

THE ECLIPSE OF MARCH 29, 2006

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Everyone who has ever seen a total solar eclipse can confirm that it is one of the most amazing cosmic events that one can experience. However, there are deeper levels to such experiences, as can be seen from the following words:

When there is an eclipse of the Sun, something quite different takes place during the changed circumstances on that part of the Earth upon which the solar eclipse takes effect, something very different than when a solar eclipse is not taking place. If we know that when the Sun's rays shine upon us will forces stream up toward the Sun, then we can imagine how an eclipse of the Sun can have a definite influence upon the streaming of the will, which is something spiritual. The Moon intercepts the rays of light coming from the Sun; this is the physical aspect. The streaming of the will up from the Earth is not held back by the physical matter of the Moon; it streams into the darkness of the eclipse. This is a moment in time, even if only brief, during which earthly will forces stream out into cosmic space in a different way than when there is no solar eclipse. Normally the physical aspect of the light of the Sun always connects with the streaming up of the will, in which case the will forces stream up in the shape of a cone, streaming unimpeded into cosmic space...However, when there is an eclipse of the Sun, then the opportunity is present for that which is negative upon the Earth to spread itself out in heavenly regions. This is a physical event which certainly has a spiritual content...It is actually so that each year when eclipses of the Sun and Moon return, these are like "valves", I would say. Safety valves are installed so that no damage takes place, so that they open at the right time – for example, to let off steam. These "valves" which appear in world phenomena as solar and lunar eclipses are there precisely so that at a solar eclipse that which spreads out as negativity upon the Earth can be borne up in a luciferic way into cosmic space where it can bring about further damage; and the lunar eclipses are such that evil thoughts from cosmic space can come to those human beings who quite especially want to be possessed by evil thoughts...And humanity will not be free of these forces of total decadence until it is able to grasp again from the heart the meaning of such spiritual connections.¹

In consideration of the total solar eclipse that took place on March 29, 2006 (actually the following remarks apply to all solar eclipses):

- (a) the time of the darkening of the Sun's rays is a time when certain negative aspects of existence may come forth, as described above in the quotation by Rudolf Steiner; and
- (b) the eclipsing of the Sun's forces can call forth in human beings their own *inner* Sun forces, having to do especially with the will – this being a conscious decision, out of human free will. In this latter case what needs to be called forth is gratitude for the mysteries of the Sun, which are essentially threefold:
 - (1) the Sun is not only the source of light, life and warmth but is also the outer manifestation of the kingdom of heaven, a place of abode of sublime spiritual beings;

*This article is posted on the website of the Sophia Foundation of North America: www.sophiafoundation.org

¹ Rudolf Steiner, *Human Questions and Cosmic Answers* (GA 213; lecture of June 25, 1922, my translation from the German).

- (2) the Sun itself is an outer, visible expression of the Son of God, a cosmic manifestation of the Christ Mystery;
- (3) the Sun points us toward the “Son of Man”, the Etheric Christ, who is working to open the heart chakra in human beings (the heart is the center of the human being corresponding to the Sun at the heart of the solar system), and who may be visualized as a radiant Sun now at work within the Earth’s etheric aura.

At the time of a solar eclipse it is always appropriate to hold in consciousness the image of Christ’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem, since this event took place historically on the day of a solar eclipse. In so doing, the most important qualities to be cultivated, which the Etheric Christ can connect with, are reverence, compassion, and conscience: *reverence* for the Divine Mystery of existence in all its aspects; *compassion* for Mother Earth and for all the human beings and other beings connected with Her, all seeking redemption; and heightened *conscience* as a sense of vigilance for the Good. Vigilant conscience is especially important at the time of a solar eclipse, because when the warmth and light of the Sun are blotted out, cold and dark forces may try to gain entrance into human consciousness. Hence the importance of taking hold of one’s own inner Sun, which like the outer Sun is always burning and aflame, and is darkened only when conscience is lulled to sleep.

The archetype of the triumphant entry into Jerusalem is important in our time in relation to the work of the Etheric Christ in the creation of the New Earth as His contribution to the New Jerusalem – Sophia’s contribution, as the Bride of the Lamb, being the bringing down of the New Heaven to unite with the New Earth. On the day of Christ’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem (March 19, A.D. 33) there was a total solar eclipse at 1:05 PM local time, which would have been around the time that the crowd who had cut branches from the palm trees and strewn them on the road along which Jesus came into the city were calling out: “*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!*” (*Matthew* 21:9). Right at the time that the Light of the World entered the city of Jerusalem as the King of Peace, the outer light of the Sun was darkened briefly. The darkness was not noticeable in Jerusalem, since the path of totality of this solar eclipse extended over water only: from the northernmost tip of Antarctica across into the Indian Ocean, without crossing any land except for the northern tip of Antarctica. Nevertheless the solar eclipse of that day was a spiritual reality for the whole Earth.

Returning to Rudolf Steiner’s description above of the negative impact of a solar eclipse, as referred to in (a):

this impact makes itself felt above all along the path of the eclipse’s totality.

However, as indicated in (b):

the *spiritual impact* of a solar eclipse in a positive sense is something global, as may be seen in this example of Christ’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem. This is a very important point – it is not necessary to be *physically present* at a solar eclipse in order to bring about something positive in relation to the negative impact an eclipse might have.

Having said this, let us now consider the solar eclipse of March 29, 2006, which was visible in Libya and the north-west corner of Egypt, and in Turkey and other countries. The eclipse signified the start of a mysterious event, and the purpose of this article is to awaken consciousness of the mystery connected with this solar eclipse. First, let us contemplate the path of totality of the eclipse. At the New Moon on the morning of March 29, the disk of the Moon completely covered the face of the

Sun, casting a narrow shadow upon the surface of the Earth. The path (approximately one hundred miles in width) of the Moon's shadow cone swept across the surface of the Earth beginning in Brazil and extending across the Atlantic, northern Africa, the Mediterranean, Turkey, and central Asia, ending at sunset in western Mongolia. At its height – in southern Libya at 16E46, 23N09 – the eclipse attained a maximum and was visible for just over four minutes. From southern Libya the eclipse then proceeded further northward to reach the Mediterranean coast at the border between Libya and Egypt. Many people were gathered in the Egyptian coastal town of Saloum (25E09, 31N31), on the border with Libya, where at 12:40 PM the total eclipse of the Sun was seen for almost four minutes.

This event of the solar eclipse was awaited with great anticipation. The occurrence of the eclipse of the Sun meant for some people an opportunity to sow positive impulses in the Earth's spiritual atmosphere on March 29 in consciousness of – and inspired by – the archetype of Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

For everyone who becomes conscious of the deeper significance of this solar eclipse, there is an ongoing work to take part in the advent of an event of cosmic dimensions – focusing upon Sophia's coming (Sophia as the "new Isis"). Here it needs to be borne in mind that Sophia's coming – as the bearer of a new world culture (the *Rose of the World*) – is an answer to the incarnation of the Antichrist and the "culture" associated with his incarnation. As discussed by Wain Farrants in his article "*The Continuing Influence of the Grand Conjunction of 1962: An Imagination for the 21st Century*", published in the *Christian Star Calendar 2006*,² the American clairvoyant Jeane Dixon had a vision on the morning of February 5, 1962 – at sunrise on this day of a solar eclipse, when all the seven classical planets were lined up in the constellation of Capricorn – of the birth of the human being whom she identified as the bearer of the Antichrist.³ She describes what she saw at that moment in time as she gazed out of the window of her apartment in Washington, D.C.:

The bare-limb trees of the city had given way to an endless desert scene, broiled by a relentless sun. Glowing like an enormous ball of fire, the sun had cracked the horizon, emitting brilliant rays of scintillating light, which seemed to attract the earth like a magic wand. The sun's rays parted, facilitating the appearance of the Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaten⁴ and Queen Nefertiti. But my eyes were drawn to the new-born-child she

² Robert Powell & Peter Treadgold, *Christian Star Calendar 2006* (Sophia Foundation of North America: Palo Alto, California, 2005) – see www.sophiafoundation.org

³ Here it is evident that Jeane Dixon participated – from afar – on a spiritual level in the solar eclipse of February 5, 1962. She participated in a profound and intense way in the eclipse, which was visible far away on the other side of the Earth, where the path of totality swept across Borneo, New Guinea, and a vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean, to stop short of the north-west coast of Mexico.

⁴ Jeane Dixon uses the spelling "Ikhnaton" (an alternative to Akhenaten) for the name of this pharaoh whose "cultural revolution" turned into a tragedy that almost ruined Egypt. The name Akhenaten means "*glorious spirit of the Aten*" or "*he in whom the Sun's disk is satisfied*," and the essence of his cultural revolution was to elevate the Sun's disk, the Aten, to the head of the Egyptian pantheon, thus relegating Amun or Amen ("*king of the gods*") to a much lower status. Jeane Dixon describes this step of Akhenaten as an "*attempt to deceive humanity*". It was an attempt to substitute a religion revering the external appearance of the Sun (and the world) in place of the Divine order underlying existence represented by Amen-Ra, who was considered to be the personification of the mysterious creating and sustaining power of the universe of which the Sun is an outer manifestation. In this respect Akhenaten could perhaps be thought of as the first materialist who, moreover, tried to establish a unique form of a materialistic religion (admittedly a much

*tenderly cradled in her other arm. He was wrapped in soiled, ragged swaddling clothes, in stark contrast to the magnificently arrayed royal couple. I then became aware of a multitude of people that appeared. I witnessed Nefertiti hand the child to the people. Instantly rays of sunlight burst forth from the little boy, which blended with the brilliance of the sun. My eyes once more focused on the baby. By now he had grown to manhood, and a small cross, which had formed above his head enlarged and expanded until it covered the earth in all directions. Suffering people, of all races, knelt in worshipful adoration, lifting their arms and offering their hearts to him.*⁵

On this day of a total solar eclipse, Jeane Dixon saw what she described as, “A revelation that...foretells one of the most dramatic events in the history of the world.” She adds: “The fact that Pharaoh Akhenaten and his wife Queen Nefertiti presented this child to the world seems to indicate that his mission is to continue where their first attempt to deceive humanity failed... There is no doubt in my mind that the “child” is the actual person of the Antichrist, the one who will deceive the world in Satan’s name.”⁶

Akhenaten is one of the most controversial figures of the ancient world. On the one hand there is the view of Jeane Dixon of someone whose “*attempt to deceive humanity failed*”. Rudolf Steiner does not mention Akhenaten at all in any of his books or lectures, which in itself is telling. One of the first eurythmists, Annemarie Dubach-Donath, who knew Rudolf Steiner well, wrote a play entitled *Echnaton, der Gottverlassene* (“Akhenaten, the One Abandoned by God”) published in 1928. On the other hand Emil Bock, in his book *Moses*, portrays Akhenaten as a figure who disavowed power and greed, turning away from the corrupt politics and black magic of the priests of Amen (Amun), and adhered to a solar divinity. Another author, Johannes Bertram, describes Akhenaten as,

*a fully conscious self (“I”) who knew of his connection with the Creative Being of the world, whose glorious reflection he saw in the Sun... Akhenaten attempted, through the light and power of his conscious clairvoyance, which he had attained as an initiated pharaoh, to pit himself with all possible means against the decline (of the Egyptian religion). It was his endeavor to save the monotheistic kernel of the Egyptian religion... He experienced himself in his innermost self (“I”) as a ray of the Light Being, as son of Aten, and thus named himself Akhe-n-Aten, son of Aten.*⁷

Thus the debate about Akhenaten is polarized between seeing him as “*one abandoned by God*” and as “*an initiated pharaoh... endeavor(ing) to save the monotheistic kernel of the Egyptian religion*”. In the space of this article it is not possible to go into all the various perspectives concerning Akhenaten, other than to mention one interesting point:

loftier form of materialism than that of our time). Akhenaten’s revolution was brought to an end at his death with the accession of his son-in-law, Tutankhamen (the boy pharaoh), to the throne.

⁵ Jeane Dixon, *My Life and Prophecies* (William Morrow: New York, 1969), pp. 178-179.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

⁷ Johannes Bertram, *Echnaton, der Grosse im Schauen* (“Akhenaten, the Great Seer”) (Hamburg Kulturverlag: Hamburg, 1953), pp. 16-25.

Rudolf Steiner's indication that the Egyptian scene in his fourth mystery play is to be considered as having taken place during the reign of Akhenaten. In this scene the Chief Hierophant in the Egyptian temple is in the process of guiding the initiation of the Neophyte:

THE CHIEF HIEROPHANT:

*O human soul, now read what through the flame the cosmic Word proclaims within
thyself.*

And now from out the cosmic vision awake!

Declare what can be read as cosmic Word.

(The neophyte is silent. The Chief Hierophant, much alarmed, continues:)

He's silent. The vision has escaped you? Speak!

THE NEOPHYTE:

*Obedient to your stern and sacred words I sank into the being of this flame,
Awaiting sounds of lofty cosmic words.*

(The assembled priests, with the exception of the Hierophant, show an ever-increasing alarm during the speech of the Neophyte.)

I felt that I could liberate myself from weight of earth and be as light as air.

I felt the loving tide of cosmic fire receiving me as flowing spirit waves.

I saw the body that I wear on earth as other being stand outside myself.

Though wrapt in bliss, and conscious of the light of spirit round me,

Yet I could regard my earthly sheath with longing and desire...

*Within my spirit-soul existence rose the wish that gravity of earth would plunge me down
Into my sheath where I might feel and hold the sense of joy in warmth of life.*

Thus, gladly diving down into my sheath, I heeded your stern summons to awake.

THE CHIEF HIEROPHANT (himself to the terrified priests):

This is no spirit vision; earth's desires – wrung from the mystic – rose as offering

To radiant spirit heights.

*O sacrilege, sacrilege!*⁸

Rudolf Steiner remarked: “*This scene is a quite decisive, concrete picture that is written into the akasha chronicle. It is that moment in which, for the first time, an initial sign lights up of the approaching Greek culture...*” This remark, and the Egyptian scene itself, conveys something of the drama surrounding the Egyptian pharaoh Akhenaten, who appears in this context as a forerunner of “*the approaching Greek culture*” celebrating “*the sense of joy in warmth of life*” on the physical plane of existence and thus stepping out of the framework of the tradition of ancient Egyptian mystery religion. In this respect he was a forerunner leading the way into experience of the sense-perceptible realm. This was a necessary step at that time. However now, in our time, a step in the reverse direction is called for – from the sense-perceptible to the spiritual, following the call of Christ and Sophia. It is here perhaps where “Akhenaten's heresy” appeared to Jeane Dixon's clairvoyance as a heralding of something *in our time* leading in the opposite direction.

⁸ Rudolf Steiner, *The Soul's Awakening* (Steiner Book Center: Toronto, 1973), pp. 108-109.

⁹ Rudolf Steiner, *Eurythmy: Its Birth and Development* (Anastasi: Weobley/England, 2002), p. 50.

As Wain Farrants describes in the article referred to above, some twenty-five years ago I had discussed Jeane Dixon's vision with my teacher in star wisdom ("astrosophy"), Willi Sucher (1902-1985). Willi affirmed the accuracy of Jeane Dixon's vision. He added that he thought that the child had been born in Tobruk, Libya. It is remarkable in this connection to consider that the city of Tobruk is very close (about forty miles to the west) from the edge of the path of the total solar eclipse on March 29, 2006. This fact, together with the "Egyptian background" to Jeane Dixon's vision, serves to highlight the eclipse of the Sun that crossed the border of Egypt and Libya on that day.

On that day thousands of people from around the world traveled to the regions of the path of the eclipse's totality in order to see this cosmic spectacle. The Moon covered the face of the Sun and the Sun's corona emerged – a magnificent vista: the radiant appearance of the great "light aura" of our star at the heart of our solar system. To witness a solar eclipse is an experience that is both lofty and – when one becomes aware of the surrounding Nature – terrible: "*It was as if Nature was torn. The pulse of earthly Nature stood still...*"¹⁰

At the eclipse on March 29, 2006 the Sun was located near the middle of sidereal Pisces (at 13½° Pisces), close to where it was at the birth of the child Jesus as described in the *Gospel of St. Matthew*.¹¹ On March 29, 2006 – when the Moon covered the Sun and all was dark – Venus (27° Capricorn) appeared to the right (westward) of the Sun and then, between the Sun's corona and Venus it was possible to see Mercury (19° Aquarius). Just above the eastern horizon a third planet – Mars (26° Taurus) – was visible. Betelgeuze, the red supergiant marking the right shoulder of Orion, rose in the east, visible beneath Mars, close to the eastern horizon. Other stars that were visible at this moment: Aldebaran ("*the Bull's eye*") in the east, about thirty degrees above the horizon; Capella ("*the heart of the She-Goat*") still higher up in the north-east; Deneb ("*the tail of the Swan*") high in the north-west; somewhat deeper, but brighter, Vega in the Lyre; Altair in the Eagle (the third star – together with Deneb and Vega – in the summer triangle) about twenty-five degrees above the western horizon; Fomalhaut ("*the mouth of the Southern Fish*") deep in the south-west; and Achernar in the River Eridanus just above the southern horizon.

Who saw this cosmic event? As well as servers of the Good who were called to witness it, there were many tourists and curiosity seekers, and some practitioners of the occult seeking to harness the potential magical forces released through the eclipse of the Sun. Just as there were many human beings there to see it, there were also a host of spiritual beings who were present to watch over this event. They beheld the "valve" opening and the rising up of "streaming forces of the will" like an outbreath of the Earth's aura, and at the same time, with the opening of the "valve", there was something that entered into the Earth's auric field. The beings of the spiritual world were in attendance to watch over what streamed up from the Earth in need of purification. All along the path of totality of the eclipse the spiritual beings witnessed and experienced in a very close and intense way the great struggle of humanity at the present time: the struggle between good and evil. The outbreath signified a release of toxicity from the Earth's aura. By way of analogy with toxic waste pouring into a river, this toxicity streamed up from the Earth's aura along the path of the eclipse, necessitating a cleansing on the part of the beings of the spiritual world, to purify what

¹⁰ Wilhelm Meyer, *Die ägyptische Finsterniss von 1905* ["*The Egyptian eclipse of 1905*"] quoted in Wolfgang Held, *Sonnen- und Mondfinsternisse* ["*Eclipses of the Sun and Moon*"] (Verlag Freies Geistesleben: Stuttgart, 2005), p. 33.

¹¹ Robert Powell, *Chronicle of the Living Christ* (Steiner Books: Gt. Barrington/MA, 1996), pp. 67-77 & p. 146.

pours up from the Earth into cosmic space. As well as the good spiritual beings, there were also dark forces at work behind the scenes to manipulate the process, as indicated at the beginning of this article.

In light of that which is discussed above, the importance of consciously bringing a harmonizing, peace-bestowing influence into the Earth's aura since the time of the eclipse is evident. If taken up consciously, this can be a real working together with the spiritual world to enliven the spiritual atmosphere in a positive way through spiritual thoughts and love-permeated feelings. The whole can be an offering to Sophia – as the “new Isis” – into Her hands as a contribution for Her to place on the positive scales of humankind's endeavor and to counter-balance whatever will be placed on the negative scales following in the wake of the eclipse.

For those called to hold the significance of the eclipse in consciousness in service of the Good, their presence on Earth is like nectar for the beings of the spiritual world, if indeed they offer their service in the right spirit. However, one must not be naïve concerning the “birth” through the eclipse (and in the wake of the eclipse) in the sense of Jeane Dixon's vision outlined above, as humanity at this point in the struggle between good and evil is calling forth this “birth”. In terms of where the world is today in its evolution, a new “religion” is arising subconsciously along the lines of Akhenaten's attempt to institute worship of the disk of the Sun. It is natural that someone (a new “Pharaoh Akhenaten”) should step into the role of shepherding humanity in a “religion of materialism” to replace that which Christ and other great founders of the world religions stood for. What better moment to bring to birth a “religion glorifying the external” than a total eclipse of the Sun, when the Sun's disk (“the Aten” in Akhenaten's religion) – even though covered by the Moon – is in a certain respect rendered visible.

He will establish and lead a strange and fundamentally anti-human “religion” of atheism and anti-religion... a seduction of minds by a false ideology and propaganda... the teacher of man's new modernized approach to life that leaves the Christian heritage behind as outmoded... He will be the last and greatest of idols man has worshiped in the long history of religious aberrations. He will receive the worship of many people, as if he, in his own person, were actually God. He will personify, in other words, a false humanism by which men worship themselves, making of themselves their own supreme law, and finding in the Antichrist the symbol of the secret aspiration of their own fallen natures. But since he will set himself up as god before all men and will demand worship of all men, he will not tolerate worship of the one true God. Hence he will wage a full, unbridled persecution of all Christians... When the “man” has reached the age reserved for the onset of his mission, no one will be able to hold the children back, for to capture the youth and, through them, the world, he was born.¹²

In relation to these words of Jeane Dixon concerning the new “religion” of the Antichrist, it is illuminating to consider Rudolf Steiner's words concerning the promotion of the “religion of materialism” and what the underlying motivation for this is. Rudolf Steiner draws attention to certain brotherhoods preparing the way for the Antichrist by promoting materialism:

¹² Jeane Dixon, op. cit., pp. 173-174, 190.

There are initiates who are also materialists and who disseminate materialistic teachings through their brotherhoods. . . What, then, are the aims of these initiates, who in reality know very well that the human soul is a purely spiritual entity, independent of the body, and nevertheless cherish and cultivate a materialistic outlook in other people? What they want is that the largest possible number of souls should absorb only materialistic ideas between birth and death. Thus these souls are made ready to linger on in the Earth sphere, to be held back there. And now observe that there are brotherhoods which are equipped to know all about this. These brotherhoods prepare certain human souls to remain after death in the realm of the material. Then they arrange things. . . so that these souls come under the aegis of their brotherhood, and from this the brotherhood gains enormous strength. . . Thus these brotherhoods build up a sort of clientele of souls from among the dead who remain in the Earth sphere. . . The aim of these brotherhoods who wish to confine human souls in the material realm is that the Christ should pass by unnoticed. . . that His coming in the etheric should not be noticed by human beings. . . These brotherhoods want to take over the Christ's sphere of influence. . . for another being. . . a strongly Ahrimanic one. . . The only weapon against these procedures is to know about them. If we know about them, we are protected.¹³

If humanity were now at a different level, engaged in a spiritually creative way such as will be in the coming culture of Sophia, the *Rose of the World*, there would be no need for this “birth” spoken of by both Jeane Dixon and Rudolf Steiner. It is a fruit of the direction that humanity in general has chosen.

An innocent heart – conscious, however, of the awesomeness of this “birth” – is important to the beings of the spiritual world, and at the same time a firm consciousness and vigilant conscience, holding firmly to Christ and Sophia. For otherwise one could be led into attunement with a being that – in relation to all the unaware people of the present time – seeks to take hold of one’s life substance, consciousness, and heart forces, wanting to make use of this as a kind of nourishment. However, in the name of Christ and Sophia one is protected and is able to remain sovereign.

The best way to serve is to hold in consciousness the higher goal of humanity’s evolution, aiming toward the *Rose of the World*. Aligned with Sophia as the bearer of this coming new culture, and united with Christ at all levels, especially the level of the will, one can turn the event of this “birth” to something good. Moreover, it is possible to unite with the work of spiritual beings cleansing the auric field of the Earth at the present time. And one can celebrate together with the lofty spiritual beings connected with the Sun and with the angelic beings connected with the Moon, which are the “eyes” of the beings of the spiritual world. Thus one can consciously participate in the tending of a “seed bed” for the future flowering of the Good. The following meditation by Valentin Tomberg can be a wonderful source of help in this respect.

Before contemplating the meditation itself, it is helpful to recall the essence of the *central myth for our time*, the essence of which is the experience of Etheric Christ as the “new Osiris” and of Divine Sophia as the “new Isis”.¹⁴ The experience of the ancient Egyptians of Isis and Osiris is summarized in these words:

¹³ Rudolf Steiner, *The Wrong and Right Use of Esoteric Knowledge* (Rudolf Steiner Press: London, 1966), pp. 16-22.

¹⁴ Rudolf Steiner, *Isis–Mary–Sophia* (Steiner Books: Gt. Barrington/MA, 2003), pp. 191-226.

The ancient Egyptians quite literally saw Osiris appear in the southern sky in the constellation of Orion, in the period immediately preceding the flood. But the flood itself was directly heralded by the appearance of Isis in the iridescent star Sirius, some time after the first reemergence of Orion from below the southern horizon. The Nile's inundation was said to be caused by the tears of Isis for her stricken lord, tears that, as it were, came streaming from the rainbow hues of this star down into the emaciated river.

If in looking south one gazes toward the Dwat, then behind one are the stars of the north, the pole stars that never set and that for the Egyptians constituted a cosmic image of eternity. It was the uninterrupted circuit of these stars that the most blessed dead would join, the realm beyond the Dwat, the realm of pure spirit.

A person standing and facing south is in the "archetypal" position by which the ancient Egyptians oriented themselves in "the Beloved Land" (*ta-meri*). One of the terms for "south" is also a term for "face", while the word usually used for "north" is related to a word that means "back of the head". The word for "east" is the same as that for "left"; likewise the word for "west" and "right".¹⁵

In light of the experience of the ancient Egyptians facing south and beholding Osiris in the constellation of Orion, let us contemplate the following meditation on the Etheric Christ, the "new Osiris", given by Valentin Tomberg at Easter 1941, also bearing in mind the Egyptians' sense for Seth (Typhon) as the opponent of Osiris:

Meditation on the Etheric Christ

Christ is already here.

He is standing in the south of the Earth, and waves are proceeding from Him.

Every human being is now able to create a connection with Him.

The human being has to do this [out of free will].

He is still standing.

However, human beings are able to approach Him, to create a connection with Him.

For this, two things are necessary:

knowledge of Christ and Antichrist;

and aligning oneself with Christ.

If one chooses one of the two streams which are streaming through the world:

[that of] Christ or [that of] Antichrist

– a light-blue stream, and a black stream –

when one chooses one is already taken into one of the two streams.

Through the Power of Christ one is immeasurably strengthened.

Through Him one can pass through terrible trials and remain peaceful.

¹⁵ Jeremy Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos* (Inner Traditions: Rochester/VT, 1996), p. 9.

*Through His Power one can bear [things] to an unbelievable degree.
He bestows great Power upon one.*¹⁶

This is a very potent meditation to hold in consciousness as a meditation on the Etheric Christ, the “new Osiris”, in the period now following the solar eclipse of March 29, 2006.

¹⁶ From an esoteric lecture held at Easter 1941 for a small group of people in Amsterdam during World War II. Translated from the German lecture notes by Robert Powell. Words in [] added by RP.

After the Eclipse *Robert Powell, Ph.D.*

The central theme of the solar eclipse on March 29, 2006 in the sidereal sign of Pisces is the healing of the human heart. Through the healing of the heart the destructive direction taken by modern civilization will be healed. It is above all the work of the Etheric Christ and Divine Sophia – also of the Master Jesus – which is directed toward the healing of the heart. The location of the Sun and the Moon at the eclipse – at 14° Pisces – is very close to the position of the Sun at the birth of the Master Jesus, whose birth is described in chapter 2 of the *Gospel of St. Matthew*. At the birth of this child, who was visited by the three magi, the Sun was at 15½° Pisces opposite the Full Moon at 15° Virgo.¹⁷

With the vernal point now in Pisces, Pisces is very much connected with the work of the Etheric Christ and, complementary to this (on the opposite side of the zodiac), the sign of Virgo has particularly to do with Sophia – although, of course, it is also true that Christ and Sophia work through *all* twelve signs of the zodiac. The birth of the Master Jesus on the evening of March 5 in the year 6 BC with the Sun in the middle of Pisces – whereby this birth took place toward the end of the age of Aries – was oriented toward the Age of Pisces that started in AD 215, some two hundred years later. With regard to the incarnation of Christ into Jesus at the baptism in the River Jordan, John spoke the words: “*Behold the Lamb of God...*” – applying to Christ (the Lamb) as the higher aspect of the Ram. In this context it is significant that the Mystery of Golgotha took place when the Sun was in the middle of the sign of Aries – at 14° Aries at the crucifixion, and at 15½° Aries at the resurrection. The Mystery of Golgotha signified an outpouring of Divine Love.

It is the Master Jesus, born when the Sun was in the middle of Pisces, who represents “*the principle of brotherly love*”¹⁸ and “*who influences most of all the heart forces.*”¹⁹ He is the teacher concerning love, and it is in this sense that the deeper significance of the solar eclipse in the middle of Pisces on March 29, 2006 can be understood as having to do with the healing of the human heart through love. Christ *is* Divine Love, and the Master Jesus is *the master whose mission is to teach love*.

Holding in consciousness that the Master Jesus was the reincarnated Zoroaster from the sixth century BC, who was the teacher of Pythagoras, and in turn that Zoroaster was the reincarnated Zarathustra from about 6000 BC, the founder of the ancient Persian culture, and that “*Sirius is the heart of Jesus-Zarathustra,*”²⁰ it is clear that the star Sirius has much to do with the mission of the Master Jesus. In fact, although the following words refer to Horus: “*I am Isis... I am the mother of Horus, who was born with his head beneath Sirius,*”²¹ they also apply well to the Master Jesus, whose eternal star is Sirius. In other words, one can imagine that he “*was born with his head*

¹⁷ Robert Powell, *Chronicle of the Living Christ* (Steiner Books: Gt. Barrington/MA, 1996), p. 146.

¹⁸ Rudolf Steiner, *From the History and Contents of the First Section of the Esoteric School, 1904-1914* (Steiner Books: Gt. Barrington/MA, 1998), p. 204.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 207.

²⁰ Words of Rudolf Steiner recorded in *The Birth of a New Agriculture: Koberwitz 1924* (edited by Adalbert Keyserlingk; Temple Lodge Press: London, 1999), p. 89.

²¹ Isis Meditation given by Rudolf Steiner, *Concerning the History and Content of the Higher Degrees of the Esoteric School, 1904-1914* (Etheric Dimensions Press: Switzerland and Scotland, 2005), p. 262.

beneath Sirius” and that therefore the star Sirius is – imaginatively speaking – “above” the head of the Master Jesus. It is noteworthy that the name *Zoroaster* means “radiant star”.

In a more general sense, however, the appearance of a star above the someone’s head is a sign of the development of the *Spirit Self* (*Manas*) or the *Higher Self*, which is the transformed and purified astral body in the human being. Normally the astral body, which is the bearer of the soul forces of thought, feeling, and will, and also of passions, appears to be in chaotic movement in the aura of the human being. When transformed and purified, it appears as a star above the head of the human being. Certain astral forces in the human being, when transfigured, are raised up above the head and appear there in the form of a radiant star. This really was the case with Zoroaster, which is why he was called “radiant star” (*Zoroaster*). This is one of the deeper meanings of the following meditation given by Rudolf Steiner:

*A star is above my head.
Christ speaks from the star:
Let your soul be borne through my strong force –
I am with you,
I am for you,
I am in you,
I am your I.*

For some of us who worked meditatively with the solar eclipse on March 29, 2006, this meditation took on extraordinary significance. For it is precisely through the experience of the true “I AM” (Christ consciousness) that the deeper healing of the human heart takes place. And this eclipse gave a powerful impulse toward Christ consciousness and the healing of the human heart through Divine Love.

A shadow side of the eclipse was also noticeable. Something of this shadow side is indicated in my article “*The Eclipse of March 29, 2006*”.²² It is possible for a spiritual being of incredible magnitude to project his image into those who are open and unprotected by Christ and Sophia. Precisely through the solar eclipse attention was focused upon the disk of the Sun, rather than upon the sublime spiritual beings of the second hierarchy (Kyriotetes, Dynameis, and Exusiai or Elohim) who work from the Sun. For the ancient Egyptians the entirety of the colony of spiritual beings working from the Sun was called “Ra”. For them “Ra” signified the spiritual beings raying out from the Sun. They also had a perception of the raying in of Christ (the Heavenly Lamb) at that time through the sign of Aries, when the vernal point was in Aries (from 1946 BC to AD 215), and they referred to this raying in as “Amen” whom they perceived as united with the Sun beings (“Ra”). Thus they referred to “Amen-Ra”. The worship of Amen-Ra developed during the Age of Aries from the great temples dedicated to Amen-Ra at Karnak and Luxor (the Temple of Man), which were linked by an avenue lined with ram-headed sphinxes on either side of the processional way between the two great temples. From here the worship of Amen-Ra spread to the whole of ancient Egypt.

The relationship of Amen with the Lamb of God is indicated in the words of the Lamb spoken in the *Book of Revelation*: “*These things saith the AMEN, the faithful and true witness, the beginning*

²² Posted on the website of the Sophia Foundation of North America: www.sophiafoundation.org

of the creation of God" (*Revelation* 3:14). And as expressed by Valentin Tomberg, the word "Amen" reveals the essence of Christ's nature:

*The word AMEN...the individual sounds of which it consists can lead to the inner recognition of the individual currents of the Resurrection body. Thus, the A sound leads to the understanding of the "risen head" – that is, of the current of relationship to the cosmic heights. The M sound reveals the "risen hands" – that is, the current in cosmic space. The E sound leads to the inner life of the Resurrection body, and the N sound reveals the force of the denial of evil – the strength of resistance to evil, as shown in the Descent...as the N force was specially revealed in the Descent..., so was the E force revealed in the Passion and especially the night of Gethsemane. The M force showed itself particularly in the healings and miracles; and the particular point at which the A force is clearly perceptible is the Baptism in the Jordan. Thus the word AMEN is the epitome of the work of Christ, just as the Resurrection body is the epitome of cosmic evolution.*²³

In my article on the solar eclipse of March 29, 2006, I drew attention to Pharaoh Akhenaten of the eighteenth dynasty (fourteenth century BC), who at the height of the worship of Amen-Ra throughout Egypt broke with the Egyptian religion and instituted his own religion focusing upon the disk of the Sun (Aten), leading away from perception of the spiritual beings working through the Sun (Amen-Ra) to focus attention upon the outer appearance of the Sun, the Sun's disk.²⁴ An analogy may be drawn with the present time: on the one hand Christ ("Amen, the faithful and true witness") is present in the ethereal realm and it is now possible to create a connection with him, and on the other hand the "religion" of materialism (which could be symbolized by the imposing appearance of the disk of the Sun as this appears at the time of a solar eclipse) has swept our planet and holds human consciousness to the physical appearances without penetrating through to the spiritual beings behind the phenomena of existence. In this sense a parallel may be drawn between our time and the time of Akhenaten, whereby it has to be said that Akhenaten's mission in the fourteenth century BC was *justified* in that he had the task of leading humanity out of the ancient clairvoyance into an appreciation of the sense perceptible realm. Now, however, the reverse evolutionary movement needs to take place.

The spiritual being of incredible magnitude referred to above is the Antichrist, the incarnation of Satan, whose advent has long been expected. It is his plan to become world ruler. There is a particular vibration associated with this being, which suddenly broke into world consciousness through the events of September 11, 2001, announcing his presence in the world. The war on terror is one aspect of his "signature" upon our time. Shortly after 9/11, as referred to in a message of the Virgin Mary at an appearance at Medjugorje, Bosnia, from September 25, 2001: "*Also today I call you to prayer, especially today when Satan wants war and hatred. I call you anew...pray and fast that God may give you peace. Witness peace to every heart and be carriers of peace in this world without peace. I am with you and intercede before God for each of you. And do not be afraid, because the one who prays is not afraid of evil and has no hatred in the heart.*"²⁵ Two months

²³ Valentin Tomberg, *New Testament Studies* (Candeur Manuscripts: Spring Valley/NY, 1985), p. 179. The *New Testament Studies* are to be republished in a larger volume by Steiner Books in the summer of 2006.

²⁴ This, of course, is an over-simplification of the new religion introduced by Akhenaten, and a more extensive study is required to fully appreciate his innovation in relation to the worship of Amen-Ra.

²⁵ <http://www.medjugorje.org>

later the words of Mary again drew attention to this new presence in the world: “*Peacelessness has begun to reign in hearts and hatred reigns in the whole world. Pray and prepare your hearts for the coming of the King of Peace, that with His blessing He may give peace to the whole world.*”²⁶ Thus there is another being, the King of Peace, who is infinitely more powerful than the Antichrist (Satan), and who is now active in the etheric realm of life forces. Moreover, there are ways of coming into connection with him.²⁷ Even if the world seems to be full of evil, hatred, violence, and egotism, the moment we lift our consciousness to Christ in the ethereal realm – to the infinite space of the heavens surrounding us, with the help of prayers and meditations (such as the one already referred to: “*A star is above my head...*”) – we come into connection with extraordinary peace and strength: the peace and strength of the Risen One (summarized in the word “Amen”, as described above by Valentin Tomberg). Therefore, just as I closed my article on the solar eclipse of March 29, 2006 with this meditation, so now I would like to close this short postscript “*After the Eclipse*” again with this wonderful meditation by Valentin Tomberg:

[Meditation on the Etheric Christ, the new Osiris]²⁸

Christ is already here.

He is standing in the south of the Earth, and waves are proceeding from Him.

Every human being is now able to create a connection with Him.

The human being has to do this [out of free will].

He is still standing...

However, human beings are able to approach Him, to create a connection with Him.

For this, two things are necessary:

***knowledge of Christ and Antichrist;
and aligning oneself with Christ.***

If one chooses one of the two streams which are [now] streaming through the world:

Christ or Antichrist

– a radiant blue stream, and a black stream –

when one chooses one is already taken into one of the two streams.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Robert Powell, *The Morning Meditation in Eurythmy* (Sophia Foundation of North America: Palo Alto, 2005) describes how – through Christ’s words, set to eurythmic movement – it is possible to create a relationship with the Etheric Christ, if one does the Morning Meditation in the right spirit – slowly, deliberately, and consciously to create this relationship. This is best done each morning in consciousness of the words: “*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away*” (*Matthew* 24: 35). This is one way of creating a relationship with the Etheric Christ and, of course, there are many other ways. See also Lacquanna Paul & Robert Powell, *The Prayer Sequence in Sacred Dance* (Sophia Foundation of North America: Palo Alto, 2003), which is complementary to the Morning Meditation. The Prayer Sequence in sacred dance is best done each evening – again: slowly, deliberately, and consciously to create a relationship with Christ and Sophia and, through them, with the Heavenly Father and the Divine Mother.

²⁸ From an esoteric lecture held by Valentin Tomberg at Easter 1941 for a small group of people in Amsterdam during World War II. Translated from the German lecture notes by Robert Powell. Title and words in [] added by RP. In this meditation a parallel is drawn between between Osiris and the Etheric Christ, and between Seth/Typhon and the Antichrist. This parallel, which is not drawn in the lecture itself, offers a key to understanding the present time.

*Through the Power of Christ one is immeasurably strengthened.
With Him one can pass through terrible trials and remain peaceful.
Through His Power one can bear [things] to an unbelievable degree.
He bestows great Power. [AUM]*

About Robert Powell, Ph.D.: Internationally known lecturer, author, eurythmist and movement therapist, he wrote his Ph.D. thesis on the history of the zodiac. Robert recently recorded the six-tape series *The Sophia Teachings* (Sounds True Recordings), now also available as a book. He has taught these teachings for many years and has written numerous books, including *Chronicle of the Living Christ*, *Christian Hermetic Astrology*, *The Christ Mystery*, *The Sign of the Son of Man in the Heavens*, *Divine Sophia–Holy Wisdom*, *The Most Holy Trinosophia and the New Revelation of the Divine Feminine*, *The Morning Meditation in Eurythmy*, and he is co-author with Peter Treadgold of the yearly *Christian Star Calendar*. Robert is co-founder of the Sophia Foundation of North America and founder of the Choreocosmos School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance. He gives workshops in Europe and North America, and every other year he leads pilgrimages to the world's sacred sites (1996 Turkey; 1997 Holy Land; 1998 France; 2000 Britain; 2002 Italy; 2004 Greece; 2006 Egypt).