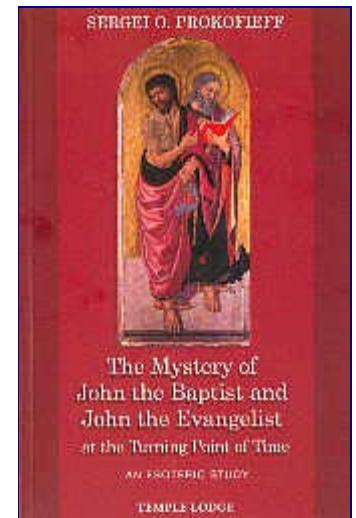


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**A READER'S JOURNAL**  
**The Mystery of John the Baptist and John the Evangelist**  
**At the Turning Point of Time**  
An Esoteric Study  
by  
**Sergei O. Prokofieff**

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A Book Review by Bobby Matherne ©2010



The "turning point of time" refers to the Mystery of Golgotha during which time period the two disciples of Christ Jesus, John the Baptist and John the Evangelist were present. In the pages of this small book, the author delineates how the great Biblical being, Elijah, appeared in both Johns, first in John the Baptist and later in Lazarus-John, the writer of the Gospel of John. He works from this summary given by Rudolf Steiner.

**[page 4] "We have shown how in the course of time the being who was present in Elijah appeared again at the most important moments of human evolution on Earth — appeared again so that Christ Jesus Himself could give him the initiation he was to receive for the evolution of mankind. For the being of Elijah reappeared in Lazarus-John — who are in truth one and the same figure . . ."**

John the Baptist had been beheaded by Herod before the death of Lazarus and his spirit, like reported of Elijah in the Bible, was hovering around and entered the body of Lazarus during his death-like state in the tomb which was actually the "temple sleep" of an initiate of Christ Jesus. The Bible clearly reveals the initiation of Lazarus in several ways: 1) Christ Jesus is not concerned nor in a hurry to reach his beloved friend, 2) when He does arrive, exactly three and a half days had elapsed, the exact time of the temple sleep, and 3) he calls Lazarus with the very words used to awaken an initiate from a temple sleep.

What was so special about Lazarus that he came to be the only disciple to follow Christ Jesus in full consciousness all the way to the cross, to the Deed on Golgotha? All the other disciples had fallen asleep in the Garden or fled from the Romans in fear of their life — only Lazarus-John was present at the foot of the cross when Christ-Jesus asked him to take care of his mother. The answer came in the days of Steiner's life.

**[page 5] During his illness, Rudolf Steiner described to Ita Wegman what happened in the course of this process: "Lazarus was out of earthly forces able fully to develop at this time only as far as the mind and intellectual soul was developed. Hence he had to be endowed with the consciousness soul and the higher members of Manas, Buddhi, and Atma by another cosmic being. Thus before the Christ there stood a human being who encompassed the domain from the depths of the Earth to the highest heavenly heights, who bore in himself in its full perfection the physical body through all its members to the spirit-members of Manas, Buddhi, and Atma, which can be developed by all human beings only in the distant future."**

We live two thousand years after Lazarus-John and we have acquired our consciousness soul, but our work on creating our spirit self (manas) is still a work in progress, and few have even started on their life spirit (buddhi) and spirit body (atma). Lazarus needed a booster shot immediately in order to rise to the level of the full human being which Jesus of Nazareth had already achieved during the baptism when he received the Christ spirit and became thenceforth known as Jesus the Christ or Christ Jesus. This happened during Lazarus's temple sleep, which was known as the sixth or Sun

Hero step of the Old Persian initiation. Here's how Steiner describes it in his own words, followed by an explanation by Prokofieff.

**[page 6] "During his initiation the Sun Hero lived in communion with the whole solar system, having as his place of abode the Sun as the ordinary human being lives on the Earth as his own planet. As mountains and rivers are around us here, so are the planets of the solar system around the Sun Hero during the time of his initiation. During his initiation, the Sun Hero was transported in consciousness to the Sun. In the ancient mysteries this could be achieved only outside the body." This stage of initiation had to do with the three days of death-like sleep of the ancient mysteries often described by Rudolf Steiner. During this time the soul of the person being initiated wholly left the physical body to ascend into the Sun sphere(1) and there encounter the Christ. The soul received from Him guidelines for the further evolution of earthly humanity.**

What distinguished Lazarus from the rest of the disciples was that they received the Sun Hero initiation on Pentecost, whereas Lazarus had already achieved that initiation during his temple sleep in Bethany. He did not find the Christ while in the Sun sphere, but instead when he was called to awake by Christ Jesus.

**[page 8] . . . his soul was called back into his body through the ancient call of the hierophant resounding upon it from without: "Lazarus, come forth!" (John 11:44). It would have become clear that the spiritual Being whom this soul had sought on the Sun was standing — now in a human body — before it on the Earth. It was this Being who summoned Lazarus down to the Earth from the Sun sphere. Lazarus now knew from his own experience that the great Turning Point of Time had begun: the spiritual Sun itself had been united with the Earth(2).**

Only a fully enlightened human being such as Lazarus-John could experience the death of Christ Jesus on the cross with Mary the mother of Jesus. Until the events of Pentecost some fifty days later when they received the Sun Hero initiation, the other disciples would not be ready.

**[page 8, 9] For Lazarus-John himself this anticipation of the Mystery of Golgotha — through his own experience — gave him the possibility of being the only one of Christ's disciples to be able to participate in full consciousness in this event, which he witnessed from beneath the Cross, and so of becoming a personal witness on behalf of the whole of earthly humanity of this central mystery of earthly evolution.**

Lazarus, in effect, had to die and be reborn so that a record of this salient event, an eye-witness account, could be preserved for all time.

At the foot of the Cross, Lazarus-John was able to see the culmination of Christ-Jesus's three year life on Earth, just as he was there at the very beginning, at the baptism in the Jordan, when John as the Baptist acknowledged recognizing the Divinity descending upon Jesus with these words, "And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God." (John 1:34)

**[page 10] Thus the two Johns frame the three years of the Christ on Earth like two mighty columns: at Christ's birth, through the Baptism in the Jordan, John the Baptist is the witness; and at His death it is Lazarus-John.**

Elijah was described as moving among different individuals in the Old Testament, as though the individual called Elijah were inhabited by a great spirit which could move around fluidly, inspiriting one person one minute and another person the next. Prokofieff gives us the Gospels report of the presence of Elijah on Golgotha this way:

**[page 10] After Jesus called out his last words from the Cross with a loud voice, some of the bystanders said: "He is calling for Elijah . . . Let us see whether Elijah will come to save him" (Matthew 27: 47, 49) These words suggest that those present on the hill of Golgotha were sensing the**

**immediate proximity of the entelechy of Elijah-John. That it was indeed there — or, rather, was supersensibly manifest — is above all attested by the awakening of conscience which accompanied the "great consternation" (54) of the "Roman centurions and those who were with him" (54), who then said: "Truly, this was the Son of God" (54). With this they were, following their inner impulse of conscience, making the same testimony as John at the Baptism in the Jordan. This may be considered a sign of the direct presence and supersensible participation of John the Baptist in the events of Golgotha.**

The other hero of the Sun is Michael (Mi-cha-el) the Archangel who throughout the ages has represented the visage of Christ to human beings in time of need. He is often pictured as fighting the forces of darkness, represented as a live, writhing snake. Various cultures have legends of such a fighter against evil, St. Michael, St. George, and others. What did Michael and those humans gathered around him in the Sun sphere experience when Christ left the region of the Sun to enter the man we know as Jesus of Nazareth?

**[page 23] We know from Rudolf Steiner's spiritual research that the cosmic Sun kingdom also represents the sphere of activity of Michael. In the karma lectures of 1924 Rudolf Steiner described on more than one occasion how the human souls gathered around Michael, souls who were between death and a new birth, experienced the Mystery of Golgotha now not from the earthly standpoint but from that of the Sun. These souls perceived not the dying of Christ in the physical body of Jesus but, rather, the departure of Christ from the Sun. This sacrificial deed signified for the Christ also a kind of cosmic death: "This betokened a kind of death for the Christ. He went forth from the Sun as we. human beings go forth from the Earth when we die. . . Christ died to the Sun. He died cosmically, from the Sun to the Earth, He came down to the Earth".**

We know from St. Paul's experience on the road to Damascus that the great Christ being entered the Earth when the blood of Jesus dripped from the Cross and during that event, anyone watching from space with spiritual eyes would have noticed a golden aura or glow appear which remains to this day. This glow was also visible to Michael and his minions in the Sun sphere. This glow foreshadows the future of the Earth as part of a new Sun in the future([3](#)).

**[page 23] Accordingly Michael, and those around him, experienced how through the Mystery of Golgotha the whole aura of the Earth — which had become ever darker as the Turning Point of Time approached — suddenly lit up again, so that he and the souls connected with him knew: through the deed of Christ on Earth, the Earth has become the beginning of a new Sun..**

How does Rudolf Steiner obtain this information? "By directing his visionary perception towards the soul of one of the individualities participating" in the event. In this case it was an individuality with which Steiner is intimately familiar, having incarnated as that individual in a previous lifetime, namely, Aristotle([4](#)).

**[page 24, 25] Why did Rudolf Steiner choose precisely the individuality of Aristotle in order to characterize the nature of the Mystery of Golgotha from the cosmic perspective of the Sun? Probably because the soul of Aristotle attained a very clear and all-encompassing consciousness in the Sun sphere. For this reason, this soul was particularly suited to being a cosmically human witness of the Turning Point of Time from a heavenly perspective. . . If one considers the earthly achievements of Aristotle from this standpoint, one will conclude that he translated virtually the whole of the mystery-wisdom existing at that time into clear philosophical thoughts. By this means he became the father of scientific thinking, which is still fully valid and current even today.**

What about Plato? Aristotle was the representative of the Sun forces and Plato of the Moon forces. We see hints in Aristotle role as the father of scientific thinking that Sun forces were at work in him. For as Steiner said:

**[page 25] "Now whenever the Sun forces work upon the Earth, they are always connected with an impulse which streams into earthly civilization as an inpouring wave of intellectuality. For in our sphere of existence, everything possessed by man and by the world in general by way of**

### intellectuality derives from the Sun"

About Plato we must come to understand that his thinking was filled with imaginations such as the powerful metaphor he developed about how we live chained in a Cave facing away from the light and that we see but the shadows of the reality which passes in front of the mouth of the Cave. This is an example of Moon thinking, as the Moon can only reflect light from the Sun, not originate the light. Such thinking can lead to a complete misunderstanding of the reality of the Mystery of Golgotha.

**[page 25, 26] Upon comparing Aristotle's works with those of Plato, one may conclude that Plato's thinking is still wholly permeated by imaginations from the ancient Mysteries. Gods become involved with the destinies of human beings. In comparison with the heavenly radiance of divine ideas the thinking of human beings is only a feeble reflection, a shadow of these ideas, and the earthly world itself merely Maya. The consequence of such a thought-conception is that one can never rightly grasp the true nature of the Mystery of Golgotha. The Mystery of Golgotha took place in the realm of death, that is, in the world of matter, which according to Plato belongs to the realm where illusion holds sway. Hence the death on Golgotha is not to be recognized as something that has a reality for man. That is why in the centuries that followed the only doctrine that arose concerning the Mystery of Golgotha out of a logical development of Platonism was that of Docetism.**

What Aristotle did saliently was to teach us how to think about *thinking* and the Logic which arose from this lives with us yet today.

**[page 26, 27] In addition to laying the foundation of scientific thinking, Aristotle endeavored to observe and describe with precision the most diverse phenomena of Nature. And once he had considered all kingdoms of Nature and had thereby employed his thinking to gain knowledge of Nature and man, he took a further step, and was probably the first to do so: he tried *to grasp thinking by means of thinking itself*. Thus Aristotle was the first philosopher in the history of humanity to think through the laws of thinking itself and created his *Logic* as a description of this. The laws of thinking which at that time he discovered and clearly formulated are still fully valid today. This signifies, however, that even today the whole of civilized humanity thinks in the way that Aristotle laid down over two thousand years ago. Rudolf Steiner says in this connection: "From what came to be known as Aristotelian logic there arose that intellectual framework which conditioned human intelligence in all subsequent centuries."**

Lazarus during his initiation in Bethany had the forces of the Aristotle bestowing upon him a Spirit-body (Atma), Zarathustra forces of Life-spirit (Buddhi), and Elijah-John those of Spirit-self (Manas). These filled out the fullest capabilities of Lazarus-John as a human being who was able to reach from physical body, etheric body, astral body, and I up through the three spiritual bodies of Manas, Buddhi, and Atma. Of this Rudolf Steiner told Ita Wegman notably:

**[page 29, 30] Thus before the Christ there stood a human being who encompassed the domain from the depths of Earth to the highest heavenly heights. . . "This could be clothed in a picture: the awakened Lazarus stood before Christ like a pillar of fire connecting the Earth with the Sun and hence prophetically indicating their future union, bearing within himself through the mediation of John the Baptist, Zarathustra and Aristotle all man's higher members.**

**Through the collaboration of these three individualities in the spiritual make-up of Lazarus-John, they were also able to participate supersensibly *through him* in the Mystery of Golgotha, as the central event of earthly evolution. They were its supersensible witnesses, just as Lazarus-John was its earthly witness.**

And as a result of this infusion of spiritual bodies, Lazarus-John was able to witness the events on Golgotha from beneath the Cross.

We are currently in the fifth cultural epoch of our present Great Post-Atlantean Epoch and at the end of the seventh

cultural epoch the entire Earth will be enmeshed in the War of All Against All(5). Following that we will enter the Sixth Great Epoch which follows our present Fifth Great Epoch. After the end of the Seventh Great Epoch, the time will arrive when the Earth and the Sun will reunite and the humans of Earth will be spiritualized. It will be the time when there will be no sunset and no dawning.

In these next passages we will see how Elijah, Zarathustra, Aristotle, and Lazarus will fulfill their roles. First Elijah-John in his incarnations.

**[page 32] The individuality of John the Baptist will in future earthly lives, following its incarnations as Raphael and Novalis, have a particular relationship with that spiritual deepening of Christianity associated with the Grail Mysteries, which will attain their full development in the sixth cultural epoch. For already as Raphael and Novalis, this individuality had a particular relationship to Christ's Spirit-Self.**

Next, the connection of Zarathustra with the Knights of the Round Table and King Arthur.

**[page 32] Zarathustra will, in contrast, bring to humanity in the future the transformed forces of the Arthurian knights, who at that time observed in the phenomena of Nature the Life-Spirit of Christ in the surroundings of the Earth. Until the end of the sixth cultural epoch, which will be a karmic consequence of the second one founded by Zarathustra, this developmental process will prepare for when, in the seventh epoch, that inner attitude will be given to the human souls on Earth who will need it during the terrible War of All against All.**

Next, the role of Aristotle as the primordial thinker of humankind.

**[page 32] And Aristotle, as a man of the Sun and the archetypal thinker of humanity, will bear his impulses into the great sixth earthly period which is to follow the seventh post-Atlantean cultural epoch. At this higher stage of development of mankind there will take place the total metamorphosis of human consciousness, a transformation process which will have its origin in connection with the Spirit-Man of the Christ.**

Next, every human has a chance to undergo a similar initiation, a similar expansion into a full human being including spirit self (Manas), life spirit (Buddhi), and spirit body (Atma), which Lazarus prefigured for us during the Mystery of Golgotha events.

**[page 33] The initiation of Lazarus was a unique, exceptional event where the forces of the old pre-Christian and the new Christian Mysteries were working together. Through the Mystery of Golgotha, as a consequence of Christ's union with the evolution of mankind, a similar initiation has become possible for every human being, though now in the physical body and in full consciousness. For in the new Christian Mysteries the stage of Sun Hero will be attained in a completely different way, without there being a need to leave one's physical body or lose consciousness of earthly realities.**

All of these great spirits through their human bodies in historical times and their spiritual bodies throughout Earth history have banded together to help human beings survive to the point where our bodies will be spiritualized and exist independent of our mother Earth which will cease to exist as a planet, but be joined, re-united with the Sun.

**[page 33] This developmental stage represents the beginning of the process of a general spiritualization and, hence, of the reunion between the Earth and the Sun, at the end of which these two bodies will unite. In his seminal work *An Outline of Occult Science*, Rudolf Steiner describes it as "the highest ideal of human evolution . . . that is conceivable for man: the spiritualization that man attains through his own work." Rudolf Steiner laid the foundation for this work in the first quarter of the twentieth century through Anthroposophy.**

With this look at this great historical figures who were also powerful spiritual beings, we have learned about how they

influenced the Turning Point of Time we call the death of Christ Jesus on the Cross, or as Steiner preferred to call it the Mystery of Golgotha. Death of a man on a cross may have no mystery to it, but this was no mere death of a man, but the first ever death of a god-in-a-human body, for that is what Jesus of Nazareth was, the bearer of the great Christ being for three years through their mutual death in a great sacrifice upon the cross. But there were three other turning points of time which preceded this event, all of which involved great sacrifices by Christ during earlier stages of our evolution, and absent any one of which we would not be here to share this time on Earth together. This set of four sacrifices are handled in the ten lectures by Rudolf Steiner in 1913, 14 in the book, [Approaching the Mystery of Golgotha](#) which we will take up in my next review.

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----- *Footnotes* -----

**Footnote 1.** The Sun Sphere is the sphere whose center is Earth and whose circumference encompasses the Sun. It was the spiritual reality and importance of these various sphere centered on the Earth which led to the "geocentric" maps of the heavens. These maps are still important for understanding the spiritual spheres today.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 1.](#)

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**Footnote 2.** St. Paul was a Hebrew Initiate and knew of the Sun Spirit through his experience of seeing the "Sun at Midnight" and his revelation came to him on the road to Damascus one day when he saw the great Sun Being had entered the Earth shortly after the Christ Jesus had died on the cross. Paul knew instantly that Jesus was the Christ, having been the means of the Christ spirit reaching the Earth. That was the Good News he sought to proclaim throughout his subsequent travels.

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**Footnote 3.** Contrast this optimistic view of the future of our beloved planet to that of the so-called "heat-death" forecasted by skeptical materialistic scientists. Rightly understood, their abstract logical deductions will meet a heat-death, not the Earth.

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**Footnote 4.** The incarnation of Rudolf Steiner as Aristotle is described in details in this book: [Rudolf Steiner's Mission and Ita Wegman](#) by the Bockholts.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 4.](#)

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**Footnote 5.** See the Sevens Table at <http://www.doyletics.com/7stable.htm>; its bottom two rows have the alignment of the Great Epochs and Cultural Epochs. Our Present Great Epoch has seven Cultural Epochs within it, and we are currently in the middle of the Fifth Cultural Epoch.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 5.](#)

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