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Although the doctrine of bodily resurrection seems far removed from the thoughts of most human beings today, the question of our future destiny after death is one which does not cease to fascinate us. A demonstration of this was the remarkable resonance found by the ideas of mathematician Frank Tipler¹. He sees a future resurrection becoming possible through information technology. The 'data' that makes up every human being: their knowledge, memories, along with the DNA that shapes their body, will be reconstituted by computers of almost infinite power, which will give human beings a new existence in a virtual simulacrum of the universe. We might see in this theory a materialist distortion of the idea of resurrection. We can see too the complementary distortion which wants to see the life after death as a blessed release, an escape of the soul from the confines of the body.

In Christian thinking, our future hope stems from the ground-breaking bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. This was no reconstitution in a virtual world, nor was it an escape from physical existence. It is instead a recreation of the body, the seed for a future transformation all bodies, and of the earth.

For many who have lived with the thought of reincarnation, the idea of a bodily resurrection is hard to grasp: if I am to have many bodies in the course of my incarnations, which one will be raised at the end of time? We hope that the articles in this issue will be helpful in reflecting further on these central questions.

TOM RAVETZ

1) The Physics of Immortality: Modern Cosmology, God and the Resurrection of the Dead, Frank J. Tipler (1994)

Sown a physical body raised a spiritual body

Peter Allan

These words of the apostle Paul from his first letter to the Corinthians (Chapter 15) are well known. They were originally written to be read aloud at gatherings of the young community of Christians, which Paul had founded in the great harbour city of Corinth. Paul wished, with his words, to give wings to the seeking souls in his care so that they could discover what, to begin with, was beyond their sight—the risen presence of Christ in their midst. The horizon his words opened up sought to make understandable how death had been overcome by the deeds of Christ who, as a divine being lived and worked on earth.

Born and bred near the sea in the Greek city of Tarsus, Paul, the Jewish Rabbi, like the Greeks themselves, stood in awe before the harmony of the human physical body. Each of their cultures, in its own way, had a true sense of the human body as a temple for the soul and the spirit of Man. And yet it was felt, by the Greeks most of all, that with the death of the body, the individual creative soul, which was their culture's crowning achievement, might become a pale shadow of itself in the afterlife. This lack of insight into existence after death stirred deep fears in human souls of Paul's time. It drove them to make the most of the passing moment, which was a widespread attitude in Corinth then, just as it is in our present culture.

However, Paul was always aware of the hidden potential in human beings, which only needed a source of inner warmth and light in order to unfold. A moving scene from his time in Corinth makes this clear. 'The Lord spoke one night to Paul in a vision: Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent, for I am with you and no man shall attack you to harm you; for I have many people in this city.' (Acts 18)

These words give clear expression to the reality out of which Paul worked. The picture of the true human being was active in him, and guided his deeds in freedom. In this way Paul worked in the spirit of our Michaelmas

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Epistle: the image of humanity, both as it now is and as it is to come, was alive in him. He strove for the understanding of Christ of which the Epistle speaks.



Eva Knausenberger

Fear confuses and lames; occasionally it paralyzes individuals and even whole nations. The archetype, the symbol for the spirituality, of fear is the many-headed dragon. Passages in the Apocalypse of St. John tell of the dragon threatening the survival of the newly-born child, the savior of mankind. We find statues and paintings of the Archangel Michael engaged in 'fighting' the dragon.

Christ understood that the core, the heart of fear, is the fear of death. His comfort to us is inherent in the words: 'In the world you are afraid' and 'behold I have overcome the world.'

What is fear?

What can we do to overcome fear, so that we are not overcome by fear? The work of priests, doctors and psychotherapists centers around the ill effects fear has on the body, soul and spirit of their clients, who are attacked by many and varied kinds of fear in everyday life. Indeed every one of us is forced to live in the face of possible annihilation through atomic warfare, terrorism, murderers, thieves to name but a few of the most obvious ones. Surely every one of us has felt the laming, confusing or paralyzing effect of fear. The 'dragon' has more heads than we can count.

Indeed, we have many reasons to worry. The results of incessant—and increasing—worrying (regardless of the reasons) manifest as heart-trouble, depression, panic attacks, increased relationship difficulties amongst many other symptoms.

Worries and problems are part of life, but the fear they introduce into the human soul—though quite obvious and apparently easy to understand—is noxious.

Do we truly understand that the life-debilitating effects of fear caused by the spirituality of fear—the dragon—are attacks on the human spirituality

and individuality? Do we see that they attack our thinking feeling and acting and debilitate them? As soon as we see that, we see the dragon.

How does the spirituality of fear invade us? Like the worm it is, it creeps in uninvited, invades our thinking.

Eva Knausenberger lives in New Zealand where she works as a psychotherapist. More exactly: it invades because we somehow don't think beyond short-term solutions. Instead the spirituality of fear begins to think in us. Our thinking is invaded by fear. And once in our minds, it has the power to spawn more of its own kind all the time. And what is even worse, it spreads its laming, confusing, depressing, paralyzing poison from our minds into our capacities of thinking, feeling, and willing, and from there into others around us and into the world.

We all know that a certain amount of caution is a very good strategy. Caution is awareness that we live in a world of many dangers. Caution alerts us to possible dangers. It is the wisdom of an inner guardian, who also thinks in us, albeit only when we invite its presence into our being.

Isn't it amazing how, for instance, loving parents 'know' when their children are in danger? If we listen to the voice of wisdom in us, the voice of our guardian angel, our conscience, we will knowingly experience that caution is not the same as fear. The one heals, the other destroys.

The battle for the evolving human I is fought in human thinking. It matters greatly therefore how and what we think; whether we are overwhelmed by fear or can see it for what it is. And therefore it is vital that we discover who or what thinks in us.

In the world you are afraid; and behold I have overcome the world.

I have [already] *overcome* [what you are wrestling with].

These words of Christ assure us that I can overcome the dragon attacking my 'I' with Him by my side. I can fight in league with the spirituality of wisdom against the spirituality of fear.

Along with Christ's words, the paintings and statues of St. Michael and the Apocalypse—and others—show the reality of the spiritual combat, show that the battle against the dark spirituality of our times can be won and how it can be won. Indeed Christ's words show that He has already won it.

The judgment against the ruler of the world has already been spoken. In no picture or statue do we see a dead dragon. The dragon is a reality in and of the world. But the lance of Michael, who fights for us with the mandate to overcome the dragon, pins the dragon to the ground. He stops its progress. And he does so by sitting fully armed on a white horse. He does not get off his horse to hand-wrestle with the dragon. He uses the elevated position his horse gives him to track the dragon's movement and intentions. We can see in the white horse a symbolof the purity of conscious thinking and overview.

In his last letter to the Ephesians St. Paul describes the armour we need to put on in our fight alongside of the Archangel Michael:

Put on the full armour of God, so that you may be able to resist the well-aimed attacks of the Adversary. For we fight not against powers of flesh and blood but:

against spirit-beings, mighty in the stream of time. against spirit-beings, powerful in the moulding of earthsubstance

against cosmic spiritual powers, whose darkness rules at the present time

against spirit-beings who are themselves the powers of evil.

Therefore courageously pick up the armour God has provided. It will enable you to resist the evil even when it unfolds its greatest strength. Stand firm, follow everything to the end.

Stand fast, girded about the loins with truth.

Put on the breast-plate of spirit-wisdom, which fulfills human destiny.

Shoe your feet with preparedness to spread the message of peace proclaimed by the angels.

In all your deeds hold in your heart the vision of Christ's presence, with which you can quench all the flames from the darts of the evil one.

Take into your thoughts the certainty of world-healing. It will protect you like a helmet.

Grasp the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. May this armour cover you in everything you do and in all prayers.

The Resurrection of the Body

Günther Dellbrügger

The body as a temple

On Palm Sunday, Christ speaks of an impending decision. 'Now the decision has to be made for this world.' (John 12:31)

This is a life and death decision which touches on the fate of the human body. Christ had already confounded everybody at the first Passover festival at which he appeared publicly in the holy city with the mysterious words: 'Destroy this temple and I will build it again in three days. To this the Jews said: It took 46 years to build this temple, and you want to rebuild it in three days. But He spoke of the temple of His body.' John 2:19–21.

The life of the Christ within his human body was an ongoing cleansing of the temple of the body. At the beginning of Holy Week a last remnant of the human constitution, weakened by the sickness of sin, still needed to be overcome. The events of the Holy Week were needed as a conclusion of the 'cleansing of the temple' of the body. 'Now the Ruler of this world will be cast out.' (John 12:31)

Christ made this statement to some Greeks who sought his advice. (John 12:20f). The fact that the evangelist points to their being Greek seems emphasizes an inner connection. For the Greeks, the form of the physical body was of utmost importance. The beauty of the body was the aim of gymnastic exercises. They served to perfect the human form. However, the body was not revered because of the outer beauty, but because it expressed the truth of the human being in the sense world. The perfect beauty of the human body, with its archetypal proportions, symmetry, strength and grace was a convincing proof of the existence of God for the Greeks. For this reason, they experienced the disintegration of the body in and after death as very painful. The beauty of the human form which seemed to be divine-eternal disappeared after death. What remained of the human being? Only a shadow. The increasing weight of the earthly sense world cast

Günther Dellbrügger is a priest of The Christian Community in Munich, Germany. a shadow on the afterlife. Human beings started to doubt the existence of the soul after death. This is the origin of the famous saying of the Greek hero, Achilles: 'It is better to be a beggar in this world than a king in the realm of the shades.' (Odyssey 11.486)

The profound, unexpressed hope for the salvation of the human body may have led the Greeks to Christ with the wish: 'We hope to *see* Jesus (John 12:21). The casting out of the ruler of this world, the completion of the cleansing of the temple and finally the resurrection of the body fulfilled the deepest hopes especially of the Greeks, who experienced the divine nature of the human body very deeply and expressed this with their art. How should we imagine the resurrection of the body? How can Christ after three days resurrect the body that obviously disintegrated with death?

The theology of resurrection in medieval times

The Christian theologians up to the end of the middle ages tried to work out with their thinking the qualities pertaining to the risen Christ. They arrived at three main qualities: 'claritas', 'agilitas' and 'subtilitas'. Briefly this means the following:

With *claritas* they tried to express the sun-like clarity the Risen One radiated. Think of Mary Magdalene. First she is overcome by anguish. She *weeps*. Then she *sees* the angels, *listens* to them, *talks* to them. She turns round to the stranger, *sees* him, *hears* his voice, *talks* to the one she thinks is the gardener. Only when she hears her name and turns round once more—which means she is prepared to perceive anew—the master reveals Himself. Cleansed by her tears, made receptive by the questions of the angels and the stranger, her inner eye perceives the sun-like countenance of her Lord and Master. The *claritas* of the Lord becomes in her the light of knowledge of the heart.

In a similar way, the *claritas* of the Risen One gradually breaks through the clouds in the souls of the disciples. With the disciples at Emmaus it was the moment of breaking the bread: 'It happened that their eyes were open and they recognized Him.' (Luke 24:31) The ten disciples in the evening of Easter 'were filled with joy when they saw the Lord; (John 20:20) or a week later with Thomas who overcomes his doubt and exclaims in recognition: 'My Lord and my God!' (John 20:28) With this the *claritas* of the Lord begins to become visible to the human beings and transfer to them. Paul who experienced the Risen One as 'brighter as the sun' expresses it in these words:

So the revealing light of the Lord is reflected in us all who have unveiled faces. And we become transformed into the image that we see, from one stage of clear shining-power to another, shining in the light that rays out from the Lord who is the Spirit. 2 Cor. 3:18

The second important characteristic of the Risen One for the medieval theologians is the *agilitas*, His mobility, the countless ways in which he

appears to the human beings. Mary Magdalene experiences Him as the gardener, the tender of all things living, the disciples at Emmaus as the one who walks with them, who interprets the scriptures and helps them understand, and the one who gives the sacraments, the one who breaks the bread. Thomas recognizes him as his God, the God who lives in his soul, and at the same time his cosmic God, who is Lord over matter, recognized by the wounds in His hands. Finally, Peter and John experience Him after returning from fishing and after an early morning meal as the Lord of destiny, who gives them their tasks for the future. He says to Peter pointing to John: 'If I want him to remain until my coming, this does not concern you. (John 21) The Risen One, with his agilitas, reveals Himself in ever new appearances, as He accommodates the people and situations He meets.

Recently this aspect of the Risen One has been described powerfully, not by a theologian, but an artist who schooled his eye with his artistic creativity:

Christ can be perceived 'with an inner eye'. And before this inner eye what has become of the resurrection of Christ appears. He naturally did not evaporate or just disappear. The question must be: Where is he now? He who tries to see with his inner eye will realize that he has returned to us long ago, not in a physical form, but in a moving form, of a substance which is invisible to the physical eye. This means that he wafts through every space, every part of time as a substance. Therefore he is very close. And the threshold to the human being has never been so low in the history of mankind. Only the readiness of the human beings to experience this is lacking, to experience it and to be fundamentally transformed by it. The process by which this coming of the Christ is happening in our time is quite simply movement. He is the one who moves...

Beuys on Christ: A Position in Dialog (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholische Bibelwerk GmbH, 1989)

The meaning of *subtilitas* in Christian theology becomes clear when one considers what happened in the evening of Easter Sunday. John stresses that the doors were closed, for fear of the Jews. There are no obstacles for the sublimeness and tenderness of the Risen One. It is obvious that He can appear when and wherever he chooses. 'Jesus came and stood among them.' (John 20)

Bringing together these three qualities, we can say that medieval theology, especially Scholasticism, recognizes in the 'claritas' the sun-like light

quality of the Risen One, which can illuminate the human soul when it recognizes Him; in the 'agilitas' the never ending mobility and power of transformation of the Lord of all life, and in the 'subtilitas' the tenderness and delicacy of His appearance, which borders the sense world.

How can one understand the subtilitas of the resurrection body when the Risen One, according to Luke, rejects being seen as a'ghost', for a ghost has neither blood nor bones:

And while they were saying this, he himself stood in their midst. They were alarmed and frightened because they throught that they were seeing a ghost. And he said to them, Why are you so bewildered? Why do so many doubting thoughts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet: It is really I. Touch me and look at me: A spirit-vision has not flesh and bones as you see that I have.

Luke 24:36-40

The resurrection body as phantom body: new understanding through anthroposophy

How can the Risen One join his disciples through locked doors, being both a *spiritual* reality and of 'blood and bones'—that is, a physical reality? Any modern person who seriously tries to understand the resurrection of Christ is confronted with this question. How can we tentatively begin to understand that the body in which the Risen One appears and through which he works is a physical-spiritual reality? Does our way of thinking itself have to go through a kind of death and resurrection?

In the lectures 'From Jesus to Christ' given in Karlsruhe in 1911, Rudolf Steiner introduces the concept of the 'phantom body'. This seems to him to be a necessity to enable us to understand the resurrection in its cosmic dimension. He speaks very movingly about the immeasurable deed of love Christ committed to save the human phantom body for mankind. In this article, we can only touch upon the most important points.

The first challenge with which Rudolf Steiner faces us is the question: What is the physical body? or in the words of the Gospel of Luke: 'What is flesh and bones?' The Steiner's answer is initially rather confusing and mysterious, because it seems to us that the physical body, through being visible and tangible, is easy to comprehend. In contrast it seems to be more difficult to grasp the life forces, soul and personality of a human being, because they are invisible.

Steiner comments: 'The physical body of the human being is in truth invisible.' He adds that it is the most difficult task for a clairvoyant to come

to a spiritual understanding of the physical body of the human being. How can we understand this?

To help to make clear what is meant here let us look at water. It takes a lot of effort and chemical know-how to split water up into its two constituent parts, the two gases, oxygen and hydrogen. If you look at water, would you ever think that it is made up of these two gases?

Similarly, the human being appears to us to be a single entity, but is in fact a conglomerate of different elements which combine to create the impression of a human being. If the clairvoyant succeeds in distinguishing between the various layers of the human being he will, in part by looking beyond all the layers, arrive at perceiving the physical body. The result is paradoxical: the *physical* body is in truth *spiritual*, i.e. not perceptible with the senses. That which we perceive is matter which fills the physical body. In order to distinguish the physical body from the visible, material body Rudolf Steiner calls it 'phantom body', an expression which one might find off-putting.

In the same way as all existence is based on a spiritual-physical divine being, according to the creed of The Christian Community, the human being is also a spiritual-physical being. Our thinking needs to be able to unite two seemingly irreconcilable qualities, spiritual *and* physical. By its own nature, the phantom body is as transparent as a crystal, but in its function as a form-body it defines, structures and forms the sense perceptible matter which has been absorbed by this body. It is connected with matter, but it is not identical with it. It is perhaps no coincidence that we speak of a phantom limb when a person feels pain in a limb that has long been amputated, in a place where there is nothing visibly present.

In the lectures already mentioned, Rudolf Steiner speaks about ever new aspects of the phantom body. On the one hand it is like a net which holds together what is contained in it, which would fall apart like a heap of sand if the net were not there; on the other hand it acts as an inner system of forces, that not only holds the substances together, takes them up and integrates them, but also excretes them again. Philosophically the phantom body is 'forma formata', the completed form, but also 'forma formans', the form in becoming. It is a spiritual form in the present, but also a dynamic, formative force which is capable of producing the form out of itself again and again. The phantom body generates itself, penetrates matter and makes it conform to the design of the body.

Rudolf Steiner describes the phantom body as the 'urgestalt' of the human being, the spiritual-physical archetypal image *before* it was filled in with mat-

ter. In other words, the phantom body is the real divine thought in the outer world, the thought which formed the basis of the creation of man in his intended form, as is revealed through the depiction at the cathedral of Chartres: the human being originates in a thought of God, right down to his physical appearance.

This is what is meant when the Old Testament speaks of the human being as being created in the image of God. The phantom body as the original form of the human being is the original, God given element of the human being. In his physical body the human being is closest to God.

During the development of mankind the phantom body, the divine original image of man, becomes obscured, weakened and disfigured through the influence of the adversary forces. The human being developed too close an affinity with matter. To pick up the image of the net, which we used earlier: the net, which should have remained merely a container for matter, became more and more part of what it contained, and therefore subject to the same deterioration as matter. The phantom threatened to disintegrate, and mankind entered a dramatic development. The temple of the body became ever more contaminated. The human



being, conceived and created by the Gods, was in greatest danger. For it is only through the pure form of the human body that human beings can find themselves and grasp the tasks the Gods have given them.

Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1 Cor. 3:16

This admonition of Paul to the Corinthians is meant for the whole of humanity. We have forgotten that our body is a temple. But this word can touch us deeply and resound in us as a great truth. 'Whoever touches the body of a human being, touches the heavens.' (Novalis)

Why is the phantom body, the temple of the body, so important for the human being? The body is not only the house of the human soul, its place of work and creativity, but it is also a mirror. In the mirror of our bodies we are to recognize ourselves as a divine thought, as intended by God. This consciousness of ourselves was supposed to preserve the connection with

the creative divine world. In the same way as the temple is the place where human beings turn to the divine and thereby come closer to themselves, the original physical body was to have made it possible to develop selfhood and nearness to God.

The intentions of the divine world, however, were thwarted by the adversary. When Christ, in a free deed of cosmic love, decided to come to the aid of human beings, his task was to wrest the temple of the body from the adversary in order to release them. Only through the saved and healed original form of the human body can human beings awaken to

Resurrection, Matthias Grünewald, Isenheimer Altar

freedom.

Christ's deed of redemption for us human beings consists of the reawakening of the original human form right down into the physical. Paul therefore calls Christ the second, the new Adam, Christ succeeded in separating the phantom body from matter with which it had amalgamated, and in wresting it away from the power of Ahriman. In the resurrection the real divine thought appears as crystalline light, as 'claritas'. Christ radiates light on the cross already. The matter of His body is utterly permeated by spirit, the matter is seared through by divine substance. Only the spirit of Christ was able to hold together this body up to the death on the cross.

The figure of the Risen One as depicted by Grünewald is again a wholeness, within which we can distinguish several different areas: the sun-like aura which radiates from the head and forms, with the raised arms and hands, from which glow the wounds like small suns, the growing point of a new cosmos; the starry skies, which are able again to unite their forces with the divine human soul; the glowing reddish-yellow middle in the realm of the heart as the source of movement and new creation and finally the phantom body, shimmering like a rose quartz, which we can see best around the legs.

The victorious gesture of the Risen One speaks:

See, I am the human being, as thought, willed and loved by the Gods. I am the new Adam. I am yourself, in your future form. Whoever unites with me will cleanse his body as a temple, and will resurrect through it.

Karma and Resurrection

Jörg Ewertowski

At first sight the idea of reincarnation and that of resurrection may appear to exclude each other. However, fresh consideration of the concept of resurrection as it is found only in the Christian faith can make us realize that these ideas are deeply connected.

Jews, Christians and Moslems do not hope merely for a reawakening of the soul after death, 'from the grave of the body', but for a real resurrection of the body 'at the end of all things'. As the idea of reincarnation sees us discarding our body at the end of each incarnation, the belief in resurrection seems to be incompatible with the belief in reincarnation. Theologians therefore often contrast the Christian image of man as a body-soul unity with the 'pagan' belief in immortality, which is based on a dualistic image of man, in which body and soul are distinct and independent realities.

Christianity differs from all other religions and particularly from Judaism by bringing in a new element, the real resurrection of the God-man in the pivotal moment of history. If we look at the resurrection at the end of time, which is common to Christianity, Judaism and Islam, from this centre, we can see Christianity in its true form. We then start to see that the concepts of resurrection and reincarnation in fact need each other.

The turning point of time and the end of all times

The belief in resurrection has two poles: The belief in Christ's resurrection and the belief that this resurrection is the guarantee of the resurrection of human beings at the last judgement. The question of what happens to those who die before the end of time until the last judgement is not answered by the dogma of resurrection.

The belief in an immortal soul that continues to live after death, which was held by the ancient philosophers and is held today by many religions, differs from the belief in resurrection in that it refers only to the death of each individual human being.

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The apparent contradiction between the belief in the resurrection and the belief in the continuity of life after death of an individual human being only occurs if we confuse the belief in the resurrection at the end of time with the resurrection during historic time, or the unique event of Christ's resurrection at the turning point of time with all the individual deaths of human beings during history.

Why do we confuse the end of all time with historic time? Because we are not aware of the difference between the death of an individual human being and the death which threatens mankind as a whole at the end of time. Because of this lack of awareness we confuse these two kinds of death, or we think these facts have nothing to do with each other.

The idea of reincarnation makes it possible to see both the distinctiveness of the two kinds of death, and their connection. The idea of reincarnation tells us that the each human being moves through the whole of the history of humanity, from beginning to end. The path of each individual human being is at the same time the path of the whole of humanity.

Only because reincarnation has been either excluded from these considerations or altogether forgotten, did the contradiction between the belief in the living-on of the human soul after death and the belief in the resurrection of the body emerge. This contradiction then leads to the claim that the belief in the Christian resurrection presupposes the inseparable unity of body and soul. And the final consequence is that the Christian belief is incompatible with the belief in reincarnation.

Christianity does not become indistinguishable from the other religions, as is often feared, if reincarnation is allowed to be the connecting link between the Christian idea of the resurrection at the end of all times and the philosophical and religious idea of an immortal soul-spiritual entity which separates from the body in death. On the contrary, the resurrection achieved by Christ in the middle of history gains its significance not through the rejection of the belief in immortality as held by other religions, but through the differentiation of the 'little death' of the individual human beings during history and the 'great death' of mankind, its possible destruction at the end of time.

Death that threatens immortality

In order to understand the resurrection in its far reaching consequences without playing it down or disregarding it, we need to bear in mind the immortality of the human being as a being of soul and spirit. Why? Because the death that threatens our immortality at the end of times has quite a different

power than the death that occurs to what is naturally mortal within time. It is only the former that is real death, or extinction. This extinction, called in traditional language damnation, means the threat that a being destined for immortality would die. Resurrection means that something that was intended to be immortal is threatened with destruction. The Fall exposed the immortal human being to death. This death has not yet fully happened. It is the threat of annihilation at the end of time.

The victory over death through the power of the resurrection has a far greater significance than merely overcoming death in the sense of the soul's escaping from the mortal body. To be aware of the threat of the 'great death' is the distinctive feature of Christianity. This special knowledge gets obscured when the resurrection is seen as the answer to the question of the little death. Through this confusion, the nature of the final death—damnation—becomes incomprehensible, because it implies that human beings—regarding their soul and spirit—are mortal beings that need to be saved from their mortality. This in fact puts the human being on the same level as the animal.

There are two possible ways of confusing our understanding, both of which have to do with the little death. The resurrection can be confused with the soul's continued existence after the body is cast off. This danger is greatest in interpretations influenced by Platonist philosophy. The church theology of the present day is well aware of this danger. Conversely, the resurrection can also be confused with the overcoming of the merely physical, merely personal death. The theology of the churches seems to be at risk of succumbing to this view. Both errors have the same source: no distinction is made between the individual human existence and the existence of the whole of humanity, and their connection is not seen with this difference in mind. This differentiated connection only makes sense in view of the history of humanity and reincarnation.—With all this in mind, how can we understand the overcoming of the 'great death' as the resurrection of the body?

Reincarnation as a way to resurrection

Reincarnation lies between mortality and immortality. In the first place it was only the human body which became mortal after the Fall of man; man's spiritual being remained unaffected at first. This mortality of the body contains a kind of protection: it prevents us from taking on a one-sided earthly perspective. The possibility of separating the physical from the spiritual is therefore a direct consequence of the Fall. The separation is only

contingent, because the soul can only live temporarily without the body and needs to seek the path to incarnation again and again. Beyond this, the Fall unleashed a dynamic which would inevitably lead to the death of the soul. Through this dynamic, the soul would connect ever more strongly with the mortal body and separate from the spirit. The physical resurrection of Christ at the turning-point of time opened up the possibility of a reverse process, through which the mortality of the body and the exile of the soul would be undone. What is the consequence of this for reincarnation?

The process which was started by the Fall does not only lead the soul towards death, through its ever stronger connection with the body. It has another effect. This connection to the body forms the soul slowly into an individual person. The dynamic of the death of the soul gives rise to individualized personality. Resurrection does not only prevent the eternal immortal being from dying, but it opens up the possibility that this newly created individuality can continue to live through the chain of reincarnations, and it bestows upon it its destiny of immortality. The path through the many reincarnations is littered with cast-off bodies, as was always the case. Over against this, a new body is gradually built up from the forces of Christ. In this inverse descent, Christ is our future ancestor from whom we inherit a body, whose essence we take with us along and build up from incarnation to incarnation.

In Christ not only did God become man, but mankind became person (the 'new Adam'). The resurrection of Christ in the turning point of time is as much an event for the whole of mankind as is the promised resurrection at the end of all times. In the process of reincarnation in which all individual human beings are engaged on their way through their incarnations, they experience more and more that Christ is the real unity of mankind which overcomes all national and race boundaries. The 'inverse stream of heredity' which is woven into the path from incarnation to incarnation creates a body which does not tie the individual through the blood to a family or nation, like the physical body, but connects him or her to the spiritual stream of mankind.

These developments moving in opposite directions—the individualization, through which the individual human being walks the path of reincarnation, and the convergence towards a new connection to a spiritual mankind—will come to fulfilment on the day of judgement. The completion of the process of resurrection will be the end of history and the end of the path of reincarnation. History, physical mortality and reincarnation are inseparable. History requires at the same time mortality and immortality.

Only the separation of the physical from the soul-spiritual makes history possible. Only the almost complete merging with the physical body makes the human being into a free, individualized person. And only the creation of a new body through the path of reincarnation, opens up the individual human being again to the eternity of spirit. In this way we can bring the concept of resurrection from the end of time into historical time, without mixing up the small and the great death. The destiny of the body and of the soul are similarly interlinked. Whoever wants to call them inseparable does not need to exclude reincarnation—the opposite is true.

This essay is not intended to compel, but rather to open horizons. The steps of the argument are intended to show the traces of a process of thought—they are not important in themselves, but are rather intended to stimulate others to find their own pathways in thought. It is the result of preparing and reflecting on a symposium on Anthroposophy and Theology.

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I have other planets too
she said, handing over the small blue green one,
they rise, on the frontier between night, and day
and keep a quiet equilibrium on this voyage,
but this one, she said,
is wounded by mistaken arrows, and hurts,
this one, called Earth,
reflects the illumination of the moon
in direct relation
to the brightness of the sun
and, sometimes,
it burns,
In the deepest

and it cries
In the deepest part of you,
for no more
In the I of God,

for no more
lies.
You are old

and have your roots

in the rhythmic tides of time

which bless you

Lucy Trevitt with their unquiet happenings.

The Lord's Prayer

Michael C. Willey

In the Gospel of Luke we are told that an unnamed disciple saw Jesus praying and when He had finished asked Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples'.

It must have required enormous courage from this disciple to approach Jesus and make such a request.

Could it have been that he had stumbled upon Jesus praying privately and then discussed what he had seen with his companions? 'John the Baptist taught us certain things but with Jesus it must be different, how does He pray? To whom does He pray? Which of us will be brave enough to go over and ask Him when He has finished?'

Eventually one of the disciples formulated the request, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' or 'Lord, teach us the Path of Prayer'.

We can try to imagine what those present experienced when they heard Him speak what we now call the Lord's Prayer. The unique words must have resonated deep within and far around them. They had witnessed a momentous turning point in human evolution.

Today when we hear the same words spoken by a priest before the congregation

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in The Christian Community we sense that they are spoken by someone who has lived with them intensely and this can help in some degree to lift us to a higher understanding. Listening to this prayer is quite a different experience from reading or saying the words ourselves in private.

The teaching to the disciples 'pray in this way' is shown to us in Matthew. Here Jesus not only gives advice on how to pray, but he also gives the fuller version of the prayer. He warns the disciples about the dangers of giving alms before men, of 'sounding trumpets' as the hypocrites do in the synagogues. Rather we are encouraged to enter into a private room and when we have shut the door to pray in secret: 'and your Father, who sees in secret himself, shall reward you openly.'

It is a remarkable fact that many of the words and phrases of the Lord's Prayer themselves would not have seemed so strange to the disciples—they had been part of Jewish piety for centuries. Nevertheless, the prayer is something completely new, both through its composition and through the fact that Jesus taught the disciples to pray directly to 'Our Father'.

A most important and central prayer of Judaism is The Kaddish. The Kaddish was written in Aramaic, which at the time of the original Kaddish's composition, was the lingua franca of the Jewish people. Jesus and the disciples would almost certainly have learnt it in their youth from family and the Synagogue. The Kaddish is a thanksgiving referring to the sanctification of the unspeakable name of God. It is used particularly on occasions of mourning, commemoration and burial.

The Kaddish

Exalted and hallowed be his great name
In the world which he created according to his will
May he let his kingdom rule
In your lifetime and in your days
And in the lifetime of the whole house of Israel, speedily and soon
Praised be his great name from eternity to eternity
And to this say 'Amen'.

Here we see the great similarity in content and structure that prefigured the Lord's Prayer, along with the great difference: in the Kaddish, God is spoken of in the third person, as 'he'. The very familiarity with the concepts of Name, Will and Kingdom must have made it all the more astonishing for the disciples to hear the great prayer addressed not to a 'he' but to a 'you', implicit in the 'our' of 'our Father'.

There is a Psalm which prefigures the Lord's Prayer, prophetically pointing to the coming Messiah, who as the first human being will address God as father.

He shall cry to me, Thou art my father, my God and the rock of my salvation. (Psalm 89:26)

The disciples would have been familiar with the scriptures and Psalms which they had sung or recited. There are many other verses that can be seen as preparation or forerunners of the prayer:

Teach me to do your will, for you are my God.

(Psalm 143:10)

Help us, O God of our salvation; for the glory of your name;

deliver us and forgive our sins for your namesake.

(Psalm 79:9)

However, it is in the human world of the wisdom writings that the social aspect of the Lord's Prayer is prefigured:

One who forgives an affront fosters friendship, but one who dwells on disputes will alienate a friend.

(Proverbs 17.9)

Immediately after speaking the fuller version of the prayer in (Matthew 6:14,15) further words were spoken regarding forgiveness. Most of us experience some difficulty in being able to forgive and the disciples themselves may have requested some help and clarification.

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you forgive not men their trespasses neither will your Father forgive you.

The Psalms amplify the sixth and seventh petitions in the Lord's Prayer, which here appears like a condensation of the centuries-old tradition of Jewish piety:

Let your good spirit lead me on a level path. For your namesake, O Lord, preserve my life. In your righteousness bring me out of trouble. (Psalm 143:10–11)

Deliver me from my enemies, O my God, protect me from those who rise up against me. Deliver me from those who work evil, from the bloodthirsty save me. (Psalm 59 1–2) One notable difference between to Lord's Prayer and the Kaddish is that the former does not include the word 'Israel' and thus becomes all encompassing. There is a hymn still popular in English which carries the words 'I vow to thee my country' which fosters nationalism, some religions are able to only accept members of the same religion as brothers and sisters. The Lord's prayer can potentially be used by everyone, it has sown the seed that will enable humanity to lift itself to a higher level of consciousness.

In the same verse of Matthew we are also asked not to 'make vain repetitions' and this must be a real danger when using the same prayer time and time again.

There have been many translations of the Lord's Prayer into English through the ages, and perhaps it will be helpful to look at a very beautiful but less well known one.

The Lord's Prayer

O Father of Mankind, Thou, who dwellest in the highest of the Heavens, Reverenced be Thy Name. May Thy Reign be, everywhere proclaimed so that Thy Will may be done upon the Earth, as it is in the Mansions of Heaven; Grant unto me, and the whole world, day by day, an abundant supply of spiritual and corporeal Food; Forgive us our transgressions against Thee, as we extend our kindness, and *Forgiveness, to all;* O God! Abandon us not, when surrounded by trials; But preserve us from the Dominion of Satan; For Thine only, is the Sovereignty, the power, and the glory, throughout eternity. (Taken from the Greek by Dr. Thornton in 1827.)

Brownie: a little house friend

Roger Druitt

A country tradition of earlier times had it that every house—and especially farm—had a small Being, loosely related to the gnomes, living in it alongside the family, that made its presence felt through things going wrong. The milk would go sour too quickly or the dough not rise. Cows could go off milk or the butter not set. To prevent such things happening, the mother of the house would put milk and bread out on the step at night for the brownie, as it was called, to eat. Were this done religiously, the brownie would do good deeds such as turn the aforementioned

woes into their opposite or even put other mischievous spirits in order (poltergeists and the like). Stories such as The Tomten or The Elves and the Shoemaker illustrate the point (although brownies are not elves, for elves are slender while brownies are more stocky and actually live in the home whereas elves tend to dwell in the forest even though they can do neat stitching!). A well-related and cultivated brownie was the consequence of a 'goodwife' in the home, respected, and perhaps envied, by her neighbours, for qualities of openness, kindness, order and self-control.

What follows is an attempt at meeting the Brownie-Spirit in our own time as we try to put ourselves on top of our domestic affairs, through some questions put recently to a brownie friend.

Is there any sign that the brownie is anything more than a superstitious hangover from a less enlightened age? Can you illustrate?

Yes. For example when you are going on holiday.

Packing to go away

Brownie gets excited if you are going to go away! Brownie thinks this is such fun. So much so in fact that at every turn Brownie suggests (by way of a voice in your mind that is indistinguishable from your own) that you do something other than what you have planned to do. If you are packing clothes, Brownie wants you to fold up the ones you are not packing, or, at worst, even mend them. In any case Brownie wants you to mend the ones you are taking away with you-and who wouldn't? Sometimes Brownie reminds you of things you have forgotten. You notice a little light go on in the back of your mind quite out of nowhere. If this happens you should thank Brownie and put something out for him or her-actually Brownie is neither, and not 'it' either!

If you are going away, there is one thing above all that Brownie will insist upon. You must leave your house clean. If you do not want to do this Brownie will be upset and hinder you in your packing: you lose things that you want to take with you and waste a lot of time (which you could be spending cleaning). When you return home you will find that the washing machine is not working or something

has sprung a leak. On the other hand, if you wish to please Brownie in this way you can keep up a running conversation about how much time to spend packing and how much to spend cleaning. Brownie especially likes this kind of interchange. It appeals to a special mindset, or rather, attitude of will; for Brownie likes variation and especially likes to play with it. Brownie also likes order as long as it is not clinical or intellectual, so try to come to an agreement with Brownie as to how to allocate your tasks. For example, you could say five minutes packing and five cleaning (or whatever suits you), and then you will find Brownie will be supportive and the work will be done very quickly.

Brownie gets especially nervous when the time to go approaches. At these times it is helpful if you have already sat down with Brownie a few days before and made a list of all the last minute things that will need doing. You will have to do this in private or you might get escorted away by nice people in white coats.) This acts as a kind of contract, for then, when the time comes, Brownie will not be able to keep adding more jobs for you to do, as Brownie would like to. On the basis of such a contract you can say to Brownie, remember what we agreed! And Brownie will have to be satisfied. Then on your return the house will seem to be cleaner than you remember. This is not just your fancy; it is

your developing sense for Brownie's being, for it is the 'invisible dirt' that Brownie cleans up if you have the right partnership, the dirt left by bad moods and the like.

Roger Druitt is a priest of The Christian Community in Canterbury and Kings Langley. Well, that gives some food for thought. Those times certainly can be fraught ones! Can you develop this?

Yes. While you are packing and clearing, what are you going to do with the things that you are going to throw away? Because Brownie likes recycling.

But be careful!

Nowadays we all have to recycle our rubbish and Brownie thinks this is an excellent idea. It satisfies the wish for order, separation into classes, reuse of scarce materials and indeed reuse of everything that has been made through intelligence and care. But Brownie's passion is optional recycling within the home. Do you save brown paper bags or plastic shopping bags? Do you keep them in other bags ready for further use? Do you save milk tops and postage stamps for charities? Do you have compartments in your bag section for old shoes and clothes for the Salvation Army or the school shop? Brownie gets so excited when you can make a little pocket money and Brownie thinks it is really satisfying when the things that we do not need find a real home, because 'home' is Brownie's passion, indeed passion to the point of peculiarity.

Here, again, it is wise to have a preliminary discussion with Brownie about all these things before undertaking any of them. You need to discuss with Brownie why different things should be saved and indeed, if you are not sure yourself, you should ask Brownie, for Brownie has an extra sense about such things. This will prove again to be a valuable contract which you can call up when required, because Brownie has a way of trying to take things too far—because after all Brownie must have some entertainment! Brownie

is usually very serious and conscientious, and that is always helpful, but we have to beware of becoming compulsive recyclers. You see, Brownie also has an amoral side and, one could almost say, has a cosmic mission to try and make us compulsive too. Because Brownie so much wants the home to be a place of action and fruitfulness, Brownie wants us to have our whole spirit in this and not do things out of routine. So when you have made a contract with Brownie about what to save and recycle and where the bags should be for different things from pencil stubs to fragments of soap to pieces of paper only used on one side, the time then comes to carry it out. It is just as with cleaning—it has to be something uplifting and entertaining. If not, Brownie gets sad and makes us sad as well because the creativity and love are gone. So when you feel that your recycling passions have got the better of you it is time to go back to your contract and have a heart-to-heart with Brownie. Brownie likes to look at things from the periphery so when we bring in the needs of the whole world, bring them into our home and what we do in our home then Brownie can see the point and is willing to advise us. Again, assuming we put something out for Brownie after making the contract, we should do so now again. Bread and milk are traditional gifts, sometimes beer, but this is not recommended today because Brownie does not respond to beer or alcohol anymore. Milk is still good food for Brownie because milk-bearing animals are 'domesticated' and that is up Brownie's street. Brownie will also very much enjoy water that is treated with some dynamising process, for example rhythmic shaking or cyclic twizzling. This is

really refreshing to Brownie because of its connection to the periphery, to the world of stars. Brownie is a kind of exile from the world of stars and would like to make our home a home for the stars also. When for example the recycling is going well and orderly, we may see a sprinkle of stars at the bottom of the bag when we empty it into the appropriate municipal facility!

Mm...Did you say 'Assuming we put something out for Brownie'? What's that about?

Do you not think Brownie would need some food now and then? Folk always took such things seriously but Brownie will think you silly if you put something out in an abstract way—for example routinely everyday—and would rather you fed the birds regularly. Then, Brownie can take a little of their food. However, it makes Brownie feel really acknowledged when you put food out on special occasions, for example going away, spring cleaning or preparing a festival. However, you should only do this if you are utterly convinced that Brownie is looking forward to it as a special treat and will actually consume it. You will not be able to see with your eyes that Brownie has consumed your offering but you will know it out of the back window of your mind. (Brownie takes the life-substance out of the food, not the material!)

Well, some of these ideas really are a bit of a challenge. Is there anything on a different level that you can pass on? I'm still hoping for some proof...

I am afraid you might be disappointed in that, for there is no proof! Can you prove that you yourself exist? You say, 'these ideas'. That's your problem: these are not ideas, they are experiences. You do not prove experiences, you evaluate them. And that takes time, and openness...and common sense. Yet there is something on a different level:

Brownie has multiple personalities.

If more than one person shares a home, they may have different ideas as to what should be done and how! They might both know Brownie and they might both claim that Brownie has said it should be done this way! What is the answer? Brownie can be a different being for each of them! And is... because Brownie is elementary and has no independent ego, but, however, might be on the way to acquiring one of sorts. If the two people talk to one another and come to an agreement to the above question and, as is always the most important thing to do with Brownie, tell Brownie about it, then this will begin to happen. Brownie's ego will be a kind of offspring of the two human beings who have, in this way, begotten it. (Brownie was hitherto an offspring of spiritual beings higher than we.) Brownie will begin to be emancipated from elemental nature to become a helper of human nature. Only experience will tell whether Brownie thereby loses caprice or whether the same watchfulness is necessary as before to prevent Brownie playing tricks.

This process is helped by working one's way through many small jobs at once. In the task areas mentioned above, we often find ourselves with several small tasks to do in as short a space of time as possible. Typically, we begin one and then find that part way through doing it we have an excellent opportunity to do one of the other tasks on our list if we but sidetrack a little.

This is most efficient provided we do not get lost in it. How many sidetracks can you cope with without that happening? If you're fetching your toothbrush from the bathroom as part of packing your suitcase then stop to wash the floor because that is also on your list, then put the cloth on the radiator to dry so that you can put it in the wash basket—and then change your mind because you might as well put the wash in the machine now as you have to do that anyway before you go away: when you come out of the wash room can you remember where you ought to be and, when you find your suitcase again, have you got your toothbrush with you? Brownie has a field day at these times! But also at these times we can raise Brownie from being merely elemental, elementary, towards being the companion that man is destined to have.

Earlier, you mentioned a 'goodwife' in the home. What about the men?

Well, men often do not believe in Brownie, because they have point-centred consciousness...and Brownie has peripheral consciousness!

You can prove this by experiment! When you are in the middle of something and go to another part of the house to fetch something you need, Brownie will expect you to attend to every task that needs doing along your way as you reach it. Can you do this without ending up not having fetched what you went for? Brownie thinks this is quite straightforward and is at best tolerant of any failure in this endeavour because Brown-

ie's 'mind' is equally in everything and everywhere and is uncluttered by an intellect that works by logic. Don't men find it hard to return with the thing in hand unless they absolutely shut their eyes and minds to everything on the way and don't women find it easier to do all the other jobs on the way as well? Brownie is sympathetic to this problem and can be an enormous help and source of humour—because Brownie has peripheral consciousness! But Brownie can also focus and is therefore a wonderful mediator between opposite poles; and that can be quite good in a household...

Epilogue

If you have happily read this far, you may wonder how seriously this is intended to be taken. I would say, it should be taken very seriously but not too intensely. We should always keep an element of lightness in our thoughts about elementary beings. There is a tendency nowadays to fix things about them or to go to the other extreme of ascribing everything that happens to their influence. Neither of these is very helpful, either to them or to us ourselves. What is written here is a series of sketches from one person's experience in order to help others interpret their own experiences when these may have a true connection to the humble beings beyond the threshold of human sight.

There are of course many other instances where Brownie may have been active—perhaps you can think of some yourselves?

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The Christian Community in Ireland—then and now

Monika Schneider

An ancient legend says that the Saint Bride threw her cloak from Paradise down to Earth, and that Ireland arose out of the mark that the divine cloak made on earth. What is certainly true is that the forces of the soul of the Irish people developed more and their clairvoyant faculties remained alive longer than anywhere else.

When the Celts came to Ireland about 500 to 300 before Christ they met a population which worshipped the sun in megalithic sun-rituals. That religion easily united with the Celtic spirituality because the Celts worshipped the sun as their highest godhead too. They worshipped a threefold God: Father God, Son God and virgin. The Celts were poets, fighters and priests. Their priests were the druids. They dressed in white. The name druid means threefold initiate. Their training took many years in distant communities. Their wisdom and clairvoyance gave them authority among the people. They taught the immortality and the reincarnation of the soul. They worshipped God as the power of creation in the cosmos, in the nature and in the human being. They were waiting for the spirit of the sun to come down to Earth, to unite himself with the earth. The highest druid initiates perceived mystery of Golgotha clairvoyantly as it was happening in Palestine. They could see Christ uniting himself with the Earth, and they could feel the power of Christ in nature and in the elements. So they experienced the fulfilment of their expectation. Of course they told the people about this important step in the evolution of humanity, nature and godhead. We may assume that these leading druids were the pioneers of Christianity in Ireland. St Patrick is known today as the main missionary of Ireland, but when he came there in the fifth century AD he found many Christians there, and he too assumed that they had become Christians out of themselves. We also know that in the year 431 AD there were already so many Christians in Ireland that the Pope sent a bishop to try to integrate them into the Roman Church.

Ireland is the only Celtic region that never was occupied by the Romans. That is why the transformation from Celtic spirituality of Christianity could happen peacefully and, in the first centuries, without being disturbed from the outside. The early Irish Christians did not know any organised church, but Ireland was full of monasteries. Some of them arose out of the druid schools; thousands of students lived and studied in them. Sometimes, one of the hermits who lived in Ireland attracted other people who wanted to live near him, to learn from him and to follow his example. That could be the beginning of a monastery too. All monasteries developed in freedom, independent of each

other. Monks of the different monasteries met each other frequently to pray to-

Monika Schneider lives in Mannheim, Germany. She is studying for the priesthood at the Seminary in Hamburg. gether. They sought to unite with Christ, with nature and with human beings. They studied Greek, Latin and Hebrew. They copied the Gospels in wonderful handwriting and with the same love they wrote

down the ancient Celtic legends. In some of the monasteries there was practised an uninterrupted singing and playing. Night and day the monks sang and prayed too. One of these hymns is called The Litany of Creation (in box). The Irish monks dressed in white, like the druids, and they practised spiritual

I entreat Thee by water and the cruel air; I entreat Thee by fire; I entreat Thee by earth; I entreat Thee by time with its clear divisions; I entreat Thee by the darkness; I entreat Thee by the light...

I entreat all the elements in heaven and earth, that the eternal sweetness may be granted to my soul.

Thy boundless pity, Thy might over battles, Thy gentleness to Thy debtors, O beloved speedy King (?)

To help me out of every conflict, by them I entreat Thee, O Father.

exercises. They sought to cultivate their inner forces and so to attain the spiritual power they needed to become missionaries. Leaving their beloved Ireland was a huge personal sacrifice for the monks. Many of them made this sacrifice to bring Christianity to large parts of Europe (eg. England, Scotland, Italy and Germany). Their understanding of mission was quite different from what we are used to today. They did not use any force or compulsion to convince people. People followed them out of their own free will because of the example they gave. The Irish monks were convincing because of their wisdom, their love, their way of life and their humour. With all their dignity, they were people who loved laughing. They did not accept any formal authority given by the government nor by the church. The only authority they accepted was spiritual authority, gained in inner exercises. An example of this, and of their sense of humour is a letter written by St Columban. He addressed the Pope addressing as the 'Head of the

churches, protector of orthodox belief' and then went on: 'Please forgive me if my harsh words have offended your pious ears. I have to account my boldness, in part, to the freedom of speech which is characteristic of my country of origin. Amongst my Irish brethren it is not people as much but rath-

er the reasons that are the determining factor.'

Another example could be at the words written on the manuscript by an unknown monk in the ninth century: 'travelling to Rome? much exertion for little gain. You won't find the king there you are searching for—unless you bring him with you in your heart.'

Most of the people living on the continent at that time still worshipped the spirituality of nature. The Roman Church condemned that. The Irish monks didn't. They proclaimed Christ as the spirit of the sun who united himself with the earth to redeem not only mankind but also all the earth and whole nature with all beings in it. The Irish monks did not emphasize the suffering, dying Jesus Christ. Everybody has to die—that was not the new

thing that Christianity had to proclaim. They preached the victory over death and they wanted people to experience the joy of the triumphant, risen Christ. The Irish monks didn't demand blind faith nor absolute obedience. Instead of that they taught the people how to develop their thinking in order to attain knowledge of the truth and of the spiritual world for themselves. They believed that there is a divine seed in every human being and they taught how to develop it. Pelagius, an Irish Christian who appeared 397 in Rome, wrote that the 'consciousness of freedom must be sustained in a man in order that he might find the courage to be virtuous.... for every noble attempt to achieve fades when we despair of attaining it.'

Most of the written testimonials of this time are lost, destroyed by the Normans and the Vikings or by the Roman Church. But the Irish high crosses can also tell us something about that important Christian stream. There must have been thousands of these stone crosses all over Ireland. They are three to five metres high, which means that if you stand in front of one, you have to look up to see the whole thing. The high crosses were to be found everywhere—inside and around the monasteries, in the landscape, at road junctions, at cemeteries. They were places where people gathered to pray, to listen, to see and to meditate. For the majority of the people, who didn't study in the monasteries, they must have been very important and impressive teachers.

Today there are about 300 high crosses left in Ireland. Standing in front of one the upright, high form appeals to one's own uprightness. Looking at them already gives strength and encourages. There is

the ancient symbol of the cross, made of stone. The vertical is a symbol of the connection between above and below, between heaven and earth, spirit and matter. The horizontal represents the association with my neighbour and with the earth; around it a sun disc or ring showing that the earth is destined to become a sun. In the centre of the cross there is a symbol of the sun representing the spirit of the sun uniting himself with the earth. There can be for example a circle, a swastika or a representation of Christ himself. On none of the high crosses do we find the hanging, dead body. Without any exception there is always the living, the triumphant Christ who overcame death. The risen one is represented always standing upright with an open, radiant gesture. Sometimes his head is inclined, as if he were giving himself, or with the blessing gesture. Sometimes, the arms are crossed over his breast, the one hand holding a cross as the symbol of death and in the other hand the staff of the druids as a symbol of life.

The crosses underwent a metamorphosis. At the beginning there were just ornamental symbols on them, then later on more pictures and figures. The rhythmic motifs of the ornaments transformed the crosses into a symbol of pulsing life arising out of death. When there are pictures we find more scenes of the Old Testament that of the New Testament. That may surprise us. Almost all the crosses depict the fall of man—usually in a central place, because this is the event which made the mystery of Golgotha necessary. Then there is Cain killing his brother Abel as a direct consequence of the fall. But we also find many scenes which show people being saved from death because of their faith, for example, the sacrifice of Isaac, Daniel in the lion's den or Jonah in the whale. From the New Testament we see along with the resurrection for example the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, the three holy kings, the marriage of Cana. The representations on the high crosses are not in any chronological order. There seems to be a chaotic confusion of scenes from both the Old and the New Testament, with details from the lives of various saints between them. The ordering principle comes not from a historical narrative, but from the inner, spiritual meaning.

As the centuries passed by, the Irish people began to lose their faculty of clairvoyance. Besides that, the Normans and the Vikings attacked the island and its population repeatedly. They plundered and destroyed the monasteries and they killed the monks who could not escape. The Roman Church tried to take over that independent stream of Christianity and in the 12th century it succeeded. It was forbidden to search for the truth on one's own inner path. Knowledge of the cosmic Christ who wants to redeem not only mankind but nature and earth too, was hidden. The joy of the early centuries was lost and suffering, dying and fear began to dominate.

In September last year I visited Ireland for the first time. It is still possible to feel something of the extraordinary vitality of nature there. I could feel a tingle in my veins as if champagne or mineral water were running through them instead of blood. With every breath I felt I was breathing pure vital energy. Of course I had seen grass and water before. But standing on the bank of the river Shan-

non and looking at the incredibly brilliant green around me, I felt as if I were seeing real grass and real water for the first time.

I stayed four days in Ireland. I went there with Rev. Tom Ravetz, the priest in Stourbridge, where I did a short practical of four weeks last year. He is responsible for the community in East Clare, Ireland, which he visits every two months. The Act of Consecration of Man has been celebrated in County Clare, in the south west of Ireland, for about ten years.

I was able to attend a preparation meeting for an all-Ireland-conference and I was deeply touched that the people from the various Camphill places who were gathered there really wanted the first permanent altar of The Christian Community in southern Ireland outside Camphill be set up in County Clare. To make this possible, they even accepted that their communities would have less visits by priests.

The Christian Community was incorporated in the Republic of Ireland in July 2005. Then, just before Christmas, a house was bought with the help of loans from The Christian Community in the UK and the Foundation of The Christian Community International. This is another step of the foundation of The Christian Community in Ireland. Community life is developing apace. In September 2006, a group of about 10 students from the Seminary in Hamburg will stay in the community house for a week, helping with renovation work and celebrating the Act of Consecration of Man every morning.

I should like to close by describing my experience of the Act of Consecration of Man in Ireland, which was celebrated in the eurythmy room of the Steiner School. Naturally, I know the service well from

my home congregation, and from the seminary. And the Act of Consecration of Man has the same solemnity in any language. However, I have never felt such joy during the Act of Consecration. That joy was everywhere—in the room, in the air, in the singing of the people which came

straight from their hearts. And the joy was in the green leaves outside. It seemed to be in the whole of nature around us. I believe that the joy I could feel and notice was the joy that after waiting more than a thousand years, the spirit of Celtic Christianity is back in Ireland.]

Man & the Stars September – November 2006

Hazel Straker

The Sun has four major engagements in September. Moving first before the Lion he meets with Mercury on the 1st who passes beyond him and a little below (above for southern viewers) as seen from the Earth, in superior conjunction. On the 7th the Sun lights up the Full Moon in the Waterman at 18.42. The Moon is partially eclipsed by the shadow of the Earth through which her upper half (lower for southern viewers) passes for only 6 minutes. Before and after she moves through the half shadow or penumbra for 32 hours which is scarcely discernible. This is visible from parts of Antarctica, Australasia, Asia, Africa and Europe, including the UK. The Sun enters the region of the Virgin on the 16th where New Moon takes place at 11.45 on the 22nd. The Moon passes in front of the Sun but being at her furthest (Apogee) from the Earth appears smaller than the Sun leaving a rim of light around her: an annular eclipse visible from the Brazilian east coast, across the south Atlantic Ocean, ending south of Madagascar. The next day at 4.08 the Sun passes one of his two equinox points when wherever the Sun is visible equal day and night are experienced all over the Earth with the Sun rising due east and setting due west. Then the two hemispheres go their own way with the nights becoming longer in the northern half and shorter in the south.

After the feast of

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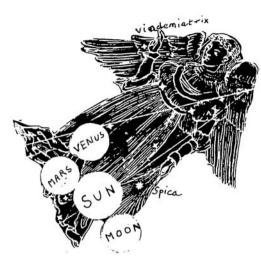
VIRGIN

Annular sun eclipse September 22, 2006 at 11.45

visible planets we were able to enjoy earlier this year in these three months it is only Jupiter and Saturn who are mostly visible. Jupiter moving before the stars of the Scales is visible in the evening western sky before sunset, low down (higher for southern viewers) and not very bright. He gradually vanishes into the light of the oncoming Sun who overtakes him on November 21 shortly after they have both moved into the area of the Scorpion. The waxing Moon marks him out on

September 26 and October 24. He will only reappear in the second week of December, in the morn-

Hazel Straker lives and works in Camphill Coleg Elidyr, Wales.



October 22, 2006

ing eastern sky. Saturn enters the region of the Lion on September 2. He is visible in the morning eastern sky brightening as the Sun moves gradually further ahead of him and rising about midnight by mid November. The waning Moon passes him on September 19, October 16 and November 13.

Mercury is not visible during September and October. We mentioned his meeting with the Sun in September in Lion. He then moves through the region of the Virgin and into that of the Scales beginning of October where he becomes retrograde at the end of the month. On November 8 he has moved back to transit the Face of the Sun for about 12 hours. Only visible in eastern Australia, New Zealand, western North America, western Mexico, south coast of Chilli and most of the Pacific Ocean. A week later, from the 15th, he starts to become visible as morning star before sunrise.

Venus moves invisibly from the Lion through the Virgin and Scales reaching the Scorpion area in mid November. In October there is a gathering of the Sun, Mars and Venus in the Foot area of the Virgin. On October 23 the Sun overtakes Mars, two days later Venus overtakes Mars and then the Sun on the 27th, passing beyond the Sun in superior conjunction. Mars and Venus remain invisible through November.

The Moon joins this gathering overtaking Venus, Mars and the Sun (5.14) on the 22^{nd} . Full Moon in the Fishes is at 3.13 on October 7. The Sun moves into the Scales on November 1 irradiating the Full Moon in Ram at 12.58 on the 5^{th} , Guy Fawkes Day.

Uranus still moves retrograde before Waterman until becoming direct again on November 20. Neptune retrogrades in the Goat becoming direct October 29. Pluto becomes direct September 5 continuing through October and November in the region of the Scorpion.

In this Michaelic time the Sun shines down on us from the region of Virgin. Just after entering, the Sun meets with the Moon who moves across his face but bearing always a rim of light around her. Is this a challenge to seek a deeper understanding of the qualities of the Virgin? In Greek mythology she is pictured as a winged angelic figure bearing a bunch of grapes in her right hand, marked by Vindemiatrix, and a sheaf of corn in her left, shown by the bright fixed star Spica representing the fruits of Earth in bread and wine. The Michaelic picture in the 12th chapter of The Book of Revelation tells us of the woman clothed with the Sun, having the Moon under her feet and crowned with twelve stars. She is about to give birth but there is a fiery red dragon waiting to devour her child as soon as it is born. She gives birth to a man child who is then caught up by

God. Michael fights the dragon, overcomes him and his hosts and sends them out of heaven and down to Earth where they continue their persecution of the human race who have 'the testimony of Jesus Christ'. We can stand up to the challenges of the dragon by enlisting the help of the Beings manifesting through the stars. The angelic Moon Beings who are nearest to us, the loving relationships supported

by the Venus Beings, the strength of the transformed Mars Beings and over all the Sun from where the Christ came to us and Michael, the Countenance of Christ, who is ever ready to help when we call him. Can we create a dialogue to help us to bring to birth that 'male child' or Spirit, within each one of us? 'Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God' (John 3:5).

All times are given in GMT.

Reviews

Necessary Evil:
Origin and Purpose
Hans-Werner Schroeder
£ 20.00
Reviewed by Christopher Cooper

Hans Werner Schroeder's latest book has an arresting title which immediately sets it aside from a great deal of mainstream theological and sociological thought: evil is not something to be avoided at all costs by simply keeping on the very straight and narrow path; confrontation with evil forms a crucial ingredient which human beings need to attain their full humanity; evil is something woven into the kingdoms of nature and our own human organism. These are just some of the striking themes that he develops with impressive mastery and his customary lucid and accessible style. He gently but very persuasively stretches many of the usual concepts of evil in the world. The fall of man is not just a brief event in a garden but a mighty process of change over aeons of time, manifesting in many areas apart from the moral sphere. Likewise the concept of sin is led into new dimensions by showing it as a human sickness which each of us has to work with and gradually transform. He shows that the idea of the eternal damnation of many sinners is based on the serious mistranslations of key passages in the Gospels.

Schroeder has based at great deal of his book on his close study of Rudolf Steiner's research work and he develops these thoughts in his own special way. We read how goodness is not just the opposite of evil but comes about through at balancing of polarities. Courage, for example, comes from holding the middle ground between recklessness and cowardice. Orderliness stands between orderliness and pedantry.

One of the most striking chapters in the whole book is modestly entitled, 'an attempt to understand the origin of evil. Rarely can any author have taken his or her readers so carefully through such an immensely complex theme as this. We learn of the holding back of certain spiritual beings of the hierarchies in their development. An elemental freedom begins to work gradually in these retarded beings, yet it must have been a difficult sacrifice involving the greatest pain and suffering during the separation from the main cosmic evolution. 'The gods called forth their own adversaries' is the striking way that Schroeder expresses this. We then read about the very significant changes throughout cosmic and earthly evolution due to these influences at work.

Another chapter which stands out is the one on Job, the Old Testament figure, who seems so unjustly punished by God even though he is not guilty of any wrongdoing. Schroeder again leads his readers skilfully through this often baffling story until at the end we can begin to see that 'through suffering Job is brought close to an understanding of Christ' who was preparing his entry into earthly life.

Schroeder doesn't spare us the enormity of evil and its huge impact on human lives (criminality, suicide, extreme tyranny are well dealt with). At the same time we are offered many antidotes to its influence. The chapter on the healing of the sickness of sin sheds valuable light on this. Taking a deep interest in the world, developing trust and thankfulness for our destiny, however difficult it may seem to be, experiencing meaningful festivals, learning and practising verses, meditation and prayer are just a few of the indications he gives.

He subtly weaves in the benefits of the renewed sacraments in human life and shows how they can transform what is fallen in each of us. One can feel a new sense of courage and determination to stand fast amidst the great onslaught of our times, especially coming from the adversary called Ahriman. 'Today the remedy for the ahrimanic darkening of our consciousness is present in anthroposophy and in the renewed rituals of The Christian Community.'

The book ends with the impressive vista of present and future times with Michael playing a crucial role in this and with Christ bringing the power of blessing to meet evil forces which cannot withstand this. We are even given a glimpse of the final redemption of evil ('once it is overcome not through battle but only through kindness') and the possibility that retarded beings can be reabsorbed in their rightful stream of revolution.

James Hindes, the American priest has abridged the original German version of

the book published in 1984 and translated very skilfully indeed—no easy task.

Although this book contains relatively few references to contemporary events, this is not a weakness since the reader is armed with so many insights that can be applied to help understand the battle and attacks of our times.

Spirit Healing
Bob Woodward
Floris Books, 2004
Reviewed by Kenneth Mullen

The recent negative comments on the usefulness and efficacy of alternative therapies by the British Medical Association and their subsequent positive defence by the Prince of Wales has made it an appropriate time to reconsider the influence of the spirit in the healing process. It was therefore timely that I read Bob Woodward's book 'Spirit Healing'. Woodward has been active within the healing profession of Curative Education for thirty years and now lives at the Sheiling Schools Camphill Community.

The eight chapters of the book cover such topics as: Steiner's Anthroposophy, Spiritual Science and Spiritual Healing, Spirit Guides and Helpers, and the Work of the Healer. Again Woodward brings in a lot of eastern teaching into his discussion, for example the description of chakras. However his main aim is to understand spiritual healing from within the framework of anthroposophy.

He gives examples from Steiner's lectures where Steiner mentions the laying on of hands, and describes in detail how these healing forces are Christ forces, how Christ can be seen as the great World Healer, 'that same Sun-Spirit' that is spoken of in other world religions.

I found it particularly interesting when Woodward describes Steiner's belief that

Readable new study of the Virgin Birth from an acclaimed anthroposophical scholar

MYTH OF THE NATIVITY

The Virgin Birth Re-examined

ANDREW WEI BURN

Lamech 'was afraid of him and fled and ... said: I have begotten a strange son; he is not like a human being, but like the children of the angels.'

(1 Enoch from the Dead Sea Scrolls)

The conception and birth of Jesus is one of the most mysterious and challenging stories in the Gospels, surrounded by many signs and miracles. Is it possible to understand the Virgin Birth in a light that is both true to its origins and meaningful in our times?

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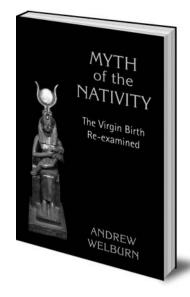
Welburn concludes that the Virgin Birth is part of a greater story, a synthesis of many traditions, and stands for, above all, a promise of spiritual rebirth.

This book is for anyone interested in the origins, and future, of the Christian faith.

Praise for Rudolf Steiner's Philosophy:

'Armchair philosophers will enjoy reading this with nothing stronger than a mild herb tea to keep them awake.'

- Martyn Rawson, Steiner Education



0-86315-543-X hardback 192 pages £20.00 Published February 2006

Andrew Welburn was a fellow of New College, Oxford and taught there until 2005. He is author of *The Beginnings of Christianity; The Mysteries: Rudolf Steiner's Writings on Spiritual Initiation;* and *Rudolf Steiner's Philosophy* (all Floris Books).



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BookSource, 32 Finlas St, Glasgow G22 5DU, UK Tel: 0870-240 2182 Fax: 0141-557 0189 everything in the universe is 'condensed light'. And the author links this indirectly to modern scientific theories. He quotes Steiner using the metaphors of electricity and the concept of polarity.

The other great theme of Steiner's discussion of healing was the notion of sacrifice, and the power of love. Steiner described this in terms of two realms: 'Everything that can be done is brought about either by inner psychic means—by love—or by external means of densified light...'(p48) Woodward demonstrates quite clearly, that in his writings Steiner speaks of, and acknowledges, spirit healing via direct contact.

In chapter 4 there is a discussion of the differences between the inner and outer sources of this healing energy. Again Woodward refers the reader back to Harry Edwards, one of the acknowledged great spirit healers of the 20th century, and his discussion of 'magnetic healing'. He talks of the hands becoming warm or hot. But the magnetic healer becomes drained, the spiritual healer not. There is a giving of their own strength, and a depletion. Edwards and Steiner are seen to have different views of the individual, but then this is not surprising.

Later in the book the author quotes from Steiner showing that he recommended visualisation and self-healing. This is of particular interest these days as there are various religions, for example Buddhism, where this approach is taken.

The author describes how magnetic healing may also lead to charlatanism. Woodward strongly emphasizes that spirit healing should not be made into a profession. This is a very important point—and relates directly to the attitude towards spirit healing found within Quakerism which is strongly sympathetic on this point. In magnetic healing, the transference is from the etheric body of the healer to that of the patient. But most healers would say that this is not true spir-

itual healing. Woodward gives an important diagrammatic representation of these issues on page 58 where he relates the different types of healing to the different subtle energy levels of the etheric, astral and ego.

Finally the book has a useful, though short, selection of literature on spirit healing, and the inclusion of addresses linked to anthroposophy and spirit healing is helpful.

'Spirit Healing' is an excellent general introduction to the topic for someone new to the field. Although someone with a greater knowledge of the field may wish for more depth in places. I found this book particularly helpful in contextualising the ideas of Steiner within the field of spirit healing as a whole. It is with this thought in mind that I can strongly recommend this book as an antidote to the sometimes more materialistic pronouncements of the British Medical Association.



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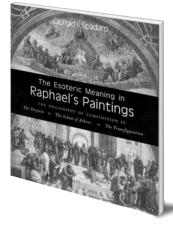
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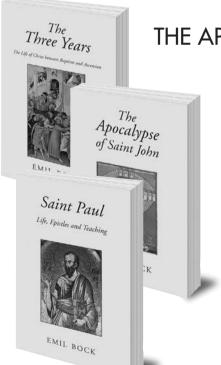
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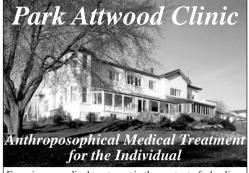
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