

THE TURN OF THE CENTURY ~ Saul/Paul

by Willi Sucher

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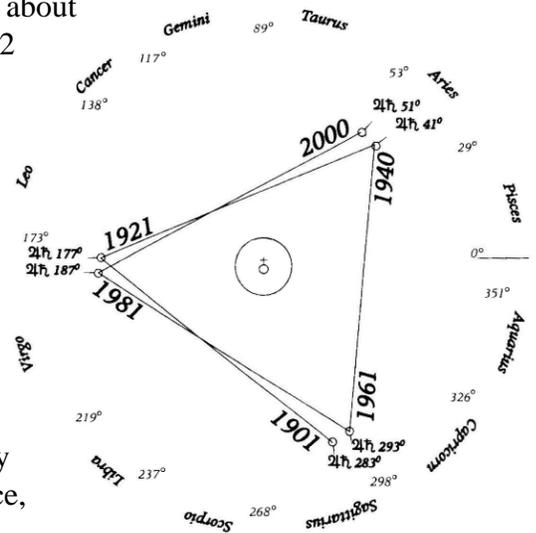
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In looking toward the turn of the century, we will first want to demonstrate how a new star wisdom can indeed be fruitful for present humanity, and then we can perhaps see the perspectives with regard to future humanity. We now stand in the last third of the 20th century, in the year 1969 and we ask, “What does this century mean for humanity from the past and for the future?” You see, in past ages the great religions all over the globe asked questions and committed them to the cosmos. They asked the Sun, so to speak, and received the answers through the Moon. It was in cosmic space that they sought the answers to their questions. We cannot do this any longer, as those times are past. We must ask in a new fashion or else we must enter into a conversation. First, we must learn how to do it. We must start to have conversations with the stars on the level of time, not of space, and this we hope to demonstrate in some way by working together.

The end of the century—the year 2000—is marked by a remarkable event in the cosmos. It is a conjunction known in history as a Great Conjunction. The fact is simply the meeting (or conjunction) of the two planets Saturn: the great knower and guardian of the past who sees to it that the past is not forgotten and all that which has been set in motion in this universe as the divine order is kept alive; and Jupiter: the great preparer of the future, the element in the cosmos that helps humanity, or tries to help us, to realize our ideas. For that purpose we need Jupiter, just as we need a liver in our organism, which is the chemist within our body. These two planets come together, in a way, in the heavens. At present Jupiter is in opposition to Saturn.

The two planets Saturn and Jupiter are slow movers. Saturn needs about 29½ years to go once through the Zodiac, and Jupiter needs about 12 years to complete one orbit. If we study their meetings, we discover that they occur in a rhythm of 20 years; however, they take place in different parts of the Zodiac. For instance, if we go through this century, we would discover that in the year 1901 the two planets met in the constellation of Archer (that is, the visible constellation of the fixed stars of Archer); 20 years later they met again, but this time in the fixed-star constellation of Leo, just going over from Leo to Virgo, and 20 years later (1940-41) they met in the constellation of Ram. If we go on with this, we discover that in 1961 they met once more, but this time they had returned to the meeting place of their conference in 1901. Therefore, after approximately 60 years they came back to the same place where they previously had their conference, in the constellation of Archer.



Thus they draw something like a big triangle into the cosmos. In three places they have their meetings, and these alternate according to a 60-year rhythm. In the year 2000, a Great Conjunction will also take place, and this will occur in the crossing point from the constellation of Ram into Bull—as in 1940-41. So you see, we have an event at the end of the century in which the whole of this century is aiming toward or leading up to, so to speak. On the other hand, it also projects itself into the future, into the coming century. One could really say, into the coming centuries, because this event in 2000 is of greatest significance for the coming ages.

If we are very precise, we discover that the Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, which took place in 1940-41, during the war, in the constellation of Ram, as I said, will already be in transition from Ram into Bull in 2000, when they will meet again. We would then discover that all three points of the triangle gradually move very slowly, about 10 degrees of the arc, in 60 years. Thus in the course of time they move on through the constellations of the Zodiac, and we can also go back into the past and work out, always in intervals of about 60 years, what the history behind each of these three Great Conjunction reveals. If we trace the Great Conjunction of 2000 back through the ages, we discover wonderful things! You see, now we look in time—no longer in

space, but in time. It is in time that we find the answers we need in order to conduct our life on this planet, and if we go far enough back we discover that this Great Conjunction took place in the year 34 AD.

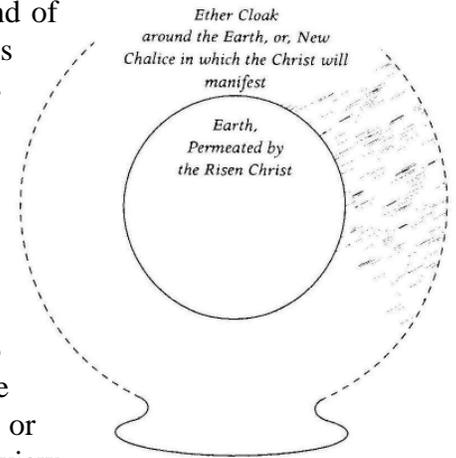
In 33 AD the Mystery of Golgotha occurred: the Crucifixion took place on the 3rd of April, the Resurrection occurred on the following Sunday the 5th of April, Easter Sunday; and in the following year, what happened then? If we read the Acts of the Apostles, we will find the story of the Conversion of St. Paul. Actually his name was Saul and he was, one could well say, an initiate into the Hebrew esotericism. He knew of the coming of the Messiah, but he left the Christians after the Death on the Cross, because he could not accept that this was indeed the Messiah who had been crucified, who had died a miserable death on the Cross—as it was a most miserable death to be crucified. How could this be the Messiah who was, according to some traditions, to be the liberator of the Jews from the Roman yoke, etc.? How was this possible? So for him, this was not the Messiah. The Christians accepted this claim that he found utterly unjustified and misleading, and therefore he started to persecute them. He was present at the stoning of the first Christian martyr, St. Stephen, and then he obtained papers while in Jerusalem from the Jewish council, authorizing him to go to Damascus to continue the purging work, which he thought was justified, of eliminating this Christian sect. Then we know what happened: Saul came to the Gate of Damascus “...and suddenly there was all around him a bright, shining light from heaven...and he heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” (Acts IX). It was then he realized that Christ was present and had risen—the Messiah was present and had risen. This was the great turning point in his life. After that he lived in western humanity, chiefly as the great Apostle of Christianity. As far as the olive trees grow around the Mediterranean Sea, so far went his message of the Risen Christ, and his emphasis was on the Resurrection. He said “...And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins” (Corinthians I: 15-17). So you see, this was the ancestor of the event which will take place in 2000. In between it returned at intervals of about 60 years. There are so many things that happened in history, in humanity through the ages, according to this rhythm; but one event stands out, and of this I wish to speak, for it is a good characterization of this Great Conjunction, this conference of Saturn and Jupiter.

In 869 AD, this conference of Saturn and Jupiter stood in the heavens, and this year really stands out in the history of western humanity. It was the year that the church met in the so-called Council of Constantinople, at which something extraordinary happened. This council felt compelled to declare—in very complicated terms by the way—that the human being did not exist as the triune of body, soul, and spirit any longer, as it was taught in all ancient mysteries. No, the human being consisted of body and soul only, with a few spiritual attributes, and that was all. In other words, as Rudolf Steiner so often was obliged to say, they discarded the spirit of human beings. What happened there in 869 AD is a part of that conference in the heavens, which brings decisions to humanity; it demands the decisions. It's a challenge in the heavens, and it is the responsibility of humanity to work it out here on the Earth. You see, it is a matter, and always will be a matter, of whether Saul will become Paul. This is an answer to the problems of the present century. We can take anything that has happened around us in the course of this century, and we can bring it all down to this question: will Saul become Paul, or will he persecute Christianity—the true Christianity? Because anybody can say that they are Christians and yet they can even fight against Christ. This one can prove. So we stand in this century and this is the great question, this experience of Paul at the Gate of Damascus. It is most important—why?

This we must work out again in the sphere of time. You see, we are asking a question here, and we can expect an answer only in the sphere of time. But how are we going to do it? Well, now we make a simple calculation: Saturn's orbit = 29.4577 years x 32.28 (Life of Jesus Christ) = 950.895 years + 33.25 (Golgotha, 3 April 33 AD) = 984.145 AD + 950.895 = 1935.040 AD (January 6, 1935). To explain: imagine that the life of Christ Jesus took 33 years. The birth took place just at the turning point of the new era. Astronomically speaking that is the year zero. Then the Crucifixion took place within the 33rd year. If we count exactly, we come to the figure 32.28 years that passed between the birth of Jesus and the death on the cross. Now let us look for a moment at this figure of 32.28 as a quantity, a Being, something which is full of events, as we can recall from the stories in the Bible and also other information. These events were incorporated into the organism of Christ Jesus. In terms of spiritual science, we must say they were incorporated, or inscribed, into the etheric body of this Christ Being. Normally, the ether body of a human being is dispersed, is handed back to the cosmos at death, so to speak, from where it was taken at the moment of birth, of incarnation. It is handed

back, and thereby the whole living biography of the human being is handed back to the cosmos. But it was not so in this case. The etheric body of Christ Jesus was not dispersed in the cosmos; it remained intact and integrated, and thus it lived on in the cosmos. In other words, that which had happened during those 33 years was communicated to the whole universe; therefore, the whole universe was permeated by this message.

The Gods waited for this, looked down on that which had happened and waited for it. Perhaps we can imagine that here on Earth this event had taken place. It had created a kind of ether aura that contained all those events of which we hear. Now this expanded into the universe, permeating it. The message of the Christ events permeated the universe, but it did not permeate it randomly. The message was translated into cosmic terms of time. That is, we have here on Earth a time-ratio which is based on the day of 24 hours and the year of 365 days—365 and a quarter of a day. This is time on Earth with which we live. It is not so in the cosmos and not so in the spiritual world. There time is totally different; time is 30 times longer. Why is that? We orientate ourselves according to the movement of the Sun. First, we say the Sun, according to Copernican conceptions, apparently goes around the Earth once in the course of 24 hours, and in the course of a year it moves once through the ecliptic, or the Zodiac of the twelve constellations. However, from a cosmic point of view,



we see the outermost planet, Saturn, as timekeeper—because from the occult point of view, Saturn is the outermost of the planetary spheres (for the moment I disregard Uranus, Neptune, or Pluto, as they have a special position in the cosmos). It takes Saturn approximately 30 years—precisely 29.4577 years—to move through its orbit around the Sun (30 times longer than the Earth). In other words, this Being, this Time Being of the life of Christ Jesus, we must now transpose into spiritual cosmic time. We do this by multiplying these 32.28 years of the life of Jesus Christ by 29.4577, and we come to 950.895 years, and that is the time it took the ether body of Christ Jesus to reach the periphery of the orbit of Saturn. Then it turns back like an echo, so to speak, and returns to the aura of the Earth, taking another 950.895 years. We started from 33 AD, and a quarter of that year had passed. It was the beginning of April, and so we have to add that quarter of a year. If we do it correctly, we come exactly to the beginning of the year 1935 about the 6th of January—the Feast of Epiphany. This is when the etheric body of Christ returned to the Earth, and it was now empowered with cosmic forces which were thus communicated again to the Earth. (See, *Cosmic Christianity and the Changing Countenance of Cosmology* by Willi Sucher—Part II, Chapter 7—where this is described in detail.)

This is precisely what Dr. Steiner indicated; that from about the years 1933, 35, 37 (in one instance he definitely said from 1935 on into the future) we can expect human beings on this planet will again be able, by a kind of naturally given clairvoyance, to see the Christ again in an etheric form—in an ether body. Just as once Christ walked among human beings healing, comforting, proclaiming the Kingdom of God, performing all those deeds, and showing us how to reach initiation through the “signs” of which we read in the Gospels; so now Christ is again close to the Earth, not in a physical body or a human body, but in the aura, the ether aura of the Earth, precisely as it was prophesied to the Apostles at the moment of the Ascension of Christ.

In the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we hear that Christ was with the Disciples for forty days after the Resurrection. While with them Christ disappeared from their vision, as it were, into the clouds and then two men appeared out of the clouds and said to them, “Why do you stand there and gaze up? He will come again exactly as He disappeared. Upon the clouds, He will come!” We find that also in the Gospel of St. Luke. Thus we can look to this as a possible answer.

We looked at the end of the century and found that the Great Conjunction, which will occur then, is related right back to the beginning of this era to the event that happened soon after Golgotha, to the time of the conversion of St. Paul. It describes, so to speak, the significance of this present century. From there we went further and asked how this event of 34 AD, the Damascus event, can become significant for this century? And again *time*, Saturn (Father Chronos, Father Time) revealed to us the secret in terms of time. But we had to find the interpretation. Father Time would not give that! We can also understand why it says in the Acts of the Apostles: nobody can know the time but the Father. Saturn is a representative of the Father forces; and what

can be expressed as time, is an expression of the Father forces. We can now perhaps ask, what does it mean? What does this event of the Second Coming—as it is so often called—mean and what will it mean for future humanity?

Well, we have already come so far and we can now imagine that in the etheric environment around the Earth—the ether clouds—there is once again the Life Being of Christ, empowered with cosmic forces. Christ is again with the Earth. But how will this work into the Earth? We need only exercise attention with regard to what is happening, and then we will find these Christ Forces weaving in all the time. They continually weave in as attempts to enter humanity, to bring a new upswing of the spiritual nature into humanity. At the same time, we will see that the Saul/Paul element also is constantly weaving in, constantly there, standing by ready to jump, so to speak, at humanity at anytime. Saul: to persecute the new spirituality, even to eradicate it in humanity, this is the chief characteristic of this present century. It has happened; and it is happening.

For example, in 1917 the planet Saturn was back in the same position where it was at the moment of Golgotha on 3 April 33 AD, and these moments when the planets return to their original positions are important. When Saturn came back in 1917, it brought a challenge to humanity. Rudolf Steiner was still alive, and he answered that challenge. Human beings came to him in deep despair, who were concerned with regard to the events that had taken place in connection with the war and in regard to the prospects of the social conditions afterwards. They asked Dr. Steiner, “Is there no possibility of bringing new life, new ideas, into this worn out world of social conditions?” Then he suggested the idea of the “Threefold Commonwealth”, something that needs deep study and which cannot be explained in just a few words. If it would have been accepted by humanity, it would have healed many of the wounds from which modern humanity is suffering in the field of community life (see, *Towards Social Renewal*, 1919 by Rudolf Steiner).

This was the one thing Dr. Steiner gave; it was truly a Christian Deed, a realization of the Christ Impulse. This threefoldness was just the very thing that the 869 AD Council of Constantinople had debased. Rudolf Steiner’s suggestion for the entire social organism was freedom for economy, freedom in the domain of human relationships (what we usually call politics), and freedom in the domain of the cultural life, including education. At the same time we might remember Saul, before he accepted the Damascus Event, who fought this freedom with all he had.

In 1917, who entered the scene? It was Lenin. Lenin at that time was sent to Russia in order to create a revolution there. He did it pretty well, on the basis of dialectic materialism, as we know, and on the basis of the eradication of the individuality which, for him, had to be swept out of humanity! The verdict of Lenin and those who cooperated was: “Individuality is the arch enemy of any healthy social condition.”

We see that this verdict came into this present century with determined force, coming up again in 1933 to 1935. Once again this script in the heavens was a repeat of that memory. In these years Saturn’s position was opposite—a recalling of the events at Golgotha—and we know what happened then in Germany. At that time it was Hitler, who said, “I shall give you bread and work.” However, his gesture was, “I order it, or else you will go into the concentration camps!” But again, it was just at that moment that Dr. Steiner spoke about the fact that from this time and on into the future—for the next 3,000 years—humanity will be able, in increasing numbers, to become aware of the Christ in the ether form. During those years—I think I can speak out of knowledge—around 1935, a number of human beings had the experience of the Risen Christ in the etheric form. There is even proof of that to a certain extent, although most of them probably kept quiet.

There was a similar situation in 1945 when these counter forces arose again, I’m afraid, in which the counter forces again released their full weight. How did they do it? They did it by employing the atom bomb, first on Hiroshima. That was an act against the Christ events that should now enter humanity. So we could go on; these are only a few very obvious examples. There are hundreds and thousands on a smaller scale, which are as yet unrevealed, that would reveal in a similar sense the Presence of Christ and also the presence of the Saul forces.

Thus we can go through history, and we would find, leading toward the future, the Presence on the one hand and the attacks of the opposing forces on the other. If we look at what happened in 1917, concerning the war, etc., we can ask, for example, what did Rudolf Steiner do? I cannot tell you how much he was aware of what happened in the heavens, of the transits of Saturn across the original position at the moment of Golgotha and Damascus, but he did one thing: he spoke regarding the idea of the Threefold Commonwealth. It was something

like a wonderful example, as are many things in Dr. Steiner's life. Many things must be regarded as first examples for a seeking humanity. Rudolf Steiner did these things, and he did speak to the stars. We have heard the presentation, by our artistic friends, of these wonderful words:

*“The Stars spake once to Man;
It is World Destiny that they are silent now.
To be aware of the Silence
Can become pain for Earthly Man,”*

In ancient times the stars indeed spoke to humanity; they could look up to the stars and could expect answers. Of course, they had to prepare themselves in the great mysteries of the past in order to learn to understand the language of the stars. What has survived into our age as astrology is but a faint, very faint, and lame shadow of that tremendous past when the stars still spoke to humanity:

*“But in the deepening Silence there grows and ripens
What Man speaks to the Stars.
To be aware of that speaking
Can become strength for Spirit Man.”*

You see, it is a totally new proposition, humanity speaking to the stars. Imagine what that means! Can we visualize that? Is this possible? That we can speak to the stars? How are we going to do it?

As I said, Dr. Steiner gave an example of how to do it. There was a situation in the heavens where Saturn was returning to the moment of the cosmic memory of the Mystery of Golgotha and challenges, so to speak, present humanity in that moment, and Rudolf Steiner answers. He has a conversation, and the conversation is the idea, the pronouncement of the Threefold Commonwealth. We must learn from the stars! This is a constant problem that will accompany us into the far future.

The planets are distributed in the heavens according to their courses and their intervals of revolution, so they appear in different places at different times. They no longer say anything to us. (If one really studied astrology one would very soon become aware that it doesn't say anything anymore.) They only create challenges, and these challenges may at times be pretty hard to bear, but we human beings must find positive answers. I can assure you that if positive answers are found, then even the worst aspects, in an astrological sense, can be redeemed and can be turned to really fruitful and positive living. We are moving into the future, and this problem of speaking to the stars will grow more and more. It concerns the world. By speaking to the stars, we can raise ourselves to cosmic heights, to cosmic dimensions. Of course, first of all we must learn the alphabet, and that means the astronomical facts, in order to know with what we are dealing. This can be done, and then it can happen that by trying to comprehend the challenges coming out of the cosmos we grow up to cosmic power ourselves. One will ask, “But how is this possible? How can we in our body, as we are now, grow up to cosmic power?”

My dear friends, you have just seen perfect examples today. (This lecture was preceded by a short Eurythmy presentation.) Eurythmy, as we have seen it today, is the beginning of that speaking to the stars. This is the visible word, Eurythmy, and it is an answer. We must grow into such speaking. What we usually call speech is absolutely powerless. We have gradually come into a position where we cannot even make ourselves understood. It will become increasingly difficult to make contact with other human beings through the word, because our word is powerless. But through something like Eurythmy, we can begin to grow again into a living word, a creative word. I dare even to say into a magic word. There is one of the Eurythmy exercises, Ich denke die Rede (I think or contemplate Speech). It's a complete exercise that is connected with the pentagram, the five-pointed star. If we do this exercise, we are already answering something which stands waiting in the cosmos to be recognized, and that is the planet we call the Evening Star, and in astronomy we call it Venus. Over the years, Venus constantly draws a big pentagram around the Earth. This was also known in the Middle Ages. Agrippa of Nettesheim, a great occultist in the Middle Ages, knew it. And now we see it done in

Eurythmy, for instance, with this exercise, “I contemplate Speech”. In this exercise there is an enlivening, a kind of making the word creative once more, i.e., heard not only among humans but throughout the whole cosmos.

If one goes into detail, one can even prove that we indeed speak to the cosmos. When we enter the spiritual world we give back that which we had on loan. The physical-material body goes back to the elements, but the etheric and astral bodies go back to the cosmos. Further, if we really study it, we would find that we indeed imprint our entire being into the cosmos. Every human being does this at the moment of death and thus speaks to the stars. We are also speaking to the cosmos with our every deed. Therefore, what we speak (even through our thinking, feeling, and willing) will become more and more significant for our practical life, even for our daily life. It is not a matter of writing books or giving lectures and speeches and all that. It can be something quite small that we do, perhaps even washing dishes can become meaningful even for the cosmos and not only for the dishes! For the human beings who are concerned, we are moving toward a future where we must learn to live magically, and I call it magic when we have learned to speak to the stars, when we have grown in our being to such dimensions that we mean something to the stars. The cosmos in which we live has exhausted itself with the creation; it has given everything it has into what is around us as the world of nature. Now this cosmos is waiting for us to be re-enlivened, to be permeated by that which only we can bring to the stars as the results, as the substance of our spiritual work. Thus we can grow up to cosmic dimensions.

Rudolf Steiner says that during the next 3,000 years we have the opportunity to experience the Cosmic Christ. This means nothing else but to grow up to such cosmic dimensions, because in order to experience Christ fully we must grow up, grow up and overcome, in a sense, the purely physical existence. What I want to say is this: putting all emphasis only on physical existence must be overcome—that is how we will grow up during the next 3,000 years. This would bring us into the fifth millennium, and great things will happen then.

In the East one speaks of the Maitreya Bodhisattva, i.e., the Gautama Buddha who reached his Buddhahood about 500 years before Christ, and since that time he no longer incarnates. Once a Bodhisattva has reached Buddhahood—Buddha is not a name, it is a degree or rank, so to speak—he no longer incarnates. However, then another Bodhisattva, another great teacher takes over in humanity and becomes the Maitreya Bodhisattva in this age. The Maitreya will reach Buddhahood 5,000 years after the Buddhahood of Gautama Buddha, and that would bring us just into the fifth millennium. Gautama Buddha taught humanity the Eightfold Path; he brought the teaching of compassion and love. The Maitreya will, as Buddha, bring the teaching of the Christian Word, the Creative Word—that which we don’t have yet, but that we must develop, and which we must gradually prepare in order to be able to speak to the whole cosmos, thereby enlarging our own being and developing powers that we cannot even imagine, which we cannot yet dream. During the next 3,000 years it really means moving and preparing, through the methods of the manifestation of the Christ in the ether, for that moment of being able to use the etheric forces in the world in order to create, in order to heal.

All Bodhisattvas and Buddhi work and live out of the Venus pentagram, because that is their sphere where they live and work in the cosmos. The Maitreya Buddha will do this in a far future time during the fifth millennium, and we must prepare for that. How do we prepare? Well, the first step we must take is cognition. We read in the last discourses in the Gospel of St. John (VIII: 32) “...the truth will make you free.” Knowledge, cognition, truth will make us free. This is the first step: to learn to recognize the cosmos, what it really is. Therefore, we need to take the next steps via astronomical knowledge; and from there work up to a deeper understanding, to a spiritual understanding, of the workings of the cosmos and also of the limitations of the cosmos with regard to present humanity and what the cosmos expects of us. All this we must first learn and know, for only then can we expect to handle it.

Therefore, the very first thing in creating a really new spiritual star wisdom is to learn to know these things in detail, for instance, the few examples I gave today. It really was a poor show, I assure you, if you know the background of this star wisdom and the possibilities of a new star wisdom. But still we must start somewhere, because this is our future, without which we will be unable to live in future times. At present we rely happily on nature. Old nature provides us with a body when we incarnate, takes us through an embryonic development and everything is done for us—it is just done. In a sense we are also involved, that’s true, but still we receive, we are still in a state of receiving from nature. This will cease. There will come the time when we will no longer

be able to incarnate as we do now, according to the present laws of propagation for entering physical existence. There will come the time when those forces that have made this possible so far, the Moon forces (we heard of those again in Eurythmy), will cease because the Moon will reunite with the Earth in a certain moment, and then these forces of propagation to which we are accustomed (which we just take for granted) will cease.

Then there will come the question, "How can we go on living and uniting with this planet?" By then we must have learned to take hold of the cosmic forces ourselves. We must have learned to operate, so to speak, the cosmos and build up our body out of cosmic forces. Because it is all foolish to believe that the human body is created out of a stream of heredity. That is an illusion; it is created by the cosmic forces.

The cosmic form, the cosmic physical-spiritual body, takes hold of the matter that is offered on the Earth and forces it into a human form. This we must learn to operate, to do it ourselves at some future time. For this, it will be necessary that first the Maitreya Buddha comes and brings the teaching of the Christian Word, of the Christ Word, of that which was already incorporated into this Earth by what Christ did during the Three Years; for instance, the signs in the Gospel of St. John. There are seven such signs recorded there. Here in the Gospel of St. John (XIV: 11-12) we read also the words: "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me or else believe me for the very work's sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto my Father."

We must realize that what is meant here by belief is not what we call belief or faith in our worn-out religions of today; it is a power of conviction, a power of the experience of the presence of the divine, and if that becomes awakened in us, then we can do the same things, we can perform the same "signs" as Christ says here, "even greater works than these."

Now we have a basis upon which to contemplate the future of humanity, especially in regard to the forthcoming Great Conjunction at the turn of the century.