



Spiritual Life Now and after Death: Forming Our Destiny in the Physical and Spiritual Worlds

Rudolf Steiner

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6 lectures, Berlin, November 16–December 12, 1915 (CW 157a)

This is a fully revised edition of the book previously published as *The Forming of Destiny and Life after Death*

Rudolf Steiner delivered these lectures near the end of 1915 and the beginning of World War I, when the issue of death and destiny weighed on the minds of many in Europe. He describes, from a spiritual perspective, the process of crossing the threshold of death to life in the spiritual world; the soul's experience immediately after death; and the process of forming one's destiny, or karma, while we remain on Earth and later in the spirit world. Steiner also discusses the importance of our connection with those who have died and how love and reverence to the memory of the dead must be united with our love for the physical world, and how we can strengthen ourselves through meditation.

In the final lecture, given on December 21, Steiner stresses the esoteric importance of the thirteen nights of Christmas and how we can consciously affect our future karma during that time.

This edition includes "The Dream Song of Olaf Åsteson," a Nordic poem (discussed in lecture 6) that describes in pictorial language the deep mysteries of the Christmas nights.

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1. Spiritual Life Now and after Death

"I"-consciousness is proof of immortality. Birth and death. Humility. What we forget of sleep is remembered in Kamaloka. Seven-year periods of life. Young people who die in war.

2. The Formation of Destiny

War. Similarity between classes. Our view after death. "I"-consciousness. Perceiving souls after death. Kamaloka. Those who die before 35. Early and late death. Spiritual decay and future spiritual flowering.

3. The Subconscious Strata of the Soul Life

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4. The Physical and Spiritual Worlds

The dead, imagery, and inner activity. Perception after death. The dead and those who remember them. Unexpected answers to questions about the spiritual world. Art, memory, and the dead. All Souls Day. Memory of the dead and love for the physical world. "You are that." Expansion in the outer world. The Guardian Angel. Egoism and the spirit world. The mystery dramas. Consciousness and egoism. Difficulty of Steiner's books enables readers to overcome egoism. The etheric body and the aging physical body.

5. Subconscious Impulses of the Soul

Path to the spirit. The subconscious and life after death. "I"-consciousness and memory. Spiritual sight, memory, and the veil of memory. Reality and philosophical reflection. Meditation, revelation, and grace. Incarnation and spirit. Subconscious fear of spirit. Death and the hierarchies. Human will before birth.

6. Today's Spiritual Darkness

Thirteen nights of Christmas. Olaf Åsteson. Knowledge and dogma. Kant. Vanity. Lucifer leads humankind to Ahriman. Spiritual Science and modern materialistic science. Authority and freedom. The Christ impulse. Physical proof and Ahriman. Finding Christ through the spirit. Presence of the Christ.

7. "The Dream Song of Olaf Åsteson"

This book contains 6 of the 7 lectures originally published in German as *Schicksalsbildung und Leben nach dem Tode* (CW 157a) by Rudolf Steiner Gesamtausgabe. *Spiritual Life Now and after Death* is a fully revised edition of *The Forming of Destiny and Life after Death* (Garber, 1989).

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