

“Sophia and the Coming World Culture, the Rose of the World”

Robert Powell, Ph.D.

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Beethoven’s sixth symphony, the *Pastoral Symphony*, which – according to the composer himself – is about experiencing the Divine in Nature, can be regarded as an expression of Shamballa – Shamballa understood as the lost paradise. What took place with Mother Nature at the time of the Fall was seen by the teachers of ancient civilization as a kind of withdrawal of the realm of Paradise into the heart of the earth. This is a realm of light-filled life, the golden realm in the heart of the earth. In our time there is a new relationship happening between humanity and this realm of Shamballa. This is going to be the main focus of the workshop this weekend, starting tomorrow, on *Sophia and the Four Elements*.

We are now at a very wonderful moment of transition for humanity, which is taking place at the present time as we approach the Age of Aquarius. As we shall see, this coming age could also be called the Age of Sophia. Who is Sophia, and what does the coming Age of Sophia signify for humanity and for the Earth?

Many of you will know from the Bible that ‘Sophia’ is the Greek word for wisdom. In the Old Testament this word is expressed in the Hebrew as ‘hokmah’ (pronounced ‘chokmah’), meaning wisdom. When the Old Testament was translated into Greek the word ‘hokmah’ was translated as ‘Sophia’. In the English translation of the Bible this is translated as wisdom. If you read the *Book of Proverbs*, there you will find words which Sophia speaks through King Solomon. It has been said that Solomon was regarded as the wisest human being of antiquity. So great was his fame on account of his wisdom that people came from all over the ancient world to seek him out, including the fabled Queen of Sheba. She came from afar to drink from the wisdom of Solomon. Solomon was a human being who had a special relationship with Sophia, Divine Wisdom. Various books of the Old Testament are attributed to Solomon, among them the *Book of Proverbs*. All these books speak of Sophia. These are called the Wisdom Books of the Old Testament.

I can highly recommend a book by Thomas Schipflinger translated from German into English by James Morgante. This book is called *Sophia Maria*. It is a wonderful book which includes all the references to Sophia from the Old Testament and also a few from the New Testament. (I was asked to write an afterword to this book and it is available from the Sophia Foundation.)

If we read the *Book of Proverbs*, we see there the words which Sophia speaks in the first person. This answers one of the questions which are often raised with regard to Sophia: Is divine wisdom simply an attribute of God? We speak of God’s power, God’s wisdom, and God’s love. But it is clear if you read the Wisdom Books in the Old Testament that it is not simply an attribute of God but an actual being, because she speaks in the first person. She says, for example: “I was present at the beginning of the Creation at the side of the Lord, participating in the work of the Creation.” This is a statement that tells us something about Sophia. It is a matter of an actual being, whose nature is wisdom, who participated in the work of creation.

If we take this as the starting point of our meditation, then it is clear also from the words spoken that Sophia is a feminine being – a great, divine feminine being. This raises many interesting questions of a philosophical and theological nature about the nature of the Godhead. These questions were asked by

some thinkers in the ancient world, but then with the rise of Christianity the theme of Sophia more and more receded into the background. The main reason for this was that early Christians identified Sophia with Christ. With this, at one stroke Sophia disappeared from human consciousness, at least in the Christian world.

Consider, however, the *Gospel of St. John*. The beginning of the *Gospel of St. John* starts off with the words “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.” These are similar to the words of Sophia, which she speaks in the *Book of Proverbs*, where she reveals herself, saying that she was present, participating in the creation of the world, from the very beginning. It was Arius, a Christian theologian of the fourth century AD, who concluded from reading these two texts, putting them side by side, that Sophia and Christ are one and the same – even though one is clearly masculine and the other feminine. This identification made by Arius was adopted by another fourth century theologian, Anathasius, and was subsequently generally accepted. This was a tragedy for the whole development of Christianity, because it developed increasingly as a patriarchal religion, losing the Divine Feminine – although of course, there was (and still is) devotion to the Virgin Mary.

On the other hand, however, in the Russian Orthodox Church there lives a devotion to Sophia. It is not immediately apparent how this came about. You can see from these icons on display here – these are Sophia icons from the Russian tradition – that all of them have something in common. They all show Sophia as a majestic divine feminine being who is raying out wisdom. Above her is Christ, so she is clearly not the same as Christ. To her right is the Virgin Mary, so she is clearly not the same as the Virgin Mary. To her left is John the Baptist. This is something – the Sophia icon tradition – that has lived in the history of the Russian Church. In fact there are two cathedrals named after Sophia: the cathedral of Divine Sophia in Kiev in the Ukraine, which was founded in the 11th century, and the cathedral of Holy Sophia in Novgorod, north-west of Moscow, also dating from the 11th century. This was regarded for centuries as the spiritual center of Russia. Moreover, there are also numerous Sophia churches in Russia. The Russian people simply took this as a matter of fact, this devotion to Sophia, without really questioning it or asking: Who is Sophia? And there is even (going back to the 17th century) a church liturgy dedicated to Sophia in the old Slavic language (church Slavonic). All this shows that in the Russian tradition there has lived this devotion to Sophia.

Vladimir Soloviev was a great Russian philosopher, who was born in 1853, and who studied philosophy in the West. His mission was to help the Russian people in the development of philosophy. Already as a child, in the tenth year of his life, when he was attending a church service in Moscow, he had a vision of Sophia who appeared to him as a radiant divine feminine being wrapped in azure light. On this account a sense of Sophia was living in him. It was a living presence, not just something that he had seen from the icons. He knew that Sophia is a real being. In his philosophical quest he was searching for the deeper meaning: Who is Sophia, and what is the relationship of Sophia to the Trinity – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are imbued with masculine qualities?

His search led him to London. He studied in the Library of the British Museum, and there one day he had a second experience of Sophia. This time he saw only her face. She said to him: “Go to Egypt.” And that is what he did. He took the train across Europe, down through Italy, and then took the ferry from Brindisi across to Egypt and stayed at a hotel in Cairo. There were some Russian émigrés staying there. One night he received the inner message to go into the desert. He was dressed wearing a long coat, a tall silk hat, and black gloves when he set off into the desert – a very strange sight. Some Bedouin nomads captured him, uncertain whether to kill him outright or to hold him for ransom. Fortunately for him,

because of his appearance they thought he was the devil, and so they released him. That night it was approaching dawn when he had the third and most momentous experience of Divine Sophia, who appeared to him in her full glory and showered him with love. “Today my Queen appeared to me in azure” he wrote. From that point, for the rest of his life, he was devoted to Sophia to help bring an understanding of Sophia to the Russian people. He is regarded as the founder of sophiology – the theology of Sophia.

There are many wonderful works in the Russian language concerning sophiology, some of which have been translated into English, contributing to our understanding of Sophia. The central question which occupied these philosophers and theologians was “What is the relationship of Sophia to the Holy Trinity?” Perhaps the most profound insight came from one of the Russian sophiologists, Pavel Florensky, who was also a priest. He has been called the ‘Leonardo da Vinci’ of Russia. He was a genius. Besides being a priest he was a mathematician and he also wrote an early history of electricity. He understood electricity. When the Bolshevik Revolution took place, he was asked by the Bolsheviks to help them with their program for the electrification of the Soviet Union. He agreed and he was allowed to continue to wear his priestly garments. As you know, in the Orthodox Church the priests wear long robes and large crosses, which they wear around their neck, and often have a big beard. On this account he was a very unusual sight in communist Moscow. He was even invited to speak at scientific congresses there. However, Stalin hated everything to do with religion, and because Florensky was a priest, this meant that he was eventually arrested and deported to a prison camp. For example, Stalin took one of the most beautiful cathedrals in Moscow and had it blown up in order to build a swimming pool in its place. That was the kind of person he was. Fortunately that beautiful cathedral in Moscow has since been rebuilt. Stalin’s hatred of everything religious was so strong that he could not tolerate Florensky, even though Florensky was a genius who was actually helping the Soviets with their electrification program. Stalin had Florensky sent to a concentration camp on the Solovetskiye Islands and there he was executed on December 8, 1937.

In Florensky’s main work, which is called *The Pillar and Foundation of Truth*, Chapter 10 is dedicated to Sophia. This work has been translated into English and published by Princeton University Press. He describes how Sophia, as the first created being, has a special relationship with the Holy Trinity – with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. For Florensky, Sophia is a being who is a ‘bride’ of the Holy Trinity, and is at the pinnacle of creation. Thus all creation has a relationship to Sophia, because all of creation has come into existence by way of the Divine Wisdom that Sophia embodies. She is the ‘plan’ of creation and also participates in the work of creation.

In Chapter 9 of the *Book of Proverbs* there is a reference to Sophia’s temple having seven pillars. This gives us some idea about the nature of Sophia. To use an analogy: an architect, before he sets to work building a house, will draw an architectural plan and work from that. You could think, by way of analogy, of the creator as the great architect and Sophia as the plan. She embodies the plan of creation. The seven pillars in Sophia’s temple indicate the seven stages of the unfolding of creation, what is referred to as the ‘seven days of creation.’

As well as that which came about in Russia through Sophia and the Russian sophiologists, our knowledge of the divine plan of the being of Sophia has been greatly enriched in the 20th century through the work of Rudolf Steiner, whose central teaching is about the unfolding of creation through seven stages or ‘days.’ What Rudolf Steiner describes is of such detail that he gives us a picture going far beyond anything that anybody has ever taught before concerning the stages or ‘days’ of creation.

Through the teaching of Rudolf Steiner, an unveiling of the being of Sophia has taken place. In fact, Rudolf Steiner called his life's work 'Anthroposophia' – 'anthropos', from the Greek, means the human being and 'sophia' is the Greek for wisdom. 'Anthroposophia' is a new revelation of the being of Divine Sophia, in which there is an understanding of Sophia as a divine feminine being.

One important aspect indicated by Rudolf Steiner is that Sophia is a cosmic being, whose nature embraces the whole cosmos. Thus, when we contemplate a map of the galaxy we gain insights into Sophia, who holds the blueprint for creation. Our Sun, and all the different stars/suns in our galaxy, have all come into existence from the Galactic Center, the Central Sun at the heart. In the *Timaeus*, Plato refers to the Transmundane Sun and he describes our Sun as a miniature copy of the Supra-Celestial Sun. Could it be that Plato, in referring to the Transmundane Sun, meant the Central Sun at the heart of our galaxy from which everything else has proceeded? The Central Sun is of immense power. If you imagine the power of our Sun holding the nine planets and countless asteroids in their orbits, you will get a sense of the power and majesty of our Sun. Now think of the Central Sun holding one hundred billion suns (not planets!), in their orbits around it, including our Sun.

Modern astronomy postulates the existence of a 'supermassive black hole' at the center of our galaxy. According to esoteric teaching, however, it is a divine center pouring out love to all the suns, all the stars in the heavens. This is what Aristotle called the 'prime mover' at the heart of all existence. Everything in our galaxy is moving around this great center. Moreover, Divine Sophia has something to do with this, which is what I want to focus on this evening.

Let us look back to someone who had a deep relationship with Sophia: the Italian poet Dante. In Dante's vision which he had at Easter in the year 1300 and which he spent the rest of his life writing down as the *Divine Comedy*, he beheld the highest realm. In Dante's vision of the highest heaven he calls this highest realm the 'Empyrean'. Let us now contemplate the depiction by the French graphic artist Gustav Doré of Dante's vision of the Empyrean, and let us then compare this with the map of our galaxy. Can you all see the similarity? It appears that what Dante beheld in mystical vision has been found 700 years later by modern astronomy. Dante describes in his vision the Throne of God at the center and countless beings around the Throne of God. The whole – he uses the expression 'the whole' – is fashioned in the form of 'a snow-white rose.' Those who know the mystical tradition relating to Divine Sophia will know that this is the image that relates to Sophia, the celestial rose. In contemplating the image of our galaxy, what are we actually beholding? Are we beholding the image of Sophia in the form of a snow-white rose? Is Sophia one and the same with what we see in our galaxy? Considering that Sophia – according to the words of Sophia from the *Book of Proverbs* – has always had a relationship with our evolution it is reasonable to conclude that Sophia is a being of galactic dimension. At least, we can hold this possibility as a hypothesis.

One of the important things that Rudolf Steiner indicated was that the being whom we call Sophia is the same as the goddess whom the Egyptians called Isis. We know of the great significance of Isis for the Egyptian culture and also of the significance of Osiris. Isis and Osiris were regarded as brother and sister and also as bride and groom. If we take this idea of Rudolf Steiner and work with it, that Sophia is the same as Isis, then who were the Egyptians revering as Osiris? In Rudolf Steiner's lectures *Egyptian Myths and Mysteries*, he describes that Osiris was how the Egyptian people saw Christ before his incarnation on the Earth. We could think of this as a pre-incarnatory revelation of Christ to the Egyptian people in the shape of Osiris, before Christ incarnated on the Earth. Against this background we can understand the words of St. Augustine, who said that there were 'Christians before Christ.' If we grasp this

background concerning the ancient Egyptian mystery religion of Isis and Osiris, we can begin to understand that the Egyptians were indeed ‘Christians before Christ.’ Before he came into incarnation on the earth, they worshipped him as Osiris. Osiris and Isis have a deep relationship to each other and are the same beings whom we know as Christ and Sophia.

This is addressed in *The Revelation to John*, the last book in the Bible, which is the revelation of the ascended Jesus Christ to John the Beloved Disciple on the island of Patmos. In this revelation a series of mighty images were given to John, revealing to him the unfolding of the future. If you read *The Revelation to John*, it is clear that the one who is called the ‘Lamb’ is Christ. That is also the name that John the Baptist gave to Christ, as indicated in John’s words: “Behold the Lamb of God.” In *The Revelation to John* reference is made to the ‘Bride of the Lamb’ who is Sophia. There is a deep and profound relationship between Christ and Sophia. A mystery of the future is revealed in *The Revelation to John*, where in the last two chapters the working together of the Lamb and his Bride is referred to. What is called the sacred marriage of the Lamb and his Bride – in the Greek, ‘hieros gamos’, ‘sacred marriage’ – where the picture is given of Sophia the Bride descending from above and coming down as the bearer of the new heaven, coming down and uniting with the Lamb, who through his sacrifice is bringing about the spiritualization and transformation of the Earth. Through this sacred marriage there takes place the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. You can read this in the last two chapters (Chapters 21 & 22) of *The Revelation to John*. Already in Chapter 12 mention is made of Sophia as a majestic cosmic being. She is depicted as the “woman clothed with the Sun, with the Moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.” This image that you see here is a representation of Divine Sophia based on a sketch by Rudolf Steiner that is drawn directly from Chapter 12 of *The Revelation to John*. He presented this sketch as the fifth of the seven apocalyptic seals.

The Russian contemporary of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) – Vladimir Soloviev (1853-1900) – also did much during his short life to promote consciousness of Sophia among the Russian people. His efforts gave birth to Sophiology: the theology of Sophia. There would be much to say concerning Soloviev and Sophiology, but for now let us focus on the image of the fifth seal. Let us try to understand what was at work with both Rudolf Steiner and Vladimir Soloviev. We can understand it against the background of the image of the fifth seal, that of the “woman clothed with the Sun” described in *The Revelation to John*. Sophia is bringing to birth a child, and she is attacked by a great red dragon with seven heads. This reveals itself to us in a remarkable way. For Vladimir Soloviev’s mission was to speak to the Russian people in the name of the folk spirit of the Russian people, to draw the Russian people towards understanding their true mission, which has to do with Sophia. We can understand this against the background of some remarks made by Rudolf Steiner, where he spoke of the next age, the Age of Aquarius, as the age when the Slavic peoples will come into their true mission. The Russians – and in fact all the Slavic peoples – will come into their true mission in this coming age. Their mission has to do with Sophia. That is why the image of Sophia has lived in the Russian church. The existence of the icons of Sophia in the Russian church, and also the naming of cathedrals and churches after Sophia, is not something coming from the past. It is something to do with the future. It has to do with the future mission of Russia and of the Slavic peoples. The coming Age of Aquarius will bring forth a new culture. This new culture will develop first in Russia and in the other Slavic countries and will then spread around the world.

If we consider this picture of the future, we can then begin to understand what took place through another Vladimir, who came after Vladimir Soloviev. That was Vladimir Lenin, who was the leader of

the Bolshevik Revolution, and who was instrumental in the birth of communism. Soviet communism took over not only in Russia but in all the Slavic countries. Soviet communism represented the opposite of the coming Sophia culture. What Soloviev and the other Russian sophiologists were working for was to prepare Russia for the future culture of Sophia. As John beheld in his vision on the Island of Patmos, he saw that Sophia would be attacked by a great red dragon. And what did the Bolsheviks call themselves? The Reds. It is very transparent, if you contemplate it, what was at work. It was literally an attack by demonic forces who worked through Marx and Lenin, and then through Stalin. The way the dark forces work is that they see what is the true image for the future, and they substitute a caricature or an inversion of it. It is often able to take hold, because it has some element of truth.

The future age of Sophia will be an age of the flourishing of community, brotherhood and sisterhood, called in *The Revelation to John* 'Philadelphia'. 'Delphos' means the womb, 'adelphoi' means springing from the same womb, i.e. brothers and sisters come from the same womb. 'Philadelphia' – that is the love that exists between brothers and sisters coming from the same womb. In a more extended sense, 'Philadelphia' is the community of brotherly and sisterly love. The longing for community was the seduction that lay at the root of Soviet communism. Communism is supposedly based on community. But as the world then witnessed, it turned out to be a dictatorship of an élite, who led their extravagant lifestyles at the expense of millions of people whom they subjected to their will. The element of truth in communism was the longing of the Slavic people for community. This was the lure, the promise of community. However, what took place did not lead to a community of free spirits, but rather to the subjugation of the people to the will of an elite group. The great tragedy that overcame Russia and the Slavic peoples was the preempting by dark forces of the future that is to arise in the coming Age of Aquarius. The visions presented in *The Revelation to John* are true. They offer a picturing of the future, but we have to learn to read them properly. At the time of John, of course, all of this with regard to Soviet communism was far in the future, but for us it now lies in the past.

During the time of Soviet communism the vision of the true future of Russia was kept alive in at least one person, the Russian poet and seer Daniel Andreev (1906-1959), who has been called the 'Russian Dante.' Being a poet and a seer under Stalin was not easy. At the age of 41 (in 1947) Daniel Andreev and his wife were arrested by the KGB and sentenced to 25 years imprisonment. All his writings were confiscated and destroyed. But that did not stop his visions which continued while he was in prison. The work of Daniel Andreev is very important as a continuation of that which emerged with Vladimir Soloviev as the stream of Russian spirituality devoted to Divine Sophia.

The visions of Daniel Andreev continued while he was in prison. When he was in prison, while the other prisoners were asleep, he was guided out of his body by his guardian angel and was shown many different things. Not only that, but his guardian angel helped him to be able to write down the content of his visionary experiences and also protected these writings. There were regular searches of the prison cell. Everything that was found was confiscated. His writing was protected by superhuman intervention. In this way his manuscript came into being. *Rosa Mira* is the Russian title; *The Rose of the World* is the translation of this title. This manuscript was nearly complete when Daniel Andreev was finally released from prison. He had originally been sentenced to 25 years in prison, but after the death of Stalin, under Khrushchev, it was altered to a 10-year sentence. He was released in 1957. By this time his health was broken and he lived only a further two years. During these two years he was able to complete the manuscript which he entrusted to his wife Alla whom I had the good fortune to meet when I was invited to be a presenter at a Sophia conference on a cruise ship on the River Volga in 1996. At that time Alla

Andreev was 90 years old and nearly blind but she was able to recite the poetry of her husband by heart. She was a very spirited woman.

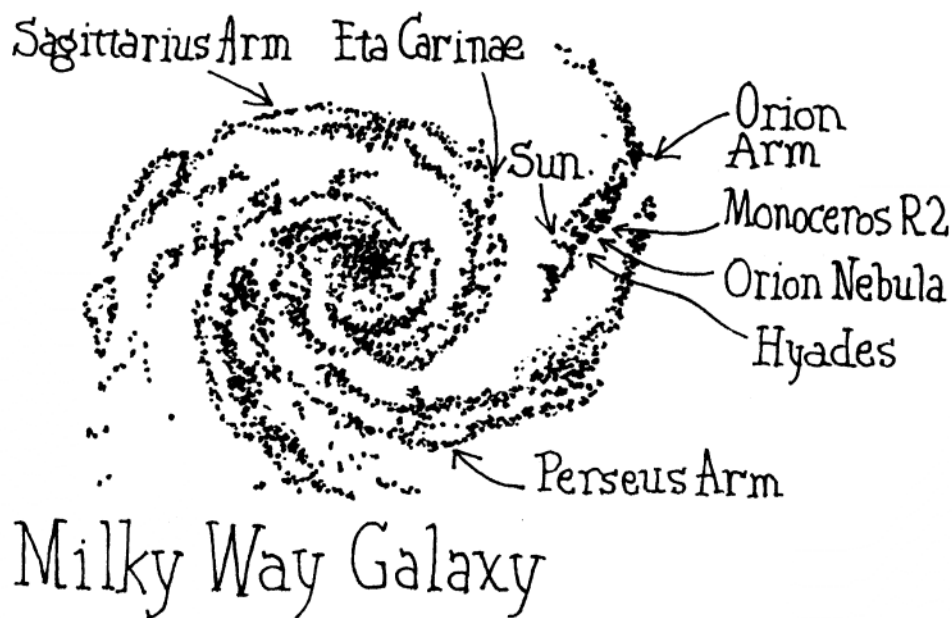
She had the manuscript of *The Rose of the World*. It was dangerous to have such a manuscript at that time of Soviet communism, so the manuscript was buried at a remote place in the Caucasus mountains. Only many years later was it retrieved. Then copies were made and these began to circulate. In 1991 with the collapse of Soviet communism the manuscript was finally able to be published in Russia. It is estimated that over a million Russians have in the meantime read this work. In 1997 an English translation of *The Rose of the World* was published by Lindisfarne Press. It is difficult book to read, because Daniel Andreev was faithful to everything that was said to him. It was said in a language which is not really known. He uses many expressions that are unknown in any language. He does give a glossary to explain what these expressions mean, but when you are reading the book it is very challenging because of expressions like 'Shadanakar', 'Bayushmi', and 'Zatomis'. If you persevere, an extraordinary revelation is presented in this work. There are also definite errors in this book. Perhaps these have arisen in translation. However, the general message of the book is very inspiring because it is all about the coming of Sophia.

Through my own research I have been able to confirm Daniel Andreev's basic thesis of the future incarnation of Sophia. Concerning this, we are approaching an event comparable to the incarnation of Christ two thousand years ago. This event will have an enormous impact on the whole of the planet. Let us contemplate this coming incarnation of Divine Sophia with the help of Star Wisdom. Through the Wisdom of the Stars, it is possible to penetrate to an understanding of the coming incarnation of Sophia, which culminates during the coming Age of Aquarius.

The stages of incarnation of Sophia are the same as those of the incarnation of Christ, the Logos. Therefore, let us follow the stages of this incarnation of the Logos, starting with the Central Sun at the heart of our galaxy as the place of origin of Christ and Sophia, who each follow the same path of incarnation. In the case of Christ, his descent from the Central Sun began long ago and took place in stages. An important stage was the entrance of Christ into our local part of the galaxy, the Orion Arm, located between the Sagittarius Arm and the Perseus Arm – two of the great spiral arms extending out from the galactic center. (There are four great spiral arms proceeding from the center of the galaxy and some side arms, one of these being the Orion Arm. Our Sun is located on the inside of the Orion Arm, looking towards the galactic center in the direction of Sagittarius.) Then, about eight thousand years ago, Christ descended from the local part of our galaxy to unite with our Sun. After entering our solar system and uniting with the Sun about 6000 BC, two thousand years ago Christ descended into the human being Jesus of Nazareth at the moment of the baptism in the River Jordan. This is the moment that is addressed in the words of the *Gospel of St. Luke*: "This is my beloved Son whom today I have begotten." This is how it is expressed in the ancient manuscripts. In later manuscripts it was changed to "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." With this later translation the significance of the moment of the incarnation was lost. However, in the ancient manuscripts of the *Gospel of St. Luke* you can read: "This is my beloved Son whom today I have begotten." This moment of baptism in the Jordan signified the incarnation of the Logos into the human being Jesus of Nazareth. It denoted the beginning of a divine mission which lasted for 3½ years. I was able to exactly date the major events in the life of Christ in my book *Chronicle of the Living Christ*.

This mission was to bring the impulse of divine love from the Central Sun for the Earth and the evolution of humanity. There was some knowledge of this in early Christianity, where Christ was

referred to as the Spirit of the Sun. There was a knowledge that Christ came from a higher world as a cosmic being. Similarly, speaking of Sophia as the “woman clothed with the Sun”, she is also an emissary from the Central Sun as the bearer of the divine feminine aspect of the Godhead. In the case of Christ and Sophia, we can speak of ‘God-born’ beings coming directly from the heart of God at the center of our galaxy. God-born beings have to be distinguished from all other beings, who are created beings. Angels, and all beings of the celestial hierarchies, and also human beings and all other beings are created beings. However, Christ and Sophia are God-born beings. This means that they are substantially part of the Central Sun. When Christ spoke the words: “I and the Father are One”, what is meant by this? To understand the cosmic being of Christ, one has to grasp that the essence of his being extended all the way to the Central Sun. The same applies to Sophia, the Bride of the Lamb, who is the feminine counterpart of Christ.



Let us now endeavor to follow the stages of Sophia’s incarnation. At the time when Dante wrote the *Divine Comedy* and had his vision and saw the snow-white rose, the celestial image of Divine Sophia united with the Throne of God in the Empyrean, the highest divine realm, when Dante had this vision, at that time Sophia was still united with the Central Sun. She was at that time still dwelling in this highest sphere, the Empyrean, the divine realm united with the Throne of God. Since approximately 1775, Divine Sophia has become connected with the local part of our galaxy, the Orion Arm, and is now working especially through the twelve constellations of the zodiac. This is revealed in the image of Sophia crowned by twelve stars. Sophia is clothed with the zodiac. She is at the present time working from the level of the zodiac.

This point in time of Sophia’s entrance into the local part of our galaxy coincides with the founding of the United States of America in 1776. There is a very deep connection here between these two events which I cannot go into now because it is too complex. However, it can be said that there is a relationship between the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the descent of Sophia to unite with our cosmos – by this I mean the local part of the galaxy – around the year 1775. Since that time Sophia has been

working from the level of the zodiac. Since then theosophy has arisen – theosophia, the wisdom of God; – also Russian Sophiology has arisen; and anthroposophy, anthroposophia, the wisdom of the human being. These spiritual streams have arisen directly from the approach of Sophia, who around 1775 came from the Central Sun into our local cosmos, the Orion Arm of the Milky Way galaxy. The coming of Sophia was shown to John on the island of Patmos over 1900 years ago when the Ascended Christ showed him the unfolding of the future of evolution. In the middle of this unfolding, in this series of visions that he received and wrote down in *The Revelation to John*, in Chapter 12 he suddenly beheld Sophia appearing. John was seeing into the future. He was seeing a certain moment in time. He saw that Divine Sophia was going to appear on the world stage. We can ask the question: When was this, or is it still to come in the future? The answer is that the appearance of Sophia onto the world stage is happening in stages. The first stage has to do with Sophia coming into our cosmos represented by the realm of the zodiac, symbolized by the twelve stars around her head. The second stage has to do with Sophia coming into our solar system and connecting with the Sun. This is why John saw her in vision “clothed with the Sun”. In the third stage he beheld her with the Moon under her feet. And then follows the fourth stage, which I will come to shortly.

What we are presented with in Chapter 12 of *The Revelation to John* is a blueprint of the incarnation of Sophia. Nobody needs to accept this interpretation. I am presenting this as the result of my research and I do not expect anybody to believe anything I say. I am simply presenting you with what I have found, what I regard as true, as a stimulus for you to think about. That is the principle of science. Scientists present their research and others can think about it. Others might come to different results, which is fine too. This lecture is given in the spirit of presenting you with what I have come to as a stimulus for further thought about very deep questions of existence.

What I have come to is that the next stage of Sophia’s incarnation, when she will come down from the level of the zodiac comprising the twelve zodiacal constellations, will be around the year 2375. Then Sophia will come into our solar system and unite with our Sun. Then she really will be the “woman clothed with the Sun.” This will take place at an interval of about 600 years after her entrance into our local cosmos (Orion Arm) with its central band of stars – the twelve constellations of the zodiac. Advancing 600 years from 1775, this will occur around the year 2375, which is the date when the vernal point will enter the sign of Aquarius. Right now the vernal point is at 5 degrees in the sign of Pisces. It moves back one degree every 72 years. We can calculate the exact date when the vernal point will enter into the sign of Aquarius signifying the beginning of the Age of Aquarius. This will be in the year 2375. This is the date that I have arrived at. There is a publication called the *American Sidereal Ephemeris* published by Astro Communications Services in San Diego. There the date for the beginning of the Age of Aquarius is given as 2376 – a slight difference of only one year. Whichever date one takes, the beginning of the Age of Aquarius is around this time. This will be the time when Sophia will enter into the next stage of her incarnation approaching the Earth in accordance with the great vision of John that he had on Patmos over 1900 years ago. She will then be literally the “woman clothed with the Sun.”

Already now preparation for the incarnation of Sophia on the Sun is taking place. This is one of the great events in the history of our solar system. The entrance of Sophia into our solar system will signify a profound shift in our evolution, when this being of sublime majesty, beauty, celestial power, grace, and divine light and love will unite with the Sun at the start of the Age of Aquarius. Even now Sophia’s influence, which at the present time (last part of the Age of Pisces) is streaming in from the world of the fixed stars, is already beginning to be received by our solar system and, in the words of Daniel Andreev,

this is giving rise to a new culture here on the Earth. The more that human beings experience this inflowing of Sophia, now from the fixed stars, especially from the twelve constellations of the zodiac, but soon – in the Age of Aquarius – directly from the Sun, the more there will arise a new sense for life here on Earth. To illustrate this, I would like to read something from Daniel Andreev's book *The Rose of the World*:

A mysterious event is taking place in contemporary times: new divine creative energy is emanating into our cosmos. Since ancient times, the loftiest hearts and minds have anticipated this event that is now taking place. This is an event so important that it can only be compared to the incarnation of the Logos 1900 years ago.

Vladimir Soloviev was given a glimpse of her when on a starry night in the Egyptian desert he experienced a stunning breach of his consciousness and saw the great feminine being with his own eyes.

We call her Sventa Sventana, the Holiest of the Holy, She who is the brightest and all good, the experience of the feminine hypostasis of the Trinity. The long-awaited day approaches when she will descend. There she will be born in a body of enlightened ether. A host of the loftiest souls will descend with her. There she is, our hope and joy, light and divine beauty. With her coming, there will be the founding of the Rose of the World.

This is the expression that Daniel Andreev uses for this new culture that will arise through the coming of Sophia, the Rose of the World. The work of the Sophia Foundation of North America is dedicated to helping to prepare the way for this future culture of the Rose of the World. In the visions of Daniel Andreev he also points to forces of opposition to this arising of the Rose of the World in the future. The greatest opposition is presented by the incarnation of the Antichrist. The culture that will arise through the coming of the Antichrist is the opposite of what is to come into the world through the coming of Sophia and the founding of the Rose of the World. There are challenges to be faced. In meeting these challenges, we can especially find strength by focusing upon the Rose of the World and gaining an idea of the coming great culture of Sophia.

Again quoting Daniel Andreev, from his book *The Rose of the World*, he says:

By warning about the coming Antichrist, by pointing him out and unmasking him when he appears, and also by cultivating unshakeable faith within human hearts, and also by grasping the spiritual perspectives of evolution, we will help Sophia bring to birth the new culture of love and wisdom.

However it has to be recalled that Daniel Andreev, using his own special language, does not speak of Sophia. Rather, he speaks of Sventa Sventana, the 'Holiest of the Holy':

Sventa Sventana's birth will be mirrored not only by the Rose of the World. Feminine power and its role in contemporary life is increasing everywhere. It is that circumstance above all that is giving rise to worldwide peace movements, an abhorrence of bloodshed, an increase in woman's role in society, an ever-growing tenderness and concern for children, and a burning hunger for beauty and love. We are entering an age when the female soul will become ever purer and broader, when an ever greater number of women will become profound inspirers, sensitive mothers, wise counselors and far-sighted leaders. It will be an age when the feminine in humanity will manifest itself with unprecedented strength, striking a perfect balance with masculine impulses. See, you who have eyes.

This is the prospect that is facing us in the future. However, one thing needs to be clarified: when Daniel Andreev speaks of an incarnation of Sophia, he makes it clear that this is not an incarnation into a

physical human being, as was the case with the incarnation of Christ in the physical human being Jesus of Nazareth. Rather, it will be an incarnation of Sophia in an ethereal body. This ethereal body is already being prepared, and it is a body of life forces, a radiant body. This great being will work here on the Earth in this radiant ethereal body and will bring about a far-reaching transformation giving rise to the culture of the Rose of the World, which Rudolf Steiner calls the 'sixth culture', the future Slavic culture. Everything that Rudolf Steiner describes about this future culture is elaborated upon by Daniel Andreev in his book *The Rose of the World*. It is through Rudolf Steiner that we know the exact dating as to when this sixth culture will arise. It will be the time of Sophia's incarnation in her ethereal body. The rhythm of her incarnation follows a 600-year rhythm, which is connected with the planet Venus. In my book *Hermetic Astrology*, Vol. I, the Venus rhythm is discussed. This is also referred to by Rudolf Steiner. He speaks of the 600-year rhythm as an important rhythm of cultural history.

To summarise the stages of Sophia's incarnation, which are important to hold in consciousness: The first stage was around 1775 coming from the galaxy into our cosmos, uniting with the Orion Arm, represented by the central band of stars, the twelve constellations of the zodiac, the 'twelve stars.' 600 years later, in 2375, the Age of Aquarius will begin and Sophia will unite with the Sun, when she will appear as "the woman clothed with the Sun." A further 600 years later, in 2975, Sophia will start to work increasingly from the Sun down to the level of the Moon. Then the third aspect beheld in John's great vision, with the Moon "beneath her feet", will be actualised. Sophia's incarnation means that she is working ever closer towards the Earth. And then a further 600 years later, in 3575, the incarnation of Sophia in an ethereal form in a life body in the Earth's aura will take place, in what is called the 'world of the elements.' This is the date – the actual date is 3574 – indicated by Rudolf Steiner for the beginning of the sixth cultural epoch. This is what Daniel Andreev is referring to with the birth of the Rose of the World as a new world culture inspired by Divine Sophia.

This is what I wanted to discuss this evening, based on years of research and exploration endeavouring to understand John's revelation. With the help of Rudolf Steiner and with the help of Daniel Andreev, it is possible to come to a precise understanding of the incarnation of Divine Sophia bringing the future culture known as the Rose of the World, underlying the sixth cultural epoch, which will last for 2160 years, from 3574 to 5734 Let us close by contemplating the coming down of Sophia from celestial heights as our hope, our joy, and our source of comfort for the future.