

From “The Etherization of the Blood” by Rudolf Steiner (GA 130, October 1, 1911),  
a lecture of deep interest to Gene (section chosen by Fred Dennehy of ASNYC)

Just as in the region of the human heart the blood is continually being transformed into etheric substance, a similar process takes place in the Macrocosm. We understand this when we turn our minds to the Mystery of Golgotha — to the moment when the blood flowed from the wounds of Jesus Christ.

This blood must not be regarded simply as chemical substance, but by reason of all that has been said concerning the nature of Jesus of Nazareth it must be recognised as something altogether unique. When it flowed from His wounds, a substance was imparted to our Earth, which in uniting with it, constituted an Event of the greatest possible significance for all future ages of the Earth's evolution — and it could take place only once. What came of this blood in the ages that followed? Nothing different from what otherwise takes place in the heart of man. In the course of Earth evolution this blood passes through a process of “etherisation.” And just as our human blood streams upwards from the heart as ether, so since the Mystery of Golgotha the etherised blood of Christ Jesus has been present in the ether of the earth. The etheric body of the Earth is permeated by the blood — now transformed — which flowed on Golgotha. This is supremely important. If what has thus come to pass through Christ Jesus had not taken place, man's condition on the Earth could only have been as previously described. But since the Mystery of Golgotha it has always been possible for the etheric blood of Christ to flow together with the streamings from below upward, from heart to head.

Because the etherised blood of Jesus of Nazareth is present in the etheric body of the Earth, it accompanies the etherised human blood streaming upwards from the heart to the brain, so that not only those streams of which I spoke earlier meet in man, but the human blood-stream unites with the blood-stream of Christ Jesus. A union of these two streams can, however, come about only if a person is able to unfold true understanding of what is contained in the Christ Impulse. Otherwise there can be no union; the two streams then mutually repel each other, thrust each other away. In every epoch of Earth evolution understanding must be acquired *in the form suitable for that epoch*. At the time when Christ Jesus lived on Earth, preceding events were rightly understood by those who came to His forerunner, John, and were baptised by him according to the rite described in the Gospels. They received baptism in order that their sin, that is to say, the karma of their previous lives — karma which had come to an end — might be changed; and in order that they might realise that the most powerful Impulse in Earth evolution was about to

descend into a physical body. But the evolution of humanity progresses and in our present age what matters is that people should recognise the need for the knowledge contained in Spiritual Science and be able so to fire the streams flowing from heart to brain that this knowledge can be understood.

If this comes to pass, individuals will be able to receive and comprehend the event that has its beginning in the Twentieth Century: this event is *the appearance of the Christ as an Etheric Being in contradistinction to the Physical Christ of Palestine*. For we have now reached the point of time when the Etheric Christ enters into the life of the Earth and will become visible — at first to a small number of individuals through a form of natural clairvoyance. Then in the course of the next three thousand years, He will become visible to greater and greater numbers of people. This will inevitably come to pass in the natural course of development. That it will come to pass is as true as were the achievements of electricity in the nineteenth century. A number of individuals will see the Etheric Christ and will themselves experience the event that took place at Damascus. But this will depend upon such men learning to be alert to the moment when Christ draws near to them. In only a few decades from now it will happen, particularly to those who are young — already preparation is being made for this — that some individual here or there has certain experiences. If he has sharpened his vision through having assimilated Anthroposophy, he may become aware that suddenly someone has come near to help him, to make him alert to this or that. The truth is that Christ has come to him, although he believes that what he saw is a physical man. He will come to realise that what he saw was a super-sensible being, because it immediately vanishes. Many a human being will have this experience when sitting silent in his room, heavy-hearted and oppressed, not knowing which way to turn. The door will open, and the etheric Christ will appear and speak words of consolation to him. The Christ will become a living Comforter to men. However strange it may as yet seem, it is true nevertheless that many a time when people — even in considerable numbers — are sitting together, not knowing what to do, and waiting, they will see the Etheric Christ. He will Himself be there, will confer with them, will make His voice heard in such gatherings. These times are approaching, and the positive, constructive element now described will take real effect in the evolution of mankind.

\*\*\*\*\*

The whole article is available at <https://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/ReapChrist/19111001p02.html>