

0506A Past Present Civilizations

Good afternoon. May I say welcome to our students who have joined us here today from so many far places. I don't have to tell you that I wish we were going to have a much longer programme, but you all know the reasons why it isn't practical this month.

And so we have to look forward to another return to South Africa. Sometimes they speak about this as darkest Africa, and you think after you've been in the dark three times it's enough, but actually it isn't really dark, as you know. And my first two trips were really marvellous ones here, and I look forward to the same this trip.

But we'll have to take it the way it is and be good-natured about it. There isn't any other thing to do. Somebody wrote me a letter today and asked if there was a reason why we get sick.

And I wrote, I thought there were millions of reasons why. I think we're always violating the laws of some kind or other. But it all goes back to one reason.

The same reason that we have accidents, the same reason that we have wars, the same reason that we have economic depression. There's really only one reason. We haven't completely become acquainted with God.

There's only one remedy to all of man's troubles. And that actually is knowing God aright. We all have some slight acquaintance with God.

We all know God to some extent, but we haven't gone far enough. Not only for ourselves, but more especially for the world. In the past history of mankind, as we study the history of many of the former great nations, we find that there is a pattern that runs all through every civilisation that has ever existed.

In the beginning, men are ignorant. They're in darkness. They're not only mentally and intellectually dark, but certainly spiritually dark.

And then somehow in each nation, there comes a glimmer of light. The beginning of the understanding that there is a power, a presence, a being greater than ourselves. Now this of course is startling because in our ignorance, we are about the biggest thing that exists and the most important.

And so when we begin to catch a glimpse of what the master must have meant when he said, I can of my own self do nothing or if I speak of myself, I bear witness to a lie. The moment we begin to catch a glimpse of that and realise that there is a something. Now it isn't necessary at first to know what that something is or how it functions.

It's enough to know that there is a something, a something greater than we ourselves. Something that in some ages has been called God. In other ages has been called gods.

And other names as well. But you can understand that the name or the names are really of no importance whatsoever. What counts is whether or not we begin to understand the nature of it.

And how it functions or why it functions. Or what we must do to bring it into function. At any rate, in all past civilisations, this glimpse of light, no matter how small, has opened the mentality of men.

So that they began to see deeper into their own mind. The first thing you know, instead of just the slavery of the form, they began to bring through inventions, discoveries. One of the first was mathematics.

Mathematics led to some of the great engineering feats. Road building, fence building, temples, palaces. All of you who have travelled through any of the ancient countries, whether it was India, China, Egypt, you know the nature, Rome, Italy, Greece.

You know the nature of the tremendous engineering feats that were performed more than 2,000 years ago. 2,500, 3,000. When you examine some of the temples and pyramids in Egypt of 4,000 years ago and more, and see the great accomplishments of those days, you will understand what I mean when I say that with the very first glimpse of something greater than ourselves, our mind begins to open.

And it reveals to us hidden treasures. Now, the great discoveries of the world do not exist out in the world. They all exist in the mind of man.

Even as we come up through our modern days, and you take the automobile and the aeroplane and the television, the telegraph, the telephone, you'll find that each one of these was brought forth out of the mind of man. He didn't discover it outside on the street or on his farm. Every single great invention and discovery has been found inside the mind of man, brought forth, externalised as form.

And the more illumined spiritually that man becomes, the greater the material and mental and cultural graces come forth from his mind. That was early in this century that the prediction was made by the great electrical wizard, Steinmetz, that it would be in this century that the secret of spiritual power would be revealed. By the very manner of his saying it, you know that he meant that never before in the history of the world has the secret of spiritual power been known, never at any time by anyone.

Glimpses, yes. Slight understandings, yes. Tiny bits of demonstration, yes.

But the secret of spiritual power has never been known. Now, to what extent it exists today, I mean as known, depends entirely on who it is that is doing the knowing. In other words, as far as the public is concerned, there is no more known of spiritual power today than ever was known in the past.

But there are here and there individuals who have gone further in understanding the nature of

spiritual power so that we still have reason to believe that this is the century in which the full secret of spiritual power will be revealed. Now, back in these early civilisations, we speak of man before he begins to suspect God as unilluminated, as in the dark. And then as he begins to come into the light of some measure of spiritual awareness, some measure of contact with God, we speak of him as becoming more illumined, and then we make this great discovery that the mind, through the spirit, the mind becomes illumined and awakened and from the depths of the mind come forth these great discoveries, the ones that had their beginnings in mathematics and came through in various ages as the great works of art, science, building, industry, and so forth.

Now, in every previous civilisation, we make the discovery that they all came to the same end. Every civilisation up to the present one that has ever existed has died. Every civilisation has gone out of existence.

It makes no difference whether you talk about the ancient Chinese or the Hindu or the Egyptian, the Roman, the Greek, the Holy Lands. Wherever there has been a civilisation, it has died. Study the history of these countries and you will find out why.

To begin with, every civilisation has resulted in a society of two kinds of people, the high and the low, the up and the down, the rich and the poor, the free and the slave. And while those who were down weren't really living, they were the walking dead. They just walked through a span of years until it came time to bury them.

They had no life on earth whatsoever. Those who are up in every civilisation all took the same path. When they reached the heights of all that their mind could bring forth, their great inventions, their great discoveries, their great edifices, they all took the same route down.

They all went down with drink, wine, women, song, gambling, decadence, immorality, sensuality. They took the whole route. One after another of them took the whole route downward until their civilisations were wiped out.

You might say, could they have been saved or could any one of them have been saved? That brings us up to our present era because we have that question to answer now. You and I individually just as much as the rest of the world outside of this room because this is the place where our present civilisation is at the present moment. We have found just enough of spiritual truth to open and awaken our minds.

Out of our minds have come the greatest discoveries ever known in the history of the world, far greater in the last hundred years than in any previous 30,000 years. And where has that brought us? It has brought us almost to the same state of civilisation as the older ones, only within another 50 years perhaps there will be no slaves on earth and there will be almost no working men on earth. In the normal run of events, 50 years from now everybody will be a skilled mechanic or an executive or a designer or a builder, a creator, but there will be no labourers.

Not only no slaves, there won't even be labourers of any kind. I can tell you at this moment the factories that are being built to be operated without labour are a speech that was made by the head of the mines of England a few weeks ago when I was there in which he was asked the question since the young men are no longer going into the mines what are you going to do for labour in the next generation? Or he said we're not engaging labour. As these men who are now labourers in the mines retire they are not replaced because we need no labour in our coal mines.

They can all be mined electronically. I know of another factory in England being planned to be five times bigger than anything England has ever known before and it will be operated entirely without labour so that in the normal course of events this century we'll also see two classes of society the men and women who have everything and the machines that are the slaves. Our slaves in this age will just be machinery and all of the rest of us will be well now let's see where we're going to have four day working weeks pretty soon in the states and it will be followed very soon by four day working weeks elsewhere in the world what do we do on those three days? Well I don't know anything about your movies here or your television I know about ours I know about our wrestling matches and fights the same gladiators of old are still gladiating all around the world and they're either throwing bowls or being thrown to the lions or to each other going on though and of course wine woman and so on all you have to do is look into your income tax records or ours in England to find out what's happening to the liquor industry and the burlesque industry and so forth and if you judge by what you read you would be very nearly right if you would say that we are now in the state of society when very soon none of us are going to have to work too hard for a living and we'll all be ready to go down that same path of wine woman, strong gambling and all the rest of it and another civilisation about to come to an end it could happen, it could happen that way or it could happen with a couple of stupid people throwing bombs at each other which would do the same thing only more quickly but the difference that exists today is that there is an opportunity that perhaps no civilisation of the past ever had today there is an opportunity to discover the nature of spiritual power now you know from your own studies and meditations and your way of life and you know by what you have witnessed and the experience of others who have come to the metaphysical path through one approach or another that that phase of life that decadent phase is bypassed it really doesn't exist among the people of the metaphysical or spiritual world in other words it is already proven in a measure that through the little that we already know about spiritual power and spiritual nature or the nature of God that there are several million people on earth who are already outside of any danger from what may come with a four day week or a three day week or lots of leisure or lots of income in other words that those who have found some measure of spiritual power have something with which to replace the material pleasures and dissipations not only to replace it but something to erase it completely from their consciousness if you only look at what may be one and a half or two million people on earth who have embraced the metaphysical and spiritual religions you will discover that those are already past the danger of being wiped out as civilisation and therefore if it can happen to one or two million it can happen to all of the rest now this is the point that in all past civilisations nobody revealed the

nature of God to the world the word God, yes the nature of God, no the word God, yes but the actual presence and experience of God, no with the exception of the few mystics who actually experienced God and was enabled to introduce God to their immediate disciples or immediate followers there is very little history anywhere to be found of any age in which God has been known on earth fictions about God, yes mythology about God, yes spiritual worship, yes but the actual coming into the experience of God has been so limited that you have to search libraries for years to find literature about it and then you would only find it for a very brief period now here we come to an age where enough has been revealed about the nature of God and the nature of spiritual power that we can count those who know and experience in millions therefore we have come to the point now where it can hopefully be expected that the entire world can experience a new birth the rebirth that was promised of course the entire experience begins individually it has to be there has to be an individual Gautama there has to be an individual Lao Tzu there has to be an individual Jesus or John or Paul there has to be an individual in every age it has to begin with an individual but from there on it has to find its way into human consciousness you might ask at this point are you honest in believing that this age can be different than others and I'm going to answer you truthfully that I not only am completely honest when I say to you that it is possible but I'm going to go further and say that I believe it is an absolute probability that we are going into a spiritual age and there is a reason for my inner confidence there are lots of reasons for my inner confidence number one all of the mystics of the past had a great deal of difficulty in getting their wisdom beyond their immediate circle because there were no printing presses no radio no television no way of circularising the few manuscripts that were written were so very few that they were hugged by anyone who had them and almost hidden so that they wouldn't travel too far away so that spreading the word itself was virtually an impossible situation today on the other hand we have the benefit ha! let me tell you this one it isn't only that we have radio and we have television and we have all of these other things but a year ago I learned that all of my writings are circulating in Poland how? because somebody has written them in manuscript form like letters and they have been mailed into Poland and they are spreading in Poland so we have the benefit of post office departments even enemy post office departments everything works together for those who love good it would seem but just imagine the benefit that we have in the form of the press my books for instance are published in the United States in American edition in England in British edition Germany has German edition Holland has Dutch Japan has Japanese and this is only the start so that we have the printing press how many things go over the air on radio and television can hardly be imagined one of them I think of very great significance that happened only a couple of weeks ago perhaps you know that a rule was passed some time ago ruling the devil out of the catechism of the Church of England that so many of the lay members objected that they had to put the devil back in temporarily but that doesn't mean that the higher ups do not know that there is no devil now they decided to find out about all of this mystery and so they had former Archbishop of Canterbury Geoffrey Fisher on the television to be questioned about some of these newfangled religious beliefs and the very first question that was asked of him was now Dr. Fisher you really do believe in God and devil don't you Dr. Fisher answered you know I think of God as infinite now you know where that left the devil you can't have an infinite

God and a devil now just think of this going out over the air all over England that Dr. Fisher, former Archbishop of Canterbury believes that God is infinite you know it's enough to make some of the people suspect that the metaphysicians are right that evil isn't real that the devil isn't real that sin isn't real disease isn't real death isn't real so if God is life and God is infinite these other things can't exist now it was shocking enough in our metaphysical days when Christian science, unity and new thought taught us these things but now when we have the great big churches come out and tell us that God is infinite we have the right to say by heaven maybe it's true God is infinite and if God is infinite we begin to embrace the idea of that infinity and we ourselves lose the fear of the devil the fear of evil the fear of sin the fear of disease and you know when you lose the fear of them you lose the pleasure in them too it just is not possible to lose fear and find pleasure in it and therefore the greatest forward step in the history of the world is for us to lose our fear of sin because in losing our fear of it we lose our pleasure in it it all goes in one time and when it happens that's when the universe is saved from this catastrophe this threatened catastrophe of going back into decadence and you might at this point ask well but even suppose there were ten million of us believing this way would that have an influence on the other three billion you just bet it would ten righteous men are enough to save a city two or more gathered together are enough to perform miracles one with God is a majority and so you would discover that just this that we the metaphysicians of the world just what we have been entertaining in consciousness this last three quarters of a century on the subject of the infinite nature of God is now spreading to the millions of the church as they hear that God is infinite and don't forget when they hear it, it doesn't spread one by one when they hear it, it goes over the television to be heard by millions at one time what? God is infinite a couple of years ago the outstanding Roman Catholic in the United States Bishop Sheehan certainly the most popular on one of his television shows ended his broadcast this way and dear friends please when you pray to God don't pray for any material thing for God is spirit that went out to millions and you know that has been taught by those of the spiritual faith for a long long time and now now it begins to reach all mankind overnight don't pray to God for material things for God is spirit you see what can happen in the space of one evening in London, New York, Berlin, Paris just one evening as these ideas that have been lived by you, by me even in a tiny measure let's not take pride that we've gone too far like Paul I'm not claiming to have reached the ultimate but at least forgetting my past I am looking toward a greater demonstration of the realisation of the omnipotence of one power now think that we of the metaphysical world will have been embodying these truths declaring them, affirming them, living them in some measure proving through our improved health or improved morals or improved supply in some measure we have been proving these things proving that they're true and now the world is taking notice of it and therefore what it has taken 75 years to build up in the consciousness of 1 million people or 2 million people all of a sudden in one night can become the consciousness of 5 million more or 7 million more because it only takes one statement of that nature coming from an authority to change the consciousness of all or many of their hearers a bishop recently told a group of ministers that the time has come when we must begin to teach our people that they must not go to church to pray for new automobiles or for rain or for not rain or for things that we must begin to teach them the nature of God as

spirit and God's blessings as spiritual blessings this is how the truth of the nature of God the nature of spirit the nature of spiritual power is permeating consciousness and when I see this and heaven knows I have an opportunity in travelling the world when I see this permeating church after church denomination after denomination when I see books of the nature of all of the Infinite Way books on sale in the bookstalls of the churches can you not see what is happening to consciousness? can you not see what is happening as one individual goes up to a bookstore and buys one of these books and the first thing you know discovers something that they suspected before that hadn't completely realised and goes to their neighbour with it and then the first thing you know what happens Joel is invited into the church to talk about this very thing do you not see that this is the age that with the help of what is being revealed to us of the nature of spirit and the nature of spirit blessings that in a degree as we ourselves are permeated with it and prove that this world the world of sin, disease and death has no more attraction for us and no more fear that as this takes place within us that it begins to take place in the rest of the world because in this age we have the benefit not only of every mechanical means of sending the word far and wide whether through printing, press, radio or television but we have in addition to that a more enlightened church than has ever been on earth in the history of the world don't forget that when all of these older civilisations were wiped out that the churches of their day were pretty dense and dark don't forget today that the churches of today are becoming more and more and more enlightened we only need one evidence of it the doing away with the devil to show what is happening in the church world because when you have done away with the devil I think I have to tell you this one I can't help enjoying it every time I think of it Kahlil Gibran the author of the prophet he wrote a story that resulted in his excommunication from the church although after he passed on they accepted him back and buried him in holy ground but he was for a while excommunicated because he wrote this story there was a man there was a priest walking along the road and he heard cries from the side of the road a man wounded in danger crying out for help and he ran over into the bushes to this man and began to attend to him fix him up whatever was needed and all of a sudden he caught a glimpse of the man's face and he said oh, I know you, don't I? oh yes, the man said I'm your best friend oh no, the priest said oh no, you're not my best friend I know my best friend but I do know you I do, I remember you I know your face you are the devil well yes, I told you I'm your best friend well, the priest ran away you deserve to die I won't help you well, the man called after him and finally attracted his attention and brought him back and he said you can't let me die if I die who's going to pay pennies to light candles? if I die, who needs prayers? and the priest fixed him up right quickly well, you can imagine that excommunication served him right but the point is what would happen in our lives? now, we're pretty well advanced on the spiritual path but what do you think would really happen in our lives if we here in this room became convinced that there is no evil power I mean, absolutely convinced not just read it in books and affirmed it I mean, absolutely came to the conviction that God is omnipotent there cannot be an evil power but you'd say the same thing goodbye practitioners your fees are over once we come to the realisation that the nature of God is spirit and therefore the nature of creation is spiritual do you not see how that changes the whole nature of our being and we do not concern ourselves with a structural universe you see what is it really concerns us every one

of us if it isn't a structural universe the bones of our body the organs of our body the functions of our body that's what's bothering us that's the only reason we fear sickness but supposing the absolute conviction came that God is omnipotent God is spirit the whole nature of this world must be spiritual in that second we lose the fear of the organs and functions of our body we lose the fear of bones we lose the fear of brain in that moment we begin to absorb in consciousness the idea of the nature of God as spirit and this is the point that's been lacking because in the prayers of the world up to the present time we have been trying to get a spiritual God to do something to our structural body or our structural business or our structural government we have been trying to get a God of spirit to do something to a material universe and until we discover the nature of God as spirit we are not going to discover the nature of this universe as a spiritual universe governed by the very substance and law that formed it now, in the first chapter of Genesis the world could be saved and we don't know whether this is omitted because the word wasn't known or whether it was mistranslated or misinterpreted but, when you say God created this world and all that is in it in his image and likeness you are making a statement that makes absolutely no sense you could repeat it from now the rest of your days but it makes no sense because if God, someone said well then, if man is made in the image and likeness of God what is God? then we're stuck because those three letters G-O-D are absolutely meaningless no one has ever invented a meaning for that word God therefore, when you say man is made in the image and likeness of God you're saying man is made in the image and likeness of I know not what now, begin to understand God as spirit in corporeal being begin to understand God as consciousness which eventually you will as you study the infinite way and then realise that the nature of man is the image and likeness of consciousness formed of consciousness not structurally formed of consciousness governed by the law of its creative principle creative substance and all of a sudden you have a universe including your own body completely devoid of fear you have no more fear for this universe you have no more fear for your body you have no more fear if they blow it up with bombs because two seconds later it reforms itself and a new population begins the old ones always have gone out the new ones always have come in and the continuity will go forward so that really if you stop to ask yourself why we have senseless fears you have to answer that well I'm just afraid I won't have 5 or 10 or 15 years more life or 20 because at the most that is what the middle-aged person is expecting 5, 10, 15, 20 and just to have the hope of that is quite enough and what we're doing in talking about bombs or talking about wiping them out in any other way is just denying them that extra 5 or 10 or 15 years and that's all that the fear is about there's only one way in which that fear can be eliminated if you really catch a glimpse of God as spirit you really catch a glimpse of the fact that man is made in the image and likeness of God therefore man is spiritual or you catch the glimpse that God is the life of the universe therefore God is your life your life is indestructible it makes no difference whether they blow your body up your life goes right on and forms a new one it makes no difference if we come to a period of some sickness or age and for a moment have a fright as we leave this body we find out very very quickly that God is the life of man man is made in the image and likeness of God therefore the life of God is the life of man the soul of God is the soul of man and as God is indestructible so is man so whether he comes to the end of his so called structural period when he's 30 or when he's 90 doesn't change

the fact that his life is everlasting and it's going to continue and it's going to continue in a progressive state when we lose the fear of death we have lost the fear of everything that can harm this universe because the first fear that humans suffer from is the fear of sin but the ultimate fear is the fear of death as long as that fear of death persists we will be proving that we have not yet discovered the nature of God and we will be in the same position as our ancestors who also did not discover the nature of God but today we do not have their excuse today we have the revelations that bring to us concretely specifically that God is spirit that God is omnipotent there is no devil there is no evil there is no power in those appearances that the world calls evil and the moment our fear is withdrawn from them they have lost their power over us because the only power they ever had was our fear of nothingness now I ask you to see this that never before has it been made as clear to the world as in this age that God is spirit that God is omnipotent therefore there is no devil whether you begin back in the earliest metaphysical days of misery where there is no evil or evil isn't real and so forth and so on or whether you come right on up to the present day when it has been revealed through millions of healings that disease isn't what it appears to be even death isn't what it appears to be now that we've seen this it should be so much easier for us to grasp the idea of an infinite God an omnipotent God of spirit and be as willing to drop the devil from our catechism as the church is willing to drop the devil from its when we drop the devil we drop it in its full significance evil and it makes no difference then what's the form of evil we're dropping it completely in the realisation of the omnipotent infinite spiritual nature of God now so that we never make the mistake that the world is making and has been making for the past generations and believe that God and man are two separate beings ah there's the trick everyone says oh yes God is omnipotent but what has that to do with me or yes God is spirit what has that to do with me how can I be sure that that will be of any benefit to me God is life eternal how do I know that that has any benefit for me so that that mistake is never made let us remember that we are dealing now with the message of the infinite way in which it is made so clear to every one of us that there is not a God and a man there is no such thing as God life and man's life there is no such thing as the spirit of God and the spirit of man these are one I and the father are one thou seest me thou seest the father that sent me therefore when you speak of God as spirit you are speaking of yourself for God is indeed your selfhood you can't claim God as your personal selfhood apart from mine but you can claim God as your selfhood as long as you are willing to acknowledge that God is universal selfhood the selfhood of you and of me of friend and of foe the moment you are ready to acknowledge that you have started removing from your life all fear and when fear goes, sin goes when fear goes, death goes and when sin and death go there is no more chance for the world to go decadent because it can only go decadent through sin and death those are the two doorways that lead to the end of civilisation but if you persist in having a God who is infinite and not including yourself in that infinity then you might just as well never have heard of spiritual truth because the one great benefit and I say the one that puts all others aside and makes them unnecessary is the fact that whatever God is I am because I and the father are one so when I talk of God being omnipotent I haven't left myself out when I speak of God as life eternal I'm speaking of my life because I've come to oneness I've come to the realisation that I and the father are one and don't think for a minute that my

passing from this human scene would change that oh no, it would just mean that I had outgrown my present position like a six year old child outgrows theirs and becomes twelve and a twelve year old outgrows theirs and becomes eighteen and so forth we are always outgrowing our present day and the day must come when we are given other tasks to do besides just continuing housework you've probably heard the story of the seventy nine year old lady who was supposed to be dying and I called Anna and sat with her for a few hours and she was up and well the next day and then someone asked the question now why did you save her life? what is she going to do with the rest of her days? knit booties for her grandchildren? my answer was I don't care what she does with her life the rest of her days if she wants to knit booties she's got to go ahead and knit booties maybe the healing will awaken her to a desire to know God but if not, I don't care I proved one thing and that's the only reason I went there I went there to prove that there is not a God life and a woman's life there is not a God life and your life and every time that I'm called on for healing and the only reason I've kept it up this long until we could prepare some practitioners to take over that business the only reason I've kept it up is that I must for the sake of the infinite ways and whatever spiritual good or grace it can add to the world I must prove that there is not the life of God and the life of man that these are one and therefore since the life of God is infinite, omnipotent, spiritual, omnipresent the life of man is infinite, omnipotent, omnipresent, spiritual now remember this don't have God and man back in the infinite way in the early chapters you will read that the major premise of this work is embodied in two tiny words the word is and the word as and you know nothing has ever changed since that book was written God is and God is as man in other words God appears as individual being therefore every individual being is the life of God the mind of God the soul of God the spirit of God individually appearing if you ever separate God and man if you ever separate the life of God and the life of man the mind of God and the mind of man or the soul of God and the soul of man you will have this world back where it was when all the civilisations were lost because man had no contact with God and he had to amuse himself in some way and he found all these other ways the moment man realises himself in God he doesn't need all of these outside amusements he doesn't need all of these outside pastimes he begins to live within himself in an inner communion but he does something more than that the moment a person begins to find a communion with the spirit of God that is within them they find a communion with every other soul on the face of the globe that has the same leanings and it's always pure and it's always clean and it's always helpful it's always healing it's the most marvellous communion because you're always recognising God as the centre of the individual you're recognising God as the life you wouldn't anymore desecrate the life of your friend knowing that life to be God than you would desecrate your own life you would no more desecrate your life once you know God to be your life well, you just wouldn't you just couldn't and that's all that's to it and it is only this that saves us that makes us a community of people who live in God as God in each other for each other with each other because we're recognising each other as that one infinite divine selfhood individually expressing itself here on earth and then how else can we be to each other especially if we remember the master statement inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren ye did it unto me inasmuch as ye did it not unto the least of these my brethren ye did it not unto me and just remember that with

those words we never forget that every good that we do unto each other we are really doing unto the God being every bit of good we withhold from each other or every bit of injury we do to another who do you think we're doing it to? God, which is our self