

Rudolf Steiner Nachlass-Verwaltung

Translated by ChatGPT4

GA 174b

Lecture Eight

Stuttgart

March 15, 1916

The last time we spoke here, during my previous presence, we examined some spiritual facts that relate to the life of the human soul after the human has passed through the gateway of death. Today, we first want to look at some facts related to this event from the spiritual world that can shed further understanding on this event. Facts that are just as capable of shedding light on the event of death, but at the same time can illuminate what happens in life between the birth and death of a person, what happens in physical life, in which we stand.

I must emphasize again and again that spiritual science must attempt not only to remain in an external schematic in the perception of human existence, but to penetrate deeper and deeper into the various members of human existence.

Now let's turn our attention to what we have often called the human etheric body. Already in yesterday's public lecture, I pointed out that we should not imagine this etheric body just as a thinned-out physical body - that would indeed be a materialistic conception -, but that we should imagine it as it appears through an inner experience. And there we come to the point that what we call thinking, imagining in a narrower sense, as man lives here on the physical plane, actually takes place in the etheric body. But for thoughts to form through this thinking, through this imagining, the physical body is necessary, because the physical body must receive its impressions if thoughts are to be held in memory here in physical life.

So, the process is as follows: When we think, of course, the thinking originates from the ego, goes through the astral body, but it plays out mainly in the movements of the etheric body. Whatever we think, whatever we imagine, happens in the movements of the etheric body. These movements of the etheric body impress themselves onto the physical body. This is put crudely, because it involves much finer processes than a rough imprinting, but one can call it such for comparison's sake. And it is by these movements of the etheric body being imprinted onto the physical body that thoughts play out for our consciousness, and thus also the thoughts are preserved in memory. To some extent, it is like this: When we have a thought and later retrieve it from memory, our etheric body moves in this act of wanting to remember, and it adjusts its movements to the physical body, and by entering those impressions that this etheric body has made in the physical body at the corresponding thought, the thought comes

up again into consciousness. So memory is tied to the movements of the etheric body being able to imprint themselves into the physical body. Of course, memory is tied to the etheric body, but the etheric body must have a kind of keeper of its movements so that memory can occur in physical life. And so we live our life between birth and death, have our experiences and remember our experiences, that is, our thought life takes place within us. In the waking state we always have more or less this thought life going on inside us.

Now as a human being in the physical body, we have the feeling that what happens in our thinking, in our imaginative life, is an inner experience, something that happens within ourselves, something that is our own property. And for physical life, this is indeed initially correct, because externally, for other people, what is happening internally as a thought experience is really not visible. So it is our property. But in relation to the spiritual world, what happens in our thought life is not our property at all. Yes, our thought life has another meaning altogether, as we often think when we refer to it as our own property. And we would like to inquire a little into this world-significance of our thought life. In order for me to make myself quite clear, I must start with a comparison: We physical humans work here in the physical world. Let's assume our work consisted of making machines. It could also consist of something else, but let's assume it consists of making machines. To make the machines, which are then put into the service of human life, we need wood or iron or whatever the machines are made of. We need the corresponding materials, and we must process these materials. The materials must be present in nature. As physical humans, we cannot create iron, create wood, these materials must be there. We take these materials, shape them, process them, and assemble them into our machines. In this, we humans exert a certain activity. In a sense, we make a realm of machines exist, but we create this realm of machines on the basis of the materials we extract from the earth.

Now imagine that we are not dealing with humans who make machines from earthly materials, from iron or wood, but with the entities of the next higher hierarchy, the entities to whom we give the names: Angeloi, Archangeloi, Archai. One could now ask: What do these beings actually have to do? Do they also have something to do, which perhaps could be compared with the activity just mentioned, and which leads to the creation of a realm of machines? - Yes, these Angeloi, Archangeloi, and Archai, they also have their activity. This activity just takes place in the spiritual world. And just as we humans have to take our iron, our wood from the subordinate realms, so first from the mineral, from the plant kingdom, to assemble our machines, the Angeloi, Archangeloi, Archai also need materials, to build, let's say, - although the expression is of course very rough -, what they are supposed to build. And what are their materials? For much of what the Angeloi, Archangeloi, Archai have to

accomplish in the spiritual world, the materials are precisely the thoughts that people regard as their own property. And it is indeed the case: While we walk through the world and nurture our thoughts, observe our thought life as it were from within and regard it as our own property, the Angeloi, Archangeloi, and Archai work on our thoughts, without our knowing it. The very least of what lives in our thoughts comes to our consciousness, because thoughts signify much else besides what comes to our consciousness, much else besides what lives in our souls. While we think and remember our thoughts, the mentioned beings of the higher hierarchy, of the next hierarchy, work as it were from the outside according to their kind, as they can use our thoughts.

So, by all means, envision every human being in such a way that what takes place for his consciousness is only one side of his thought life. While he thinks, he is constantly surrounded by the beings of the mentioned hierarchies, and they work with the help of his thoughts. These are their materials. And what they work in this way belongs to what is needed for the Earth to someday give rise to Jupiter, Venus, Vulcan. This contributes to the progress in the development of the universe. And all our life until death, the mentioned beings of the higher hierarchy work on the thoughts, insofar as they are enclosed by our being, from the outside in.

And when we pass through the gate of death, then, as we have already indicated during my previous presence, some time after we have passed through the gate of death, our etheric body is taken from us and interwoven with the general world ether. Not only is that which we last see, when we look at one side of our thought web, interwoven into the general world ether, but also what the mentioned beings have worked out. While they work, so to speak, on our individual thought web during our life, they then assemble the individual thought webs of one, the other, the third human being, as they can create something new in the ongoing development of the world. This must be interwoven into the general world ether, what they can acquire by putting together the individual ether bodies of people, which they have worked on during the time of physical life.

From this, you can see how serious our inner life of thought actually is. It is quite serious indeed. Depending on how we think, we will be found useful for the general course of world development. Whoever has only endeavored to think foolishness throughout his life, or has only endeavored to think things that are images of the physical world, will not provide very good building materials for what should be interwoven from his etheric body into the general world ether. The inner life, the inner life of thought, which appears to us during life between birth and death as our own property, is a serious matter. In the way described, it actually belongs to the whole world. And just as little as we humans could make machines without wood and

iron, so little could the higher beings continue to work on the course of world development if they did not find their building materials in what we can give them in thoughts during our physical life. We are the ground and soil for them, from which they take their wood, their iron, and so on, that is, our thought webs. They carry out their sublime activity with these materials from their wisdom surpassing human nature; but the materials must be provided to them by what lies in us.

What we are able to give to these beings, the Angeloi, Archangeloi, Archai, forms for the entire time we then go through between death and a new birth, something that we have to look at, that we have to gaze at. We know that it is taken from us a few days after we have stepped through the gate of death. But as we continue to live between death and a new birth, our soul's gaze is incessantly directed at that which we were able to contribute to the general world etheric fabric. And how we ourselves now have to contribute again to the production of what then connects with physical matter to give us a new incarnation, this view of what we have thus given to the great world works into our work. In short, whether we have something to gaze at from which we can draw new impulses for a next incarnation in this thought-web woven into the world ether, or whether we cannot, much will depend on how we will be able to prepare for our new incarnation.

Our thoughts are tied to our physicality before we go through the gate of death. Then they are taken from us in a certain way, and they are woven into the general world ether in what the named beings have made of them, to now not have an existence in us, but an existence outside of us. Therefore, in spiritual science, this process can be described, to always remember it, to always have it in meditation, with the words: The Inner becomes an Outer. For exactly as we look with the physical eye at mountains, rivers, clouds, stars, so we look after death at what has been woven from our thinking as at the Outer, which has been taken from us and woven into the general world ether. It is now the outside world, uplifting or distressing us, strengthening or weakening us. The Inner has become an Outer.

Then we know that there is a further, very long time in which we have to relive in a certain way what we have gone through here in earth life, but differently than we have gone through it in earth life. We relive, as we know, with triple speed the past life between death and birth in reverse order, so what we experienced in the last year, first, then what from the penultimate year and so on. So we live the life after death back in imaginations, but differently than we have lived it here in the physical body. After our etheric body is separated from us, we live life back, but in such a way that we now do not experience what we have experienced in our feelings, in our impulses of will during our physical existence. Take the extreme case, if we had injured someone, insulted them during our physical existence, we would have felt

something as we insulted them. But they also felt something. What we felt is what drove us out of our feeling to insult them, then also, what we may have felt as a certain satisfaction about the act. In short, you can imagine what a person feels, feels in the good or in the bad sense, when he causes something on the physical plane. But the other, to whom our action was directed, feels something different. The one who is insulted feels something different than the one who insults. After death, during this return which is now to be characterized, we feel the effects that we have caused with our actions, with our impulses of will, and also with our thoughts in other people, but also in other beings. So, not what we have already felt while we were in the physical body, do we now feel, but what we have caused in other souls, in other beings. The external, what remained external during our physical life, now becomes internal. Just as the inner becomes an outer through the separation of the etheric body, so the external becomes an inner through this return. Our soul is filled with what we have done as effects within our physical existence. This now becomes our inner life: the external becomes an inner. So the inner becomes an outer and the outer an inner. In this way, the human being is, as it were, turned around after he has stepped through the gate of death.

Imagine now, as you had to imagine the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai in a certain relationship to the human thought world, now the spirits of the higher hierarchies: the spirits of form, the spirits of movement, the spirits of wisdom, yes even the spirits of will, the Thrones, imagine them so that they now also stand in a kind of relationship to what I have now characterized, how man acquires a new inner, which is now welded together from the external. With their spiritual eye - if I may use the image - the spirits of form, the spirits of movement, the spirits of wisdom, the spirits of will look down on that remarkable, meaningful spectacle that unfolds after a human being has internally experienced this or that through his actions, through his impulses of will between birth and death; what he now experiences after he has stepped through the gate of death, where he collects the effects, as it were, to make them into a new inner being, that inner being which can then continue to live out its karma in the construction of a later incarnation. How everything that spreads out in the world as our effects becomes internal, that is what the aforementioned spirits observe from their spiritual heights. And what they thus observe is for them now material to incorporate something more than the aforementioned lower spirits of the ongoing world development, to assist above all in causing the karma, so that what is thus pushed from outside to inside provides the foundation in a slow construction, which unites between death and a new birth that fabric which then descends to the physical substance of inheritance, to connect as a spiritual being with what the human being inherits from father and mother. Much is necessary for this to come about, what descends from the spiritual heights and must connect with the hereditary substance, which descends from the ancestors.

After a person has stepped through the gate of death, has shed his etheric body, after he has caused that return journey through the soul world of which we have spoken, the work that must be done between death and a new birth already begins, so that the new birth, the new incarnation can come about.

What is being worked on? It is actually infinitely difficult to characterize the way in which we are worked on in the spiritual universe outside. If I were to characterize it, I could perhaps do it in the following way through a schematic sketch. Let's assume that a person steps through the gate of death. His etheric body is then shed. That which he himself still overlooks remains relatively long in the vicinity of the Earth in some way. I have characterized such things for you over time. But what the Angeloi, Archangeloi, Archai have woven goes so far out, as it is woven into the general ether world, that it unfolds in a wide sphere, the center of which is the Earth. So, the ether of the world surrounds the Earth like a spirit atmosphere. And what we have spun from our thoughts is woven into this ether of the world. Do not be anxious about where there could be space for all these tissues: the spiritual penetrates each other, and all these tissues are within this sphere.

In its further course, the human being now sees this tissue, not from the inside, but from the outside. And his further life is a kind of enlargement, a rise into the universe. And throughout the entire time, while life takes place between death and a new birth, the human being always looks in from the outside, he sees: This is you -, like an even more powerful, extended sphere, and on this sphere imagine something like a powerful map. Of course, everything is expressed figuratively and roughly, but it does reflect the facts. - There, on this map, on this globe, work is done by drawing in everything, integrating it spiritually: first, what has been worked out by the human being himself in his etheric body, which the human being can look at, but then also what has now become a human inner being in the way I have described. All this is worked into it by the spirits of form, spirits of movement, spirits of wisdom, spirits of will working on the human being between death and new birth.

And when the time has come when the new incarnation is to be given, then this tissue is ready. Then there is a mighty sphere. Again, you don't need to be afraid that there would be no space for all these spheres; they can all be inside each other. Of course, it's a picture of a spiritual thing. - Then this sphere begins to become smaller and smaller, and it turns, like you turn a glove, so that the inside becomes the outside and the outside becomes the inside. What is, as it were, outside, all goes inward, it turns completely and becomes so small that "It can unite with the human germ as it develops in the body of the mother. This is also a picture.

Of course, these things can also be represented in another way of imagery. This has already happened here. But today we want to imagine the matter in such a way that, according to what the human being has given to the entities of the higher hierarchies during his life between birth and death, these spirits of the higher hierarchies work both on the world and on the establishment of the spiritual foundations for the new incarnation of the human being. I think this is a tremendous thought, when it takes hold in our soul in an emotional way, when we become aware of what our life means for the entire universe when viewed in this way, how we are in this universe.

And it is necessary that more and more people permeate themselves with the consciousness from the present onwards of being in such a context through their whole life with a spiritual world.

The very clever people of today, who are opponents of spiritual science, will say: Human life continues, even if one does not spread such knowledge among people, but knowledge of a much simpler kind. For these would only be things that exist for thought, with which one could burden one's thinking; but one does not need to burden life with such thoughts. - So the very clever people certainly say. And they may even add: People did not know such unnecessary wisdom in the past and were able to make progress. - The people who say such things have no idea how stupid what they say is, because such an assertion is made under the assumption that it is really true that people were always as ignorant about the spiritual mysteries of existence as they are now. But it is not so long ago that people were not so ignorant. This can even be shown everywhere in externalities.

I want to give you such an externality. Here I have never had the opportunity to visit any picture gallery, in order to see if similar pieces are also located here in Stuttgart. But recently we visited a picture gallery in Hamburg, and this is what emerged. You see, when painters today are to paint what we know as a great, powerful picture, but a picture for a truth, as we know, the Fall of Man at the beginning of the Old Testament, when the painters are to paint this Fall of Man based on what they today believe to be correct, well, they paint a tree, on one side Eve, on the other side Adam. Depending on whether they are expressionists, impressionists or other "ists", they paint these human figures more or less, let's say, on; but in any case, they then paint a snake on the tree. That's naturalistic, isn't it, that's realistic. But upon closer inspection for the one who can really think, it's not realistic at all. Because I would like to know the woman, even if it were an Eve, who would let herself be seduced by such a common snake with a proper bare snake's head to do what Eve let herself be seduced into doing. I mean, that just doesn't exist. Even an Eve would not be seduced by such a snake. We know that it was a seduction by Lucifer. But can Lucifer be represented by a common snake? This can at most be the image. But we know from Lucifer that

he actually obtained his existence by staying behind at the lunar stage. There were not such snakes as have formed during the Earth time. So it is completely unnaturalistic to paint a pure snake with a huge snake's head. How should one actually paint Lucifer if one wanted to paint him correctly, realistically in the sense of our spiritual science? One would have to paint him in such a way that one expressed how Lucifer was for a development still expressing the imaginative during the lunar time, as I have described it in the Akasha Chronicle. That means, if one goes into it more closely, one will find that what has become physically the earth head in man now, with the thick, sometimes very thick bony brain shell, was thin at that time. It was imaginatively to be seen. But what hangs on it – you can see it on the skeleton, how man actually consists of two parts, the brain and the spine - that hangs on it only like a very thin strip. The rest is actually the work of the Earth. And from man is essentially what is actually the skull, from the Moon, and the spinal cord has come over as an appendage. Everything else has been added by what we have developed as earthly existence. So what will Lucifer look like for an imaginative cognitive vision? He will have had a human skull, and hanging from it something like a serpent's body, developed as something movable at that time, the spine. That's what he will have looked like. So if one wanted to paint realistically, one would have to paint the tree, and on the tree the human head with a serpent's body hanging from it, indicating the spine. Then one would paint truthfully. But then one would have to know something about the mystery of existence, about the spiritual worlds with which man is connected.

In the Hamburg Picture Museum you will find a picture from the 13th or 14th century by the so-called Master Bertram. There the Fall of Man is painted exactly as I have just described to you. There is not painted that image of a mere snake, but all that is painted on the tree as I have just described to you. What does that mean? It means that it is at most a few centuries ago since people no longer know how they are connected with the spiritual world and that there is a spiritual world in the marked sense at all. So people have become so foolish that they believe that just as people now look at the world with the mere physical senses and with the mere understanding that is bound to the brain, so they have always looked at it; they would have been just a little more childish and would have made up all sorts of myths. That is how today's university science thinks. But all that is nonsense, for it is only a few centuries since mankind lost the living view of the spiritual world. And in the face of the great tasks of cognition, the materialistic science of the present is nothing else than the wandering dullness against the spiritual world. And this dullness what is regarded as authoritative among people today, what is marveled at as the great progress. It had to come once. We know why it had to come: so that people are protected by their mere physical development and can become free. And this must be understood. And even from such external documents, like the ones I have cited, people could see, if they had just a little bit, forgive me for this, grit in their heads, how short a time it is since the

spiritual view has been lost to people. But today people don't even think of really thinking about these things. They prefer to choose external means of power, because it is convenient, because they don't have to learn anything special, but only have to stand at some laboratory table and can be drilled into certain methods; and then they declare by external power speeches that everything is error and nonsense and fantasy that speaks of the spiritual world. This is what is supposed to be given to people today instead of a real inclination towards the spiritual world.

But, my dear friends, at present it is still the case that all that which belongs to inventive genius has remained as a heritage from those old times when people looked into the spiritual world. When that too will be gone, people will no longer make inventions. And if spiritual science would not rekindle human thinking, it would not take more than fifty years, then everything that works in mere materialism, a talking about outer matter, would be nothing more than that, and nobody would come up with anything that could enrich art or ideology or outer life in any way. Therefore, it is the strictest demand of the time, not a mere preference for some spiritual dreaminess, that a consciousness of the connection of mankind with the spiritual world should take hold, that people can look up again. And they can do this, after the old atavistic clairvoyance has passed, by passing through spiritual science.

And in this sense it is already necessary that people learn not only a knowledge of the spiritual world, but also a correct thinking about life as a whole. For this, approaching spiritual science is fruitful. Again and again one experiences how people in the present time are quite disinclined to engage in that somewhat complicated inner soul life that must be developed if one wants to approach the spiritual world. Just think: a typical professor of today - of course there may be exceptions, nobody should be hit, and the more so it must be praised if there should be one in this circle -, such a typical contemporary university lecturer, will usually not want to listen to these things, that is too boring for him. For when one talks about spiritual things today, one has to speak in general, vague phrases that say as little as possible, but then also mean as little as possible for real life.

When I recently gave the same lecture in Leipzig that I gave here the day before yesterday about a faded tone in German intellectual life, two gentlemen came to me after the lecture, two gentlemen of the clever sort of people, of course, and one of them said that he was actually surprised that I had spoken so, because he would have expected that if one speaks from theosophical points of view, one would more strike into his way of thinking; for he was a pacifist and had to view the present war in particular as a pacifist.

Pacifism, that is this view, which has been cultivated for some time under the aegis of various people, Bertba von Suttner, but also that being who is considered in St. Petersburg as Caesar and Pope at the same time. Many years ago I said in Berlin lectures that it was characteristic of the peace efforts that since we have them, the greatest and bloodiest wars in world history are being fought. But this movement is precisely one of those that live on spreading as unclear phrases as possible among humanity, but that ingratiate themselves into human emotional life, because one only needs to spread them, and one spreads love and I allowed myself to say to the gentleman: Look, we are now in the most terrible of wars that world history has so far experienced, we have experienced that in June or July 1915 more ammunition was fired in a single day than in the entire Franco-German War! We have already reached the point where now in this war as much ammunition has been fired as in all wars that have ever been fought with this ammunition in the world, in the development of humanity. I said: Isn't it obvious that what has now been played out as culture for centuries has led itself ad absurdum, that it has shown what it leads to? - Well, he objected: I see this war as a disease, and it must be cured; it is only a disease, it can occur.

Now such a sentence is particularly deeply illuminating for the reason that it is so self-evident and because it is quite obviously correct from any point of view. But that's not the point, whether things are correct, but whether they are more or less superficial, that's what matters. The sentence is of course correct: it is a disease. But I said to him: If you would only consider the disease more deeply, why does it occur in people? Because something was not right before! The disease is only the reaction to something that was not right before. So if you would just think a little further from your point of view, you would realize that it is a disease, but it has occurred because things were not right before. Because that was precisely not in order, the disease occurred, that's true. - But people mix up all sorts of correct things because they are trivial and self-evident and because they actually can't get to deeper things. This is the serious thing that one must realize in the present time.

If you take such a fact as the one I brought up the day before yesterday with reference to Karl Christian Planck, whose intellectual capacity simply arises from the fact that he exactly foresaw in 1880 what is happening today, you will realize from the way he was appreciated and recognized that this culture, which has developed, is very much capable of making the rule of the power of the incompetent, which suppresses all truly striving, into a world power. No one should deceive themselves about this. This is what must be recognized in the deepest sense.

I will tell you a little story. A person once heard that Goethe had written a "Faust", and he said he wanted to know what this Goethe's "Faust" actually contains. So the

one he asked felt he had to find the easiest, most comfortable method for the other to find out what this "Faust" actually contains, and he thought deeply: How can I explain to this person, who has no sense for the simplest idea of Goethe's "Faust", what it contains? - Then a light dawned on him. He thought: a new edition of "Faust" is currently being printed in a particular printing house, so I will take this fellow there, who wants to know what's in "Faust". And then he told him: Look, in three weeks' time "Faust" will be printed here. In all the hundreds of typesetting boxes lie the most diverse letters, and now pay attention, you will see, the typesetter takes out this and that letter and puts the individual letters together into words. You will see exactly how page after page is assembled, and how in the end "Faust" comes together from the individual letters. So the other sat there for weeks and saw how the whole "Faust" came together through the hands of the people through the letters!

Well, you see, I can also tell this in a somewhat different way. The newer times came up. Then people wanted to know what is actually present in the spiritual-soul life, and they had a need to understand how ideas, thoughts, impulses of will and feelings are interwoven in the human soul, what they mean for the whole world. They asked - the people. Well, then came the newer science, this purely naturalistic science, and it said: Well, we will do it! So we look, as far as it can be now, at the individual brain pathways, the nerve threads, the ganglia, and all that, how it is intertwined with each other. And there we have the soul life inside. - It's exactly the same thing you get from Goethe's "Faust" when you get to know it like the person who sat in the printing house for three weeks, exactly the same! Take all the products that are fabricated today by the so-called psycho-physiologists, you have in relation to the spiritual knowledge of the world what you know about the whole "Faust" if you have watched how "Faust" is fabricated from the typesetting box. It is only necessary to realize this, then the soul will be overcome by the shattering feeling that is necessary to make progress in the development of humanity.

"You are fine opponents," will now the people of Naturalism say, as you tarnish our science, the true science, which proceeds strictly according to nature! - But it doesn't occur to us at all to tarnish it. We just put it in the right place, in the right life point. If "Faust" is to come about, of course the typesetting work has to be done for the "Faust" edition; but it has to be recognized in its correct position in the world.

Everything I can indicate with this belongs, in the sense I meant it yesterday, to the serious, significant tasks that will still grow for Central Europe. All this points to these serious tasks. And to remember these things in our serious time today is urgently necessary. For it is absolutely necessary that a deeper sense for real truth go through the world than can blow under the influence of the materialistic or naturalistic or strictly natural scientific worldview. You don't have to be opposed to people learning

to typeset so that "Faust" editions can be made. You don't have to be opposed to people studying the brain, the nervous system. All this should be studied, which is really very important to study today. But one must be decidedly opposed to that presumptuous arrogance appearing, which is present today especially in materialistic science, that in a frightening way, there is a suffering for the feeling of how seriously and worthily, especially from Central Europe - for Western Europe is dead in regards to these things - the spiritualization of culture must be accomplished. I say this not just to say something paradoxical, something strong, but I say it out of the necessity that works for the expression of such things in our time. There will come a time when we will have to look truthfully at various things; but today there is not much sense present for such truthful looking. I could give you thousands and thousands of examples of the inner untruthfulness of the present scientific and literary business. Let me at least cite one example that I would have liked to mention in yesterday's public lecture, but the time is always too short, and the lectures unfortunately have to be kept so very short.

For example, you can find again and again in many books by Ernst Haeckel - you know, I appreciate Ernst Haeckel very much in the area where he is to be appreciated - that he refers to Karl Ernst von Baer, the excellent naturalist, whom he calls his teacher. People today, of course, pick up Haeckel's books, study them, regard them as a kind of new Bible or at least as a kind of writings of new church fathers. For the difference is not that one believes in one's own judgment today, while at the time of the church fathers one relied on the church fathers, but the difference is quite another. In the times of Tertullian, Gregory of Nazianz, these were the church fathers, and the people swore by them. Today, especially those who found Monist societies or societies for eugenic worldview or similarly beautiful things, swear by the holy Darwin, the holy Haeckel or the holy Helmholtz. It is - only in a slightly different field - exactly the same! They don't call it holy, but that doesn't make the difference. So people read Haeckel and have, when he quotes Karl Ernst von Baer, the opinion: Well, one can see that this great naturalist Karl Ernst von Baer was completely in agreement with Haeckel in relation to rejecting any spiritual world. I would like to advise some, who today, after they have sniffed a little bit into Haeckel's, into Darwin's books, before they go to found a branch for a Monist society, to do many other things beforehand: for example, when Haeckel quotes Ernst von Baer, to take Karl Ernst von Baer himself into their hands and read him. I just want to read you a passage from Karl Ernst von Baer, where he expresses his views on how the spiritual world is related to the earthly world. Baer says: "The earth body is only the seedbed, on which the spiritual heritage of man grows, and the history of nature is only the history of progressing victories of the spiritual over the matter. That is the fundamental thought of creation, for the sake of which, no, for the achievement of

which it allows individuals and generations to fade and raises the present on the scaffolding of an immeasurable past.'

What does this Baer say? 'The earth body, the earth is the seedbed, and into it are sunk the spiritual germs, so that they can wrap themselves up. - This Baer has spoken the pure truth at the beginning of the 19th century! Ernst Haeckel picks out those sentences from Baer that are agreeable to him. Those who do nothing more than found Monist societies at most to promote worldly wisdom, they know nothing else about all this than what Haeckel says about Baer, and continue to live in the lie, without even the slightest inclination to convince themselves of the matter at hand. Such webs of lies permeate our literature today. And everywhere, especially in our popular scientific literature, there is a striving for as much vagueness and frivolity as possible, one could even say, of intellectual endeavors and a maximum disinclination to express clear, secure human judgments in these things and to judge.

For example, to give you concrete things, in the West among the French, among the British, among the Italians, there are all sorts of Masonic orders with high degrees, some with thirty-three degrees, but there are also some with over ninety degrees. Especially in such orders, much murky fishing has been done over the centuries. And if one day one examines with sober, healthy judgement the influence of all sorts of unhealthy, foolish, but probably conscious manipulations in terms of personal and political intentions, if one studies the influences and currents of Freemasonry that exist in Western Europe on Italy's involvement in this war, then one will only get a hint of the many obscurities and murky fishing in our so-called culture! What has happened, especially in such Masonic orders since the outbreak of the war, will one day become a curious chapter. The German Freemasons will come out of it relatively the best, because the only thing that can be said about them is that they were the fools in the whole game. Namely, insofar as they lived in brotherhood with the others, they didn't notice anything. And that's something that can be said - well, yes! - in their favour. But one should certainly not believe that what is asserted from such sides is without influence on what lives and works around us in the so-called culture, and what can only work and live as long as the other people do not want their judgement to be clarified, strengthened by the insight into the spiritual world.

I have pointed out in my book 'Thoughts during the Time of War', as far as one can do it in public literature to be understood - and it has been little understood - to certain currents that are everywhere in the East and the West. These currents, let's say for example the eastern one of the Slavophiles, which I pointed out in the mentioned booklet, however, have much deeper roots. Already at the end of the 18th century, and especially at the end of the 19th century, but also decades earlier, the Western Masonic orders in particular have had a greater influence on Russian intellectual life,

have transplanted there, have infected, inoculated what was to appear there. And in many respects, Slavophilism and Pan-Slavism really is the germinated seed of what many have planted from these Masonic orders. Under the mask, under the guise of ceremony, people were initially, so to speak, dazed, made to experience all sorts of trumpery, so that they might then be inclined towards certain plans. And what roles the West has played in Eastern Europe, humanity will duly convince itself of this, when, in the place of the warlike, other events have come to pass!

If these places, where we are gathered in our branches, are the only places where one can speak today, then it must at least be discussed here.

Today, I wanted to connect to that grand, sublime linkage of man with entire hierarchies, which can appear before our soul, when we consider that what we carry in our thought and emotional life within us, already within our physical shell between birth and death, but then also between death and new birth, is embedded in a fabric, a world's work, on which entire hierarchies work in vast contexts. It's not so much about knowing the individual details, but about permeating ourselves with such a world sensation, and that you, my dear friends, leave from such a consideration with a feeling for what man actually is within the world, and what he should know about this connection with the world. That's what matters. That all this flows together in your souls, in your hearts into a world sensation, and that in this way something ignites in you of the power that can be kindled by what is to be incorporated into our culture, as far as each can according to the place they hold in the world. Official scholars have not worked on these things today; they will not do so. Hence, people must also open their eyes to the position that official scholars deserve in the world: that they, insofar as they do laboratory work, can be compared to the typesetters, or some who do not do laboratory work, merely with people who describe typesetting. These are mostly today's philosophers, who preach at the universities.

That this is so, should indeed be known in individual souls. Because this is not a criticism of the time, it is a characteristic. Only through knowing how things stand in different eras, were the forces found to push development further, only through this.

Especially in these difficult times - where one cannot always say, we will see each other again - I wanted to place on your souls: something of knowledge, which can transform, if we feel it in the right way, into a sacred inner duty of the human soul towards the vast contexts. Deaths upon deaths surround us today in the events, which on the one hand in the indicated sense is the fruit of the preceding development, but which must be a sign for many things that have to happen, so that humanity does not advance in the way the describers of the typesetting box want, but advances as the necessity of world development requires.

Surely, I mentioned yesterday the father of all materialism, Lamettrie, stating that - of course, truth is also this - Erasmus would merely have needed a small wheel in his nervous system to change, then he might not have become Erasmus, but a fool. I said that this does not need to be refuted. But we, who are perhaps a little prepared, should also know a little more about this.

Let's take everything we have considered today, let it become feeling and sensation in us, and then we say to ourselves, how true it is that the numerous sacrificial deaths currently being made really relate to earthly existence in such a way that the etheric bodies, which are taken from people at an early age, remain connected with earthly existence for a long time, and that now people must be present who can become aware of what lives in these unused etheric bodies, which contain all that these Let's take everything we have considered today, let it become feeling and sensation in us, and then we say to ourselves, how true it is that the numerous sacrificial deaths currently being made really relate to earthly existence in such a way that the etheric bodies, which are taken from people at an early age, remain connected with earthly existence for a long time, and that now people must be present who can become aware of what lives in these unused etheric bodies, which contain all that these people could still have used in their earthly life if they had lived for decades more. This is in the spirit-etheric of the earth. But people will need to be there who can become aware of this in the future, so that earth culture and not Ahriman reaps the fruits of what is contained in these etheric bodies. Let's truly penetrate ourselves in view of the fact that we have to prepare ourselves in our souls for what is happening, with the words that have often been spoken here:

From the courage of the fighters,
From the blood of the battles,
From the sorrow of the abandoned,
From the sacrifices of the people,
Spiritual fruit will grow —
If souls, conscious of spirit,
Turn their sense into the spirit realm.