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From Limestone to Lucifer, GA# 349

by

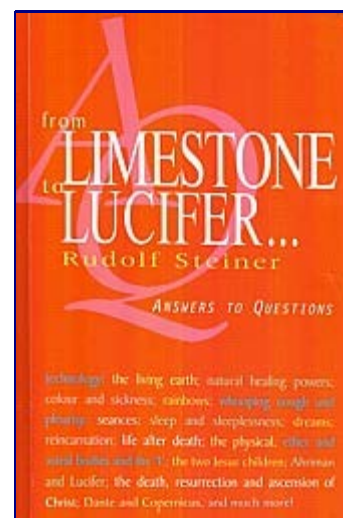
Rudolf Steiner

Answers to Questions

**Twelve Sessions at Dornach from February to
May, 1923**

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A Book Review by Bobby Matherne ©2001



Steiner begins his first talk with a discussion of the various elements and minerals: how they are helpful to the human body. First he covers silica. I can't think

of any medicines off the top of my head that incorporate a compound of silica. I had to look up the chemical constituency of aspirin to check if it contained silica, and it doesn't. The salicylic acid is an organic compound named for the genus of willow trees in whose bark the active ingredient of aspirin was first discovered.

[page 10] The head goes furthest towards cosmic space. It can therefore be healed most easily with silica. The belly comes closest to earth, and we therefore can most easily heal it with mica. And the parts that are more in the middle, the lung and so on, can be treated to good effect with feldspar, if we prepare it in a suitable way.

As for another hard mineral, limestone, it was once part of a living creature and is now mostly dead matter, but it will arise again into living matter. To understand how this might be so, we must look at the sun cycle of 25,920 years during which the Sun completes its path through all the signs of the zodiac, spending 2160 years in each one. While we humans live and walk upon the solid Earth, it is sleeping, a sleep of 15,000 years, and a mineral like limestone is hard and lifeless, a residue of life. When the Sun returns to Libra or the Scales again, the hard minerals of Earth will be flowing again, "and a state of life will exist again, only at a higher level of evolution." (page 15) I know all this sounds silly to materialist scientists with their radioactive carbon and uranium-decay dating methods that claim a life-time of over three billion years for the Earth. However their methods have not been in existence for three billion years but a paltry hundred years or so when things haven't changed much. They project backwards in a fashion much like the doctor who inspected the changes in a patient's heart over several years, and projected backwards from the changes he observed claimed that he could describe the state of the patient's heart at a time three hundred years in the past. His methods may be exact, but there is one small problem: the patient had *not been born* at that time! (Steiner has used this metaphor in several lecture series to show the folly of projections backwards as to the life of the Earth by materialistic scientists.)

What does all this mean? It means that the tiny bit of residual life in limestone may be administered as medicine, both homeopathically and allopathically, with good effect.

On page 16 he details the case of malnutrition involving a child with a bloated belly who is unable to digest food anymore. We've seen photos in our lifetime from Ethiopia, Somalia and other regions of such children. Steiner says for those children we must first make their "organs fit again to take in food."

[page 16 -17] This is where the little bit of life in the limestone serves us well. If the limestone, or calcium carbonate, is used as a medicine in the right way, we can wake those sleeping digestive powers up again and the child will live. . . . Given in allopathic

doses, it acts on the digestive organs, given in very high dilution it acts on the head. And we can arrange things accordingly. But we can also know what we are using when we give calcium carbonate in very high dilution. We are using powers of the future. These are still in there and will be active in the future.

The next lecture he covers two basic parts of color theory: why the sky is red at dawn and dusk and yet is blue in the middle of the day. When the Sun is below the horizon, at dawn and dusk, there is dark around us, and when the light from the Sun hits clouds in the sky near the horizon, the light bouncing off the clouds towards us travels as *light through the dark* and thus appear to us to be *red*. In the middle of the day the sky above us is full of light from the Sun and yet above the Earth the realm of space is black. The result is that when we look up into a clear sky in daytime, we see *darkness through light*, which will always appear *blue*.

To me, a trained physicist, this seems *prima facie* to be poppycock and addle-headed foolishness. Everybody knows that all the colors of the rainbow are contained in a single beam of light and one only needs a prism in a dark room to prove that to be the case. Ah, but I am now hoisted on my own petard because my previous sentence presupposes an image schema of light being "a container of colors." To quote my review of Mark Johnson's fine book, [The Body in the Mind](#):

What is an image schema? It is a "dynamic pattern that functions somewhat like the abstract structure of an image, and thereby connects up a vast range of different experiences that manifest this same recurring structure."

What does it mean for a beam of light to be a *container of color*? Rightly understood, the whole statement is a bit silly. Color is a process, the result of the path taken by a particular ray of light, not a *thing* is contained in a light beam. But what did Newton say to himself?

[page 24 -25] Newton said to himself: 'There the white light is coming in; the prism gives me the seven colours of the rainbow. The seven colours of the rainbow are therefore contained in the white light and I only need to lure them out.' You see, that is the simplest explanation. You explain something by saying it is already present in something from which I then draw it out.

And, as silly as it may be in truth, this explanation of light is still being taught to physics majors some forty years after I learned it in college. No wonder I was unable to understand the subtleties of light and color - always using the container image schema, I was unable to notice by dint of my cognitive processes that the color of a white coffee cup could be white, gray, beige, green, yellow, pink, or any combination of those colors depending on the toils undergone by a ray of light from a given spot on its path into my eyes. Not only could I not *see* the cup as it really was, but my cognitive blindness made it impossible for me to *render* an accurate color image (painting) of such a simple object as a solid white cup! Armed with the explanation by Steiner that when using a prism we "see light through darkness on one side [namely, red], and darkness through light on the other [blue]," I would have been better prepared to understand that color is an emerging property of the path that a light beam takes, not something that exists in a container to be extracted!

When a bull sees red, it gets angry. We even call getting mad "seeing red." When we see a blue sky, we feel peaceful. If color is just something that is extracted from a container, how is this possible? Steiner says that when the eye comes up against the color red, light seen through darkness, the blood in the eye is a little bit destroyed as are the nerves in the eye. The oxygen drawn in from the body leaves the eye and the rest of the body vitalized. On the other hand, darkness seen through light, or blue color, does not destroy our blood and it leaves the nerves intact, and we feel peaceful with a sense of well-being. As for the other colors, yellow is a shade of red and green is a shade of blue. (from page 27 to 29)

How does one obtain color pigments for painting? I grant that this has been a mystery to me as well, up until now. So it was with great interest that I read this section on pages 30 and 31. To produce red shades

of color [red, orange, yellow], one can use the flower of the sunflower plant. But if one wants to get a blue color, one uses a plant that produces a blue flower, but the material from producing the color is located in the roots of the plant. The example he gives are the chicory plant, which gives a shade of blue, and the indigo plant, which gives a darker shade of blue, only from the roots of these plants.

[page 31] And so I must develop a live chemistry in which I imitate the flower processes of plants to get light colours and the root processes of plants to obtain dark colours. You see, what I have been telling you is something that real common sense can discover. This business with the red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet of the rainbow, on the other hand, is not something real, fundamentally speaking.

Next Steiner takes us into the human body, how the body is affected by colors and how the body affects colors in itself corresponding to its condition of health and vitality. Basically he says that in the presence of red colors the destruction of the blood calls up oxygen in us and this leads to a robust healthy condition. On the other hand, if we are surrounded by darkness or shades of blue all the time, we grow pale due to the excess of carbon dioxide. This is not something that Newton's image schema of a prism and rainbow to explain light would ever lead us to.

Consider for a moment the face of a shepherd, someone who works out of doors tending his flock and sleeping under the stars. What kind of a face do you see when you think about this shepherd? Tanned face, piercing eyes, peaceful countenance? Yes, peaceful is probably the most universal demeanor that one thinks of when one thinks of a shepherd, perhaps due to the many pictures of Christ as the Good Shepherd, or is it the other way around? Perhaps Christ was portrayed as a shepherd because of the universally accepted view of a shepherd as peaceful. Read what Steiner says below and decide for yourself.

[page 37] Think of the pastoral peoples of earlier times who drove their herds and slept in the open. In their sleep they were exposed not to the blue but to a dark sky. And stars beyond number were shining up there in the heavens. From the dark sky came a calming influence, and the people felt inwardly at ease in their sleep. The whole human being was penetrated by the darkness, growing inwardly calm. Sleep came from the darkness. But there were those stars shining on the people. And wherever a star's ray shone down, the human being became a little bit excited inside. Then a ray of oxygen would go out from the body. And the star rays were all met by rays of oxygen, with the human being having such oxygen rays running through every part of him. He then became an inner oxygen-mirror image of the whole starry firmament.

[page 38] All human beings everywhere on the earth have come from that pastoral state. And in their bodies they have inherited as much as has still come down to them from those pastoral ancestors.

A major debate in physics and chemistry raged for many years over what happens during combustion. The materials burned were obviously smaller after burning than what they were before burning, indicating that something was given off. That was called phlogiston. Then clever scientists began to weigh all the products of combustion and found that, instead of something being given off, something was added. That something, they called oxygen and it could be weighed. That was how materialism came about: people began to believe only in those things that have weight. There is a stark consequence to this belief only in things one can weigh, however, as Steiner tells us bluntly:

[page 50] But remember, this earthly human being will be a corpse one day. Everything that has weight, that can be treated with scales, will be a corpse. Then the corpse lies there. You will still be able to live in the part that does not have weight, the part that exists around this earth and which materialists say does not exist.

To exist as an individuality after death is to be human. What is it to be human while one is on the Earth? How are humans different from animals? The answer is as simple as 1, 2, 3, 4. Humans can 1) Walk, 2) Talk, 3) Think, and 4) Learn. Do animals walk? Yes, but the easy way, on all fours, not erect for any long periods of time. Do animals talk? No, they bark, make noises and give signals to each other. Do animals think? Steiner says, yes, but their thinking is not personal but cosmic. Humans first learn to walk upright, something animals cannot do, only approach doing in some species. Then humans learn to talk by imitating others, which does not require thinking. Thinking only comes along later by which time they are capable of talking. Walking requires combustion, which means that combustion products or ash are formed in our body. If we did not replenish the things burned up in our bodies, we would decompose like corpses. The ether body in us replenishes our physical body while we are sleeping. The astral body provides us with our ability to talk, which goes away when we are sleeping and the astral body departs the physical body. Do animals learn? No, they are born with instincts and apply them as they mature to adapt to unique situations. Our ability to learn, above everything else, distinguishes us from animals and makes us truly human; our ability to learn comes to us because we have a fourth body, an I. That rounds out the four bodies that comprise the human being: physical body, etheric body, astral body and I.

In this next passage Steiner reveals something about himself, about how it is that his lectures are always so fresh and informative, even when he is talking about a subject he has dealt with many times before.

[page 65] Now when one wants to come into anthroposophy, then, I'd say, one has to learn one's language all over again. For you'll find that when someone gives a talk nowadays - wow, it's as if it comes from a machine. Observe it - you'll find it is as if it were coming from a machine. It is different from the way it is when someone gives a talk about something out of the science of the spirit, out of anthroposophy. There one must all the time try and find the words, take them up again in a new way inwardly. And then, having shaped the words, one really begins to worry that they did not really present things correctly. In anthroposophy, the relationship to those who listen to one is very different than it is with academics today. Modern academics no longer take care with their speech. In anthroposophy, one must always take care of speech and language.

One of the things that always puzzled me as a child was where was I before I was born. Nothing in catechism was any help. Nothing that I read anywhere was any help. I seemed to have just popped up, "Hey, World! Here am I!" at birth. Some years ago it began to occur to me that if reincarnation were true that would mean that I had lived before this lifetime. But that meant that the whole fabric of the story by the Church was rent in two - you know, the story about eternal bliss in heaven with harps and angels. Thank Goodness, I thought, what a boring prospect for spending eternity! I came to understand that life after death must also mean life before death even though I had never encountered the concept elsewhere. So, it was not surprising to me to encounter the following thoughts expressed by Rudolf Steiner about why the Church taught the dogma that life before life did not exist for us.

[page 74] So what happened when the dogma was established that one should not consider life before life on earth? People's view of the supersensible was cut off. But does it serve a purpose for the Church to cut off this view of the supersensible? Oh yes, it serves a purpose, for since human beings desire to have life after death, the Church is then able to make itself responsible for everything to do with death. People will not be able to know what happens after death, and have to depend on what the Church tells them. And this will make people long to believe above all in the Church. It was therefore a good thing - that is, for the Church - to establish the dogma that human beings go on living after their life on earth. For with this the Church took control of everything connected with death and dying.

In the next lecture Steiner talks about "cat asthma" by which he means an asthma that is triggered by the presence of a cat in the room whether the person knows a cat is present or not.

This reminds me of the [dog allergy](#) that my sister-in-law had. I suggested that she do a doyle trace and she did one in under 60 seconds following the simple instructions I gave her. When she went from 5 to 4, she said, "Woo! What was that?" She told me later that she felt this enormous rush in her chest's midline. Suddenly she could breathe freely again. The trace was over! Her difficulty breathing was gone, and within five minutes the puffiness around her eyes had abated. When I asked her, "What's a plausible thing that could have happened to you at the age of four?" [the Plausibility Question], she recalled that a large Labrador retriever, a big black dog, had eaten her kittens when she was four, and she cried a long, long time. I asked her what kind of dog was it that her boss had brought to the office the day before that triggered her "dog allergy" and she said, "Omigod! It was a Labrador retriever!" Over the 35 years since that childhood incident she had thought she had a "dog allergy" and all her doctors agreed and prescribed drugs for her. What she really had was a doylic event stored that consisted of puffy eyes, difficulty breathing, and these were triggered by the presence of a big, black dog, a Labrador retriever. So she had a "dog allergy" that was specific to Labrador retrievers, and had actually had other types of dogs as pets in her past.

Read Steiner's description of the cat asthma and note the similarities to the dog allergy I described above.

[page 138] The child then recovers from his whopping cough, but sometimes a strange thing remains behind. If the child has not been used to having a cat around before, and a cat has come to live in the house whilst the child had whooping cough - this will not happen when he has just recovered, but later on the condition will develop which people call asthma, a breathing difficulty that repeats itself over and over again.

And further along Steiner talks about buckwheat asthma - a young student who only got asthma when buckwheat was present in the house, whether he knew it consciously or not. The cooks were all instructed that no buckwheat should ever come into the house.

[page 139] A new cook had come who did not know this. She had had some buckwheat down below on the ground floor, and the young student up on the second floor developed asthma. These seem like fables. But they are completely true.

Of the veracity of the stories, I have no doubt, especially after my experience with removing my sister-in-law's dog allergy. The human being has senses that are extremely sensitive and that operate outside of awareness, outside of consciousness, outside of cognition. Lawrence Weiskrantz discovered the presence of such senses and gave it the name ['blindsight'](#). In blindsight, a man who has a lesion in his cortical region that processes visual information is still able to identify visual objects that he says that he cannot see. In other words, without any consciousness of seeing, he is able to pass tests with almost perfect scores that confirm he is, in fact, able to see the objects. If, as I suspect, the amygdala provides the storage and retrieval mechanism for storing triggers, such as the visual information about the cat or the smell of the buckwheat, then these sights and smell would be able to trigger the physical body states (doyles) in the person's lungs that we call asthma that were stored and associated with these triggers before the person was five years old. With the science of doyletics we are able finally in the 21st Century to provide an explanation for these 'strange' phenomena that Steiner reported in the first quarter of the 20th Century.

We all know that red blood is highly oxygenated blood and blue blood is blood with an excess of carbon that must be processed by the lungs to remove the carbon dioxide. Couple that knowledge with Steiner's explanation that the lips are actually an expanse of inner skin and you have a way of understanding certain kinds of plant poisoning, e. g., from opium or belladonna, the deadly nightshade. The person who is poisoned gets a red face and blue lips. With the poisoning the breathing is held up, preventing the removal of the carbon, and you get the red face, blue lips syndrome. An interesting aspect is the origin of the expression "blue blood" as it refers to the nobility.

[page 158] This is something else primitive peoples once knew, this business of the blue blood going inside. When someone had too much blue blood inside they would say that

someone who has too much blue blood inside him is in the first place someone who has little soul; his soul has gone away. 'Blue-blooded' therefore became a term of abuse. And when members of the nobility were called blue-blooded, people wanted to say their souls were not there. It is strange how these things live in a most marvellous way in popular wisdom. You really can learn a tremendous amount from language.

You can also learn a tremendous amount from Rudolf Steiner by reading all the lectures in this book. This paltry review can do little but give hints of what insights are contained within. It would be fitting to close with a view of Christianity that he shares with us that he says would allow Christianity to be "understood everywhere on earth."

[page 228] The divine spirit we should venerate is not in a particular place on earth but is connected with the power of the sun, the living nature of the sun which the Christ has taken into himself. And the sun is truly for the whole of humanity. No one in Europe can say, when the sun is shining on his head, that this is a different sun from the one that is there for the Egyptians, or the Chinese, or the Australians. Anyone who truly accepts that the Christ power comes from the sun has to accept the general religion that is for all humanity.

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