

# Asuras, asuric beings

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**Asuras, asuric beings (Ger: 'Asuras', 'asurisch')**

<Description>

***In Chronological Order (where possible):***

**GA 11 – *Cosmic Memory* – **Chapter 14; Chapter 15; Chapter 16.**  
(date: numbers 14-35 of the periodical 'Lucifer-Gnosis', 1904-1908).**

*Here 'Asuras' is used simply as a synonym, in reference to antecedent theosophical literature, for the "Primal Beginnings" or Archai. In the same chapter(s) Rudolf Steiner also terms them "Spirits of Personality", "Spirits of Darkness" and even spirits of "Self-hood" (Egoism)".*

Then follows the activity of the "Spirits of Darkness." which are also called "Spirits of Personality" or of "Self-hood" (Egoism). [...] Without them man would never have become a self-enclosed entity, a "personality." Christian esoteric teaching uses the expression "Primal Beginnings" (Archai) for them, and in theosophical literature they are designated as Asuras.

Chapter Fourteen: The Life of Saturn

In the same way the "Spirits of Form" (Exusiai), those of "Darkness" (in Christianity, Archai, in theosophy, Asuras), then the "Sons of Fire" (Archangels), and finally the "Spirits of Twilight" (Angels, Lunar Pitris) successively repeat their labors. [...] Through a similar process the "Spirits of Darkness" (in Christianity, Archai, in theosophy, Asuras) have at this time attained the level of psychic consciousness, which man will develop only on Jupiter as conscious image consciousness.

Chapter Fifteen: The Life of the Sun

Because the Spirits of Personality (the *Asuras*) have previously inoculated this astral body with their nature, these emotions now appear with the character of selfhood, of separateness. [...] The developing astral body is inoculated with independence by the Spirits of Personality (*Asuras*).

Chapter Sixteen: Life on the Moon

**GA 93 – **Berlin, 23 May 1904; Berlin, 10 June 1904.****

*In the 23 May 1904 lecture, given close to the times above, Rudolf Steiner refers to the Asuras again in relation to early and pre post-Atlantean times but makes reference to their influence on materialistic impulses within the “northern peoples” and modern human beings. In the 10 June 1904 lecture, Rudolf Steiner links them to the ‘Rakshasa’, the result of the union spoken of in Genesis 6, 4: ‘There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the Sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown.’ The publisher includes a footnote that reads as follows: “It is called ‘Rakshasas’ in occult language ...’ According to H.P. Blavatsky’s *The Secret Doctrine*, there are many explanations for this race of the Rakshasas in Oriental esoteric philosophy. See, for instance: *The Secret Doctrine*, Book 2, p. 288, where it speaks of ‘Rakshasas’ (giant demons) and Daityas (Titans). A German translation of C.G. Harrison’s *The Transcendental Universe*, which was among the books in Rudolf Steiner’s library, may have been used by him in preparing this lecture. In the fifth lecture of the above it speaks of: ‘These semi-human creatures, the progeny of the fallen angels, are known in the Hindu Scriptures as the “Asuras” and are sometimes called “Rakshasas” or demons.’ This makes it plain that, in lecture 2 held on 10th June 1904, Rudolf Steiner conferred a different meaning on the term ‘Asuras’ to the one he had in mind when he lectured on 23rd May 1904 (lecture 1).”*

The intuitive faculty of the Indian was concerned mainly with the worshipping of these Devas. The man of India sees these Devas all around. He sees them as creating powers when he penetrates the veil of outward appearance. This intuition is fundamental to the outlook on life of the peoples of the Southern Zone! It is expressed most powerfully in the Egyptians’ conception of the world.

The other intuition was the basis upon which the ancient Persian mysticism was founded, and this led to the veneration of beings who were also only twofold in their nature: the Asuras. They, too, possessed what we call soul, but the soul organ was enclosed within a physical body developed in sublime and titanic fashion. The Indian view of the world, which clung to the Deva worship, looked upon the Asuras as something inferior; whereas those who inclined to the viewpoint of the Northern peoples adhered to the Asuras, to physical nature. Thus there developed in the Northern Zone more especially the impulse towards controlling the things of the sense world in a material way, towards an ordering of the world of realities by means of the highest technical advancement, through physical arts and so on. Nowadays there is nobody who still persists in Asura worship, but there are many among us who still have something of this within them. Thence comes the tendency towards the materialistic side of life and that is the basic tendency of the Northern peoples. (Note 11) Whoever acknowledges purely materialistic principles can be sure that he has something of the Asuras in his nature.

Among the Asura adherents there then developed a strange undertone of feeling. It first made its appearance in the spiritual life of Persia. The Persians developed a kind of fear of the Deva

nature. They experienced fear, apprehension and dread in face of what was of a purely soul-spirit nature. That was the reason for the great contrast which we now observe between the Persian and the Indian attitude.

Berlin, 23 May 1904

Those who still remained of the Abel line were Sons of God, they remained akin to the divine. But they now had to guard themselves against entering the earthly sphere. And from this resulted what was to become the principle of asceticism among those who dedicated their lives to the service of God. It became a sin for such a dedicated one to have anything to do with those who had committed themselves to the affairs of earth. It was a sin when 'The Sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair' and took them wives; they took them wives from the daughters of Cain.

From this union resulted a race of men which is hardly even mentioned in the published books of the Old Testament, but is only hinted at; it is a race that is not perceptible to physical eyes. It is called 'Rakshasas' in occult language and is similar to the 'Asuras' of the Indians. It consists of demonic beings who really did exist at one time and who acted seductively upon the human race and caused its downfall. This flirtation of the Sons of God with the daughters of men produced a race which worked particularly seductively upon the Turanians, the members of the fourth sub-race of the Atlanteans, and led to the destruction of humanity. Some things were preserved and carried over into the new world. The Deluge is the flood which destroyed Atlantis. Men who were seduced by the Rakshasas disappeared by degrees.

Berlin, 10 June 1904

**GA 89 – Berlin, 17 October 1904.**

*Again there is the transition between Suras and Asuras, but here this is mentioned in connection with Atlantean development on the one hand and in relation to a luciferic element working in the early centuries of Christianity. This is followed by descriptions of evolution in terms of the development of adversarial beings.*

To understand the position of the principle of spiritual evolution we have to consider a significant development in the Atlantean race. Spirits that had initially been [full of wisdom] now became rebels, agitators wanting to gain their independence. Suras became asuras. Until then they had been latent on Earth. They are the powers which now, at the present time, represent the intellectual and mental side of humanity. This aspect of Lucifer is also the one which represented Christianity in the early centuries. Two documents relating to this exist—one in the Vatican, and a copy of it in the possession of the most initiated Christian in the West, the Count of St Germain. This Lucifer-nature had also represented Christianity in the early centuries. Then Lucifer had gradually changed into a kind of adversary in the Christian tradition. Originally his position had been that of the human being's friend. Evolution thus means that the different streams in the universe do not develop at the same rate. Part has to go ahead, something else needs to catch up later. This lagging behind of evolutionary streams leads to opposing interests in the world. This is an important occult law. Certain evolutions have been shown as ascending and descending in theosophical books. We have 7 planets with 7 rounds each and always 7 form states, a total of 343 states. These were at about their halfway point by the middle of the Atlantean age. The ascent thus began with an intervention from the luciferic principle. In the descent, evolution became delayed, and in its ascent it came to be faster and faster. This accelerated development did not, however, address itself to the whole of the physical plane but only to individual spirits. The lords of wisdom had initially been in ascending evolution. They had reached a peak by the middle of Atlantean evolution. Where love is concerned they are at a beginning; they carved love into the macrocosm, but they are in the descending line and in delay. The lords of the luciferic principle, on the other hand, are in the ascending line of development. Because of this, intellectuality is increasing rapidly, whilst ennoblement through love is very slow. Example: piano maker working with loving care would be out of place in a concert hall; there you have to have the perfect virtuoso pianist. Disharmony would result if the former wanted to go on to do his hammering with the same loving devotion in the concert hall.<sup>49</sup> Two streams must therefore always come together. Relative evil arises when two streams, perfect in themselves, interact. Jesus said to his disciples: 'Why do you call me good? No one is good except God only.' Nothing in the world is good, only the principle of the beginning, which is the Father. So this is how the godlike atman and budhi qualities develop macrocosmically in the hosts of the world's disposers.

Berlin, 17 October 1904

**GA 51 – Berlin, 25 October 1904.**

*Here Rudolf Steiner refers to the etymological changes regarding deities in the context of cultural evolution.*

Here as well there is an important linguistic connection, for the gods of the Persians were almost identically named 'asuras', which likewise points to a relationship which extends between all these peoples. An important further indication is found in an ancient Persian magic formula or incantation which has been handed down to us. It points to transformations of the folk-disposition and to Gods who were superseded and driven out by others. Forsworn was the service to the devas, service to the asuras was sworn to. There appears here the similarity between the Devas and the giants who were defeated by the Aesir.

25 October, 1904

**GA 93a – Berlin, 7 October 1905; Berlin, 17 October 1905.**

The physical human eye is similar to a camera, for, as with the camera, there appears within it a picture of the surrounding world. Only when one abstracts from the physical eye everything that is not to be found in the camera, does one discover what is the specific nature of the physical eye. So too one must abstract from the entire physical body everything that is not purely physical: only then does one have what in occultism is called the physical body. In itself it can neither live, think nor feel. There then remains a very wisely ordered, extremely complicated automaton, a purely physical apparatus. This, alone, was all there was of human existence at the Old Saturn stage. At that time the eyes were present only as little cameras. What was produced as [a] picture of the surrounding world came to the consciousness of a Deva being. In the middle of the Saturn evolution the so-called Asuras (the Archai) were sufficiently advanced to make use of the apparatus. At that time they were at the human stage. They made use of the automata and the pictures they produced. The Asuras themselves were not within the apparatus but outside and only made use of the pictures as we make use of photographic apparatus in order to take pictures of a landscape. Thus the physical body of man was at that time an architectural structure of a physical apparatus operated from outside. This is the first stage of human existence.

Berlin, 7 October 1905

We understand that a merely cool, dry thought is less effective on the astral plane than a thought that springs from the soul in an impulsive way. When a person in the present stage of civilisation has come so far as not to be at the mercy of his passions — our civilisation has a certain sophisticated cunning — when cold thoughts about the affairs of the world rise from him into the astral plane, they show themselves there as hollow spaces, they drain the substance away. Ordinary space can be filled with substance. One can bring into ordinary space substance that fills it. It is not so in the case of substance which, coming from thoughts, streams into astral space. It works in the opposite way from physical matter. It displaces what is there in much the same way as, for instance, one makes a hole in dough. So it is, when our thoughts stream out into astral space. The higher substance is the opposite of the lower; instead of filling out space, it displaces what is in space.

When a thought penetrates into astral space it forms a denser layer around the hollow brought about by the thoughts. Around this hollow, coloured phenomena make their appearance. A glimmer begins to light up. It is the thought-form which we then see. The astral substance surrounding it becomes denser and thereby brighter. The added brightness which arises around the thoughts soon disappears; but if the thought is connected with an intense impulse of passion, it has a relationship with the densified astral substance and gives it life. Thus people who are still very undeveloped but very passionate create living beings in astral space when they think. This ceases later; when people evolve and become calmer such beings no longer arise when they think. But now you understand that there are beings on the astral plane which originate from human beings and also from animals; for in the case of certain animals too, such beings are formed, and indeed with far greater intensity. The animal however presses its own impulses into its own astral form, so that it usually creates its own form, its own image in astral space.

Every animal leaves a sort of trace behind in astral space; this has, it is true, only a short life, but nevertheless it remains for a time. But through the strongly passionate thoughts of human beings there arise new elemental inhabitants in astral space. Gradually however man reaches the point where a kind of neutral elemental being arises. When this point of neutrality is finally past, he progresses to the stage when he ennobles his passions and desires to an ever-greater degree. This leads him to impart to his thoughts a noble enthusiasm which also has the power of creating life in the surrounding astral substance. Through the development of patriotism, for instance, beings of noble form also arise and the elemental beings created in this way play their part in the furtherance of what lives in astral space. The ignoble beings produced by man through thoughts which are filled with passions are hindrances and act in a retrograde way. Everything however which he achieves in freedom from what is sensual, through enthusiasm and so on, works progressively.

The substance in astral space which is pressed together by passionate thoughts is the same as that which surrounded the previous planet, the Old Moon, out of which the Moon has developed to a higher stage. Thus wherever such substance exists, a certain danger is present. We human beings are created in such a way that we are obliged to incarnate in the physical matter of today. On the earlier planet there was not as yet physical matter of this kind; it was more highly developed than that of present day animals and less so than that of present day man. This substance in which Jehovah seeks to incarnate provides, as such, no favourable habitation. But the beings which are so far advanced that they reached their proper stage on the Old Moon will cause no harm. They have no liking for this substance.

It is not the substance in which man is now incarnated. But certain retrograde beings who had fallen behind on the Old Moon had discovered in this astral substance — food for their gluttony. They want to feed on it; it has for them a great force of attraction. This shows that we are continually surrounded by beings whose higher nature is related to our lower. When someone produces egotistical thoughts, this is very welcome to these beings. In other respects

they are actually more advanced than man, but they have the craving to embody themselves in the astral forms which we ourselves create. They are the so-called Asuras. Through our baser thoughts we provide nourishment for these asuric beings.

When people whose nature is not yet purified, not yet free from passions, meditate, creating strong thought forms, they conjure up around themselves a powerful aura of desires. In this incarnate asuric beings of this kind which are then able to draw such people downwards. If a person drowsy with sleep meditates and in so doing does not rise clearly enough into thoughts, he creates this substance, and because he has no counterbalance, such beings incarnate in his thought forms. These are higher beings because they had completely developed Manas on the Old Moon, before the coming of the Buddhi impulse; they therefore do not possess this impulse. Hence with them Manas is egotistical. Had not the human being on Earth, from that point of time at which Manas came to him from outside, also received the impulse of Buddhi, had he only developed further the forward urge of Manas, he would have become in the strongest sense of the word an egotistical being. Manasic evolution is one tending to egoism and independence. Its task was to make man independent, but then the Buddhi nature was necessary. The asuric beings already referred to, because they developed Manas too early, have missed this impulse of the Buddhi nature. On the one hand therefore they stand at a higher stage and on the other hand they cannot progress, but go on developing the Kama-Manas, which is egotistical.

Halfway through the Lemurian Race Kama-Manas appeared on the physical plane in the duality of the sexes. The God who brought about Kama-Manas was Jehovah. This is why Helena Petrovna Blavatsky called him the Moon God; he is rightly called the God of Fertility. He caused the external working of Kama-Manas to reach its ultimate limit. The sexuality which made its appearance in the Lemurian Age, when we trace it backwards, when we see it in its ever higher and higher nature, becomes the Second Logos. Through the descending Kama-Principle it was the manifestation of Jehovah; through the ascending Buddhi-Principle it was the manifestation of Christ.

Now if we submerge ourselves into the Kama of the pre-earthly period we are drawn down by the asuric beings. The higher forces of these our spiritual predecessors stand occultly bound up with the passions and forces of our own lower nature. (53) Wherever there are dissolute excesses, there the substance is given in which powerful asuric forces pour cunning intellectualism into the world. In the case of decadent tribes similar powerful asuric forces are to be found. The black magician draws his most powerful forces out of the morass of sensuality. The purpose of sexual rites is to introduce such magic into these circles. A battle is continually taking place on the earth, the one side striving to purify the passions, the other side striving to intensify sensuality. The beings who are guided by the Christ-Principle seek to win the Earth for themselves, but there are also the other antagonistic beings who seek to usurp the Earth.

These embodiments of asuric beings in the out streaming of passion-filled human thoughts

are one kind of astral beings. They are called artificial elemental beings because they are brought forth artificially by man. There also exist in astral space natural elemental beings. They proceed from the Group Souls of animals. For each animal group a being exists on the astral plane which unites what is present in the single animals. We meet these also in astral space. Every animal draws its own nature after it astrally like a trail. What is thus formed can however not work so harmfully as what the human being creates in the way of elemental beings. This astral trail is rendered harmless because it is annulled by the Group Souls of the animals. This is not so however with the beings created through man, because in this case nothing is annulled and hence these elemental beings remain.

When an animal is tortured, the amount of pain inflicted on it recoils immediately on the astral body of the human being. Here certainly it is reflected as it's opposite; hence the sensual pleasure in cruelty. Such feelings bring about a lowering of the human astral body. When a person destroys life, this has for him a tremendous significance. (54) [Gap in text ...]. In no way can one so readily assimilate destructive astral forces as by killing. Every killing of a being possessing an astral body evokes an intensification of the most brutal egoism. It signifies a growing increase of power. In schools of Black Magic therefore, instruction is first given as to how one cuts into animals. Cutting into a definite place, accompanied by corresponding thoughts, induces a certain force, in another place it induces another force. (What corresponds to this in the case of the White Magician is meditation.) Something comes back to the physical plane when it is accompanied by physical thoughts; without thoughts it comes back to the Kamaloka plane.

The overpowering of a human being by means of hypnotism is a still stronger killing, for it destroys the will. The occultist therefore never intrudes into a person's freedom; he only relates facts.

Lying is, from the astral standpoint, murder and at the same time suicide. It deceives the other person and creates in him a feeling that is related to a non-existent fact, to a nothingness. On the astral plane appears the counter picture of the nothingness, the killing. You therefore kill something in a person when through a lie you direct his feeling to something that does not exist, and you commit suicide because [Gap in text ...].

Berlin, 17th October 1905

**GA 266a – Muenchen, 1 November 1906; Berlin, 29 January 1907.**

Asuras remain behind on old Saturn. Satanic fire spirits on old Sun. The regent of fire spirits is Christ. Luciferic spirits fell behind on old Moon. Lucifer was at work in the Lemurian epoch, could be included in earth evolution, and worked as a liberator by giving men independence and enthusiasm for wisdom. Satanic Gods of hindrances began their work in the Atlantean epoch. Asuras are starting to work in the post-Atlantean epoch. They're the worst of the three and they mainly work into sexual life in the physical body. The many



sexual aberrations today are to be ascribed to this strong influx. All forces of hindrances try to hold onto currently existing things that are still imperfect, carry them out and intensify them. Lucifers gave independence, egoity with egoism. Egoism, error and animal love are the first expressions of egoity, wisdom and highest spiritual love. We must bring about the respective transformations. The separation of the sexes took place in the third root race, it'll be overcome in the sixth root race; this must be prepared for in the sixth sub-race. Man's productive forces are becoming transformed. The productive force as such is the most sacred thing that we have, because it's directly divine. The more divine what we pull into the dirt is, the greater the sin. Later on the heart and larynx will be the productive organs in us. Just as the Word became flesh in Christ Jesus, so the flesh must become word when Christendom becomes perfected. That's the mystery of the Holy Grail, the holy love lance, the fertilizing sunlight that'll unite with Eva again. Rosicrucians' occult brotherhood is the seminary in which a human material must be educated for the coming age. A particularly bright light must always arise in especially dark times. Christ was born in the Oriphiel age. When Oriphiel rules again the spiritual light that was brought by Christian Rosenkreutz and is now being spread must have generated a host of clairvoyant men who are pioneers working consciously towards a goal. This will produce a separation into good and evil races. The fifth root race will perish through evil. Good and evil are still relatively undifferentiated and it's hard to see who's evil or good behind the flesh. When the forces of the masters and of the men who join them with their whole strength and will, and when the forces of the Gods of hindrances, Mammon, Satan, Asuras and their human followers intervene ever more mightily into human life and earth evolution, then good will develop into a divine good, and evil into a terrible Antichrist. Then every one of us needs world helpers and all the strength that he can only gain through the overcoming of suffering and evil. It's the aim of Theosophy and Rosicrucianism to summon men to this battle via such knowledge and to give them peace in the battle.

Muenchen, 1 November 1906

[Alternate translation]

The Asuras remain behind on Old Saturn. As did fire-spirits on the Sun. Christ is the regent of the fire-spirits. The satanic hosts are the fallen fire-spirits. On Old Moon it is the luciferic spirits. In the Lemurian race Lucifer intervened in human development. He was drawn into earth development and served as a liberator through giving man independence and enthusiasm for wisdom. The satanic beings begin their 'work' in the Atlantean race (black magic). They are the gods of hindrance. The Asuras intervene only now in the fifth race. They are by far the most harmful and work mainly into the sexual life, i.e. the physical body. The many sexual aberrations of the present can be traced back to their strong influence. All forces of hindrance work in such a way that they seek to hold on to what exists at present, what is imperfect, to carry it through and reinforce it in its imperfection. The luciferic beings still worked as liberators, because they gave independence, the egoity together with egoism.

We had to pass through egoism, which was, as it were, the first expression of the ego – just as error is the first expression of wisdom in a world of becoming, and animalistic love is the first expression of the highest spiritual love. Our task is the transformation in each case. The third root-race saw the separation of the sexes, in the sixth root-race it will be overcome; this has to be prepared in the sixth sub-race. The reproductive forces of man are undergoing transformation. Reproductive force in itself is the most holy in our possession because it is directly divine. The more divine what is dragged through the mud by us, the greater the sin. The reproductive organs in us will be heart and larynx. As the word became flesh in Christ, so in the time of the fulfilment of Christianity the flesh has to become word. [...] Good and evil are as yet differentiated relatively little. And our eyes do not much penetrate the behind the uniform appearance of the flesh. Now it is still a relatively small step from evil to good, from good to evil. When the powers of the Masters and of those who support them with all their strength and will, and the powers of the gods of hindrance, also called Mammon (the Satans and Asuras), with their human following, intervene ever more strongly in the life of humanity, in earthly development – then good will develop into a divine good, and evil into something terrible, the Anti-Christ. Then every single one of us world-helpers (may this word be spoken in deepest humility) will need all the strength that can be gained from suffering and the overcoming of suffering, from evil and the overcoming of evil. It is the task of Theosophy (Anthroposophy), of Rosicrucianism, to summon human beings to this battle through knowledge of such things, and in the battle to bring them peace.

Muenchen, 1 November 1906 [same as above]

Asuras are spirits of the very greatest egoism who remained behind during Saturn evolution. They want to condense matter and compress it ever more so that it can't be spiritualized and brought back to its original condition. They're the dregs of the planetary evolution that goes from Saturn to Vulcan. The asuras inhabit the moon and from there they work on the men whom they want to drag down into the eighth sphere and thereby tear away from progressive evolution and its goal — the Christ. All those who strive towards the eighth sphere will eventually live on a moon.

AUM. One wards off bad influences when one says it in the right way; it connects man with the creating Godhead, the three Logoi. The evil beings who want to tear men away from the Godhead can't stand it.[...]

Berlin, 29 January 1907

**GA 99 – Berlin, 2 June 1907.**

These beings, whose lowest member is the ego, are those who come into special consideration for us in the Saturn evolution. They were at the stage where humanity stands today. They could exercise their ego under the quite different conditions that I have described. They were the human beings of Saturn and the ancestors of our present humanity. They irradiated the surface of Saturn with their ego-hood, their external nature, they were the implanters of ego-hood in the physical corporeality that was forming on the surface of Saturn. Thus they made it their care that the physical body was prepared in such a way that it could later become the bearer of the ego. Only such a physical body as you have today, with feet, hands and head and the sense organs incorporated in it could be ego-bearer on the fourth stage, the Earth. To this end the nucleus of it had to be already implanted on Saturn. One also calls these ego-beings of Saturn, Spirits of Egoism.

Egoism has a two-fold character; it is excellent and desirable or obnoxious and evil. If at that time on Saturn and on the succeeding planets the essential nature of egoism had not been again and again implanted, man would never have become an independent being who can say “ I ” to himself. Into your bodily nature there has been instilled ever since Saturn the sum of forces which stamps you as an independent being, cutting you off from all other beings. To this end had the Spirits of Egoism, the Asuras, to work.

Among them are to be found two kinds, apart from slight deviations. The one kind has elaborated egoism in a noble, self-reliant way, and has risen higher and higher in the perfection of the sense of freedom: that is the rightful independence of egoism. These spirits have guided mankind through all the successive planets; they have become the educators of men towards independence. Now on each planet there are also Spirits who have remained behind in evolution, they have remained stationary and not wished to progress. You will recognise a law from this: If the most outstanding fall and commit the “great sin” of not advancing with evolution, then they become the very worst of all. The noble sense of liberty has been reversed into wickedness, into its opposite. Those are the Spirits of Temptation, and they must be taken gravely into account; they lead to the evil side of egoism, even today they are still in our environment, these evil Spirits of Saturn. All that is bad draws its power from these Spirits.

Berlin, 2 June 1907

**GA 100 – Kassel, 24 June 1907.**

The Beings who passed through the human stage upon Saturn did not possess a physical body as their lowest member, for they did not descend into matter so deeply as to require a physical body. Their lowest member was the Ego, even as to-day our lowest member is the physical body; then came their Sprit-Self or Manas, their Life-Spirit or Buddhi, then Spirit-Man or Atma. In addition they developed an eighth, ninth and tenth members, which must be included.

Theosophical literature calls these members which the human being has not yet developed, the “Three Logoi”; in Christianity they are called the Holy Spirit, the Son or the Word, and the Father. We may therefore say: Even as the human beings now consists of physical body, etheric body, astral body and Ego, Spirit-Self, Life-Spirit and Spirit-Man, so these Beings living upon Saturn, who in regard to their connection with the earth may be compared with the present human beings, consisted of Ego, Spirit-Self, Life-Spirit, Spirit-Man; of the Holy Ghost, the Son or Word, and the Father. The theosophical terminology designates them as “asuras”. They are the Beings who from the very beginning implanted into the physical foundation of man’s body the feeling of independence, of Ego-consciousness, and of Ego-feeling. You could not use your eye in the service of the Ego had your eye’s foundation not been prepared at that time, so that now you are enabled to place your eye at the service of the Ego. These members were therefore prepared by the Spirits of the Ego, also named the Spirits of Egoism. They gave us the wisest thing of all, when developed in the right way. But everything of the highest nature becomes perverted into its opposite if it is not developed in the right way, because then it exercises the most harmful and destructive influence. Man could never reach that high stage which we designate as human dignity, had not these Spirits of Egoism implanted in him the Ego-feeling. There have always been Beings who followed an evil Course, and consequently we must say: The Beings who implanted the Ego into man and who are now upon a stage of development greatly surpassing the human one, those Beings to whom we may look up as the highest of all, gave their Ego as an offering of self-renunciation and sacrifice; but the others followed the development of their Ego in a selfish manner.

In striving after freedom and human dignity we bear within us the influences of the Spirits of the Ego who followed the good path, and we bear within us the seed of evil, because the influence of the Beings who fell away continued to be active. This contrast has always been felt. Christianity itself makes a distinction between God the Father, whom it considers as the most highly developed Spirit of Saturn, and his opponent, the Spirit of all the evil Egos and of everything which is radically immoral, the Spirit who fell away upon the ancient Saturn. These are the two representatives of Saturn. [...]

The Leader of the Sun Spirits, in so far as He exercised the highest, influence upon the earth, the representative of the Spirits whose highest member was the Son or the Word, is the Christ, in the esoteric meaning of Christianity. He is the real regent of the earth, in so far as the earth is based upon the Sun state of existence. Upon the Sun, Christ would not yet have been called by that name. The old form of Christianity always taught this truth, and the difference between genuine Christianity and, the exoteric form of Christianity, which is in so many cases based upon misunderstandings, is that the older form of Christianity exerted all its thinking power and applied every conception in order to understand that high Being Who took on human shape in Jesus of Nazareth. The ancient form of Christianity wished to gain a conception of what lay at the foundation of this mystery, and no wisdom was too high for it, or too complicated: It explained the Being of Christ within Jesus of Nazareth in accordance

with this truth. Many a passage in the Gospel of St. John can only be understood if you grasp it from this aspect. It suffices to draw attention to one point: If you take the words, “I am the Light of the World” literally, these imply that the Christ is the great Sun Hero, and that the Light which belongs to the Sun constitutes His being. We designate the whole hosts of Spirits whose Leader is the Christ as the “Fire Spirits” and we say: The Asuras or the Ego Spir-its reached the human stage during the Saturn era. During the Sun existence the Fire Spirits or the Logoi, whose highest representative is named the Logos or the Word, reached this stage. For this very reason, Christ is named the “Word” that existed in “the beginning”, and the “beginning” designates in the Bible a definite point of departure in the cosmic evolution.

Kassel, 24 June 1907

**GA 266a – Berlin, 14 March 1908.**

During the Saturn period there was only a warmth globe on which the spirits of darkness, the asuras, attained their human stage. The blood we had then was dark. There was a hidden fire or warmth on the planet, but no light. When Saturn disappeared, the Sun rose from the darkness, the second, air element with its oxygen made Saturn’s glimmer burst into flames, and then there was light, as is symbolized by the alchemist’s sulfur. Blood turned from black to yellow. [...]

Blood is the I’s instrument. Saturn spirits work in the warmth of our blood, as Christ worked in Jesus’ blood from age 30 on. Before that Jesus had worked on his physical, etheric and astral bodies. Then Christ took hold of the blood and purified it during the three years. That’s why blood had to flow. When we’ve purified our four bodies in the same way we’ll then have the four-fold philosophical fire that belongs to the Vulcan period.

Berlin, 14 March 1908

**GA 102 – Berlin, 16 May 1908.**

*MENTIONED IN PASSING TO INTRODUCE CONSIDERATION OF BEINGS WITH DIFFERENT BODIES.*

We have learnt that beings who are today two stages higher than man, the Fire Spirits, went through their human stage on the old Sun, and we have further learnt that the Asuras went through the human stage on Old Saturn. Their qualities, good as well as evil, stand far above or below those of man. Thus in the course of time we have reviewed a whole series of beings who participate in the whole development of our life and nature. We have come to know beings to whom in a certain respect we must look up; and one who can observe clairvoyantly finds a significant distinction between them and man.

Berlin, 16 May 1908

**GA 104 – Nuremberg, 22 June 1908.**

It was in the fourth principal cycle that our present human race was to become man. Now, just as in all the Rounds upon Saturn, Sun and Moon, certain beings reached the human stage (upon Saturn the Asuras or Original Forces, upon the Sun the Archangels, and upon the Moon the Angels), there were always beings who remained behind. Upon the Moon there were also beings who could no longer reach the human stage, backward Angels, shall we say, who could only catch up their human stage upon the Earth planet during the first three Rounds. Man reached this stage at the fourth.

Nuremberg, 22 June 1908

**GA 105 – Stuttgart, 7 August 1908.**

As before, this is merely a reference to the Asuras as the Spirits of Personality in theosophical terminology.

[...] the Archai, also called Spirits of Personality or Original Forces, or, in Theosophical parlance, Asuras.

Stuttgart, 7 August 1908.

**GA 107 – Berlin, 1 January 1909; Berlin, 22 March 1909.**

From what has been said you can gather that through Christ's Coming, Ahriman has been cast into fetters — if this expression may be used — but only, of course, for those who endeavor unceasingly to fathom the Christ-Mystery. And outside the forces streaming from the Christ-Mystery, protection in the world against the influence of Ahriman will steadily diminish. In a certain sense — and many signs proclaim it — our epoch courts these influences of Ahriman. In certain occult teachings the hosts of Ahriman are also called the Asuras. These are of course, the evil Asuras who at a certain time fell away from the evolutionary path of the Asuras who endowed man with personality. It has already been indicated that these are spiritual Beings who detached themselves from the evolution of the earth before the separation of the sun.

Berlin, 1 January 1909.

The foundation of the physical body was laid on Old Saturn, the ether-body on the Old Sun, the soul or sentient body on the Old Moon. On the Earth was added the sentient soul — which is actually a transformation, an elaboration carried out unconsciously, of the sentient body. Lucifer anchored himself in the sentient soul; and there he remains. Through the unconscious transformation of the ether-body, the intellectual soul came into being, a more detailed description of which is contained in the book entitled The Education of the Child. It was in this second soul-member, the intellectual soul — the transformed part of the ether-

body — that Ahriman established his footing. From there he lures man to false conceptions and judgments of material things, leads him to error, to sin, to lying — to everything that originates in the intellectual or mind soul. In every illusion that matter is the sole reality, we must perceive the whispered promptings of Ahriman, of Mephistopheles. Thirdly, there is the consciousness soul (spiritual soul), arising from an unconscious transformation of the physical body. You will remember how this transformation came about. Towards the end of the Atlantean epoch, the etheric body corresponding to the head came right into the physical head and gradually brought about selfconsciousness in the physical body. Fundamentally speaking, man is still working at this unconscious transformation of the physical body, at the development of the consciousness soul. And in the age now, approaching, those spiritual Beings known as the Asuras (see Note 1) will creep into the consciousness soul and therewith into the human 'I' or ego — for the 'I' lights up in the consciousness soul. The Asuras will generate evil with a far mightier force than was wielded by the Satanic powers in the Atlantean epoch or by the Luciferic Spirits in the Lemurian epoch.

In the course of the Earth-period man will cast away all the evil brought to him by the Luciferic Spirits together with the blessing of freedom. The evil brought by the Ahrimanic Spirits can be shed in the course of karma. But the evil brought by the Asuric powers cannot be expunged in this way. Whereas the good Spirits instituted pain and suffering, illness and death in order that despite the possibility of evil, man's evolution may still advance, whereas the good Spirits made possible the working of karma to the end that the Ahrimanic powers might be resisted and the evil made good, it will not be so easy to counter the Asuric powers as earth-existence takes its course. For these Asuric Spirits will prompt what has been seized hold of by them, namely the very core of man's being, the consciousness soul together with the 'I', to unite with earthly materiality. Fragment after fragment will be torn out of the 'I', and in the same measure in which the Asuric Spirits establish themselves in the consciousness soul, man must leave parts of his existence behind on the earth. What thus becomes the prey of the Asuric powers will be irretrievably lost. Not that the whole man need become their victim — but parts of his spirit will be torn away by the Asuric powers. These Asuric powers are heralded to-day by the prevailing tendency to live wholly in the material world and to be oblivious of the reality of spiritual beings and spiritual worlds. True, the Asuric powers corrupt man to-day in a way that is more theoretical than actual. To-day they deceive him by various means into thinking that his 'I' is a product of the physical world only; they hue him to a kind of theoretic materialism. But as time goes on — and the premonitory signs of this are the dissolute, sensuous passions that are becoming increasingly prevalent on earth — they will blind man's vision of the spiritual Beings and spiritual Powers. Man will know nothing nor desire to know anything of a spiritual world. More and more he will not only teach that the highest moral ideals of humanity are merely sublimations of animal impulses, that human thinking is but a transformation of a faculty also possessed by the animals, that man is akin to the animal in respect of his form and moreover in his whole being descends from the animal — but he will take this view in all earnestness and order his life in accordance with it.

Man does not as yet entirely base his life on the principle that his true being descends from the animal. But this view of existence will inevitably arise, with the result that men will also live like animals, will sink into animal impulses, animal passions. And in many things that need not be further characterized here, many things that in the great cities come to expression in orgies of dissolute sensuality, we can already perceive the lurid, hellish glare of the Spirits we call the Asuras.

Berlin, 22 March 1909.

**GA 110 – Dusseldorf, 13 April 1909; Dusseldorf, 21 April 1909.**

Out of universal space the first fire bodies were hatched. The Spirits of Personality, or Archai (they are also called Asuras) were incarnated in these fire bodies. Saturn only consisted of that element of fire.

Dusseldorf, 13 April 1909

*Question: What is the difference between the luciferic and the ahrimanic, or Mephistophelian, beings?*

The latter have a stronger, more powerful will for evil. The two different kinds of beings come from different hierarchies. In the beginning of evolution, all beings stood more or less at the same stage; then there were beings who remained behind. The stages of evolution are forced into each other. The ahrimanic beings stand deeper in the region of evil and recruit their beings from the most manifold hierarchies; for instance, some beings remained behind on the Sun and others on the Moon. Those who remained behind on the Sun could make up their development on the Moon; those on the Moon could make theirs up on the Earth, and so on. Mephistophelian or ahrimanic beings stand higher, or also lower, in the hierarchy of evil than luciferic beings. These ahrimanic beings recruit from the Archangels on up to the Mighty. [...]

[Questions on other topics follow; then...]

*A question was asked about the Asuras.*

The Asuras are beings that stand one degree higher in their will to evil than ahrimanic beings, and two degrees higher than luciferic beings.

21 April 1909, Questions and Answers

**GA 104a – Christiania (Oslo), 20 May 1909.**



Certain beings have passed through their human state on every incarnation of the earth: the angels during the moon stage, the archangels on the old sun, the good Asuras, also known as archai or primal beginnings, on old Saturn. There are also beings who did not complete their development.

Christiania (Oslo), 20 May 1909.

**GA 109 – Berlin, 25 May 1909.**

The soul of the ancient Persian had become too weak to activate the spiritual forces that could lead it back to the ancient gods. Hence, it had to be educated to pierce through the veil of materiality covering the spiritual. In the outer world the evil Asuras lay hidden, but human beings were not yet capable of seeing the beneficent spiritual beings beyond the world that was regarded as maya. That is why all names for spiritual beings came to be reversed during the time between the Indian and the Persian epochs. Devas were the good beings in ancient India, but in the Persian culture, they became the evil gods. The true reason for this reversal is evident from the continuing development of the human soul; in relation to the external world it had become increasingly stronger, in relationship to the inner world, increasingly weaker.

Berlin, 25 May 1909.

**GA 121 – Christiania (Oslo), 15 June 1910.**

The Persian directs his chief attention to the conquest of Ahriman and to uniting himself to the Spirits who in this country are the great Powers, the Luminous Ones. He is organized for becoming active in the domain which lies outside. Hence he has his Ahuras or Asuras. It is, on the other hand, dangerous for the followers of the Persian religion to descend into that world to which a man can attain by plunging into his own inner being; there, where the Luciferic powers lie hidden, he will have nothing to do even with the possible presence of good powers. There he perceives danger; he directs his gaze outwards and pictures the Asuras of Light as opposing the Asuras of Darkness.

Christiania (Oslo), 15 June 1910.

**GA 60 – Berlin, 19 January 1911.**

*Here again the difference between the Indian and Persian regard for the gods is discussed.*

The Indian teacher said:-‘ Put away from yourselves all that can enter the soul through the powers that are external; merge yourselves solely within your very being-descend to the Devas and when you have vanquished the lower Devas, then will you find yourselves within the kingdom of the Deva of Brahma; but shun the realm of the Asuras, whence come those malignant ones who would thrust themselves upon you from the outer world of Maya; from all such you must turn away, whatsoever may befall.’ Zarathustra, on the other hand, spoke to his disciples after this fashion :-‘ Those who follow the leaders among the people of the South can make no advance along the path which they have chosen, because of the different order of their search after those things which are of the Spirit; in such manner can no nation make headway. The call is not alone to mystic contemplation and to dreaming, but to live in a world which provides freely of all that is needful-man’s mission lies with the art of agriculture, and the promotion of civilization. You must not regard all things as merely Maya, but you must penetrate that veil of colours, and of sounds, which is spread around you; and avoid everything that may be of the nature of the Devas, and which because of your inner egoism, would hold you in its grasp. The region wherein abide the lower Asuras must be traversed, through this you must force your way, even up to the highest; but since your being has been especially organized and adapted to this intent, you must ever shun the dark realms of the Devas.’ In India, the teaching of the Rishis was otherwise, for they said to their followers:-‘ Your beings are not suitably organized to seek that which lies within the Kingdom of the Asuras therefore avoid this region and descend to that of the Devas.’ Such was the difference between the Indian and Persian culture. The Indian peoples were taught that they must shun the Asuras and regard them as evil spirits; this was because through the method of their culture they were only aware of the lower Asuras ; the Persians, on the other hand, who found only low types of De vas in the Devas regions were adjured by their leaders thus:-‘ Enter the Kingdom of the Asuras, for you are so constituted that you may attain even unto the highest of them.’

Berlin, 19 January 1911.

**GA 130 – Basle, 1 October 1911.**

Question: What is the relationship of chemical forces and substances to the spiritual world?

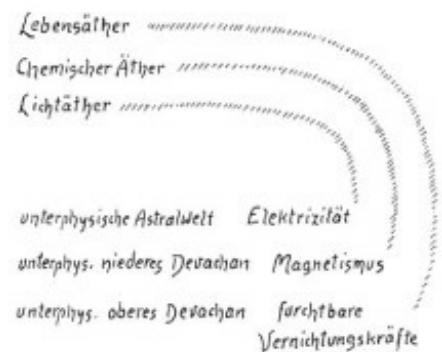
Answer: There are in the world a number of substances that can combine with or separate from each other. What we call chemical action is projected into the physical world from the world of Devachan — the realm of the harmony of the spheres. In the union of two substances according to their atomic weights, we have a shadowing of two tones of the harmony of the spheres. The chemical affinity between two substances in the physical world is like a shadowing from the world of the harmony of the spheres. The numerical ratios in chemistry are really an expression of the numerical ratios of the harmony of the spheres, which has become dumb and silent owing to the densification of matter. If one were able actually to bring material substance into etheric dilution and to perceive the atomic numbers as the inner formative principle, one would hear the harmony of the spheres.

We have the physical world, the astral world, the Lower Devachan, and the Higher Devachan. If one thrusts the body down lower even than the physical world, one comes into the sub-physical world, the lower astral world, the lower or evil Lower Devachan, and the lower or evil Higher Devachan. The evil astral world is the province of Ahriman and the evil Higher Devachan the province of the Asuras. If one drives chemical action down beneath the physical plane, into the evil Devachanic world, magnetism arises. If one thrusts light down into the sub-material — that is to say, a stage deeper than the material world—electricity arises. If what lives in the harmony of the spheres is thrust down farther still, into the province of the Asuras, an even more terrible force, which it will not be possible to keep hidden very much longer, is generated. One can only hope that when this force comes — a force we must conceive as being far, far stronger than the most violent electrical discharge — one can only hope that before some discoverer gives this force into the hands of humanity, human beings will no longer have anything immoral left in them.

Zur Fragenbeantwortung:

Es spiegeln sich als unterphysische Welt

die Astralwelt	das Gebiet des Luzifer
unteres Devachan	das Gebiet des Ahriman
oberes Devachan	das Gebiet der Asuras



Question: What is electricity?

Answer: Electricity is light in the sub-material state. Light is there compressed to the utmost degree. An inward quality, too, must be ascribed to light; light is itself at every point. Warmth can extend itself in the three dimensions of space. In light we must speak of a fourth dimension; it can extend itself in a fourfold way; it has the quality of inwardness as a fourth dimension.

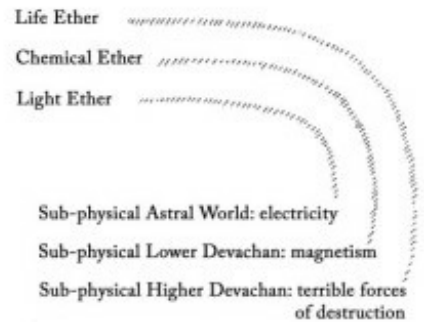
Question: What happens to the earth's corpse?

Answer: As the residue of the ancient Moon evolution we have our present moon that circles the earth. Similarly, there will be a residue of the earth that will circle Jupiter. Then these residues will gradually dissolve into the universal ether. On Venus there will no longer be any residue. Venus will manifest, to begin with, as pure warmth, then it will become light, and then it will pass over into the spiritual world. The residue left behind by the earth will be like a corpse. This is a path along which man must not accompany the earth, however, because he would thereby be exposed to dreadful torments. There are, however, many beings who will accompany this corpse, since they themselves will by that means develop to a higher stage.

Answers to Questions :

Reflected as sub-physical world:

Astral World	the province of Lucifer
Lower Devachan	the province of Ahriman
Higher Devachan	the province of the Asuras



Basle, 1 October 1911.

**GA 142 – Cologne, 31 December 1912.**

This first suggestion we discover in the following way if man is to rise through Yoga from the ordinary stages of the soul to the higher, he must free himself from external works, he must emancipate himself more and more from outer works, from what he does and perceives externally; he must become a “looker-on” at himself. His soul then assumes an inner freedom and raises itself triumphantly over what is external. That is the case with the ordinary man, but with one who is initiated and becomes clairvoyant the case does not remain thus; he is not confronted with external substance, for that in itself is maya. It only becomes a reality to him who makes use of his own inner instruments. What takes the place of substance? If we observe the old initiation we meet with the following: Whereas man in everyday life is confronted with substance, with Prakriti — the soul which through Yoga has developed itself by initiation, has to fight against the world of the Asuras, the world of the demoniacal. Substance is what offers resistance; the Asuras, the powers of darkness become enemies. But all that is as yet a mere suggestion, we perceive it as something peeping out of the soul, so to say; we begin to feel that which pertains to the soul. For the soul will only begin to realise itself as spiritual when it begins to fight the battle against the demons, the Asuras.

Cologne, 31 December 1912.

**GA 146 – Helsingfors, 2 June 1913.**

*This is simply a quotation from the Bhagavad Gita:*

[...] Gandharvas, Yakshas, Siddhas, Asuras [...]

Helsingfors, 2 June 1913.

**GA 194 – Dornach, 15 December 1919.**

If the world continues in the course it has been taking under the influence of the degenerating spiritual life derived from the Orient, then this spiritual life, although at one end it was the most sublime truth, will at the other rush into the most fearful lies. Nietzsche was impelled to describe how even the Greeks had to guard themselves from the lies of life through their art. And in reality art is the divine child which keeps men from being swallowed up in lies. If this first branch of civilization is pursued only one-sidedly, then this stream empties into lies. In the last five or six years more lies have been told among civilized humanity than in any other period of world history; in public life the truth has scarcely been spoken at all; hardly a word that has passed through the world was true. While this stream empties into lies (see drawing), the middle stream empties into self-seeking; and an economic life like the Anglo-American, which should end in world-dominion — if the effort is not made to bring about its permeation by the independent spiritual life and the independent political life, it will flow into the third of the abysses of human life, into the third of these three. The first abyss is lies, the degeneration of humanity through Ahriman; the second is self-seeking, the degeneration of humanity through Lucifer; the third is, in the physical realm, illness and death; in the cultural realm, the illness and death of culture.

The Anglo-American world may gain world dominion; but without the Threefold Social Order it will, through this dominion, pour out cultural death and cultural illness over the whole earth; for these are just as much a gift of the Asuras as lies are a gift of Ahriman, and self-seeking, of Lucifer. So the third, a worthy companion of the other two, is a gift of the Asuric powers!

Dornach, 15 December 1919



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