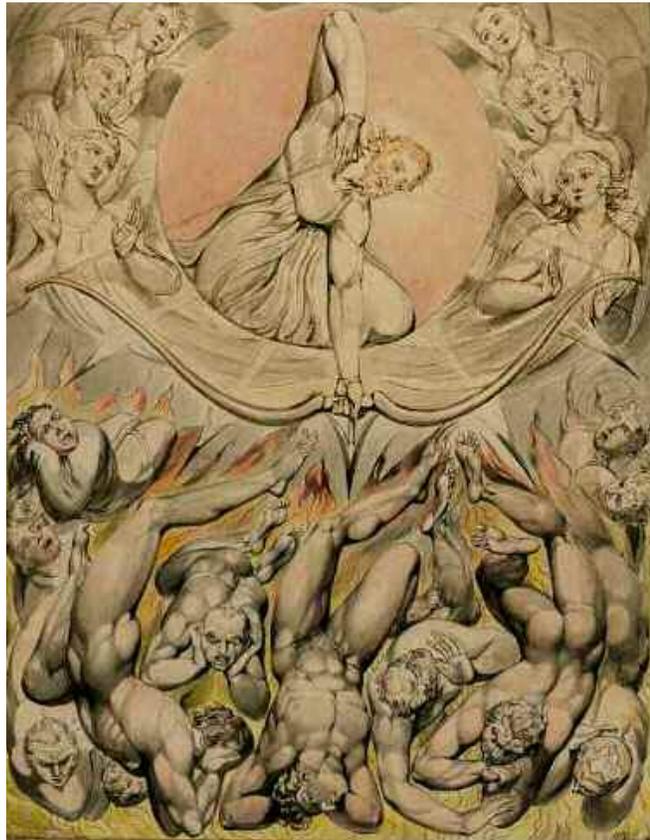


The Mystery of Golgotha— The Redemption of the Luciferic

THE COSMOS OF LOVE'S evolution begins at the Mystery of Golgotha, which is the seeding of the new Cosmos. Just as the whole future organism is already contained in the seed, so the whole future of the world is contained in the Mystery of Golgotha. For this reason Rudolf Steiner was accustomed to make the statement: The Mystery of Golgotha is the meaning of the Earth. And the Earth is the arena upon which is fought the decisive battle between Good and Evil in the Cosmos.

Initially this conflict takes place with regard to a quite definite territory—which includes everything in the universe upon which Lucifer works, has worked, or can work. For the territory of Lucifer is that region of the world which may either fall prey to Ahriman, or be won back by the Hierarchies of Good. This territory includes, on the one hand, parts of the realm of the Spiritual Hierarchies, and, on the other, the Kingdoms of Nature. In the center of the territory, however, stands Mankind, who has absorbed the Luciferic into himself. Therefore the pivot of the territory in dispute lies in Man who, as the center of the field, forms the link between the realm of Nature and the realm of the Hierarchies.

The struggle between Good and Evil is initially in the Luciferic territory because the Luciferic is not only inwardly opposed to the Hierarchies of



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In the cosmic sequel to the casting down of the Lucifers, signifying their regressive need to evolve through human experience in the physical world, Christ Jesus atones for their errors and redeems them through His earthly sacrifice.

Good and to the Ahrimanic, it has also something in common with both the one side and the other; and therefore for each side there is the hope that it may be completely won over. For in common with Ahriman, Lucifer has the *pride* of opposition, while with the Hierarchies of Good he has *love* in common. Lucifer is like Janus in character: with one side of his nature he loves the Christ, but with the other he has affinity with Ahriman. It is because Lucifer is so constructed that both sides have the prospect of winning the whole field of his activity; the Spiritual Hierarchies hope to acquire it for Love, and Ahriman hopes to incorporate it into his dominion.

**This is the second of three articles on the cosmic consequences of the Mystery of Golgotha. It is drawn from Valentin Tomberg's Studies of the New Testament. Reprinted with permission of the Anthroposophic Press, Hudson NY 12534.*

In the period directly preceding the Mystery of Golgotha, the situation was such that the whole Luciferic field might be regarded as the assured prize of Ahriman. This was the case for humanity already in the year 666 A.D. when a sort of “fantastic wisdom” (the expression is Rudolf Steiner’s) emanating from Gondishapur, the spiritual center of the New Persian empire, had spread over the world. This type of wisdom was “fantastic” in so far as it was a combination of “iron logic” with a visionary perception of fantasms. It was not merely a question of forms produced by human fancy, which in themselves would have been relatively harmless, but rather of Luciferic imaginations which Ahriman had given spectre-like existence, and which would be therefore really not fancies, but precisely, fantasms.

Thus the “logic” which was combined with the mediumistic visions would not be that thought-life which forms a link between the human head and Heaven, but a logic of the lower man, of the metabolic man; it would be a pragmatic logic of the Will which, in conjunction with the visions, would produce a force against which Man would not be able to stand. For then the essentially human element, the heart, would not only be completely shut away, as it were, “imprisoned,” but it would also be dumb and powerless; it would have no thought by which to make itself known, and it would have no influence on the Will to accomplish deeds.

The net formed by the visions and the logic of Will would have contracted round the heart, detaching it completely from the Spiritual World, so that it must of necessity wither and abandon the realm of its existence to Ahriman.

One of the characteristics of that “fantastic” wisdom would have been that it produced no universal human truth at all; instead of that, importance would be attached to “geographical” “truths” “founded on blood-ties,” with their origin not in Heaven, but in earth and blood. For instance, there would be one “logic” and one world-conception on American soil and another world-conception on the soil of Eastern Europe. And the visions of one group of men united by blood-ties would be different from the visions arising from the blood of another such group. Different gods and demons,



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The purifying and regenerating power of Christ Jesus’ blood is celebrated in the sacrament of the Eucharist. His blood had to flow to enable His Spirit to enter the Earth. The artist affirms the planetary, indeed cosmic, impact of this sacrifice.

ascending from the blood-fumes, would reveal themselves to different groups of men and would assume the direction of those groups with oracular authority. Men would speak of the “awakening” of the gods and ancestors from the past, and the guidance of those gods and ancestors would be followed with implicit obedience.

But those things did not happen—at any rate they only happened partially in a blunted and weakened form. And the reason why it could not happen so lay in that event wherein the sacred Blood flowed on to the hallowed soil. When, in the Mystery of Golgotha, the blood of Christ Jesus flowed onto the ground, a force was implanted in the blood of Man and in the soil of the Earth which counteracted the demonic element in the blood and the enslaving influence of the Subterranean Spheres working through the medium of the soil.

And this counteracting influence brings it about that human blood is the bearer not only of the subjective illusions of the demonic fumes, but also of the objective impulse of conscience; further, this influence not only robs the ground of its enslaving power, but also speaks of the yearning and hope of Nature for redemption through mankind. By it human blood receives the capacity to reflect moral and spiritual truth as water in Nature reflects the sky, but the ground receives “blood,” as it were, and thereby the capacity of “groaning together with the whole creation.”

This mystery of the Christ-influence on blood and earth is referred to in St. John’s Gospel in the following words: “But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.” (John 11: 34, 35)

But for mankind this influence on blood and earth means the restoration of equilibrium in these regions and hence establishment of freedom. It now depends upon Man himself whether he will yield to the enslaving influence of earth and the fantasm-producing influence of blood, or whether he will regard the whole terrestrial globe as the victim of the Fall of Man and will make the blood the bearer of conscience. The “fantastic wisdom” of Gondishapur has no longer power simply to overwhelm mankind with coercive force; it only appears, and then incompletely, when and in so far as Man accedes to it.

But establishment of equilibrium, and therewith of human freedom, is not the only consequence of the Mystery of Golgotha. It was also the beginning of the step-by-step retrieval of the territory of Lucifer. For the spirit who had severed this territory from the region of the Hierarchies of Good himself experienced now an inward conversion through the Mystery of Golgotha, True, this conversion concerned in the first place only Lucifer himself, and not, for instance, the Luciferic influence in Man. This latter is still active in the old direction and can only be changed by Man himself. But the Prince of the Luciferic hosts changed his course in consequence of the Mystery of Golgotha. The conversion took place within him when look-

ing at the Crucifixion at Golgotha it pierced him with penetrating insight that it was actually he who should have borne those sufferings. And now the Other was bearing them *in his place*.

Pierced by that pain, there arose in Lucifer at that hour a ceaseless longing for suffering and humiliation. To the proud spirit, to the shining spir-

The Spirit of Self-conscious Beauty recognized that the true and highest beauty is in sacrifice, and that all beauty which continues to nurse itself after it has seen the suffering of the righteous One of God, is, in truth, ugliness.

it of beauty personified, nothing thenceforward has become more hateful than the incense of admiration for his character—it burns him like fire—and nothing more desirable than the recognition of his wrongdoing and the humiliation of his spirits. This is as balm to him, soothing his pain. And he is filled with a passionate hope that at some time in the Cosmos he may be allowed to experience a martyrdom equalling that of the Other.

This hope of Lucifer’s was reflected in world history when, in the first centuries after the Mystery of Golgotha, there was among men a great wave of enthusiasm for suffering martyrdom. A current not only of readiness to be martyred, but a yearning quest of martyrdom inspired vast circles of mankind during the first Christian centuries. Behind this aspiration was the longing to suffer as *He* had suffered, and behind that longing stood Lucifer with his hope of a martyrdom that would equal *His* martyrdom... For the Spirit of Self-conscious Beauty had recognized that the true and highest beauty is in sacrifice, and that all beauty which continues to nurse itself after it has seen the suffering of the righteous One of God, is, in truth, ugliness.

This inward conversion of Lucifer was the beginning of the retrieval of the whole Luciferic territory for the work of Goodness, and therewith also the sealing of the future fate of Ahriman, the “Prince of this World.” □