

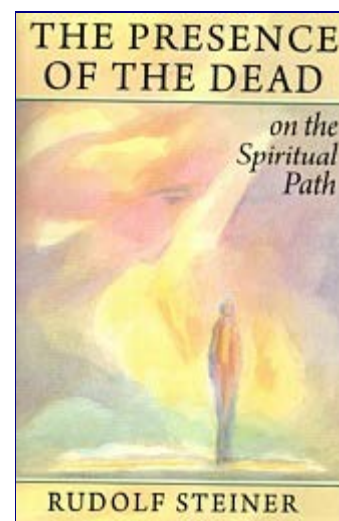
Site Map: [MAIN / A Reader's Journal, Vol. 2](#) [Webpage](#) [Printer Ready](#)



A READER'S JOURNAL

**The Presence of the Dead on the Spiritual
Path, GA#154
7 Lectures in Basel, Berlin, Paris etal, in
April, May 1914
by
Rudolf Steiner**

ARJ2 Chapter: Spiritual Science
Published by Anthroposophic Press/MA in 1990
A Book Review by Bobby Matherne ©2015



What is the difference between dreams and hallucinations? In his first lecture devoted to Understanding the Spiritual World, Steiner explains the difference this way on page 2. In dreams "we look back from within our astral body and I to what we have left behind in sleep" in our etheric body. Our etheric body operates as a continuous recording of our lives, not just what happens in the sensory world but also inside our body. At the end of our life, our etheric body contains everything which happened to us in this lifetime. This is what people in near-death experiences call seeing their entire life pass in front of their eyes. When we dream one short episode of our etheric recording is played for us.

In hallucinations, a diseased(1) part of the nervous system prevents the etheric body from entering it and as a result that part radiates out toward the etheric body and we experience this part consciously as a hallucination. If the diseased part is due to a physical injury such as a bump or a bruise, the etheric body is displaced and we experience consciously the process of pain at the spot of the injury until the healing is completed. I have suspected for some time that when a mother kisses a hurt knee, for example, her etheric body infuses the hurt spot and removes the pain for awhile. Healing by laying on of hands seems to me to work in a similar way. But what if the injury is psychic and not physical? In that case the diseased part which exists throughout the nervous system is projected out to the etheric body and we become conscious of it as a hallucination.

The process of clairvoyant Imagination described elsewhere in detail by Steiner is a human capability which requires great strength of soul to develop in this stage of human evolution. Without it we cannot perceive the etheric world, but only what effects us directly by way of dreams and hallucinations.

[page 4] True perception of the etheric world after death or here on earth in clairvoyant Imaginations requires greater strength than we usually have between birth and death. We need greater inner strength of soul. We do not perceive the etheric world around us during earthly life because we lack sufficient strength of soul. To perceive the etheric world we must become much more active, work much harder than we do in ordinary life. After death, too, the soul must be filled with much more active strength than in ordinary life to relate to its environment. Otherwise we do not perceive the etheric world, just as we wouldn't perceive anything if we lacked all senses in the physical world. Thus, we need a more active strength of soul to find our way after death and not to be deaf and blind, figuratively speaking, to the world we enter then.

When we write down words on a page, we know what we writing and afterward know that we wrote the words. When we are dreaming or hallucinating, it seems that these are being generated separately from us as some passing scene on a street or from a railway car; they seem to be just happening to us, out of our control. What if these dreams and hallucinations were coming from us just as much as the words we write on paper?

[page 5] Now, let us return to dreams. When we dream, we usually feel the dream images "weave" and simply unravel on their own. We should think of these dreams as images that float past the soul. Now suppose you were thinking that you yourself place the dream images in space and time just as you set down letters on paper. This is not what we normally associate with dreams or hallucinations, but it is the type of consciousness required for imaginative thinking. You must be aware that you are the determining power in your dreams. You put down one thing after another just as you do when writing something on paper. You yourself are in control. The same power is behind you that makes what you write true. The great difference between dreams or hallucinations and true clairvoyance is that in the latter we are aware that we are the esoteric scribes, as it were. The things we see are noted down as an esoteric script. We inscribe onto the world what we perceive as expression, as revelation, of the world.

With true clairvoyance, things get a bit tricky. When we write in the physical world, we know what we want to write as we go along. We perceive things and we write about them. In the spiritual world the being of the next hierarchy is doing the writing through us and we discover what is being written as we write it.

[page 6, 7] The only difference is that when we want to write in the physical world, we need first to know what is it we want to write down — at least it usually helps if we do. By contrast, in spiritual perception we allow the beings of the spiritual hierarchies to write, and only then, while we are writing, do the things appear that we are to perceive. Real clairvoyance cannot come about without our active involvement in every single aspect of our perception.

In the physical world, the type of thinking we do is useless for perception after death in the spiritual world.

[page 7] We need a stronger kind of thinking, one that is inwardly active of its own accord. We need thinking that forms thoughts which do not merely mirror the outer sense world. We must develop this inner capacity to form thoughts independent of anything external, thoughts that arise, as it were, from the depths of the soul, or we cannot have a corresponding capacity after death.

Does this mean that people who write science fiction stories about super heroes and monsters are developing the kind of thinking needed after death? In a sense the answer is yes, but it is not a useful skill for developing true impressions of the spiritual world, only false ones.

[page 7] It cannot be denied — people who do this will have greater faculties in the world after death than those who do not. However, they would perceive only false images, distortions, just as people with impaired vision see a distorted image of the physical world and those with damaged hearing have a false impression of its sounds. People who follow this course of action sentence themselves to perceiving nothing but grotesque things in the etheric world, instead of what is truly rooted there.

People reading this will likely say, "I cannot believe this stuff." And they would be right; no one can believe it, nor is anyone expected to believe it, especially not by Rudolf Steiner. No one is expected to "believe this stuff", the stuff that comprises spiritual science or anthroposophy.

[page 9] I have often emphasized that it is a complete misunderstanding to say spiritual science must also be believed. When people say this, it is because they are so crammed full with materialistic prejudices that they do not look at what spiritual science really has to offer. As soon as it is examined, everything becomes understandable. One does not need clairvoyance for this; our ordinary understanding is enough to really grasp and comprehend all this gradually — of course, "gradually" will be inconvenient for some people.

Ancient spiritual leaders gave human souls something that awakened them spiritually so that they could perceive in the etheric world and have a conscious life after death. With the recent advent of Baconian thinking which focuses our thoughts only on sensory perceptions, we need a way of consciously developing these powers while we are alive or we will not have perceptual capability after death. Curiously, that is when materialists who claim that the spiritual world does not exist, will prove themselves to have been right, but only right for themselves and other human souls who think materialistically.

[page 10] Only one type of person will have difficulty in finding his or her way after death. In fact, this type will frequently not even experience a life after death, because it will have become so dulled and obscured. This sort of person is the dyed-in-the-wool materialist who clings to images of the physical world and does not want to develop any strength to perceive the world we enter after death. In terms of the soul-spiritual, to be a materialist really means the same as wanting to destroy one's eyes and ears in the physical world, gradually deadening one's senses. It is no different from someone saying, "These eyes — they can't be trusted, they provide only impressions of light. Away with them! These ears — they perceive only vibrations, not the one single truth. Get rid of them! Get rid of the senses, one by one!" To be a materialist in regard to the spiritual world makes as much sense as this attitude in regard to the sensory world. It is basically the same, as will be quite easy to see when we consider the reasoning presented by spiritual science.

When we are facing a difficult problem, we are often told to sleep on it. What is the magic of sleeping on something? In our dreams we have access to information stored in our astral body that we are not conscious of while awake. When doing difficult crossword puzzles, I evolved a pattern of not looking up the answers in the external world, eschewing the dictionary and Google for an answer. That leaves me on my own resources and one of those resources is my astral body which works to find solutions to things that otherwise seem insoluble to me. If I am unable to complete the Saturday stumper, the hardest puzzle of the weekday editions of my newspaper, then I put it aside until Sunday morning and easily fill in answers which were completely unknown to me the day before.[\(2\)](#)

[page 11] There are also other dreams where we face ourselves objectively. And beyond simply seeing ourselves, as sometimes happens, we can also have the dream students often have, of sitting in school, trying to work out an arithmetic problem, but unable to solve the equation. Another person comes and easily finds the solution. The student really dreams that this happens. Well, you will understand that it was he himself who came and solved the problem. Thus, it is also possible that we face ourselves in this way without, however, recognizing ourselves. But that is not the important thing. In such a situation the I divides in two, as it were. It would be nice, wouldn't it, if in the physical world as well, the other ego appeared and immediately produced the right answer when we do not know something. Well, it does happen in dreams.

This double of ourselves can happen in dreams because we are in our astral body and I while we are dreaming, and what we see as another person in a dream is an image formed out of our astral body. The process of dream work made popular by Fritz Perls in his Gestalt Therapy involves retelling a dream and becoming each part of the dream. Since each part of the dream is information from your astral body,

becoming that part allows you to become aware of the information your astral body has prepared for you in the dream. Once a trainer suggested that I stand up and slide around the room like the roller skater which vexed me in a dream. As soon as I began imitating the skater, I got the revelation of what I needed to do in the novel conditions of my life at the time. I needed to free myself from overweening responsibility that was burdening me down without my being aware of it. Sometimes the astral body can reveal things which are coming to you from the future, as if you contained a fortune teller inside of you, an Oracle like the ancient Greeks beseeched for advice. Curiously the answers they received were often as convoluted as many of our dreams are. What the Greeks sought outside themselves, we have inside ourselves via our astral bodies, if we only knew it.

That is what Steiner is hinting at in this next passage.

[page 11, 12] We do not perceive the astral body in ordinary life, but we can quite easily see part of it in sleep. It contains things we are not at all aware of when we are awake. I spoke earlier about the nature of the etheric body; it contains everything we have experienced. But now I have to tell you something quite strange — the astral body contains even those things we have not experienced. You see, our astral body is a rather complicated structure. It is in a certain sense built into us out of the spiritual world, and it contains not merely those things we already have in us now but also those we will learn in the future! They are already present there as a disposition.

One piece of Gestalt work I recall vividly. It involved a man who had lost his job, his wife, his car, his apartment, he was friendless, his life was a complete mess, and he felt hopeless. After the work, he felt much better and hopeful and ready to tackle all his problems. I saw this type of thing happen many times during my training, but this time the man did something unique. He shared with us, "I just realized that all my problems out there are still out there, completely unchanged. What's different is that I now feel capable of handling them!" What he had experienced, as I understand it now, was a time wave from the future(3), a time wave of feeling from a future time when all of his problems have been solved. Riding on the wave feeling, it was now possible for him to do the things necessary to bring that feeling into everyday reality for himself.

We learn from this how inspiration comes to us from the astral world, via our astral body. Steiner says that our astral body contains all the mathematics that has ever been discovered or will be discovered. He also warns that giving oneself over to hallucinations which offer us advanced insights because Lucifer can takeover us. This taking over is vividly displayed in the movie, "A Brilliant Mind" about the famous mathematician John Nash who had to fight a fierce battle against his luciferic hallucinations to survive.

[page 12] For example, the astral body contains, believe it or not, all of mathematics, not only as far as we know it today, but also everything that still remains to be discovered. Nevertheless, if we wanted to read the mathematics contained there and read it consciously, we would have to do so actively by acquiring the necessary faculties.

Thus, it is a revelation of part of our astral body when we come face to face with ourselves in a dream. And many of the things that come to us as inner inspiration spring from these revelations of the astral body. In the same way hallucinations can occur under the circumstances I described earlier. The part of us that is cleverer than we usually are can, through a special disposition in our constitution, take on a voice of its own. Then we can be inspired, which would not happen if we used only our ordinary judgment in our physical body. But it is dangerous to give ourselves over to such things, because we cannot control them until we are able to penetrate them with our judgment. And since we cannot control them, Lucifer has easy access to all these developments, and we cannot keep him from directing them according to his intentions, rather than in accordance with the aims of the proper world order.

One more insight from this amazing lecture: if you lie, you are giving yourself a raspberry! If you tell an

untruth, it appears on your face, poker face or not, your skewing of the spiritual world becomes readable on your face to spiritual sight. This next passage is a difficult text to sort out, but it brought to mind kids of my childhood who would taunt each other with lies, saying, "blah, blah, blah!", and end by sticking their tongue out. Seems that small kids still have memories enough of spiritual sight to know that people who act that way appear in the spiritual world with their tongue sticking out.

[page 13, 14] If we are in the spiritual world and perceive something is incorrect, that means we are using the esoteric script incorrectly. Well, if we use the esoteric script incorrectly but perceive ourselves as the center of everything going on, we experience in our own being: You look like this because you did something wrong; now you have to put it right! We can see how we have acted by what we have become. We can compare this to how you would feel here in the physical world if you were not inside but outside yourself. For example, if you said to someone, "It is now half past eleven" -- something that is not true — and look at yourself, you see how you stick your tongue out at yourself. You say, "This isn't you!" And then you start to correct yourself and say what is true, "It is now twenty past nine." At that moment your tongue goes back in. Similarly, you can tell whether you are acting correctly in the spiritual world by looking at yourself.

Some of you are probably thinking only stupid, superstitious people with vivid fantasies would speak about the spiritual world. Rudolf Steiner quotes a famous 18th century philosopher who would disagree with you.

[page 18] Out of his conviction that we live in and are always surrounded by the spiritual world, the German philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte said: "I do not need to wait until I am removed from the things around me in the physical world to gain entry into the spirit realm. I already exist and live in the latter much more truly than in the former. It is my only firm basis, and the eternal life I took possession of long ago is the sole reason why I still wish to continue the earthly one. Heaven does not lie beyond the grave; it is here already, pervading all of nature and its light rises in every pure heart."

Anyone who studies Steiner's spiritual science, anthroposophy, will find themselves acquiring new concepts, ones they will not have brought with them (although some may seem familiar to them). Here is a new concept in a nutshell: *We perceive the physical world; the spiritual world perceives us.* I cannot recall ever encountering this concept before anywhere before reading Lecture 2, pages 18 to 32. I was aware of my Guardian Angel, but I cannot say that I perceived him. Through these new concepts I have come to understand we don't perceive our Angel but rather feel him perceiving us. That makes eminently good sense to me. We humans can perceive a stone, a plant, or an animal, but those lower hierarchical beings might say they experience being perceived by we humans who are in a higher hierarchy than they are. For our part, we can say we experience being perceived by beings higher in the spiritual hierarchy than we are. A famous painting of a Guardian Angel illustrates this because the Angel is not being perceived by the young girl and boy because it is behind them as they walk along the broken wooden bridge. Notice how the girl and boy can feel the Angel perceiving them and feel Angel protecting them. What gives veracity for to Steiner's words is the numerous times I have received a new concept from him, only to find examples of that new concept in my everyday experience through things I have seen many times before but never understood the deeper meaning of them, like the Guardian Angel painting.

[page 21, 22] By looking at things, we perceive the human realm, human beings as physical beings, the animal, plant, and mineral kingdoms, clouds, mountains, rivers, oceans, stars, sun, and moon. We perceive these things to the extent that they are physical entities. We look at them, see their colors, hear their sounds, feel their warmth - - in short, we perceive them. This is a perfectly correct description of our relationship to the physical world. But as soon as we look at the world of the spirit, we should feel the need for another expression than "I perceive," because it is not quite correct to say "I

perceive the beings of the spiritual world." We need to understand that all so-called perception of the spiritual world is quite different from that on the physical plane. As we grow into the realm of the spirit and approach it, we have the impression that we are perceived. Here on earth we are, in a certain sense, the highest physical beings. A stone, a plant, or an animal might say they are perceived by human beings. And in terms of our physical body, we can say we are perceived by beings of our own kind. We are also perceived from the moment we grow into the spiritual world. The spiritual beings look down at us, and in a certain sense we become objects to them. It is indeed a first sign of having entered the spiritual world when we are perceived.

Each person has a Guardian Angel, but Archangels, being one step higher than angels, rather than having charge of protecting one human, are charged with protecting a whole people, a country, or a region of the world. When an Angel perceives you, you feel its perceiving you, but when an Archangel perceives you, it moves you into action, into performing a deed. The most well-known example of this in history, although similar deeds may have happened many times, is the deed of Joan of Arc, the young maid of Domremy, who was driven single-handedly to save her country of France from becoming an English-speaking country ruled by the King of England. Without Joan's deed, the language of French and the country of France could have been obliterated from the world by the end of the fifteenth century. From various written records we know that an Archangel was hovering over Joan, speaking to her, prompting her to action. Steiner notes in other places that Joan's Archangel was likely not Mi-cha-el, but instead it was the Archangel of the country of France whose forces flowed into Joan and gave her the courage and stamina to act in such a decisive manner to save France.

[page 22, 23] We learn to see ourselves grow into a state of mind allowing us to feel we are perceived by the higher beings of the hierarchy of angels. Then as we develop further, we are perceived by those of the hierarchy of archangels, and so on. This feeling that we are looked at, that the will of spiritual beings is affecting us, is what I mean when I say "We are perceived." We have to be quite clear about this and must not think that growing into the spiritual world is just a continuation of the panorama surrounding us in the physical world. Our whole soul mood changes because we become aware that we are living in the spiritual world, and that what we experience there is the feeling that the beings of the higher hierarchies perceive us. Their forces flow into us and are at work in us when we do something, when we act.

Why not concentrate on the physical world while we are in it and worry about the spiritual world when we are in it? This is a great question. It is often put forward by materialists who want nothing of the spiritual world, most of them claiming that they are certain no spiritual world exists. This is a great question to ask because, rightly understood, everyone enters the spiritual world every time they go to sleep! Even materialists enter the spiritual world during sleep, materialists who would be chagrined to discover that truth about human beings, after all, some of them are human beings!

It is a great question because every human being is constantly immersed in the spiritual world, as Fichte clearly stated in his Page 18 quote. Materialists have blinders on to protect them from perceiving the spiritual world as they walk the hard structures of material reality. Like a horse pulling a cart through a city full of dark shadows which would spook it, materialists wear blinders to keep them focused only on the here now of physical reality while they are conscious. The intimate relationship between sleep and death escapes them entirely, up until now. As a result, materialists are spooked by the thought of death, by the thought of ultimate non-being, a concept created by human thinkers. They should be equally spooked to learn that they are in the spiritual world even when they are awake.

[page 34, 35] We know from our studies in spiritual science that when we fall asleep, two members of our being, the ego and the astral body, leave the physical and etheric bodies. Where are the ego and the astral body when we are asleep? To begin with, we can say they are in the spiritual world. Of course, we are always in the spirit realm, because the

latter is not separated from the physical world, but surrounds us just as air envelops us everywhere. We are always in the spiritual world, even when we are awake.

In this lecture, Steiner makes an important revelation that while the astral body and the I leave the blood and nerves by night, they remain in and vitalize the remainder of our organs by night.

[page 35, 36] Our ego and astral body do just what the sun does, which shines here during the day and when it sets for us, it rises for the people on the other side of the earth. When ego and astral body "set" for our blood and nervous system, they rise for the other organs and are linked all the more strongly with them.

These other organs, to which our ego and astral body are connected when we sleep, have been constructed out of the spirit, as has everything else in the world. And the remarkable fact is that while we are sleeping, we strongly influence these other organs of our body with our ego and astral body. During the day, our ego and astral body work strongly upon our blood and nervous system, but they influence our other organs, all those not part of the blood and nervous system but which affect the blood from the nerves, when we are asleep.

Ever since Louis Pasteur discovered germs, doctors everywhere have set about trying to kill the germs that Pasteur said made us sick. Claude Bernard, a colleague of Pasteur, acknowledged the presence of germs but spoke of a holistic approach in which some germs were good and some were bad and health consisted of keeping the good and bad germs in balance. On Pasteur's deathbed he said to those near him, "Claude was right." In this next passage Steiner equates the medieval fear of ghosts to our present fear of germs in all forms, bacteria, viruses, etc. He echoes Claude Bernard's sentiment and gives some practical advice on how to maintain one's health, advice sure to be missed by materialists with their blinders in place.

[page 36] However, the important point we want to make today is that germs can become dangerous only if they are allowed to flourish.

Exactly what both Pasteur (at the end of his life) and Bernard claimed to be true. But Steiner goes further in explaining how germs can be encouraged to flourish by thinking materialistic thoughts before going to sleep and giving into thoughts of fear while around sick patients. How did Mother Teresa survive among the many sick patients she nursed? By actively loving her patients and thinking only healthy thoughts as she prayed for their recovery.

[page 36, 37] Germs should not be allowed to flourish. Even materialists will agree with this statement, but they will no longer agree with us if we proceed further and, from the standpoint of proper spiritual science, speak about the most favorable conditions for germs. Germs flourish most intensively when we take nothing but materialistic thoughts into sleep with us. There is no better way to encourage them to flourish than to enter sleep with only materialistic ideas, and then to work from the spiritual world with the ego and the astral body on those organs that are not part of the blood and the nervous system. The only other method that is just as good is to live in the center of an epidemic or endemic illness and to think of nothing but the sickness all around, filled only with a fear of getting sick. That would be equally effective. If fear of the illness is the only thing created in such a place and one goes to sleep at night with that thought, it produces afterimages, Imaginations impregnated with fear. That is a good method of cultivating and nurturing germs. If this fear can be reduced even a little by, for example, active love and, while tending the sick, forgetting for a time that one might also be infected, the conditions are less favorable for the germs.

Steiner is not trying to get us to believe something, he is merely describing how the spiritual world works, and how those who are successful with working with sick patients are able to keep themselves healthy in spite of being surrounded by germs. Wearing the blinders of materialism and working with very sick

people is a prescription for short careers for doctors, rightly understood.

[page 37] These issues are not raised in anthroposophy merely to play on human egotism, but to describe the facts of the spiritual world. This concrete case demonstrates that in real life we cannot avoid dealing with the spiritual world, because it is the basis for our actions between going to sleep and waking up. If people were given thoughts that lead them away from materialism and spur them on to active love out of the spirit, it would serve the future of humanity better.

As more and more medical doctors take off their blinders of materialism, they will find ready answers in anthroposophical-based medicine and practices. A century after Steiner spoke these words, medical doctors everywhere are turning into anthroposophical practitioners and replacing drug company compounds with natural remedies available from the Weleda Corporation whose founding was inspired by Rudolf Steiner and his colleague, Ita Wegman, MD.

[page 37, 38] Then infinitely more productive work could be achieved than through all the preparations now being developed by materialistic science against germs. In the course of this century, the insight has to spread more and more widely that the spiritual world is by no means irrelevant to our physical life, but is of essential importance to it because we are in the spiritual world between going to sleep and waking up, and continue to affect the physical body from there. Even if this is not immediately obvious, it is nevertheless true.

Germs and parasites of various kinds are creatures of the materialistic world, or the world of Ahriman. When we think materialistic thoughts, we encourage the creatures of Ahriman to flourish within our bodies. All around us in the open air are animals, plants, and various creatures, many of which are useful and helpful to human beings and some of which are occasionally harmful.

[page 38] But in the case of germ-like creatures resident and active in other living beings, in plants, animals, or humans, we are dealing with creations of Ahriman. To understand the existence of such creatures correctly we must know that they express spiritual facts, namely the relationship between human beings and Ahriman. This relationship is established through a materialistic attitude and purely egotistical states of fear. We see the conditions allowing the existence of such parasitic beings correctly if we realize that they are a symptom of Ahriman intervening in the world.

Steiner says, "we can no longer claim it is irrelevant whether or not we know of the spirit in this world." It is important for all humans being in the coming centuries to take off their blinders of materialism.

[page 39] It will become increasingly clear to us how this earthly life is connected with spiritual life. We rely on nature, which is on a lower level than we are, for our nourishment. For some time after death, the dead derive their nourishment from the ideas and the unconscious emotions that we here on earth take into sleep with us.

My hope for each of you, Dear Readers, is that you may become an ever fruitful pasture for the spirits of the newly dead, many of whom will be our own dearly loved ones who have transited into the spiritual world. The only alternative is to become a barren ground and starve our loved ones if we take only materialistic ideas and attitudes with us into sleep. (Page 39 paraphrase)

[page 41] Illuminating thoughts must flow up to those regions where the dead dwell, just as rain streams down from the clouds as a blessing to the physical world.

I think of a materialist as a rich man of Jesus' time who tries to enter the city walls through a restricted gateway known as a needle. He has piled upon his camels his possessions to such a height that he and his camel cannot pass through the needle unless all his goods are stripped away. A materialist is someone who

loads his camel's back with a pile of clever and important thoughts and feelings, only to find when he enters the spiritual world, all his possessions are gone! Not only that, but he who wore the blinders of materialism while alive, now is functionally blind in the spiritual world. (Page 44)

Are there not those who refuse to believe that Jesus lived because they can find no material evidence to prove he lived? Steiner gives us on pages 46, 47 a beautiful metaphor. He has us imagine that Jesus had chiseled into a rock the words, "I was here", for all future peoples to see. It would prove him to have existed and no one would have to believe it.

[page 47] His deep significance, the possibility of redemption, is precisely that this was not the case, that we cannot comprehend him through our senses but have to accept him with the forces of the spirit. Seen in this light, we find Christ intimately connected with those things that even here on earth lift human beings beyond the sense-perceptible world into the spiritual realm.

Ahriman is likewise invisible to us and that suits his purposes just fine. Steiner imagines Ahriman talking to us modern humans this way:

[page 47] Yes, think only with the power of your science, with all those things you can discover through science applied to technology, industry, and also use only those things for your thinking and apply them to nothing but physical experience; that suits me fine. It fits in well with my aims, if you are unable to see me.

We begin to perceive our Baconian madness as Ahriman continues:

[page 48] You might well despise reason and knowledge, the supreme achievements of human beings; thus you are absolutely mine — at least as long as you do not see me. I will instill the drive in you to use reason and knowledge only for earthly things!

Human beings seduced by Ahriman into Baconian modes of thought based on the senses will be chagrined to learn that they have likely shut the most important sense of all to a full human being, the sense of feeling.

[page 54] If we allow our feelings to accompany [someone's] actions, ignoring the individual's appearance, we will get a sense in the depths of our soul telling us what being we are actually dealing with.

Information reaches us from the spiritual world in the form of feeling, a feeling which, rightly understood, is as real as any visual or auditory image and as useful. Remember earlier when we learned that we do not perceive an angel, but rather feel an angel perceiving us. This feeling was so strong in Joan of Arc that she left her home alone as a 19 year old to fight the English army trying to take over her beloved country of France. But for Joan there might be no France nor any french language today.

Steiner lost a good friend named Maria who transited in 1904 and whose impulses from the spiritual world poured into her artistic work on the Munich plays. He explains the difference between how such impulses are experienced by someone who had an egotistical love and someone who had a selfless love.

[page 57] Let us assume such a person would want to help us after her death, but we cannot develop true selfless love for her. Her spiritual gaze, her spiritual will streaming toward us would then be alike a burning sensation, causing a piercing, burning feeling our soul. If we can feel and maintain a selfless love, this stream, her spiritual gaze as it were, flows into our soul like a feeling of warm mildness and pours itself into our thoughts, imagination, feeling, and willing. It is out of this feeling that we recognize who the dead person is and not on the basis of their appearance, because the dead may manifest in the guise of a person we feel close to at the moment.

The above forms itself into an unanswered question in my mind. Is it possible that the sales of much Maalox, Tums, *etal* stem from such spiritual gazes from departed friends for whom one does not have a selfless love? A person, who lacked understanding that feelings can have a spiritual source, would likely take Tums or Maalox to stem the burning sensation in their soul, might they not? Perhaps the burning sensation resulted in an imbalance in stomach chemistry which the anodynes could cure on a temporary basis. If the spiritual source of the burning feelings remained unacknowledged, could not an ulcer be generated? This reminds me of the words spoken by John Ciardi, *"An ulcer, gentlemen, is an unknissed imagination taking its revenge for having been jilted. It is an unwritten poem, an undanced dance, an unpainted watercolor. It is a declaration from the mankind of the man that a clear spring of joy has not been tapped and that it must break through muddily, on its own."* When one begins to understand the spiritual reality which shapes physical reality, many medical enigmas can be revealed in their true light.

[page 57, 58] The form in which the beings of the higher world appear to us — and after death we are all beings of a higher, spiritual world — depends on our subjective nature, on what we habitually see, think, and feel. The reality is what we feel for the being manifest before us, how we receive what comes to us from this being. Regardless of what Joan of Arc said about the appearance of the higher beings in her visions, the occultist who is able to investigate these things knows that it was always the genius of the French nation who stood behind them.

In a dream we are in the spiritual world and we can often encounter words and not be able to make sense of them. We do best to focus on feelings rather than reading the words. We can feel the gaze of spiritual beings during dreams, but to try to describe the visions is as silly as trying to describe the shapes of letters forming words. As a child we learned to read, to convert those shapes into words with meaning. Steiner exhorts us to learn how to feel the gaze of spiritual beings and their will flowing into our souls if we would extract meaning from our dreams and our later life in the spiritual world.

[page 58] I described how we can feel the gaze of spiritual beings resting upon us and their will flowing into our souls. To learn this is analogous to learning to read on the physical plane. Those who merely want to describe their visions would be like people describing the shape of the letters on a page rather than their meaning. This shows you how easy it is to have preconceived notions about the experiences in the spiritual realm. Naturally, it seems most obvious to attach great importance to the description of what the vision looked like. However, what really matters is what lies behind the veil of perception and is expressed in the images of the vision.

We must learn to read in a new way when we enter the spiritual world and that new reading reveals to us that thoughts appear as real beings around us. This happens in our everyday physical life, but we are unaware of creating thought beings, thought elementals, whenever we think; in the spiritual world, this will be our very environment, filled with thought beings.

[page 59] When we speak on the physical plane and tell our thoughts to someone, we have the feeling that our thoughts come from our soul, that we have to remember them at this particular moment. Speaking as a true occultist and not someone who just tells his experiences from memory, we will feel that our thoughts arise as living beings. We must be glad if we are blessed at the right moment with the approach of a thought as a real being.

To speak spontaneously one must wait for the words to arrive, or else one is simply speaking words out of rote memory. There is no such thing as memory in the spiritual world. Speaking out of the spiritual world is like waiting for thought friends to arrive at a party, as they arrive the party begins, and no one can predict what will happen. It is what makes a party fun, the spontaneity, is it not? Is there any duller than a predictable party full of predictable people? Or a lecturer reading from a prepared lecture at a podium? Rudolf Steiner gave over 6,000 lectures in 25 years and rarely repeated himself for more than a few

sentences. Every lecture of his reveals new and often mind-boggling and unpredictable thoughts, concepts, and revelations. He often seems to deviate from the topic of the lecture, but reports from people attending his lectures reveal a theme, "He spoke about things that concerned me deeply as if he were reading my thoughts and answering my questions." It was this feeling that was apparently pervasive even in his early lectures because people, voluntarily and without prompting, began to record his lectures in shorthand for later transcribing.

[page 59] When you express your thoughts in the physical world, for example, as a lecturer, you will find it easier to give a talk for the thirtieth time than you did the first time. If, however, you speak as an occultist, thoughts always have to approach you and then depart again. Just as someone paying you the thirtieth visit had to make his way to you thirty times, the living thought we express for the thirtieth time has to come to us thirty times as it did the first time; our memory is of absolutely no use here.

If you express an idea on the physical level and someone is sitting in a corner thinking, "I don't like that nonsense, I hate it," you will not be particularly bothered by it. You have prepared your ideas and present them regardless of the positive or negative thoughts of someone in the audience. But if as an esotericist you let thoughts approach you, they could be delayed and kept away by someone who hates them or who hates the speaker. And the forces blocking that thought must be overcome because we are dealing with living beings and not merely with abstract ideas.

Joan of Arc apparently lived in a clairvoyant world of living thoughts and she could feel the hierarchy of angels around her. She did not have abstract ideals which drove her into battle against the English; rightly understood she detested fighting, and yet she donned fighting clothes and did battle. How can we possibly understand her actions? The Church fathers who later condemned her to be burned at the stake in Rouen certainly did not understand her actions. Joan tried to explain that she had to do what she did because of the angels. In the physical world one can ignore an ideal, but in the spiritual world which Joan lived in, the ideals there were real beings and could not be ignored. The "genius of France" which Steiner mentioned earlier was an archangel whose gaze drove Joan to save the country of France from extinction.

[page 59] Now, in our earthly life, we have certain ideals and think about them abstractly. As we think of them, we feel obligated to pursue these ideals. In the clairvoyant sphere, however, there are no abstract ideals. There ideals are living beings of the hierarchy of angels and flow through spiritual space, looking at us with warmth.

In the physical world, we may have ideals, know them well, and yet we may not do anything to apply them. Our emotions, and perhaps passions, can tempt us to shirk them. However, if we knowingly ignore an ideal in the clairvoyant sphere, we feel the spiritual gaze of a being of the hierarchy of angels directed at us with reproach, and this reproach burns. In the spiritual world, ignoring an ideal is thus a reality, and a being of the hierarchy of angels reproaches us. Their gaze makes us feel the reproach; it is the reproach we feel.

It is likely Steiner spoke often about Joan of Arc because her lifetime revealed spiritual realities in sharp relief, realities often blurred over and obscured in others' lives. The reproach she felt from the "genius of France" led her into battle time and again, and in time the burning within her became so great that she recanted her false confession and accepted the burning at the stake; the external burning had become preferable to the burning within.

Joan had risen to the level of the hierarchy of archangels and could feel the archangel's reproach which forced her into action.

[page 61] Through continued esoteric training, we can rise to an even higher level, that of the hierarchy of archangels. If we ignore the angels, we feel reproach. With the archangels we feel reproach as well as a real effect on our being. The strength and power

of the archangels works through our I when we live in their world.

Before I had studied Antonio Gaudi's cathedral in detail, I thought his organic design was similar to Rudolf Steiner's design of the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland. Gaudi consciously took his designs from Nature, especially the tall spires which reminded him of the shape of the mountain peaks surrounding his childhood home near the Benedictine retreat of Montserrat. Steiner's architectural designs did not come from Nature, but from the Spiritual world.

[page 67, 68]] If anthroposophy is to be represented in a building the next step must be to bring to life the living and weaving thought patterns themselves, flowing and pouring into space. Then we will see in physical form what Imagination and Inspiration reveal directly of the spiritual world. That is why the forms of the Dornach building are such that it is pointless to ask in materialist fashion what they symbolize and what their shapes stand for. They have to be taken on their own merit, since they are nothing more than immediate spiritual experiences poured out into spatial forms. We have attempted to transform everything that can be seen and experienced in the spirit into artistic form. So if people ask what a form stands for, they have misunderstood the building; for every form signifies only itself, just as our hands or head stand only for themselves and nothing else. Such a question also indicates a complete misunderstanding of our position in regard to occultism. We will be glad to leave behind the old theosophical nonsense of examining every fairy tale, every figure, and every myth for what it signifies and symbolizes.

Already in 1914 Steiner was leaving the Theosophical Society behind him like a snake sheds its old skin. The building of the Goetheanum will not have detailed explanations for every architrave, column or sculpted feature.

[page 68] Our building will be understood if people stop asking what it symbolizes and instead think about what it is. They will understand our building when they realize it is better not to use any of the usual terms and the old verbal images to help our materialist age comprehend it. Spiritual science can at most be a synthesis of religions; unlike the ancient religions, it does not build temples, but rather a structure that expresses its innermost nature. This building can only be understood gradually, and only if we do not apply old words to this new development.

In Lecture Five, Steiner explains that we are in a stage of development with spiritual science that the study of physical sciences has been in since Bacon. The revolutionary concepts of Giordano Bruno, Newton, Copernicus, and Einstein among others, will find modern companions in the revolutionary spiritual revelations and concepts of Rudolf Steiner's spiritual science. As a physicist, I always wanted to visit other planets. I've told people that I read so much science fiction in the 1940s and early 50s that I spent more time on Mars than on Earth. As a spiritual scientist today, I find the idea of taking one's physical body along on a tour of the planets when every time I fall asleep my spirit encloses the entire universe within itself instantly, all the planets, all the stars and billions of galaxies. Put another way: Bruno taught humans to look through the firmament of our blue sky into infinite space beyond; Steiner taught humans to look through the firmament of our time between birth and death into the infinite time beyond.

[page 85] The time will come when people will see the lack of substance and precision in such logic, when they will understand that something can be irrefutably correct as philosophical argument, and yet be completely refuted by life. After all, before the discovery of the microscope or the telescope people might very well have "irrefutably" proven that human eyes can never see a cell. Still, human ingenuity invented the microscope and the telescope, which increased the power of our eyes. Similarly, life has outdistanced the irrefutable proof of the philosophers. Life does not need to refute the arguments of this or that philosopher. Their proofs may be indisputable, but the reality

of life must progress beyond them by strengthening our cognitive capacity and spiritual understanding through spiritual instruments.

Okay, there are as few people who want to look through Steiner spiritual telescope any more than Criminino wanted to look through Galileo's telescope to see proof of mountains on the Moon. To ordinary scientists today, Steiner's claims of the spiritual world are as ridiculous to ordinary scientists today as Galileo's claim of mountains on the Moon was to people of his time. But *the times they are a'changing* as a poet of the 1960s wrote.

[page 85] In the present state of our culture with its prevailing belief in the incontrovertibility of the philosophers' proofs, these things are not generally or readily accepted. However, as our culture continues to develop, it will reach a higher logic than the one supporting these proofs of purely external philosophy. This higher logic will be one of life, of life of the spirit, of insights based on spiritual science. A time will come when people, while still respecting the accomplishments and discoveries of the natural sciences as much as we do now, will nevertheless realize that for our inner life these marvelous achievements have brought more questions than answers. If you study biology, astronomy, and so on, you will see that they have reached their limits. Do these sciences provide answers? No, they are really only raising questions. The answers will come from what stands behind the subject matter of the natural sciences. The answers will come from the sources of clairvoyant research.

My quest to find the answer to the two great riddles of the world, what happens after death and what happens before birth, led me to Rudolf Steiner and I have never been disappointed by what I have found in his font of lectures and spiritual knowledge. Not even disappointed to find as Steiner indicates on page 86, "the solution to the world's riddles will never be solved completely."

Along with finding Steiner I found my life's goal which is to ensure that human beings will discover the importance of the spiritual world to our progress as humans, to learn in no uncertain terms that without the spiritual world nourishing our physical world, it will die away, leaving behind no spiritual progeny as the Earth disappears.

[page 91] That is why the founders of our religions provided ideas they had received from the spiritual world. These truly spiritual thoughts nourish our soul and maintain it. It would be the death of our soul if it always had to live in thoughts taken only from the physical world. In earlier times, religious beliefs were such spiritual thoughts human souls need. That phase of our development has been completed, and we live now in a time when we on earth will gradually lose the ability to take in what speaks only to our emotions, our faith. We can still preserve this faith for a time, galvanizing it, so to speak, but we cannot keep it for the future. The principle "I believe" has to be replaced with "I believe what I know." People will begin to feel that this new principle must be applied. Otherwise we deny ourselves any possibility of knowing something about the life between death and a new birth. Then we would return to pitiful conditions in our next incarnation. Enthusiasm for other ideals, all clearly justified, is certainly a good thing and has to exist. However, in comparison with the foundations of spiritual science, these ideals cannot be put into practice directly. Lacking its knowledge, they can only be precursors of spiritual science.

I believe what I know! A great *mot d'ordre* or motto for the future! In Latin it can be rendered as *Credo quod Novi*. And yet, Steiner tells us to remain silent unless it is to further our goal of freedom.

[page 91] As we progress in our spiritual research, we will feel the need to remain silent rather than to speak. If we speak nevertheless, it is out of insight into the conditions necessary for our time. Knowledge alone will make us free, and it is the task of the

future to win the freedom of the human soul.

Angels might help us in this endeavor to win freedom for our soul, but they will not come down to Earth to speak to us, nor will they tell us what to do. They won't let us see them either, so what are we to do?

[page 92] A great contemporary scientist, Max Müller, said that if an angel were to come down and proclaim news of the spiritual world, people would not understand or believe him.

We would not perceive the angel doing so, because as adults in this stage of evolution, we cannot see angels, cannot perceive angels, no, we can only feel some mild warmth when an angel is perceiving us. Like so many other people, as I grew up, I forgot how to feel an angel perceiving me. One day after a hurricane, my only source of electricity at home was from a portable generator, and after five days, I was running out of gas for it. I had heard that no gas stations were open, but early one morning, I drove to the corner and looked left up the highway and saw no lights on, then looked to the right down the highway and there in the distance was a couple of red lights which meant power and probably a station pumping gas. I drove down there and found the station was open and as I was pumping gas into my automobile and my generator's gas cans, the speakers overhead were pumping these lyrics of a pop song from the 1950s into my ears, "Johnny Angel," and I suddenly felt the presence of my Guardian Angel and the need to thank him. "Thanks, Johnny," I said aloud, and from that day on, I can feel the deeds of my Guardian Angel and remember each time to thank him personally.

After reading the quote from page 92 above, I was inspired to write this poem. Since many people wear flak jackets of materialism to protect them from the spiritual world which make them angel-proof, I call this poem ironically, "Angel Proof."

I had forgotten how to feel
my Angel perceiving me.
I looked and looked
and still the wonder grew,
Where was the Angel that,
as a child I knew.

The Angel who looked over me,
that once I knew was real,
Is still around and strains my sanity —
What once I saw, I can now only feel.

Can only feel my Angel
guarding me,
perceiving me,
As assuredly as I feel



this steel with which
I pen this poem.

I feel my pen a worthy friend —
I feel my Angel likewise so —

So, ask not where my angel is —
 'Tis nowhere but out there —
Looking over me
 and my only proof
Is that I feel it so.

Zombies and vampires are all the rage now, in novels, movies, Halloween costumes, etc. Ever wonder why the living dead seem to becoming more popular than the actually dead? I suspect that it's because so many people think dead thoughts these days and so few realize that *live thoughts live!*

[page 95] Completely different thoughts have to take hold in our soul, in our astral body, and all our feeling, willing, and thinking not limited to the physical plane. Otherwise we will remain inwardly dead. All thoughts that represent objects are meaningful only on the physical plane. This is implied in the very question, "Are thoughts that do not represent objects justified?" Only with the thoughts living freely in the spirit, living freely in the astral body and the I can we gain insight, only with those thoughts can we live. These thoughts not only represent things, but are also inwardly active and alive; they create something out of themselves and out of us.

How do we keep our thoughts alive? One way is by holding an unanswered question in our mind. Why? One possible answer is that doing so keeps our astral body agile. A kerosene lamp will grow dim if the wick is not trimmed and soot deposits form. Our soul can become like a sooted lamp and when we take it with us into the dark of death we will have no illumination.

[page96] If people do not develop thoughts that keep the astral body inwardly agile, they will suffer from mineral deposits even in childhood and as a result become ill later in life. And the world they enter after death will remain dark, because they do not radiate any light themselves. The rays of the sun strike a surface and that is how we see things. But in the spiritual world we are the source of light; we illuminate the surroundings we are supposed to see. Souls feeling the need to pursue spiritual science may not be aware of these circumstances, but they live in the depths of the soul. Just as in the physical world sunlight comes from the outside, so we must make ourselves sun-like in the spiritual world. We have to light in ourselves the spiritual fuel, the inner flame, to illuminate the realm of the spirit.

Imagine for a moment that Rudolf Steiner is speaking to us at our graduation. We have studied all the physical sciences and are preparing to go out into the world to change it for the better. Are these the exhortations that we want to hear: *Keep your astral bodies agile. Light within yourselves the spiritual fuel. Illuminate the world with your inner flame.* What do they mean? They form great unanswered questions, don't they? Let us hold them in freedom and love as we toss our graduation caps into the air and go out into the world with our new living knowledge, keeping our astral bodies agile and fueled by these unanswered questions.

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

Footnote 1.

The use of diseased or dis-eased is a way of acknowledging an abnormal perturbation of the

nervous system. Such perturbations can result in hallucinations. Drugs such as LSD can produce hallucinations. A hypnotist can perturb the nervous system and produce a temporary hallucination.

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

~~~~~

**Footnote 2.**

The process I call [Matherne's Rule#25](#) What is the power of an unanswered question? taps into one's astral body to produce an answer in its own time. Yes, it would be nice if the answer came immediately, but what could one do with such an ability but become a circus or TV Talk Show freak?

[Return to text directly before Footnote 2.](#)

~~~~~

Footnote 3.

Here is [Matherne's Rule #36](#): *Remember the future. It hums in the present.* In other words, time waves from the future arrive in the present as feelings.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 3.](#)

~~~~~

To Obtain your own Copy of this Reviewed Book, Click on SteinerBooks Logo below:

