective events means to walk a path of accepting the corrections and recognizing the steps that lead to the construction of a new human being united with God. Cooperation with the four times seven series of events *are* these steps of the liberating path. And whoever takes even the first step and is ready for all the others belongs in principle already to the “saints,” as they are called in the Apocalypse. These are not the morally perfect or particularly pious. They are all those people, regardless of their religious affiliation, who experience their separation from God, want to cancel it through inner transformation, and actually change, at whatever stage of their path they may be.

Thus, people do not need to be mere victims of the corrections. They can recognize their necessity, cooperate with them, in this way grow themselves into the harmony of the divine order, and experience the divine love.

PART 1: AT THE THRESHOLD

Prophecy

John, the Truthful Witness

1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place; he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, 2who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.

3Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it; for the time is near. 4John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, 5and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. ...

The author of the Apocalypse is aware that the revelation he received emanated from the divine world. He is neither a medium who has received impressions from the beyond in dimmed consciousness nor has he tuned himself to the beyond by so-called “channeling” to serve otherworldly beings as a tool. Rather, the disposition to the “image of God” had developed within him so far that it could act as an organ of perception for the divine world, as a “spiritual eye,” with which he was consciously in contact with the divine world. The latter now makes itself visible to his “spiritual eye,” and John calls this influence “sending an angel.” He knows thereby that this “influence,” this “angel,” proceeds from Jesus, the Christ, and that Jesus received his revelation in turn from God.

Thus John points out that he stands in a great context, in a stream of knowledge emanating from the divine world itself, in which he is included as a “servant.” He testifies to the “word of God,” the divine world perceived

by him, and at the same time to the “testimony of Jesus Christ,” who for his part perceived the divine world and reported on it. John perceives and understands the “word of God” independently and therefore knows clearly that what he passes on is not his own invention and not the invention of otherworldly beings. He is, even as a “servant” of God, independent and can judge that what he sees does not originate from his own wishful thinking or from messages from the beyond. His revelation is not human work but comes from the divine world of immortal truth.

It bears this stamp for every unprejudiced person, and those who possess the same “spiritual eye” as John will see the same as he. They will belong to the “servants,” the disciples of Jesus, who, like their master himself, had faithfully served God in their own hearts, had also reached the resurrection with the help of their master, and could receive with a new consciousness what had been revealed.

Jesus, the “Lamb,” had been worthy to open the seven seals of the “scroll” and to receive the revelation because he had developed his own “spiritual eye” and had given the “image of God” the opportunity to resurrect through his mystery death, which he had already accomplished during his lifetime. This “image of God” had become conscious and active; it was able to consciously experience the effects of the divine world and to see its laws. Thus, the “Lamb” had made possible eternity breaking into time and had initiated the great turning point in the development of humanity: the fundamental transformation of the old humanity and the building up of a new humanity – exactly the processes that are described in the Apocalypse and that “must soon take place.” “Soon” means: It already begins and will take place as “prophesied” – prophesied not on the basis of a mediumistic ability to foresee the future but on the basis of the knowledge of the developmental plan of God.

Angels appear repeatedly in the Apocalypse. “Angel” is a loan word from the Greek and simply means “messenger.” An angel of God is a messenger of God, a power invisible to earthly eyes that is one with God, living out of God’s attributes and powers, and communicating them to others, just as a ray of the sun works out of its attributes and powers. When the text speaks of an angel appearing to John or others, this is again an image. There is an influence on the human consciousness coming from the power, life, and light of God,

a message from God. It can only be received by a consciousness attuned to it. Thus, an angel is not a bodily figure that could be glimpsed with earthly eyes.

Those who “read aloud” the text of the Apocalypse, that is, *realize* it before the eyes and ears of others, are “blessed” – happy as co-workers with God with whom they are one. “Blessed” are also all who hear and keep these written down messages. They now know the “words of the prophecy.” They know what will happen “soon” and will not be surprised by the events. That is why the revelation is given to them. They can act upon it by “keeping” these words and taking them to heart.

After the prologue, John writes seven letters “to the seven churches that are in Asia.” He welcomes them with a great hymn to God and his Son Jesus Christ. Thus he connects them with the grace, that is the affection, and the peace of the “One” and his “Son,” the true self. In doing so, he opens their souls to the divine powers and removes them from their everyday attachments whereby they too can *experience* their connectedness with the divine world.

He shows them that they have emerged from the one “who is and who was and who is to come,” from the eternal “Father,” who is not subject to time, who overlooks all time, the “One,” and therefore they are themselves, according to their innermost being, eternal and not subject to time. This relieves them of their everyday life, enlivens their own true, eternal being, and gives them comfort and strength.

John also connects his listeners with the “seven spirits who are before his throne.” The seven aspects of the “One” work in people on a spiritual path – the “seven churches” embody such people – and enable and encourage them to walk this path.

Finally, John shows them that they can walk this path at all only because Jesus, the Christ preceded them and thereby released the power for them to follow him.

Jesus is “the faithful witness” of the Father since he faithfully fulfilled the will of the “One” in his own being, *as* the will of his true self, without following the will of his earthly being, his egocentric self.

Jesus is also the “firstborn of the dead.” The “dead” are the earthly people subjected to death and transience. The incorruptible, immortal disposition to the divine human being, which is normally unconscious and inactive, had

been born again in Jesus, who had voluntarily incarnated into a perishable man and had become conscious and active. Jesus in his time had explained to Nicodemus (John 3:5) that such a rebirth out of water and spirit, that is, out of the divine wisdom (the “Mother”) and the divine will (the “Father”), was necessary if the true self was to be “resurrected,” that is, to become conscious and active and to build up an incorruptible spiritual body. And he himself had accomplished this rebirth and thus overcome death.

Thus Jesus had also overcome the world and had become a “ruler of the kings of the earth.” The kings of the earth rule by force. Divine love, on the other hand, is stronger than all manipulation by force and the earthly “will to power.” Everything that is built up by this will inevitably collapses again and is transient. Thus it belongs to death, which Jesus had overcome by his path. Jesus participated in the stream of imperishable divine love, thereby building up something imperishable and overcoming the earthly will to power. In contrast to the rigid, destructive power of the “kings of the earth,” divine love is an always flowing, building up power, which dissolves the violent power of the “kings of the earth,” just as warm water dissolves rigid ice. The power of Jesus is not quantitatively greater than that of the “kings of the earth.” It is qualitatively different and comes from another dimension in which the “will to power” has no more validity. In this respect, he is “ruler of the kings of the earth.”

Source of the Prophecy: Jesus, the Son of Man

1:5 ... To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

That “Jesus loves us” means again: He does not rule like the “kings of the earth” but loves people as the bearers of the eternal, divine being, which they currently suppress and condemn to ineffectiveness by their ego’s will to power. His love is like a stream that wants to awaken and absorb the eternal in human beings so that it cooperates with the divine love as a conscious part of this stream.

As a stream of divine love, his love is his “blood,” his soul energy that emanates from him, wants to awaken the true self in human beings, and redeem it from bondage under the will to power. However, those who do not absorb this “blood,” this supply of soul energy, and allow it to work in them will not be redeemed. A mere belief that Jesus has redeemed them does not help them. They must let the stream of love work in them and change them.

However, those who allow themselves to be taken up into this stream and to be changed by it will themselves rise from the “dead” and realize their original inherent purpose. They will belong to the “kingdom of God” and be “priests” who receive the love of God, like Jesus himself, as soul energy, as “blood, and shed it for others.

Thus Jesus brings grace, which is the “blood of Christ,” and peace, which is freedom from all conflictual violence, into the world, and therefore eternal glory and gratitude are due to him for the inexhaustible power emanating from him.

Addressee of the Prophecy: Humanity

1:7 Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. Amen. 8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

After his physical death and prolonged activity of his love and power in his friends and enemies, the Son of Man will come again, however not in physical flesh but "with the clouds."

The "clouds" are an image for the sphere of consciousness, for mental and psychic processes. People will "see" him: They will become aware of his essence in their own thinking and feeling, in the "clouds." And "every eye will see him": *Every* consciousness will perceive him, both that of his friends and that of his enemies, for the "Son of Man" is the original human being, which as the true self in every earthly human being is for the time being still asleep, as it were "dead," and at the end of the development of humanity or of the individual human being "arises" again from the dead. The true self becomes conscious and active: The Son of Man comes again "with the clouds."

The friends will welcome him and become one with him. Perhaps, in the meantime, some former enemies will also have come to their senses and welcome him, those who had "pierced" him and destroyed his physical body hoping thereby to destroy his being as well. Nevertheless, some of them will now be ready to follow him, for precisely their hatred had connected them most closely with him and the truth working from him. Precisely by their violent rejection, they had been impregnated inwardly with his "blood" as it were. It could work in them since then and awaken their eternal being.

But most of his enemies do not want to cooperate with him. This causes corrections, self-inflicted pain. Those who do not develop their true being will feel the pain of not being fulfilled, also the painful consequences of their egocentric behavior. That is why "all the tribes of the earth will wail" who are still "piercing" Jesus.

All these effects of Jesus on humanity will be described in the Apocalypse in the following.

John ends the hymn to Father and Son by once again describing the “One” as the One who is not subject to any temporality or power of the world. The “One” is the Alpha and the Omega (alpha and omega are the initial and final letters of the Greek alphabet), the beginning and the end of all things, the beginning and the end of the development of the world and humanity.

The Prophet

State of John's Soul

1:9 I, John, your brother who share with you in Jesus the persecution and the kingdom and the patient endurance, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, ...

John describes himself and his inner state in which the “hidden things” were “revealed” to him.

He “shares with” his listeners. He experiences like them as an earthly human being the afflictions of the transient earthly world. But since he has persevered “in Jesus” on the spiritual path, he receives in his true being the “word of God,” lives according to it, and remains faithful to the example of Jesus – because of “the testimony of Jesus.” Therefore, like his brothers, he will be resurrected as the true self, as the original “Son of Man,” and experience the kingship in the imperishable divine world.

The reason why “patient endurance” is so difficult is that it entails loneliness in the earthly world. People will not understand such a disciple of Jesus on the path; perhaps they will be hostile to him. However, the loneliness experienced through “patient endurance” is also necessary so that the person can hear the “word of God” without distraction from external and internal influences, and recognize how the example of Jesus must be followed. “Island” is an image for this isolation and total loneliness. Those who endure it will hear the “word of God” on their “Lord's day” when they have become ripe for revelation by Jesus. It will show them what will happen in themselves, in their comrades, and in the whole of humanity. And John experiences in a new consciousness, which can see like a spiritual eye the world events and their backgrounds, what will happen “soon.”

He relates, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day” (1:10). Some German translations, as mentioned, translate the Greek words for this expression with the German word for “rapture.” But this could give rise to misleading ideas of pathological states. Rather it is about the total change of consciousness,

about the absorption of the earthly consciousness into a spiritual consciousness. Verse 1:17 corresponds to this: When John saw the glory of the Son of Man in this new consciousness, he “fell at his feet as though dead.” The ordinary consciousness is “taken up” into a new consciousness, it goes up or down “in the Spirit.” And with this new consciousness lifted up “in the Spirit,” John becomes another. He experiences the temporary anticipation of a state that will be permanent at the end of his journey, the state of the “Son of Man,” the original human being. This is a foretaste of the new existence in the divine world. This state is in no way comparable to intoxication, imagination, or pathological exaltation. It is an all-embracing view through all time and space unclouded by dark passions and illusions, a state of clear, bright thinking.

Encounter with the Son of Man

1:10 ... and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 11 saying, "Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." 12 Then I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the lampstands I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest. 14 His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force. 17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he placed his right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 18 and the living one. I was dead, and see, I am alive forever and ever; and I have the keys of Death and of Hades."

At first, John hears only "a loud voice like a trumpet." "Trumpet" refers to the mighty power of a divine vibration that rips open the soul's habitual, earthly state and brings about a higher state within it. John's soul becomes receptive to the higher, divine vibration and resonates with it. Thereupon, he "turns," again an expression to denote an elevated consciousness that turns away from the earthly world and toward the divine world, and sees "one like the Son of Man": the resurrected Jesus. He does not "see" him with the ordinary I-consciousness that perceives other beings as objects, for the spiritual consciousness, itself an infinite power field, is penetrated by the power fields of other beings and perceives these power fields within. So this experience is not an apparition after the manner of hallucinations or apparitions of spirits as they can show themselves to the normal I-consciousness.

And since the "power field" of the Son of Man corresponds in its structure to the true self of every human being – it is the pattern of every true

self – John also perceives his own true self, permeated and surrounded by the Son of Man. It is his own innermost being that he sees in the Son of Man and before which his transient ego-being sinks down as though dead.

For people raised in the concepts of traditional Christianity, it is an unfamiliar idea that the innermost being of all human beings, their true self, should be structurally identical with the “Son of Man,” immortal, of great glory, as the next verses describe. But how could John, the earthly-mortal man, perceive the “Son of Man” if the latter were not present in himself as his own true self? It had already developed to a certain degree in John; a new consciousness had formed in him, and therefore he could become aware of the true self of the Son of Man.

The fact that he falls down at this moment as an earthly self as though dead only shows how far the earthly nature of human beings has moved away from their originally divine nature in the course of the millennia. The ego *must* fall down as if dead when the original human being comes to life again, since in its transitoriness, it is not in the least equal to the true nature of the human being. It must “die” if the true self is to become active again in the human being.

This is, as if condensed into a single moment, the whole course of events of the Apocalypse: The hitherto hidden, as it were “dead” divine nature of the human being and humanity pushes towards realization, pushes aside all obstacles with the help of the divine powers of the “Lamb,” the first resurrected original human being, dissolves the perishable earthly nature, lets the imperishable divine nature arise again, and thus realizes the true, original human being, the Son of Man in all humanity.

In every earthly human being, this divine nature, this “Son of Man” is hidden; *in* every human being, it can push out of concealment into the light. But when it shows itself, the earthly nature must “die” because it is no match for the true self. It must “melt” into it, merge into it. It is not that earthly human beings must or could develop into divine human beings. That is impossible, since they live only from earthly prerequisites and foundations. When the divine human being, the “Son of Man,” appears in them and when they are ready to “resurrect” this true self, there is nothing left for the ego but to step back and “die.” In this sense, John the Baptist in the Gospels – the earthly human being who is ready to let the divine human being arise within

– says of Jesus, this “Son of Man,” “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

The qualities of the Son of Man, in whom the true nature of every human being appears, are of a divine nature just as every ray of the sun is like the nature of the sun. This too will be difficult for people brought up with traditional religious ideas to grasp: that within them, completely separated from earthly nature, such a glory of the divine nature should await its resurrection.

The true, divine nature of human beings, of which the Son of Man is the pattern, has a “robe” reaching down to the feet, an image for a garment of light in which the divine *activity* is expressed;

it has a “golden sash” across its chest, an image for a radiation of feeling from the heart, “golden” like divine *love*;

it has a head and hair “white as white wool, white as snow,” an image for a thought radiation from the head shining “white” like the divine *thinking*;

its “feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace,” an image for the fiery divine *will*;

its “eyes were like a flame of fire”: The four aspects named above enable the penetrating, conscious *perception* on the part of the new human spirit, called “*manas*” or “human spirit” in esotericism;

its “voice was like the sound of many waters”: The four aspects mentioned enable vibrations throughout the universe that connect all beings in the *unity* of divine love-wisdom – called “*buddhi*” or “life spirit” in esotericism.

And all six aspects emanate from the “One” and together form the new human being living in and from God with creative *will*, the “*atman*” or “divine spirit.”

Thus, the Son of Man, the true self of the human being, works with and from the seven spirits that stand before God. Therefore, he holds seven stars in his right hand, which are the “angels of the seven churches” as explained in verse 1:20. They are the spiritual foundations or also objectives of these churches, their “basic laws” so to speak, which as “angels,” as sources of power from the divine world mediated through the Son of Man establish the connection to the divine world. The Son of Man also lives in the midst of the seven churches, symbolized as “lampstands” and gives them his power. Also,

a “sharp two-edged sword” came from his mouth. For he sharply divides between an earthly world, which has emancipated itself from the divine world on its own authority, and the divine world. And his “face was like the sun shining with full force”: His consciousness, his “face,” is one with the Father, the divine sun, just as the consciousness of every resurrected divine human being is a ray of that sun.

Often the Bible tells that people who are surprised by “angels,” personified powers from the divine world, are afraid. But the angels lift up the frightened ones again and calm them down. Now also the Son of Man, personification and pattern of the true self, says to John, “Do not be afraid!” laying his right hand on him and thereby strengthening him. The latter’s new consciousness, to whose “feet as though dead” the earthly consciousness has fallen, can now find its way in this unfamiliar situation and receive the declarations of the Son of Man, who, similarly to the “One,” says, “I am the first and the last.” He lives from eternity and works from the beginning of the development of the world and humanity to their goal.

The Son of Man further declares, “I was dead, and see, I am alive forever and ever.”

The “dead” in this context is again not the spiritually dead earthly human being but the true self, which on account of its incarnation into a mortal earthly man had at first become unconscious and inactive – as if “dead”⁵ (see the chapter “John, the Truthful Witness” in Part 1). His soul-spiritual “life” was as if extinguished under the pressure of the egocentric self. But on the mystery path, it had become “alive” again, that is, conscious and active, and now remains alive until eternity. Jesus, the “Lamb,” was the first to experience and exemplify this process so that all other, weaker human beings can now follow him.

And when the Son of Man possesses “the keys of Death,” it indicates that he overcame physical death by dissolving the earthly hunger for life, the cause of death. And that he has the “keys to Hades” means that having dissolved the earthly hunger for life within himself, he now also has access to the other world, to the “realm of the dead,” for the imperishable spiritual body living out of divine power, which had grown up in Jesus, can freely seek out the “spirits in prison” as it is formulated in the First Letter of Peter (1 Peter 3:19).

These “spirits in prison” are the dead existing in the heavenly or hellish realms in the beyond.

Thus, the Son of Man, by overcoming his hunger for life on the basis of the true self, had opened the way in two directions: to the divine world – the “curtain of the temple was torn” at his resurrection – and to the “realm of the dead.” This later found expression in the Christian creed in the phrase, “descended into hell.” Also in the Apocalypse, the purification that the divine powers cause in the unconscious, “demonic” deep areas of the human soul, the so-called “hell,” is described later in detail. This purification is an essential part of the mystery path on which the imperishable true self “rises” through the voluntary “dying” of the perishable ego.

Assignment to John

1:19 Now write what you have seen, what is, and what is to take place after this. 20 As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

In his new state of consciousness, the seer on Patmos receives the assignment from the Son of Man to write in a book, in detail seven letters, and send it to the seven churches.^[5]

First Vision of John

The Divine Order

4:1 After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

2At once I was in the spirit, and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne! 3And the one seated there looks like jasper and carnelian, and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald. 4Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones are twenty-four elders, dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads. 5Coming from the throne are flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God; 6and in front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass, like crystal. Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: 7the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle.

8And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing, "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come." 9And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10the twenty-four elders fall before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives forever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing, 11 "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

John perceives the structure of the divine world and the beings in it. "After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice,

which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.’” (4:1). John sees on a throne the “One” who resembles a jasper and is surrounded by a rainbow. He experiences the divine will, the divine wisdom, and the divine activity, which create, order, and lead the whole universe towards its inherent purpose.

He looks even more. Around the divine throne, also on thrones, sit 24 “elders” in white robes and with crowns on their heads. The divine will, the divine wisdom, and the divine activity are the highest, finest, fastest vibrating power fields working in the whole universe, the strongest creative energies. Subordinated to them are further, not quite so strong fields, among others the field called the “zodiac” in astrology.

Many ambiguities exist about the astrological facts, and just in this respect, it is necessary to distinguish exactly between the realities of the world of light and those of the world of darkness.

One can describe the zodiac and the solar system as part of the world of darkness. Like every celestial body in space, the sun and every planet, including the earth, represent specific fields of force in which their soul-spiritual character is expressed. All these force fields interpenetrate and influence each other, which also influences the soul-spiritual characteristics of the beings living in them – on Earth, these are the human beings. And one can imagine that the angles in which these fields of force intersect and affect the people cause different imprints of the soul-spiritual characteristics.

When the earth revolves around the sun, both force fields intersect at different angles, depending on the axis position of the earth to the sun. At the so-called vernal point, the axis is in a certain position to the sun; at the opposite point of the earth’s orbit, the autumnal equinox, it is in opposition to the position in spring, at other points at an angle of 90 degrees, and so on. The soul-spiritual effects of these force fields correspond to this. In the spring point, a promoting effect is apparent, in the autumn point, a retarding effect, and thus at all twelve points of this orbit, more or less promoting or retarding influences result.

Now in astrology, the “study of the stars,” one has described these twelve sections of the orbit of the earth with symbols, the so-called signs of the zodiac, for example the first section, where promoting effects occur, as a ram or “Aries,” and the seventh section, with retarding effects, as scales or “Libra.”

The ancients *located* these sections by means of the fixed constellations, which *at that time* could be seen “behind” the vernal equinox or behind the other sections of the orbit. But it is not the images or the sectors of space designated by them which exert the soul-spiritual effects, but it is the Earth’s force field, whose relation to that of the Sun changes regularly. Today, other fixed constellations lie behind these sections of the Earth’s orbit than in ancient times. But the regularly changing relation between the force field of the earth and that of the sun has remained the same since then and will always remain the same. At the vernal equinox there will *always* be the same axial position of the earth to the sun and a corresponding effect “Aries,” no matter on which background in the fixed star sky this vernal equinox is projected.

The ancients knew these facts, yes, they experienced them like the seer on Patmos within themselves as soul-spiritual states. They also experienced that every sign of the zodiac has an active and a passive aspect, an emanating and a receiving aspect. That is why most signs express a duality, be it that the respective animal has two horns (Aries, Taurus) or claws (Cancer, Scorpio), be it that it appears in double form (Gemini, Pisces), be it that is symbolized by two wavy lines (Aquarius) or bars (Libra).

They represent the zodiac, whose soul-spiritual principles in the solar system inevitably affect all its inhabitants, depending on the section of the Earth’s orbit around the Sun. One can conceive of these influences as cosmic *qualities*, principles that in human beings represent all 12 times 2 aspects of character (12 is the number of completeness). Aries as the first sign, for example, describes the principle of “identity with oneself,” the urge of people to manifest themselves actively or passively, or Libra the principle of “harmony” (passive) and “balance” (active). The innumerable combinations of these principles, *all* of which always interact in some way in the individual human being, cause the almost infinite number of different human characters. Moreover, these principles can be seen as stages of a development: from the setting of the beginning by emphasizing the individual identity (Aries), through the principle of harmony (Libra) between human beings and the environment, up to the end of a sacrifice for the world (Pisces), whereupon a new spiral begins.

But John sees in his vision the *divine* zodiac of the world of light, whose 12 principles or qualities, each appearing actively and passively, embody the 24 elders. Aries, for example, then means the “identity of the true self with itself” and not the “identity of the earthly self with itself,” which is symbolized by the earthly “ram.” The earthly self manifests itself by asserting itself at all costs, whether in attack (active) or in defense (passive). The true self, on the other hand, manifests itself in cooperation with the divine powers (active) and by assimilating them (passive). Or: Libra of the zodiac marks the ideal of “harmony.” Influenced by the earthly zodiac, the earthly self establishes “harmony” either by manipulation (active) or by adaptation (passive). The true self, on the other hand, arrives at “harmony” with others by striving to become one with the divine “harmony” (active) or by a receptive becoming one with it (passive). The case is similar with the rest of the two times twelve ideals of the divine zodiac.

The 24 elders sit on thrones, as does the “One,” an image that the divine ideals are the foundations for all aspects of human beings’ *spiritual* life. They are further clothed in “white robes,” symbols of purity of *soul*, and wear golden crowns on their heads, marking them as “victors.” They are more powerful in their *physical* effectiveness than all aspects of the *earthly* zodiac.

If people lived in accordance with the divine zodiac, they would feel uplifted and free in this divine order since it corresponds to their true self. But they have lost this accordance and now live under the influence of the earthly zodiac, which reflects their deviations from the divine order. It contains the so-called karma or destiny: the repercussions of people’s ungodly behaviors and characteristics. Only when they would again follow the order of the divine zodiac and dissolve the disorder in character and life circumstances caused by their earthly self, the karma would also dissolve. The divine zodiac would make all aspects of the earthly zodiac ineffective, and the true self of human beings could unfold freely.

The “One” by no means closes itself austere in itself after having once brought forth the universe. Rather, effects go out from it uninterruptedly into the creation, which does not stand *outside* of it. The One is active *in* the creation as will, wisdom, and activity. John represents this by flashes of lightning (its fiery impulses of will), rumblings (its psychic vibrations or “words”) and peals of thunder (shaking by effects that prevent stagnation and

advance the development of creation and its inhabitants) proceed from the throne of the One.

This energy is carried above all by the “seven flaming torches in front of the throne.” As John himself explains, they are the “seven spirits of God.” Here too, astrology has preserved ancient knowledge. Because these seven spirits are effective as principles and executive organs of the divine will in the whole universe, they are also to be found in the solar system. There they are embodied by the seven “planets” of the ancients (the Sun also being considered a planet), as earthly or divine principles.

These “seven spirits” are soul-spiritual principles, *powers* working in the human being in contrast to the *qualities* represented by the “elders.” But here too, a distinction must be made between divine and earthly forces in the planetary system, between the forces of the world of light and those of the world of darkness. Those familiar with astrology know that “Sun” stands for the guiding force of a personality, for the “self” (in the world of darkness) or the “true self” (in the world of light). “Moon” stands for the metabolism with earthly or divine substances, respectively, “Mercury” for the limited “earthly-rational thinking” or the unlimited “thinking open to the divine,” respectively, “Venus” for “earthly-sensual love” or “divine-pure love,” respectively, “Mars” for “assertiveness” or “bravery,” respectively, “Jupiter” for “earthly expansion” or “spiritual wealth,” respectively, “Saturn” for “limitation” or “structure,” respectively.

In interaction with the respective qualities, the “elders,” these “seven spirits” influence the purpose and style of life of every human being. They resemble seven powerful thought currents that the divine will and the divine wisdom unceasingly release from themselves and that provide for the realization of the divine order in the universe.

Further John speaks of a “sea of glass, like crystal” in front of the throne. Whereas up to now, he spoke mainly of *spiritual* principles and effects, the “sea of glass” is a reflection of the *world soul*, which receives all effects from the divine-spiritual world and reflects them like a clear mirror. Those who live in the divine world also live from this soul field, which gives them a pure consciousness as a reflection of the divine qualities and effects and enables them to implement all of these in physical life. No streaks or turbidity may disturb this soul sea if it is to perform its function of reflection well.

Especially impressive are the “four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind” standing around the throne of the One. Already the prophet Ezekiel had described them in a similar vision as John (Ezekiel 1:5-14). They are, in contrast to the spiritual and soul forces, the restlessly working elements or *life forces* of the divine world, in esotericism also called “ethers.” One resembles a lion, corresponding to the force that regulates the *functions of life*; one an ox, symbolic of the *form-giving ether*; one has a human face and embodies the ether that makes *thought possible*; and the fourth a flying eagle, symbolic of the forces or ethers operating in the *world of feelings*. Thus, after the highest level, that of the divine will, and the level of divine wisdom and activity, they represent the fourfold level of the divine life forces that are active everywhere and at all times in the whole universe and also make possible the four main faculties of human beings: thinking, feeling, vegetative life, and doing.

Each of these beings has six wings, which refers to the three aspects of the “One,” will, wisdom, and activity, from which they operate, each with an active and passive, a creative and a receiving pole. Unceasingly these divine life forces perform the works of the “One” on the throne; unceasingly they register the inner and outer developments and conditions of the world and the living beings – hence their eyes inside and all around; unceasingly they carry this information to the “One” on the throne and receive new impulses from the One. Therefore “day and night without ceasing they sing: ‘Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty.’” “Singing” is meant here as a creative activity through which they fulfill their function of maintaining, carrying out, and further developing the order of God in the universe, in other words, “sanctifying” all beings in a threefold way, just as the “One” is also “holy” in a threefold way: as unshakable will, wisdom, and activity.

Together with them, the 24 elders also give expression to their devotion and servitude to the “One” by symbolically casting their “crowns” before the throne of the One and confirming their function of implementing the two times twelve soul-spiritual divine attributes by conferring upon the One “glory, honor and power.” The “One” who through will “created all things,” “lives forever and ever,” and also works in them as their “unground,” origin, and sustainer, just as the One also gives order and justification to all other living beings, forces, and functions in the universe.

The “Lamb”

5:1 Then I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll written on the inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals; 2and I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” 3And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. 4And I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. 5Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”

6Then I saw between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7He went and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne. 8When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9They sing a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation; 10you have made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God, and they will reign on earth.” 11Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12singing with full voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” 13Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing, “To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” 14And

the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the elders fell down and worshiped.

John had described the structure of the divine world. It forms the untouchable, immovable static background for the coming dynamic events. The "Lamb" sets this dynamic in motion. Through the incarnation of Jesus, the "Lamb," and the mystery path he walked, the wall between the divine and earthly worlds came down in *one* human being. The curtain in front of the Holy of Holies was torn. Since then, the divine powers can affect the whole of humanity and its world and cause other people to follow the same path as Jesus did – or cause resistance to it. They will correct and dismantle what does not conform to the divine order and make possible the building of a new humanity and a new world. This is, broadly speaking, the mystery path for all humanity, where the separating wall and the wrong relationship between the earthly world and the divine world will be removed and the original relationship will be restored: The earthly essence of humanity and the world, renewed from the ground up, will again be an expression of the divine essence.

Ezekiel had not yet seen a "Lamb" between the "One" on the throne and the divine beings surrounding it, for in the state of humanity that is the basis of the Old Testament, the curtain between the earthly world and the divine world, the "Holy of Holies" in the temple, had not yet been torn. The scroll with the developmental plan of God was not yet visible and not opened. Only the Lamb, Jesus, the Christ, through his incarnation and his mystery path, had dissolved the barrier of the self dependent on the law. Thus, he had established the direct connection between the two worlds, allowing the free flow of divine powers into the earthly world and the free reception or rejection of the flow by people.

John describes the Lamb in more detail. It has "seven horns and seven eyes." In this context, "horn" is a symbol of "power." Chapter 17:12 says, "The ten horns [of a beast] are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom." The Lamb with the "seven horns" thus possesses the power of the "seven spirits who are before the throne," the seven dynamic powers that will carry out the plan of God. And with their "seven eyes," which are also at the

disposal of the Lamb, they will register the associated seven states of development in order to report this information back to the “One.”

In this way, the lamb sacrificing itself is a symbol of the will, wisdom, and activity of the “One” giving itself to the whole of creation, permeating it and filling it with divine power. After having gone into the earthly world “to seek out and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10), even at the cost of its own life, the Lamb tries to bring back everything that had drifted away and separated from the “One.” Thus, along with the “sea like crystal,” it is another expression of the divine world-soul through which the “One” works and becomes conscious in its creatures: The Christ “explains” the Father to his disciples.

All other divine beings in front of and around the throne cooperate with the Lamb in this task and subordinate themselves to it: “The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb” and put at its disposal their soul vibrations (harps and songs) and soul powers (prayers).

The “saints” are all those people who had turned to God in their lives or had already become one with God again. They appear here for the first time in a scene that, in contrast to the following calamity, represents the salvation in the divine world. Again and again, as in a drama, scenes of salvation and calamity will alternate, but salvation is never endangered, even when calamity initially pushes itself into the foreground. In the end, it will be completely defeated, while the “saints” are removed from all suffering and danger.

Now, in their first scene, they sing “*a new song*.” They behave in a different, new way compared to the Old Testament state. The Lamb has made possible a New Testament behavior, for through his incarnation into an earthly personality, his mystery path, and his overcoming of the world and death through the resurrection of the true self with a spiritual body, a new relationship has been established between the world of light and that of darkness. All people who follow the way of the Lamb can since then also be liberated from the fetters of earthly power and death and consciously resurrect in the divine world with their true self and a spiritual body. “They will reign on earth”: They live in and from the divine order and gradually re-establish it in all humanity.

And all the uncounted beings of the divine angelic hierarchies welcome this new situation of humanity and praise the Lamb, Jesus, the Christ, who

made the newness possible. They welcome the liberation of humanity from the chains of death and the earthly world and the recovery of their dignity as beings born of God. As “images of God,” these liberated people can consciously live out of divine will, wisdom, and activity and magnify the glory of the “One” with their thinking, feeling, willing, and doing. They are reborn, original sevenfold human beings.

Therefore, full of gratitude and joy, they assign to the Lamb, the embodiment of the redeemed human being, “power, wealth, wisdom, might, honor, glory, and blessing,” seven praises corresponding to the seven burning torches before the throne of the “One” and the seven horns and eyes of the Lamb.

And analogous to the “four living creatures” with the animal faces before the throne, “every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea” also pronounces once again before the Lamb the four praises of “blessing, honor, glory, and might forever and ever.”

For the first time, a “mighty angel” appears in this scene, who with his question, “Who is worthy to open the scroll?” (5:2), sets the events rolling, so to speak. Again and again in the following, such a “mighty angel” will announce new events as a messenger of God like a herald or intervene dynamically in the course of events. Perhaps it is even always the same angel who, as a kind of special commissioner of God, sets new, necessary developments in motion even against great opposition or conversely delays developments until certain preconditions are fulfilled.

PART 2: RESTORATION OF HUMANITY

Level of the Spirit. Opening of the Seven Seals: Correction of the Earthly Disorder, Building of a New Order

John had outlined the cosmology of Christianity, the great framework and background in the divine world, in *heaven*, against which the coming events on earth would take place, for the divine plan of development contained in the scroll in the right hand of the “One,” whose course the Lamb made recognizable and possible by opening the scroll, has not yet been carried out. The whole further Apocalypse is the representation of this execution, one could say: the sociology, politology, and historiography of Christianity.

Thereby all beings of the world of darkness hostile to the world of light are called on the scene by the dynamic activity of the divine beings. Humans can choose freely between affection for the world of darkness and love for the world of light, and suffer the conflicts connected with this choice in each case. Parts of humanity cooperate with the divine world, therefore have to endure hatred, persecution, and death by the hostile powers, but reach salvation in the world of light. Other parts resist the influences from the world of light, make common cause with the world of darkness and its beings, and have to take the consequences upon themselves.

But finally the beings of the world of darkness are overcome by those of the world of light and are expelled back to their due place in the universe that they had left indignantly. All humanity, after tremendous horrors and sufferings, will be redeemed and the divine, paradisaical order will be restored on a higher plane than before.

The great restoration of the divine order begins with the opening of the seven seals. Many know of the four “apocalyptic horsemen,” which are depicted by Dürer in grandiose woodcuts of his series on the Apocalypse. Their activity is triggered by the opening of the first four seals. Also with these riders, it is a matter of symbols with which John designates

soul-spiritual realities. Those who want to recognize the realities behind these images must detach themselves from their usual concrete ideas.

Seven Spiritual Principles

Open Thinking

6:1 Then I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures call out, as with a voice of thunder, "Come!" 2I looked, and there was a white horse! Its rider had a bow; a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering and to conquer.

John "looks up" and sees the Lamb opening the first seal of the scroll. This causes the first of the four living creatures before the divine throne, the one with the human face, to send out a rider on a white horse. This first being before the throne embodies that divine power (mental ether) that makes *thinking* possible and urges it to develop throughout the universe. This aspect of the divine order especially characterizes the human existence, for present human beings possess as the highest ability the thinking faculty, which distinguishes them before minerals, plants, and animals. Like the minerals, they possess the faculty of forming, like the plants the faculty of living, and like the animals the faculty of feeling. But through thinking, they grow beyond these three kingdoms of nature. That is why the first living creature before the throne, which symbolizes the power of thinking, has a human face.

The rider on the white horse sent out by this living creature symbolizes the spiritual principle of *open thinking* emanating from God, which as an absolute standard restores order in the chaotic disorder of the present rigid human thinking. It makes use of powerful energies that are now pouring into the world. "Horse" in the Bible is often an image of swift, chasing, fighting, victorious energy, for example in the prophet Jeremiah. He speaks of "horses" coming like a storm, "swifter than eagles," upon the people of Israel who had fallen away from God (Jeremiah 4:13). And "horsemen" are the ordering principles of the spirit restraining and deploying this energy. The white color of the first horse expresses the brightness of clear, orderly, incorruptible intelligence.^[6]

The present rational mind can and should work rationally and realistically. The mind receives sense data and tries to order them according to the laws of logic into concepts, categories, systems, and theories. It has its justification in the area of the sense world. But as soon as it believes that it can go beyond these limits on its own authority and make judgments about questions such as the meaning of existence or the immortality of the soul, it brings disorder into life. It then likes to claim that a divine world does not exist just because the senses do not perceive it. Its thinking regards itself and matter as absolute and denies the soul-spiritual levels in the universe. What it cannot *prove* logically, it rejects.

This leads to the fact that, for example, in today's humanities, the meaning and significance of works of poetry or visual art that represent soul-spiritual truths are hardly ever examined. Instead, scientists often apply statistical and mathematical methods in the hope that this will bring them closer to the secret of art – if they still sense such a secret at all. They even trust computers with insights in this field. But their research results become increasingly powerless, unimaginative, mindless by such methods.

Conversely, there are thinkers who cling to traditional statements about existential questions and try to *prove* them with all – inadequate – means of the mind. But the rational mind cannot possibly distinguish between soul-spiritual truths and illusions. Nevertheless, some thinkers cling to illusions, claiming them as truth, and inevitably clash with others who believe other illusions to be true.

Some, therefore, feel obliged to honestly come to terms with the limitations of rational thinking and to let soul-spiritual truths stand on their own. They know that the ordinary mind *cannot* distinguish between illusion and spiritual truth, and therefore renounce openness to spiritual truths altogether.

But an open-minded rational thinking could be inspired by the divine world and become a vessel for its truths and then would be fed from the sources of divine wisdom. Such thinking would *report* on realities – without wanting to prove or reject them – such as those underlying the original religions and mystery schools. It would grant the soul-spiritual processes in the universe their justification, but at the same time it would recognize its own limits and point out its own possible encroachments and egocentricity.

Open thinking as a spiritual principle works like a strong power field that wants to dissolve the force field of a rational or spirit-hostile thinking closed in itself, which does not agree with it, yes, is opposite it, in all of humanity. As soon as it is admitted, inspired, creative thinking becomes possible. One could say that it then permeates the consciousness of human beings as a new mental atmosphere and invites them to correspond to it. Those who cannot or will not correspond to it will be corrected.

Inspired thinking is creative in art, science, and religion. It becomes aware of the dynamic order that has produced and continues to produce the versatility of creation, solar systems, galaxies, laws of nature, light, colors, sound, smells, and free beings. It bears witness to the “artistry” of God, the infinite imagination of the “One.” In this “unground” are contained from eternity creative ideas as possibilities that rise up one after the other in order to become, through open thinking, reality in time and space.

How does someone who denies this free, imaginative artistry of God want to explain human artistry? The artistry of Dürer and Raphael, Bach and Mozart, Shakespeare and Goethe? The scientific artistry of Einstein, Newton, and Galileo? The philosophical artistry of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Socrates, and Plato? The spiritual artistry of Lao Tse, Buddha, Jesus? The artistry of human love, demonstrated by Albert Schweitzer, Florence Nightingale, Mahatma Gandhi? The great creations of statecraft brought forth by Caesar, Emperor Ashoka, Moses? Should all this human artistry be explained by causal, chemical-physical, cybernetic processes? Quantitative processes are certainly always involved in the creation, but they do not explain the *qualities*. These result from human beings being in the “image of God” in whom the artistic thinking of God, which has created the universe, works exactly as in the vastness of the macrocosm, which surrounds the human microcosm.

The rational mind is also immensely domineering and vain. It believes itself to be able to organize human concerns optimally according to its limited ideas. On the other hand, it likes to belittle itself today by claiming to be *generated* from and dependent on the material structures of the brain alone. Whereas it *needs* the brain only for its work. With many, whose thinking is governed by passions and egoistic purposes, this impression of

a total dependence on the brain may arise, which they then attribute to an immutable law of evolution.

But could it not be that on the contrary, evolution is heading for freedom of thinking? It sets human beings the task to bring forth as the next evolutionary step a thinking which recognizes its actual dependence on emotions and desires but tries to detach itself from them in order to use the brain freely as its instrument. Having become free, it could be inspired by divine will, wisdom, and activity and would shape life in the sense of the divine order.

In general, however, present rational thinking degenerates again and again into dogmatic, rigid systems or illusions from which arise the merciless struggles of institutions, cultures, and peoples who cling fanatically to their “truths” and want to enforce them. It continually produces lies to enforce the emotions and passions pushing behind it.

Into this situation the dynamic, free, creative, wise, incorruptible divine thinking, the “conqueror,” the rider on the white horse, like an atmospheric mental storm pushes aside rigidity, illusions, pedantry, and high-handed claims to absoluteness of the rational thinking and frees and opens the human mind for divine wisdom and truth. With the tightened bow of divine truth, the horseman sends off his arrows of thought and destroys lie after lie, illusion after illusion. He destroys materialistic prejudice and all philosophical systems arising from it. Thought inspired by divine wisdom serves the divine goal of development of the world and humanity and helps to achieve it. Like an atmospheric mental force field working within human beings, it robs the domineering mind of its power.

Everyone is free to encounter the activity of the spiritual principle of *open thinking* one way or another. Those who let it work in them, clearly align themselves with it, and cooperate with it gradually see through illusions, lies, and conflicts and recognize the wise structure of the divine world and of their own soul. They experience the creative freedom of thought in all areas of reality and the happiness associated with it. However, those who resist the “conqueror” and want to assert the foundations of their previous rigid thinking will increase the resulting suffering for themselves and for humanity.

Pure Motivation

6:3 *When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature call out, "Come!" 4And out came another horse, bright red; its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another; and he was given a great sword.*

Now the Lamb opens the second seal, and a rider on a bright red horse emerges as the dynamic messenger of the living creature with the eagle's appearance. This living creature in front of the throne embodies a divine power (so-called light ether) that makes sensation and desire possible in the whole universe. The rider illustrates the *pure* divine and newly-human *motivation*, which is characterized above all by devotion. It forms the standard by which the motivations of contemporary humanity are measured. This rider also approaches the earth like a strong force field with tremendous energy and works both within individual human beings, starting from their disposition to the "image of God," and collectively in the whole humanity.

The "One" permeates the whole universe and all its creatures and gives itself to them in order to promote their development. Without this devotion, they would not come into being, would not be able to develop, and would not be able to feel the joy and happiness of life and development. Divine devotion *is* the joy and fullness of life in creatures. It is the divine feeling that expresses itself in the universe and all beings therein and enables them to feel individually.

A reflection of this divine power is found in people's devotion to their works, to other people, in promoting others, in helping others, in the desire to lighten the lot of others, in the joy of working together and devoting oneself to common aims. In this is revealed a remnant of human beings having been created in the "image of God." Whoever claims that all this devotion and joy of life is only the result of causal evolutionary processes reduces the human being to a machine. Could a machine feel happiness, joy, and devotion? Certainly, this ability has only gradually *appeared* in humanity

in the course of evolution, depending on the level of outer and bodily organization reached. But it cannot be *explained* from it.

For the time being, human devotion is very limited compared to the unconditional divine devotion. It is always interspersed with imperiousness, vanity, and possessiveness. Those who want to promote others promote them not according to the ideas of the others but according to *their own* ideas. Those who love others want to model them in *their own* not the others' image, want reciprocal love and gratitude, and if they do not get them, their disappointed love turns into hatred, and their joy turns into sorrow. In this way, the conflicting twin forces of hate and love give rise to the chaotic coexistence from which humanity suffers. The power of sentiment serves to boost earthly human beings' ego instead of the advancement of others. They want to rule instead of serve, which creates the hell of hatred all over the world.

One need only look at the relationship of the sexes to find this confirmed. How often, despite all attempts to respect and give each other freedom, it is a power struggle. One rules, the other submits; then again it is the other way around.

People react to this situation with desperate attempts to *establish* brotherhood, harmony, unity, and peace through belabored kindness. But the rider on the red horse, an earth-spanning force field, a kind of new emotional atmosphere in the consciousness of humanity, drives into the false peace and the manufactured harmony like a sword. He destroys this harmony; it proves to be unsustainable whereby now all the more, the love and hate instincts, which have been laboriously kept in check, break out and people "slaughter one another." This shows that divine devotion is a power that for the sake of purity of motives must first eliminate impure motivations. It is the second principle of the divine order that now begins to work on earth. The Lamb Jesus had said, "I have not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34).

Again, everyone is free to work with or against this new emotional atmosphere. Those who cooperate with it can promote others, experience the joy and freedom that come with it, and gradually *become* divine devotion within themselves. Those who resist it will wear themselves out in the struggle against others and against the dissolution of false, manufactured

relationships until they do eventually, forced or from insight, enter into the tranquility of a life without strife.

Balancing Justice

6:5 When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature call out, "Come!" I looked, and there was a black horse! Its rider held a pair of scales in his hand, and I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a day's pay, and three quarts of barley for a day's pay, but do not damage the olive oil and the wine!"

Balancing justice is the third spiritual principle. It becomes active when the third seal is opened and forms the divine standard against which the life functions of present humanity are measured. It is symbolized by the third horseman, and its dynamics by his black horse. The third living creature before the throne of God sends him out, the living creature with the lion face, who embodies the divine power of life (life ether) working in the universe. This rider holds a pair of scales in his hand, for in the divine All there is balance. In changing activities, all forces are balanced; as in a cosmic dance, they circle and penetrate each other and form a dynamic unity. Where an element deviates from the divine order, a correction follows according to natural law so that the hierarchy of beings and their values, qualities, and abilities are always preserved. But it is a hierarchical order that is never rigid but always moving and developing.

Every development in the universe is subject to this principle of balancing justice. What is left behind is promoted, what is ahead is called back, so that the whole remains intact. What falls behind too far in one stage may catch up its development in the following stage; what rushes too far ahead may already join the stage lying ahead of it. Another word for this constant balancing is fate or karma.

Above all, if this principle of the balancing divine justice is not disturbed arbitrarily, constant metabolism is guaranteed. Every single element and being then receives from the inexhaustible reservoir of divine energies and

substances its due and beneficial share. There is no one who hoards energies and substances and withholds them from others. It is a constant give and take, and the value and task of each element determine the quality and extent of the energy supplied to it.

Similarly, artists, free in creative thought and devotion to their work, balance the elements and masses of that work with each other or create productive tension between opposites to give expression to the cosmic dance in its turn. They are not bound by any rigid rules in the distribution of values and elements except that their work, once put into a form, cannot continue to evolve as divine works can.

Scientists would certainly agree that this principle of balance applies everywhere in the physical universe because “every action is opposed by an equal reaction” is one of the basic principles of science. But scientists’ axioms of the conservation of the energy and of entropy, the gradual cold death of the universe and the extinction of all movement, do not describe the activity of the “artist” God adequately. God has inexhaustible energies; always new creative thoughts and powers spring up from the unground, and so life is increased incessantly instead of dying off gradually. Nobody knows from where the energy at the beginning of the universe before the so-called “big bang” came – who then would like to claim that no new energies and ideas could come forth from the “One” and that the universe is approaching a rigid final state and “cold death”?

What about this flowing divine balance and equilibrium among individuals and peoples? If humanity would produce in harmony with the resources of the earth and sustainably so that what is consumed grows again, the balance between it and its dwelling place earth would be secured. But it exploits in excess. Corporations, pressured by shareholders, hoard, swallow weaker ones, monopolize and dominate the markets that should provide balance. Manipulated prices determine the scope of production and consumption and direct the flow of distribution. The poor become even poorer, the rich even richer. The value measure “money” is overridden by speculation creating permanent uncertainty and disorder. The continuous supplying of people is endangered.

Similar distortions occur in the field of jurisprudence. Justice in favor of class interests sometimes prevails also in constitutional states, and too

often corruption fosters the injustices of the rich and victimizes the poor. “Law,” like food and goods, is distributed unfairly. And while divine karma corrects deviations from the divine order to bring about *insight* into that order, human courts pronounce “punishments” to *deter* – a perhaps necessary procedure. But who knows how just, in the sense of karma, such punishments are.

Similarly, no one in religious institutions knows to what extent moral rules are really in harmony with divine laws and actually lead believers to God. Often morality becomes a means of power over souls. The divine order has implanted in beings a conscience that reflects that order and leaves humans free to follow it or not. But a religious and social conscience generated by human institutions can exert internal and external coercion that creates oppressive guilt and unbalances souls.

When the rider with the scales rides like a storm on his black horse into this disorder of injustice and intemperance, divine justice and measure will be restored in the long run. At first, admittedly, as a defensive reaction of many people, imbalances will increase. The religious and legal institutions will impose even more draconian punishments – or no punishments at all, depending on their interests. In economic life, chaotic conditions will occur; frantic reforms and collapses will take their place; the exploitation of the poor will increase; prices will rise, and money and goods will be hoarded in excess. Where before, in the language of the Apocalypse, 5 quarts of wheat or 15 pounds of barley were available for a day’s pay, natural products and goods will now become 5 times more expensive. One will get only a quart of wheat or 3 quarts of barley for a day’s pay. Hunger and inflation set in.

Finally, however, through the rider with the scales, a balance is restored, be it that enemies of the divine order are worn down by the consequences of their own mistakes and resistances, be it that people come to their senses and cooperate with the rider by establishing a new balance between rights and duties in their lives.

Many are even freed from oppressive moral burdens, for where they have accumulated karma that is too heavy, it can happen that the divine world largely suspends the principle of justice and allows mercy to prevail, for “oil” and “wine” remain untouched by the general decline of values. They are

traditional symbols for principles and powers of divine devotion.^[7] Both “substances” are assigned to the divine world and are therefore withdrawn from the imbalance in the earthly world. Those who are able to absorb these ever-present energies themselves or to transmit them to weakened and suffering souls help all those receptive to them to bear their earthly and karmic burdens and to dissolve them themselves.

However, this is ultimately also a form of balancing divine justice. It wants *all* imbalances to be removed, and when fate becomes too oppressive and people can no longer learn from it, the law of divine mercy comes into effect.

Indestructible Formation

6:7 When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!” 8 And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its rider’s name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth. (ESV)

At the opening of the fourth seal, the fourth rider on the pale horse is sent out by the living creature with the appearance of an ox who stands before the throne of God. This living creature embodies the divine power (form ether) that enables the development of forms. The rider on the pale horse represents accordingly the scale and the dynamics of *indestructible formation* and drives like an ordering force field into the chaotic force field of earthly forms.

In the divine world there is no death of form. If the thinking, feeling, and life of a human being are in accordance with the eternal divine laws, they are themselves also eternal and produce a bodily form which is likewise eternal: a “spiritual body” as Paul calls this form (1 Corinthians 15:44).

But why then is the rider on the pale horse, who embodies the immortal divine form, called “Death”? Because he brings death to all beings who possess an earthly form, an earthly body. Because the divine form principle

is incompatible with the present earthly body of people. This is built up and maintained by thoughts, feelings, and vital functions, which, because of the human hunger for the perishable life, do not agree with the imperishable, eternal order, are themselves mortal, and therefore cannot produce an imperishable, immortal body. Thus, when the rider on the pale horse breaks into the earthly world, as the divine principle of form, he destroys the undivine, mortal body – in other words, the human body destroys itself through the lack of conformity of its functions to the divine principle of form. It receives insufficient power supply from the divine world, becomes more and more inelastic and weaker, and finally dies.

The body is, after thinking, feeling, and living, the fourth aspect of the earthly human being, the “fourth of the earth.” All human beings are subject to the death of this fourth part. Thus, it is not a fourth of the *number* of people that dies, but the fourth part of each individual inasmuch as the fourth part of their personality is the mortal body, which is dissolved by the divine principle of form.^[8]

The death of the gross-material earthly body, to which all people are subject, is generally followed also by the dissolution of people’s subtle material parts in the other world, the “realm of the dead”: the dissolution of their convictions (thinking), sensations (feeling), and aspirations (living), which after all also do not correspond to the divine spiritual principles and are therefore mortal. Therefore the rider with the sword, who brings the death of the coarse-material body, is followed by “Hades,” the realm of the dead in which also the subtle material parts of the deceased dissolve in the course of time. This death of the subtle material parts of the human being in the hereafter is called the “second death” by the Apocalypse (20:6).

The gross material bodies of *all* people, a quarter of their earthly personality, are thus irrevocably destroyed by this horseman called “Death.” But there is the possibility to cooperate with him, the principle of divine formation, already during life. This means: People can consciously let their hunger for life and their drive for self-maintenance “die” already during life. They then let their attachments to the perishable world be dissolved by the divine powers of the true self working in them and give these powers the

opportunity to build up a new thinking, feeling, and life, together with a new, spiritual body within the old, mortal body.

This process is nothing other than the spiritual path or mystery path, and the great model for it is the “Lamb,” Jesus, who walked this path throughout his life to the mystery death and resurrection. When the physical body of such a person dies, the new thinking, feeling, and life remain immortal – “over these the second death has no power” (20:6) – as does the new spiritual body or at least the rudiments to these that had been formed during earthly life. These four immortal aspects of the human being can then become consciously active in the divine world without being affected by the death of the physical earthly body. They “arise” in the divine world: after the mystery death, the resurrection. This whole process is described in detail by all four biblical evangelists using Jesus as an example.

Thus, the rider on the pale horse inevitably brings death to the earthly, mortal body. As the divine formation, he *must* destroy people’s drive for self-maintenance, which is directed against the divine order, and the form that springs from it. His indirect organs of execution are then war, famine, pestilence (bacteria or viruses), natural disasters (wild beasts), or directly: old age.

For a human being who has gone the mystery path to the resurrection of a new spiritual body or at least the rudiments of it, this is a liberation from a mortal form no longer necessary, a relief. The inhabitants of the earth who have not lived according to the divine laws and have clung to the transient life, however, feel this horseman as an enemy. That is why Dürer depicted him as a terrible, fear-inspiring creature. In reality, however, he too is a messenger of the living creatures who stand before God’s throne and a friend of humanity. He *can* only work in the sense of divine wisdom, devotion, and justice.

For he creates by the death of the earthly body also for all opponents of the divine world the possibility to incarnate again and to lead then a life that corresponds better to the divine laws. And all those who had already cooperated in life with him, the indestructible divine principle of formation, by walking a mystery path and building an indestructible body, he releases from a “garment” that is no longer necessary. For them, it is a relief to be able to take off the earthly body with which they had done their duty in life. Thus

the rider “Death” is in reality the friend of all people and should actually be represented as a beautiful youth, for can the divine world work otherwise than for the advancement of human beings?

The color of the four horses goes from white over red and black to pale, that is colorlessness. According to the layers in which the riders work, thinking, feeling, life, and formation, the light vibrations become slower and weaker.

For the opening of the fifth to the seventh seal, some explanations are necessary in advance. According to the conception of human beings of the author of the Apocalypse, human beings are sevenfold beings as mentioned above (in the section “The Scroll with the Seven Seals”). Seen from below, they consist of seven layers: form, life, feeling, thinking, which in the original human beings are followed by the higher faculties of the “human spirit” (called “*manas*” in esotericism), the “life spirit” (called “*buddhi*” in esotericism), and the “divine spirit” (“*atman*”), which in their trinity form their true, divine self.^[9] These three layers or faculties have become latent in earthly human beings, have atrophied, and have sunk down into the unconscious as if “dead.”

In their place, also in the unconscious of the humanity separated from the divine world, three anti-divine, demonic principles of disorder and chaos have gained dominion and further fortified humanity’s separation from God. They are symbolized in the Apocalypse by three evil beings. Opponent of the “human spirit” is the “beast rising out of the sea,” embodiment of the biological “will to power”; opponent of the “life spirit,” the Christ, is the “beast that rose out of the earth” in the form of a “lamb,” the “false prophet,” the false Christ; and opponent of the “divine spirit,” the “Father,” is the “dragon,” image of nihilistic, materialistic atheism.

When the fifth seal is opened, the spiritual principle of *ordering effectiveness* – which corresponds to *manas* or “human spirit” – is released to fight the “beast rising out of the sea”; when the sixth seal is opened, the spiritual principle of *unifying wisdom* or *buddhi*, “life spirit” or Christ, is released to judge the “beast that rose out of the earth,” the false prophet, and in opening the seventh seal, the spiritual principle of *creative will*, *atman* or

“divine spirit,” is released to later confront the “dragon” of materialism and to lead from the spiritual level over to the soul level.

Ordering Effectiveness

6:9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for the word of God and for the testimony they had given; 10they cried out with a loud voice, “Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?” 11They were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number would be complete both of their fellow servants and of their brothers and sisters, who were soon to be killed as they themselves had been killed.

John describes the effects of the fifth spiritual principle, which is released by the opening of the fifth seal. It embodies the self-sufficiency of the true self, and will be referred to here as ordering effectiveness. John describes it by means of the human souls who had become victims of the chaos caused by the “beast rising out of the sea” in their lives. Here on the spiritual level, this “beast” is not yet concretely represented, for it can appear only on the soul level. Nevertheless, the later parallels at the sounding of the fifth trumpet on the soul level show that it is active as an invisible opponent already in this fifth phase on the spiritual level. “The souls of those who had been slaughtered” have indeed been “slaughtered” by the “will to power” hostile to the spirit represented by the “beast rising out of the sea” and its followers.

Against this self-important “will to power,” which claims dominion in every human soul, these souls had remained faithful to the divine order, the “word of God,” and had steadfastly and independently held on to the “testimony” for this word, to the ordering effectiveness of the divine teaching. Because of their unswerving faithfulness, they had received “white robes,” an image for the fact that the four “sheaths” of their soul: thinking, feeling, life, and spiritual body, had been cleansed in the “blood of the lamb”

and had become immortal. They had come to heavenly perfection (“completion” or “fulfillment.”)[10]

Now they ask “with a loud voice” why they are still not *avenged* on their enemies and these are judged by God. But should souls plead for vengeance who are already in white robes “under the altar” of God, the place of voluntary sacrifice? This is not a matter of emotions but of a lawfulness. The “shed blood” of these people cries out for compensation, not they themselves, for everything earthly that happens against the divine laws triggers reactions by natural laws. This compensation *must* take place. As long as this is not the case, there is a tension of imbalance that wants to be resolved. And these souls suffer from the tension and wait for the balancing. They still *must* wait for this until in the course of events, all people who have matured to this, “their fellow servants” of God, will have joined them.

For the fifth spiritual principle triggers only more terrible countermeasures of the “beast rising out of the sea,” which receives its power from the “dragon.” The attacks on people seeking redemption will be all the more violent and the temptations all the more insidious, the more this “beast” and its followers, embodiments of the autocratic “will to power,” see their rule endangered. Here too, however, people are free to cooperate with the divine spiritual principle or to fight it. And above all, if they are willing to cooperate in this way, they receive powerful support within from the divine order, which acts as a strong power field in the consciousness of humanity and promotes the free insight of the true self. Without this help, they would be almost powerless against the “beast.”

Unifying Wisdom

6:12 *When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and there came a great earthquake; the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, 13and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree drops its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. 14The sky vanished like a scroll rolling itself up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. 15Then the kings of the earth and the magnates and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and*

everyone, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 16calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; 17for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

When the sixth seal is opened, the sixth spiritual principle is freed, which will be called *unifying wisdom* here because from its activity arises real, living, indestructible unity among all beings in the universe. It corresponds to the "life spirit," Christ or "*buddhi*," which in and with his love-light connects all godly people and elements of the world with each other.

In contrast, the "beast that rose out of the earth," the "false prophet" or the imitation of the Christ, manipulates an apparent unity among people, supported by the "dragon," the materialistic-atheistic principle. With the help of loud slogans of brotherhood and solidarity, it pretends to promote the unity of religions and propagates new ways of salvation, which are only wrong ways, however. It darkens the light of divine truth by lies and beautiful appearances. Also this second "beast" is not yet visible here, on the level of the spirit, because it belongs to the soul level. But the parallels to the sixth phase of the events on the soul level show that the false prophet, the imitation of the Christ, is also already active on the spiritual level with all its power.

The consequences of this activity are again expressed by images. The earthly mind, symbolized by the "sun," seduced by the imitation of the divine light, had forgotten its task to let itself be enlightened by the divine wisdom and to reflect its light to the people. It had fallen into the presumption of making itself and its sense knowledge absolute and rejecting all wisdom arising from creative thinking. Now this deceptive appearance is darkened, and it becomes obvious how "dark" the imagined light actually is: arrogance and ignorance, "black as sackcloth," which was worn when mourning, for mourning and remorse would have to seize the people who have lost themselves to this false "light."

The "moon" on the other hand, the earthly light of intuition, had presumed to fathom the secret driving forces of existence. It too loses its

semblance, and it becomes apparent that only desire and passion were behind this presumption: the energy, the “blood” of the earthly soul.

Finally, human ideals, which should have pointed to the luminous divine ideas, are now exposed in their hollowness: The false “stars” fall from the “sky” of consciousness.

And this earthly consciousness with all the information in it is rolled up “like a scroll” and dissolves. The previous illusory certainties and “immovable” convictions, “mountains and islands,” are “removed from their places.”

All this is brought about by the power field of the sixth spiritual principle, which exposes and attacks the presumption of the human intellect, biased intuition, and unrealistic idealism with the force of an earthquake. The unifying divine wisdom wants to promote grown, lasting bonds between elements and people, but must first dissolve the false bonds established by manipulation and lies. That which destroys must be destroyed before that which heals and builds can take effect.

But all bearers and followers of power and lies, practitioners and subjects, who, instead of living from the divine light, worship the principle of power, “slave and free,” flee from these dissolving forces and hide from the divine “wrath” as which they feel the effects of divine wisdom.

Creative Will

Finally, at the opening of the seventh seal, the spiritual principle of *creative will*, as it might be called, the “divine spirit” or “*atman*,” becomes active. It ends in the course of time the rule of the “dragon,” nihilistic materialism (see the section, “The “Dragon”: Nihilistic Atheism”). But before this seal is opened and the seventh spiritual principle (see the section, “Michael”) becomes active, the awakened, redeemed souls are “sealed” so that they will not be “damaged.”

The seven spiritual principles that successively become active through the opening of the seven seals correspond to the seven spirits before the throne, the seven flaming torches that John had beheld in his great vision of “heaven” (see the section, “The Divine Order”). They also correspond to

the seven layers of the human being. And therefore the order in which they appear is not accidental.

For the middle of the seven layers of the human being, thinking, is, as it were, the hinge between the three upper and the three lower layers. Here, in conscious thinking, is therefore the point from which all the other layers can be influenced and changed. When people, by means of thinking, attain insight into their state separated from God, they can, also by means of thinking, influence their feelings, their libidinal will (as an expression of their vital functions), and their actions. And with it, also the access to the three higher layers, which were unconscious to them until then, is opened.

Therefore, the activity of the divine spiritual principles begins with the mind, in order to purify it, renew it, and make it suitable for the entry of the three higher principles. First then, the three lower layers of sensation, volition, and action are purified and renewed. Once, however, this fourfoldness of thinking, feeling, life, and doing, of which the human being is conscious, has been conquered by the spirit, the threefoldness of the upper divine layers, which had become latent and had sunk into the unconscious, can also be revived, raised into consciousness, and as the true self, resumes its due place. The prerequisite for this is that the two spirit-hostile “beasts” and the “dragon,” which also work in the “bottomless pit” of the unconscious and have built up and dominate the earthly self, are disempowered and relegated to their proper place.

Also the order in which the two “beasts” and the “dragon” are defeated is not meaningless. It begins with the fifth seal and its corresponding spiritual principle of *ordering effectiveness*, which dissolves the first “beast,” the earthly “will to power,” in the unconscious. Then after the opening of the sixth seal, the spiritual principle of *unifying wisdom*, the Christ, follows and destroys the imitation of this light, the “false prophet.” Finally, the seventh seal is opened, the spiritual principle of *creative will*, which defeats the “dragon” and initiates the final restoration of the divine order.

Once a spiritual principle has become active in humanity, it continues to work incessantly so that all seven form an uninterrupted connection. The earth is thus always as if surrounded by a sevenfold spiritual power field, and all humanity is permeated by it. It is a kind of sevenfold matrix, which calls humanity to turn around and at the same time makes it possible. All human

beings can cooperate with these effects, let them enter into their thinking, feeling, life, and doing in turn, and build up a fourfold new personality, as well as let the threefold, original true self arise again through the higher three spiritual principles.

The seven spiritual principles work especially since Jesus, the Christ, established the direct connection of the divine with the earthly world in all seven aspects through his mystery path, and they strive to build up the new spiritual human being, who is present as a germ in every human being. The disposition to the immortal “image of God” can awaken, develop, and grow to maturity with the help of the sevenfold matrix, to finally resurrect consciously in the spirit world. The condition for this is that people allow their egocentric being to be corrected and, like Jesus, let the bonds to the earthly world dissolve on a lifelong mystery path – or at least make a beginning with it. Those who allow something new to be “born” in them must and can let the old “die.”

Whoever takes even the first steps on this path that leads to the world of light will be withdrawn from the influences of the world of darkness and will be touched and supported by the world of light. People of this kind belong to the “saints” of the Apocalypse, even if they make only minimal progress. The main thing is that they let themselves be attracted by the world of light and shape their lives accordingly. All people who resist the influences from the sevenfold spirit matrix and turn even more to the dark world, however, will experience painful corrections from within and from without until their “image of God,” perhaps in the course of many incarnations, turns to the light world after all.

Sealing of the Pure Ones

7:1 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth so that no wind could blow on earth or sea or against any tree. 2I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to damage earth and sea, 3saying, "Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have marked the servants of our God with a seal on their foreheads." 4And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the people of Israel: 5From the tribe of Judah twelve thousand sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, 6from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, 7from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, 8from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand sealed. 9After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. 10They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

13Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" 14I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who

have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. 16They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; 17for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

For the second time, the “saints” appear here, and again in a scene of salvation, which after the scenes of disaster associated with the opening of the first six seals, represents a point of rest in the course of the cosmic drama. Before the opening of the seventh seal, they are protected from the new catastrophes that are coming, which are triggered by seven angels with trumpets. Four angels stand ready “at the four corners of the earth” – as it says later (9:14), “at the great river Euphrates” – to raise a great storm. The “river Euphrates” is an image of the unconscious of humanity separated from the divine love of the Christ, the “bottomless pit” in which the self-power of the “beasts” and the “dragon” operate.^[11] But these four angels are instructed by a special angel of God who ascends “from the rising of the sun” to wait still and do no harm before “the servants of our God” are marked “with a seal on their foreheads with the seal.”

How do “instructions” take place in the world of divine beings? “Instructions” are intelligently coordinated effects on the totality of the cosmic play of forces by higher power fields on lower ones. Therefore also here, the right time of the intervention must be awaited. It has come only when the power current caused by the “prayers” of the “servants of God” (8:3) is integrated into the cosmic total event.

Furthermore, what is this special seal, and what does the sealing of the servants of God mean? As explained in chapter 14:1, this seal is the “name of the Lamb and of his Father.” The “name” of a being embodies its soul-spiritual structure, its character, and its task in the universe. The redeemed, who stand before the throne of God, have dissolved their earthly self on their way through the world and replaced it by their true self, which was “dead” and has become alive again. Their individual soul-spiritual

structure, their “human spirit,” “life spirit,” and “divine spirit,” has been resurrected and corresponds, no, is identical with the structure of the threefold cosmic spirit, lives from it, and strengthens it. The “sealing” symbolizes the connection of their threefold true self with the threefold cosmic spirit. The angel embodies the power effects and vibrations of the cosmic spirit, brings these to them, and in this way confirms and strengthens their inner state.

And since the place of both their former self and their present true self is located behind the forehead, the sealing takes place “on their forehead.” Thus their true self and their whole renewed personality including the resurrected spiritual body are withdrawn from the influences of all earthly forces. They are no longer accessible by the vibrations of the entire earthly world, since the dimension of the divine world is of a different nature. Only with their earthly body, which they may still possess – it is possible that their immortal spiritual body still develops during their physical life in the mortal body – they are still subject to the laws of the earthly world and can be reached by its sorrowful influences.

Here (7:2) an angel appears for the second time, who decisively intervenes in the course of events with the prohibition to the storm angels to intervene too quickly in the events and with the sealing of the saints. The angel rises “from the rising of the sun” and temporarily stops the further development. The angel is, as it were, the seal-keeper of “the living God” endowed with the power to impress God’s seal on other beings. Perhaps it is the same mighty angel who had asked at that time who was worthy to open the seals of the scroll of development (5:2).

John speaks first of 144,000 sealed ones, the saved members of the twelve tribes of Israel but afterwards (7:9) of a great multitude from “from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages,” and one may certainly add, from “all religions.” In chapter 14, he again speaks of 144,000 “redeemed from the earth.” How are the two groups related to each other? Are perhaps both groups identical?

The number 144,000 is a symbolic number. 144 is 12 times 12, and 12 is the kabbalistic number of completeness referring to the *totality* of aspects of a being or thing. 12 in the second power indicates that in each of the 12 aspects all others are always included, so that there is an unsurpassable totality. The

number 144 can also be broken down kabbalistically into 100 plus 40 plus 4. 100 designates the spirit, on whose basis rests 40, the soul (Hebrew *Mem* = 40 means “water,” a symbol for the soul), and 4, the body, gives expression to both. A person designated with the number 144 is therefore a being in whom spirit, soul, and body are in perfect structural balance. The spirit forms the basis, the body the form, and the soul is the mediator between the two so that the execution of life of this being is also perfectly harmonious. The 1000 simply means infinite. 144,000, then, is an infinite number of perfect, harmonious divine personalities not a specific number of saints that cannot be less or exceeded.

The 144,000 from Israel’s twelve tribes are the “righteous” who were saved through Israel’s special bond with God, as described in the Old Testament, but with the eternal Christ also already working in secret as Paul confirms (1 Corinthians 10:4): On their journey through the desert, “the Israelites “drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.” The other group are the souls saved by the “blood of the Lamb” (7:14), that is, since Jesus. They are not only the Christian martyrs but all the people of the earth, regardless of their religious affiliation, who had to live through a “great ordeal” because of their faithfulness to the way of salvation and yet endured, just as Israel endured on its journey through the desert. In their nature, they are completely like the righteous from Israel. In this respect, there is neither a difference in essence nor in number between those redeemed in the Old Testament era and those in the New Testament era. They *all* belong to the 144,000.

So John now sees that 144,000 such saved souls are standing before God. He does not count them. He only knows from the images familiar to him from the Old Testament that they are members of all 12 tribes of Israel, and from the images used in the New Testament by the evangelists that the redeemed or awakened are 12 types in all, corresponding to the first 12 disciples of Jesus. They all wear “white robes” because their true selves are wrapped in four white robes: a thinking, feeling, living, and doing radiant in divine light, and they carry palm branches in their hands. The “palm” is a symbol of peace, which marks the awakened ones as bringers of peace. They worship God “day and night within his temple” (7:15).

Many have scoffed at this scene, thinking that the redeemed just stand there continuously, waving palm branches and praising God. They imagined that such bliss must be very boring and barren. They would be right if the Apocalypse depicted sense-perceptible situations. But “worshiping God” is again an image of an *activity* in the service of God not just an incessant singing and rejoicing. When the redeemed “worship God within his temple,” they are in a state corresponding to the divine world, the “temple,” and in this state, they can and will work in the earthly world and for earthly people, whether as incarnates or directly from the divine world.

In constant connection with God and grateful for it – they cried out “Salvation” to God and the Lamb – they send healing and strengthening vibrations into space, which rush through space like sounds and glorify the divine world. This is their “singing.” Therewith they create “peace” everywhere, agreement of all beings with the divine harmonies. As “children of God,” they are “peacemakers,” as the seventh Beatitude in the Gospel of Matthew states (Matthew 5:9). Thus, they “wave palm branches.”

Likewise, all other beings are active before the throne of God: the angels, who bring to earthly people effects from the divine world in the form of presentiments, impressions, or dreams; the elders, the 24 principles of the divine zodiac, who act as ordering factors in the world; the four living creatures before the throne of God, who symbolize the four divine life forces, the “ethers,” are restlessly active in space in all directions with their “wings,” perceive everything with their innumerable “eyes,” and carry what they perceive to the divine wisdom.

When they prostrate themselves before the throne, this means that they always perform their activity in the service of God, without any arbitrariness, and when they give God the seven praises “Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might,” this is not only a shouting. They thereby express their being and their relationship to the “One” on the throne; they bring forth vibrations that glorify the “One” and thus also themselves as creatures and co-workers of the “One.” God also works within them; their praises are do not pertain to a mighty authority outside of them before which they would be only small specks of dust. They have a part in the “One.” They *are* parts of God like cells in a great organism,

which they honor by their cooperation, through which they themselves are also honored.

The situation of these redeemed ones in white robes is described in more detail. “The sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat”: In earthly life, because of their loyalty to the divine order, they had suffered under false dogmas and ideas, the “sun” of the earthly mind, and had to endure the scorching heat of hatred and fanaticism of their persecutors. That is over now. And all receive as much as they need; there is no lack in the divine world, neither hunger nor thirst, for the Lamb, the inexhaustible Christ-field, supplies them with divine substance and energy as “light” and “water” in abundance, comparable to the situation of an earthly person breathing in a pure, infinite sea of air. And God will “wipe away every tear from their eyes” because no pain about the past will torment them anymore. Only the memory remains as experience in them, with which they can work for others. Thus, God “shelters” them. The divine world forms their home.

After the Opening of the Seventh Seal: Silence

8:1 When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. 3Another angel with a golden censer came and stood at the altar; he was given a great quantity of incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar that is before the throne. 4And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel. 5Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth; and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. 6Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets made ready to blow them.

After the opening of the seventh seal, there is breathless silence in heaven “for about half an hour.” This is an image of a tense transitional situation. The divine corrections on the level of the spirit are set in motion; new corrections on the level of the soul are added to make the “hour,” the whole development, “full.” But before that, all the powers of the divine soul, embodied by seven angels, must be gathered.

John sees “the seven angels who stand before God.” They are the seven spirits who stand before God in a lower potency. They now work not on the level of the spirit but on that of the soul. The seven spirits had acted as ordering principles of God after the opening of the seven seals. Now they work as qualities of the soul, as authoritative attitudes, dispositions, or states of the divine soul, as seven “angels.” Their effects are illustrated by “trumpets,” an apt image for the dynamics of the divine soul vibrations, which will soon spread like mighty sounds through space and enter into human souls.

And the transition from the spiritual to the soul level, which had been symbolized by the “half hour,” will be accomplished, and that by a special power effect that establishes the connection between both levels. At that time, the “souls of those who had been slaughtered” (6:9) had pleaded in

their prayers that at last there would be a balance between their sufferings and the deeds of their persecutors on earth. But they had been told that this could only happen when the souls of all their “fellow servants” had also been sealed.

That moment has now come. And the balancing actually becomes possible through the “prayers of all the saints.” What had ascended upwards into the divine world as the power effects of these prayers is now collected by an angel in a “golden censer” and placed on the “golden altar” that stands before God. It is the incense “which is the prayers of the saints” (5:8).

The smoke from this incense, the effect of the prayers, “rose before God.” The prayers of the saints reach the “One,” the supreme divine Spirit, but after being dynamized by the “fire” of the divine will, they are thrown back to earth, for “the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth.” The altar is the “place” of the divine world where the soul sacrifices of godly people coming from below are gathered, and the “fire from the altar” are the divine powers from above with which these soul sacrifices and the resulting prayers are provided.

For the third time, an angel appears here who intervenes actively in the events and drives them forward, in this case as a special messenger of God, possibly the same one who had already become active in this function before. He collects the power effects of the “prayers of the saints,” brings them before God, who permits and sanctifies their effects, and then throws them on the earth whereby the activity of the seven trumpet angels becomes possible.

On the soul level of the universe and of humanity, these prayer powers of the redeemed, endowed with the divine fire, are now active and trigger there tremendous consequences: “peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake,” which are shocks in the realm of thinking (flashes of lightning), feeling (rumblings), life functions (peals of thunder), and physical forms (earthquake), as well as the effectiveness of the seven trumpet angels. These now become active.

Level of the Soul. Sound of the Seven Trumpets: Correction of the Earthly Disorder, Building of a New Order

In contrast to the principles of the spirit, the seven trumpet angels are visualizations of qualities of the soul. While the spiritual principles had started directly from the “throne” of God, from the innermost core of the world, the trumpet angels start their activity from the “altar,” a little further away from the throne of God. Their trumpets illustrate the forces, the powerful vibrations, with which the norms of the divine soul make themselves felt in the universe and in human beings. They act as invisible power fields in the whole of humanity and within the souls of individual human beings, where they appeal to their disposition to the “image of God.”

Thereby they begin with the attitudes of the human being towards the material world (figuratively speaking towards the “earth”), go on to the attitudes towards the processes of life (which are symbolized by the “sea”), then have an effect on the attitudes in the area of feelings (the image for this area is the “fresh water”), and finally on the motivations of thinking (the “lights in the sky”). Thus, in the fourfold personality of the human being, the four first trumpet angels connect first to the lowest layer, the actions in the world of form, and go up to the fourth layer, the motivations of thinking. They proceed in reverse order from the four apocalyptic horsemen, who had begun with thinking and descended to the form level. Then follow the three last angels, who, like the three last ordering spiritual principles, work in the unconscious of people, in the “bottomless pit,” and ensure there the quality of the states of the soul.

At the same time, the spiritual principles continue to be active. The sevenfold spiritual level remains active even when the processes of change take place on the sevenfold soul level. After all, they enable the activities of the trumpet angels and continue to work in parallel.

Seven Soul Qualities

Serving with Devotion

8:7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. (KJV)

When the first angel trumpets, “hail and fire mingled with blood” come to the “*earth*.” By “earth” here is meant the world of forms, and since the events take place on the soul level, the “trees and green grass” are images for the works that people create in the world of forms. But the “third part” of the earth and the trees as well as “all green grass” is burned up. Characteristic for the soul level in comparison with the spiritual level is above all that what does not correspond to the norms is “burned up.” On the spiritual level, disorder is *dissolved*; on the soul level, wrong attitudes are *burned up*.

The expression “the third part” in the following never refers to a numerical amount but to the *vital force* of beings and things. Counted from above, this is after the first, mental layer and the second, emotional layer, the third, vital layer of the I-personality, before the fourth and last layer, the material form.^[12] So, when the text reports that the “third part” of the beings or things perishes or is weakened, the life force of *all* earthly beings and things perishes.

The human *forming power* of the self on the “earth,” in the area of forms therefore, forces things and people together into forms instead of letting them *grow* together. I-human beings are doers, and they carpenter together states, institutions of the economy or society by force. They organize these according to their own ideas, purposes, and the technical possibilities without consideration of the characteristics and needs of the individuals. Marriages and friendships are made on the basis of interests, desires, and passions, hardly ever in accordance with the nature of the participants. They cram animals into cages and mutilate them to make questionable profits. This is not caring treatment oriented to the needs of humans and animals – not

serving with devotion but the exercise of power and exploitation. Such forms are not sustainable or only to a limited extent.

The divine forming power, on the other hand, proceeds from the kinship of things and their natural affinities to each other and thus lets evolved formations come into being on the basis of lawful power effects, attractions, and repulsions. The divine standard for the soul attitude to the world of forms is *serving with devotion*. People should build forms that correspond to the essence and tendencies of the things. They could recognize to what extent things fit to each other according to their nature and treat communities that have grown with care. Such relations would be durable since they agree with the nature of the things.

Made arrangements, however, become fragmented in the course of time and break apart. They are destroyed by “hail” in due course. “Hail” is an image for the shattering effects of the divine forming power, which either appears as a power field in the whole of humanity or makes itself felt in the individual human soul by triggering dissatisfaction with the given. This can increase up to aggressiveness and works then like “hail.” Destructive tendencies announce themselves in the soul, which smash what has been formed so far to fragments. A marriage based on wrong foundations apparently falls apart by itself; in reality it is fragmented by increasing dissatisfaction of the parties involved as if by “hail.”

The divine forming power is not destructive in itself. It is serving with devotion that builds form structures in harmony with the essence and the properly understood needs of beings and things. Such formations are durable and rest in themselves. But it seems to have a merciless *effect* like smashing hail on human structures that were forced together. It appears as a standard within the soul and creates dissatisfaction of people with their own works that do not correspond to this standard. Thus, it clears the way for new forms that are coherent in themselves and correspond to the divine standard.

Mixed with the hail are fire and blood. “Fire” is an image for the divine life force. The life forces of the forcibly brought forth products of egocentric human beings exhaust themselves, or because they do not agree with the divine life force, they are “burned up” by it just as a strong force field extinguishes an opposing weaker field. The indication “the third part” refers to the third aspect of *every* form: its life force. And since the life force of the

products of earthly human beings originates from the self and its efforts that exhaust themselves, it cannot assert itself against the inexhaustible, devoted divine life force. The products of egocentric human beings “burn up” in the life force of the divine nature: in the “fire.” The “third part of the earth,” its entire earthly life force, “burns” in the divine life force, likewise all “green grass,” symbol for the earthly life force in general. Thus, communities that were *made*, whether in the private or public sphere, because they do not have a sufficient vital basis, are “shattered” or “burned up.” Or they begin to “bleed.” As a result of the influences on the part of the divine life force, they lose their vitality, their “blood.”

The first angel with the trumpet embodies therefore the attitude, which is in fact in many people but not developed or lost, to create permanent things in the world of forms, the “*earth*,” by devotion, and so their own “image of God,” which wants to serve with devotion, destroys unconsciously for them what was forcibly built up.

It is not a malicious punitive action of the divine world. People cause these processes themselves by their deviations from the soul quality of *serving with devotion* and now only experience the effects: the fragmentation and burning of their works and an increasing weakening, a “bleeding out” of what was forcibly built up. The products of the soul, its works in the material world, symbolized by “trees” and “green grass,” “burn” in the “fire” of discontent that the people themselves have kindled.

All people are exposed to these effects, but they have the freedom to cooperate with the angel and his vibrations or not. If they cooperate and try to correspond (again) to “devotion” in their behavior, their life force will regenerate and what they have built up in the world of forms will be permanent. If on the other hand, they continue to force things and beings together into unnatural deformities, they will experience that these perish for lack of life force, or the people will destroy them themselves having become dissatisfied and aggressive. If they resist the inner call for careful and considerate construction embodied by the first trumpet angel, the fragmenting “hail” and the burning “fire” that arise within them will destroy all the forced formations, and the “blood” of the suffering associated with them will flow even more strongly.

Behind this forced forming in the lowest layer of the I-personality, by the way, the motif of augmentation that opposes the second trumpet angel is already there and working. This represents the soul quality of *patiently allowing maturation*. The first soul quality has therefore the second as a prerequisite.

Patiently Allowing Maturation

8:8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. (KJV)

The second trumpet angel, the second “quality” of the divine soul world, embodies the attitude of *patiently letting* things and beings *mature* instead of frantically, violently increasing yields. The layer of life force – the third layer in the human I-personality (counted from above) – is illustrated in the Apocalypse by the salty, dynamic “sea.” Forming power by the “earth,” life force by the “sea.” When this layer does not match the standard of patiently letting it mature, a counter-reaction is triggered from the divine world. A “mountain burning with fire,” concentration of the divine life force, is thrown into the sea of the earthly life forces, turns the “third part” into “blood,” burns the “third part” of the “creatures” in it, and makes the “third part” of the “ships” floating on it sink.

Also these pictures express spiritual facts by means of physical processes. The life forces of modern human beings are directed to uninterrupted progress, increase of power and wealth, economic growth, and the like. But this is in contrast to the God-given, natural processes of growth and maturation and destroys the natural life forces in the long run. It can be seen in the depletion of overused soils, which are not allowed to recover by constant fertilization, in the unquestioning exploitation of mineral resources, which endangers the equilibrium of the organism earth, in the

short-livedness of the products of human life forces: enterprises, organizations, economic products, or buildings that clearly embody the striving for success.

Then the divine life force falls as a mighty “mountain burning with fire” into the “sea” of the earthly life forces and destroys the “creatures which had life” in it, the products of human striving for growth and profit. Their life energy, which is after the mental and emotional basis their “third part,” is not sustainable. The “third part” of the “sea” – the life force as such, the essence of earthly life – becomes sick “blood” and dies. And the social creations: associations, organizations, communities, and institutions, the “ships” that should be carried by the “sea” of earthly life force, perish after a short life span due to the weakening of their own life energies, their “third part,” and those of the sea.

The “mountain burning with fire” is a concentrated power field of divine life force, which works in the soul of the whole of humanity and extinguishes or weakens the opposite power field of the life forces originating from the self believing in progress. But it would be possible that in the soul of individuals, the lost or weakened attitude of patiently *allowing maturation* would be awakened again by this “mountain burning with fire.” Such people would then try to cooperate with the divine life force and get rid of the wrong manipulative attitudes, the euphoria of progress and growth. Everyone has this freedom.

If people would react in such a positive way to the “mountain burning with fire,” their life forces would grow again and the resulting creations in the “sea” would become durable. The “mountain burning with fire” would bring a supply of power instead of destruction. But if humanity continues to hold on to its delusion of progress and puts all its forces into growth without considering that the trees do not grow into the sky, its life forces will gradually bleed out for lack of a supply of power. The divine life energy will act as a painful correction and cause disasters, although it wants nothing else than to build new life in accordance with the natural and divine laws.

By the way, the attitude of people to think only about growth and increase is caused by the lack of *compassion with understanding*, which characterizes the third soul quality, the third trumpet angel. Thus, the second depends on the third soul quality.

Compassion with Understanding

8:10 *And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;*

11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. (KJV)

When the third angel blows the trumpet and elicits the activity of the soul quality of *compassion with understanding*, a shining star falls from the sky, “burning as it were a lamp.” The star, whose name is “Wormwood,” transforms the “third part” of the “fresh water” into wormwood. In contrast to “salt water” – the “sea” – “fresh water” is an image for the area of the feeling forces, the third layer in the human being (counted from below), esoterically called “astral force,” therefore the image of the “star” (Latin *astrum* = star). It causes in the realm of egoistic feelings and sensations that are contrary to the divine life the bitterness of wormwood: pain and distrust, the opposite of mercy, understanding, and devotion. It transforms the “third part” of the “rivers and springs,” that is, the life force of people in the sphere of the life of feeling, into disappointment, fear, guilt, sullenness, and reproachfulness.

The star is not itself this bitterness. How could bitterness come down from the sky and poison the “rivers and water sources”? The divine astral power wants to bring forth the happiness of freedom, creativity, and human warmth in the souls, and not at all to act as a corrective “punishment.” But those who are used to getting their “joy of life” from greed, self-love, and exploitation of others will experience that this kind of joy of life is transformed into disappointment and bitterness by the effect of the star. Enmity and coldness will arise in them, and enmity and coldness will strike them.

However, whoever works and lives in harmony with this “star,” the divine astral power, in readiness to serve and devotion for others, gains real joy of life, courage to face life, and confidence, from which also *compassion with understanding* for the sufferings of others arises. Those who continue

to follow their anti-life and anti-human ego attitude will increasingly experience the bitterness and disappointment of the star “Wormwood.” Many today feel the atrophy of their own soul forces, which results from the destruction of understanding and respectful interpersonal relationships. They try to remedy this weakening and inner emptiness with antidepressants and stimulants. But this only intensifies the activity of the “star burning as it were a lamp.” They “die” inwardly from the “waters” that have become bitter and develop neuroses and “burnout syndrome.”

This is a consequence of the lack of the fourth soul quality of *meaning-filled trust*. Because people are largely materialistic in their thinking and can no longer see any meaning in existence, they replace the desolation and emptiness of their existence with power and exploitation of others or frantic search for pleasure.

It is thus shown with the four first trumpet angels that and how the next lower soul quality always depends on the next higher one. In this the exact, scientific psychology of Christianity proves itself.

Meaning-Filled Trust

8:12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. (KJV)

A consciousness determined by the pride of the ego in its rational and intuitive capacities triggers a counter-reaction in the “heavens,” on the part of the divine consciousness. The fourth angel embodies the sure confidence in the meaningfulness of existence and spreads it in the universe with the sound and by the vibrations of his trumpet. Thus he corrects the spirit-hostile mental attitudes of people: rational-materialistic thinking, superstitious intuition, and the egocentric ideals – or these qualities feel all the more provoked and prompted to fierce defense. But exactly by this, the earthly-mental light forces are weakened. The “third part” of the “sun” of the conceited mind, the “moon” of raptures, superstitions, and fantasies, and the

“stars” of ideals, religious beliefs, scientific theories, or faith in progress are darkened. They lose their mental life energy: their radiance and brightness. The “day” of thinking that is directed outwards loses the bright glow of truth, and the “night” of inward reflection remains without the certainty of clear intuition and the sparkle of living ideals.

The fourth angel evokes particularly fierce opposition compared to the first three. Because modern people in particular have lost confidence in the meaningfulness of existence due to their exclusive belief in “chance and necessity,” their materialistic mind insists all the more stubbornly, even if it pains the soul, on the meaninglessness of existence. They still make a virtue out of the pride to be able to heroically bear the absurdity of life and the loneliness of the “speck of dust in space.” Thus their brightness decreases continuously – they lose their creative abilities because they do not open themselves any more to the unity and the meaning of the universe – even if their ability for analytical sharpness may increase. Intuition, on the other hand, no longer being embedded in the unity and truth of being, becomes susceptible to illusions and superstitions. And ideals become powerless or degenerate into fanaticism.

But the soul quality coming from the divine world, *meaning-filled trust*, again has no intention to torment people. Like an ordered force field corrects a disordered one, this soul quality only reacts to the wrong mental expressions of people and corrects them in favor of new mental functions and contents that enable the happiness of meaningful existence. Whoever agrees with this quality of soul will experience how the secret fear of loneliness in a universe emptied of meaning dwindles and will feel new thoughts, intuitions, and ideals rising from the heart. Those who do not will experience more and more painful corrections and meaninglessness.

The effects of opening the sixth seal had also darkened “sun, moon, and stars” at that time (6:12-13). But this had happened in the unconscious of people where *repressed* convictions and illusions reside. The repressions and the darkness behind them had been made visible by the sixth divine principle of order. In contrast, the effect of the fourth trumpet is about states in the conscious soul life of people, namely in the area of thinking, the fourth layer of their personality. The soul lights associated with wrong thinking are eclipsed by divine soul powers.

8:13 Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew in midheaven, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!"

After the first four angels with their trumpets, who work in the four soul "sheaths" of the human consciousness, an eagle appears to the seer John high above in the zenith of the consciousness. It is a high spiritual power that announces further calamities – "three woes" – in the three layers of the human *subconscious*. It makes people aware of them so that they can be prepared and understand the origin of the coming calamities. Thus, they always have the possibility to freely cooperate with the correcting powers or to refuse them.

Like the three last principles of the spirit, the three last qualities of the soul operate in the "bottomless pit," the three unconscious layers of the human soul. The three soul qualities of *free courage*, *unintentional kindness*, and *enlightened consciousness* break into the layers of the unconscious and harass the demonic spirits dwelling there – these are the innumerable repressed urges and illusions that lead their own lives in the underground of the soul. These vehemently resist the trumpet blasts of the angels in question and try to keep people in their power. Those who make common cause with these or allow themselves to be carried away by them will be inwardly destroyed. These are the three "woes."

Free Courage

9:1 And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit; 2he opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. 3Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given authority like the authority of scorpions of the earth. 4They were told not to damage the grass of the earth or any green growth or any

tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5They were allowed to torture them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torture was like the torture of a scorpion when it stings someone. 6And in those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will flee from them. 7In appearance the locusts were like horses equipped for battle. On their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, 8their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; 9they had scales like iron breastplates, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. 10They have tails like scorpions, with stingers, and in their tails is their power to harm people for five months. 11They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon. 12The first woe has passed. There are still two woes to come.

The first “woe” is caused by the fifth trumpet angel. He embodies the soul quality of *free courage*, which is hardly active in today's externally directed person. The “human spirit” – *manas* – should form a part of the threefold true divine self of the human being. But as the “shadow” of this spirit, the “will to power” has established itself and now works in the upper layer of the “bottomless pit.” It is later called the “beast rising out of the sea” and is the concentration of unconscious, egocentric, demonic emotional and driving forces by which some people are enslaved to the point of unconsciousness – today this condition is called “psychosis.”

When the vibrations of the trumpet angel of *free courage* become active in the form of a “star” from heaven on earth, he is given the “key to the shaft of the bottomless pit,” to the human unconscious. And he “opens the shaft of the bottomless pit,” with the consequence that all unconscious drives of the “will to power,” biological self-assertion, resist and revolt against it. A struggle for this human being begins in the unconscious.

Like “smoke” from a great furnace, delusions come out of this deep layer of the soul and darken the “sun,” that is, the sense of reality and the judgment of the human being, and cloud the “air” of clear sense perceptions with hallucinatory vapors. From the smoke and vapors, monstrous thoughts and

feelings are formed that damage the soul life of people, just as locusts eat away all the “green” of an area – that is, the capacity for hope – and scorpions inflict “pain” with their poisonous sting – in the soul, this is fear that invades everything. “Locusts” are images for forces that can damage human souls but not directly human bodies and the natural kingdoms of plants and animals.

If people were able to live as true self on the basis of divine powers and cooperate with them, they would be able to cope with the demonic influences and gradually dissolve them, for the *free courage* flowing from the divine powers is stronger than all demonic-psychotic energies and would protect against them. That is why the seer says that the people who “have the seal of God on their foreheads” cannot be damaged. Attacked are only those who do not possess this seal or do not want to acquire it by cooperating with the divine spirit (9:4).

The demonic forces do not kill the souls but torture them as far as the blood, “for five months.” Five is the number of the soul according to its five aspects: blood as the power of form, nerves as the power of life, hormones as the power of feeling, mentality as the power of thinking, and finally ego-consciousness. All these aspects are now attacked and poisoned by the demons so painfully that people “seek death” and do not find it, for their mental torment is indescribable. Psychotic illnesses in the form of black depression and manic euphoria with the subsequent exhaustion and emptiness haunt them. The feeling of being at the mercy of unknown forces, of being deprived of their own soul power and dominion over their lives, torments them. They cannot realize themselves, cannot establish stable contacts with others, are haunted by voices and hallucinations, and must watch impotently the gradual deterioration of their personality: a horror.

John describes these demonic-psychotic tormentors in detail, probably already in order to enable a certain distance to them. They are “like horses equipped for battle” illustrating their terrible dynamism and aggressiveness, wear on their heads something “like crowns of gold” expressing the delusional arrogance of seemingly unassailable certainty of victory, and have “human faces” as the inflated ego identifies with eminent personalities and the fearful ego feels threatened by “hostile” personalities. Also, these beings have “hair like women’s hair.” In the Song of Songs of Solomon, the poet uses the symbol of “women’s hair” positively and praises his beloved: “your

flowing locks are like purple; a king is held captive in the tresses” (Song of Songs 7:5). Here in the Apocalypse, it has a negative meaning, for the demons in the form of tormenting self-reproaches and feelings of guilt of the mentally ill people alternate between withdrawing and attacking and try to dominate the people completely. In their weakness, the people surrender to the demons in order to finally come to rest, and the demons clasp them all the tighter.

The locusts also have “teeth like lion’s teeth,” an image of their cruel thirst for blood, are stuck in “scales like iron breastplates” of insensitivity and ruthlessness, and make a hellish noise in the consciousness of the sick person like “many chariots with hoses rushing into battle.” As “scorpions,” they sting with their poisonous sting. They wound the sense of self, stimulate the sick people’s hatred and distrust of others thereby causing the others’ hatred and distrust in turn, provoke the sick people to provocations, and spoil all their attempts to perhaps reach reasonable social behavior after all. In short, they are messengers of the king “Apollyon,” which means “corrupter,” the evil angel of the bottomless pit.

But all these demons and the torments caused by them are not intended by the divine world and the fifth trumpet angel. They are counter-reactions of natural law to the long-term wrong behavior of many people and their repressions. The power field of the divine soul quality of *free courage* affects the force fields in the human world that deviate from it, which have arisen in the unconscious, and initially triggers their resistance. But those who able to attune themselves to the divine power field will gain a new independence. On the basis of new self-confidence, they will be able to take a courageous stand in the chaos of lies and nonsense and will speak out as long as it makes sense. In the power of the fifth trumpet angel, they develop spiritual civil courage – not out of belligerence or because they feel backed into a corner but calmly and without anger. While the population around them, stunned and paralyzed by collective fear, remains silent in the attitude, “It doesn’t help anything,” or indifferent in the face of creeping incapacitation, they call injustice and unreason by its name with individual courage. Socrates before his judges or Jesus before the high priest Annas are beautiful examples of this courage.

Today, attempts are made to counter the demonic forces of the soul with psychiatric measures or medication. The chances of healing are small because psychoses usually develop in the long term and are often created by earlier incarnations. The sick people are weakened from birth and are not able to build up a reasonable ego. The presumption of the “will to power” had already hindered the development of reason in earlier incarnations. The only possibility of a slow healing would be that the sick meet people in whom the free courage of the true self is already active. The power of this freedom would support the weak ego and help develop the germ of the true self.

Unintentional Goodness

9:13 Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” 15 So the four angels were released, who had been held ready for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, to kill a third of humankind. 16 The number of the troops of cavalry was two hundred million; I heard their number. 17 And this was how I saw the horses in my vision: the riders wore breastplates the color of fire and of sapphire and of sulfur; the heads of the horses were like lions’ heads, and fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths. 18 By these three plagues a third of humankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths. 19 For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they inflict harm. 20 The rest of humankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands or give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their fornication or their thefts.

The sixth angel trumpets and initiates the second “woe.” He represents the soul quality of unintentional goodness, the “life spirit” or *buddhi*. The

soul vibration emanating from him, the “sound of his trumpet,” now works in the middle layer of the “bottomless pit,” which is mostly unconscious to human beings, and triggers the opposition of the demonic-psychotic spirits dwelling there. These had prevented the second aspect of the true self, the individual life spirit, which is unintentional goodness, from developing. And they now imitate the Christ, the “life spirit,” in order to bind the souls to themselves and make them work for them. Later they will appear in their totality as the “beast that rose out of the earth,” as the “lamb with two horns” (see Part 4, the section “The Two Beasts”).

It is particularly difficult to see through the seduction by these lying spirits, for people generally *want* to be good and to do good. They see how urgently humanitarian and charitable activities are needed in the chaos of earthly conflicts, diseases, and deficits. But it is precisely this spontaneous love of humanity of which the demonic forces working from the unconscious take advantage. They appear in and outside the soul of human beings as deceptive light appearances or “divine” masters and stimulate people’s willingness to sacrifice and serve until exhaustion. As “idols” of all kinds (9:20), they persuade human beings that they are an important instrument of God and induce them to constant prayer and meditation. They suggest to people that through their efforts they can eliminate the calamities on earth, even make a paradise out of the earth.

But they are only interested in keeping souls in their sphere of power and to live from their forces. They prevent freedom and self-responsibility. Those who are obedient to the idols, believing they are serving the spirit of life, the Christ, who is pure goodness, actually serve evil. They can become fanatics who want to force others to their happiness by all means. Under the mask of the benefactor and deliverer, they even commit “acts of murder, fornication, and theft” and practice “sorcery” (9:20).

Thus, the demonic-psychotic forces deceive souls without being recognized and wreak terrible havoc. They are the cause of compulsive, hectic “philanthropy” that believes it must eliminate misfortunes everywhere and at all times. The sixth trumpet angel, on the other hand, enables people to do what is necessary in each case as a matter of course, without intention, responsibly, and calmly from the powers of the life spirit, whereby the “left hand” does not know what the “right hand” is doing (Matthew 6:3).

These activities of the “bottomless pit” are triggered by four angels who until then were “bound at the great river Euphrates” but now are untied on the command of a divine “voice.” The voice sounds from the “four horns of the golden altar before God.” Again, then, the “prayers of the saints,” which had been laid down as incense on the sacred altar, trigger a response from the divine world to the disorder of the earthly world. The altar has “four horns” corresponding to the “four corners of the earth” where the four storm angels stand, likewise corresponding to the four layers of the human ego personality: thinking, feeling, life, and form (doing).

The “Euphrates” is a symbol for the unconscious, demonic-psychotic layers in human beings, the whole “bottomless pit.” From its second layer, the demons that are now becoming active are rushing at humanity. There are 20,000 times 10,000 forces, innumerably many. The number “20” symbolizes a behavior of grabbing and manipulating in accordance with the character of the demonic, which can never wait patiently and let things grow.

John also precisely describes these merciless lying demons in order to already begin their disempowerment by unmasking them. They are equipped with “breastplates the color of fire and of sapphire and of sulfur,” which in turn characterizes idolatrous thinking (fire), wickedness hidden behind apparent goodness (sapphire), and “sorcery,” manipulative will (sulfur-yellow). Their horses represent animal energy and speed. They have heads “like lions’ heads,” which characterizes their cruelty and rapacity, and they emit “fire and smoke and sulfur” from their mouths. On the one hand, the “power of the horses” is in their mouths; on the other hand, they also possess tails like biting, stinging serpents, for these monstrous inner-soul entities poison people’s souls with their breath (fire, smoke, and sulfur) and at the same time sting painfully with their lies, slander, and insidiousness.

All these are demonic, psychotic-sick growths in the soul, produced and maintained by the people themselves by their misbehavior perhaps already in earlier incarnations, but terribly tormenting and weakening, so that a “third” of the people is “killed.” Again, this is not to be understood numerically, but the life forces, the third *aspect* of the soul, are meant. All these people die a soul death.

Despite their torment, they do not “repent” – from where would the necessary strength come in their condition? – and remain with their

wrongdoing. But before their submission to the lying spirits, they would still have possessed the freedom to repent and join the “servants of God” who are protected from these plagues by a divine seal on their foreheads. The seal would connect their true self to the structure of the divine world, thereby protecting them from all attacks. The powers of goodness, the divine “life spirit,” are far stronger than any demons and could save from the demise of the soul.

Enlightened Consciousness

(See “The Seventh Trumpet” on page 112.)

Pause before the Seventh Trumpet: “Story within the Story”

Similarly to the opening of the seventh seal, there is also a pause before the sounding of the seventh trumpet in which what has happened is consolidated and what is to come is prepared, for from now on the Apocalypse tells a dramatic “story within the story.” Against the background of the activity of the spiritual principles and soul qualities, it tells how a new humanity is built up. This is, after all, the goal of all activity from the divine world: to dismantle everything old that exists in harmony with the world of darkness so that from the disposition to the “image of God,” a new human being can be built up that lives in harmony with the divine world of light.

But not only that: The new human being represents a further development compared to the original one. Not only tried and tested things are regained. On the basis of the tried and tested and with its help, as on a higher turn of a spiral, a more advanced consciousness arises. Thus, in the womb of the old and in the chaos of the annihilation of the worn-out, the germ of something new, previously unheard of, is already being formed.

The drama develops on the stage of world events, changes these at the same time, and flows with them to completion. It has three acts. In the first, John himself becomes active for the goal of the development of a new human being. He drafts the doctrine by which the divine order is made known to the emerging new human being, and he walks the path that follows from this doctrine. As before, he observes the divine world and the events in it, but he also observes himself as he intervenes in the events at the command of the divine world.

In the second act, two “witnesses” prepare the new human being, much as John the Baptist and the Old Testament prophets had prepared Jesus’ activity in the New Testament phase, and John describes the fate of these two witnesses.

And in the third act, John sees two “signs in *heaven*.” A woman gives birth to a boy, image of the new true self in the making. But a dragon pursues this woman and her child. Both, woman and dragon, immediately thereafter become reality on *earth*, and a terrible conflict ensues between them until the

dragon is defeated and the boy, the young, seminal true self that has emerged from the end-time struggles, has come of age.

PART 3: A NEW HUMAN BEING ARISES

Story within the Story

Promise and Mission of the Angel

10:1 And I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. 2He held a little scroll open in his hand. Setting his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3he gave a great shout, like a lion roaring. And when he shouted, the seven thunders sounded. 4And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down." 5Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and the land raised his right hand to heaven 6and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it: "There will be no more delay, 7but in the days when the seventh angel is to blow his trumpet, the mystery of God will be fulfilled, as he announced to his servants the prophets."

In the first act of the drama, John sees a strong angel coming out of heaven, standing with his right foot on the *sea* and with his left foot on the *earth*. For the fourth time, a messenger of God, endowed with special power, now appears and drives the action forward. He forms the contrast to two beasts that will appear soon at the sound of the seventh trumpet: From the *sea*, which symbolizes the earthly life forces separated from God, a beast resembling a panther will come up, and from the *earth*, image for the earthly, God-hostile formative forces, a beast resembling a lamb. But the angel comes from the divine world, stands with the right foot on the *sea* and with the left

foot on the *earth*. He rules with the divine powers of life and form the earthly forces of life and form and the two beasts, which live and receive power from the latter.

The angel is “wrapped with a cloud” and carries a “rainbow over his head.” Thus he shows his consubstantiality with the “One” on the throne. His effectiveness is not guided by the striving for power over creation like that of the beasts but by the grace, the devotion of God to creation, which is symbolized by the rainbow. And he works out of a “cloud,” symbol of the divine consciousness in which sphere also the Son of Man will come. The beasts, however, will be surrounded by “smoky vapor,” an image for the excited, cloudy consciousness of earthly beings.

As with the “One” on the throne and with the Son of Man, the face of the angel shines clearly and brightly “like the sun” and his feet, representing the divine will, flame like “pillars of fire.” His voice is “like a lion roaring,” a powerful vibration that pervades the universe and triggers future development. He also holds a “little scroll open” in his hand.

In response to the angel’s call, “the seven thunders sounded.” But John receives instructions from a “voice from heaven” not to write down the contents of these words but to seal them up. Why? Is not the Apocalypse to reveal *all* the secrets of heaven and earth and to make manifest all that has been hitherto hidden and slumbering in the bosom of the future?

“Thunders” are shocks emanating from the divine world that destroy the apparent certainties of the human world of form. Apparently, the seven thunders refer to the seven bowls of “the wrath of God” that are to be poured out on humanity in the future *after* the activity of the beasts from the abyss (Chapter 16). Therefore, John may not *yet* reveal the meaning of God’s thundering words at this stage. But he will make up for it later in the form of the description of the seven bowls of wrath, which are identical with the words of thunder. They will then be unsealed and revealed.

The catastrophes and chaotic events with the “dragon” and the “beasts from the abyss” that occur after the sounding of the seventh trumpet might make you despondent. But they are not the end. In front of their background, a new world and a new human being rises. This process is initiated by the angel. He confirms that the chaos will be only temporary and that in the end the divine order will triumph, even a progress in the

consciousness of humanity will be achieved. He swears by God with his right hand raised to heaven, on behalf of the iron will of God, who “lives forever and ever” and created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all living beings therein. Thus he confirms that the will of God, who “lives forever,” will reign forever. All transience will cease, and “there will be no more delay” or as it is translated in the KJV, “there should be time no longer.”

Thus, on behalf of God, the angel affirms God’s reliable promise that transience, with all its evils and death as its greatest, will have an end and that all future catastrophes will be succeeded by the eternally valid, just, harmonious, wise divine order and that humanity will even take a new step toward self-reliance and freedom. This will be the “fulfillment” that will be ushered in at the sound of the seventh trumpet and had been proclaimed by the prophets.

What is the “mystery of God”? God’s essence, eternity, which is inaccessible to the consciousness of transient beings. What is the “fulfillment” of the mystery of God? The revelation of the essence of God and eternity. The mystery is seen by an *enlightened consciousness*; it becomes conscious to people in whom a new consciousness, a spiritual eye, has grown through their path in harmony with the divine world. End times do not only destroy and rebuild tried and tested things. In the womb of end times and catastrophes, new developments and results are always already growing – progress in the consciousness of humanity: greater freedom, greater independence, greater God-likeness of the “images of God” who want to grow up in the course of the times as “sons of God.” The seer on Patmos, as a pioneer, is already developing this new consciousness; as a “son of God,” he experiences the future in advance.

The Little Scroll: The Inner Path

10:8 *Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, “Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land.” 9 So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll; and he said to me, “Take it, and eat; it will be bitter to your stomach, but sweet as honey in*

your mouth.” 10 So I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it; it was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter. 11 Then they said to me, “You must prophesy again about many peoples and nations and languages and kings.”

The “voice from heaven” speaks to the seer, “Take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel.” And John takes it, whereby the angel tells him, “Take it, and eat!” And John describes how it tastes “sweet as honey” in his mouth but causes bitter grimness in his stomach. What do you think the scroll says? It describes the way to the new consciousness to which the “mystery of God” is revealed. To take the scroll in one’s mouth and to taste its contents means to *understand* this path. It gives satisfaction, enlightenment of thinking, and joy of understanding.

But to *eat* the scroll means to make what is comprehended into one’s own nature and to really *walk* the path. This is painful. The comprehension with the intellect is “sweet”; the realization with the whole being is “bitter.” It requires people to give up everything old and dear and to let the divine powers working in them “break” the ties to the transitory world if they themselves are not able to do it. The seer on the path experiences this on his own body, and this way he is to announce also to others, “peoples and nations and languages and kings.” Similarly, in his time, the prophet Ezekiel had received a scroll with the command to “eat” it and then to proclaim its contents (Ezekiel 2:8-9 and 3:1-4). On this scroll were explicitly written “words of lamentation and mourning and woe” that would befall his hearers and himself if the contents were made known and then realized.

The Measuring of the Temple: The Divine Teaching

11:1 Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, “Come and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, 2 but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample over the holy city for forty-two months.”

Like the prophet Ezekiel in his day, John is instructed to “measure” with a staff the “temple, the altar, and those who worship there.” The “temple” is the “dwelling place of God on earth” but not only as an outer temple but above all as the inner constitution of the community of the “saints,” the people of “Israel.” This must correspond to the seven divine spiritual principles and soul qualities if God is to dwell in the “temple,” for only then will the lives and prayers of all the worshipers in the temple be able to reach God and anchor God’s qualities on earth.

Since the conditions change in the course of the times, this “measurement” must always take place anew. The construction of the temple and the altar must be adjusted to new conditions in such a way that they correspond to the respective state of consciousness of the worshipers of God. John is thus to recognize what the measurements of the “dwelling place of God on earth” are and how the community of the “saints” must be structured under the new conditions of the time so that the worshipers of God can perform their task in the temple. And he is to proclaim this new order, which is the standard for the life of “Israel,” that is, the community of those striving toward God, to the people of his time.

The “holy city,” on the other hand, is the constitution of the community of all people who prepare themselves in the temple forecourt to enter the “temple,” to belong to “Israel.” Here, too, the conditions have changed compared to the time of Ezekiel. The “holy city” is no longer holy. Therefore John is not to measure the forecourt of the temple. A constitution tailored to the entrance into the “temple” is no longer possible for the people in the temple forecourt because in the meantime the “pagans” have made themselves at home there, all those people who neither want to know anything about the state of the divine human being nor about the way to it. They are the enemies of the people striving towards God. They persecute them and destroy the “holy city,” the community of those who want to prepare themselves for the way to God.

The “pagans” can behave in this way as long as the first half of the whole development of the world and humanity still has lingering effects: the first 42 months or 1260 days, that is 3 1/2 of seven years, seven great periods that form a great unity. It is that half of the total development in which the gap between humanity and God has become wider and wider, to a low point. In

the meantime, however, the great turning point has begun, which is to lead to reconnection with God, made possible by Jesus, the Christ, the Lamb. In the second half of the development, the great “end time,” the “pagans” will be deprived of the possibility to destroy the holy city and persecute the saints. And they will be involved in a new way in the development of humanity, led by the new human being with a conscious true self, who will “rule them with a rod of iron” (12:5).

John thus proclaims two things: on the one hand, the contents of the “scroll” describing the inner *path* of human beings to the state of true worshipers, the liberated or “redeemed in the white robes,” and on the other hand, the constitution of the “temple” of God, the authoritative *doctrine* of the divine order, in principle immovable yet always attuned to the particular condition and consciousness of the worshipers of God.

The Two Witnesses

11:3 “And I will grant my two witnesses authority to prophesy for one thousand two hundred sixty days, wearing sackcloth.” 4These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. 5And if anyone wants to harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes; anyone who wants to harm them must be killed in this manner. 6They have authority to shut the sky, so that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have authority over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they desire. 7When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, 8and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that is prophetically called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. 9For three and a half days members of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb; 10and the inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and celebrate and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to the inhabitants of the earth. 11But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and those who saw them were terrified. 12Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here!” And they went up to heaven in a cloud while their enemies watched them. 13At that moment there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14The second woe has passed. The third woe is coming very soon.

The second act of the “story within the story” contains the activity of the “two witnesses.” The whole development of the world and humanity — or a great period in it — is symbolized in the Apocalypse by “seven years,” the

symbol of a complete unit of time. During the first half, the “3 1/2 years” of preparation for the fulfillment, there were always prophets pointing to the second half, the “3 1/2 years” of fulfillment. Although in the meantime, this second half has begun with the “Lamb,” nevertheless the first half continues to work and overlaps more or less with the second. The same applies to every smaller end time period within the great one. Therefore John now also describes this first half and its fate.

The multitudes of the prophets who had pointed to the “Lamb” are represented by the “two witnesses” who “stand before the Lord of the earth,” namely before Jesus, the Christ (11:8). The one witness embodies the “law” that had guided the preparation for the path of “freedom.” As reported in the Old Testament (Exodus 7:17), it is Moses, the bringer of the “law,” who in Egypt, the kingdom of bondage, had “authority over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every kind of plague” (11:6). The other witness stands for the host of prophets who had already proclaimed the Redeemer himself, the bringer of “freedom.” It is Elijah who had “authority to shut the sky, so that no rain may fall during the days of his prophesying.” He is a symbol of the natural law that all those who close themselves against the water from heaven, the purifying powers of the soul, no longer receive these heavenly blessings, the “rain,” while conversely all who open themselves to these powers become partakers of them (1 Kings 8:35-36). The New Testament knows that a reincarnation of this Elijah is John the Baptist (Matthew 17:12), who baptizes with the purifying water, preparing Jesus, the bringer of freedom.

Both of them, one as the bringer of the law preparing freedom, the other as the herald of freedom, stand in the New Testament at the “transfiguration of Jesus” (for example, Matthew 17) on either side of the Savior, the “Anointed” Christ, as his two witnesses. The evangelists and the John of the Apocalypse also refer to the prophet Zechariah, who saw in a “vision” a “lampstand all of gold,” on either side of which, on the right and on the left, were two “olive trees” (Zechariah 4:2-3). Here, with John of the Apocalypse, the two witnesses are themselves two lampstands and, again agreeing with Zechariah, two olive trees. As “lampstands,” they bring the knowledge of God, and as “olive trees,” they bring the power of God with which the “saints” are anointed.

During the period of 1260 days, the preparation for the second half of each end time, and as long as this preparation period continues to work in the second half, these two witnesses, representative of *all* prophets, are restlessly active to inculcate in humanity how necessary the preparation for the future is. Since their task is very difficult and they can show almost no success, they are dressed in “sackcloth,” garments of mourning, according to Ezekiel’s statement that their message brings them only “lamentation and mourning and woe.” Nevertheless, “fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes.” The power of their words of truth is tremendous and destroys the lies, presumption, and sloth, even the false ego identity of their hearers so that at first the latter cannot harm them and are “killed” spiritually.

But when the period of fulfillment, the second half of each end time, dawns, the time of preparation for the future is over, and Jesus, the Christ, takes over. The two witnesses whose “testimony is finished” have accomplished their mission. The power working in them withdraws, and those fighting against the new time, embodied by the “beast coming up from the bottomless pit,” have temporarily free play. They defeat and kill the witnesses. Their “dead bodies lie in the street of the great city.” This refers to *Jerusalem*, actually the holy city of God, the community of all who are preparing to go to God. But now it has become the prey of the “pagans” and deserves only the designations “Sodom” and “Egypt.” “Sodom” is the Old Testament symbol of indignation by a community against God and the corruption that comes with it, and “Egypt,” once a holy land, has degenerated into the epitome of slavery under earthly power.

“People,” that is the “pagans” from all over the world, abandon the two corpses to shame by leaving them unburied for 3 ½ days. The 3 ½ days symbolize the first half of a shorter unit of time of “7 days,” that half in which the people get into ever greater separation from God as they do in the large unit of time. The “people” rejoice about the fact that they finally got rid of the annoying tormentors who had spoken incessantly to their conscience. Relieved, they express their exuberant joy by congratulating each other on their victory through mutual gifts.

But Moses had been taken away from earth to heaven in his time, which according to traditional Jewish belief is expressed by the fact that “no one knows his burial place to this day” (Deuteronomy 34:6). Elijah, for his part,

had ascended “in a whirlwind into heaven” with “a chariot of fire and horses of fire” (2 Kings 2:11). Both great prophets had attained such a firm connection with the divine world during life that their renewed soul together with a spiritual body could resurrect after being “called” by God, that is, filled with the living, eternal spirit.

So also now, after 3 ½ days, when the second half of this “seven days” unit of time begins, “the breath of life from God” comes into the two witnesses, and “they went up to heaven in a cloud” of a new consciousness. “Their enemies watched them”: The pagans became aware of this process. And as always when earthly people are confronted with an effect of the divine Spirit, “those who saw them were terrified.” Similar to the resurrection of Jesus, moreover, a great earthquake arose because the previous soul security of the people was shaken by the divine powers.

And “a tenth of the city fell.” The Apocalypse here again applies the kabbalistic method of interpreting events with the help of a fraction. In this case, the first part of a totality consisting of 10 units represents the basis, the essence of this totality.^[13] But the “pagans” working in the holy city had not worked out a durable essence in harmony with the divine order, and so a “tenth” of the degenerated holy city collapsed. The false foundation of their coexistence was not up to the shaking of the divine powers. Moreover, 7,000 people (literally “names of humans,” which are the innumerable false ego identities of the people active in the 7 layers of the human personality) were wiped out by the quake. But the remaining “pagans” are prompted by the events to still repent, to live a life in harmony with the divine order, and thus “give glory to God.” The second half of the “seven days” unit of time then leads up to the reconnection with God.

With this, the “second woe,” the time of the sixth trumpet angel’s activity, is over.

The Seventh Trumpet

11:15 Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, ...

Thus the third act of the “story within the story” unfolds. A new human being, an enlightened human being, emerges, as if in birth pangs from the struggles between light and darkness. The “third woe” comes. The seventh trumpet triggers the fall of the “dragon” from heaven to earth, the confrontation of the “woman” clothed with the sun with the “dragon” and the resulting birth of the new human being, a true self aware of itself, its origin from God and from the “One.”

The soul quality embodied in this trumpet angel can be called *enlightened consciousness* because it corrects the “dragon,” which is just the opposite, an unenlightened, dark materialistic consciousness. It denies the world of light, denies the divine meaning of the development of the world and humanity, and thereby drags the souls into a barren loneliness and darkness, into coldness and hopeless death. But the enlightened consciousness, like John, sees the high meaning of the universe and the whole creation, what Jakob Böhme called the “Ungrund,” the wisdom and love of the “One” and lifts the souls into the unity with God, into the light of the knowledge of God, into the warmth of the divine love and the hopeful future of an ever-progressing life.

Whoever grows into such a consciousness cooperates with this angel to open up the same great perspective to others. Those who continue to surrender to the “dragon” will experience the destruction of their wrong attitude and after physical death will find themselves in unbearable emptiness and blackness burning like fire.

The Future Reign of God Becomes Visible

11:15 ... and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah,

and he will reign forever and ever.” 16Then the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17singing, “We give you thanks, Lord God Almighty, who are and who were, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. 18The nations raged, but your wrath has come, and the time for judging the dead, for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints and all who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying those who destroy the earth.” 19Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple; and there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

John again turns the spiritual eye to the divine world and sees what is happening there. The last and seventh quality of the soul, *enlightened consciousness*, becomes active. “Loud voices” resound “in heaven,” proclaiming the final assumption of dominion over the world by God and his “Anointed,” the Lamb Christ, for in the seventh period of the corrections coming from the divine soul level, the divine order according to spirit, soul, and body, which can no longer be shaken, will be established in the whole universe.

For the third time, a salvation scene appears in the apocalyptic sequence, among other things with the “saints and all who fear your name.” The 24 elders, representatives of the 12 aspects of the divine order (with a receiving and giving possibility in each case), prostrate themselves before God and confirm thus their unconditional loyalty to this order. As soul-spiritual laws in the universe, they preserve unbreakably the validity of the two times twelve great ideas, which are the basis of the life of all beings, and which represent at the same time an order reaching up to the goal of the creation.

Therefore, they know that those “who destroy the earth” will themselves be brought to ruin. According to the principle of action equals reaction, those who “rage” against God themselves call forth the “wrath” of God and suffer judgment by the divine order, whether as living people in this world or as dead people in the hereafter. On the other hand, also according to the principle of action equals reaction, all those who have tried to live in harmony with the divine order — that is, those who “fear God’s name,”

the “servants, prophets, and saints” of God — receive confirmation and strengthening from that order.

In this way, the order itself is revealed in the consciousness of people through their concordance with or opposition to it: “God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple.” The Ark of the Covenant is a symbol of the fact that notwithstanding all the disorder in humanity, God nevertheless always seeks connection with it. The divine order works in spite of all the chaos on earth, drawing people to itself, and enabling them to realize the divine order within themselves in the form of their true self. It is regrettable when the insight into what true human happiness is arises in many only after sorrowful corrections — “flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, earthquakes, and hail.”

But these corrections have only the purpose to cause insight. Sooner or later, it will light up in all people. Their freedom consists of this, that they must look for the way to their true happiness themselves. But they will eventually find it because the goal of their existence and the freedom to realize it is written in their hearts by God, who embodies freedom and from whom it came forth. Thus in the end, “God and his Messiah,” the Christ, “will reign forever and ever.”

The Adversaries of God

At the same time, great scenes of calamity will take place. The enemies of the divine order, which until now had lurked in the three layers of the human unconscious, the “bottomless pit,” will reveal themselves in conscious life, pushed by the divine powers. The unconscious, earthly, demonic-psychotic soul-forces, the “beasts,” will rise out of the “sea” and out of the “earth” to the earth, or like the “dragon,” which had once risen from the abyss to heaven, will be thrown from heaven to earth. Their effects will become clearly visible on the stage of world history. The “demonic-psychotic,” which until now had tormented people unconsciously inside their souls, will step over the threshold of consciousness and spread in outer life. The hosts of the demonic powers of the upper layer of the “bottomless pit” concentrate and embody themselves in the first “beast” rising out of the “sea” and the hosts of the

second, middle layer in the “beast” rising out of the “earth” and those of the lower layer in the “dragon” and later in the “woman sitting on the scarlet beast.”

With their last effort, they will try to maintain their bastions and rise up against humanity and God. Nevertheless they will be defeated.

Signs in the Heaven: “Woman” and “Dragon”

12:1 A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. 2She was pregnant and was crying out in birthpangs, in the agony of giving birth. 3Then another portent appeared in heaven: a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born. 5And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron. But her child was snatched away and taken to God and to his throne; 6and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, so that there she can be nourished for one thousand two hundred sixty days.

The drama of the development of a new human being reaches its climax. It is the confrontation between the “woman” and the “dragon.” Humanity is to become capable of realizing its true self by its own insight. In the course of its history, as long as it was still “immature,” it had always been guided by emissaries from the divine world according to the divine plan of development. But after the activity of the Christ in Jesus, the time has come when it must and can try to recognize and carry out this plan maturely and independently, for no “end time” serves only to restore something that has already been achieved earlier. Through the great conflicts between light and darkness, there should also always be progress in the awareness and freedom of humanity.

The “Woman”: Mother-Field of a New Consciousness

The possibility that humanity learns from the afflictions of the “end times,” acquires independent insight, and builds up a new consciousness, a true self, is represented by a “woman.” She is a reflection of the divine trinity.

Clothed with the “sun,” she lives from the creative will of the “divine spirit” (*atman*). Under her feet, she has the “moon,” her servant and her foundation, which is the divine wisdom of the “life spirit” (*buddhi*) receptive to the spirit. Like an opened bowl, this “moon” receives as world soul the “divine spirit.” And the “twelve stars on her head” mean the twelve main divine ideas, which arise from the community of “divine spirit” and “life spirit,” the aspects of the realization of the divine life. They belong to the “human spirit” (*manas*), to the divine “zodiac.”

Thus the “woman” is an image of the divine soul of the world, Sophia, whose spiritual “consort” is the Christ.^[14] But for the time being she is still a “sign in the sky.” Something is emerging in the mental and psychic areas, in “heaven,” that still wants and must become reality on the “earth,” in the area of forms. It *urges* to be realized in the world of forms.

Another symbol for this “woman” is “Israel” as will be shown later, whereby “Israel” is to be understood as the community of all souls turned towards God from which a new consciousness is to emerge. “Israel” lives from the creative will of the “father” (sun), is carried by the God-serving wisdom of the “mother” (moon), and realizes itself in its twelve tribes, twelve “angels” (stars).

As such a community, the “woman” embodies all spiritual and mystery schools and original religions of humanity, a spiritual power field that embraces all people who want to free themselves from the darkness of the earthly world and break through to the light of a new consciousness. Especially since the activity of the Christ in Jesus, his disciples have been trying to bring forth a new consciousness, a true self, from the divine wisdom working in them.

This newly-conscious true self is the “male child” with whom the “woman” is pregnant, pregnant by the divine spirit, her “consort.” The woman “cries out in birthpangs, in the agony of giving birth,” for the bringing forth of a new consciousness in the individual and in all of humanity is a laborious, painful process, which must prevail against the greatest opposition. It is synonymous with the mystery path in which the old human being “decreases” enabling the new human being to “increase” or with another image, with the “rebirth of water and spirit” (John 3:5). A new

human being wants to be born from the soul of humanity under great travail. A new consciousness that recognizes the divine inherent purpose of humanity wants to be born like an infant from the mother's womb, from the soul, and see the brightness of the light. For the time being, however, this is only an endangered future project.

But this boy will one day "rule all the nations with a rod of iron." The new, divine order on earth, working in the true self, will be like an "iron rod," unwavering, uninfluenceable. But it will also be salutary and lead to the redemption of the "nations." The boy, having grown up, will "rule" those people who are not yet capable of independent insight into their inherent purpose. The independent new consciousness arising in the pioneers of humanity will supply all people who are still dependent in thinking and feeling, the "nations," with the powers which will eventually enable them to become independent.

The "Dragon": Nihilistic Atheism

A powerful opponent of this woman and her son appears. In "heaven," also not yet as reality on "earth," another "portent" appears opposite the "woman": a "great red dragon" with seven heads and diadems on them as well as ten horns. The pregnant "woman" and the "dragon" are the embodiments of two great tendencies in the development of humanity. They are the opponents of a fierce confrontation: On one side are still weak new possibilities of humanity, the birth of the true self; on the other side are hostile forces that want to prevent this birth.

Materialistic atheism, symbolized by the "dragon," already seizes human beings, who are symbolized by the "stars of heaven" (compare to 1:16), in "heaven," in the mental and psychic areas of the world. The tail of the dragon sweeps "a third of the stars of heaven" and casts them "to the earth." The fraction $1/3$ symbolizes the third aspect of the fourfold human personality: the *life force* of the soul, the will. When this will turns to the "dragon," attracted by its self-will, the latter, as the "third part" of *every* human being that surrenders to it, drags it along with it in its fall to earth, into material life. "One third" thus again does not designate a numerical number of "stars"

but is a symbol for those “stars,” those human beings, who have let their will, their decisive third, be seduced by the “dragon” to betray their divine task.

With its seven heads and seven diadems on it, the “dragon” is an imitation of the seven spirits that stand before God and of their seven signs of victory. And its ten horns stand for ten periods of reign of nihilistic materialism on earth. After ten such periods of most different character – ten is the number of the completion of a development – its rule is finished.

It now stands as a terrible threat “before the woman who was about to bear a child, so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born.” The “dragon,” a tremendous force of “autocracy” hostile to heaven, wants to destroy the beginnings of a new consciousness, the “image of God” becoming conscious and active. It is the concentrated force of negation, of darkness that does not want to accept the divine light, of indignation against the divine order. Expressed in modern terms: nihilism and materialistic atheism, cold mechanistic thinking that sets itself absolute, sees only “chance and necessity” at work in the universe, and denies the creative spirit.

Both, the “woman” as well as the “dragon,” which at first were only visible as “portents in *heaven*,” soon reach the earth. They become earthly reality, that is, they were unconscious to the people so far, but now they step over the threshold of consciousness and begin to penetrate the whole outer life of the people. But the “boy,” the germ of a new consciousness born in all people turned to the spirit, is “snatched away and taken to God and to his throne.” The germ of the true self is still weak and hardly active. It would not be a match for the “dragon” and its art of seduction. The inkling of a new, divine freedom, love, and independence rising in the soul of some people would be immediately pushed back by the atheism and nihilism working everywhere on earth, yes, the fear of the “dragon” omnipresent in the life of humanity would nip such an inkling already in the bud. Therefore, for the time being, this germ withdraws from the consciousness into the world of the superconscious, to “God and to his throne,” into the sphere of the divine will where it is safe, to return later when conditions on earth have changed.

The “woman,” on the other hand, after giving birth to the “boy” and arriving on *earth*, must flee from the “dragon” “into the wilderness” (12:6), where she also has a place “prepared by God,” safe from the “dragon.” The “woman,” the community of all souls in which the inkling of a new human

being has been born, is not yet able to assert itself against the superiority of the “dragon” and its followers on earth. Spiritual schools that want to work in humanity during the afflictions by the “dragon” have to appear completely on their own, without help from the dominant cultural, political, and social forces: in the “wilderness.”

Michael and the “Dragon”

12:7 And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, 8but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. 10Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming, “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah, for the accuser of our comrades has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. 11But they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not cling to life even in the face of death.

12Rejoice then, you heavens and those who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you with great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”

Michael

In the meantime, like the “woman,” the “dragon” has also come from heaven to earth. “Michael and his angels” had thrown “the dragon and his angels” down.

Who is Michael? Before the opening of the seventh seal on the scroll in the right hand of the “One,” a great silence had occurred. And after the opening of the seventh seal, the trumpet angels had begun their work. The seventh principle of the spirit, the *creative will*, had not yet been spoken about. But now it appears in the form of Michael. “Michael” means translated, “Who is like God?”^[15] He is the “angel prince” who stands before the face of God, an embodiment of the creative will of God, which initiates the final victory of the divine order. He acts as the executor of the world of light, of divine truth, and destroys the lie of the world of darkness.

His position in the divine world of light mirrors inversely the position of his opponent in the ungodly world of darkness: the “dragon.” The latter is the projection of the creative divine will in the primeval substance that has become a power of its own. It had become the lower, fundamental power of the “bottomless pit,” the world of darkness (see the chapter “Indestructible Formation” in Part 2). It is logical that now these two spirit beings collide: the creative will of God, the highest principle of the divine spiritual world or “superworld,” and the seventh aspect of the soul world, corrupted by self-will, the lowest, most powerful layer of the “bottomless pit.”

In the human being, the highest aspect of the true self corresponds to the “divine spirit,” while the “dragon” acts as the lowest, most fundamental aspect of the bottomless pit. In the soul of each individual and of all humanity, these two principles meet as force fields. Living from the Michael force field, people will recognize the false claim of the “dragon” and try to free themselves from it. In the long run, their true being, belonging to the divine order, “Michael,” is stronger than the claim to absoluteness of the ego being, which in the form of the “dragon” denies the divine order and is caught in the conviction that matter is the essential thing.

In the human consciousness, in the consciousness of the true self, in “heaven,” the “dragon” is defeated and thrown down to “earth,” into the living conditions of the earthly human being. The collective force field of the creative will in humanity, embodied by the archangel “Michael,” throws the collective force field of the self-aggrandizing, egocentric will, embodied by the “dragon,” out of “heaven” onto the “earth” and into the “sea,” the human worlds of form and of life. Thus “Michael” acts as the “power of God” standing before God, as the highest aspect of the true self, through which the self-importance of the ego is destroyed.

And John hears the voice of an angel, “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah.” “Heaven,” the realm of the world of light, has gotten rid of the representative of the world of darkness who had *accused* the “saints” — the spiritual “comrades” of the angel — “day and night before our God.” How had he done that?

Two examples from the Old Testament can explain this. In the book of Job 1:8-11, Satan claims that if God withdrew his hand from Job and

plunged him into calamity, Job would “curse God to his face.” Like Satan himself, Job would be outraged against God. Thereby, Satan states that people are outraged against God from the outset. They only do not show this as long as they are doing well. If God withdraws his grace from them, however, people will curse him. Basically, people, like Satan, the “serpent of paradise,” want to be independent of God, to know independently, and to shape their destiny in their own power. They are by nature egocentric beings disobedient of God. Thus, Satan acts as the “accuser of our comrades.”

The second example of Satan’s accusation of people is the high priest Joshua “standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him” (Zechariah 3:1). The high priest “was dressed with filthy clothes,” in other words, his soul and its sheaths (thinking, feeling, willing, and acting) were stained with “guilt.” This is the content of Satan’s accusation. He says to God in effect, “You see, even your high priest has sinned against you, thus proving that it is unalterably in human nature to be outraged against you and to act egocentrically.” Satan does not take into account that people are also “images of God” and can overcome their egocentric nature in favor of this “image.” And *because* the high priest behaves as such an “image of God,” God takes away his guilt, has his dirty clothes taken off, and festal apparel, a new being, put on him. And God asks Satan, “Is not this man a brand plucked from the fire?” (Zechariah 3:2) — a man torn out of the fire of satanic egocentricity, which almost burned him? — Satan does not know this possibility of people being freed from this egocentricity by the help of God.

In the Apocalypse, “our comrades” have overcome Satan — that is their egocentric nature — exactly in this way “by the blood of the Lamb,” “by the word of their testimony,” and because “they did not cling to life.” Their “image of God” dissolved their egocentric nature: by the “blood of the Lamb,” the divine power of the soul; by their fidelity to the “word,” the divine teaching describing humanity’s inherent purpose; and because they had surrendered their hunger for life in favor of the new life on the mystery path.^[16]

“Rejoice then, you heavens and those who dwell in them!” the voice calls out to the saints, as it foretells great “woe” for the “earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you!”

One may ask why the “dragon” is not immediately sent to the bottomless pit, where he belongs and where his proper place in the universe is. Why is he still thrown on the “earth” and that means, into the life of the earthly people, where he causes the greatest devastations? The answer is: The people of the earth attract him. As an embodiment of egocentricity, he is also *in* them, and he must be defeated *in* them if the “image” of God, the true self, is to become active again. According to the world law of balancing tensions and because of human freedom, people must be confronted with this egocentricity inside and outside of themselves. They have allowed their world to be determined by the dragon’s egocentricity in the course of the eons. They can become free from him only by being confronted with him in earthly life, by consciously recognizing him, and thus breaking the power of nihilistic, materialistic atheism over their souls.

They are helped in this by the power field of the divine will embodied by “Michael.” He is the protector and helper of all those souls who want to overcome egocentric self-importance in favor of their “image of God.” Similarly, as the symbol “woman” can also be replaced by “Israel,” the community of all souls turned to God, “Michael” is the angelic “prince” of Israel, symbol of the power field that protects and strengthens all these souls (Daniel 10:21).

Cosmology of the “Dragon”

The “great dragon, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan” is imagery for a soul-spiritual force that works in the whole universe as well as in the soul of every single human being. It is the force of *egocentricity*, an exaggeration and aggravation of *independence*. Independence has its justification everywhere in nature, also in human nature because only through it can the beings in the universe reach inner freedom.

But how can we explain why independence becomes egocentricity or willfulness? We can at least try to describe it. God, the One, is active from

the beginning in two harmoniously cooperating powers: an active creative power, the divine spirit or “Father” (*atman*), and a passive receiving power, the “Mother” (*buddhi*), the subtle-material original substance of the world, in other words: the world soul. The creative power projects itself into the receiving power of the original substance, and from the interaction of both, the “Son” (*manas*) arises. The original substance is thus a kind of abutment for the creative spirit. It needs a certain independence in order to be able to receive and then also to produce fruit, the “Son,” and it pushes itself towards the spirit *in order* to receive.

Thus, its independence can become egocentricity. The abutment can become independent and continue the projections of the spirit into and out of itself without being further fertilized by the spirit. Thereby its independence develops to egocentricity. It separates from the creative impulses of the spirit, its “companion,” and goes its own ways, yes, becomes the adversary of the divine spirit. The “dragon” is created.^[17]

The Apocalypse calls the dwelling place of the “dragon” the “bottomless pit.” Correspondingly, the divine spirit can be called “heaven.” And since the divine spirit is threefold in itself as creative will, wisdom (*Sophia*), and activity, the “bottomless pit” is also threefold: To the creative will corresponds the “dragon,” pure egocentricity; to wisdom corresponds the second “beast from the abyss,” the false imitation of Christ, the false prophet, and to activity corresponds the first “beast from the abyss,” the biological “will to power.” The bottomless pit is a mirror image of heaven, so that the lower layer of the bottomless pit, the “dragon,” corresponds to creative will, the upper layer of heaven.

To the sphere of the divine activity, the “Son” (*manas*), belong all beings that came out of the “Father-Mother” (*atman-buddhi*), among others, human beings as “images of God” who were male-female in the beginning (Genesis 1:27) and equipped with a free consciousness — light — like God. Human beings stood and stand between the two forces of spirit and soul, creative will and receiving original substance. It is their inherent purpose to create forms for themselves in freedom, with the help of which they develop a true self and a light of consciousness, by which they can recognize themselves, their origin from God, and God.

But it has happened that a part of the original humanity — the present humanity on earth — has allowed itself to be overwhelmed by the egocentricity of the original substance. It has separated itself, like the “dragon,” from the impulses of the spirit and has created forms on its own authority with which it has entangled itself more and more deeply in the egocentric original substance. Like the latter, it has thereby lost the unity with the divine spirit and is no longer guided and nourished by it.

The part of humanity remaining in harmony with the spirit has gradually developed a threefold consciousness, the immortal true self, the mature “image of God” corresponding to the spirit with its three aspects of will, wisdom, and activity. This is implicit in the first creation account of the Old Testament (Genesis 1:1-31 and 2:1-4) in which the *Elohim* are active. Humanity, on the other hand, separating from the spirit, has only produced an egocentric self that is no longer aware of the threefold heavenly world instead of producing a true self. The creation of the mortal body for this self by *Yahweh* is described in the second creation account of the Old Testament (from Genesis 2:4). And because this self is no longer guided and nourished by the powers of heaven, it has become mortal. It is, unconsciously to it, often dominated by the threefold bottomless pit: by the “dragon” and the second and first “beast from the abyss.”

The original human beings, in themselves male-female, were and are immortal and self-creative. The present egoic human beings, on the other hand, are mortal and have become unisexual in body. They need a partner for reproduction. But for the eternal disposition to the true self this imperfect, mortal self is not a suitable means of expression. Therefore, it has to “adopt” a new mortal self again and again in order to have at least a provisional means of expression — until one day such an egocentric self retires on the mystery path and makes room for an immortal true self. Then the law of reincarnation has become ineffective. In such a person the “dragon” of egocentrism is overcome and the unity of the “Son” with “Father-Mother” is restored.

Today’s human beings are generally not yet faced with this step. They live in separation from God and have lost the freedom that is in harmony with the divine freedom. They practice a “freedom” of presumption and arrogance, which can go as far as self-glorification and denial of the divine

order. This is human egocentricity, the individual “dragon.” And when these individual forces of egocentricity unite, the result is a collective “dragon,” an exceedingly powerful field that arrogates to itself the leadership of humanity, allows only the order of matter to apply, and establishes, instead of the trinity of divine will, wisdom, and activity, a trinity of earthly power, illusory sanctity, and violence. Everyone can feel how powerful this field of the nihilistic, materialistic denial of God has become today.

It is possible, however, that a crisis will occur and that the immortal disposition to the true self, suppressed by the egocentric self, will revolt. People will then realize that they have not realized their true nature and have lost their embedding in the divine order, their true freedom. Egocentricity and its consequences will be revealed to them in visible life so that they can be freely recognized and overcome. And when the confrontation of humanity with the “dragon” and the “beasts from the abyss” is finished, they can finally be banished to the “bottomless pit.”

Conflict between “Woman” and “Dragon”

12:13 So when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. 14But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle, so that she could fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to her place where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. 15Then from his mouth the serpent poured water like a river after the woman, to sweep her away with the flood. 16But the earth came to the help of the woman; it opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. 17Then the dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her children, those who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus.

The “woman,” unlike the “boy” born of her, is nourished in the “wilderness” for 1260 days, which is 3 1/2 years. A look into the Old Testament shows what is meant by this. After the Exodus from Egypt, the Israelites encamped in the wilderness, and God spoke to them through the mouth of Moses, “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself” (Exodus 19:2-4). “Israel” is just another symbol for the community of all souls turned to God, which John illustrates with the “woman clothed with the sun.” The “wilderness,” on the other hand, means here a realm *between* the “fleshpots of Egypt,” the house of bondage, in short, the transitory earthly world that is *left* by the Israelites, and the divine world, the “Promised Land,” in which they are *not yet*. This intermediate realm provides protection at the same time. Just as the dragon pursues the woman who flees from it into the “wilderness,” so Egypt pursued Israel. And Israel saved itself in the “wilderness.”

The “eagle’s wings” of God carry the woman into this intermediate realm. Isaiah says, “But those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles” (Isaiah 40:31). Trust in God carries them into the “wilderness” out of the seemingly fertile places of earthly people and earthly consciousness where the “dragon” unfolds its arts of

seduction. The souls turned to God can no longer take part in the bustle of the earthly world and are persecuted by it but find temporary security in the isolation of the “wilderness” — for 3 1/2 years, as long as the “dragon” is granted leeway on earth. After these 1260 days, half of a period of “7 years,” a self-contained seven-part period, the turnaround towards the “Promised Land” will take place, and the “dragon” will also be defeated on earth.

Thus, all spiritual schools or communities on the way to a new consciousness are saved from the “dragon” by “the two wings of the great eagle,” the trust born of God and turned toward God. Their members are on the way to God, do not yet possess an independent new consciousness, but are nourished by “manna,” the divine food of a teaching and power leading to God.

But the “dragon” spits its irreconcilable hate after the “woman” as a river. It recognizes in the community of souls turned to God the activity of the divine will of which it is the great adversary. As egocentric will, it had revolted against the divine will and now fears its destruction. Its poisonous river of saliva of hatred carries *thoughts*, which it sends after the “woman”: “You humans are only matter; the spirit is only its exhalation, the accidental, useless, and senseless product of physical-chemical processes.” The “dragon” also sends destructive *feelings* after the “woman”: “As poor little specks of dust in the universe, you humans are only to be despised even if you can assert yourselves by manipulation of matter.” In line with this, also the life forces contained in the poisonous river of the “dragon” want to seduce the “woman” to violence against life and to induce her to completely subjugate living beings and the world of forms by technology and organization.

The “woman” threatens to be “swept away” by this river of hate, but the “earth” helps her and swallows it. The author of the Apocalypse knows that the earth as a planet is an ensouled organism with its own lawfulness that is basically in the service of the divine world and whose vibration is different from the hate and the destructiveness of the “dragon.” These natural vibrations and life connections of “Gaia,” the earth, absorb the life-hostile vibrations of the “dragon” not only in the material realm but also in the energetic area of the life forces and thereby help the “woman.” But now the “dragon” has free play on earth for a time. It wages “war” with the offspring of the “woman,” with all those who belong to the community of souls turned

towards God and are busy with the birth of a new consciousness. "Woe to the earth and the sea," the voice from heaven had cried, "for the devil has come down to you" (12:12). But all those who already live in "heaven," in a new consciousness, can "rejoice."

One can try to imagine how all these forces work in individuals and bring forth a new consciousness, a true self. Such people are pupils of a spiritual school, thus belong to a community that is embodied by the "woman clothed with the sun." With the help of the soul power of this community, the "image of God" wants to unfold in them. The "boy," the conscious true self, wants to be born in them. And it *is* born, at first only as a faint inkling of new possibilities.

But immediately the "dragon" appears in these people, the terrible opponent of every independent spiritual development, and tries to destroy the helping soul power, the "woman," and the germinating new consciousness, the "boy." "Woman" and "boy" have to withdraw at first in order not to expose themselves directly to the violence of the "dragon." But "Michael," the power of the divine will, defeats the "egocentricity" in these people, saves them from the "dragon," and enables the "boy," the true self, to develop into a mature, independent spirit-soul consciousness.

At the same time, however, the individual pupils are also part of the larger world in which the "dragon" and the two "beasts" as well as "Michael" and the seven spiritual principles and soul qualities act as collective force fields. Such pupils can and will freely orient themselves between these forces and try to cooperate with the divine forces that support the development of their true self. Nevertheless, as individuals, they would not be able to cope with the hostile forces of the "dragon" and the "beasts" if they were not also members of their spiritual school, which protects them through the soul power of the "woman clothed with the sun" from the negative influences of the environment and enables the pupils to face and overcome them. In this way, they will belong more and more consciously to the people who "dwell in heaven" and will be able to help all those who are still unprotected against the violence of the "dragon" and the "beasts from the abyss." The "story within the story" of the Apocalypse has had a positive outcome for them.

PART 4: REVOLT OF THE DEMONS

Until the fall of the “dragon” from heaven, the psychotic-demonic forces had worked in the human unconscious, in the “bottomless pit.” As cruel as their dominion over the ego had been, precisely also because of their invisibility and impenetrability, they had not yet reached the visible level of human life expressions. Now, however, they are forcibly breaking through the barriers of the rational ego, which until then had at least protected people from their immediate grasp, and penetrating all areas of life: politics, economy, society, culture, family. Embodied in the “dragon” and the two “beasts,” they gain power as ideologies in institutions and organizations and even become socially dominant. In doing so, they make use of special personalities that no longer seem to have anything human about them — if one regards an intact conscience and the ability to exercise one’s own responsibility and judgment as essential criteria of the human condition.

These personalities are manipulated and exploited like puppets, but they also possess, as is known from psychotically ill people, unbelievable instinctual certainty and will energy. They can be ruthlessly evil, draw people to themselves through their hypnotic charisma, infect them with their essence, and turn them into docile instruments. In this way, collective psychic force fields are created from whose influence the individual can escape only with great difficulty.

The foundation of this demonic “bottomless pit” and the ruler over the demons is the “dragon,” an image for the revolt of humanity against every divine and natural order and sense. It is the “serpent” of paradise, the principle of self-assertion that absolutizes itself and denies the embedding of humanity in cosmic and spiritual contexts. In modern terms: the force field of an absolute materialism, the blackest darkness that drives away the light of intuitive and reasonable cognition and denies its justification, and of a nihilistic atheism which permeates all expressions of life. This is the rebellion of the “dragon” against the divine world, which is the very basis of human existence.

As a psychotic-demonic energy from the subterranean depths of the soul, the “dragon” disintegrates the rational ego of the personality and evokes

collective delusions that destroy even the last still effective spiritual, religious, and rational traditions. Thus it wants to thwart every possibility of the ego to express the divine world in life. The fact that it was thrown down from “heaven” to the “earth” means: People have become conscious of it, and it shows itself from now on in all areas of the outer life.

The Two Beasts

The “Beast Rising out of the Sea”: Will to Power

12:18 Then the dragon took his stand on the sand of the seashore.

13:1 And I saw a beast rising out of the sea having ten horns and seven heads; and on its horns were ten diadems, and on its heads were blasphemous names. 2And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And the dragon gave it his power and his throne and great authority. 3One of its heads seemed to have received a death-blow, but its mortal wound had been healed. In amazement the whole earth followed the beast. 4They worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?" 5The beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. 6It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. It was given authority over every tribe and people and language and nation, 8and all the inhabitants of the earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slaughtered. 9Let anyone who has an ear listen: 10If you are to be taken captive, into captivity you go; if you kill with the sword, with the sword you must be killed. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

The satanic energy of the “dragon” brings forth different forms of expression that can dominate humanity at all times and also concretize in the present in a modern way. The first form of expression is the “beast” that, according to the Apocalypse, rises from the “sea” to humanity. The demonic-psychotic

energies, which until now had been stimulated by the fifth angel with the trumpet in the upper layer of the “bottomless pit,” the human unconscious (see the chapter “Free Courage” in Part 2), now, summoned to the earth by the fall of the “dragon,” step over the threshold to consciousness and concentrate in the “beast rising out of the sea.”

“Sea” in the Apocalypse is usually symbolic of the biological-vital forces of the world and humanity. The “beast rising out of the sea” thus ascends from the sphere of vital forces into human consciousness and thereby begins to determine the material conditions of life as well. It embodies the principle of the rule of the strongest, the struggle for existence as the apparent meaning of life, the leader principle, violence that always causes counter-violence, enslavement of others that in the long run always results in one’s own enslavement, and the emotions of revenge and cruelty arising from these principles.

That is why it is similar to a “panther,” symbol of wild, creeping, grasping animal power, striding like a “bear,” treading firmly, crushing resistances, and tearing hungrily at its food like a “lion.”

“The dragon gave it his power and his throne” (13:2). For the driving force of this beast is atheistic nihilism. The “will to power,” the “selfish gene,” [18] recognizes no spiritual foundation, no divine world. Materialistic science connected with such an attitude towards life denies any spirituality and justifies the connections of life with materialistic theories of evolution. According to its view, the universe came into being by chance and continues to develop by chance, just as the animal and human worlds are supposed to have come into being by chance and continue to develop by random mutation and selection.

As an expression of the “dragon,” this spirit-hostile “beast” also has ten horns and seven heads. The ten horns are symbols for ten periods of rule, for the totality of a development with ten aspects, and the “diadems” on it are victory symbols. The seven heads correspond to the seven spirits before the throne of God, powers that operate on all levels of being, except that in the bottomless pit, they are corrupted and made subservient to autocratic atheism. They assume destructive, anti-divine functions, as evidenced by the “blasphemous” names on the “heads.”

“In amazement the whole earth followed the beast,” and people “worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast?’” (13:4). They are fascinated by power and worship it. Biology and the animalistic are supreme; progress toward ever greater glory and mastery is euphorically embraced. The “beast” talks “haughty and blasphemous words,” the propaganda for the ideology of power and a blind biologism is almost irresistible.

These are all characteristics also of a special, modern form of expression of this “beast”: fascism. This is not to say that the author of the Apocalypse foresaw fascism and national socialism in its exact expression or even the name itself. Because the “beast rising out of the sea” concretizes itself in the course of human history always anew. And also today, it is not limited to this concrete political-social form but shows itself far more comprehensively in many current expressions of life: in open or hidden claims to power and displacement of the weak by the strong. Again and again, groups and movements appear on earth in which it manifests itself and carries people away with it. It is present in *every* human being and receives nourishment from the collective. Only if individuals remember the essential soul-spiritual basis in their own being and live from it do they have the chance not to fall prey to the seductive power of this “beast.”

Such people then belong to the “saints” on whom the “beast” wages war in order to defeat them. A “saint” is already someone in whom above all the soul-spiritual basis of the “lamb that was slaughtered” makes itself felt and who at least tries to live from this power. The “lamb that was slaughtered” is the exact opposite of the principle of might over others, success at the expense of others, and defrauding of others. It embodies a state of the soul in which the perversity of the worship of might over others is recognized and experienced. Such “saints” know that self-realization and true happiness are not to be achieved through violence against others but solely through sacrifice and devotion to others and live accordingly.

Alone by this, they get into opposition to the “beast” and people who serve the “beast,” but they receive strength from the divine world and from the example of the “lamb” to persevere. If they have an ear, let them listen! When they listen attentively to the inner voice of their Christ nature, they will be able to hear and obey it. When they do not, as ones who lead others into captivity, they will themselves become captives, and as ones who kill

with the sword, they will perish by the sword. "Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints" (13:10).

It will take 42 months, again 3 1/2 years, until the fury of the "beast" is broken (13:5). This is again not a statement of time but the statement that the "beast" will work until the tension of the imbalance in the soul condition of humanity has reached a crisis point and the turnaround to the new construction becomes possible. The first part of a full period of "seven years," which belongs to the "beast" and its irresistible influence, is symbolized by the first "half." Then the turnaround occurs, and the second part begins, the other "half," in which the influence of the "beast" gradually fades.

John also saw one of the heads of the "beast" "seemed to have received a death-blow, but its mortal wound had been healed" (13:3). Perhaps he is referring to a ruler of that time who was defeated and regained his dominion. He could mean the emperor Nero, about whom the legend went that after his apparent death, he fled to the Parthians (the Persians) and would one day return. Later in the text (13:12 and 18), the one head is identified with the whole "beast" so that the emperor Nero can be taken as a symbol of autocratic power in general. Then the death wound and its healing would mean that power, even when seemingly struck to death by another power, nevertheless always regenerates itself. Earthly power as such cannot be destroyed by earthly power. It can be dissolved only by the fundamental power of the universe, the divine will giving itself to the creation, withdrawing the basis of egocentricity.

But the lawfulness described by John is also valid today and in every end time. Also more recent history knows of leaders who were apparently already finished and straight from their defeat "resurrected" stronger than ever. This also expresses the idea that earthly power cannot in principle be destroyed by earthly counter-power.

The “Beast that Rose out of the Earth”: Imitation of the Christ

13:11 Then I saw another beast that rose out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. 12It exercises all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and it makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound had been healed. 13It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in the sight of all; 14and by the signs that it is allowed to perform on behalf of the beast, it deceives the inhabitants of earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that had been wounded by the sword and yet lived; 15and it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast could even speak and cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. 16Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, 17so that no one can buy or sell who does not have the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. 18This calls for wisdom: let anyone with understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a person. Its number is six hundred sixty-six.

A second expression of the “dragon” rises as a “beast out of the earth.” It is the concentration of the demonic-psychotic energies that until now had acted on the people under the threshold of consciousness from the middle layer of the “bottomless pit.” The sixth “angel with the trumpet” had stimulated them (see the chapter “Unintentional Goodness” in Part 2). But now, after the dragon as the foundation of the “bottomless pit” has been thrown out of “heaven” onto the “earth”, that is, has become active in human consciousness, also the middle layer of the “bottomless pit” is mobilized, and the demonic forces that had been unconscious up to now rise as a “beast out of the earth” over the threshold of consciousness and show themselves in the outer human life, yes, become determining there.

This beast “spoke like a dragon,” thus also draws its power from materialistic atheism and nihilism, exercises “all authority of the first beast,” and therefore lives like the latter from the “will to power.” As its helper, it causes the earth and all its inhabitants to worship the first “beast.” It imitates the brotherhood and goodness of the Christ and seduces people to the idolatry of a false brotherhood and imagined human love.

It has the form of a “lamb with two horns” but does not stand before God like the divine lamb but before the “dragon” and the first “beast.” Its method is to imitate the divine lamb like a “wolf in sheep’s clothing.” This corresponds to its later characterization as a “false prophet” (16:13). Jesus had spoken in his time that in the end times, many false Christs would appear, false prophets from whom his disciples would have to beware (Matthew 24:5).

This “beast” thus slips into the mask of the divine Lamb and imitates its willingness to sacrifice and its devotion in order to seduce people. It pretends to work from divine truth, love, and devotion but lives from the lie of materialism, the “dragon,” and the violent power of the first “beast.” It exploits the longing of people for freedom, equality, and brotherhood to build up societies by force, in which the “dragon” and the first “beast” have the power. It speaks of “redemption” from manipulation and violence but strives for it exactly by manipulation and violence, and on a material basis.

The fact that this “beast” comes up straight from the “earth” refers to this material basis. It mobilizes all forces of the earth and of earthly human beings, their intellect, their abilities in science and technology, and gives them the illusion to be able to create a paradise on earth by organizing matter and using all material means. Its motto is, the “material being” determines the consciousness. Instead of strengthening the consciousness by devotion to the divine laws and powers in such a way that it learns to master the material forces and makes them the expression of the divine order, this “beast” claims that technology and science will gradually eliminate all psychic and social conflicts, build an empire of welfare and prosperity, redeem people from fear and suffering, and make them masters of the earth.

Certainly, founders and supporters of such projects often have the best humane or Christian intentions. But it is precisely the technique of the “lamb” from the earth to make these motives serve its purposes. In the mask

of the philanthropist, it uses people's need for dignity and independence to suggest that they are the measure of all things, and it creates a general delusion of feasibility and progress. Even those who decidedly reject communist or socialist social designs and projects are not protected from the mentality of the "lamb" from the earth, for *all* tendencies to exaggerated organization and bureaucratization stem from this attitude: Caring and love of humanity suddenly turn into domination when they are combined with the will to power.

The "lamb" from the earth also "performs great signs" and even makes "fire come down from heaven to earth." The energy and fire of enthusiasm for ideal societies and organizations increase to the extent that people believe in this "beast." It also "deceives the inhabitants of earth, telling them to make an image" of the first beast. It is able to "give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast could even speak" (13:15). This need not mean that John foresaw the activity of the modern media, which in film, radio, and television actually produce "speaking images" to give validity to the will to power of the first "beast" in all its facets.^[19] But in the consciousness of people of all times a second, reproduced reality, an image and mouthpiece of the ruling will to power, emerges when they lose the connection to their own inner being and allow themselves to be guided only by the outside. The external structures of power then become active in their imagination as "images" that exert a dominating influence on them like constantly speaking "voices."

Revelation 16:13 describes that "three foul spirits like frogs" come "from the mouth of the dragon, from the mouth of the beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet." Then as now, rulers and ideologues can be conspicuous for their constant "croaking." They give only "hollow words," clichés of beautiful promises, and lies. Some of their listeners become even more trapped by this; others lose all confidence in the reliability of such personalities through whom "demon spirits" (13:14), that is psychotic energies, speak.

And all who do not worship the "image" are killed. That is, all who do not surrender to the ruling ideology and idolatry and resist the enforced conformity by propaganda will always be declared outsiders and enemies of

the regime and excluded as “non-conformists” or liquidated right away. John recognized on the basis of his insight into the regularities of the human soul that in every end time, a need of the state would arise to supervise and if necessary correct the attitude and behavior of its citizens. The “beast” from the earth as a helper of the “beast” from the sea absolutely wants this control. In its intoxication of power and need for security, it is incapable of trust and devotion, incapable of leaving others free and granting them something of their own.

This is why John speaks of the “marks of the beast” on the hand and forehead by which people’s loyalty to the state can be read. The “beast” requires people to completely align the ego seated behind the forehead, their disposition, and their actions with the nature of the beast and to publicly manifest their loyalty to the state through gestures, signs, or rituals. At the time of the author of the Apocalypse, this had to be done by sacrificing to the image of the emperor. Today, there are more sophisticated surveillance techniques and the possibility of providing people with identification numbers by which they can be observed, directed and, if necessary, eliminated in the event of non-compliant behavior. Did John foresee this? And nobody who does not possess these marks can make a living by “buying and selling”!

John also indicates the essence, the “name” of the “beast,” which is to be contained on the mark. It is the “number of a person,” namely 666.

In antiquity, people assigned numbers to the letters of a word or name and recognized in the sum of these numbers the meaning of this name. Thus the numerical value of the Greek words for “Emperor Nero” is actually 666. This number thus expresses the principle of absolute arbitrariness, which “Emperor Nero” embodies in an exemplary manner. It also applies in the present, even if there is no Emperor Nero today. And John urges people then as now to beware of this principle.

One could also interpret this number kabbalistically still differently by breaking it down into 600 plus 60 plus 6. “6” in Kabbalah is the number for the critical period before the end of each epoch, which is marked in its entirety by “7.” In the period of “6,” the belief in material development and the conquest of heaven by earthly power usually reaches its peak. Samech meaning serpent, that is, the seduction to evil, has for example the numerical

value 60,20 and Noah is 600 years old when the Flood comes.^[20] The whole number 666 would therefore mean that the earthly power, be it embodied by emperor Nero, other rulers or organizations, rises to the highest in end times on all three levels of reality, that of the spirit (600), that of the soul (60), and that of matter (6) and prepares for the final battle.

The first “beast,” which rises from the sea, is the embodiment of the will to power in all areas and forms of rule, the expression of people’s tendency to take everything into their own hands and to assert themselves ruthlessly. Thus it forms the glaring contrast to the divine lamb, divine devotion and freedom. The second “beast,” which comes out of the earth, is the mouthpiece and helper of the first. It embodies less brutal power but rather the imitation of the divine lamb. It exploits the longing of the people for peace, harmony, and love in order to seduce them and to subjugate them to the first “beast.” For this purpose, it makes use of people’s imaginations, develops ideologies, deceives through propaganda and lies, and numbs with floods of images and constant noise. It is the intellect that serves power and veils its brutality.

Both “beasts” work together perfectly. In the false prophet, the second beast, the fascist and socialist tendencies mix and become propagandistic words and images. Perhaps these two tendencies are the two horns of the “beast”: the will to power and the striving for “redemption” through violence.

Both beasts live from the “dragon,” the indignation against the divine and natural order in total egocentricity. They now gather all those who bear the mark of the first “beast” on their right hand and forehead to fight against the Christ.

The Awakened and Redeemed

14:1 Then I looked, and there was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion! And with him were one hundred forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. 2And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, 3and they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the one hundred forty-four thousand who have been redeemed from the earth. 4It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins; these follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They have been redeemed from humankind as first fruits for God and the Lamb, 5and in their mouth no lie was found; they are blameless.

The divine world also gathers those who belong to it, sets them up against the “bottomless pit,” and strengthens them, for the seven soul qualities, the angels with the trumpets, have become fully active in the meantime. In a different order than the spiritual principles, the first four qualities had begun with the soul attitudes of the people to the world of form, had continued with the realm of the life forces and feelings, in order to finally cause sure faith in the sense of existence in thinking. On the other hand, the three higher qualities (*free courage, unintentional goodness, and enlightened consciousness*) originate from the three realms of heaven (“human spirit,” “life spirit,” and “divine spirit”) and had triggered in the unconscious of people the activity of the three layers of the “bottomless pit” in which the two “beasts” and the “dragon” dwell.

In this way, after the seven power fields of the spiritual principles, seven power fields of a soul-like nature had arisen around the earth, which since then have permeated and influenced human souls. They represent standards for the soul characteristics of a new human being, and as such correct the soul characteristics of the old human being bound to the earthly world, and enable on the other hand the “image of God,” if it cooperates, to wake up and

to unfold. They form a sevenfold soul matrix within the spirit matrix, and both together surround people to build up the new and break down the old, the outlived. People are free to oppose or consent to this.

John turns his spiritual eye to the inhabitants of heaven. After so many scenes of calamity, disasters, and restless struggles, he again describes a resting place, a scene of salvation. This time, the sealed saints with the Lamb are already standing on “Mount Zion,” an area of relative safety, for “Mount Zion” is the “*stronghold* of God,” the holy mountain above Jerusalem, symbol of a sphere in heaven where the “armies of God,” symbol of God’s *justice*, are active.

Opposite the mountain is the temple as the “*dwelling place* of God,” emblematic of a sphere in heaven to which the sacrifices of the faithful ascend and from which God’s *grace* descends to humanity. On Mount Zion is the “light,” in the temple the “smoke” of God’s glory. Zion is the refuge of the poor and oppressed of God’s people, which is why festive rejoicing reigns there, while in the temple, the priests and co-workers of God are engaged in reverence and contemplation.

So now on Mount Zion stands the “Lamb” of God, Jesus the Christ, with the 144,000 saved by him from the chaos of the earthly world, the innumerable people who on the path made possible by the “Lamb” and his “blood,” his soul power, have restored the once lost harmony between spirit, soul, and body. They bear “on their foreheads” the “name” of the Lamb and his Father, for they have realized their imperishable identity, their true, divine self, in contrast to those people who have written on their “foreheads” as a mark the “name” of the beast, the perishable identity of the earthly self.

All these saved people sing a new song, which sounds in John’s spiritual ear like a “sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder,” for this song is filled with power (waters) and might (thunder) and sounds like the harps of countless harpists. Just as harps send out string vibrations, the voices of souls turned to God send out soul vibrations. Their “song” does not just sound beautiful or majestic to the ears. Rather, it is the activity of vibrating soul forces that glorify and strengthen the divine order in harmony with the divine will pervading the universe, the “throne,” the divine wisdom preserved by the 24 elders, the double divine zodiac, and the divine activity unceasingly

carried out into creation by the four “living creatures” with wings before the throne of God to sustain and develop it.

It is also a “*new song*” because the consciousness and being of the singers has become free from the old consciousness and being, which was subject to earthly matter or the Mosaic “law” and now lives out of the freedom and independence of the divine spirit that has become conscious, out of the devotion of the divine soul, and out of the power of the immortal spirit body. Therefore, those who still remain in the old consciousness and being and have not let themselves be liberated by the “Lamb” from the constraints of the earthly world cannot learn this “song.”

All these liberated ones have “not defiled themselves with women” and are “virgins.” “Women” here are symbols of the passions and emotions to whose attraction and seduction human souls, whether female or male, are exposed in the world of darkness. The souls following the “Lamb,” be they female or male, are no longer subject to this attraction and seduction and are “virginally” pure. “Virgin” here, by the way, can also mean that these people have overcome the separation of the sexes and have again become bisexual in their souls like the original human beings (see Luke 20:34-36).

Jesus, the “Lamb,” the Christ, who had sacrificed his soul blood during his life for the people and had been killed, had “bought” those following him dearly with this “soul blood.” He had freed them, since they *wanted* to follow him, from the captivity in earthly matter and had made the construction of a new trinity of spirit, soul, and spirit body possible for them.

This is tantamount to overcoming the world and overcoming death, which until Jesus had not yet been possible completely, not yet up to the transfiguration even of the material body. Therefore, these Jesus followers are the “first fruits for God and the Lamb.” They are the first to have gone this new mystery path *to the end*. In contrast to the people who follow the “beast” and reminiscent of a statement by the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 53:9), they are “with no lie” in their mouth. Their speech is free from lies; they are “blameless” in every respect, not only morally, but existentially, as spirit, soul and spiritual body.

Level of Life Forces. The Seven Harvest Angels: Correction of the Earthly Disorder, Building of a New Order

When the seven *spiritual principles* activated when the seven seals are opened and when the seven *soul qualities* represented by the trumpet angels are active in humanity, people have the freedom to cooperate with them or to oppose them. Especially the religions are the means used on the part of the divine world to recommend and enable people to cooperate with them. Whether and to what extent humanity has followed these recommendations and has brought forth corresponding fruits in the realm of the divine *life forces* is now being examined by seven harvest angels.

Thereby seven standards are applied, which make a judgment possible: What is the nature of the fruits of life brought forth by humanity in the course of time? Are they useless for the divine world? Or have the seeds sown in souls by religions sprouted? Have people brought forth new life forces in harmony with the world of light?

The order of the tests corresponds again to the sevenfold structure of the human being and the world, only that they now start with the three higher layers: “divine spirit,” “life spirit,” and “human spirit,” and the four lower ones follow: thinking, feeling, willing, and doing.

Seven Standards of Testing

14:6 Then I saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation and tribe and language and people. 7He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

The “Eternal Gospel”

The first angel announces the “hour of judgment” that is coming upon “every nation and tribe and language and people.” He checks whether they had aligned their striving with the order of the divine spirit or not. The standard for this is the “*eternal gospel*,” the order of the divine world as far as it had been expressed as religious doctrine and power in the earthly world. “Fear God and give him glory,” is the content of this “eternal gospel.” The judgment and the reaping of the “harvest,” that is, the addition to the host of “saints” of those who have brought forth good fruit, take place according to this standard.

“Gospel” translated means “good news,” namely, from the divine world. The message is that people have the possibility of escaping their individual and collective misery as mortal beings subject to suffering and death by unfolding the immortal “image of God,” which as a predisposition wants to work in them. The “Son of Man” is the exemplary embodiment of this “image of God.” People can unfold it by letting the obstacle to it, the mortal ego being, gradually dissolve, “die,” in the powers of the model, the “Son of Man.” In this way, they regain their lost dignity as original human beings. Insight into this possibility and the resulting path of realization is the content of the “Good News.” It is not only contained in the biblical gospels of Christianity, but in every original religion so that the following text refers to all “who live on the earth.” On the one hand, the “eternal gospel” is a doctrine; on the other hand, it is also a power that enables its realization.

So the first angel checks whether the people have already recognized their unfortunate situation against the background of their dignity as “images of God,” continue to close their eyes to it more or less consciously, or are even still “asleep.” If they have already attained a certain awareness, he further checks whether they have already become aware of the cause of this situation, namely, the separation from God, and whether they have already accepted and tackled the task of abolishing this separation — for example, by behaving according to the seven guiding principles of the spirit and the seven quality standards of the soul.

So, have they brought fruits of life in the sense of the order of the “divine spirit” (*atman*)? In the form of a total transformation of their whole being and existence? Or is the message only a hollow sound to them, and have they remained as before in spite of the call to transformation? Do they turn the “eternal gospel” into a dogmatic theology and argue about interpretations? Do they live in the illusion that it is enough to “believe” in this message and to perform the corresponding rituals in order as mortal human beings to be resurrected immortally at the end of days and to be redeemed?

Divine Life Force

14:8 Then another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

The second angel shows concretely the great wrongdoing of which many “who live on the earth” are guilty. He pronounces that now the hour of correction has come. They had given themselves over to “Babylon the great,” a symbol of the earthly love of life and its goods or greed for wealth and possessions, as will be explained later (17:1-6). The “wine of the wrath of fornication” is this immensely strong earthly hunger for life that seduces to unfaithfulness against God, which is why “Babylon the great” is also called the “great whore.” The people had “drunk” this love for the earthly life and its riches again and again and had insatiably longed for earthly goods. Thus

their desire for the goods of the divine world, if already awakened at all, had been stifled again and again.

But, the angel proclaims, this earthly life force, “Babylon the great,” has already been replaced in the course of time by the *divine life force*, divine love, which corresponds to the “life spirit” (*buddhi*). It is the second yardstick by which the harvest of human endeavor is measured. Have people worked with this new life force, changed fundamentally as a result, and produced love of God and love of humanity as fruit? Or if they have not completely fallen prey to the “Babylon the great,” have they only surrendered to philanthropic and charitable efforts, which have their value but do not bring about a fundamental human transformation, no unity with God from which true love of humanity would come forth?

Steadfast Faithfulness

14:9 Then another angel, a third, followed them, crying with a loud voice, “Those who worship the beast and its image, and receive a mark on their foreheads or on their hands, 10they will also drink the wine of God’s wrath, poured unmixed into the cup of his anger, and they will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image and for anyone who receives the mark of its name.” 12Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and hold fast to the faith of Jesus.

13And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who from now on die in the Lord.” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them.”

The third angel speaks of the judgment that will be passed on all who “worship the beast and his image” and bear his “mark” on them. The judgment takes place through the “wine of God’s wrath” according to the

working in the “human spirit” (*manas*) of the standard of *steadfast faithfulness*, an energy that attacks and destroys the earthly energy of striving for power and wealth just as a corrosive liquid dissolves a corrupt substance. This process acts on those affected like an attack by fire and sulfur, and takes place “in the presence of the holy angels and the Lamb,” for the followers of the “beast” stand in opposition to the followers of the Lamb. The latter live in harmony with the power of the divine spirit fire and experience it as strengthening, while the same power is experienced as divine “wine of wrath” by all who deviate from it. “There is no rest day or night,” and the “smoke of their torment” rises continuously. It is emblematic of the burning of their earthly life force by the divine “wine of wrath” and of the mental pain it causes, which lasts “forever and ever,” until all earthly substance is burned up in the divine substance.

But while still alive, the followers of the Lamb, the “saints,” are always in danger of falling again into the “wine of the wrath of fornication” in spite of everything and then being corrected by the “wine of God’s wrath.” Therefore, they are called to steadfast faithfulness to the “everlasting gospel,” which means observance of the “commandments of God” and constant openness to the way pointed out by Jesus. And they are tested to see whether they have thereby acquired new soul substance, a true self that has itself become the source of divine power. They themselves as transformed, self-reliant human beings would be the fruits that could emerge and be harvested in the realm of the “human spirit” (*manas*).

If they bear such fruits, as “a voice from heaven” declares, they will be blessed after death. In contrast to the torment of the followers of the “beast,” “their labors,” the result of their lifelong striving on the path, will give them rest in the divine world, the rest of being in tune with the divine life force.

True Feeling and Thinking

14:14 Then I looked, and there was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like the Son of Man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand! 15 Another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to the one who sat on the cloud,

“Use your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.” 16 So the one who sat on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

The four last angels embody the effects of the divine life forces on the four lower layers of the earthly ego personality: thinking, feeling, willing (striving), and doing. Here too, they test to what extent the human beings, transformed from the bottom up, can bring fruit in harmony with the divine order and can themselves be added to the “saints” as a “harvest.” The test is symbolized by “sickles” with which the angels gather the harvest.

The angels all come forth from the “temple in heaven” (14:17), again indicating that they do not emanate directly from the divine realm as did the apocalyptic horsemen and trumpet angels in their time but from the realm of religion and religious striving symbolized by the “temple” in which the divine order in heaven and on earth is concretized.

The fourth angel is “like the Son of Man.” A or *the* Son of Man always embodies *thinking*, that quality by which people are distinguished from animals. Therefore, this angel sits on a “cloud,” symbolizing the sphere of consciousness, and has “a golden crown on his head,” symbolizing the victorious, guiding power of thinking over the other faculties of human or animal.

Now the angel harvests the grain of the earth, which has become “dry” and ripe. In other words, he tests whether and to what extent people — or humanity during centuries — have produced true thoughts and insights during their lives. That is his standard for this fruit: the truth of thought. “Bread” in the gospels is emblematic of divine insight, the fruit produced from the Word sown by God. For example, in feeding the 5,000 and 4,000, Jesus refers to his teaching as “bread,” the food of the soul, the true teaching he gives out to the hungry, in contrast to the “leaven,” the false teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 16:11), dry, vain, empty knowledge.

The angel like the Son of Man, however, does not become active by himself but is only called to activity by a fifth one who comes “out of the temple.” This fifth harvest angel can be seen as a symbol of desire in harmony with the divine order that sets thinking in motion. Desire and thinking, the human heart and head, always work together to bring forth knowledge.

Therefore, *true feeling and thinking* oriented to the divine order forms the standard by which these two angels test what fruit human thinking, motivated by desire, has produced. The one angel initiates the examination; the other carries it out by means of the “sickle.”

Honest Willing and Doing

14:17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. 18 Then another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over fire, and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, “Use your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe.” 19 So the angel swung his sickle over the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and he threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God. 20 And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the wine press, as high as a horse’s bridle, for a distance of about two hundred miles.

The sixth and seventh angels also work together. Both come out of the “temple in heaven,” thus work out of religion, the form that the divine order has taken in humanity in the holy scriptures and rituals of all original religions. The sixth angel, like the fourth, has a sharp sickle in his hand. He is the one who examines the fruit of will and action produced by the human being or humanity, while the seventh angel calls upon him to carry it out. The interaction between the two corresponds to the human will that triggers the action.

Therefore, the seventh angel comes from the “altar” in the temple and has “authority over fire.” “Fire” is a symbol for the will, the striving of the human being that can be directed upwards or downwards. If it directs itself upward and sacrifices egocentricity on the “altar” in the “temple,” the purified will ascends to God as the “prayers of the saints” and causes corresponding action in the praise of God. The seventh angel, on the other hand, checks with his “sickle” whether the action of the people driven by this new will has led to a fruit, to “clusters of the vine” that correspond to the will of God. *Honest*

willing and doing oriented to the divine order are the standard by which the fruit of human life is measured, to be then “gathered.”

Bread and wine, these are the two great kinds of fruit that should be produced by people during life: the results of right thinking prompted by feeling, namely true knowledge — the “bread” of the new life substance — and the results of right striving and action, the “wine” of the new life energy, which a person can communicate to others as courage to face life and trust in God to help them on their way to the divine world.

The fruits of human will and action are poured by the sixth angel into the “great wine press of the wrath of God.” The wine press is the press in which the grape juice, the later wine, is pressed out of the grapes. The urgent call from the divine world to people to realize their true essence is a kind of “press” that either presses out of them qualities that correspond to this true essence — they are the juice that becomes good wine — or it turns out that in the course of life, only ordinary egoic qualities have arisen in them, bad juice that does not make good wine.

People are moreover “pressed” by the circumstances that they themselves and all humanity have created in the course of the eons: by the unleashing of the “beasts” from the abyss and of the “dragon.” Have they withstood this pressure and remained true to their true self so that now the new substance of life, the “soul blood” of genuine human love, flows out of them? Or is only the old substance being squeezed out of them, earthly “soul blood” — feeble attempts to be good and decent, clichés and empty words, mere activism? Perhaps they shed earthly “soul blood” under the pressure of fate also by suffering from the futility of their existence or out of sheer despair, blood that rises to the horses’ chests.

The same procedure is described drastically in Isaiah 63:2-6. A divine being is asked there, “Why are your robes red, and your garments like theirs who tread the wine press?” and it answers, “I trod them [the peoples] in my anger [...]; their juice spattered on my garments [...]. I trampled down peoples in my anger [...] and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.”

The treading of the wine press happens “outside the city,” outside the heavenly Jerusalem, the “City Not Forsaken” (Isaiah 62:12), because, as it turns out, all too much impurity, all too much false fruit, has arisen in people and is pressed forth, which would profane the holy city. The “blood” pressed

out of the wine press, impure, earthly life juice, bears no resemblance to the wine of divine life energy and spills out to a distance of about 200 miles (1600 stadia in the Greek).^[21]

Later (19:15), the “Son of Man” is named as the one who treads the wine press. The angels of the Apocalypse are often only substitutes for the “Son of Man.” Basically, therefore, it is always the “Son of Man” himself who, as the pattern of the sevenfold true self, performs the seven fruit tests. He is the “image of God” becoming active in all human beings and as such the standard of true humanity. Therefore, these trials arise not only directly from the divine world and the corrupted environment of people but above all from their own being. The trials press people to show them what fruit they have produced and what must change in their life.

The “saints” who have passed the seven trials are praised as blessed. They have shown “endurance” and kept the “commandments of God” and held fast to the “faith of Jesus.” Therefore, they die “in the Lord” (Jesus) and will “rest from their labors,” for their true self, which is one with and unbreakably united to the self of Jesus, can no longer be damaged by the death of the physical body. “Their works” had given expression to and confirmed their inner state during their lifetime so that they were equal to the seven trials.

The Pure as Victors

15:1 Then I saw another portent in heaven, great and amazing: seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is ended. 2And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. 3And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb: "Great and amazing are your deeds, Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, King of the nations! 4Lord, who will not fear and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your judgments have been revealed."

John sees again a "portent in heaven." A future event "waits" in the subtle areas of the world, in "heaven," for its realization in the gross material present, the "earth." The seven phases of this event are symbolized by seven "angels" with bowls full of the divine "wrath." The divine "wrath" is nothing else than divine life energy, which triggers seven "plagues" on the earth whereby material life is purified and rebuilt. The "wrath of God is ended." Seven means of divine "wrath" are waiting to be applied.

But before that, John describes a "sea of glass mixed with fire" as he had seen it once before (4:6). It is a divine field of fiery energy/matter, fine and transparently pure, a reflection of the divine world soul over which the Spirit of God hovers (Genesis 1:2). Through the creative word of the spirit working in this power field, the true human beings, conscious of their divine self, come into being, as the spirit *speaks*, "Let there be light!" The "saints" live from this soul power and also possess it themselves: They stand "beside the sea of glass." They are the human souls turned to God, the followers of the "Lamb" who have defeated the "dragon," the beast of the "will to power," and his image, that is, the "false prophet" through the redeeming soul power, the "blood" of the Lamb. Through the power of the true self, they have overcome the "666," the psychotic-demonic energies that rise from the unconscious and want to enslave humanity.

Thus, again, in the apocalyptic drama, a scene of salvation appears before renewed catastrophes. And this time, the “saints” are already depicted as “victors” over the forces of calamity. Towards the end of the drama, the scales tilt more and more toward the “saints.” Out of gratitude for the divine help and out of joy over the victory, they play on harps and sing “the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.” “Playing and singing” are again not contemplative activities. On the contrary, after the divine will, wisdom, and love have become active in them, the liberated souls consciously cooperate with them. *This* is their harp playing, the use of their new being as an instrument that promotes and praises the harmony in the universe, and *this* is their singing, the expression of their new being within the divine order of the universe. They carry out the law of God, which prepares the freedom of all beings in the universe and was proclaimed by Moses, “Just and true are your ways!” and they help God in the realization of freedom as it has become possible through Jesus, the “Lamb.” They say, “You are holy,” inviolable and glorious, as a *state* of unconditional freedom made manifest through the Lamb. These are their songs of Moses and the Lamb.

Level of the Body. Pouring out of the Seven Bowls of Wrath: Correction of Earthly Disorder, Building up of a New Order

15:5 After this I looked, and the temple of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, 6and out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues, robed in pure bright linen, with golden sashes across their chests. 7Then one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever; 8and the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were ended.

The fourth series of seven corrections each of the world of darkness by the world of light begins. The first one started and continues from the level of the divine spirit, the second one from the level of the divine soul, the third one from that of the divine life forces, and the fourth one now concerns the effects of the divine formative forces, which carry out a purification of the human bodies and their material environment.

In this too, people are free to cooperate or resist. Behind the divine energies of wrath, there is no intention to punish. Rather, they are medicines that may taste bitter at first but are ultimately intended to bring about purification, recovery, and reconstruction. Those who resist the bitterness will suffer even more pain while free cooperation promotes the healing process and rebuilding.

For God is love that wants to keep the way to freedom open for the beings that have emerged from it and to enable them to an independent existence as perfect “images of God.” For those who cooperate with this love, it is like a stream in which they swim along, by which they are carried, and which enables them inner growth. However, if they resist and swim against it, love acts as divine wrath that foams up against the stubborn ones and carries them along by force until they arrive after all at the goal inscribed in them — but without having gained a new consciousness and freedom.

Now the “portent” seen by John before in heaven that referred to the future becomes reality in the present. The “temple,” the “tent of God in heaven” opens — as the “tabernacle” or “dwelling place” of God on earth, this temple was always carried along during the Israelites’ march through the wilderness (Exodus 25-27). The seven angels emerge, the seven powers of the purification, healing, and rebuilding of all material conditions on earth. They are clothed in “pure bright linen,” symbolizing inner and outer purity, and have “golden sashes across their chests,” symbolizing the devoted love with which they work in concert with the divine Spirit. “One of the four living creatures” before the throne of God, which represent the four kinds of divine life force, gives them “golden bowls full of the wrath of God,” full of the purifying divine medicine. It is probably the creature that resembles a bull since the activity of the angels refers expressly to the purification and healing of the “earth,” the seven layers of the human world of forms.

And as the angels come forth, the temple is filled with the glory of God. The “glory of God” is the *splendor* of God’s being, not this being itself. It is only the “smoke” or “cloud” of the divine fire. But even this reflection of God cannot be endured by people, which is why, as long as the temple is filled with the “glory of God,” they cannot enter it. An example of this is Isaiah 6:4-5. The lowly state of their unclean bodies is no match for the high state of the divine world. Only when the purification by the seven angels of the bodies and earthly conditions and a rebuilding have taken place are they in a condition to enter the temple.

Seven Medicines

16:1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God." 2So the first angel went and poured his bowl on the earth, and a foul and painful sore came on those who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped its image. 3The second angel poured his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing in the sea died. 4The third angel poured his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. 5And I heard the angel of the waters say, "You are just, O Holy One, who are and were, for you have judged these things; 6because they shed the blood of saints and prophets, you have given them blood to drink. It is what they deserve!" 7And I heard the altar respond, "Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, your judgments are true and just!"

8The fourth angel poured his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch them with fire; 9they were scorched by the fierce heat, but they cursed the name of God, who had authority over these plagues, and they did not repent and give him glory. 10The fifth angel poured his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness; people gnawed their tongues in agony, 11and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores, and they did not repent of their deeds.

12The sixth angel poured his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up in order to prepare the way for the kings from the east. 13And I saw three foul spirits like frogs coming from the mouth of the dragon, from the mouth of the beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet. 14These are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. 15("See, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and is clothed, not going about naked and exposed to shame.")

16And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Harmagedon. 17The seventh angel poured his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" 18And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a violent earthquake, such as had not occurred since people were upon the earth, so violent was that earthquake. 19The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. God remembered great Babylon and gave her the wine-cup of the fury of his wrath. 20And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found; 21and huge hailstones, each weighing about a hundred pounds, dropped from heaven on people, until they cursed God for the plague of the hail, so fearful was that plague.

"A voice from the temple" instructs the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God." The seven angels on the level of the *spirit* had gone out from the "throne" of God, from the innermost; the trumpet angels on the level of the *soul* had gone out from the "altar"; the harvest angels on the level of the *life forces* had gone out from the "temple" as the place of religious worship. The angels with the bowls of wrath now proceed from the "temple" insofar as it symbolizes the new spiritual body. (See John 2:21 where Jesus speaks of the temple of his body. The old body is broken down; the new spiritual body is built up.) They now begin the work of cleansing and rebuilding the material conditions on earth by means of the seven bowls of wrath. The "means of cleansing and building," the energy of God, becomes active in a sevenfold gradation among the people. Thereby the principles of the spirit, the qualities of the soul, and the tests of the fruits of life do not stop working. On the contrary, they continuously enable and determine the efficacies of the bowls of wrath parallel to them and as their basis.

The four first "bowls of wrath" refer again in turn to the material form of people, to their vitality, to their sensations, and to their thinking in so far as they determine or depend upon people's bodily functions and actions. People have to purify and heal voluntarily all four layers of their ego personality, or the layers will be purified for them, so that a new spirit body and new material conditions can arise in the coexistence of people.

Harmonious Metabolism

The first bowl with the first “medicine,” a divine power that regulates the form and the metabolism of the body in the sense of the divine order, refers to the “earth” (16:2), to matter. It has a negative effect in people who “had the mark of the beast and who worshiped its image,” whose body therefore behaves disharmoniously to the metabolism in the divine world, causing foul sores to form on the body. Today, people experience this, among other things, as the disease of cancer, as chaotic proliferation of the body’s cells, caused by the body’s refusal to respond with a *harmonious metabolism* to the divine design and to be transformed by it. (Such diseases can also be karmic. But even then, their cause is a disharmonious relationship to metabolism in the divine order.)

Balanced Vital Functions

The second angel pours his bowl of wrath on the “sea,” symbolizing the life forces in the body. The “medicine” of the divine life forces could cause *balanced vital functions* if the earthly life forces would let themselves be transformed by it and would cooperate. An essential part of these life forces is sexuality. For many, it has become the absolute substitute for the search for truth and insight into the connections of earthly and divine life and thus the actual meaning and content of life. Therefore, it is no longer integrated into natural and divine laws of life, becomes an end in itself, and loses its contours. Little attention is still paid to the fruitful interaction between the male and female pole. A look into physics would show what happens when two poles with the same charge meet. Plus and plus or minus and minus repel and destroy each other instead of complementing each other and becoming cooperatively creative.

The sexual aspect of the earthly life forces is also impaired by the disturbances in the sphere of sensation of the human ego personality. There is often a lack of human attention, understanding, and recognition. Many believe to be able to compensate this lack by sexual relations, try to satisfy

their need for recognition and love by mere sexuality, and thereby overstrain it.

In the long run, this exhausts the life forces. The result is “like the blood of a corpse.” All the functions of the body, the living organs which, transformed, could contribute to a new health in harmony with the divine order, gradually “die.” And the building up of new life functions according to the divine life forces, among other things an embedding of sexuality in creative, respectful interpersonal relationships, fails to take place

Considerate Togetherness

The third “medicine” from the divine world is poured out on the “rivers and springs of water,” the “fresh water,” an image for the earthly powers of sentiment. If human sentiments in relation to material life would change and act, for example, as respect for others, patience, understanding, and consideration, the divine medicine *considerate togetherness* would not need to purify or even destroy anything. It would create new interpersonal relationships; it would radically change the relationship of people to animals, plants, and the earth. Animal experimentation would be recognized as a crime against life and would cease. The justification that it is for the good of humanity would no longer be accepted: Health through crimes against creatures of God, younger siblings of human beings?

And factory farming? It can no longer even be justified with the welfare and health of human beings — how many diseases of animals and people are caused by this form of handling animals alone! Only economic profit tips the scales, and so also with the handling of plants and with the earth itself, in particular with its smallest building blocks, the atoms. Unhesitatingly, atoms are split for peaceful and warlike purposes although nobody knows what long-term effects this has on the condition of the earth and its inhabitants. Recklessly, scientists interfere with the genetic structures of living beings and create new structures without having any idea of the long-term effects in the balance of nature and without worrying about them. Exact science?

Many have shed the “blood of saints” — those people who had tried to go a way of turning to God — by aggression, evil criticism, and reckless actions,

but also the blood of their fellow creatures in the other kingdoms of nature, including the organism earth. It is only just if they are judged by the fact that now they themselves have to “drink” the “soul blood” of the aggression and cruelty of others. “It is what they deserve,” says the angel of the “fresh water,” who pours his bowl of wrath into the sphere of the sentiments of humanity. And yet, the divine life forces related to sentiments, the contents of the third bowl of wrath, want nothing more than to build new sentiments, for example, of understanding love that does not take possession, does not exploit, and patiently endures the inevitable shortcomings of the forms of earthly coexistence.

From the altar in the temple, where all the “saints” who have fallen victim to earthly wickedness stand, a voice resounds, “God, your judgments are true and just!” Since there is a connection between sentiments and bodily hormones, sentiments that are not in harmony with the divine standards produce corrupted “blood” in the form of disturbed hormonal functions and glandular diseases. People who resist the “medicine” of *considerate togetherness* must expect such bad “blood” to develop in their bodies (16:4), which again affects their relationships with humans, animals, plants, and the earth.

Community-Building Reason

The fourth angel pours his bowl on the “sun,” symbol of human reasoning. If people would cooperate with the divine life force that makes thinking possible, their minds could absorb and pass on the divine wisdom and would be cured by this remedy of their excessive pride in their own abilities and materialistic prejudices. However, since present-day thinking is almost always in the service of expectations and disappointments, which are triggered by the twin forces of love and hate, and is often only an agent of sexual needs, the thinking of most resists divine, *community-building reason*, and thus the divine thinking force acts as a scorching fire on the mind, as a corrosive cleanser.

But the mind is stubborn and does not want to be freed from the compulsion of the passions nor from its materialistic theories and

hypotheses. It retains the materialistic prejudices, “blasphemes” thereby the “name of God,” and closes itself against the insight that the divine spirit has primacy in the universe and in human beings and uses matter for its expression but does not need to be dependent on it. Such people “do not repent,” continue to act in their bias, and do not give the spirit the “glory” it deserves. Is it any wonder that the plague of this fourth angel takes effect in the form of increasingly appearing brain and nervous diseases? Whereas people could give up their partly dependent, partly manipulative nature through the divine thinking energy contained in this “bowl of wrath” and act freely for a reshaping of the human conditions according to divine standards.

Independent Individuality

The three last angels of the bowls of wrath act from the divine world, from the superconscious of the “human spirit,” “life spirit,” and “divine spirit” on the three layers of the “bottomless pit” that come up into the consciousness of the people in the times of the end. The fifth angel pours the energy of the “human spirit,” the free, *independent individuality* of the human being as an “image of God,” onto the “throne of the beast,” which symbolizes the will to power, human egocentricity. Like an eclipse of consciousness, this remedy has an effect on all those who give allegiance to the “beast.” As they resist this influence, their drive for power, prestige, and possessions is weakened or even more whipped up, and this excessive or diminished functioning causes them mental and physical agonies.

For greed or avarice cause compulsive psychoses, and darkening of the consciousness and depressions arise from the withdrawal or overuse of the vital energies. Nevertheless, often the “will to power” does not allow itself to be impressed and only gets more indignant against the “God of heaven” who is the “devotion” for others and by his universal love also gives the “beast” and the “dragon” the possibility of existence. If people would let the fifth angel and his new life force build up this ability of independent, creative action, new individual freedom would arise in the forms of earthly communities in which all would nevertheless be one.

Non-Contentious Unity

While the “sea of glass mixed with fire” (15:2) is an image for the power of the divine world soul, the “great river Euphrates” represents the opposite soul power of the “beast that rose out of the earth,” the collective soul life of the human beings who have fallen away from God. Through the activity of the sixth angel, this stream of ungodly soul forces in humanity should be gradually dried up, clearing the way for divine soul forces, the “kings from the east.” The purifying activity of the angel, however, first of all causes the opposition of the “beast that rose out of the earth,” the “false prophet,” who nevertheless tries everything to retain his power over humanity. As already described, out of his mouth come forth three “foul spirits,” “demonic spirits,” which croak incessantly like frogs. It is the drumbeat of the words of the ideologists, their noisy propaganda, which incites people in the service of their unconscious, partly repressed instincts to a raging lust for power and possessions, to wars, revenge, and persecution of those who think differently.

The “demonic spirits” go out “to the kings of the whole world,” to the leading personalities of the classes, races, peoples, and religions, in order to unite them to the final war against God, against divine will, wisdom, and love. While the sixth angel embodies *non-contentious unity*, the power of the true self to make peace between classes, races, peoples and religions, the demonic spirits under the leadership of the false prophet gather classes, races, peoples, and religions to battle despite their opposing interests against their common enemy: Jesus, the Christ.

With this, John points out for the first time that in end times, the situation increasingly intensifies until it comes to a final confrontation, a great battle between the forces of light and the forces of darkness that are outraged against the spirit. No one can predict when the powers of the spirit will have completed their work of cleansing and building up and will have drawn to themselves all the people who have turned to them, and when, on the contrary, the ungodly, demonic forces will have armed themselves for the last revolt and mobilized their followers. But this confrontation will happen, and Jesus, the Christ, will come in the form of divine spiritual powers to defeat the demonic forces. He will come “like a thief,” unforeseen and surprising. The power field of the Christ, like a thief, will take away from

people even their little ability to cooperate with the divine powers if they have not developed it (see Matthew 25:29).

Therefore, the Son of Man asks his followers to be constantly awake and ready and to remain faithful to the new state of soul they have attained on their spiritual path. “Clothes” are an image for this new state of soul, for a new consciousness that is wrapped by new thinking, feeling, living, and doing like clothing. These “clothes” have to be “held on to” and not to be lost, otherwise people would again stand “naked” before the spirit, without corresponding soul clothes and therefore without the possibility to become one with the spirit. That would be their “shame”: unbridled desires, lust for power, and ambition in the service of the “demonic spirits.”

“Harmagedon” can be translated as “City of Megiddo” or “Mount Megiddo.” On the plain at the mountain and at the city of Megiddo, situated southeast of Mount Carmel, great decisive battles had taken place again and again in the history of the people of Israel. Therefore this plain is used here by John as a symbol for the last decisive battle between the spiritual and the demonic forces. Already in the “Book of Judges,” a battle on this plain had been exaggerated to a battle between cosmic forces: “The kings came, they fought [...] by the waters of Megiddo [...]. The stars fought from heaven, from their courses they fought against Sisera” (the commander of the enemies) (Judges 5:19-20). There, on this symbolic battlefield, the “demonic spirits,” marching before the “dragon,” the “beast that rose out of the sea,” and the “beast that rose out of the earth,” the “false prophet,” gather their multitudes for the final battle.

Living Culture

As the seventh angel pours out his bowl of wrath, a “loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, ‘It is done!’” The divine will, the throne, announces from the “temple,” the “dwelling place of God” with humanity, that all factors of the divine order have now taken corrective effect. The seven seals of the “scroll” of the development of the world and of humanity have been opened; seven angels have blown their trumpets whereby this development has not only been revealed but also triggered;

seven harvest angels have become active. All these effects are still in progress. But as soon as the seventh angel's bowl of wrath is also poured out, the whole event comes to an end.

This bowl of wrath symbolizes the order of the "divine spirit" in human culture. Like a powerful "cleansing agent," the medicine of *living culture* finally destroys the whole demonic order of the "dragon" and of the "beasts" from the abyss in an enormous catastrophe. This happens first "in the air" because every order, also that of the demons, represents a mental structure, an element of the "air," what is described for example by the author of the Letter to the Ephesians. He speaks of the "ruler of the power of the air," of the (demonic) "spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient" (Ephesians 2:2). After this, even the concrete forms of human coexistence that originated from the mental structure no longer hold. Everything earthly and all human work, the entire material foundations of civilization that had been built up according to the order of the demons, are destroyed by the powerful influences of the divine will energy, the divine "wine of wrath" (16:19), which becomes active with "flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder," and "huge hailstones" as well as an "earthquake, such as had not occurred since people were upon the earth."

One can think of great natural disasters but also of the destruction of the social, economic, and political structure of human society: the "great city." This is shattered into "three parts" because if relations between the three spheres of economy, politics, and culture are based on violence and not on a common will of the citizens that corresponds to the divine order, they are not sustainable. The "cities of the nations" also collapse for the same reason: Their make-up is oriented to the service of "pagan" idols such as wealth and pleasure not to the religion of the spirit and collapses. All these processes are accompanied by war and turmoil, which also destroy the material foundations, infrastructure, and buildings. And yet, with the exception of those who are and remain devoted to the divine order, people do not turn back and "curse God." They do not realize that the "great hail" is the result of their own mistakes, that violence generates counter-violence, and still complain about this "injustice" of God.

The only possibility here for the individual to cooperate with the divine corrections for the time being is to build up, at least in the small, private

sphere, an order of life, a living, creative culture that is oriented to the divine order. And when people in all seven areas of life cooperate with the love of God, which is the actual content of the “bowls of wrath” — the divine love acts as wrath only when people resist it — a rebuilding of all seven aspects of the human being will take place. In all seven layers, people’s “hunger for life,” their love for the transient earthly life, which is the cause of death, will be replaced by love for the divine, imperishable life, and inexhaustible life force will fill them. Within the physical body, which they still need for existence in the earthly world, a new body, a spiritual body, and a new soul, a true self, will grow, which, filled with divine powers, will be immortal. And these people, recognizing the meaning of their existence and inspired by the joy of life, will be able to create a new, creative culture.

“Babylon the Great”

17:1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great whore who is seated on many waters, 2with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the inhabitants of the earth have become drunk.” 3So he carried me away in the spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. 4The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication; 5and on her forehead was written a name, a mystery: “Babylon the great, mother of whores and of earth’s abominations.” 6And I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the witnesses to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly amazed.

7But the angel said to me, “Why are you so amazed? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her. 8The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to ascend from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the inhabitants of the earth, whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will be amazed when they see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come. 9”This calls for a mind that has wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; also, they are seven kings, 10of whom five have fallen, one is living, and the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain only a little while. 11As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction. 12And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast.

13These are united in yielding their power and authority to the beast;

John describes the events of the pouring out of the last bowl of wrath in even more detail by means of the fate of “Babylon the great.”

One of the seven angels with the bowls of wrath, the seventh, who carries out the last purification, raptures John in the spirit into a “wilderness” and shows him the “judgment on the great whore,” on a “woman” sitting on a “scarlet beast.” Already once before, the Apocalypse had spoken about a “woman” who fled into the “wilderness.” “Woman” is a symbol for a community of souls that is receptively aligned with a creative, masculine principle. The “woman” who was to give birth to the “boy,” the new true self, was a community of souls turned toward the divine spirit. It had found refuge in a “wilderness,” a transit area from the earthly to the divine world. But the “woman on the scarlet beast” is the exact opposite image. It symbolizes a community of souls who turn completely to the earthly world and the “dragon.”

Also the “wilderness” in which it is located is a counter-image to the “wilderness” of the first woman; it is a transit area in the opposite direction, namely from the divine to the earthly world. The community of these souls is on the way to the spirit-hostile earthly world and crosses a wasteland which, like the “wilderness” of the first woman, also offers no food. But while the Israelites in the “wilderness” were nourished by the divine manna, the “woman on the scarlet beast” feeds on the “blood of the saints” and is “drunk” with it.

It is called the “Babylon the great,” “the great city that rules over the kings of the earth” (17:18). One need not identify this city only with ancient Rome, as the author of the Apocalypse did in his time. “City” is a timeless symbol of wealth, division of labor, rational organization, networking, and purposive relations, and the “woman on the beast” symbolizes greed for wealth and possessions. This is evidenced by her outward appearance. She is “clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls,” symbols of luxury, opulence, and the mentality that goes with it. Today this “great city” is a symbol of globalization, the networking of all peoples and all humanity on the planet in the service of an economy that sees itself as

the supreme standard and goal of life. Profit, the pursuit of profit, and the ideology of ceaseless economic growth are the hallmarks of an unbridled, “neoliberal” capitalism that today has taken hold of all spheres of existence. It is this capitalism that is represented by the “woman on the scarlet beast.”

It sits on a “beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns.” It is the same “beast” that had risen “from the sea” and embodies the will to power in the service of atheistic materialism, the “dragon.” Neoliberal capitalism draws its power from the will to power. Nothing should escape its control; everything must obey its laws. It cannot tolerate entrepreneurial independence, which is why it absolutely subjects even free markets or entrepreneurs to its monopolistic dictates. A global economic empire built by the exploitation of humanity and the earth is to control all individuals and peoples.

There is no objection against trade, capital, production, consumption, and possession as long as they move in a reasonable, moderate framework and serve humanity. But the woman on the scarlet beast is symbolic of the absolute dominion of the possessive instinct over all areas of life, even over politics, even over “human souls” (18:13). “Your merchants were the magnates of the earth,” it says later in the text, “and all nations were deceived by your sorcery” (18:23). And everyone can experience it at present: In unbounded capitalism, really everything becomes a commodity and slaves. Even “human souls” are traded. The people of the developing countries are practically the slaves of the rich countries, and already the souls of children are sacrificed everywhere to the Moloch of profit, possessions, and success, also the souls of old people and if possible, of all people.

The “woman” is “holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication.” “Fornication” is not necessarily sexual libertinage. The word in the Bible means above all unfaithfulness to the divine Spirit and exclusive devotion to the goods of the earthly world. The word also has this sense when the “kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose (the woman’s) fornication” “have become drunk” (17:2). They give themselves completely to luxury and pleasure and lose themselves in the hustle and bustle of business.

This results in countless deviations from the divine and natural order, today including corruption, tax evasion, disregard for the needs of the

dependent, excess of bureaucracy and control as the flip side of the lack of trust in the honesty and willingness of people to work, speculation on price fluctuations, and seduction through clever advertising. These are the “abominations and the impurities of fornication” contained in the “golden cup,” in the all-encompassing desire for wealth.

The angel explains to John “the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her.” It is, after all, the same beast that had come up from the “sea,” from the “bottomless pit” of the life energies, and had received a “death wound” that was healed again (13:12). Correspondingly, it is said now (17:8) that it “was and is not and is to come.” Power can be defeated by counter-power but never eradicated by counter-power that is also only earthly power. The “seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; also, they are seven kings.” This may refer to the power of the seven-hill city of Rome and its rulers, specifically to the emperor Nero when John speaks of the sixth emperor being present (symbolizing the “beast” with the number 666). Nero “belongs to the seven,” but he “goes to destruction” and is the “eighth.” This again alludes to the legend that the supposedly dead Nero would go to the Parthians and come back as the eighth emperor.

But “seven” is a symbolic number that can be applied to the “rulers” of all time periods, including the modern present, to seven typical aspects of power, for example, exercise of power through violence or populism or bribery, etc. From these “heads” of the beast, these aspects of power, the “woman” draws her power. The same is true of the “ten horns” that John identifies with “ten kings” who have not yet attained power. They represent a totality (“ten”) of typical forms of rule from tyranny to mob rule, which can develop at all times no matter how many rulers appear concretely. They have power from the beast and transfer power gained by themselves to the beast (17:13). The only difference here from the earlier description of the beast is that it is “scarlet.” This can mean either that it has taken on the “red” of the sexual libido that works behind all pursuit of wealth, or that it has been “dyed red” by “the blood of the saints and the witnesses to Jesus” (17:6).

Politics and Economy

17:14 they will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.” 15 And he said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the whore is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. 16 And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the whore; they will make her desolate and naked; they will devour her flesh and burn her up with fire. 17 For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled. 18 The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”

After the fall of the “dragon,” materialistic atheism, from “heaven,” the whole of humanity was overrun by the biological “will to power” culminating in fascism and authoritarian socialism in all its varieties also carried by the “dragon.” But as if this had not been enough, out of the “dragon” and the two “beasts,” an even more enormous, more comprehensive power emerged: the proliferation of the possessive instinct into a network of inhuman capitalism covering the whole earth. John could not foresee the modern names and details of these developments and ideologies. But doing “economic science” in his way, knowing the regularities of the human soul and the divine spirit, he knew that such phenomena would occur in every end time. That is why the Apocalypse describes aptly the captivity and catastrophe into which present-day humanity has gotten by these developments.

But the power of imperialist capitalism will not last. It will perish partly from its own internal contradictions, partly from the activity of the seventh “bowl of wrath” poured into the air. Internal contradictions are, for example, the competition among the large corporations, which causes grueling battles but also accelerates monopolization. Fearing their own demise, business leaders try to squeeze everything out of workers and resources to the point of exhausting themselves and their reserves of labor and capital.

Monopolization, however, entails immobility and rigidity since gigantic size can respond only inadequately to external and internal changes.

Above all, political power will regenerate and seek to subjugate economic power, a tendency that can already be observed in many countries today. The Apocalypse describes this also. It is true that the “whore” sits “on many waters” (17:1 and 15), which means, the “peoples and multitudes and nations” supply forces to the capitalist economy. But the “ten kings” and the “beast,” the pure power that organizes itself politically and militarily, “will hate the whore; they will make her desolate and naked; they will devour her flesh and burn her up with fire” (17:16).

The “ten kings,” the political leaders of the earth, are of *one* mind. They have the one common belief in the universal validity of the principle of power, in the enforcement of the biologically stronger, the shaping of all conditions by manipulation — and they will carry out this belief and “give their kingdom to the beast” (17:17), which will turn against the “whore,” ruthless capitalism. For the time being, it seems that the economy rather dominates politics, but the future will show whether John has seen correctly.

In any case, according to his insight, the political and military leaders will try to put reins on the oligarchs of the economy everywhere and subdue them — not with the aim of a more humane economic organization but in order to be able to control better. They will ban excesses of the economy and the “fun society” and introduce puritan sobriety. The “woman” will be made “desolate,” deprived of all splendor and opulence. Her weaknesses, nakedness, debts, and inner contradictions will become ever more apparent; she will stand “naked,” and kings will “devour her flesh”: They will attack the foundations of economic activity, real capital, savings, educational institutions, and allow production to benefit primarily the military and political elites rather than consumers in general. Investment in consumer goods, infrastructure, and cultural concerns will decline, and greed and accumulation of wealth will be punished with the harshest measures, with “fire” (17:16), as they could become dangerous to those in power.

Besides these internal contradictions, however, the activity of the seventh “bowl of wrath” is decisive. The wrong foundation of the economic, political, and cultural order, the ruthless striving for profit and power, is disintegrated by the forces of the divine order, the purifying “medicine” of the seventh

angel. It is true that most people will react badly to the divine impulses working in their own souls and will put more emphasis on violent, manipulative shaping of all conditions, on subjugation and domination of all free activity and self-reliance. But some will cooperate with the inner call to devotion and service to others and develop a living culture. They will respect each other again, trust each other, and leave each other free. This will be their basic need, the longing of the “image of God” active in them. This foundation of living together will be stronger, at least in the long run, than the manipulation and domination of others based on fear. On this foundation in harmony with the divine and natural laws of life, relationships will *grow* that serve people’s development towards their true self. Life can again be regulated reasonably, and remaining power tendencies can be curtailed.

The followers of the order that opposes God will indeed “make war on the Lamb,” but the “Lamb will conquer them” because in the long run, the basic human need for trust and devotion, symbolized by the “Lamb,” is stronger than all psychotic-demonic tendencies. The “Lamb” is “the Lord of lords and the King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful”: all those people who, starting from this basic need, decide to cooperate with the purifying “medicines.” The divine forces do not act in a maliciously punitive way. Everyone has the freedom to cooperate with them and to build up other economic conditions and ways of behavior than those based on power and control.

This possibility is being realized everywhere today although in a small scale. Those who want to participate could, for example, as owners of securities, investigate who and what is hidden behind the titles of their treasures — perhaps arms and drug deals, human trafficking, exploitation in factories, mines, and agriculture of the Third World? Many people who discovered this would not hesitate to invest their money differently.

Only where people stubbornly hold on to the old patterns are they forcibly deprived of the ground under their feet by the divine laws. Exercising power is exhausting, and those who try to escape the consequences of the hectic working life by medication will be exhausted even faster. After all, human strength is limited, and soon many will no longer be able to cope with the pressures of working life. A life based on trust and mutual respect,

on the other hand, will produce a joy of work and a joy of life; working conditions will change, and hatred, sullenness, flight into stupor, and fatigue will disappear.

Fall of "Babylon the Great"

18:1 After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority; and the earth was made bright with his splendor. 2He called out with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! It has become a dwelling-place of demons, a haunt of every foul spirit, a haunt of every foul bird, a haunt of every foul and hateful beast. 3For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxury." 4Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, so that you do not take part in her sins, and so that you do not share in her plagues; 5for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. 6Render to her as she herself has rendered, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double draught for her in the cup she mixed. 7As she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, so give her a like measure of torment and grief. Since in her heart she says, 'I rule as a queen; I am no widow, and I will never see grief,' 8therefore her plagues will come in a single day— pestilence and mourning and famine— and she will be burned with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who judges her."

9And the kings of the earth, who committed fornication and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning; 10they will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say, "Alas, alas, the great city, Babylon, the mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come." 11And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore, 12cargo of gold, silver, jewels and pearls, fine linen, purple, silk and

scarlet, all kinds of scented wood, all articles of ivory, all articles of costly wood, bronze, iron, and marble, 13cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, olive oil, choice flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, slaves—and human lives. 14”The fruit for which your soul longed has gone from you, and all your dainties and your splendor are lost to you, never to be found again!” 15The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud, 16”Alas, alas, the great city, clothed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, with jewels, and with pearls! 17For in one hour all this wealth has been laid waste!” And all shipmasters and seafarers, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off 18and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning, “What city was like the great city?” 19And they threw dust on their heads, as they wept and mourned, crying out, “Alas, alas, the great city, where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth! For in one hour she has been laid waste. 20Rejoice over her, O heaven, you saints and apostles and prophets! For God has given judgment for you against her.” 21Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, “With such violence Babylon the great city will be thrown down, and will be found no more; 22and the sound of harpists and minstrels and of flutists and trumpeters will be heard in you no more; and an artisan of any trade will be found in you no more; and the sound of the millstone will be heard in you no more; 23and the light of a lamp will shine in you no more; and the voice of bridegroom and bride will be heard in you no more; for your merchants were the magnates of the earth, and all nations were deceived by your sorcery. 24And in you was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slaughtered on earth.”

Other scenarios and consequences of the collapse of the old order are painted in rich detail. An “angel from heaven” concludes, “Fallen is Babylon the great.” Where before there was exuberance and pleasure, now there is resentment and dejection on the part of all those who have suffered losses

and must economize. Thus the “city” whose inhabitants once bathed in opulence and intoxication and “fornication” in wealth and luxury has become “a haunt of every foul spirit, a haunt of every foul bird, a haunt of every foul and hateful beast.”

And another “voice from heaven” calls on all sensible people to separate from this “woman” as soon as possible “so that you do not take part in her sins, and so that you do not share in her plagues.” Those without need who maintain the wrong order will lose their innocence and will be dragged along into the whirlpool of the downfall. Therefore, withdraw from the ruling circumstances, calls the “voice from heaven,” and thereby withdraw from them the power over you! Some already follow today this voice and as “dropouts” pursue new economic ways with much commitment and idealism.

And the “voice from heaven” continues, “Give her a like measure of torment and grief,” for the “woman on the scarlet beast” still says, “I rule as a queen; I am no widow.” With this John quotes the prophet Isaiah, who had threatened Babel, “Your nakedness shall be uncovered, and your shame shall be seen [...], you lover of pleasures, who sit securely, who say in your heart, ‘I am, and there is no one besides me; I shall not sit as a widow or know the loss of children’” (Isaiah 47:3-8): My followers — these are the “children” — will not abandon me; they continue to serve me faithfully in their own interest.

Isaiah continues: “Your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray [...]. Stand fast in your enchantments and your many sorceries [...]. You are wearied with your many consultations” (Isaiah 47:10-13). Some day, all the economists and counselors cannot save Babylon; all the conjurers of the public, who had given it hope with lies and false promises, no longer know how to advise. “They all wander about in their own paths; there is no one to save you” (Isaiah 47:15). The foundations of this society, economy, and these politics were not in harmony with the divine and natural laws, which is why they themselves and the whole edifice built on them will crumble — if there is no turn to reason.

The “kings of the earth” will weep and lament for her, and “the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore” — the enumeration of goods and commodities in 18:12-14 includes a myriad of the most diverse products and services. Those who trade all over the

world also lament the desolation of the city because all trade has come to a standstill.

The “voice from heaven” lets itself be heard again, calling all the “saints” who have kept themselves free from the excesses of the “woman” to rejoice at the downfall of the “great whore.” “For God has given judgment for you against her.” At last the balance has been struck for which the “saints” had longed for a long time (6:10). They do not rejoice out of gloating or satisfaction that justice is now being done for them. If they behaved like that, they would not be “saints,” not souls turned to God. When “God avenges the blood of his saints,” it is meant that a cosmic imbalance is removed. A tension in the human organism has arisen due to the persecution and killing of the saints. It urges for resolution. And when it is resolved, relief and rejoicing over the balance that has occurred are the result. This is the “rejoicing” of the saints.

The description of the downfall of the “woman” is concluded by a great image. An angel picks up a large stone “like a great millstone” and throws it into the sea. “With such violence Babylon the great city will be thrown down.” The worldwide organization of labor and capital built up by power, which “grinds” like a millstone, producing wealth and in the process also “grinding up” people and resources, is thrown into the “sea” of cosmic energies and dissolves there. At first, “nothing” remains behind: For a while, all artistic activity stops; joy of life, music, and dance die out; “the sound of the millstone will be heard in you no more” because industry and trade are destroyed; the “lamps” of the nocturnal amusement go out; joyless are the weddings — in short, there is desolation, emptiness, and senselessness. The peoples who “were deceived by your sorcery” stand stricken with the madness of disappointment before the shards of their great, euphorically undertaken works, and consternation and dismay spread over the disaster wrought in the intoxication of blood and power.

Heaven Begins Its Rule

19:1 After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power to our God, 2for his judgments are true and just; he has judged the great whore who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged on her the blood of his servants." 3Once more they said, "Hallelujah! The smoke goes up from her forever and ever." 4And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!"

5And from the throne came a voice saying, "Praise our God, all you his servants, and all who fear him, small and great." 6Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. 7Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready; 8to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure"—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. 9And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are true words of God." 10Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your comrades who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

While the disaster on earth is still taking its course, there is joy in heaven that the "great whore" has been judged and that the order in accordance with humanity and God has been restored in principle. The "woman on the scarlet beast" had corrupted the foundations of human life, honesty, sobriety, modesty, and mutual respect and thus extinguished all genuine joy of life, truth, and justice. So now the great corrupter, arrogance and ruthlessness,

is itself corrupted. An inevitable reaction of the divine order to the wrong actions of the whore, the inevitable correction of an erroneous development takes place. And a “great multitude in heaven,” the community of all souls and angels turned to God, cries aloud, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power to our God.”

For the second time, their voices resound as they express their thanks and happiness at their newfound security and joy in life — these sentiments are the “smoke that goes up (to God) forever and ever.” Likewise, the 24 elders and the four living creatures standing before the throne of God worship God and praise his righteousness. All the attributes of the twelve times twofold divine zodiac and the four great divine powers that carry out the will of God in the universe *experience* once again that they are in harmony with the divine order in which their bliss and freedom exist and give expression to this experience by being and doing.

And once again the voice of all the righteous, just, and truth-loving people rises up as vibrations of their being that permeate the whole universe. They rejoice at the marriage of the “Lamb” with the “bride.” This is a process that is celebrated in them all, for the “bride” of the “Lamb” is the community of all souls turned to God, embodied by the “woman” who had fled from the “dragon” into the wilderness and there had been nourished with divine food. Each soul of this community is “clothed with fine linen, bright and pure,” image of its “righteous deeds.” And the “Lamb,” the “bridegroom,” is Jesus, the Christ, who, as the divine spirit, also becomes active *in* each “saint.”

The pure soul that is receptive to the divine spirit is penetrated by the spirit, which it experiences as enlightenment, as unity with the divine order, as being enlivened by this order, as “being recognized” by the spirit as it in turn recognizes it. Paul describes this process with the words, “then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known” (1 Corinthians 13:12). The sixth beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount also speaks of this: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God” (Matthew 5:8). The pure heart, the pure soul, is the bride, and Christ, the God in the human being, is the bridegroom, who is conscious in this soul and is seen by a new consciousness. This is the marriage of the pure soul with the spirit and the marriage of the community of all the pure souls, of the “woman clothed with the sun,” with the Christ, the “Lamb,” who becomes active in all the renewed souls.

This union is at the same time a feeding of the soul with the divine spiritual powers, and thus they all partake “of the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

This is what the angel explains to John, the seer. And he challenges him: Write this down; inform the living on earth that all are blessed who are “invited” to the wedding and the wedding feast. All those who follow the inner call to reconnect with God and take an appropriate path will share in the enlightenment and its effects. The angel further emphasizes this, saying, “These are true words of God.”

The seer prostrates himself before the angel. But the latter objects to this, for angels, like people, are “servants” of God, who are to worship God, which means that they are to realize the divine order in themselves and outside of themselves. He, John, has the gift of prophecy, the “spirit of prophecy.” He has it because Jesus, the “Lamb,” expresses in him the divine love, the harmony with the divine world and its order, the overcoming of the earthly world and its disorder, in short, the “testimony of Jesus,” the re-experiencing of the way of Jesus. Being in harmony with the divine order enables people to recognize the divine order also in others and in the world and the developments arising from this order. Thus they can foresee what will happen when people deviate from it. This is the “spirit of prophecy,” the “testimony of Jesus” in the enlightened ones.

The correction of the earthly disorder by the divine powers and the construction of a new order have been completed. The events have taken place on four levels, in each case in seven sections.

The relationship of the four levels with the four principles that are embodied by the four apocalyptic horsemen is unmistakable. The spirit level corresponds to the mental, the first horseman; the soul level to the astral, the second horseman; the level of the life forces to the vital, the third horseman; and the level of the body to the material, the fourth horseman.

Judgment and Final Battle

The Son of Man as Victor

19:11 Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse! Its rider is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. 12His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name inscribed that no one knows but himself. 13He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is called The Word of God. 14And the armies of heaven, wearing fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. 15From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron; he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, "King of kings and Lord of lords." 17Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly in midheaven, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, 18to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of the mighty, the flesh of horses and their riders—flesh of all, both free and slave, both small and great." 19Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against the rider on the horse and against his army. 20And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed in its presence the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. 21And the rest were killed by the sword of the rider on the horse, the sword that came from his mouth; and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

The victory over the "dragon," the two "beasts" from the abyss, and all their followers has been won. Now the judgment of the defeated takes place, which John also sees on the basis of his spirit-permeated state of soul. He

sees “heaven opened” and recognizes the Lord of Judgment who descends to earth endowed with five special qualities.

But this “Lord of Judgment” does not come as a luminous figure recognizable to earthly eyes with all his visible hosts in his wake. He comes as a mighty “power field,” as divine love energy and wisdom that becomes active and recognizable in the *consciousness* of all of humanity. The authors of the biblical gospels also knew this, which is why Luke, for example, says, “For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day” (Luke 17:24).

The Lord of Judgment bears various names that designate his attributes. First, he is Jesus, the Christ, “like a Son of Man” who appears in his glory as the victor. As such, he is called “Faithful and True” and wages “war in righteousness.” “His eyes are like a flame of fire” — his divine faculty of knowledge exposes all semblance of human life. “From his mouth comes a sharp sword” — his activity sharply separates everything earthly from the divine. This shows that he is identical with the divine being similar to a Son of Man who had met John on Patmos and had opened his spiritual eye (1:13). Now, however, there are additionally “many diadems on his head” as proof that he has overcome all demonic spirits. As the victor, he also bears a “name that no one knows but himself.” It is the name by which he is written in the book of life, his individual task in the universe, different from all other tasks of the “images of God.”

Secondly, the Lord of Judgment is the “Lamb of God,” apparently without power, for Jesus could only achieve victory over the power of the world and of death by voluntarily laying down his “likeness of God” and incarnating into a “likeness of a servant” in order through divine love to dissolve earthly power and earthly hunger for life, the cause of death. As this “Lamb of God,” he is “clothed in a robe dipped in blood.” When “the Lord of glory” was incarnated in a “servant form,” “none of the rulers of this age understood this,” crucified him, and shed his blood, as Paul puts it (1 Corinthians 2:8). In this capacity of the “Lamb,” his name is also “The Word of God” bringing the creative wisdom and love of God as a message to the people of the earth until today.

Third, the Lord of Judgment is that boy to whom the “woman clothed with the sun” gave birth before fleeing from the dragon into the wilderness

and who was temporarily “caught up to God and his throne” (12:5). He has since grown up and as the embodiment of the matured true self that has become aware of itself, “rules the nations with a rod of iron.” With the help of the divine law, he prepares and guides all “nations,” the people who are not yet mature or willing to take a conscious path to God as members of the community of the saints, as children of the “woman,” and to gain their true self, for this path.

Fourth, when the fruits of human life are harvested, this “being like a Son of Man” treads with another angel “the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God.” He allows the divine “wine of wrath,” the divine life energy, to act upon human beings, thereby determining whether the “grapes,” that is, the fruits of human thought, feeling, and striving, are fit for noble “wine” of the spirit or contain only “blood” of the flesh (14:19-20).

And fifth, he is the “Lord of lords and the King of kings” (17:14) with innumerable attendants and followers. He has the name “King of kings” inscribed on his hip from where, as from a stretched bow, his will goes forth. He sits on a “white horse,” which again underlines his quality as Son of Man — because human beings differ from the inhabitants of the other kingdoms of nature by their thinking — and the “white horse” is the energy of thinking (see 6:2). Also following him on “white horses” are the “armies of heaven, wearing fine linen, white and pure.” They are all the pure ones, the “called, chosen and faithful” (17:14) who had not borne the mark of the beast on their foreheads and hands and had therefore been persecuted and killed. Now they come with their Lord to judge the “dragon” and its “beasts” — as a mighty divine force field that tests the nature of the earthly force fields and corrects them.

John also sees an “angel standing in the sun” who calls on all the birds “that fly in midheaven” to “eat” the “flesh” of the people who had fallen prey to the power instinct and who had died when the sixth seal was opened (6:15). “An angel standing in the sun”? Is this again the strong, powerful archangel Michael, who now appears as God’s special executive organ that seals the end of God’s enemies? After all, “Michael” means “Who is like God?” And to stand “in” the “sun” is nothing other than to work in and from God, who is symbolized by the sun.

One might be tempted to imagine a great “feast” of carrion birds consuming the flesh of corpses lying on battlefields. But it is again a symbolic process. The “birds that fly in midheaven” can be understood as the very finest, highly energetic vibrations that directly, vertically from the sky and tasked by the divine fire, the angel in the “sun,” must dissolve and absorb the too coarse, too much condensed vibrations of the earthly bodies, for gradually “a new heaven and a new earth” (21:1) arise, which presupposes that the old heaven and the old earth disappear. These are not completely extinguished — energy is imperishable — but are absorbed and replaced by higher energy fields from which also the solid flesh of earthly bodies had been formed.

When the sixth angel of the bowls of wrath had poured out his bowl on the “great river Euphrates,” the “bottomless pit,” the first beast from the abyss and his prophet, the second beast, together with the “kings of the earth” who had fallen to them had gathered on the battlefield “Harmagedon” to assert themselves as concentrated demonic-earthly powers against the divine Son of Man with his hosts (16:16). Now they are overcome by the “rider on the white horse” and his army. The thinking based on the divine love and wisdom sees through the demonic illusions, ideologies, lies, and speculations of the powerful of the world and casts these thoughts, feelings, and will impulses, as well as their collective concentrations, the two “beasts,” “into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.”

From now on in the Apocalypse, ideas about the death of the body or the soul, about the states of souls after death, and about the resurrection appear again and again, which are hardly known in traditional Christianity but are found in other writings of that time.

For example, the “lake of fire” may have been inspired by Egyptian imagery. The ancient Egyptian funerary texts, especially the *Amduat* or Book of What is in the Underworld,²² speak of the ordinary souls who at least tried to lead an honest, decent life but did not (yet) follow a path of liberation from earthly transience. In the Apocalypse, these are the “nations” who during their life are “ruled with a rod of iron” by the “boy” who has grown up (12:5). According to ancient Egyptian ideas, after the death of the gross material body, they are thrown with the contents of their still impure thinking, feeling, and willing — these are their subtle material bodies — into

a “lake of water,” a certain sphere of the realm of the dead in the hereafter. There they are purified until they are prepared for a new incarnation. The Apocalypse does not mention this “lake of water” explicitly. It speaks only several times of a “lake of fire” in the realm of the dead.

According to ancient Egyptian ideas, those human souls that had let themselves be dominated by the “dragon” and the two “beasts,” the demonic-psychotic energies of the “bottomless pit,” unlike the souls striving for a good life, are thrown after the death of the physical, coarse-material body into the “lake of fire.” Their subtle material bodies, their thinking, feeling, and desiring, had been completely occupied during life by the drives for power, prestige, and possessions. They had explicitly worked against the divine order of the spirit, and their subtle bodies had been especially solidified by this resistance. Therefore, after death, they experience their dissolution like a burning by fire and sulfur — like when a strong acid attacks and destroys rotten substance. The overly solidified attitudes of their souls are gradually annihilated by incessantly biting feelings of remorse and guilt, painful self-reproaches and accusations, until these souls can also incarnate again, according to the ancient Egyptian view.

Bondage of the “Dragon” and “Thousand Years”

20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3and threw him into the pit, and locked and sealed it over him, so that he would deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be let out for a little while. 4Then I saw thrones, and those seated on them were given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5(The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. 6Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. Over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him a thousand years.

After the two “beasts” from the abyss, embodiments of the “will to power” and of the “false imitation of Christ,” have been defeated and eliminated by the Christ himself, there remains as the greatest enemy of the Christ and of humanity the great “dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan,” embodiment of the egocentric indignation of the earthly world of darkness against the divine world of light. This egocentricity had settled as nihilistic materialism in the higher mental areas of the world, “heaven,” which are unconscious to people, and had turned against the divine spirit. The “dragon” of egocentricity, however, had been thrown from “heaven” to earth, had established itself in the conscious, material existence of humanity, had seduced the peoples to egocentricity, and had triggered demonic-psychotic effects, as they have been and still are painfully

experienced by modern people in the form of nihilism and absolute materialism.

After some time, a separation will occur between the souls that have fallen prey to the “dragon” and those that have freed themselves from it. The people turned to God will then in their turn form a strong collective force field on earth. The tendency towards nihilistic materialism will be temporarily pushed back completely by the powers of heaven and deprived of its influence on souls. This is the “bondage” of the “dragon.” An angel from heaven “holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain” binds him “for a thousand years” and casts him into the bottomless pit. For the last time, a special messenger of God appears here who banishes the “dragon,” the strongest adversary of God, for the time being from the consciousness of people and from earthly life into the unconscious and paralyzes its activity.

So humanity will now have “a thousand years” of rest before the “dragon.” This so-called “millennial kingdom” in which the “souls of those who had not worshiped the beast” will “reign with Christ a thousand years” (20:4) has always particularly occupied the imagination. Are there any clues as to what is meant by these “thousand years”?

“A thousand” is again not a numerical indication but denotes an uncountable quantity, in this case of years, that are marked by the divine world — symbolized by the “one” — in a special way. “A thousand years” are therefore the symbol for a time of a special *quality* that is made possible by a temporary restraint of the forces of the “dragon.” In the sphere that is created in this way and that is protected from the “dragon,” a special vibratory realm between the world of darkness and the world of light is formed. From the vibrations of the souls of the saints “who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus” and came back to life and from the power of the resurrected Jesus, there arises — as we would say today: with the help of “stepped-down” divine vibrations — an intermediate state that belongs neither to this world nor to the hereafter, the realm of the dead, but also not yet completely to the divine world.^[22] This vibrational realm is the abode of all those souls who during an “end time” have detached themselves from the

perishable earthly world and have laid aside their physical bodies but have not yet fully entered the divine world.

With regard to them, there is talk of the “first resurrection” and of the “second death” having no power over them. This “first resurrection” had been made possible by the mystery path by which these souls had freed themselves from the perishable earthly world. During their life, they had tuned their spirit and soul to the divine order and therefore could not be damaged by the “second death,” the dissolution of the soul sheaths of thinking, feeling, and willing. The “first death,” that of the gross physical body, also hit them, as it does the body of every earthly human being. But the “second death,” the dissolution of the subtle material bodies, did not reach them. They had become immortal. They became “alive” again, namely with their immortal new spirit soul and their immortalized subtle bodies.

The “rest of the dead did not come to life” (20:5). They had not replaced their mortal soul bound to perishable earthly things with an immortal soul with immortal subtle bodies. Therefore, they *could* “not come to life” — in other words, they could not be resurrected. They belong to the “realm of the dead,” the hereafter, in which their mortal soul together with its mortal sheaths, the subtle bodies, gradually dissolves until after some time, they incarnate into a new material body.

Furthermore, beings like Jesus exist in this vacuum who have been resurrected with spirit, soul, *and* a new spirit body. So they have accomplished the “second resurrection,” but for the time being, they renounce the “ascension” — as the Bible calls the immediate entrance into the divine world. Only in this way can they, like Jesus in his time after Easter, maintain contact with their spiritual brothers and sisters who still live in a visible physical body on earth although they have already developed a new, immortal soul. Jesus’ encounter with Mary Magdalene at the empty tomb is a good example of this.

Accordingly, these “thousand years” are a particularly intense phase, a harvest time in the development of humanity or of the individual. They do not form a visible but an *invisible* realm of peace in a sphere vibrationally situated between the divine world and the earthly world.

Thus, in this intermediate realm of the “thousand years,” there are beings with an immortal spirit soul and immortalized subtle bodies who *cannot* yet

enter the divine world because they do not yet have a spirit body, as well as others who do not yet *want* to enter although they have a spirit body. Over both groups, the “second death” has no more power.

As partakers of the special vibrational field of the “thousand years,” which is indeed fed from the powers of the divine world but is still in connection with the earthly world, they also have an effect just by their being and their vibration on all earthly people who are either of the “nations” or had “accepted the mark of the beast.”

Thus they hold “court” or “judgment.” Their state of being forms the standard for a successful or unsuccessful life of the people on earth, for their entrance into imperishability or their remaining in perishability. They are “priests of God and of Christ” because they live from the divine powers and cooperate with them. And as true selves, they “reign” with God and Christ by “ruling the nations” with “a rod of iron” and meeting all who are still trapped in the earthly world with divine love and power as once Jesus, the Christ, himself did when he was incarnated in a mortal body. In the Letter to the Hebrews of the New Testament, they are called “priests forever, according to the order of Melchizedek” (Hebrews 5:6), and Jesus, the Christ, as their head is “high priest according to the order of Melchizedek” (Hebrews 5:10).

They *can* rule because the old “dragon” is bound and pushed back but without being completely disempowered yet: These are the “thousand years,” a state of a special quality of time. As long as it lasts, the effects go out from the souls liberated in Christ relatively *unhindered* to the remaining people. These for their part are called out of the vibrational sphere of the “thousand years” to embark on a mystery path or to prepare themselves for it. Since the “dragon” is bound, they have better chances during this phase than before to respond to this call.

Therefore, many will be able to follow such a path until the “first or second resurrection” to also enter the special vibrational realm of the “thousand years.” These are those souls who, to speak in Buddhist terms, leave the wheel of birth and death. All other earthly souls will remain subject to the law of reincarnation until that other “time” and world situation occurs which is described from 20:7 onward.

Once again, it should be noted that the “thousand-year kingdom” does not belong to the “realm of the dead,” to the hereafter. Beings from the

hereafter cannot help people living in this world to build up immortal souls and immortal subtle bodies on a mystery path. After all, they themselves do not possess immortal subtle bodies, and however long their stay in the realm of the dead should last, they will *have* to incarnate again one day because their subtle bodies will be damaged and dissolved by the “second death.” Without having vibrations from the divine world, how could they support people on this side in building immortal, divine subtle bodies? Therefore, whether through channeling or otherwise, any contact between such otherworldly beings and people living in this world *binds* these people to the otherworldly beings in the “realm of the dead” and thus to the world of darkness and does not serve the ascent into the divine world of light. Only beings from the sphere of the “thousand years,” who have immortal subtle material bodies, can be helpful to souls on this side on the way to the divine world. They are helpful only by releasing “stepped-down” divine vibrations by their being, which can promote those living in this world but leaves them free to react to it or not.

So during the “thousand years,” the old heaven and the old earth have not yet disappeared. They are dissolved only afterwards, which is shown beginning with verse 20:11: “Then I saw a great white throne and the one who sat on it; the earth and the heaven fled from his presence, and no place was found for them” and ending with verse 21:1: “the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.” During the “thousand years,” a time of special possibilities and vibrations, the earthly world continues to exist as the old heaven and old earth. After this time, however, the “dragon,” who has been pushed back for the time being, will burst forth again to seduce all souls that had not been accessible to the effects from the vibrational realm of the souls with Christ. Only when it is finally defeated and thrown into the “lake of fire” will a “new heaven and a new earth” arise (21:1).

Last Rebellion of the “Dragon”

20:7 When the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, in order to gather them for battle; they are as numerous as the sands of the sea. 9They marched up over the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from heaven and consumed them. 10And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

At the end of the “thousand years,” this situation of restraint by the world of light of the forces of the “dragon,” the latter, also called “Satan,” is once again released from his prison and gathers all his followers “at the four corners of the earth.” They stand under the leadership of “Gog” from the land of “Magog” — this is an allusion to the final battle between the followers of Satan and those of God already described by the prophet Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39 — on “the breadth of the earth” and surround “the camp of the saints and the beloved city,” here symbolizing the community of the saints and all souls turned to God, that is, the special vibrational realm of the “thousand years” that has arisen out of the divine world and to which the liberated souls belong.

But “fire came down from heaven” and consumes the hostile multitudes. It is not a visible battle but a confrontation in the invisible worlds between the dimension of the earthly world and that of the divine world, between two immense fields of power, whereby the field of the divine will, wisdom, and activity acts like fire on the deviating field of satanic force and dissolves it.

For the individual followers of the “dragon,” this means that after the death of their physical body, their subtle bodies will also be dissolved by the fire of the divine will. The “lake of fire and sulfur” is nothing other than a special aspect or “outflow” of the power field of the divine will. Those who disagree with this power field and are immediately exposed to it after physical

death feel it like burning “sulfur,” as it causes painful remorse in their subtle bodies until they are completely dissolved.

Also the principle and power of self-aggrandizing indignation against the divine world symbolized by the “dragon,” the principle of biological power (the “beast rising out of the sea”), and that of distorting lies (the “beast that rose out of the earth”) — in short: the forces of egocentricity in the universe, are “tormented” in the stronger power field of the divine will as by corrosive sulfur “day and night forever and ever.”

The Greek word for “eternity” in the Bible usually denotes only a very long time, an “eon.” So also here. Through many eons of torment, the energies of *egocentricity* separated from God and resisting God are restored to their former pure state in which they had been before their emancipation from the world-soul, from “Sophia.” They now serve the divine world again in their due place in the universe: as *independence* of the original substance, which works in the unconscious depths of the developing beings and thus helps to maintain the earthly and divine order. The “dragon” with its forms of expression *can* and *must* therefore not be killed at all — this is also an old Egyptian conception. As transformed and purified energy, it must only exercise its actual function in the universe.^[23] As immortal energy, it has its justification and task in the universe and in the life of humanity as an abutment, so to speak, for the development of the spirit and the soul. Only it must be placed in its due place in the depths and *remain* there.

Judgment on the Dead

20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and the one who sat on it; the earth and the heaven fled from his presence, and no place was found for them. 12And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Also another book was opened, the book of life. And the dead were judged according to their works, as recorded in the books. 13And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and all were judged according to what they had done. 14Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire; 15and anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

In 20:5, John had pointed out that all the dead who had remained in the cycle of incarnations during the “thousand years” and had not been liberated would be “alive” and judged again after the final reckoning with the “dragon.” This is now happening. John sees “a great white throne and the one who sat on it.” It is the same One John had recognized in his vision of the divine world (4:2-3), the Lord over heaven and earth. His throne is now “white” because the original soul substance — symbolized by the jasper and carnelian stone — also contains whiteness, the color of purity. And the judgment is about purity and impurity.

“The earth and the sky” flee from the presence of the one who sits on the throne — “presence” is symbolic of his consciousness. His consciousness is the eternal truth, the conformity of all things with the divine order, the world of light, and also this order itself. Before this standard, the old earthly order of the world of darkness can no longer exist. The old earth, the material order to which the consciousness of earthly people was attuned, and the old heaven, the mental and psychic order in which the “dragon” had once worked, find “no place” before this truth and dissolve in favor of a new heaven and a new earth (21:1) that are in harmony with the world of light.

The “sea,” the “realm of the dead,” now “gives up the dead,” that is, they show themselves in their state in order to be confronted with the

macrocosmic power field of the divine will, the throne of the “One,” and to be “judged” according to their state.

Also “books” are opened. The modern person would say that special “information fields” become active because just as the microcosmic force field “human being,” also every macrocosmic force field possesses a “memory.”

One such information field, the “book of life,” contains the names of all those dead people who have an awake, living true self.

The other books contain the records of the merits and demerits of the dead, that is, of their relatively evil or good deeds: their karma. And all the dead are judged according to which deeds prevail. They are all in the “sea,” the sphere of invisible earthly life forces, which is for them the “realm of the dead.”

Now there are three possibilities. One is that the true self of physically deceased persons is already so far developed that they are recorded in the “Book of Life” and belong to the “blessed and saints.” Then, according to the judgment of the “One,” they will join them and need not incarnate again. John had already spoken of this possibility in the sections about the “thousand years.”

The second possibility is that dead people have a true self, but it is not yet developed, so they are not recorded in the “Book of Life.” Now they stand before the throne of the “One.” They may have led a so-called “decent” life as earthly *souls*. Accordingly, the judgment of the “One” consists in the fact that their subtle bodies are dissolved in a special area of the “realm of the dead,” the Egyptian “lake of water,” in which the fire of the divine will only indirectly cooperates, however as a decisive standard. This is their “second death,” a relatively mild dissolution that occurs without fiery self-reproach and remorse. Moreover, it will now be decided before the throne of God under what circumstances they will have to incarnate again according to their karma. It will be relatively favorable circumstances. John says nothing about this second possibility that again corresponds to Egyptian ideas.

The third possibility is described by him. It concerns dead people who as followers of the “dragon” when alive had expressly violated the divine laws, in other words, those people with “sins against the holy spirit” (Matthew 12:31). Their subtle bodies are now thrown into the “lake of fire,” an outflow

of the divine fire of will in another area of the “realm of the dead,” and “burned.” This is *their* “second death.” They had become slaves to the *spirit* of the “dragon” and feel the divine order as consuming, tormenting fire because their subtle bodies had been thoroughly impregnated by the “dragon.”

According to the judgment of the “One,” they will have to incarnate again under unfavorable circumstances — if not even their whole karma will be “burned” with them. In this case, their rudimentary true self would have to start all over again and build up new karma until leaving the wheel of birth and death becomes possible. That would be a particularly terrible variant of the “second death.”

The dead in the “lake of water” are judged according to their earthly *soul state*, which is why the divine spirit fire acts only indirectly as a yardstick. The dead in the “lake of fire,” the outflow of the divine spirit fire, are judged directly according to their *spiritual state*, how they have fallen to the adversary spirit of the “dragon.” This is probably behind the division into “the great and small dead” (20:12) according to the degree of their deviations.

Finally, John sees that “Death” itself and “Hades,” the realm of the dead,” are also thrown into the “lake of fire.” “Death,” as a consequence of a deviation from the divine order, is a perfectly logical and justified phenomenon in the world of darkness. But in the world of light, it is something “unnatural,” an institution that no longer has a right to exist when the divine order reasserts itself and is dissolved by the “lake of fire” of the divine will.

“Hades,” the realm of the dead, on the other hand is the “sea,” the beyond, the sphere of the earthly life forces. It is divided into two areas: the “water,” where the indirect, mild judgment by the divine fire awaits the bourgeois “decent” dead, and the area where the divine world is directly felt as burning “fire” by the dead opposing God. Also these abodes lose their function when the world of darkness is dissolved altogether. Therefore “Hades” is also thrown into the “lake of fire,” as John expresses it, by the world of light, the fiery divine will. Verse 21:1 reads, “and the sea was no more.”

PART 5: NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH

21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

John sees “a new heaven and a new earth.” The great vibrational fields of the old “earth,” that is, of earthly gross matter, of the old “heaven,” that is, of the earthly subtle material layers of the ordinary world of feeling and thought, and of the earthly “sea,” that is, of the earthly life forces, have been replaced by new, finer vibrational fields. The previous vibrational fields had not qualitatively corresponded to the divine vibrations and could not give them an adequate expression. Therefore, as the Apocalypse describes in detail, they were dissolved by the divine order in four times seven great purification and correction processes in order to be completely rebuilt. Now they correspond again to the divine vibration fields. A “new heaven and a new earth” have come into being with other structures and regularities than those of the present earthly world known to us.

Now this really seems to be an absolute “final state” of the development of humanity and its field of development, a final restoration of the lost unity with the divine world, not only a relative “final state” after an end time of medium duration. For obviously the nature of heaven and earth is *completely* changed, and completely new matter, gross or subtle, has come into being.

A great separation has arisen between the souls turned to God, the “saints,” and the souls that were thrown in the “lake of fire.” Tranquility reigns after the terrible trials, purifications, and catastrophes: the tranquility of salvation and healing that have finally been achieved. The souls turned to God now form a world community aligned with the order of the divine world and unmolested by enemies. To it belong both the souls still in the physical body on the way back to the divine world and those souls who as “resurrected ones” have already laid aside their physical body.

The souls thrown into the “lake of fire,” on the other hand, include all those who had not distanced themselves from the “dragon” and the two

“beasts.” They are those who are mentioned in verse 21:8 and have to die the “second death” in the “lake of fire.”

But there is no absolute final state in the world. There always remain not yet redeemed souls who must receive new possibilities for development in new fields of development. Therefore, the Apocalypse describes that the ordinary souls who belong neither to the “saints” nor to the souls delivered to the “lake of fire” continue to live on earth and under heaven even after the great end time. Verses 24 and 26 of this chapter, for example, speak of this. “The nations will walk by its light” (21:24) without already belonging to it themselves. They will be surrounded and held by the radiance of the “holy city.” And the “kings of the earth,” who are also not yet liberated souls, bring “their glory,” all their power and earthly achievements, to the “holy city” and serve it. They also belong to the “nations” who are ruled by the “saints” with an “iron rod.” The purification and correction processes have changed their soul-spiritual state, but they have not yet become immortal. After the death of their gross material body, they have to purify themselves in the “lake of water,” and there they have to die their “second death,” the death of the subtle bodies, similar to the souls that have fallen prey to the “dragon” in the “lake of fire,” in order to be able to incarnate again.

John does not speak of these states explicitly. But he describes in detail the world community of the immortal souls turned to God, whether still with or already without earthly bodies, and his description applies to the situation after a great end time as well as an end time of medium duration. The whole history of humanity had been a movement from the origin of the original humanity, through the “fall” of a part of humanity into the world of darkness, to the deepest depths of separation from the divine light world. Jesus, the Christ, however, brought the turnaround, and since then, the movement goes through great corrections and purification processes first to a state of separation between the people who remained in the world of darkness and those who were liberated from it who enter the vibrational realm of the “thousand years.” Then a restoration of the people turned to God and their original field of development takes place. For these redeemed and liberated people, the previous gross material earth and its fine material areas, the old heaven, will be replaced by a “new earth and a new heaven.” But for the not yet redeemed souls, who have to stay in the “lake of water” and

the “lake of fire” for some time in order to incarnate again, there will certainly be new fields and possibilities of development.

The New Jerusalem as a Place of the Pure Ones

21:2 And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; 4he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." 5And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. 7Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children. 8But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, the murderers, the fornicators, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars, their place will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

A symbol for the finally liberated world community of the awakened and redeemed is the "holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God." God is present in this community. He has pitched his "tent" or "tabernacle" with it as in the days of the Israelites' migration through the desert (Exodus 26-27), for all members of the community live consciously from the divine will, the divine wisdom, and the divine activity and let themselves be guided and enlightened by them.

In such a community of liberated souls, living from the spirit and possessing a new spirit body, there can be no more suffering. "Every tear will be wiped from the eyes," and also "death will be no more," for the cause of death, the hunger for the perishable earthly life, has been dissolved. All the evils of the perishable world are past.

"For the first things have passed away." The "image of God," the original human being (see the Bible's first creation account, Genesis 1:1-31 and 2:1-3), had "fallen" out of union with God, with the "Elohim," and people had found themselves in a perishable earthly world. "Yahweh" had then created for them a mortal body "from the dust of the ground" and breathed

into it “the breath of life” so that they could express themselves in the earthly world. Thus a mortal egoic being had arisen (see the second creation account of the Bible, Genesis 2:4-7), which Paul calls a “*living being*,” the “first man, Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:45). After that, the “image of God,” exemplarily embodied in Jesus, the Christ, had gone on the mystery path, had thereby freed itself from its imprisonment in the perishable world and in the egoic soul, and had risen again as the “last Adam.” It had become an immortal trinity of spirit, soul, and spirit body, an incorruptible, “*life-giving spirit*,” as Paul puts it (1 Corinthians 15:45). All these liberated people who have become an immortal trinity form the “communion of saints” in whom the original “image of God” has again become conscious and active. This is confirmed by the one “who was seated on the throne”: “See, I am making all things new.”

And John is asked to write down “these words” for humanity because they are “trustworthy and true.” “It is done”: The “fall” of the “image of God,” the original human being, has been undone; the unity of humanity with God has been restored after endless errors, detours, and catastrophes. And God, or God’s son, the Christ, are both the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega of this development: The “images of God” had come forth from God to develop self-awareness and the consciousness of their origin from God and of their task in the world. A part of these “images of God,” earthly humanity, had lost the contact to the divine world and had to win it back laboriously. But all people, whether in harmony with God or on the way back to God, were and are nourished by “the water of life,” the divine powers. Through this drink, all people separated from God can overcome death and the earthly world and then belong to the “communion of saints.” God says to them, “I will be their God and they will be my children,” which is similar to what God said to the prophet Samuel, “I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me” (2 Samuel 7:14).

The New Jerusalem as God's Temple

21:9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." 10And in the spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. 11It has the glory of God and a radiance like a very rare jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal. 12It has a great, high wall with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates are inscribed the names of the twelve tribes of the Israelites; 13on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. 14And the wall of the city has twelve foundations, and on them are the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15The angel who talked to me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. 16The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width; and he measured the city with his rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. 17He also measured its wall, one hundred forty-four cubits by human measurement, which the angel was using. 18The wall is built of jasper, while the city is pure gold, clear as glass. 19The foundations of the wall of the city are adorned with every jewel; the first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, 20the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. 21And the twelve gates are twelve pearls, each of the gates is a single pearl, and the street of the city is pure gold, transparent as glass. 22I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. 25Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. 26People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. 27But nothing unclean will enter it, nor

anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

An angel raptures John to a high mountain symbolizing a high vibrational field illuminated by the spirit and shows him even more clearly the world community of souls turned to God. It forms a field of new soul power filled with the spirit. As a reflection of the divine spirit, it is the “glory” of God, which shines like “jasper, clear as crystal.” For the one who sits on the throne in heaven is “like jasper and carnelian” in appearance (4:3).

The “city,” this power field of liberated souls, is surrounded by a “great, high wall,” image of its solidity and inviolability. Powers hostile to God cannot enter. It has twelve gates as entrances and exits because its powers go out into the whole world, return to the community of the “saints” with the results of their activity, and thus strengthen it unceasingly. These powers, in turn, form a complete set of typical aspects symbolized by the number “twelve”: for example, twelve possible, clearly distinguishable human character types or the twelve times two ideas embodied by the 24 elders before the throne of God, which are active on all levels of the universe. Stereometrically, this is comparable to a sphere with twelve equally sized spheres all around it without gaps. The thirteenth in the center is image for God as the central idea, but all thirteen together are also the fullness of God.

At each gate of the city stands an angel, who in turn represents one of the twelve aspects and is a guardian and messenger at the same time. The “names of the twelve tribes of the Israelites” are also inscribed on the gates, for the twelve tribes represent the twelve activities of the divine powers as they manifested themselves in the world at the time of the Old Testament. They can also be arranged as a square, three each related to thinking, feeling, willing, and doing, as they are described in the Old Testament as the four “camps” of the tribes in the wilderness placed according to the four cardinal directions (Numbers 2). Spirit, soul, and body as a trinity work respectively in the quadruplicity of thinking, feeling, willing, and doing, which results in three times four, equal to twelve activities.

The wall of the city also has “twelve foundations” on which the “names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” are written. They represent the twelve great activities of the divine powers at the time of the New Testament. The

Old Testament relates to the New Testament as a gate to the foundation, as exterior to interior, as law to freedom. Through the gate of the law, humanity reaches the foundation and the cornerstone of the city, the freedom of the Christ.

All these characteristics of the city figuratively represent the essence of the world communion of the saints: its unity and wholeness in the twelve aspects, its activity in twelve directions starting from and relating to the Godhead in the center, and the two levels on which it operates: preparation for the way of liberation through the law of the Old Testament and fulfillment through the freedom of the New Testament.

To further confirm this, the angel measures the city with a “measuring rod of gold,” the measuring rod of the divine spirit. It turns out that this power field forms a perfect square, even a perfect cube with three equal dimensions. “Length” (referring to the divine will), “width” (referring to the divine wisdom), and height (referring to the divine activity) correspond to each other, and in all three dimensions, they extend to infinity. They each measure fifteen hundred miles, literally “12,000 stadia” where twelve again signifies the completeness of their parts and “thousand” signifies infinity. The city wall is 144 cubits high “by human measurement, which the angel was using.” This is because all twelve aspects of wholeness each contain the other eleven, resulting in 144 qualities, the totality of the essential qualities of both human being and angel. The number 144 can also be broken down kabbalistically in such a way that it reflects the trinity of spirit, soul, and spirit body: the perfect human being, who as a divine human being and mature “image of God” resembles an angel (see the chapter “Sealing of the Pure Ones” in Part 2).

The power field of the world community of the saints further consists of a special substance namely of “pure gold clear as glass.” The “pure gold” points to the high vibrations of the divine spirit, and the “glass” is reminiscent of the sea of glass that spreads out before the throne of God and illustrates the pure, transparent vibrations of a reflection of the divine world soul. This power field, one with the divine order, consists of and lives from both vibrations, and its inhabitants move in both vibrations, for the “street of the city” is also “pure gold, transparent as glass” (21:21).

According to the spirit substance and soul substance of the members of the world community of the saints, John also describes the substance of their incorruptible spirit body. It differs according to the level of activity of its members: the 12 “foundations” — that is, the “apostles” together with all their disciples who embody freedom in Christ and bring it to the world — resemble the 12 most precious gems and shine in the brightest etheric substance, differentiated according to their tasks.

The twelve gates, on the other hand, which symbolize the “tribes of the Israelites,” are like “pearls.” Pearls arise from the confrontation of shelled mollusks with a painful foreign body that it gradually envelops with its own substance. In this way, the prophets and people of the Old Testament also wrestle with the Mosaic law, which is a foreign body for the egoic human being, and envelop it with their own pure soul substance. Thus, through the painful effect of the *law*, people bring forth a new consciousness, new soul substance: insight into their state separated from God and the need to return to oneness with God. This insight is the “pearl.” The new consciousness can then be enlightened and reach the *freedom* of the New Testament.

Of particular importance is the indication that the communion of saints no longer needs an external, visible temple, for the “dwelling place” or the “tent of God” is in the midst of them and within them. From and within them, the freed “image of God” works as their true identity. With spirit, soul, and body, all have become a temple for the God within each of them, and also the whole community forms an invisible temple, the divine power field in and from which it works. Therefore, it no longer needs a visible sun and moon. Within the individuals and the community, the “light of God” shines; the lamp of the “Lamb” illuminates them. Their life receives direction and purpose through the divine light. They know that only a life such as the “Lamb” had led can also be theirs: an unconditional, free obedience to the God within, to its will, wisdom, and love. A seduction by forces hostile to the spirit, which are only interested in power, possession, and prestige, is excluded in the future. One’s own painful experiences with these forces prevent new aberrations.

Therefore, “nothing unclean will enter” them. All those who “practice abomination or falsehood” must remain outside and still be purified in the “lake of fire.” Only those people whose names are written in the “Lamb’s

book of life” can enter. Only their vibration corresponds to the vibrations of the power field of the world community of souls turned to God. All people or “the nations” recorded in the “Lamb’s book of life” will walk by the light of this community, and as far as their state of soul entitles them, “the kings of the earth” will “bring their glory into it,” for this power field is not an impenetrable fortress of stone nor an earthly region over which day and night alternate. It is a vibrational field that is continuously open in resonance to equal vibrations or that repels unequal vibrations, and it is independent of the earthly alternation between light and darkness — it is the light of the spirit, the soul, and the spirit body that never goes out.

The New Jerusalem as a Community of Activity

22:1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. 3Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; 4they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

After describing the characteristics of this “city of the saints,” John describes the movements taking place in it. The angel shows him a perpetual “river of the water of life” that proceeds from the “throne of God and of the Lamb.” These are the divine soul powers, “bright as crystal,” identical with the “sea of glass” before the throne of God from which streams pour into the whole world, nourishing all beings and enabling them to develop. And just as each individual and the whole community is a “temple” in which the “throne of God and of the Lamb” stands, so also from each individual and the whole community emanates a source of these divine soul powers.

The same is true of the “tree of life on either side of the river flowing through the middle of the street,” which bears fruit twelve times a year, every month. These trees are *in* each individual and in the whole community, indeed they *are* themselves these individuals and the community, for when people have become one with God again, they are filled, like a tree, with the “sap” of the divine life. The whole “boughs” of their nervous system are flooded with inexhaustible life energies. They no longer eat only from the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil in paradise” but also and especially from the “tree of life” growing there, so that they bring forth “fruits of life” in the form of new thoughts, feelings, strivings, and actions, “twelve times a year.” This can mean uninterruptedly, without being dependent on seasons;

it can also mean that each individual realizes all twelve great aspects of the divine whole in a receiving and a creative capacity as embodied by the 24 elders before the throne of God. The “leaves of this tree,” the results of the lives of the saints, possess “healing power” and have a healing effect on all beings who have lost their way in the earthly world and have become ill in soul or body. Thus, they can find the way again and continue on it.

In this city, the power field of the world community of the saints, nothing “accursed” is to be found anymore because all have nullified the curse of separation from the divine world by their way back to unity with the divine order. All the inhabitants of the city serve God and the Lamb, and because they correspond soul-spiritually and bodily to the divine vibrations, they “behold the face of God” directly with spiritual eyes according to the sixth beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God” (Matthew 5:8). They *experience* God’s “face,” that is, God’s consciousness; they *are* themselves the divine consciousness and are embraced by it. The “name” of God is “written on their foreheads.” The identity of people, their “name” or being, is expressed in a point behind the forehead. The identity of the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem is one with the “name and essence of God,” in contrast to the “name and mark of the beast” that all souls delivered to the “lake of fire” bear “on their foreheads.” But even such souls, after a time of purification, can replace this mark, this false identity, with the divine name, the true identity as the “image of God.”

And again John emphasizes that in and over all the members of the community and in and over the community itself, the imperishable light of the divine spirit shines in place of all perishable earthly lamps, suns, or lights of understanding. “They will reign forever and ever.” As “images of God” who have matured and have the whole wealth of experience of their erroneous paths and detours in the world of darkness, they have become independent sources of the spirit, immortal “priests and kings” “forever and ever” in the kingdom of the spirit. They control all spiritual, soul, and material forces in the universe and apply them for the development of the beings in the universe.

PART 6: THE CIRCLE CLOSES

Quality of Divination

Reliability

22:6 And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true, for the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place." 7"See, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." 8I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me; 9but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your comrades the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!" 10And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. 11Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

At last the angel confirms before John everything shown and said, "These words are trustworthy and true," no imagination, no hallucination, no mediumistic transmission from the beyond, but the immersion of the divine and earthly reality into a consciousness corresponding and open to the divine vibrations. The "God of the spirits of the prophets" has shown to the seer John the play of the soul-spiritual forces like a great painting spread out before the spiritual eye. John does not look clairvoyantly into a future external to him. Just as a composer or a poet inwardly perceives a whole work at once, John sees in an instant the whole future development of humanity that results from the lawful activity of the soul-spiritual forces within and outside of him. The realization of this painting in space and time can extend over infinitely long periods of time just as the artist must transfer the work instantaneously seen inwardly into spatiotemporal succession through laborious work.

“Soon” means then: All causes are laid and recognized; the effects will be revealed in the future, and this revelation begins *immediately*. Since the breaking in of eternity into time by which the spatiotemporal development will be rolled up like a scroll, it is *always* end time, for *one* human being, Jesus the Christ, has accomplished the process of rolling up the spatiotemporal up to the emergence of a new heaven and a new earth, up to the resurrection of an immortal spirit soul and an immortal spirit body. In Jesus, the breaking of eternity into time, the rolling up of the spatiotemporal in the form of the mystery path, the descent into the “bottomless pit,” and the building of a new world from “heaven” have taken place. In principle, this process is already anchored in humanity and will successively continue.

Overwhelmed by these impressions, John now wants to prostrate himself before the angel and worship him. But the angel denies it to him. Why? Is the angel as revealer not far superior to the recipient of the revelation and would deserve reverence?

When John “saw” the Son of Man (represented here by the angel) at that time, he “fell at his feet as though dead” (1:17). As someone belonging to the *earthly* world, he is indeed tiny before the greatness of the heavenly power and would rightly prostrate himself before it. But as someone who has become one with the Godhead, he belongs to the divine world and is of the same kind with all its inhabitants. He is as free as God and all the other inhabitants of heaven. His dignity as a free being does not permit him to prostrate himself before the angel and worship him. But he will, like the angel, acknowledge a higher being above him and within him: God. He will serve God, is to that extent a “fellow servant” of all the other inhabitants of heaven, and “worships God” — not in the dust of the earth but as a free servant in heaven.

Moreover, the angel expressly commands the seer “not to seal up the words of the prophecy” and to make them known to all humanity. “For the time is near,” the time of the return of the Son of Man. The time is ripe; the consciousness of humanity is ripe to understand and consider the challenges that will be associated with this Second Coming. All are free to respond to it in their own way. They may have done wrong so far and may continue to do wrong or not; they may have been righteous people and may continue to practice justice or not, and the “holy” who walk a mystery path may “still

be holy” or leave this path again. All will be “repaid” for their “work,” their being, and their actions. All will get the “reward” that corresponds to their state of being. This is the law of karma. It is not stated here to frighten people, to threaten them, or to persuade them to “sanctify” themselves, for those who base their behavior on such motives act out of fear or alienation and will not persevere in the long run. The angel appeals only to free human insight. Without compulsion and aware of the consequences of their decision, all can decide this way or that, and will experience “grace or a curse.”

The Son of Man Speaks through the Angel

22:12 "See, I am coming soon; my reward is with me, to repay according to everyone's work. 13I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." 14Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates. 15Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

Out of and in the "angel" from whom John had received his orders, Jesus himself had repeatedly spoken. "It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches" (22:16). Therefore, John now hears from the mouth of the angel the words coming directly from Jesus, "See, I am coming soon," for the original human being, the "image of God," the true self, will be resurrected in some people in the near future just as Jesus himself was resurrected. Jesus will be resurrected in these people as the true self: "See, I am coming soon."

The Son of Man is also connected to the law of karma. He is the standard, the perfect "image of God" by which every other human being is measured. He is the beginning, the Alpha, the original human being who came forth from God. He voluntarily incarnated, as Paul puts it, in a "form of a servant" (Philippians 2:7, ESV) in order to take upon himself the karma of humanity separated from God, to dissolve it, and regain the original "form of God" (Philippians 2:6). Thus, he came to know all the causes and effects of separation from God and through his divine power, enabled all other human beings to likewise dissolve their karma and, like himself, to rebuild the original form of the "image of God." Therefore, he is also the end, the Omega.

Beatitude of the Pure

In his time on earth, the Son of Man had “washed” his “soul robes,” the thinking, feeling, willing, and doing separated from God, in his divine powers and had thus acquired an immortal spirit body, which rose incorruptible. And all who “wash their robes” on earth like the Son of Man are “blessed.” Those who, like Jesus, walk a mystery path of purification of their “soul robes” wash them in turn in the “blood of the Lamb,” namely, in its divine powers (see 7:14). Like Jesus, they then have a new thinking, feeling, and willing in harmony with the divine order and an immortal spirit body. Thus they belong to the “saints” and are blessed. They will resurrect, “enter the city by the gates,” become members of the world community of saints, and “will have the right to the tree of life”: They will eat of the tree of life that is in the New Jerusalem, the world communion of saints, will realize in themselves this tree that bears fruit twelve times a year, and will distribute its fruits.

But separated from these “blessed ones” are the “dogs” — the aggressive persecutors of the saints who may tear the saints’ bodies apart, something like what Psalm 22:16-17 describes. Also all the others mentioned in verse 22:15 must remain “outside.”

Final Words to the Reader

The Son of Man as the Source of Prophecy

22:16 “It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”

At the end of the Apocalypse, Jesus once again explicitly reveals himself as the one who has shown all these now beginning end-time events to the “churches,” that is, the great world community of the saints, through his angel messenger and his disciple John. And he describes himself on the one hand as the “root and the descendant of David,” as the “king and priest” of Israel — “Israel” are all those who had prepared themselves for the Messiah and had expected him — on the other hand as the “bright morning star” who still — and already — announces the light of the divine sun in the deepest darkness before daybreak and is himself the source of the divine light, the “Lamb” that goes out from the “Father.” In this way, he shows that he has connected in himself the Old and the New Testament, law and freedom.

Invitation to Join the Son of Man and the “Bride”

22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” And let everyone who hears say, “Come.” And let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift.

The Spirit, the “bridegroom,” and the world community of saints, the “bride,” say to every person, “Come!” Fulfill the conditions to participate in the wedding feast yourself, yes, to celebrate the marriage of spirit and soul in yourself. Conversely, those who hear this call say, “Come!” and ask the divine spirit and soul to come to them. Thus, there is a call from above and a request from below. And Jesus goes on to say, “Let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift.” Those who long for the “water of life,” the divine power that helps them fulfill their inherent purpose as the “image of God,” let them now receive this “water of life” and come!

Magic Formula of the Sealing

22:18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this book; 19if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away that person's share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

Jesus, the Lamb, the Son of Man, closes the revelation of God to John with a magic formula that is supposed to ensure that no one arbitrarily changes what has been revealed. Those who arbitrarily add something to the divine words, live accordingly, and also seduce others to do so will be inflicted with the plagues described in the Apocalypse as a necessary correction according to natural law, not as a punishment. Such people belong to those who bear the mark of the “dragon” on their forehead, the embodiment of egocentricity in relation to the divine will. On the other hand, those who arbitrarily take away something from what has been revealed, live accordingly, and also tempt others to do so, God will take away their share “in the tree of life and in the holy city.” They then also bear the mark of the “dragon” on their forehead and cannot join the world community of the saints. They must remain “outside” and will not be able to eat from the “tree of life” as long as they behave egocentrically.

John's Readiness for the Realization of What He Saw

22:20 The one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! 21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.

John, who has received this revelation and testifies to it, promises, "Surely I am coming soon! Amen, for sure!" And conversely, he, or any disciple who wants to follow Jesus, asks, "Come soon, Jesus, you image of God in me, you God in me!"

And he asks that grace, the attention of the Lamb, come to his own aid and to the aid of all those who honestly try to make their way back to the divine world. It is the sevenfold way that is described in chapters 2 and 3 in the form of the letters to the seven churches in Asia.

The Letters to the Seven Churches as Stages of a Sevenfold Path of Initiation

The Path of the Pupil of the Mysteries

In Revelation 19:9, an angel had said that all who are “invited” to the wedding feast of the Lamb would be blessed. This invitation, this inner call to return to the divine world, goes out to the seekers of truth of all times. Every seeker can answer this call by taking a path of return and become a John on Patmos and see the coming events as if in an instant. John, the awakened human being, had been taken up “in the spirit” on Patmos, had seen the Son of Man, and heard his voice. The Son of Man exemplifies the divine self, the original human being, the “image of God” that awaits realization in every human being. And this pattern of the true self had instructed John to write seven letters to the seven churches in “Asia.”

It is quite possible that the seven churches were real existing churches in Asia Minor, which, if you look at a map, are geographically arranged in an almost closed arc from south to north and back again. But the Son of Man as a power field also “carries” and “contains” these seven churches in himself. “In his right hand he held seven stars” (1:16), which are “the angels of the seven churches” (1:20). The “angels” are the basic principles on which these churches are built and from which they live, concepts derived from the divine wisdom of the Son of Man. And the latter stands “in the midst of the seven golden lampstands” (1:12-13), which are “the seven churches” (1:20). His power field encompasses them and radiates his powers into them so that they shine golden like the spirit itself.

The churches embody at the same time the seven steps of the mystery path that leads back to the divine world, seven basic principles and states that must be realized on this path. This is because the seven letters are instructions each of which refers to one stage of this path. Accordingly, they can also be read as if they were addressed to the individual pupils of the spirit who successively experience within themselves these seven basic principles and states of the mystery path. In this way, such pupils respond to the call of

the Son of Man, the true Self within themselves, receive at each step the instructions corresponding to the task at hand and the power to also accomplish the task. They themselves recognize the basic principles of this task at each stage and receive the powers to accomplish it. They are themselves the seven stars and the seven candlesticks, which one after another flare up and are lit within them always nourished by the power field of the Son of Man within them.

In doing so, the pupils will always be aware that it is not they as earthly people who are walking this path. It is not their earthly being that must and can develop into the divine human being. On the contrary, the divine human being, the true self, becomes conscious and active only to the extent that the untrue self, the earthly egoic human being, “perishes” or “dies” in them whether they first allow themselves to be purified by the divine powers or whether they gradually hand over the direction of their life and themselves entirely to the true self.

Each letter, each stage of the path, contains four aspects. First, the Son of Man himself always appears, the pattern of the true self, who explains the task of this stage and gives a corresponding order. Thereby, in each case, a special quality of the true self analogous to this task is in the foreground: “These are the words of him who ...” – and then this quality is designated.

Secondly, the task master describes the task at hand and checks to what extent it is already fulfilled by the pupils.

Thirdly, he describes the dangers at each stage and the possible failure to achieve the goal. He asks the pupils to recognize the possible mistake, to behave differently from now on, and points out the consequences if this does not happen.

But if the pupils behave again according to the task, they will, fourthly, receive their “reward.” Their true self notices the gained increase in freedom and scope of action – that is the “reward” – and is put into a corresponding function by the Son of Man. This is always expressed by the formula: “To everyone who conquers, I will give ...” – and then the new function follows.

In all this, the Son of Man always sharpens the pupils’ attention, saying, “Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.”

It is clear that the *initiative* always comes from the Son of Man, not from the ego of the pupils, and that the latter also receive from the Son of Man the *strength* for their task. But their own work is indispensable. It consists in listening, understanding, examining themselves, and cooperating with the power given to them to change their nature. Thus, both sides are always involved in the redemption. On the one hand, the Son of Man and the divine world determine the task and give strength to accomplish it. But if the pupils do not cooperate with full commitment, there will be no result. Salvation is not simply given to them. It consists in a change of their being from the bottom up. The old being is dismantled; the new one is built up, and any progress in dismantling depends on progress in building up – and vice versa.

But without membership in a spiritual school, people today cannot as a rule go this path. Too great are the resistances of the environment, of their own ego and karma, too great the possibility that they may be deluded. In a spiritual school, however, they will receive the powers to recognize resistances and illusions and to overcome them gradually. The letters to the seven churches show clearly what kind of problems these can be.

The seven stages of the path correspond in their order to the seven principles of the order of the spirit at the opening of the seven seals. It begins with the transformation of thinking, feeling, living, and doing, that is, the four main characteristics of the human personality, upon which the three aspects of the true self are then built: divine activity, divine wisdom, and divine will. The “seven letters” give concrete instructions and assistance for this path, so that the pupils can cover it consciously and with full insight into the conditions.^[24]

Insight

2:1 *“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands: 2”I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance. I know that you cannot tolerate evildoers; you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have*

found them to be false. 3I also know that you are enduring patiently and bearing up for the sake of my name, and that you have not grown weary. 4But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. 5Remember then from what you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. 6Yet this is to your credit: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers, I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God."

The essence, the concept, or as the Apocalypse puts it, the "star" of the first stage of the path is contained in the letter to the "angel" of the church at Ephesus. It is about insight into the human situation. The geographical Ephesus, located on the border of "Asia," the field of experiences on the mystery path, also symbolizes this threshold of insight. The pupils, recognizing themselves, will clearly feel that in their present earthly state, they are completely separated from the divine world and that their task is to return to conscious union with God. The task master at this stage is the Son of Man in his capacity as the bearer of the seven stars and the seven candlesticks, which here, at the beginning of the path, explicitly refer to the seven tasks awaiting the pupils.

The Son of Man notes that many pupils of the first stage have become quite aware of their task and have also made progress. They have learned to distinguish the spirits with new insight. They have sufficiently "tested" all the alleged "apostles" who seduce others and have "found" them to be "false." They have shown perseverance in doing so and have had to "endure" much ridicule and persecution because they have remained faithful to the goal of making the true human being in them conscious. "For the sake of my name," that is, for the sake of the true human being whom Jesus prototypically embodies and who also wants to become free in the pupils themselves, they have perseveringly gone their path. They hate "the works of the Nicolaitans" (2:6).

The "Nicolaitans" seem to have been people who also wanted to walk a spiritual path but believed they could eat "food sacrificed to idols" together

with non-Christians without serving the “idols” in their hearts. In other words, they could seemingly follow certain conventions of their environment and thereby avoid social difficulties, but inwardly they would not need to accept the false teachings behind the conventions (see also 2:14-15). Thus, in reality, pupils nevertheless make common cause with the idolaters and betray the mystery path.

Some pupils of the first stage are also rebuked by the Son of Man that they have already sometimes deviated from the starting point of the path. The “first love” is the connection to the divine world, the response of the one touched by the divine love to that touch. The basic condition of the path is that the connection to the divine world is never severed and all work is done in connection with and by virtue of that love. Everything that is accomplished with a self-willed objective, out of love for the world or for oneself, is without permanence. That is why the Son of Man so emphatically inculcates in the pupils to remember again their first love on the basis of which they had begun the path, to distance themselves from their self-love and love of the world, and to “repent.” He says to the pupils: If you do not behave in this way, “I will remove your lampstand from its place.” Your already gained insight, the “lampstand,” will be taken away from you if you do not return to the first love and “do the works you did at first.”

The “reward” for those faithfully fulfilling this task is “eating from the tree of life.” This tree is, among other things, the redeeming divine wisdom. The new thinking partakes of the living, imperishable “bread” of insight and becomes therefore itself imperishable.

Longing

2:8 “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of the first and the last, who was dead and came to life: 9 “I know your affliction and your poverty, even though you are rich. I know the slander on the part of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Beware, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have

affliction. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Whoever conquers will not be harmed by the second death."

The "star," the concept of the second stage of the path, is represented by the "angel" of the church in Smyrna. Here it is about the sorrow of the pupils for their present miserable state and that of humanity from which comes their urgent desire to restore the original state. This is not grief over the disappointments of the I-personality in the earthly world but grief over the fact that present-day human beings have lost their dignity as the "image of God" and live in an unholy state separated from God. And at the same time, these mortal people still consider themselves the crown of creation and believe themselves entitled to persecute, even to kill all those who pursue a goal in life other than that of power and success! – When such feelings of sorrow rise in people, their desire grows to do everything to change this state from the root.

Therefore, the task master at this stage is the Son of Man in his capacity as one who himself was killed by men, who fully understands the unworthy condition of human beings in the earthly world, and who is filled with the desire to remedy it. Grief also grips the pupils especially over those people who call themselves "Jews and are not." They claim to serve God but do just the opposite. They are not true "Jews," not followers of the "Lion of Judah," the Christ. They belong to the "synagogue of Satan," the enemy of the Christ, had at that time also blasphemed and killed the Son of Man himself, and apparently also in Smyrna of that time, convinced of the absolute validity of the Mosaic law, persecuted followers of the Christ who tried to live out of the freedom of the Gospel.

Based on his own experiences, the Son of Man brings compassion to these pupils – he "knows their affliction and their poverty" – and is the appropriate caretaker for them on this second stage of the mystery path. Like himself, some of them will be put in prison, endure sorrow, and be "poor" in joy. But you are "rich" in joy, he calls out to the pupils of this stage, since you are on a path at the end of which, as with myself, the "crown of life" beckons.

It is the victorious crown of overcoming sorrow and death through a new life that emerges from the reawakened “image of God.”

The task at this stage is to endure the pain, not to fear the suffering that the path brings, to have compassion for all others in similar situations, and to remain “faithful until death” in the desire for the “crown of life” despite all hostility. In this way, a new sentient body is created which, in harmony with the imperishable divine sentiments, is itself imperishable.

The “reward” for the pupils at this second stage, therefore, is that they will “not be harmed by the second death.” The first, inevitable death is the death of the gross physical body in this world; the second death is the following dissolution in the hereafter of the subtle mental and emotional “bodies,” of all the beliefs and sentiments that a person had built up during life. In the ordinary person, these beliefs and feelings are transient. But if a person builds up new “soul sheaths” during life, insights and feelings filled with divine life, these are indissoluble and eternal and cannot be damaged by the “second death.”

Perseverance

2:12 “And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword: 13”I know where you are living, where Satan’s throne is. Yet you are holding fast to my name, and you did not deny your faith in me even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan lives. 14But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the people of Israel, so that they would eat food sacrificed to idols and practice fornication. 15So you also have some who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 16Repent then. If not, I will come to you soon and make war against them with the sword of my mouth. 17Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white stone, and on

the white stone is written a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it."

The task on the third stage of the path, symbolized by the "star" of the church of Pergamon, is the development of a new will, a steadfastness nourished by divine life force. The pupils at this level especially feel that they live in a thoroughly materialistic world whose energies serve only the will to power and the resistance to divine love and wisdom symbolized by the "beasts from the abyss" and the "dragon." This is the "throne of Satan," which in the form of a famous temple of Zeus also stood in the Pergamon of that time. In the protection of this temple, religious and worldly powers served only their earthly interests. And yet the disciples in Pergamum prove steadfastness and perseverance in the face of chaos and enmity, maintain their connection to divine love, that is, to the "name" of the Son of Man, and their receptivity to it, that is, their "faith."

Nevertheless, there is still the danger of opportunism, namely, that pupils at this level give in more than necessary to the habits and demands of their environment in order to escape material disadvantages and exclusion. Eating "food sacrificed to idols" is again emblematic of such compromises. Many disciples even of the third level at that time believed that it would not harm their inner development when in order to avoid such disadvantages, they conformed and performed the pagan rituals with the followers of the contemporaneous religions. How far this compromise should go was left to the discretion of each disciple, then as now. Apparently there was a disciple named Antipas who also did not shun death and "was killed among you."

Pupils of that level today may also be too willing to compromise and serve today's "idols," even if only outwardly, in order to escape social pressure. They do not dare, for example, to express their own opinion among friends or to distance themselves from customary practices that they have recognized as harmful to inner development because they fear the reaction of those around them. Nevertheless, pupils who outwardly say what people like to hear and excuse themselves by having inward reservations about it harm their inner development.

Such behavior is referred to in a Jewish tradition according to which the seer Balaam advised Balak, an enemy of Israel, to set the pagan Moabite

women on Israel, which had been faithful to God, in order to induce it to fall away from God. The Moabite women invited the Israelites to the sacrificial feasts of their gods and enticed them to eat food sacrificed to idols (Numbers 25:1-2). Thus Israel was to commit “fornication” together with these women, that is, to be unfaithful to their God to whom, after all, they had promised themselves like a bride to the bridegroom.^[25]

Therefore, at this stage of the path, the Son of Man, in his capacity as the enemy of compromise, comes with a “two-edged sword” that cuts the pupils’ ties to the earthly world and all their evasions. Thus, the pupils learn to repent and not to conform too fearfully in the future. As a “reward” for consistent behavior, the Son of Man brings the pupils the new life force, the divine “manna” hidden from ordinary consciousness, which nourishes and strengthens. Thus, the pupils gain an unshakable state of soul comparable to a “white stone,” pure and solid, on which their new name is written.

White stones with names of protective gods carved on them were used as talismans in ancient times. On the “white stone,” the new, firm, and pure state of soul that develops in the pupils of this stage, their heavenly “name” is written, their new task that is appropriate to their nature, with which they are inscribed in the book of life of God. As if by a mark on their forehead, they are protected by the “name” from all earthly seduction, and no one else knows it but they themselves. All those liberated are inscribed as such in the book of life and live by the one power of the Christ. But each of them has their own task also in the divine world.

Such pupils are filled with the divine will of the seven spirits before the throne of the “One,” recognize the truth everywhere on earth, and live according to it. Therefore, the stone could also be identical with the “stone” mentioned in the prophet Zechariah (3:9), on which rest seven “eyes of the LORD, which range through the whole earth” (Zechariah 4:10).

Way of Life

2:18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose

feet are like burnished bronze: 19"I know your works—your love, faith, service, and patient endurance. I know that your last works are greater than the first. 20*But I have this against you: you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet and is teaching and beguiling my servants to practice fornication and to eat food sacrificed to idols. 21*I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her fornication. 22*Beware, I am throwing her on a bed, and those who commit adultery with her I am throwing into great distress, unless they repent of her doings; 23*and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve. 24*But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call 'the deep things of Satan,' to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden; 25*only hold fast to what you have until I come. 26*To everyone who conquers and continues to do my works to the end, I will give authority over the nations; 27*to rule them with an iron rod, as when clay pots are shattered— 28*even as I also received authority from my Father. To the one who conquers I will also give the morning star. 29*Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

The fourth stage of the path is characterized by the "star" of the church of Thyatira, a city that by its wealth and pleasure-seeking could easily seduce disciples living there to pride and recklessness and distract them from their goal. The Son of Man therefore speaks above all of the "works" to be done on the path, of the new "doing" as the fourth stage, for from the new thinking, feeling, and willing follows a new way of life according to the divine order. The Son of Man knows that the pupils on this stage, embodied by the church of Thyatira, have already accomplished works "greater than the first" in love for the divine world, in faith, and perseverance. Their "last works" had apparently shown better conformity to the divine order than the first attempts on the path.

But the danger at this stage is that the pupils, precisely because they recklessly and arrogantly believe they can rely on the new powers, obliviously act again from their old ego state and do worse works than before. Such

arrogant, self-willed actions of some pupils is embodied here by the “woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet and is teaching and beguiling my servants.”[26]

All those on the fourth step of the path who fall prey to this false, arrogant way of doing and in a figurative sense “commit adultery” like Jezebel or are “her children” will become soul-sick and die a spiritual death since they again live for their own power and greatness and use the divine powers they have been given for this purpose. They will have to suffer the consequences.

Apparently, at the time of John, disciples in Thyatira at this stage of the path claimed to have known “the deep things of Satan” and thus to be immune to his seductions. But the Son of Man, who is active within the human being, searches “minds and hearts” (“reins and hearts” in some translations) in which the life forces are concentrated. The innermost motives of the pupils lie open before the divine spirit, and the will forces hostile to God, which nevertheless still work in them, cannot be concealed from the spirit.

On those pupils who do not behave in this way and who really live from the divine powers, however, the Son of Man does not lay “any other burden” than the duty to remain in this new state of thinking, feeling, willing, and doing until he comes, that is, until he, at the fifth stage of the path, becomes visible to their spiritual eyes. Such pupils, being filled with divine power and not abusing it, will receive as “reward” “authority over the nations.” They will “rule them with an iron rod, as when clay pots are shattered.” “Rule them” means to encourage and teach them and to prepare them by the “law” of Moses for their inherent purpose as “images of God.” Their deviations from the “law” will be shattered by fate like clay pots. The “woman clothed with the sun,” embodiment of all the spiritual schools of the earth, had given birth to a “son,” the “true self,” who now, as a pupil of the fourth stage of the path, has grown up and can work openly in the midst of the “nations” (see 12:5 and 19:15).

The Son of Man has received this divine power, which he will give to his pupils, “from his Father” and will never abuse it. He appears again on this fourth stage of the path with a special quality corresponding to this stage: with “eyes like a flame of fire” and “feet like burnished bronze.” His

thinking is penetrating like fire – with it he explores hearts and minds – and the “feet” are symbol for the indomitable, firmly established, pure divine will from which follows a corresponding action. He gives the “morning star” to all who overcome, that is, the herald of the sun of God, the beginning of a new God-perceiving consciousness.

Divine Activity

3:1 “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars: “I know your works; you have a name of being alive, but you are dead. 2Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is on the point of death, for I have not found your works perfect in the sight of my God. 3Remember then what you received and heard; obey it, and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. 4Yet you have still a few persons in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes; they will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. 5If you conquer, you will be clothed like them in white robes, and I will not blot your name out of the book of life; I will confess your name before my Father and before his angels. 6Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.”

On the fifth stage of the path, the Son of Man appears as a being who works with the seven spirits standing before the throne of God, the sevenfold Holy Spirit, and brings forth from it the contents of the seven stages of the path, the seven “stars.” He again knows the works of the pupils at this stage, but they are still very deficient. Their task now, in fact, is to learn to live and act from a new consciousness, an immortal consciousness, a new spirit soul that directs the qualities acquired in the previous four stages. The pupils are expected to use the divine powers for others as true self, as “*manas*,” and to work independently on earth in their four new “soul sheaths.” They are expected at this stage to work as a living source of the Holy Spirit – Sardis has the “name of being alive.” But just this living independence in the spirit,

the *divine activity*, is difficult to attain, and therefore it is no wonder that many pupils are still “dead” in this respect or that the already germinating independence threatens to “die” again. Thus they work again with the old ego-consciousness and thereby also spoil the new soul sheaths.

Therefore, the pupils are asked by the Son of Man to become aware of this situation – “Wake up!” “Strengthen what remains” of the new spiritual power in you, the weakening independence that “is on the point of death” so that it does not disappear completely. This is only possible by the pupils reflecting on everything that they have already “received and heard” on the path and now really *applying* it and thereby preserving it. This would be repentance. If they do not apply their new abilities independently, what they have gained so far will be taken away from them again without them noticing it. The Son of Man will come by surprise, “like a thief,” and take away from them completely what they have hardly developed.

Then such pupils may ask themselves, Why do I no longer feel the divine power when I have already absorbed it for so long? The answer is, They have failed to learn to work independently out of the spiritual powers. If they did, they would feel the divine power within them again in a new, stronger way than before. However, in the state of emptiness, the apparent loss of the spiritual power, they want to try to work forcefully with the old ego-consciousness in order to regain what they have lost. But by doing so, they spoil the new soul sheaths all the more, the “clothes” of the soul that they had already acquired.

Only a few pupils apply the new spiritual powers independently with a new spirit-soul consciousness. That is why they do not spoil the new soul sheaths, the “clothes” of the soul. “They have not soiled their clothes”: Thinking, feeling, willing, and doing have become pure tools of the soul permeated by the spirit. Therefore, the “reward” of these pupils is that they “walk dressed in white.” The new state of soul and its pure tools are already their “reward” of which they are “worthy.” They belong to the “saints,” the souls turned to God, who, whether still in the physical body or already without it, “sing along” in the choir of the souls standing before God, as it is so often described in the Apocalypse. They are “clothed in white robes,” their “name” – that is their essence, their new, individual, immortal consciousness – cannot be erased “out of the book of life,” and the Son of Man will “confess”

their “name” before God and the angels, for he is one with their life, as they are one with his, which is manifest before all eyes.

Divine Wisdom

3:7 “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens: 8”I know your works. Look, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. 9I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but are lying—I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. 10Because you have kept my word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. 11I am coming soon; hold fast to what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. 12If you conquer, I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God; you will never go out of it. I will write on you the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem that comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name. 13Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.”

On the sixth step of the path, “a door is open” to the pupils, “which no one is able to shut.” It is the door to the conscious entrance into the “kingdom of God,” into the divine world. The Son of Man, who now appears as the Christ, the divine love itself, has opened it. He is “the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David.” This also refers to the geographical Philadelphia, where there was a sanctuary of the god Janus, the god of doors and keys.

The soul vibrations of those who acquire a state of divine wisdom on the sixth step of the path resemble those of the Christ. With them, they enter the divine world, which consists of the same vibrations, and no one can prevent

them; no one can close this door before them. If their vibrations are like those of the Christ, who would prevent the union of the two vibrational qualities? And if their vibrations contradict those of the Christ, who would be able to bring about the union? Thus, the task at this level is for the pupils to learn to live out of and in these vibrations of unifying wisdom and to walk through the door.

Apparently, having learned independence in spirit, many pupils have no difficulty living out of the love vibrations of the Christ even though their strength in this regard is still small. They have kept the “word” of the Christ and have not “denied his name” because they have always kept their state of soul in his love vibrations. So strong are these outward effects that even some of “those of the synagogue of Satan who say they are Jews and are not” have been “infected” and overcome by the state of being of these pupils. These people have felt the impotence of the earthly “will to power” before the power of divine love and devotion and have prostrated themselves before it. They have recognized in the pupils of this level the power of the Christ, who is the embodiment of the unifying wisdom.

This divine love unifying all “images of God” in which the pupils have patiently and steadfastly “endured” will preserve them in the “hour of trial” because through their perseverance, they have gained the inner strength for it and the connection with the Son, the divine “Word,” has become indissoluble. The temptation will come from the “dragon,” the opposite of divine love, and the “beasts from the abyss” carried by it, who will develop tremendous power. But fear and terror of this will disappear in the divine love by which such pupils are filled – if only they stand faithfully by what they have recognized and experienced. Therefore they are exhorted, “Hold fast to what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.”

Their “reward,” in other words, the self-evident result of their faithfulness to the Christ, will be that they will be “made a pillar in the temple of my God.” After the great temptation and the overcoming of the enemies of the divine spirit, the “holy city,” the new Jerusalem, the dwelling place of the “saints” who resisted the great temptation, will indeed descend to a new earth. In this city, there is no longer a stone temple, but “its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb,” the Christ (21:22). Whoever is united with the Christ, divine love, and has become strong for this love

and from this love through tested, independent work belongs to the divine temple consisting of love vibrations and is even a “pillar” in it.

It was customary in ancient times to erect a pillar in the temple for outstanding personalities on which the name of the person concerned was engraved. So, the pupils become “pillars of glory” on the sixth step. They receive a place in the invisible temple corresponding to their widely known and active love of humanity. Never again will they “go out” of this invisible temple, and they will reflect in their being the nature of God, the nature of the New Jerusalem, and the nature of the Son of Man as their own “name.”

Divine Will

3:14 “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of God’s creation: 15”I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. 16So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. 17For you say, ‘I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.’ You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich; and white robes to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen; and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. 19I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. 20Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me. 21To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. 22Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.”

Just at the end of the path, on the seventh and last stage, in the sphere of the “divine spirit,” where the pupils think they have now achieved everything, the danger of blissful withdrawal into the divine world and enjoyment of what they have achieved approaches them. The pupils say to

themselves, “I am rich; I have prospered, and I need nothing.” But this is the highest ignorance and self-love, the return of self-importance at the highest level. The fall is all the deeper. In reality, such pupils are poor in knowledge, blind to the requirements of spiritual life, and stand naked, devoid of wisdom and love, before God. Like lukewarm water, the Son of Man will “spit them out of his mouth.” The pupils would be “hot water” if they served others in divine love and “cold water” if they resisted divine love. But in the latter case, they would still be connected to it, and there would be a possibility that it would one day break into their being. Paul is the best example of this. To make possible this renewed activity of the divine spirit in their own being is the task of the pupils on the seventh step of the path.

The Son of Man advises such pupils to “buy from him gold refined by fire,” for that would be true wealth, wealth in the gold of the spirit, namely in divine, creative will, which drives like a firestorm into the rotten earthly conditions to make room for true life. Such pupils would burn in hot love for humanity and do everything to give humanity back its lost dignity. The Son of Man also advises them to acquire “white robes,” namely, unspoiled, pure sheaths of the soul: new thinking, feeling, willing, and doing inflamed in the spirit to cover “the shame of nakedness” in true human love, as well as “salve to anoint their eyes” (the geographical Laodicea was known for its medicinal products) so that in divine wisdom they would recognize their own situation but also see for what reasons humanity got into its present state and what it needs to rise again from it.

The Son of Man “reproves and disciplines” all whom he loves. His “punishment” consists in the fact that such pupils who fall from the height of their previous state fall into inner “emptiness,” into nothingness compared to the fullness of the spirit experienced so far, and into the renewed pain of separation from God. Perhaps, as a result, they gain new zeal to work for humanity, change their lukewarm behavior, and repent in this way, for the Spirit stands at the door of their heart and “knocks.” When the pupils hear the “voice” of the Son of Man within themselves and open the door again, the Spirit enters into them. The Son of Man will “come in to them and eat with them, and they with me.” This is the final union of the true self, the resurrected “image of God” with the “Father.” Such pupils can say with Jesus, “The Father and I are one” (John 10:30). They will eat together with the

“Son,” which means, directly absorb the divine powers, yes, be themselves divine will, wisdom, and activity, and live and work from it unceasingly and inexhaustibly.

Their “reward” at this stage at the end of the path is that they sit with the Son of Man on his throne and with him on the “throne of the Father.” They have become one with the divine will and carry it out in all areas of the world, in devotion to this will, which is also wisdom and love. In this way, the pupils who have followed the mystery path to a good end “reign” and “judge” in the universe (22:5).

All this is told to them by the “faithful and true witness, the origin of God’s creation,” as which the Son of Man appears at this stage of the path, for the “origin of God’s creation” is the divine will, the “Father,” from whom everything comes forth, who sustains everything and pushes it toward its inherent purpose until the fulfillment of that purpose, the end of human development. Therefore, the pupils themselves are also this end. They have “conquered” earthly power and death and are thus, like Jesus, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. The pupils who fulfill the task of this last stage of the path consciously cooperate with the divine will.

Participation in the Restoration of Humanity

Not everyone is already able to walk this path of the pupil. But everyone can prepare for it by taking note: There is such a path. They can visualize its steps and lead a life that does not entangle them even deeper in chaos. In this way, even without being pupils of a spiritual school, they will come into the field of radiation of those who, like John himself, walk the path and will suffer less from the apocalyptic corrections than if they resisted them. In any case, they will belong to the souls turned to God who are preparing for or working on their sanctification and will not slide even deeper into the degeneration of the souls who surrender to the dragon, the beasts from the abyss, and the Babylonian woman.

They are then able to do what is possible for them as earthly people to at least mitigate the apocalyptic effects. But they must be aware that they are only preparing for the path of the pupil, not yet walking on it consciously. To walk on it consciously would mean allowing the four times seven powers of the divine world to completely transform them and becoming one with these powers. It is true that their cooperation will have to be oriented to the divine powers otherwise it would be completely in vain and would not support these powers. But they must always keep in mind that this cooperation, as necessary as it is, is not the final purpose of life and does not lead to liberation from the world of darkness but is *preparation* for liberation and entry into the world of light. If they were to regard the cooperation of their ego as the main and decisive thing, they would set up a new obstacle in front of the mystery path as soon as it becomes possible for them to walk on it.

Level of the Spirit

How can such cooperation of non-pupils with the ordering principles of the spirit look concretely? The prerequisite is their consent that the seven principles of the spirit, which become active in humanity one after the other when the seven “seals” are opened, also create order in their own life. These

principles appeal like radiations from the universe to their conscience and independent judgment.

Therefore, starting with thinking, these people will realize that ordinary rational thinking is limited and that thinking influenced by materialism enslaves them. So they allow their possibly materialistic and dogmatic-religious prejudices to dissolve in favor of an *open thinking* that takes seriously the descriptions by the teachers of humanity of the wise structure of the divine world. They also do not let their thinking be dominated by emotions or unconscious influences but learn to become themselves free, incorruptible masters or “victors” over cherished illusions and hidden driving forces.

Those who cooperate with the second spiritual principle, *pure motivation*, will measure all earthly ideals, teachers, and masters, however lofty or self-confident they may pretend to be and however deceptively they may adorn themselves with “divine” attributes, against their inner compass, the search for truth. If these are not in harmony with it, they will detach themselves from them and try to honestly follow their inner compass.

Interaction with the third spiritual principle, *balancing justice*, means that without putting their selfish interests first, they are concerned with balance between work and leisure, between expenditure and income in the household, business, and state, insofar as they are responsible for these, and between give and take in interpersonal relationships. Their self-evident, regular physical inhalation and exhalation show them that they are quite capable of such balance psychologically as well.

Thus, according to the fourth spiritual principle, that of *indestructible formation*, their physical condition will change. In accordance with psychosomatic laws according to which changes in thoughts, feelings, and conduct of life also bring about physical changes, their whole body will become an instrument for and support these new faculties.

In spite of all the hostility of the “beast out of the sea,” embodiment of the “will to power,” such people will discover, fifthly, that their earthly self is entirely built up from the “world of darkness.” Whether this self conceitedly considers itself to be the “crown of creation” or on the contrary, overmodestly considers itself to be a miserable, unfree product of the material brain – it is in its egocentricity the cause of the separation from God. By this discovery,

these people create the scope for their true self later, when surrounded by the “sheaths” of the new thinking, feeling, willing, and doing, to grow in the spiritual principle of *ordering effectiveness* and to work out of the “world of light.”

Likewise, according to the sixth spiritual principle, they see through the “beast out of the earth” that imitates the divine love of the Christ. This beast promises freedom, equality, and brotherhood but only wants power. In contrast, those who feel the *unifying wisdom*, the love of the Christ, in their heart, try to realize true freedom, equality, and brotherhood, which unite all people as “images of God.”

Thus, they finally also strengthen the positive influence of the seventh spiritual principle, the *creative will*, which as an apocalyptic effect triggers the uprising of all demons under the leadership of the “dragon.” Often it seems that the “world of darkness” gains the victory. But everyone can try in their sphere of life to serve the “world of light” by honesty, integrity, and sense of responsibility. In this way, they accelerate the victory of the divine will, which restores the “world of light,” the order of the creative divine will in the whole universe.

Level of the Soul

All those who are well-intentioned can make an effort, even without already consciously walking the path of the pupil, to correspond to the qualities of the soul embodied by the seven angels with the trumpets. New attitudes and dispositions develop in them according to the way they allow these qualities to work in the seven layers of their personality.

In the realm of material forms, the first layer counted from below, they learn to turn to things, circumstances, and people with *serving devotion*. They try to order these not according to their *own* ideas but according to the relationships and needs of the things, circumstances, and people themselves. They know how important it is that they support by their actions in matter the insights that have arisen in them according to the fourth spiritual principle. If these insights remained mere theory, they would get nowhere.

Their *whole* life can change when their being increasingly corresponds to the soul quality of devotion.

The same applies to their attitudes in the second personality layer, that of the life forces. Here they cooperate with the second trumpet angel, and in *patiently allowing* things to *mature*, they take care that things and people can develop according to their own pace. They do not force them to ever accelerating growth. They gratefully accept what is due to them; they let go of what is not due to them or bring it to where it has its place. They do not allow themselves to be carried away by the pursuit of pleasure and success and do not submit to social pressure that wants to make them participants in the race for wealth, beauty, and success.

In connection with the third trumpet angel, they develop *compassion with understanding*. They at least *notice* when they become aggressive in the face of slights or disappointments and overly flattered in the face of praise. They have an understanding of their fellow human beings, the latter's situation, character, and problems arising from the past. They try to be matter-of-fact in the face of sympathy or antipathy and to give people equal attention without becoming sullen or bitter in the face of ingratitude.

The fourth trumpet angel awakens *meaning-filled trust* in their soul and joy about it. If they open themselves to this influence, they will experience that everything is connected with everything and urges to harmony with the divine order. Their feeling of isolation and inner emptiness gradually disappears, and when they encounter despair or stupidity, they nevertheless know themselves and all others embedded in the great divine context and do not lose their trust.

In the fifth personality layer, which corresponds to the "human spirit" (*manas*), they are again confronted with the "beast rising out of the sea," the "will to power" in and outside their soul. They cooperate with the trumpet angel responsible here by seeking to develop the *free courage* that comes from growing independence. They see through the exploitation attempts of the "beast," which only wants to assert itself and rule. Thus they gain more and more self-assurance on the basis of the "human spirit" working in them and act accordingly.

Likewise, they see through the imitations of divine love in the sixth soul layer. The "beast that rose out of the earth," the false Christ, wants to seduce

them into “idolatry”: into the worship of transient earthly ideals, into the illusion that final peace and harmony are possible in the transient earthly world, and into ever more exhaustive efforts to realize the good. Instead, they entrust themselves to the *unintentional goodness* of the “life spirit” (*buddhi*), which gradually grows within them promoted by the sixth trumpet angel, and cease wanting to bring about their own salvation through techniques of all kinds.

And the seventh trumpet angel causes them to see through the “dragon.” They sense the possibility of an *enlightened consciousness* that recognizes “what holds the world together in its innermost being”^[27] and sense the divine truth and wisdom working behind the development of humanity and the world that John has glimpsed. They will promote the emergence of an enlightened consciousness by studying the historical evidence of the reality of the “divine spirit” (*atman*) and its activity in the earthly world.

Level of Life

Again and again, people who respond positively to the fourfold apocalyptic matrix will examine the extent to which they have produced fruits of life through their efforts to conform to the spiritual principles and soul qualities. The testing standards are embodied by the seven harvest angels, which also act as a compass in themselves.

They start with the three upper layers of their personality, the “divine spirit,” the “life spirit,” and the “human spirit.” With regard to the uppermost layer, they find out whether and to what extent they have understood and realized the “*eternal gospel*,” the teaching about the meaning and purpose of human life that comes from above, from the “divine spirit,” and that is found in all religions.

In the test of the second harvest angel, they ask themselves whether they feel the *divine life force* coming from the Christ, from the “life spirit,” at least as an inkling within themselves, as faith in their inherent purpose to become true human beings.

Similarly, they check, thirdly, whether they have made progress in independence in relation to people and circumstances. In their later mystery

path, any such progress will benefit their *steadfast faithfulness* to the true self and the “human spirit.”

Next, it is the turn of the four lower personality layers. Together with the fourth and fifth harvest angel, they apply to themselves the fourth and fifth standard of testing: *true feeling and thinking*. Do their insights into the path that leads to reconnection with God, to “*religio*,” correspond to the truth? Are these insights, together with the feelings associated with them, nourishing bread for the soul that they can pass on to others? Or have they harvested only meager ears of corn, intellectual knowledge, and stand empty-handed?

In the same way, they check with the sixth and seventh harvest angel whether their *honest willing and doing* have given rise to a new will and courage to live, which they can communicate to others as spiritual “wine.” Should it turn out that only “blood,” earthly soul energy in the form of suggestive radiation that demands and dominates was pressed out of them in the angel’s wine press, they will try to create “wine” in themselves through greater devotion to the divine order: comforting peace that leaves others free and lifts them up and constant joy that is contagious.

Level of the Body

Finally, they will not resist the purification of the material bodily processes and conditions by the divine powers but will accept the medicine of the seven angels of wrath even though it may taste bitter at first. They will hardly be able to directly influence the bodily diseases that arise by possible resistance to the purification processes in the metabolic system, energy system (organs such as liver and kidneys), glandular system (feelings), and nervous system (thinking). But indirectly they have possibilities of influence thereby that they support in the areas of thinking, feeling, and life energy the effects of the three upper series of seven on the bodily level.

Nevertheless, they can work well with the first angel of wrath by giving up everything that hinders its activity on the one hand, especially dependence on stimulants and intoxicants, and choosing a sensible way of life

with plenty of exercise and a suitable diet on the other hand. In this way, they attain a *harmonious metabolism*.

Especially with the help of the second angel of wrath, they will strive for *balanced vital functions* of their body and consider, among other things, that they did not invent sexuality themselves and not for the purpose of enjoying it as much as possible. It has been *given* to them without their doing by evolution and has after all also a function in the household of nature: to produce offspring. They will embed this amazing creative power in meaningful relationships without misusing it for purposes of self-affirmation or as a substitute for missing contents of life.

With the help of the remedy of the third angel of wrath, they will build up a new life of feeling in interpersonal relationships, a *considerate togetherness*, and will show compassion and understanding to animals, plants, and the life organism earth. They will respect these organisms' own lives and not brazenly manipulate them only according to their egoistic interests.

With the help of the fourth angel of wrath, they will allow a thinking to emerge that will not be dominated by passions or unsatisfied feelings and will harmonize the needs of the individual with those of the community in *community-building reason*.

Together with the fifth angel of wrath, they try to develop *independent individuality* in taste and judgment and to become independent in the face of paternalism from politics, economics, and culture.

In harmony with the sixth angel of wrath, they detach themselves from fanatical ideologies that promise life fulfillment solely through athletic activity, physical beauty, material security, money, possessions, and power. All these have their justification within a reasonable framework but become obstacles when salvation and highest happiness are expected from them. As for the conflicting differences of people by race, class, religion, and ethnicity, as people interested in the true happiness of humanity, they will implement the remedy of *non-contentious unity*, the attitude of peacefulness – which does not mean servility – as much as possible.

They will especially join the seventh angel of wrath who shows them “Babylon the great” and its fall. Because here the “dragon” of materialism and atheism manifests itself in the absolute rule of politics and economy over body and soul. Buying and selling, advertising, production, consumption,

and entertainment have nowadays often become the only purpose of life; politics worldwide serves money and is corrupted by it. Individuals can do little to directly influence these great currents. But they have the possibility to live rationally in their own small sphere and not to be carried away more than necessary by the general currents of opinion, speech, and action. Above all, they can contribute to a new, worldwide *living culture* through the creative forces working within them.

Those who thus prepare themselves for the mystery path within the fourfold apocalyptic matrix will one day also want to be able to walk it consciously. Their whole old, mortal human being will then be replaced in seven stages by a new, immortal human being who can no longer be damaged by the “second death” and who will enter the soul realm of the “thousand years” in the “first resurrection.” Such people will finally also belong to those who have built up in themselves a new “heaven,” which is an immortal spirit soul, and a new “earth,” an immortal spiritual body. Together with beings of the same kind, they then form the cosmic new “heaven” and the new “earth” that John saw.

Their future mystery path consists in nothing else than consciously living through all the apocalyptic events, salvation and disaster, described in the Apocalypse. Like John, they will see and experience on this path what is gradually revealed to them. Thus, after many labors of preparation, they will get to the root of evil, for a real healing of the conditions must start from the imperishable predisposition to the true, divine self and advance from the principles of the spirit through the qualities of the soul into life and into the body. Only in this way, from the radix, the root, can a radical change and transformation, yes, a complete renewal of human beings and their reality take place, for from the root had also proceeded the disaster: the high-handedness of human beings, which corrupted their life to ever more chaotic conditions and separated them from God.

Even in this “world of darkness,” reasonable cooperation with the apocalyptic divine forces is still possible and necessary, but it is certainly not sufficient. Sufficient is only a mystery path gone now or later on which the chaotic conditions in the individual and in humanity are remedied and a new reality united again with the “world of light” arises.

Literature

By means of the books listed below, readers can inform themselves which interpretations of the Apocalypse already exist and form their own opinions about it.

I have refrained from dealing explicitly with the indicated books in the text. That would have been a boundless undertaking. Those familiar with the subject will notice for themselves how and why the present interpretation differs from other approaches.

Most of the Biblical quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version.

Emil Bock, *The Apocalypse of Saint John*, Edinburgh, UK: Floris, 1996

Raymond Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, New York: Doubleday, 1997

Bart Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2019

Craig Koester, *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2014

Elaine Pagels, *Revelations: Visions, Prophecy, and Politics in the Book of Revelation*, New York: Penguin Random House, 2012

James Morgan Pryse, *The Apocalypse Unsealed*, London, UK: Watkins, 1914

Gilles Quispel, *The Secret Book of Revelation*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978

Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Dei Gloria Intacta*, Haarlem, The Netherlands, 1962

Rudolf Steiner, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, Hudson, New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1993

About the Author

Konrad Dietzfelbinger, translator and writer, has edited the early Christian Nag Hammadi texts in four volumes with commentaries and interpreted the four biblical gospels in a new way. He is the author of *The Bible in a Spiritual Perspective*, *The Birth of the True Self in the Human Being: The Message of Jesus for Our Time in the Gospel of Luke*, and *Judas – Traitor or Hero: A Lesson about Evil*.

Apocalypse Today and his other books strip away the dust of traditional Christianity, bring Christianity to light as a living, experiential religion, and establish its current relationship to contemporary human beings.

[1] Incidentally, the evangelists, the authors of the biblical gospels, proceed in the same way when they describe soul-spiritual realities and events brought about by Jesus as “miracles.” The “miracles” are nothing more than soul-spiritual processes captured in pictures, which can be brought particularly close to the readers’ consciousness as picture stories. They too must and can be translated into concepts for the modern consciousness in order to be understood.

[2] One can ask how and why present-day humanity has reached this state of darkness. It must have to do with divine freedom, which had become a part of the original human beings as beings emerged from God, for as God is un-conditioned and free, so were also the human beings who originated from God’s will, thought, and working. They were free to develop in accordance with God or to go their own ways. A part of the original humanity, however, turned in self-will too much to the world of forms and got entangled in it. As a result, these people separated themselves from the light causing the loss of their divine willing, thinking, and doing. Nevertheless, the divine world does not cease to move people to free insight into their goal of development, harmony with the divine world, and to thus pave the way for them to reach this goal.

[3] Goethe, for example, has his Faust say at the sight of the rainbow, “Life is but light in many-hued reflection” (*Faust, Part 2, Act 1, Verse 4727*, translated by George Madison Priest).

[4] Accordingly, an aphorism of Franz Kafka reads, “Only our concept of time lets us call the Last Judgment [German = *Jüngste Gericht*, literally Youngest

or Latest Judgment] so, actually it is a court-martial [German = *Standrecht*]” (Konrad Dietzfelbinger, *Kafkas Geheimnis*, page 121).

[5] Here we could talk in more detail about these letters which John rightly put in this place in his composition of the Apocalypse, for they describe the seven steps of the mystery path in the course of which an independent organ of perception, a “spiritual eye,” for the divine world and the condition of the earthly world develops in the human being. With this spiritual eye, John himself sees the whole history of humanity as it results from the influence of the divine on the earthly world. And every reader who goes this path will also see and experience as an individual what the Apocalypse describes in the following for the whole of humanity. But it might be a relief for modern readers if they get to know the letters more closely only after the apocalyptic events. They are not, like the readers of that time, familiar from the beginning with the symbols of the initiatory path. Therefore, this path will be presented on the basis of the letters only at the end of the book when the symbols in question have already been largely explained.

[6] In the prophet Zechariah (6:1-8), a picture appears of four chariots pulled in the four cardinal directions by steeds of different colors. Possibly John makes use in his own way of this picture that was handed down.

[7] “Oil” is a symbol of the anointing of kings and priests by the insight-giving divine spirit, and “wine” symbolizes the energy with which the representatives of the divine order were to lead earthly people to freedom.

[8] This meaning of the fourth, third, fifth, or tenth parts and so on is a common principle of the Kabbalah, Jewish esotericism. See Friedrich Weinreb, *Schöpfung im Wort*, for example page 677.

[9] Christian esotericism speaks of the “Holy Spirit,” the “Son,” and the “Father” in reference to this trinity. This is not identical with the above division. For the “Holy Spirit” actually corresponds to “*buddhi*,” the “mother” (in Hebrew “spirit” is feminine); the “Son” corresponds to “*manas*,” and the “Father” to “*atman*.” To avoid misunderstandings, the esoteric classification is preferred in this book.

[10] Other translations of the last portion of verse 11 read: “until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled” (KJV); “until their companions and their brothers were also perfected, who were going to be killed, even as they had been” (*The Peshitta Holy Bible Translated*, translated by Glenn David Bauscher, 3rd edition, Lulu Publishing, 2019).

[11] Babylon is located on the Euphrates River. From there, the armies of the Assyrian or Persian kings came again and again in the history of Israel and destroyed Jerusalem. Therefore the identification of the “Euphrates River” with the God-hostile “bottomless pit.”

[12] Esoterically speaking, this third layer is that of the “ethers.” They are fourfold and enable as mental ethers the functions of the mental layer, as astral ethers those of the emotional layer, as life ethers those of the vital layer, and as form ethers those of the material layer.

[13] For example, it was the law in Israel that the Israelites each gave a tenth, the *first*, most important tenth of the profit they earned, the essence of what they had achieved, to God. See Friedrich Weinreb, *Das Opfer in der Bibel*, pages 230f.

[14] The Gnostic texts from Nag Hammadi portray this context, for example *The Sophia of Jesus Christ* in

<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/sophia.html>

[15] A legend tells: Satan was defeated by a mighty being, and surprised, he asked, “Who is it that is as strong as God?” Hence the name Michael.

[16] Incidentally, Joshua the high priest is also called a “man of foreknowledge” (Zechariah 3:8). He anticipated the life of Jesus, whom God calls “my servant the Branch” in Zechariah. For on his mystery path, Jesus overcame the selfishness of the ego, Satan, especially by passing the three temptations.

[17] The Gnostics described this process in the myth of Sophia, the World Soul, and her partner Christ. For more on this, see Konrad Dietzfelbinger, *Erlösung durch Erkenntnis – die Gnosis*, Königsdorfer Verlag, 2008.

[18] Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1976.

[19] He was possibly referring to idols that in some places appeared to talk and express the will of the idol by means of technical devices or perhaps simply to ancient oracles.

[20] *Ibid.*, page 93.

[21] Similarly, the Ethiopian Book of Enoch formulates, “And the horse shall walk up to the breast in the blood of sinners” (Chapter 100, Verse 3). By the way, instead of 1600 “stadia,” possibly *miles* are meant. That would be 12,000 stadia (1

mile corresponds to 7.5 stadia), and that would mean, The blood splashes all over the world.

[22] In esotericism, this is called “Shamballa,” the “source of happiness,” a state of “wisdom-acquired” (H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine, Volume III*, London, UK: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1897, page 431) or the “Vacuum of Shamballa” (Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri, *The Brotherhood of Shamballa*, Haarlem, The Netherlands: Rozekruis Pers, 1986), “vacuum” because in this realm no *earthly* vibrations, neither of this world nor of the beyond, occur. In the Gnostic text *Pistis Sophia*, this in-between state is called the “Thirteenth Aeon.”

[23] Set, the brother and adversary of Osiris, represented as a “hippopotamus,” may not be killed by Horus, the son of Osiris and liberator of humanity, but only tied up.

[24] The physiological processes on this transfiguristic path are described by Jan van Rijckenborgh in an astrophysical framework in *Dei Gloria Intacta* (see Literature).

[25] In the Old Testament, however, Balaam is portrayed differently. He wants to curse Israel on behalf of Balak but feels inwardly compelled by God to bless Israel (Numbers 22-24). And there is no mention of a “trap” that he sets for Israel. The Israelites begin on their own “to play the prostitute with” the Moabite women. — Obviously, the author of the Apocalypse did not know the story of Balaam and Balak exactly as it is told in the Old Testament, or he relied on a version of this story that was handed down orally.

[26] This is again drawing on the Old Testament (1 and 2 Kings). Jezebel was the daughter of a king of the Sidonians, who worshiped Baal, the highest idol, the idol of power. King Ahab of Israel took her as his wife and, also a servant of Baal, became the worst king in the history of Israel (1 Kings 16:30-33). Jezebel killed the prophets of God, practiced sorcery, and performed idolatrous sacrifices. Thus, she became unfaithful to the God of Israel and committed “prostitution” with idols. 2 Kings 9:30-37 describes her cruel death.

[27] Goethe, *Faust*, verses 382 and 383

