

# From Akashic research. The fifth gospel

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## THE FIFTH GOSPEL

*Berlin, October 21, 1913*

*First lecture*

After a long break, we have come together again in our Berlin working group and want to begin what we can regard this winter as a kind of continuation of our humanities work as we have done over the years. For Berlin there was a long pause; But this time this break was filled not only with the usual presentations and the lecture cycle in Munich, but also with the laying of the foundation stone of our building in Dornach and with various work connected with the beginning of this building of ours. And so, on this evening, on which we have come together again in this room for the first time in a long time, first of all I can direct your gaze to what is expressed for us in this Dornach building. It is to be hoped

Basically - this will have shown you a number of remarks from the past few years, which have also been made here - everything in the spiritual life of the present indicates how mankind of our day unconsciously thirsts for what is given with a true spiritual worldview should. And not only those souls who today express in a positive way the need for such a worldview strive for such a worldview, but also numerous people who know nothing about such a worldview. Yes, even those who do not want to know anything about her, perhaps are still hostile to her today, but they strive unconsciously - one might say out of the needs of their heart, which are not yet announced in conscious terms and ideas,

So it was really a very special feeling when we laid the foundation stone of this Dornach building with the few of our anthroposophical friends who were close to the place and could be present because everything had to be done quickly because of the circumstances. It was an uplifting sensation to feel that one was, as it were, at the beginning of the building which, so to speak, is to form our preliminary external symbol for our common striving.

When you stand up there on the hill on which our building is to be built - and that was what happened at our opening ceremony - from which you can look far out to the surrounding mountains and areas of the country and direct your gaze out to much wider expanses, then one had to think, as it were, of the cries of humanity in a wider world environment for spiritual truths, for the proclamations

of a spiritual worldview that can be given within our spiritual currents. And one had to think of how, even more than what has been said or felt, many other symptomatic heralds in our presence that it is a spiritual necessity that such a spiritual world view should be really fruitfully implanted in the soul life of mankind. That was the main feeling that animated us when we laid the stone above which our building was to rise into the earth. And this building, it should also express in its forms what we want; so that those who will look at the building from the outside or from the inside, when it is finished, can perceive its forms as a kind of characters in which express what we want to see realized in the world.

If one has to think about such a justification and empathize with it, then it is so obvious to think about how karma works not only in individual human life, but in the entire human evolution on earth. In the individual human life the little karma works, so to speak; The great karma is at work in the whole of earth and human evolution. And that is the great, uplifting thought that one can feel: when something like this happens on spiritual ground, one is in a certain way - and so are all anthroposophical aspirants who are involved in the cause - the tool, if only that small, but the tool of the spirit, which works through the world karma and creates its deeds. This feeling of connection with the spirit of the world karma, that is the significant great feeling, the feeling in which everything that we can cultivate in terms of anthroposophical considerations should come together again and again. This feeling is what can give the soul rest when it needs rest, what can give the soul harmony when it needs harmony, but what can also give it strength, ability to work, endurance and energy when it is strength, ability to work, Stamina and energy.

If the spiritual world concepts flow into our soul in their truth, then they also become something like an inwardly pulsating life in us, which translates into force, which we can feel and perceive, which is active in us both with the highest, to which we can swing our thoughts, as well as to the smallest thing in everyday life that our work forces us to; they become something that we can always reach for when we need a stimulant that we can look to again and again when we need comfort in life. Real morality, real moral strength, will also sprout out of humanity only from this turning of the soul's gaze towards real spirituality, towards real spiritual life.

Because we are currently in the world karma in a different way, than humanity was in the world karma at the time in which what we have often called the center, the focus of human earth development: the mystery of Golgotha. And just as in other places in recent times - especially in connection with the point in time of our own spiritual-scientific development, in which we are now - I drew attention to very strange circumstances with regard to the Mystery of Golgotha, so I want it

today, where we will meet again after a long time in this room, also before your hearts and souls.

The Mystery of Golgotha, the living-in of the Christ Impulse came into the world. At what time did it come into the world? Today we know through our spiritual deepening what flowed into a human body at that time in order to become the property of earth evolution, of earth human evolution. What we have undertaken, as it were, in preparatory studies, has enabled us to understand, to some extent, the meaning of the Mystery of Golgotha. We have often emphasized that future periods of time will understand it even more clearly. But what about the understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha, one might ask, at the very time in which it took place? The point is that we grasp this Mystery of Golgotha according to its factuality, that we understand what it really is. Is it then what was then taught to mankind? If it mattered, then perhaps those could claim a semblance of justice who say that most of the teachings of Christ Jesus were already present in earlier periods; although, as we know, it is not entirely true either. But that is not primarily important, it is something completely different, namely: what happened on Golgotha and in connection with it, what would have happened, even if no human soul in the vast vicinity of the earth had understood it. For it is not a question of a fact being immediately understood, but of it happening. The significance of the Golgotha fact is not based initially on

When did the Mystery of Golgotha fall? It really fell at a strange time. We only look at the strange this period the eye *to* grasp the post-Atlantic development. We have often pointed out that in this post-Atlantean period humanity first developed in the so-called primeval Indian cultural epoch. We pointed out the greatness and importance of the ancient Indian culture, pointed out how completely different the souls were in this epoch, how they were much more intimately accessible to the spiritual life, and how this accessibility then decreased from epoch to epoch . We have also pointed out how in the ancient Persian period, in the Egyptian-Chaldean period, man's direct participation in the spiritual worlds diminished. For in the ancient Indian epoch man had taken everything into his etheric body that the world could convey to him, and he had experienced it in his etheric body; at least those who experienced this Indian cultural epoch in those ancient times in the true sense of the word have experienced it. What one experiences in the etheric body has to a high degree the character of clairvoyance. In ancient Persian times one experienced the soul in the sentient body; that was already experienced with a lesser degree of clairvoyance. In the Egyptian-Chaldean epoch, the soul was experienced in the sentient soul; there was a lesser degree of clairvoyance again. Then came the fourth, the Greco-Latin cultural epoch: into this fell the Mystery of Golgotha. It is the cultural epoch in which the human soul had already emerged to perceive only on the external physical plane. The culture of the mind related to external things begins.

In our time, in the fifth post-Atlantean cultural period, human experience has so far been limited to observing the outside world, to experiencing sensory impressions. But this fifth post-Atlantean cultural period will again have to lead to a new, renewed receptivity for the spiritual life, because it must fully live out the life in the consciousness soul.

If one now asks oneself, looking only at the first four periods of post-Atlantean development, which of these periods was most unsuitable for truly understanding the mystery of Golgotha, the Descent of Christ, with a spiritual understanding, one could pursue oneself say: If - as it could not have happened according to the world karma, but as one can hypothetically assume - the mystery of Golgotha had taken place, had the Christ come down into a human body in the time of the ancient Indian culture, innumerable souls would have been there, to understand this event; because they still had this spiritual understanding. Even in the original Persian, Even in the Egyptian-Chaldean epoch, an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha would have been easy for souls in a certain sense if it had been able to take place according to the world karma. In the fourth post-Atlantean epoch the human soul was in a development in which this understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha, this immediate spiritual understanding, was closed to it precisely because of its state of development.

We will often have to speak of the peculiar fact that the Mystery of Golgotha in the post-Atlantean period waited for that cultural period in which the spiritual understanding of the fact to be happened had already waned, was no longer there. In the Greco-Latin period, the mind or soul soul was developing in a special way. Above all, she lovingly directed her gaze to the outside world, as can be seen in the whole of Greek culture. The mystery of Golgotha, which could only be followed with the inner gaze, was essentially confronted with the whole of contemporary culture just like those women who came to the tomb of Christ Jesus and looked for the body, but found the tomb open and the body no longer in it, and who, when asked,

Just as they were looking for Christ in the outer world, but the answer came: The one you are looking for is no longer here! - so it was basically the whole age with regard to the understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. The people of the fourth post-Atlantean cultural period were looking for something that was not where they were looking. And they were still searching when this fourth post-Atlantean period came to an end - it ended in the fifteenth century - they looked there in the same way. Because the crusades appear to us like the implementation in the large, that is only spatially large, of what happened to the women at the tomb of Christ Jesus. At the time of the Crusades, the longing passed through many European minds: we must look for what is dear to us, at the grave of Christ

Jesus! - And whole multitudes of people moved over to the Orient in order to find what they wanted to find, because it corresponded to their feelings. And how can one characterize what exactly those felt who went to the Orient in the Crusades? It was as if the whole Orient had answered them: The one you are looking for is no longer here! - Does not express itself in it symbolically deeply that during the entire fourth post-Atlantean period mankind had to search on the external physical-sensual plane, but that Christ must be sought on the spiritual plane, also insofar as he is in the earth world. how did those who went to the Orient in the Crusades feel? It was as if the whole Orient had answered them: The one you are looking for is no longer here! - Does not express itself in it symbolically deeply that during the entire fourth post-Atlantean period mankind had to search on the external physical-sensual plane, but that Christ must be sought on the spiritual plane, also insofar as he is in the earth world. how did those who went to the Orient in the Crusades feel? It was as if the whole Orient had answered them: The one you are looking for is no longer here! - Does not express itself in it symbolically deeply that during the entire fourth post-Atlantean period mankind had to search on the external physical-sensual plane, but that Christ must be sought on the spiritual plane, also insofar as he is in the earth world.

Where was the Christ when the women looked for him at the grave? He was in the spiritual, where he could appear to the apostles when they opened their hearts, their souls, in order to look through the not merely sensual forces at Christ, who was walking around in the etheric body for a while after the mystery of Golgotha.

Where was the Christ when the Crusaders sought him outwardly on the physical plane in the east? In the way that it can move into human souls as a fact, we see it move into the mystics of the West at the same time that the Crusaders were looking for him in the East. There is this Christ Power, there is the Christ Impulse! While the crusaders go to the east to search for Christ in their own way, the living impulse of Christ - just as it was able to revive in Europe according to the circumstances of the time - lives on in the souls of *Johannes Tauler*, a *Meister Eckhart* and others who were able to accept him under the circumstances of the time, revived in the spiritual. In the meantime he had moved over into Western culture and moved away from the place where he had been and where those who were looking for him had to be given the answer: The one you are looking for is no longer here!

The fifth post-Atlantean cultural period is devoted to the formation of the ego, that is, actually to the consciousness soul. But the human being goes through the consciousness soul so that he can become fully conscious of his ego. We have often spoken of these spiritual scientific truths. At this very hour I am still speaking about these truths with a very special feeling.

It is understandable that the proclamation of these views in the present still arouses opposition over opposition. But it remains significant for this feeling that I mean when one has to say, for example: You see, it has now become necessary for me to finish the second edition of my book *Welt- und Lebensanschauungen im 19th Century*. Now, when this book appeared at the time, it was a "book of the century", a look back at the past century. Of course, a second edition cannot be the same, for there is no point in writing back in 1913 to the previous century. So the outer version of this book had to be redesigned many times. Among other things, I felt compelled to give a long explanation as an introduction, which should give an overview from the oldest Greek times up to the 19th century. So in this last time I was compelled, also in this more philosophical way, to let the world views of Thales, Pherecydes from Syros and so on - more from a philosophical point of view - pass my gaze right into our time. There one has before one not only the spiritual, but what is historical tradition; and I have almost set myself the task of describing only that which relates to philosophical progress and excluding all religious impulses. It was precisely at this point that the truth of that strange turnaround that occurred at the beginning of the Greco-Latin period emerged with profound clarity,

There it becomes, as it were, if one examines the individual philosophers for their truth content, tangible, historically tangible, how true these things are. That is why I am talking about these things today from a completely different point of view than what can happen in that book and with a very special feeling. But in external history, too, one can see how the ego-consciousness and the ego-feeling penetrated the human soul around the fifteenth century.

This newer epoch since that time is therefore especially designed for the fact that man is forced to bring the energies, the forces of his ego to the surface, to become more and more conscious of his ego. The restriction of the view to the only external sensory phenomena is particularly suitable for this, such a restriction as is shown by modern scientific development. When man no longer finds in his environment that which appeared to him in powerful imaginations, in images in the Egyptian-Chaldean periods of time, or what in Greco-Latin lived out in large tables of thought as in Plato and Aristotle and the thinkers belonging to them, but when the human being - without the tableau of imaginations, without the tableau of thought, as it was still perceived by Aristotle in the Greco-Latin age - is dependent on seeing only what the senses offer in the vicinity of his perception, then the ego, because it can only sense the only spiritual in itself, must grasp itself in his being and looking for the power of his self-consciousness. And all serious philosophers since the 15th century, if you look at them in their nerves, you see struggling to build up a worldview that results in such a worldview that the human ego, the self-conscious soul, is possible and can exist in it. The fourth post-

Atlantean cultural epoch, which developed the intellectual or emotional soul, had something else, even if the conception of the Mystery of Golgotha was distant, quite distant, what this mystery of Golgotha could bring to him. We also call the mind soul, because this soul is really a duality, because in human nature in the period of time that we call the fourth post-Atlantean, just like the mind, the mind, the feeling, the sensation worked. Because the mind also worked, the heart could feel what was closed to the understanding, and that understanding of feeling arose, which one can also call faith, for the mystery of Golgotha, that is, the human soul had an inner feeling for it Christ impulse. People felt the Christ impulse indwelling; they felt inwardly and spiritually connected to the Christ impulse, even if they could not understand its meaning, its essence. The Christ was there for them. But this being-there had to dwindle even further in the age of the I-culture in which we now stand; for the ego, in order to be able to fully grasp itself in its isolation, must shut itself off from all that reaches the soul in the form of spiritual impulses. So we see a very strange spectacle. With the arrival of the new period, as soon as it is announced, we see very clearly how to the old non-understanding there comes a new non-understanding, yes, a non-understanding that goes even further than the old one. Anyone who examines the facts of the spiritual life must find it understandable that the fourth post-Atlantean cultural period could only receive the Christ impulse with the mind, but could not really grasp it spiritually. But one knew through what one could receive that the Christ was there, that it is effective in human evolution. You felt it.

With the new, the fifth period, something completely different announced itself. Not only that one now developed incomprehension towards the Christ-essence, but also incomprehension in general towards everything divine-spiritual. And what is the proof for it - one could find a lot of proofs, but one speaks particularly clearly for it - how one advanced in the lack of understanding, that is, that people could no longer directly accept not only the Christ principle, but also the divine-spiritual principle at all? In the twelfth century, as predicted by the ego culture, Anselmus, the Archbishop of Canterbury, invented the so-called proof of God; that is, this man finds himself compelled to "prove" the deity. What do you prove in such a way? What you know or that what you don't know If, for example, something has been stolen in my garden and I can watch the thief from the window carrying out the fact of the theft, then I don't have to prove that it was this person who stole. I only try to prove it when I don't know him. The fact that one tries to prove God is proof that one no longer knows him, no longer experiences him. Because what you experience, you don't prove, but what you don't experience, you prove. And then the misunderstanding actually went on and on, and today we are at a strange point in that relationship. From this point it has often been touched upon what infinite misunderstandings have occurred in the last centuries, especially in the last

But all of this is related to much, much deeper, characteristic properties of our age. Only the fast-moving nature of our time is actually not ready to pay attention to what is particularly characteristic of our time; but for those who want to observe the facts speak a clear, all too clear language.

Take a fact; I mention little things, but such little things are symptoms. In a very well-known weekly there was a very strange essay recently, which is now mentioned more often, is mentioned with respect. It came down to something strange, namely: If you look at the world views that have emerged in the last few centuries, you actually have too many "concepts" before you; these terms are too difficult to visualize. Translated into our language, it means: They are not understandable in the sensory world to which one wants to limit oneself. Thus, strangely enough, this writer finds that the philosopher *Spinoza* It is difficult to understand how he tries to understand the world from a single concept, the concept of divine substance. Then this writer makes a certain suggestion for the reform of the philosophical understanding of our time, which amounts to vividly depicting how a concept forms the top and how the concepts then diverge, split; in short, he proposes to "illustrate" Spinoza's thought structure in a way that one often creates a scheme so that one no longer has to follow how the thoughts are represented in Spinoza's soul, but can have them sensually in front of him in the film . - So perhaps, if such «ideals» come true, one will soon go to the cinematograph theaters to do the cinematographic - not recordings, but «translations»*to pursue!*

This is a significant symptom of what the human soul has brought it to in our time, a symptom that must be mentioned for a very specific reason: Because one did not perceive what one should have perceived if such a thing was healthy The symptom would have been considered: that a mockery should have developed over this foolishness, over the madness that lies in such a reform of philosophy! For the zeal that would be expressed in such derision that is probably already a sacred need *to call.*

This is *a* symptom - for it is to be seen as a symptom - of how necessary our age is the spiritual absorption, but the true spiritual absorption. For not only spiritual deepening in general is necessary, but that spiritual deepening which, if it is real, must lead to truth; it is what the souls of the present need. Our time is precisely where education and even the formation of a worldview want to be at home, only too inclined to be content with that which leads far, far away from real spirituality. For our time is easily content with appearances; but appearances lead in some way, if they appear for the current for which it is meant here, to inner untruth and untruthfulness. But another symptom.



Today one can often hear a worldview praised that has caused quite a stir: that of the philosopher *Eucken*. Not only that Eucken received a world-famous prize, the Nobel Prize, for his worldview, but he is also praised as the one who dares to talk to people about the spirit again. This boasting does not happen because this Eucken speaks so beautifully of the spirit, but because people today, when it comes to the spirit, are so easily content with the very least, if only something is preached to them about the spirit and because Eucken always, in innumerable conversions, of the sentence that one can read over and over again in his books, only people do not notice that they are eternal repetitions: it is not enough to understand that the world is sensual, but that man must grasp oneself inwardly and thus - inwardly - unite with the spirit. - Now we have it: Man must grasp himself inwardly and must inwardly unite with the spirit! Again and again one comes across this sentence in Eucken's books, and not just three or four times, but five or six times: so it is a "spiritual" world view! - It is precisely such symptoms that are significant because we see in them what can be considered "great" today in those who must count themselves among the best understanders. But you could only read! Because if you open Eucken's last book, "Can we still be Christians?", You will find a strange sentence that goes something like this: Today, people are beyond believing in demons, as one can immediately see in believed in demons in the Age of Christ; one needs a different representation of Christ today, which no longer represent the demons and accept them as truth. It is very flattering for every person of today's enlightened times that the great teacher Eucken reproaches him for saying that he is beyond believing in demons even today. But if you continue reading the book, you will find a strange sentence: "The contact between the divine and the human creates demonic powers."

I would like to ask if all the people who have read Eucken's book really laughed at this Eucken's naivety, that is to say "wisdom", which manages to say, on the one hand, that one is beyond belief in demons and on the other hand talks about something "demonic". It goes without saying that the Eucken people will say: The demonic is meant in a figurative sense, it is not meant so seriously. - But that is precisely the point, that people use words and ideas and do not take them seriously. Yes, therein lies the deep inner untruthfulness! It is part of the real worldview of the humanities, however, to become conscious that one has to take the words seriously and not speak of something demonic if one does not intend to take the word seriously.

Otherwise it could happen again and again to people like the chairman of a world view society in which I had to give a lecture. In the lecture I pointed out that in *Adolf von Harnack's* book "The Essence of Christianity" it was written that it was not essential to find out *what had happened* on Golgotha, that could be left open; but it should not be left open that *faith started* from that time of the Mystery

of Golgotha - regardless of whether the belief relates to something real or not. The person in question - he was the chairman of a Berlin Weltanschauungsverein and, of course, a Protestant - said to me: I read the book, but didn't find it in it; Harnack couldn't have said that, because that would be a Catholic idea. The Catholics say, for example: Whatever stands behind the Holy Rock in Trier, that is not the important thing, the belief in it is the important thing. - I then had to write down the page for him where the sentence was. Perhaps many people feel that they read a book but have not read the very important thing that is symptomatic.

So we threw a sidelight on our time. Here we discover a necessity, which is particularly present for our time, out of the symptoms of the present: the need that really spiritual conscientiousness may develop in our age, that we may learn not to accept such things with indifference when the representative of one spiritual worldview once says that one has gone beyond demons and afterwards the word "demonic" is used in a peculiar sense. But if you consider that we are living in the age of the "newspaper culture", then one must not say that there is little hope that such a culture of conscientiousness can develop; It must be said that it is all the more necessary to do everything that can lead to such a culture of conscientiousness. Spiritual science prepares this intensively; but one must open one's eyes to see the symptoms of our time.

I would like to point out one more fact. From the 1860s onwards, *Ernest Renan's* book «The life of Jesus» made a tremendous impression. I mention this fact in particular to show the state of our day understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. If you read Ernest Renan's book, you say to yourself: Well, firstly, a person writes in a beautiful style, a person who has wandered through all the sites of the Holy Land and is therefore able to give the most beautiful local flavor; and then a man writes in it who does not believe in the divinity of Christ, but who speaks with infinite veneration of the exalted figure of Jesus. But now let's go into the representation in more detail. Strangely enough, Ernest Renan describes the progress in the life of Jesus in such a way that he actually shows that Jesus is doing as it is for everyone - some on a larger, some on a smaller scale - who has to represent any worldview in front of any greater or lesser number of people. And something like that goes for such a person: first he appears with what he only believes and with it comes before the crowd; then people come up; One has this need, the other that, one understands the matter like that, the other like that, one has this weakness, the other that, and then the one who first spoke out of an inner truth joins it, small, so to speak to be added. In short, Renan thinks that some people who have important things to say show that this is basically what spoiled his followers. And he believes that Christ Jesus too was corrupted by his followers. Take the Lazarus miracle, for example. As it is shown, let it be included, that one had to say: The whole thing would be something of a hoax, but could be used well to spread the matter; therefore Jesus let it happen. And so other

things are represented. But then, after it has been shown how the life of Christ Jesus gradually declines, a hymn follows again at the end, which can only be addressed to the Most High. - Now let's take this inner untruth! In Renan's book, fact is a mixture of two things: something extraordinarily beautiful, a shiny, in some parts sublime depiction mixes with a backstairs novel - but in the end a tremendous hymn to the sublime image of Jesus. What is this hymn aimed at? To the Jesus? To the one whom Renan himself describes, he can't really be right when one has a healthy soul; for these exaltations of praise would not be spoken of to Christ Jesus, whom Renan represents. So the whole thing is internally untrue!

What did I mean to suggest to you with these considerations? Finally, I would like to summarize it in a few words. I wanted to suggest that the Mystery of Golgotha fell into an age of human evolution in which humanity was not prepared to understand it, but that even in our age humanity is still not prepared for it.

But its effect has existed for two thousand years! That effect is there. How is she there? So that it is independent of the understanding that humanity has shown it to this day. If Christ had been able to work in humanity only to the extent that he was "understood", he could have done little. But we will also see in future considerations that in the present period we are living in a point of development where it is precisely necessary to develop that understanding that was not there before. Because we live in the period in which a certain need will arise not to look for Christ where he is not, but where he really is. Because he will appear in the spiritual and not in the body, and those who will look for him in the body will always get the answer: the one you are looking for in the body is not in the body! - We need a new understanding, which in many respects may even be a first understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. The time of not understanding must give way to the time of the first understanding. That is what I wanted to indicate with today's considerations and what we will continue with the next considerations.