

THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST IN OUR TIME

Robert Powell

(with other contributions, including Valentin Tomberg's Communications about the Mystery of the Etheric Christ)

By way of introduction regarding the article below, entitled *An Experience of the Etheric Christ*: To readers unfamiliar with the term *Etheric Christ*, this refers to the non-physical manifestation of Christ in our time, as distinct from the physical incarnation of Christ two thousand years ago. *Etheric* refers to the ethereal realm of life forces – the biosphere that surrounds the earth and interpenetrates the whole of nature. Everything living is immersed in the biosphere, the *etheric realm*. The *Etheric Christ* was first spoken of by the Austrian philosopher and educator Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), who indicated the deeper meaning to the prophecies concerning Christ's second coming:

They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. —Matthew 24:30

He was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two angels appeared to them in white apparel, saying, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw him go into heaven." —Acts 1:9-11

Behold, he is coming with the clouds; and every eye shall see him... —Revelation 1:7

These prophetic statements all refer to the clouds. What does this signify? According to Rudolf Steiner:

*Through the Mystery of Golgotha, one is [now] able to experience the whole of Nature morally. If one gazes up at the clouds and sees lightning flashing down from them, one is able to behold Christ in his etheric form. With the clouds – that is to say, with the elements – he appears in spirit form. This vision may be had by everyone sooner or later. (Rudolf Steiner, *The Misraim Service*)*

From these words it is clear that the coming of the Etheric Christ – his second coming – is an event that is not only for humanity, but is also for the world of nature, comprising the elements of earth, water, air, and fire (warmth), of which the clouds are an expression, representing for our senses the natural boundary of the extent of nature. It is a new manifestation of Christ – the Etheric Christ – that is indicated in the New Testament by referring to his "coming with the clouds." In the Greek New Testament, the second coming is expressed by the word *Parousia*, which is usually translated as *Presence*, but which can also be translated as *Coming*, i.e. the second coming. Rudolf Steiner not only proclaimed the coming of the Etheric Christ, but also said that the second coming would commence during the course of the twentieth century – see my article "Kashyapa and the Proclamation of Christ in the Etheric" in the Easter 2011 issue of *Starlight*, the newsletter of the Sophia Foundation of North

America, available as a free download: <http://sophiafoundation.org/newsletter/> Steiner called this the *greatest mystery of our time*, ushering in a New Age for humankind.

Rudolf Steiner is not the only one to have spoken of the coming of the Etheric Christ. This was also spoken of by the Russian spiritual teacher Valentin Tomberg (1900-1973), and an early writing of his, indicating the onset of the second coming in 1932, appears at the end of these Easter greetings – reprinted from my book *Hermetic Astrology, volume 1* (San Rafael: Sophia Foundation Press, 2006). This early writing by Valentin Tomberg brings out the profound significance of Christ's second coming for the whole world of nature.

The work of the Sophia Foundation is focused upon helping to promote an understanding of – and facilitating an experience of – the second coming of Christ: an understanding which is fostered and deepened through Sophia, Divine Wisdom: *The Christ will appear in spiritual form during the 20th century, not through an external happening, but inasmuch as human beings find that force which is represented by Holy Sophia.* (Rudolf Steiner, *The Search for the New Isis, the Divine Sophia*, lecture 2). *Sophia* is the Greek word for *wisdom*. The Sophia Foundation exists to assist in bringing to birth a new world culture, inspired by Sophia, known as the *Rose of the World* – a culture based on Sophia's Divine Wisdom and on the new experience and understanding of Christ as an all-pervading Presence of Divine Love in the etheric realm.

Many others have borne witness to the Etheric Christ in our time. For example, Estelle Isaacson, who has contributed an article to the 2011 issue of *Starlight*, and whose work is also discussed there. Estelle had this vision in the year 2009:

As I stood before Christ in the Etheric, He lifted me up so that we were hovering just above the Earth. He was like a fire, a purifying fire. He was glowing like the Sun. Upon His chest was a brilliant cross of light, with rays of blue-violet light emanating out from it. He spoke to me: "O child of light, I came to Earth that I might illuminate it with My love, and My love knows no bounds. I love all, and the light of My love shines upon all beings, both good and evil..." – quoted from my article "In Memory of Willi Sucher (1902-1985)," *Journal for Star Wisdom 2010* (Great Barrington, Massachusetts: SteinerBooks, 2009)

I would like to thank Estelle for making her visions available, some of which have been published in the *Starlight* newsletter of the Sophia Foundation, some in the *Journal for Star Wisdom*. and some on the Internet within the context of the SophiaFocus group (SophiaFocus@yahoogroups.com). A published edition of Estelle's visions is eagerly awaited – hopefully in the not-too-distant future.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank all those who have helped – and are helping – to support the work of the Sophia Foundation, especially the Kalliopeia Foundation, whose generous support has enabled the Sophia Foundation (and therewith the Choreocosmos School and the Sophia Grail Circle) to continue this

year. To all who have helped in the past, and to all who are helping in the present, enabling us to continue the work dedicated to assisting the emergence of a new world culture, the *Rose of the World*, based on Love and Wisdom...heartfelt gratitude!

And with heartfelt greetings to *everyone*. ~Robert Powell

An Experience of the Etheric Christ

The following article by Tracy Saucier describing an experience undergone by participants at the workshop *Sophia and the Spiritual Hierarchies* is reprinted from the Easter 2011 issue of *Starlight*, the newsletter of the Sophia Foundation of North America, which is available as a free download from:

<http://sophiafoundation.org/newsletter/>

It was, as Tracy says at the end of her article, something altogether extraordinary. The Christ experience with which we were blessed is difficult to express in words, other than to characterize it as being bathed in *solar substance*, in *Light and Love*, enveloped in a supernatural *Divine Breath of Silence and Peace*.

It is the profound silence of desires, of preoccupations, of the imagination, of the memory, and of discursive thought. One may say that the entire being becomes like the surface of calm water, reflecting the immense presence of the starry sky and its indescribable harmony. And the waters are deep, they are so deep! And the silence grows, ever-increasing...what silence!

(Meditations on the Tarot, p. 10)

The suggestion was made to participants at the workshop that it would be possible – for those who wish to – each evening at 9pm to attune to the experience of the Etheric Christ through a *silent minute*. The *silent minute* was an historic movement begun in the United Kingdom by Major Wellesly Tudor Pole in 1940. The idea was developed in Britain during the Second World War. People were asked to devote one minute of prayer for peace at nine o'clock each evening. Tudor Pole said: “*There is no power on earth that can withstand the united cooperation on spiritual levels of men and women of goodwill everywhere. It is for this reason that the continued and widespread observance of the Silent Minute is of such vital importance in the interest of human welfare...[It comes from] an inner request from a high spiritual source that there be a Silent Minute of Prayer for Freedom, at 9pm each evening...*” This invitation, now in our time, to have a silent minute at 9pm each evening to attune to the Etheric Christ – to bathe in his *solar substance*, in *Light and Love*, to become enveloped in his supernatural *Divine Breath of Silence and Peace* – is open to everyone, and could also include something from the three prayers indicated below, after Tracy’s article.

~Robert Powell

This weekend (April 8-10, 2011) at Robert Powell’s workshop, *Sophia and the Spiritual Hierarchies*, held at Summerfield Waldorf School & Farm, in Sebastopol, California, something truly remarkable took place. It occurred towards the end of

Robert's talk on Saturday afternoon. On Saturday morning, he had spoken of the various kinds of negative radiation coming toward us: for example, electricity, electromagnetism, and atomic power - pointing out that activating our inner radiance is the answer to the increasing radiation from without (radiation that is inimical toward human beings, particularly on an etheric level, but also on other levels).

On Saturday afternoon, Robert made the point that since 9/11 we are living in the period prophetically indicated in chapter 13 of the Book of Revelations, as discussed in the book *Christ & the Maya Calendar* and also in Robert's forthcoming article for the 2012 issue of the *Journal for Star Wisdom*. Then he read from the article "Rose of the World" in the 2011 issue of the *Journal for Star Wisdom* and came to the words where Daniel Andreev indicates that everyone will see the Son of God and hear his Word:

Christ will take on as many forms as there are consciousnesses on Earth to behold him. He will adapt himself to everyone, and will converse with all. His forms, in an unimaginable way, will simultaneously yield an image: One who appears in heaven surrounded by unspeakable glory. There will not be a single being on Earth who will not see the Son of God and hear his Word.

Robert continued by giving a brief introduction to the last part of this "Rose of the World" article, describing Estelle Isaacson's experience of meeting with the Etheric Christ that came from her contemplation of the scene of Christ's suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane. Robert asked if anyone would like to read a passage from this last part of the article. A young woman, at her first Sophia Foundation workshop (it happened to be her birthday), responded "yes". At Robert's request she then read the following passage from the article, which is a message from Christ to all people:

Love one another and love the Earth. Send your love to your fellow beings and into the Earth that the Earth may be lifted up on wings of peace. There is a body of the Earth, which is a body of love; this is My body that I gave to the Earth. You become one with the body of love by doing works of love, by cultivating feelings of love and by thinking thoughts of love. I invite all to become one with Me in this body of love. I call you home; My arms are around you. Return to love. Remember love. For where love is there am I; and because I desire to have you in My heart, I ask you to love one another, that I may be in you and you in Me. Look for Me to come to you, for I am coming and shall gather you to myself, and you shall be safely folded in Me because you are precious in My sight; and My sight is ever upon you. Return to Me.

When she had read Christ's message and passed the *Journal for Star Wisdom* back to Robert for him to read the last part of the vision, he could hardly speak the closing words to the "Rose of the World" article, as the whole room was by this time filled with the Light and Love of Christ. Everyone present was enveloped in this Light and Love. There was total stillness and silence for about ten minutes as everyone

underwent - all together - a group experience of the over-lighting Presence of the Etheric Christ.

Reading Daniel Andreev's words and the words from the message of Christ at the end of the "Rose of the World" article in the 2011 issue of the *Journal for Star Wisdom* had somehow helped to bring about this beautiful and profound experience undergone by all at the workshop. For this blessing, we are all inexpressibly grateful. It was truly an altogether extraordinary workshop. ~Tracy Saucier

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May the over-lighting Presence of the Etheric Christ bless everyone, especially at this time of Easter, when Christ's sacrifice for humanity and the earth through his death and resurrection are held in consciousness. The over-lighting Presence of the Etheric Christ is needed all the more now, at a time of crisis for Mother Earth and her creatures. Through prayer it is possible to join with the activity of the Etheric Christ, at this critical time of the technological assault on Mother Earth, two major examples of which are: the 2010 Gulf Oil spill (<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=24370>), and the 2011 Fukushima radioactive leak (<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=24324>), which is still continuing.

These realities call for the co-creative healing forces of *spiritual imagination* and *listening of the soul* in order to activate impulses toward *moral actions* and *creative deeds* in the world. Witness positive news about humankind taking steps to protect Mother Earth(!) as indicated in the article on the rights for Mother Earth included beneath the following three prayers. ~Robert Powell

[1] A prayer sent by Dr Masaru Emoto to all people around the world, accompanied by this message: Please send your prayers of love and gratitude to the water at the nuclear plants in Fukushima, Japan!...During over twenty years research of hado measuring and water crystal photographic technology, I have been witnessing that water can turn positive when it receives pure vibrations of human prayer no matter how far away it is. The energy formula of Albert Einstein, $E=MC^2$, really means that Energy = number of people and the square of people's consciousness. Now is the time to understand the true meaning. Let us all join the prayer ceremony as fellow citizens of the planet earth. I would like to ask all people, not just in Japan, but all around the world to please help us to find a way out of the crisis of this planet!... Please say the following phrase to the water of Fukushima Nuclear Plant:

***We are sorry to make you suffer.
Please forgive us.
We thank you.
And we love you.***

[This prayer, or something similar, can be said at any time, and the same formulation can be directed toward other suffering realms of Mother Earth, for example, to the region of the Gulf Oil spill or elsewhere – note added by RP].

***[2] PRAYER FOR THE PROTECTION OF MOTHER EARTH AND
HER CREATURES***

HEAVENLY FATHER

HEAR OUR PRAYER

MAY DESTRUCTIVE MODERN TECHNOLOGY BE STOPPED

MAY THE ASSAULT ON MOTHER EARTH AND HER CREATURES BE HALTED

- IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST -

FOR THE SAKE OF HIS SORROWFUL PASSION

IN ATONEMENT FOR OUR SINS

HAVE MERCY ON US AND ON THE WHOLE WORLD

NOW AND FOREVER

AMEN

This prayer, which can also be prayed with appropriate gestures, is formulated in a traditional way, as experience shows that this is highly effective in terms of being heard in the spiritual world. It addresses the one whom Jesus Christ called the Father, the Creator of all existence. It expresses in a concise way the heartfelt prayer that the destruction of God's created world through modern technology may be stopped, that the technological assault upon Mother Earth may be halted. This prayer is effective through Jesus Christ, in his name. His Passion, his sacrifice on Golgotha, which is commemorated especially at Easter, is a door through which the Father can be reached. The second part of the prayer is a form of the Mercy prayer communicated through the Etheric Christ to Sister Faustina (Saint Faustina, the *Apostle of Divine Mercy*) in the 1930s – ideally to be prayed every day at 3pm in consciousness of the culminating moment of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. It can be prayed at other times as well, and is a most effective prayer.

[3] The following words, communicated by the Etheric Christ to Sister Faustina, are included in the Sophia Grail Circle celebration of the Nine Beatitudes, in the Fifth Beatitude "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy." These words are

also a prayer of attunement to the Etheric Christ, whose being is *unfathomable mercy*:

Apostle of my mercy, proclaim to the whole world my unfathomable mercy. For you I descended from heaven; for you I allowed myself to be nailed to the cross; for you I let my sacred heart be pierced with a lance, thus opening wide the source of mercy. From all my wounds, as streams, mercy flows for souls, and the wound in my heart is the fountain of unfathomable mercy. My heart overflows with compassion and mercy for all.

These words spoken to Sister Faustina can be experienced as a blessing from the Etheric Christ to everyone.

Here, now, with some very positive news for all who love and care for Mother Earth:

Bolivia enshrines natural world's rights with equal status for Mother Earth

Law of Mother Earth expected to prompt radical new conservation and social measures in South American nation

- John Vidal in La Paz
- guardian.co.uk. Sunday 10 April 2011 18.17 BST

John Vidal reports from La Paz where Bolivians are living with the effects of climate change every day:

[Link to this video](#)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/apr/10/bolivia-enshrines-natural-worlds-rights>

Bolivia is set to pass the world's first laws granting all nature equal rights to humans. The Law of Mother Earth, now agreed by politicians and grassroots social groups, redefines the country's rich mineral deposits as "blessings" and is expected to lead to radical new conservation and social measures to reduce pollution and control industry.

The country, which has been pilloried by the US and Britain in the UN climate talks for demanding steep carbon emission cuts, will establish 11 new rights for nature. They include: the right to life and to exist; the right to continue vital cycles and processes free from human alteration; the right to pure water and clean air; the right to balance; the right not to be polluted; and the right to not have cellular structure modified or genetically altered.

Controversially, it will also enshrine the right of nature "to not be affected by mega-infrastructure and development projects that affect the balance of ecosystems and the local inhabitant communities".

"It makes world history. Earth is the Mother of all", said Vice-President Alvaro García Linera. "It establishes a new relationship between man and nature, the harmony of which must be preserved as a guarantee of its regeneration."

The law, which is part of a complete restructuring of the Bolivian legal system following a change of constitution in 2009, has been heavily influenced by a

resurgent indigenous Andean spiritual world view which places the environment and the earth deity known as the Pachamama at the centre of all life. Humans are considered equal to all other entities.

But the abstract new laws are not expected to stop industry in its tracks. While it is not clear yet what actual protection the new rights will give in court to bugs, insects and ecosystems, the government is expected to establish a ministry of Mother Earth and to appoint an ombudsman. It is also committed to giving communities new legal powers to monitor and control polluting industries.

Bolivia has long suffered from serious environmental problems from the mining of tin, silver, gold and other raw materials. "Existing laws are not strong enough," said Undarico Pinto, leader of the 3.5m-strong Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia, the biggest social movement, who helped draft the law. "It will make industry more transparent. It will allow people to regulate industry at national, regional and local levels."

Foreign Minister David Choquehuanca said Bolivia's traditional indigenous respect for the Pachamama was vital to prevent climate change. "Our grandparents taught us that we belong to a big family of plants and animals. We believe that everything in the planet forms part of a big family. We indigenous people can contribute to solving the energy, climate, food and financial crises with our values," he said.

Little opposition is expected to the law being passed because President Evo Morales's ruling party, the Movement Towards Socialism, enjoys a comfortable majority in both houses of parliament.

However, the government must tread a fine line between increased regulation of companies and giving way to the powerful social movements who have pressed for the law. Bolivia earns \$500m (£305m) a year from mining companies which provides nearly one third of the country's foreign currency.

In the indigenous philosophy, the Pachamama is a living being.

The draft of the new law states: "She is sacred, fertile and the source of life that feeds and cares for all living beings in her womb. She is in permanent balance, harmony and communication with the cosmos. She is comprised of all ecosystems and living beings, and their self-organisation."

Ecuador, which also has powerful indigenous groups, has changed its constitution to give nature "the right to exist, persist, maintain and regenerate its vital cycles, structure, functions and its processes in evolution". However, the abstract rights have not led to new laws or stopped oil companies from destroying some of the most biologically rich areas of the Amazon.

In conclusion, as relevant to the foregoing indications relating to the Etheric Christ and the challenges now facing Mother Earth, let us consider these:

Communications concerning the Mystery of the Etheric Christ

It was in 1933 that Valentin Tomberg reached the age of 33. Among his diary notes, the following—written on June 3, 1933—expresses something of his intimate

experience of the onset of the second coming, the *etheric return*, i.e. Christ's return to Earth in a spiritual—etheric (and not physical)—form.

Comments added by the translator (Robert Powell) are in brackets [].

The translator of the following has not had access to the esoteric diaries from which this text stems, but received this extract from a diary entry for June 3, 1933 from someone who did have access and who typed out this particular entry (written in German, with the heading *Mitteilungen uber das Geheimnis des atherischen Christus*: "Communications concerning the Mystery of the Etheric Christ").

The etheric return of Christ has its source of origin in a still higher world sphere than did the descent of Christ prior to the Mystery of Golgotha...Just as the present descent of Christ is beginning in a higher sphere than at that time, so it ends correspondingly DEEPER than it could at that time. Nineteen centuries ago Christ descended as far as the sixth-sub earthly sphere; now he will descend to the ninth sphere...

Since 1932 it is important that the necessary takes place in order that Christ is able to appear in the earthly realm. The line of his descent down to the Earth is vertical. Then his horizontal movement across the Earth's surface begins. This is the CROSS of his second coming. Then his descent down through the nine sub-earthly spheres begins.

The occurrence [of the second coming] in its various stages is as follows: Through Christ's etheric return the Christ-Power is penetrating nature much more intensively than before [at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha]. At that time it was up to humankind; this time it involves nature also. The Christ-Power will reach right into the root-forces of plants, in which the mystery of the Fall of nature is locked up...

The reappearance of Christ on the Earth will signify the meeting of the whole of humanity with the Lesser Guardian of the Threshold. Usually the etheric return of Christ is imagined as signifying joy and happiness for humankind. But the reality will be quite different. Initially, it will not be joy and happiness which will be felt, but SHAME. A feeling of shame—in an elemental and powerful form—will take hold of human beings. Human beings will become conscious of all their shortcomings, and no one else will be able to comfort them. Human beings will then go out to seek comfort from nature. One will be able to see someone going up to a tree and embracing it—seeking comfort from it—and, standing thus, how they will weep bitterly.

And people will then be right in seeking comfort from dumb creatures, for creatures (the beings of nature) will become transformed through the presence of Christ. At present nature has lost all hope of being redeemed, but will be filled anew with hope through the breath of the presence of Christ. Nature will become good, and will again radiate trust and kindness towards human beings, instead of fear and mistrust as is the case now. Wonderful changes will take place in nature. Springtimes will come which will be different from all other springtimes—with goodness which will be felt in the air and in the breath, in the breathing of the ground, in the buds and green leaves.

These springtimes will be filled with a blessing that nature has never experienced before.

Towards autumn nature will bestow her fruits in generous abundance—the sap will be life-giving and seeds will be ripe and full. For Christ will be there for nature. His presence will work in such a way that—even if it takes place only for a moment—all struggle, hate and fear will withdraw from nature.

Extraordinary changes will become noticeable in the atmosphere. There will be regions where the air will be such that many people will be cured—cured of their illnesses through the air they breath in...Changes in the behavior of children will manifest themselves in surprising and mysterious ways. Thus, it will happen that a circle of children playing will become quite still and will stand there motionless and in deep silence for a while... Even if communism still exists in Russia, remarkable occurrences in the school-life of communist Russia will take place. There large groups of children will suddenly experience something, concerning which they won't know what to say, but which will place them in a reverent and devout mood.

Christ will move from the West to the East in wave-like lines. He will begin in America and will continue through Europe to the north-east of Europe. From there he will continue eastwards as far as China, where the resistance is strongest. His coming is not for all regions of the Earth simultaneously, but progresses step by step. Thereby each further step of his movement will signify a stronger force, a growth in the transmission of the Christ-Power. Only after traversing the whole of the Earth in this way will he appear to individuals in different parts of the world. Clairvoyant esotericists will see him earlier, where he will be present only in the kingdoms of nature, but for many others the first experience of him will be in the human kingdom, after his expansion throughout nature is accomplished.