

The Ten Commandments in General Plus Other Contextual Information

Introduction

There are four books of Swedenborg's theological writings in which the Ten Commandments are explained as to their outer and inner meanings. These books are as follows:

- *Secrets of Heaven*¹
- *The Apocalypse Explained*²
- *The Doctrine of Life*³
- *True Christianity*⁴

In each of these books there is a body of teaching that appears *before* the explanation of the Commandments, and a body of teaching that appears *after* it. The body of teaching that comes before the explanation, together with the body of teaching that comes after it, forms a *context* in which the explanation itself is given—like a backdrop to a play, or the setting of a ring that holds a ruby or a diamond.

For example, in *The Doctrine of Life* there are sixty-six paragraphs of teaching which precede and twenty-three paragraphs that come after an explanation of four of the Commandments. Together, these eighty-nine paragraphs of doctrine give a wealth of information about the Ten Commandments in general, and they set a context in which four of the Commandments are explained.

This document is divided into four parts. The first part contains the body of information that immediately precedes, and the one that immediately follows, the explanation of the Ten Commandments in *Secrets of Heaven*. The second, third, and fourth parts do the same thing for the other books mentioned above.

¹ Volume 10 of that work, paragraph nos. 8853-8912

² Volume 5 of that work, the second half of paragraph nos. 932-1028

³ The full title of this work is *The Doctrine of Life for the New Jerusalem from the Ten Commandments*. It is found in a larger work by Swedenborg titled, *The Four Doctrines*. In *The Doctrine of Life*, Swedenborg explains the commandments on murder, adultery, stealing, and bearing false witness. He does not directly explain the other six commandments in *The Doctrine of Life*.

⁴ Volume 1 of that work, paragraph nos. 282-335

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Contents

The Ten Commandments in General...from <i>Secrets of Heaven</i>		1
•	Introduction.....	1
•	Contents	3
1.	The Doctrine of Charity	5
2.	Exodus Chapter 20 (Scripture).....	6
3.	The Spiritual Meaning of Exodus 20 (Brief Overview)	7
4.	The Spiritual Meaning of Exodus 20:1.....	7
5.	The Spiritual Meaning of Exodus 20:18-20	11
6.	The Spiritual Meaning of Exodus 20:21-23	17
7.	The Spiritual Meaning of Exodus 20:24-26	22
 The Ten Commandments in General...from <i>The Apocalypse Explained</i>.....		33
1.	The Goods of Charity	33
2.	The Ten Commandments in General.....	43
 The Ten Commandments in General...from <i>The Doctrine of Life</i>		47
1.	All religion is of life, and the life of religion is to do that which is good.	47
2.	No one can from him- or herself do what is good that is really good.	53
3.	In proportion as a person shuns evils as sins, in the same proportion he or she does goods, not from him- or herself but from the Lord.	56
4.	In proportion as any one shuns evils as sins, in the same proportion he or she loves truths.	61
5.	In proportion as any one shuns evils as sins, in the same proportion he or she has faith and is spiritual.....	64
6.	The Ten Commandments teach what evils are sins.	67
7.	Murders, adulteries, thefts, false witness, together with all concupiscence for these things, are the evils which must be shunned as sins.....	72
8.	No one can shun evils as sins so as to be inwardly averse to them except by means of combats against them.	77
9.	A person ought to shun evils as sins and fight against them as of him- or herself.	79
10.	If any one shuns evils for any other reason than because they are sins, he or she does not shun them, but merely prevents them from appearing before the world.....	82
 The Ten Commandments in General...from <i>True Christianity</i>		85
1.	The Catechism, or Ten Commandments, Explained in Both It's Outer and Its Inner Meanings	85
a)	Introduction.....	85
b)	The Ten Commandments Were the Holiest Thing in the Israelite Church.....	85
c)	In Their Literal Meaning, the Ten Commandments Contain General Principles to Be Taught and Lived; in Their Spiritual and Heavenly Meanings, They Contain Absolutely Everything.	88
d)	The Ten Commandments Contain Everything about How to Love God and How to Love Our Neighbor.	95
2.	Four Memorable Occurrences.....	99

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The Ten Commandments in General, Plus Other Contextual Information

- from -

Secrets of Heaven

Emanuel Swedenborg

1.

The Doctrine of Charity

SH 8853. Every person has something of his own which he loves above all things. This is called that which rules, or if you will, that which reigns universally with him. This is constantly present in his thought, and also in his will, and makes his very life.

SH 8854. As for example, he who loves wealth above all things, whether money or possessions, is continually revolving in his mind how he may procure it; he inmosty rejoices when he acquires it; he inmosty grieves when he loses it; his heart is in it. He who loves himself above all things is mindful of himself in everything, thinks of himself, speaks of himself, acts for the sake of himself; for his life is a life of self.

SH 8855. A person has as the end that which he loves above all things; in each and all things he has regard to this; it is in his will like the hidden current of a river which draws and bears him away, even when he is doing something else, for it is what animates him. It is this which one person searches out in another, and also sees, and according to it either leads him, or acts with him.

SH 8856. When a person is being regenerated, charity is implanted by means of faith, even until it becomes that which rules; and when charity has become this, he has a new life, for it is then continually present in his thought, and continually in his will, nay, in every single thing of them, even when he is meditating about other things, and when he is engaged in business.

SH 8857. The case is the same with love to the Lord. When this love is that which rules, it is present in every single thing of the person's life; as for instance with him who loves his king, or his parent, his love toward them shines forth in their presence from every feature of his face, it is heard in every expression of his speech, and is seen in his every gesture. This is meant by having God continually before the eyes, and by loving Him above all things, with all the soul and with all the heart.

SH 8858. A person is wholly such as is the ruling principle of his life; by this he is distinguished from others; according to this is formed his heaven if he is good, and his hell if he is evil; for it is his very will, and thus the very being of his life, which cannot be changed after death. From all this it is evident what is the nature of the life of one who is regenerate, and what is the nature of the life of one who is not regenerate.

2.

Exodus Chapter 20 (Scripture)

1. And God spoke all these words, saying,
2. I am Jehovah your God, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of servants.
3. You shall have no other gods before My faces.
4. You shall not make to you a graven image, nor any likeness, of that which is in the heavens above, or that which is in the earth beneath, or that which is in the waters under the earth:
5. You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them; for I Jehovah your God am a zealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons, upon the thirds and upon the fourths of them that hate Me:
6. And doing mercy to thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.
7. You shall not take the name of Jehovah your God in vain; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain.
8. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
9. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work:
10. And the seventh day is the Sabbath to Jehovah your God; you shall not do any work, you, and your son, and your daughter, your manservant, and your maidservant, and your beast, and your sojourner who is in your gates:
11. For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested in the seventh day; wherefore Jehovah blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.
12. Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged upon the land which Jehovah your God gives you.
13. You shall not kill.
14. You shall not commit adultery.
15. You shall not steal.
16. You shall not answer against your neighbor the witness of a lie.
17. You shall not covet your neighbor's house, the shall not covet your neighbor's wife, and his manservant, and his maidservant, and his ox, and his donkey, and anything that is your neighbor's.
18. And all the people saw the voices, and the torches, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and the people saw, and they quaked, and stood afar off.
19. And they said to Moses, Speak with us, and we will hear; and let not God speak with us, lest perchance we die.

20. And Moses said to the people, Fear not; because God is come to tempt you, and that the fear of Him may be before your faces, that you not sin.
21. And the people stood afar off, and Moses came near to the thick darkness where God was.
22. And Jehovah said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, You have seen that I have spoken with you from heaven.
23. You shall not make with Me gods of silver and gods of gold, you shall not make to you.
24. An altar of ground you shall make to Me, and shall sacrifice thereon your burnt-offerings, and your thank-offerings, your flocks, and your herds; in every place where I shall put the memory of My name, I will come to you, and I will bless you.
25. And if you make Me an altar of stones, you shall not build it of hewn stones; for if you move your tool upon it, you will profane it.
26. And you shall not go up on steps to My altar, that your nakedness be not uncovered upon it.

3.

*Spiritual Meaning of Exodus 20
(Brief Overview)*

SH 8859. In this chapter⁵ the subject treated of in the internal sense is the truths Divine which are to be implanted in the good with those who are of the Lord's spiritual church. The ten commandments of the Decalogue denote these truths. The commandments concerning sacrifices, and concerning the altar, which follow in this chapter, denote the external truths which are of worship.

4.

The Spiritual Meaning of Exodus 20:1

SH 8860. [Exodus 20,] verse 1. *And God spoke all these words, saying,* signifies truths Divine for those in the heavens, and for those on earth.

SH 8861. *And God spoke all these words, saying.* That this signifies truths Divine for those in the heavens and for those on earth, is evident from the signification of "the words which God spoke," as being truths Divine, for the things which God speaks are nothing else than truths. From this also truth Divine is called "the Word," and "the Word" is the Lord, according to John i. 1, for the reason that when the Lord was in the world He was the Divine truth itself, and afterward when He was glorified He became the Divine good, and thenceforth all Divine truth proceeds from Him. This Divine truth is light to the angels, which light is also that which illuminates our internal sight, which is that of the understanding. [2] As this sight does not see natural, but spiritual things, it has for its objects in

⁵ *Secrets of Heaven*, chapter 20, which describes the spiritual meaning of all of Exodus 20

the spiritual understanding the truths which are called the truths of faith; but in the natural understanding it has for its objects truths of the civil state which relate to what is just, and also truths of the moral state which relate to what is reputable, and lastly natural truths which are conclusions from the objects of the external senses, especially of the sight. From all this it can be seen in what order truths follow, and that all and each have their origin from truths Divine, which are the internal beginnings of all things. Moreover the forms in which they are have had their origin from the same source, for these were created to receive and contain. This shows what is meant in John by all things having been created through the Word (i. 1-3); for truth Divine is the very essential, and is the only substantial through which all things are.

SH 8862. That by “the words which God spoke”⁶ are meant truths Divine for those in the heavens and those on the earth, is because the ten commandments, which are called the Decalogue, and the subsequent statutes promulgated and commanded from Mount Sinai, are such truths as are not only for those who are on the earth, but also for those who are in the heavens; for all the words, that is, all the truths which are from the Lord, are not only for men, but are also at the same time for the angels, since they come through heaven and thus pass over to earth. But in the heavens they do not sound as they do on the earth, for in the heavens they are in a spiritual form, but on the earth in a natural form. What is the nature of those things which are in a spiritual form as compared with those which are in a natural form, is evident from all the particulars of the Word in the internal sense and in the external sense. Those in the internal sense are spiritual, but those in the external sense, which is the sense of the letter, are natural. The latter have been accommodated to men on the earth, but the former to angels in the heavens. [2] That such is the case can be seen from the fact that the Word has been sent, and thus has passed, from the Divine Itself through heaven to earth; and that when it comes to the earth it is truth accommodated to the human race, which is in earthly and bodily things; whereas in the heavens it is accommodated to angels, who are in spiritual and heavenly things. Such being the nature of the Word, it is holy in itself; for it contains in itself what is heavenly and Divine. This can be plainly seen from the ten commandments of the Decalogue. Every one can see that these commandments are such things as have been known everywhere on the earth; as that parents are to be honored, that murder, adultery, and theft are not to be committed, and that no one should bear false witness; consequently that the Israelite nation might have known these laws from natural light alone; for what nation is there which does not know them? And yet for their promulgation Jehovah Himself came down and promulgated them out of fire which burned even to the heart of heaven. From this it can be seen that these commandments contain in their bosom more things than appear in the letter, namely, such things as are at the same time for the heavens and that fill the heavens. All things of the Word are of this nature, because they are from the Divine. From this it is plain whence it is that the Word is holy, and what is meant by the Word’s being inspired as to every jot and tittle, and as to every little horn (Matt. v. 18; Luke xvi. 17). The nature of the commandments of the Decalogue in the spiritual sense, that is, their nature in the heavens, shall accordingly be seen in what follows.

⁶ Exodus 20:1

Note

An explanation of the literal and spiritual meanings of the Ten Commandments is given at this point in the current work (*Secrets of Heaven*). That explanation is not included in this document. Explanations of individual Commandments can be found online at www.BeginNewLife.info, the page titled *In Swedenborg's Own Words*.

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The Spiritual Meaning of Exodus 20:18-20

SH 8913. Exodus 20, verses 18-20. *And all the people saw the voices, and the torches, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and the people saw, and they quaked, and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, You speak with us, and we will hear; and let not God speak with us, lest perchance we die. And Moses said to the people, Fear not; because God is come to tempt you, and that the fear of Him may be before your faces, that you not sin.* “And all the people saw the voices, and the torches,” signifies the perception of truths Divine from good; “and the voice of the trumpet,” signifies the same things through heaven; “and the mountain smoking,” signifies the good itself of truth not perceptible except in the external form; “and the people saw, and they quaked,” signifies the tremor which there is when they are received; “and they stood afar off,” signifies remoteness from internal things; “and they said to Moses,” signifies complaint; “You speak with us,” signifies the reception of truth in an accommodated form, which in this manner they would obey; “and let not God speak with us,” signifies truth in a form not accommodated; “lest perchance we die,” signifies that thus the life of heaven with them would perish; “and Moses said to the people,” signifies information; “Fear not, because God has come to tempt you,” signifies that the life of heaven will not perish, this is merely that it may be known that it exists, and what is its quality; “and that the fear of Him may be before your faces, that you not sin,” signifies holy fear therefrom of the Divine, and the consequent preservation of spiritual life.

SH 8914. *And all the people saw the voices, and the torches.* That this signifies the perception of truths Divine from good, is evident from the signification of “seeing,” as being to understand and perceive (see n. 2150, 2325, 2807, 3764, 3863, 3869, 4403-4421, 4567, 4723, 5400) from the signification of “voices” or thunderings, as being truths Divine (n. 7573, 8813); and from the signification of “torches” or lightnings, as being the brightnesses which truths have from the good of love, and which strike through and penetrate (see n. 8813). [2] By truths Divine from good are here meant all the commandments of the Decalogue, which were pronounced from Mount Sinai out of the midst of thunderings and lightnings; these being then displayed because the thunderings signified truths Divine, which are also for this reason called “voices;” and the lightnings signified the brightnesses which truths have from good, which are also for this reason called “torches” or flames. (That “flames” denote Divine truths proceeding from the Lord’s Divine good, see n. 6832.)

SH 8915. *And the voice of the trumpet.* That this signifies the same things through heaven, namely, Divine truths from good, is evident from the signification of “the voice of the trumpet,” as being the state of the angelic heaven encompassing the Divine, and as being truth Divine therefrom (see n. 8815, 8823); from which it can be seen what is signified by the words of the Lord where He foretells concerning the consummation of the age, or the last time of the church, that then the Lord shall send His angels with a great voice of a trumpet, who shall gather together His elect from the four winds (Matt. xxiv. 31). He who does not know

that all the words of the Lord have stored up within them also heavenly and Divine things, that is, that there is in them an internal sense, will believe that when the Last Judgment is at hand, angels will appear, and will announce it, and will also gather together the elect with the voice of a trumpet. But that by "the voice of a trumpet" is not there meant the voice of a trumpet, but truth Divine in the internal form through heaven, and the evangelization thereof, see n. 4060, 8815, 8823.

SH 8916. *And the mountain smoking.* That this signifies the good itself of truth not perceptible except in the external form, is evident from the signification of a "mountain," here Mount Sinai, as being the Divine good united to the Divine truth in heaven (see n. 8805); and from the signification of "smoking," as being in the external form. That this is meant by "smoking," is because Divine truth, or the Word in the internal form, is like light and like flame, but in the external form it is like a cloud and like smoke. The reason is that truth Divine, or the Word in the internal form, is such as it is in heaven, thus such as it is in the light there; but in the external form it is such as it is in the world, thus such as it is in the light there; and relatively to the light of heaven, the light of the world is like a cloud, or like smoke relatively to flame. Truth Divine, or the Word in the internal form, is the internal sense of the Word, and in the external form it is its external or literal sense; that this literal sense is called a "cloud," see the preface to Genesis xviii., and elsewhere (n. 4060, 4391, 5922, 6343, 6752, 8106, 8781); and that it is called "smoke" is because by "smoke" is signified what is obscure of truth (n. 8819). That the mountain appeared smoking before the sons of Israel, was not because the Divine there was of such a quality, but because the Divine appears to every one according to the quality of him who sees it; and the quality of those who then saw was that they made everything of worship to consist in externals, and nothing in internals; and that consequently they understood the Word only according to the sense of the letter. Therefore in respect to the truth which was being promulgated, the Divine must needs appear to them as smoke, that is, as obscure; whence it is also said that they "stood afar off," by which is signified that they were remote from internal things. But on this more below.

SH 8917. *And when the people saw, they quaked.* That this signifies the tremor which there is when Divine truths are received, is evident from the signification of "to quake," as being a tremor, here a tremor such as there is when Divine truths are received (concerning which tremor, see n. 5459, 8816).

SH 8918. *And they stood afar off.* That this signifies remoteness from internal things, is evident from the signification of "standing afar off," as being remotely, here, from internal things, because from Mount Sinai, by which is signified heaven and the Divine there (see n. 8805). Whether you say "remotely from the Divine," or "from heaven," or "from internal things," it is the same, because heaven is in internal things. For the internal of a person is in the light of heaven, and his external is in the light of the world; or what is the same, the soul or spirit of a person is in heaven, but his body in the world. Heaven is nearer to the Divine than the world, because in heaven the Divine of the Lord reigns, and is the all in all. As further regards the signification of "afar off," be it known that in the spiritual sense "afar off" has no reference to space, but to the Divine, thus to

good and truth. Distance from the very good itself which proceeds from the Divine, causes the appearance of distance in heaven. The angelic societies there appear distinct and even remote from one another; but as already said this idea of space comes from distance from the good and truth which are from the Divine of the Lord. This must needs appear a paradox, nay, absurd, to many in the world. The reason is that the thoughts and their ideas with a person are founded upon spaces and times, insomuch that a person cannot think without them. Consequently if you abstract times and spaces from a person's thought, he scarcely perceives anything. Nevertheless the angels in heaven think absolutely without any idea of time and space, and with such fullness that in intelligence and wisdom their thoughts surpass the thoughts of a person thousands, nay, myriads of times; and, wonderful to say, if there occurs to them an idea derived from time and space, shade and thick darkness at once come to their minds, because they then fall from the light of heaven into the light of nature, which to them is thick darkness. [2] (That there are no spaces and times in the other life, but states; or that the appearances of spaces and times arise from the variations of state in respect to good and truth, see n. 2625, 2837, 3356, 3387, 3404, 4321, 4882, 5605, 7381.) From this then it is evident what "standing afar off" signifies in the spiritual sense, namely, remoteness from heaven where the Divine is; here, remoteness from internal things, because, as said above, that nation which then stood afar off from Mount Sinai was very remote from internal things, for it was in external things only, and it made everything of Divine worship to consist in these. Moreover to do so was permitted that nation, because thus it could represent heavenly and Divine things; for in order to be representative an external is required, and is also possible without an internal (n. 3147, 3670, 4208, 4281, 4288, 4307, 8588). [3] "Afar off" signifies remoteness from good and truth, which are from the Divine, thus remoteness from internal things, also in the following passages. In Luke:

In hell the rich man lifting up his eyes saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Abraham said to him, Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; that those who would pass over from hence to you cannot; neither can those who are there pass over to us (xvi. 23, 26);

by "Abraham" is not meant Abraham, for he is not known in heaven; but in the supreme sense the Lord, and in the relative sense those in heaven who are in the good of love and faith in the Lord (n. 1834, 1876, 1965, 1989, 2011, 3245, 3305, 6098, 6185, 6276, 6894). They who are in hell are said to "see those who are in heaven afar off," because they are in a state most remote from good and truth. The "great gulf" between them denotes the remoteness itself from good, which also gives the appearance of an intervening gulf. [4] They who think from an idea of space, as do all people in the world, perceive no otherwise than that hell is far distant from a person, and that heaven is so too. But the case is otherwise. Hell and heaven are near to a person, yea, in a person; hell in an evil person, and heaven in a good person. Moreover every one comes after death into that hell or into that heaven in which he has been while in the world. But the state is then changed; the hell which was not perceived in the world becomes perceptible, and the heaven which was not perceived in the world becomes perceptible; the

heaven full of all happiness, and the hell of all unhappiness. That heaven is within us, the Lord teaches in Luke:

The kingdom of God is within you (xvii. 21).

See “afar off” also in the following:

They come from a land afar off, from the extremity of the heavens (Isa. xiii. 5; also Jer. v. 15).

Hear, you that are far off, what I have done; and you that are near, acknowledge My might (Isa. xxxiii. 13).

I will say to the north, Give; and to the south, Keep not back; bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the extremity of the earth. Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears (Isa. xliii. 6, 8; also xlix. 12).

Attend, O isles, to Me; hearken, you peoples, from far (Isa. xlix. 1; also Jer. xxxi. 10).

The voice of the cry of the daughter of My people from a land afar off: Is not Jehovah in Zion? is not her King in her? (Jer. viii. 19).

Jehovah, You have planted them, and they have also taken root. But You are near in their mouth, but far off from their reins (Jer. xii. 2).

Am I a God near, and not a God afar off? (Jer. xxiii. 23).

In all these passages “afar off” signifies remoteness from good.

SH 8919. *And they said to Moses.* That this signifies complaint, is evident from what follows in this verse; for what they said are complaints.

SH 8920. *You speak with us, and we will hear.* That this signifies the reception of truth in an accommodated form which so they would obey, is evident from the signification of “speaking,” as being influx and communication (n. 2951, 3060, 4131, 5481, 5797, 6228, 7270, 8128), therefore also reception, for that which flows in and is communicated is received; and from the representation of Moses, who was to speak, as being truth from the Divine beneath heaven conjoined with truth Divine in heaven, thus mediating between the Lord and the people (n. 8760, 8787, 8505); hence it is that “Moses” here denotes truth in an accommodated form. [2] As regards truth in an accommodated form, be it known that when truth Divine descends through the heavens to people, as the Word has descended, it is on the way accommodated to all, both to those who are in the heavens, and to those who are on the earth. But truth Divine is in quite a different form in the heavens from what it is in the world. In the heavens it is such as is the internal sense of the Word; in the world it is such as is its sense in the letter. Nay, in the heavens themselves it is in diverse forms, in one form in

the inmost or third heaven, in another form in the middle or second heaven, and in still another in the first or ultimate heaven. The form of truth Divine, that is, the perception, thought, and utterance of it, in the inmost or third heaven, so transcends that in the middle or second heaven, that in this heaven it cannot be apprehended, it is so Divine and exalted; for it contains innumerable things that cannot be uttered in the second heaven; it consists of mere changes of state in respect to the affections of love. But the form of truth Divine in the middle or second heaven transcends in like manner that in the first or ultimate heaven, and still more the form of truth Divine in the world. Hence it is that the things which are uttered in those heavens are such as no human mind has ever perceived, nor any ear heard, as those know from experience who have been raised into heaven. [3] They who do not know this believe that in the heavens they think no otherwise and speak no otherwise than on the earth; but this they believe because they do not know that the interiors of a person are in a more exalted state than his exteriors, and that the thought and speech of those who are in the heavens is celestial and spiritual, but of those who are on the earth it is natural, the difference between which is so great that it cannot be described in words (but concerning these kinds of speech, see n. 1634-1650, 1757-1759, 1876, 2157, 242, 2476, 3342-3345, 4104, 4609, 5225, 5287, 6040, 6982, 7002, 7089, 7131, 7191, 7381, 8343, 8733, 8734). [4] From all this it is also evident that unless truth Divine or the Word were presented in an accommodated form, it could not be apprehended; for if it were in a more exalted form than the state of perception, it would not fall into the understanding, thus not into the faith. Hence it is that truth Divine was given to mankind such as is the Word in the letter; for if it were to appear such as it is in heaven, no person would apprehend it, and on the first view and notice would reject it, because it would not fall into such things as are of natural light; and moreover it would be full of secrets such as could in no wise enter into any idea of a person, because they are altogether repugnant to the appearances and fallacies which are derived from the world through the external senses; to say nothing of the deeper secrets which lie hidden within these secrets in manifold series, and that cannot possibly be expressed except by means of variations and changes of state of heavenly light and flame, by which angelic speech and thought are carried on.

SH 8921. *And let not God speak with us.* That this signifies truth in a form not accommodated, is evident from what precedes; for by "Moses" is signified truth Divine beneath heaven conjoined with truth Divine in heaven, thus mediating between the Lord and the people, consequently truth Divine in an accommodated form (as just shown above, n. 8920). Consequently by "Let not God speak with us," is signified truth Divine in a form not accommodated; for by "God" is here meant the Lord as to Divine truth in heaven (n. 8805), consequently the Divine truth itself; which is also the reason why it is said "God," and not "Jehovah;" for in the Word where "God" is named, the Lord as to Divine truth is meant; but where "Jehovah" is named the Lord as to Divine good is meant (n. 2586, 2769, 2807, 2822, 3921, 4295, 4402, 7091, 7268, 7873, 8301, 8867).

SH 8922. *Lest perchance we die.* That this signifies that thus the life of heaven with them would perish, is evident from the signification of "dying," as being to die

spiritually (see n. 6119), thus to perish in respect to the life of heaven. That truth Divine in a form not accommodated has this effect, is evident from what was shown just above (n. 8920). For truth in a form not accommodated, such as it is in heaven, transcends the apprehension, and that which transcends the apprehension is not received, and that which is not received does not flow into any faith, thus neither into the life of faith, which is the life of heaven. For a person is regenerated, that is, receives the life of heaven, by means of the truth Divine which is of faith (n. 2046, 2063, 2189, 2979, 3155, 3876, 3877, 5893, 5912, 6247, 8635-8640, 8772).

SH 8923. *And Moses said to the people.* That this signifies information, is evident from the signification of "saying," here by Moses to the people, as being information; for the things which he said are matters of information about that of which they complained. In like manner in other places by "saying" is signified information, when information is given about the subject of inquiry (see n. 7769, 7793, 7825, 8041).

SH 8924. *Fear not, because God is come to tempt you.* That this signifies that the life of heaven will not perish; this is merely that it may be known that it exists, and what is its quality; is evident from the signification of "not fearing," namely, that they will die, as being that they will perish in respect to the life of heaven (see n. 8922); and from the signification of "to tempt you," as being to teach that there is a life of heaven and what its quality is. That this is signified by "tempting," is because all spiritual temptation teaches and confirms such things with a person. For temptations are to the intent that the faith of truth, and the affection of truth, and afterward the affection of good, may be implanted and inrooted, and that thus the person may receive new life, which is the life of heaven. [2] For temptations are combats with evils and falsities, and when the person conquers these, he is confirmed, for he fights from truths and for truths against falsity and evil. That he fights from truths and for truths, the person is not sensible of at the time, because truths are in the interiors; and therefore they do not come manifestly to sense, which is of the exteriors; but that it is from them and for them is evident from the fact that there is combat and afterward victory, which is not possible except by collisions of things opposite to each other: the opposites are evil and good, and falsity and truth. [3] But be it known that the person does not fight, but the Lord for the person, and indeed against the hells, which then attempt to attack and subdue the person (see n. 840, 1661, 1692, 8159, 8168, 8172, 8175, 8176). From all this it is evident that by the words "Fear not, for God is come to tempt you," is signified that they ought not to fear that the life of heaven will perish, for this comes to pass that they may be taught and know that there is a life of heaven, and also what its quality is. (But concerning temptations, see what has been already said and shown, n. 2272, 2768, 3318, 3927, 3928, 4249, 4299, 4341, 4572, 5036, 5246, 5356, 6144, 6574, 6611, 6657, 6663, 6666, 6829, 8131, 8273, 8351, 8367, 8370, 8403, 8567.)

SH 8925. *And that the fear of Him may be before your faces, that you not sin.* That this signifies holy fear therefrom of the Divine, and the consequent preservation of spiritual life, is evident from the signification of "the fear of God," as being a holy fear of the Divine (of which below); from the signification of "faces," as

being the interiors (n. 1999, 2434, 3527, 4066, 4796, 4797, 5102, 5585, 5592); consequently “the fear of God before their faces” denotes a holy fear of the Divine in their interiors; and from the signification of “that you not sin,” as being the preservation of spiritual life, for spiritual life is preserved by not sinning. To sin is to do and think what is evil and false intentionally and from the will, for the things which are done intentionally and from the will are such as come forth out of the heart and defile the person (Matt. xv. 11, 17-19), consequently which destroy spiritual life with him (n. 8910). As regards the holy fear which is signified in the Word by “the fear of God,” be it known that this fear is love, but love such as is the love of little children toward their parents, of parents toward their children, of consorts toward each other, who fear to do anything which displeases, thus which in any way does injury to love. Such fear is insinuated into love during a person’s regeneration. As this fear is in agreement with love, and can be within and actually is within or united to love, it is for this reason called holy fear, and is the fear of sinning or doing contrary to the commandments, thus contrary to the Lord. But this fear differs with every one according to the quality and amount of the love (see what has been shown about it in n. 2826, 3718, 3719, 5459, 7280, 7788).

6.

The Spiritual Meaning of Exodus 20:21-23

SH 8926. Exodus 20, verses 21-23. *And the people stood afar off, and Moses came near to the thick darkness where God was. And Jehovah said to Moses, Thus shall you say to the sons of Israel, You have seen that I have spoken with you from heaven. You shall not make with Me gods of silver and gods of gold, you shall not make to you.* “And the people stood afar off,” signifies remoteness from internal truths; “and Moses came near to the thick darkness where God was,” signifies conjunction still of the truth of spiritual good with truth Divine; “and Jehovah said to Moses,” signifies instruction further; “Thus shall you say to the sons of Israel,” signifies those who are of the spiritual church; “You have seen that I have spoken with you from heaven,” signifies all things of the Word by means of influx from the Divine through heaven; “you shall not make with Me gods of silver and gods of gold,” signifies that they should wholly abstain from such things as in the external form appear as true and good, but in the internal form are false and evil; “you shall not make to you,” signifies that they must carefully beware.

SH 8927. *And the people stood afar off.* That this signifies remoteness from internal truths, is evident from the signification of “standing afar off,” as being remoteness from internal things (of which above, n. 8918).

SH 8928. *And Moses came near to the thick darkness where God was.* That this signifies the conjunction still of the truth of spiritual good with truth Divine, is evident from the representation of Moses, as being truth Divine beneath heaven conjoined with truth Divine in heaven, consequently mediating (see n. 8760, 8787, 8805), thus the truth of spiritual good, for this is truth Divine beneath heaven, in which truth is the spiritual church that is represented by the sons of

Israel--this truth is represented by Moses as the head of that church (n. 7041); from the signification of "coming near," as being conjunction, for to come near to the Divine is to be conjoined therewith; and from the signification of "thick darkness," as being truth Divine relatively to those who are of the spiritual church, also relatively to that people which Moses was in charge of as their leader. That truth Divine is thick darkness to that church and that people, is because they are not in any light in respect to truths Divine. [2] In the first place, those who are of the spiritual church believe that they are in light; but that they are in obscurity, nay, in thick darkness, in respect to truth Divine, is evident from the fact that they do not know from any internal perception that what the church says is true, but merely from the fact that the church says so; and this they confirm with themselves whether it be false or true; and he who is not in any internal perception concerning truth Divine is in thick darkness, or what is the same thing, to him Divine truth is thick darkness. For example, they who are of the spiritual church do not know, nor desire to know, that there is any internal sense of the Word; and if perchance they were to believe it, it would not be from any internal perception that it is so, but from persuasion from some other source. [3] To take another example: they who are of the spiritual church say that faith is the only means of salvation, even without charity and its goods. This they believe because the church says so, nor do they come to such a light of perception as to perceive that there is no faith except where there is charity, and that the one belongs to the other as consort to consort; consequently that charity is an essential of the church, because it is of good. From this also it is plain in what obscurity, or in what thick darkness, the spiritual church is. And because they are in this thick darkness they divide the church into as many churches as there are diverse doctrines concerning the truths of faith; which they would not do if they were in light. For he who is in light never doubts, still less denies, that love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor are essentials of the church, and that upon them are based all the truths of the Word, consequently all the truths of faith. The case is similar with all the other truths which hang upon this and are called truths of faith. (But these things have been more plainly shown above, n. 2708, 2715, 2831, 2849, 2935, 2937, 3241, 3246, 6289, 6427, 6865, 6945, 7233. That they who are of the spiritual church do not attain to the first threshold of the wisdom, or to the first ray of light, in which they are who are of the celestial church, see n. 2718, 3833, 6500.) [4] Another reason why Moses is said to have entered into thick darkness when he came near to God, is that Moses as a leader represented the Israelite and Jewish people, which was in such thick darkness concerning internal truths as to be wholly ignorant of them, for they made everything of worship and everything Divine to consist in external things. This is the reason why to them the Divine was thick darkness; for it is known to every one that the Divine is never in darkness, but in light, for the Divine is light itself; and therefore when it is called "thick darkness" it is relatively to those who are in no light, for to such the Divine truths make the light of heaven appear no otherwise; because they are not believed, and are even denied. And the Divine appears to every one according to the quality of his life and faith, consequently as light to those who are in light, and as thick darkness to those who are in thick darkness. (That the Israelite and Jewish people was of such a quality, see n. 3479, 3769, 4281, 4293, 4307, 4314, 4316, 4433, 4680, 4825, 4832, 4844, 4847, 4865, 4903, 6304; also that the Lord appeared to them upon Mount Sinai in smoke, in a

cloud, and in thick darkness, in accordance with their quality, n. 1891, 6832, 8814, 8819.)

SH 8929. *And Jehovah said to Moses.* That this signifies instruction further, is evident from the signification of “saying,” as being instruction, for “saying” involves what follows, here instruction (as also elsewhere, n. 6879, 6881, 6883, 6891, 7186, 7267, 7304, 7380, 8127).

SH 8930. *Thus shall you say to the sons of Israel.* That this signifies those who are of the spiritual church, is evident from the representation of the sons of Israel, as being those who are of the spiritual church (see n. 6426, 6862, 6868, 7035, 7062, 7198, 7201, 7215, 7223, 7957, 8234, 8805).

SH 8931. *You have seen that I have spoken with you from heaven.* That this signifies all things of the Word by means of influx from the Divine through heaven, is evident from the signification of “speaking from heaven,” when by Jehovah to those who are of the church, who are represented by the sons of Israel (n. 8930), as being truth Divine, or the Word from the Divine through heaven; for that which Jehovah speaks is truth Divine, thus the Word which is in the church; and that which He speaks passes through heaven. [2] Be it known that heaven is not in any certain and determinate place, thus not, according to the common opinion, on high; but heaven is where the Divine is, thus with every one and in every one who is in charity and faith; for charity and faith are heaven, because they are from the Divine, and there also the angels dwell. That heaven is where the Divine is, that is, where the Lord is, is evident from the fact that Mount Sinai, from which the Lord spoke, is here called “heaven;” and this is also the reason why by “Mount Sinai” is signified heaven, from which is Divine truth (n. 8805). [3] That all things of the Word are signified, is because Jehovah or the Lord then began to reveal the Word which should serve the human race for doctrine and life, first by Moses, and afterward by the prophets. In order therefore that they might know that the Word was from the Divine through heaven, the Lord Himself willed to come down, and with a living voice proclaim the ten commandments, and thus show that all that follows of the law, that is, of the Word, was in like manner by means of influx from the Divine through heaven.

SH 8932. *You shall not make with Me gods of silver and gods of gold.* That this signifies that they should wholly abstain from such things as in the external form appear as true and good, but in the internal form are false and evil, is evident from the signification of “making gods,” as being to worship, for he who makes to himself gods does it for the sake of worship; from the signification of “silver,” as being truth, consequently in the opposite sense, falsity; and from the signification of “gold,” as being good, and consequently in the opposite sense, evil (see n. 113, 1551, 1552, 2954, 5658, 6914, 6917, 7999). That those things are meant which appear true and good in the external form, but in the internal are false and evil, is because it is said, “You shall not make them with Me,” that is, with Jehovah God; for Divine truth itself and Divine good itself are in internals and are likewise in externals; but in externals Divine truth and good are in representative types; for external things in a type have reference to and represent internal things. External things are false and evil whenever, being separate from

internal things, they are accounted holy or are worshipped; and yet they still appear as true and good, because they represent what is true and good. These things are signified by “making with Jehovah God gods of silver and gods of gold.” [2] This commandment follows immediately after the ten commandments, for the reason that the Israelite and Jewish people was such that it accounted holy, and worshipped altogether as Divine, external things separated from internal (n. 3479, 3769, 4281, 4293, 4307, 4314, 4316, 4433, 4680, 4825, 4832, 4844, 4847, 4865, 4903, 6304, 6832, 8814, 8819). That it may be further known what and of what quality are those things which in the external form appear as true and good, but in the internal are false and evil, let us take as an example all the rites of the Jewish Church; as the sacrifices, incenses, washings, and many others. In the external form these were true and good, not of themselves, but because in a type they had reference to or represented internal truths and goods, which are of love and faith in the Lord. When such things were accounted holy in the external form, and especially when they were worshipped, as by the Jews and Israelites when becoming idolaters they applied them to the worship of strange gods, they then retained nothing of the truths and goods which in a type they had reference to or represented, except the appearance, because in the internal form they were falsities and evils. [3] The case was similar with all the other things which with that people were types representative of heavenly and Divine things. For as soon as the external things which represented internal things were applied to the worship of other gods, they became idols which they worshipped, or gods of silver and of gold which they made with Jehovah God; for then in external form they appeared as true and good, but in the internal they were false and evil. [4] In general “gods of silver and of gold” denote all the falsities and derivative evils of worship, which are rendered like truth and good by wrong applications and interpretations of the Word, and at the same time by reasonings from self-intelligence. Such things are signified by “the gods of silver and of gold” in the following passages. In Isaiah:

In that day a man shall cast forth his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made for themselves to bow down to, to the moles and to the bats; to enter into the clefts of the rocks, and into the clefts of the crags (ii. 20, 21);

“moles and bats” denote those who are in darkness, that is, in falsities and in the derivative evils. [5] Again in Isaiah:

In that day they shall cast away every man his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which your hands have made for you, a sin (xxxii. 7);

“which the hands have made” denotes those things which are from self-intelligence. Again:

The craftsman casts a graven image, and the caster overlays it with gold, and casts silver chains (Isa. xl. 19);

“graven images” denote those things which are from one’s own (see n. 8869); “to overlay with gold” denotes to make them appear good in the external form;

“casting silver chains,” denotes to make them cohere together as if connected with truths. (That “gold” denotes good, and “silver” truth, may be seen in the passages cited above.) [6] In like manner in Jeremiah:

The statutes of the nations are vanity: surely he cuts out wood from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman. He decks it with gold and with silver; they fasten them with nails and with hammers, that it not sway to and fro (x. 3, 4).

In Hosea:

The Ephraimites sin more and more, and make them a molten image of silver, idols in their intelligence, all the work of the craftsmen (xiii. 2);

“Ephraim” denotes the intellectual of the church (n. 5354, 6222, 6234, 6238, 6267); “a molten image of silver” denotes falsity appearing as truth, wherefore it is said “in their intelligence;” “all the work of the craftsmen” denotes that all was through reasonings from their own. [7] In Habakkuk:

Woe to him that says to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, This shall teach. Behold this is fixed with gold and silver, but there is no breath in the midst of it (ii. 19);

“wood” denotes evil; “stone” falsity; “fixed with gold and silver” denotes the appearance of good and truth by means of applications. In Daniel:

Belshazzar said while he well tasted the wine, that they should bring the vessels of gold and of silver which his father Nebuchadnezzar had brought out of the temple that was in Jerusalem; that the king and his great ones, his wives and his concubines, might drink therefrom. And they drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, of stone (v. 2-4, 23);

“the vessels of gold and of silver, which were from the temple of Jerusalem,” represented the goods and truths of the church and kingdom of the Lord; “to drink wine out of them” signified to profane by means of evils and falsities, which are “the gods of gold and of silver.” [8] In David:

Their idols are silver and gold, the work of a man’s hands. They have a mouth, but they do not speak; they have eyes, but they do not see (Ps. cxv. 4, 5; cxxxv. 15, 16);

“the silver and gold which are idols” denote falsities and evils; “the work of a man’s hands” denote that they are from self-intelligence. In Moses:

The graven images of the gods of the nations shall you burn with fire; you shall not covet the silver and the gold that is on them, to

take it to you, for that is an abomination to Jehovah your God; therefore you shall not bring an abomination into your house, that there become what is accursed, like to it, you shall utterly abhor it (Dent. vii. 25, 26);

“the silver and gold upon graven images” denote the falsities and evils which are worshipped as truths and goods by reason of the appearance that is induced on them.

SH 8933. *You shall not make to you.* That this signifies that they must carefully beware, is evident from the fact that it is again said that it was not to be done. The iteration or repetition involves that it was not to be done at all, or that they must carefully beware.

7.

The Spiritual Meaning of Exodus 20:24-26

SH 8934. Exodus 20, verses 24-26. *An altar of ground you shall make to Me, and shall sacrifice thereon your burnt-offerings, and your thank-offerings, your flocks, and your herds; in every place where I shall put the memory of My name, I will come to you and I will bless you. And if you make Me an altar of stones, you shall not build it of hewn stones; for if you move your tool upon it, you will profane it. And you shall not go up on steps to My altar, that your nakedness be not uncovered upon it. “An altar of ground you shall make to Me,”* signifies a representative of worship in general from good; “and shall sacrifice thereon your burnt-offerings, and your thank-offerings,” signifies worship specifically according to the state of the spiritual life of each one; “your flocks, and your herds,” signifies goods internal and external; “in every place where I shall put the memory of My name,” signifies a state of faith in the Lord with every one; “I will come to you and I will bless them,” signifies the presence of the Divine then, and influx; “and if you make Me an altar of stones,” signifies a representative of worship in general from truths; “you shall not build it of hewn stones,” signifies that it must not be from self-intelligence; “for if you move your tool upon it,” signifies if it is from one’s own; “you will profane it,” signifies that then there will be no worship; “and you shall not go up on steps to My altar,” signifies no elevation to interior things which are celestial; “that your nakedness be not uncovered upon it,” signifies the idea of thought concerning them thus full of falsities, which idea will then be made manifest.

SH 8935. *An altar of ground you shall make to Me.* That this signifies a representative of worship in general from good, is evident from the signification of “an altar,” as being the principal representative of the Lord, and consequently of the worship of Him (see n. 921, 2777, 2811, 4489, 4541); and from the signification of “ground,” as being good. That “ground” denotes good is because by “ground” is signified the church which is in good (n. 566). Hence Adam was said to be “from the ground” (Gen. ii. 7; iii. 19), for by him was signified the person of the celestial church, or the church which is in good (n. 478, 479). There

are two things from which the worship of the Lord is effected; good and truth. Worship from good was represented by an altar of ground, but worship from truth was represented by an altar of stones; both kinds of altars are here treated of. These two things from which worship is effected are called faith and charity; worship from truth bears relation to faith, and worship from good to charity. As regards worship from faith and worship from charity, or from truth and from good, the case is this. Before a person is regenerated he is in worship from truth, but when he has been regenerated, he is in worship from good. For before a person has been regenerated he is led by means of truth to good, that is, by means of faith to charity; but when he has been regenerated he is in good and thence in truth; that is, he is in charity and thence in faith (n. 8516, 8539, 8643, 8648, 8658). These two kinds of worship are what are represented by altars of ground and of stone. (That an altar is the chief representative of the worship of the Lord, because thereon were made burnt-offerings and sacrifices, and these were the things in which the Divine worship of the Hebrew nation, and thus of the Israelite and Jewish nation, chiefly consisted, see n. 923, 1343, 2180, 2805, 2807, 2830, 3519, 6905.)

SH 8936. *And shall sacrifice thereon your burnt-offerings, and your thank-offerings.* That this signifies worship specifically according to the state of the spiritual life of each one, is evident from the signification of "burnt-offerings and sacrifices," as being all internal worship in general, with variety according to the various kinds of celestial and spiritual things, that is, of good which is of love to the Lord, and of truth which is of faith in the Lord (see n. 922, 923, 2165, 2180, 2805, 2807, 2830, 3519, 6905), thus according to every state of spiritual life specifically. From this it was that sacrifices were instituted of kinds so various, as, besides the daily sacrifices, those of the sabbaths, of the feasts, of the new moons, of inaugurations, of sanctifications, also for every guilt, for sin, for cleansing, for healing, and for birth. From this also it was that according to the state [to be represented] various kinds of animals were employed, as oxen, bullocks, lambs, rams, she-goats, and he-goats, by which were specifically signified the various goods of spiritual life.

SH 8937. *Your flocks, and your herds.* That this signifies goods internal and external, is evident from the signification of "flocks," as being internal goods, and from the signification of "herds," as being external goods (see n. 2566, 5913). That by "flocks" are signified internal goods; is because to flocks belong lambs, sheep, kids, she-goats, rams, and he-goats, by which are signified such things as are of innocence, and of celestial and spiritual love in the internal person; and that by "herds" are signified external goods, is because to herds belong oxen, bullocks, calves, by which are signified such things as are of good and truth in the external person. (What is signified by "oxen," see n. 2180, 2566, 2781; what by "bullocks," and by "calves," n. 1824, 2830; what by "lambs," n. 3519, 3994, 7840; what by "sheep," n. 4169; what by "kids," and by "she-goats," n. 3519, 4005, 4006, 4871; what by "rams," n. 2830, 4170; and what by "he-goats," n. 4169, 4769.)

SH 8938. *In every place where I shall put the memory of My name.* That this signifies a state of faith in the Lord with every one, is evident from the signification of "place," as being state (see n. 2625, 2837, 3356, 3387, 3404, 4321, 4882, 5605, 7381);

thus “every place” denotes the state of every one, or with every one. That a state of faith is signified, is because the “name of Jehovah” signifies everything in one complex by which the Lord is worshipped, thus all things of faith and charity (n. 2724, 3006, 6674); consequently “to put the memory of the name of Jehovah God” denotes with whom, or in whose heart, are charity and faith from the Lord. It is according to the sense of the letter that they were to sacrifice burnt-offerings and thank-offerings, thus their flocks and their herds, in Jerusalem, which was the place chosen by the Lord for the worship of Himself, thus in which He put the memory of His name. According to the internal sense, however, place is not meant, but every person in whom are faith and charity; for in the internal sense by “place” is not signified place, but state; neither by “name” is there signified name, but faith and worship; thus there is meant the person who is in a state of reception of faith from the Lord. Moreover in Jerusalem, which was the place where the Lord was worshipped by burnt-offerings and thank-offerings, were represented all things that belong to the church. Consequently by “Jerusalem” in the Word, and by the “New Jerusalem” in the Apocalypse, is signified the church of the Lord; and the church of the Lord is with every one who is in a state of reception of charity and faith from the Lord; for a person is himself a church, and a number in whom is the church make the church in general. Hence it is also evident that by “in every place in which I put the memory of My name” is signified a state of faith with every one.

SH 8939. *I will come to you, and I will bless you.* That this signifies the presence of the Divine then, and influx, is evident from the signification of “coming to” any one, when it is said by Jehovah, as being presence (see also n. 5934, 6063, 6089); and from the signification of “to be blessed,” when by Jehovah, as being to be gifted with faith and charity (n. 2846, 3406, 4981, 6091, 6099, 8674), thus also their flowing in, for faith and charity flow in from the Lord with a person. These things are “a blessing” in the internal sense, for they are what render a person blessed and happy to eternity. During a person’s life in the world, the things which he calls blessings are those which render him blessed and happy in time, such as riches and honors. But the things which are meant in the internal sense of the Word are not temporal things, but eternal things, compared with which temporal things are of no account. For there is no ratio between what is temporal and what is eternal, not even if the time be extended to thousands or myriads of years, for these have an end, but that which is eternal has no end. Wherefore that which is eternal *is*, for that which is without end *is*, because it has *being* from the Divine, which is infinite, and the infinite as to time is the eternal. But that which is temporal relatively is not, because when it is ended it is no more. Hence also it is plain that “blessing” in the spiritual sense is that which has within it *being* from the Divine, thus the things of eternal life, consequently those which are of charity and faith. [2] That worldly blessing is nothing in comparison with heavenly blessing, which is eternal, the Lord thus teaches in Matthew:

What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul? (xvi. 26).

But the person who is in worldly and earthly things does not apprehend this saying, for worldly and earthly things suffocate it, and cause him not even to

believe that there is an eternal life. And yet I can asseverate that as soon as a person dies he is in the other life, and lives as a spirit among spirits, and that he then appears to himself and to others in that life in all respects like a person in the world, endowed with every sense internal and external (n. 1881); consequently that the death of the body is only the casting off of such things as had served for use and service in the world; and moreover that death itself is a continuation of life, but in another world, which is invisible to the eyes of the earthly body, yet is there seen in a light exceeding a thousand times the midday light of the world. [3] As I know this from the living experience of so many years, which is still continued, I solemnly declare it. I still speak, and I have spoken, with almost all whom I had known in the world and who are dead, with some after two or three days from their decease. Very many of them were exceedingly indignant that they had not believed at all in a life which was to continue after death. I have spoken with them not merely for a day, but for months and years; and it has also been given me to see their states of life in succession, or in progress, either to hell or to heaven. Wherefore let him who wishes to be eternally happy know and believe that he will live after death. Let him think of this and keep it in mind, for it is the truth. Let him also know and believe that the Word is the only doctrine which teaches how a person must live in the world in order to be happy to eternity.

SH 8940. *And if you make Me an altar of stones.* That this signifies a representative of worship in general from truths, is evident from the signification of "an altar," as being a representative of Divine worship in general (see n. 921, 2777, 2811, 4489); and from the signification of "stones," as being truths (n. 643, 1298, 3720, 3769, 3771, 3773, 3789, 3798, 6426, 8609). There is worship of the Lord from good, and there is worship of Him from truth. The worship of the Lord from good was represented by an altar of ground, and the worship from truth by an altar of stone (as to both kinds of worship, see above, n. 8935). As an "altar of stone" signified worship from truth, it was therefore commanded that such an altar should be erected as soon as they passed over the Jordan and came into the land of Canaan, and upon it were to be written the commandments of the law, that is, truths Divine from heaven; for by the "ten commandments" are signified all truths Divine in sum total. Concerning this altar it is thus written in Moses:

When you shall pass over Jordan, you shall set you up great stones, and plaster them with plaster; and then you shall write upon them all the words of this law. Afterward, you shall build there an altar to Jehovah your God, an altar of stones, upon which you shall not strike iron. You shall build the altar of Jehovah your God of whole stones, and you shall cause to go up upon it burnt-offerings, and thank-offerings. And you shall write upon the stones of the altar the words of the law very plainly (Deut. xxvii. 1-8; Josh. viii. 30-32).

[2] The reason why the words of the law were to be written upon the stones of the altar, was that by "stones" were signified truths, and by "an altar of stones," worship from truths. This also was the reason why the ten commandments, which signified Divine truths in the complex, were written on tables of stone. That this was to be done as soon as they had passed over the Jordan, was because

the Jordan, which was the first and the last boundary of the land of Canaan on the side of the wilderness, signified introduction into the church or heaven, which is effected by means of the knowledges of truth and good, thus by means of truths from the Word (n. 4255); for all the rivers which were boundaries of that land signified the first and the last things of the Lord's kingdom (n. 4116, 4240). By the "stones of the altar" are signified the truths of faith also in Isaiah:

He shall take away sin when He makes all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are scattered (xxvii. 9);

speaking of the vastation of the church; "the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are scattered" denotes that so it shall be with the truths of faith which are of worship. As regards altars in general, they were of ground, of stones, of brass, of wood, and also of gold of brass wood, and gold, because these signified good. (Concerning an altar of brass, see Ezekiel ix. 2; concerning an altar of wood, xli. 22; and concerning an altar of gold, which was the altar of incense, see 1 Kings vi. 22; vii. 48; Rev. viii. 3.) (That "brass" signifies good, see n. 425, 1551; that "wood" does so, n. 643, 2784, 2812, 3720, 8354; and likewise "gold," see n. 113, 1551, 1552, 5658.)

SH 8941. *You shall not build it of hewn stones.* That this signifies that it must not be from self-intelligence, is evident from the signification of "hewn stones," as being such things as are from self-intelligence; for "stones" denote truths (see n. 8940); and to "hew," or fit, them denotes to hatch or devise truths, or such things as resemble truths, from one's own, or from self-intelligence. For things which are hatched or devised from one's own, or from self-intelligence, have their life from a person, which life is no life, because a person's own is nothing but evil (n. 210, 215, 694, 874-876, 987, 1047, 5660, 5786, 8480); whereas that which is not from a person's own, but from the Divine, has life in itself, because all life is from the Divine. The worship of the Lord from truth is here treated of, for this worship is signified by "an altar of stones" (n. 8940). [2] The truths from which the Lord is to be worshipped are to be taken solely from the Word, for in every detail of the Word there is life from the Divine. When truths are taken from one's own, they regard and have as their end dignity and eminence over all in the world, and likewise earthly possessions and wealth above all people, and therefore they have in them the love of self and of the world, thus all evils in the complex (n. 7488, 8318). But truths which are from the Word regard and have as their end eternal life, and have in them love to the Lord and love toward the neighbor, thus all goods in the complex. When truths are hatched from one's own, or from self-intelligence, they rule over the truths which are from the Divine, because these are applied to confirm them; when yet the contrary should be the case, namely, that truths from the Divine should rule, and those which are from self-intelligence should serve. Those which are from one's own, or from self-intelligence, are called truths, but they are not truths; they only appear as truths in the external form, for they are rendered like truths by means of applications from the literal sense of the Word, and by reasonings, while in the internal form they are falsities (what and of what quality they are, see above, n. 8932). [3] There are in the world two religiosities which are from self-intelligence, one in which the love of self and of the world is everything, which religion is that which is

called in the Word “Babel;” it is inwardly profane from the love of self and of the world, and outwardly holy from the Word which has been applied to confirm. The other religiosity is that in which the light of nature is everything; they who are in this acknowledge nothing as truth which they do not apprehend. Some from this religiosity acknowledge the Word, but they apply it for confirmation, thus to serve. Some however do not acknowledge the Word; but these make the Divine to consist in nature, for their light, being of nature, falls into nature, and cannot be enlightened by the light of heaven, because they reject the Word from which is all enlightenment. Those who are from these two religiosities are in hell, because they are void of heavenly life, which they cannot receive because they have rejected the Word. And those of them who have applied the Word for confirmation, have made the Word of none effect in their hearts; but because of its great authority with the common people, they have used it for this service, in order to give weight to the devices of their own intelligence. From all this it can be seen what is signified in the spiritual sense by the altar not being to be built of hewn stones. [4] By “hewn stone” is signified that which is from self-intelligence in the following passages also:

That the people may know, Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in haughtiness and pride of heart, The bricks are fallen, and we will build with hewn stone (Isa. ix. 9, 10).

Although I cry and shout, He has shut out my prayers, He has fenced about my ways with hewn stone, He has overturned my paths (Lev. iii. 8, 9).

Forasmuch as you trample upon the worn one, and seize from him the burden of wheat; you have built houses of hewn stone, but you shall not dwell in them (Amos v. 11).

In these passages “hewn stone” denotes such things in matters of faith as are from self-intelligence. [5] Such being the signification of “hewn stone,” therefore the altar first built in the land of Canaan by the sons of Israel after they had passed over the Jordan, was built of unhewn stones; for by the passage over the Jordan was represented introduction into the kingdom of the Lord, which is effected by means of the truths of faith. Of this altar it is thus written in Joshua:

Joshua built an altar to Jehovah the God of Israel in Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded the sons of Israel, an altar of whole stones, upon which no man had moved iron (viii. 30, 31; also Deut. xxvii. 1-8).

[6] In like manner the temple of Jerusalem was built of whole stones unhewn, of which it is thus written in the first book of the Kings:

As to the house itself, when it was in building, it was built of whole stone, as it was brought; for there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tools of iron heard in the house, while it was in building (vi. 7);

for by the temple of the Lord was represented the Lord as to Divine truth. That the Lord was represented by the temple, He Himself teaches in John ii. 19, 21, 22; and that He was represented as to the Divine truth, was because this truth was there taught; for which reason also it was built of stones, because by "stones" was signified Divine truth (n. 8940); and hence also the Lord Himself was called the "Stone of Israel" (n. 6426). [7] from all this it is now evident what was signified by the stone of the altar, and what also by the stone of the temple, likewise what by the stones being whole and unhewn, namely, that religion was to be formed by truths from the Lord, thus from the Word, and not from self-intelligence. Truths which are from self-intelligence are thus described also in Isaiah:

The workman casts a graven image, and the founder overlays it with gold, and casts silver chains. He seeks an intelligent workman to prepare a graven image (xl. 19, 20);

"a graven image" denotes a religiosity that is from one's own, which is set up to be worshipped as Divine (see n. 8869); "the workman" denotes those who hatch and devise from one's own; that they may appear like truths is described by his "overlaying it with gold," "casting silver chains," and "seeking an intelligent workman." [8] Again:

They that form a graven image are all of them vanity. All his fellows shall be ashamed, and the workmen themselves. He fashions the iron with the tongs, and works with coal, and forms it with sharp hammers; thus he works it with the arm of his strength; he fashions pieces of wood, he stretches out a thread, and marks it off with a rule, he makes it into its angles, and defines it with a compass, that he may make it in the form of a man, according to the beauty of a man, to dwell in the house (xliv. 9, 11-13);

in this passage also is described a religiosity which is from self-intelligence. In like manner in Jeremiah:

The statutes of the nations are vanity; surely he cuts out wood from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman with an ax. He decks it with silver and with gold; he fastens it with nails and with hammers (x. 3, 4).

And also in Hosea:

Nevertheless now they sin more and more, and make them a molten image of silver, idols in their intelligence, all the work of the craftsmen (xiii. 2).

A religiosity that is hatched from self-intelligence, and not derived from the Word, is meant in the internal sense by "idols" and "strange gods," by "molten images" and "graven images," for the things which are from one's own are nothing else, because in themselves they are dead, and yet are adored as living.

SH 8942. *For if you move your tool upon it.* That this signifies if it is from one's own, is evident from the signification of a "tool," as being truth devised, thus from one's own; for the tool is of iron, by which stones are cut and fashioned into form. Here therefore it is a person's own, for this fashions the things which are to be of religion, in order that they may appear in the form of truth. Instead of "tool," the term "iron" is sometimes used, and sometimes "ax" (see Deut. xxvii. 5; Josh. viii. 30, 31; 1 Kings vi. 7; Isa. xliv. 11, 12; Jer. x. 3), and by these instruments are signified such things as are of self-intelligence, and which devise.

SH 8943. *You will profane it.* That this signifies that then there will be no worship, is evident from the signification of "profaning," as being to cause that there is not any worship. For that which is from self-intelligence is in itself void of life, nay, is spiritually dead, for a person's own is nothing but evil; and therefore if Divine worship is performed from it, this worship is nothing else than the worship of an idol, graven or molten, wherein there is no spirit, that is, no life. But that which is from the Word is alone serviceable for Divine worship, because it is in itself alive. For within everything of the Word there is a spiritual sense, which treats of the Lord's kingdom; and within this sense is the Divine, because the Word in its inmost sense treats of the Lord alone; from this is the sanctity and the life of the Word, and not from any other source. The Word is like a Divine Person; the literal sense is as it were his body, but the internal sense is as it were his soul; which shows that the literal sense has life through the internal sense. It appears as if the literal sense vanishes or dies through the internal sense; but on the contrary it does not vanish, still less dies; but through the internal sense it lives. From all this it is now evident that worship truly Divine has its existence from those things which are of the Word, and in no case from those things which are of self-intelligence. Hence it is that by "if you move a tool upon the altar you will profane it," is signified, if you devise not from the Word, but from self-intelligence such things as must be of Divine worship, there is no worship.

SH 8944. It is believed in the world that a person is able to know from the light of nature, thus without revelation, many things that belong to religion; as that there is a God, that He is to be worshipped, and also that He is to be loved, likewise that a person will live after death, and many other things that depend upon these; and yet these things being such as are from self-intelligence. But I have been instructed by much experience that of himself, and without revelation, a person knows nothing whatever about Divine things, and about the things that belong to heavenly and spiritual life. For a person is born into the evils of the love of self and of the world, which are of such a nature that they shut out the influx from the heavens, and open influx from the hells; thus such as make a person blind, and incline him to deny that there is a Divine, that there is a heaven and a hell, and that there is a life after death. This is very manifest from the learned in the world, who by means of knowledges have carried the light of their nature above the light of others; for it is known that these deny the Divine, and acknowledge nature in place of the Divine, more than others; and also that when they speak from the heart, and not from doctrine, they deny the life after death, likewise heaven and hell, consequently all things of faith, which they call bonds

for the common people. From this it is plain what is the quality of the light of nature without revelation. It has also been shown that many who have written upon natural theology, and from the light of their nature have skillfully confirmed those things which belonged to the doctrine of their church, in the other life at heart deny these same things more than others do; and also deny the Word itself, which they attempt utterly to destroy; for in the other life hearts speak. It has also been shown that the same can receive nothing of influx out of heaven, but only from the hells. Hence it was plain what is the quality of the light of nature without revelation; consequently what is the quality of that which comes from a person's own intelligence. [2] But two considerations have arisen which bring the mind into doubt upon this subject: first, that the ancients who were Gentiles nevertheless knew that there is a Divine, that this is to be worshipped, and that a person as to the soul is immortal; second, that these things are known also to many nations at this day, with whom there is no revelation. But as regards the ancients, they did not know these things from the light of their own nature, but from revelation, which had spread from the church even to them; for the Lord's church had been in the land of Canaan from the most ancient times (see n. 3686, 4447, 4454, 4516, 4517, 5136, 6516). From this source such things as pertained to Divine worship spread to the nations round about, and likewise to the neighboring Greeks, and from these to the Italians or Romans. From this source both Greeks and Romans had knowledges about the Supreme Deity, and the immortality of the soul, of which their learned men wrote. [3] As regards the nations at this day who also know that there is a Divine, and that there is a life after death, these have not had this knowledge from the light of their own nature, but from a religiosity derived by them from ancient times, which had been founded on such things as had spread in various ways from the church, which had revelation. This was of the Lord's Divine Providence. Moreover, those of them who from their religiosity acknowledge a Divine over all things, and from their religiosity perform the duties of charity to their neighbor, when instructed in the other life receive the truths of faith, and are saved (see n. 2589-2604).

SH 8945. *And you shall not go up on steps to the altar.* That this signifies no elevation to interior things which are celestial, is evident from the signification of "going up by steps," as being to raise one's self to higher or interior things (whether we say "interior things," or "higher things," it is the same, for interior things appear as higher, see n. 2148, 3084, 4210, 4599); and from the signification of "an altar," as being the chief representative of the Lord (n. 921, 2777, 2811); thus by "going up on steps to My altar" is signified to raise one's self to the Lord, consequently to interior things which are celestial; for the Lord is more present in interior things. Those things are called celestial which are in the inmost heaven, and those spiritual which are in the middle heaven. For heaven is distinguished into two kingdoms, namely, the celestial kingdom and the spiritual kingdom. They who are in the celestial kingdom are in the inmost or third heaven, thus nearest to the Lord; for they who are there are in love to the Lord and in innocence, consequently in wisdom above all the other angels. But they who are in the spiritual kingdom are in the middle or second heaven, thus more remote from the Lord; they who are there are in charity toward the neighbor, and through charity are with the Lord. (Concerning these two kingdoms and the

difference between them, see n. 2048, 2088, 2227, 2507, 2669, 2708, 2715, 2718, 3235, 3246, 3374, 3887, 4448, 4585, 4938, 4939, 5113, 5922, 6367, 6435, 7877.) [2] It is to be explained in a few words how the case is with respect to the elevation toward interior things, thus toward celestial things, which is signified by "going up on steps to the altar." It is not granted any one in the other life to be raised higher into heaven than to the degree of good in which he is; for if he is raised higher, his defilements, that is, the evils of his loves and the falsities therefrom, are made manifest. For the more interior, the more pure and holy, it is in heaven. They who are in a more impure state are kept in a lower sphere, where their impurities are not perceived and do not appear, because they are in a grosser good, and a more obscure truth. [3] It sometimes happens that they who come into heaven desire to come into a more interior heaven, believing that so they will enjoy greater joy. In order that this desire which clings to them may be removed, they are indeed raised into a more interior heaven; but when they come thither, they begin to be distressed by reason of the evils of their loves, which evils then come to their perception, and they also become ugly by reason of the falsities from the evils with them. On perceiving these things, they cast themselves down from the more interior heaven, and do not return into a tranquil and peaceful state until they come into their former station. These are the things which are signified by the statute, "You shall not go up on steps to My altar, that your nakedness be not uncovered upon it." [4] The case is similar with those who are beneath heaven. If these desire to ascend into heaven before they have been prepared, when they are raised there they feel torment almost infernal, and appear to themselves like carcasses. Even the very life with them labors, like the life of those who are in the death agony; and therefore they cast themselves down headlong, and afterward no more desire to ascend above the state of life in which they are. [5] Be it known that in the other life heaven is denied by the Lord to no one, and that as many as desire can be admitted. (Heaven consists of societies of angels who are in the good of love toward the neighbor and of love to the Lord; and when any are admitted into heaven, they are let into such societies.) But when the sphere of their life, that is, when the life of their love, is not in agreement, then conflict arises, from which they have anguish and downcasting. In this way they are instructed about the life of heaven, and the state of their own life in comparison, also about the fact that no one has heaven merely by being received or admitted (as is the common opinion in the world), and that by his life in the world a person may become of such a character that he can be with those who are in heaven (see what has been already said and shown on this subject from experience, n. 3938, 4225, 4226, 4299, 4674, 5057, 5058, 7186, 7519, 8794, 8797). These are the things which are signified by the statute, "You shall not go up on steps to My altar, that your nakedness be not uncovered upon it;" and also by a similar statute in Exod. xxviii. 42, 43. [6] It is said "go up on steps," for the reason that elevation to interior things appears in the world of spirits, where celestial and spiritual things are presented in forms like those of the world, as an ascent by steps. This representative it has often been given me to see. For this reason also it was that the angels were seen by Jacob in his dream going up to the Lord by the steps of a ladder (Gen. xxviii. 12). Therefore also by "steps" in the Word is signified ascent to higher things, that is, to interior things, as in Ezekiel xl. 6, 22, 26, 31, 34; and in Amos:

The Lord Jehovih Zebaoth builds His steps in the heavens (ix. 6).

SH 8946. *That your nakedness be not uncovered upon it.* That this signifies the idea of thought concerning them thus full of falsities, which idea will then be made manifest, is evident from the signification of “nakedness,” as being that which is destitute of truths (see n. 5433), thus an idea of thought full of falsities; and from the signification of being “uncovered,” as being to be made manifest. How the case herein is, has been explained just above (n. 8945), namely, that a person, a spirit, or an angel, when raised more interiorly into heaven, appears such as he is as to both his lives; as to the life of his thought with respect to truths, and as to the life of his will with respect to goods; for the more interior the advance into the heavens, the purer is the good, and the purer the truth. In order therefore that the falsities which are of the thought, and the evils which are of the will, should not appear, but be hidden, they are kept in lower parts, where they are in a comparatively obscure light. From all this also it can be seen what was meant by the saying that “no one can see Jehovah and live;” for Jehovah is pure love, and from Him is pure light, and to be seen in these is to perish. Therefore also the angels themselves in heaven are covered with a cloud (n. 6849); and all who are in hell are veiled in thick clouds (n. 3340, 8137, 8138, 8814, 8819); for clouds there are falsities.

The Ten Commandments in General, Plus Other Contextual Information

- from -

The Apocalypse Explained

Emanuel Swedenborg

1.

The Goods of Charity

AE 932. As faith separated from the goods of charity, which are good works, also the faith that is from charity, have been treated of in the explanations of two preceding chapters (the twelfth and thirteenth), the goods of charity shall be treated of in the explanations of this and the following chapter. What is meant by the goods of charity or good works is at this day unknown to most in the Christian world, because of the prevalence of the religion of faith alone, which is faith separated from the goods of charity. For if only faith contributes to salvation, and goods of charity contribute nothing, the idea that these goods may be left undone has place in the mind. But some who believe that good works should be done do not know what good works are, thinking that good works are merely giving to the poor and doing good to the needy and to widows and orphans, since such things are mentioned and seemingly commanded in the Word. Some think that if good works must be done for the sake of eternal life they must give to the poor all they possess, as was done in the primitive church, and as “the Lord commanded the rich man to sell all that he had and give to the poor, and take up the cross and follow Him” (Matt. xix. 21). But what is meant in the Word by good works shall be told in order in what follows.

AE 933:2. It has been said in the previous article that at this day it is scarcely known what is meant by charity, and thus by good works, unless it be giving to the poor, enriching the needy, doing good to widows and orphans, and contributing to the building of temples, hospitals, and lodging houses; and yet whether such works are done by a person and for the sake of reward is not known; for if they are done by a person they are not good, and if for the sake of reward they are meritorious; and such works do not open heaven, and thus are not acknowledged as goods in heaven. In heaven no works are regarded as good except such as are done by the Lord with a person, and yet the works that are done by the Lord with a person appear in outward form like those done by the person himself, and cannot be distinguished even by the person who does them. For the works done by the Lord with a person are done by a person as if by himself; and unless they are done as if by himself they do not conjoin a person to the Lord, thus they do not reform him. That a person ought to do goods as if by himself may be seen above (n. 616, 864, 911c).

AE 934:2. It was said of works in the preceding article that those done by a person are not good, but only those done by the Lord with a person. But for works to be done by the Lord, and not by a person, two things are necessary: first, the Lord's Divine must be acknowledged, also that He is the God of heaven and earth even as to the Human, and that every good that is good is from Him; and secondly, that a person must live according to the commandments of the Decalogue by abstaining from those evils that are there forbidden, that is, from worshipping other gods, from profaning the name of God, from thefts, from adulteries, from murders, from false witness, from coveting the possessions and property of others. These two things are requisite that the works done by a person may be good. The reason is that every good comes from the Lord alone, and the Lord cannot enter into a person and lead him so long as these evils are not removed as sins; for they are infernal, and in fact are hell with a person, and unless hell is removed the Lord cannot enter and open heaven. This is what is meant by the Lord's words to the rich man:

Who asked Him about eternal life, and said that he had kept the commandments of the Decalogue from his youth; whom the Lord is said to have loved, and to have taught that one thing was lacking to him, that he should sell all that he had and take up the cross (Matt. xix. 16-22; Mark x. 17-22; Luke xviii. 18-23).

"To sell all that he had" signifies that he should relinquish the things of his religion, which were traditions, for he was a Jew, and also should relinquish the things that were his own (*proprium*), which were loving self and the world more than God, and thus leading himself; and "to follow the Lord" signifies to acknowledge Him only and to be led by Him; therefore the Lord also said, "Why do you call Me good? there is none good but God only." "To take up his cross" signifies to fight against evils and falsities, which are from what is one's own (*proprium*).

AE 935:2. The previous article treated of the two things necessary that works may be good, namely, that the Divine of the Lord be acknowledged, and that the evils forbidden in the Decalogue be shunned as sins. The evils enumerated in the Decalogue include all the evils that can ever exist; therefore the Decalogue is called the Ten Commandments, because "ten" signifies all. The first commandment, "You shall not worship other gods," includes not loving self and the world; for he that loves self and the world above all things worships other gods; for every one's god is that which he loves above all things. The second commandment, "You shall not profane the name of God," includes not to despise the Word and doctrine from the Word, and thus the church, and not to reject these from the heart, for these are God's "name." The fifth commandment, "You shall not steal," includes the shunning of frauds and unlawful gains, for these also are thefts. The sixth commandment, "You shall not commit adultery," includes having delight in adulteries and having no delight in marriages, and in particular cherishing filthy thoughts respecting such things as pertain to marriage, for these are adulteries. The seventh commandment, "You shall not kill," includes not hating the neighbor nor loving revenge; for hatred and

revenge breathe murder. The eighth commandment, "You shall not bear false witness," includes not to lie and blaspheme; for lies and blasphemies are false testimonies. The ninth commandment, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house," includes not wishing to possess or to divert to oneself the goods of others against their will. The tenth commandment, "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, his manservants," and so on, includes not wishing to rule over others and to subject them to oneself, for the things here enumerated mean the things that are a person's own. Any one can see that these eight commandments contain the evils that must be shunned, and not the goods that must be done.

AE 936:2-4. In the previous article the evils that must be shunned were enumerated from the Decalogue. But many, I know, think in their heart that no one can shun these of himself, because a person is born in sins and has therefore no power of himself to shun them. But let such know that any one who thinks in his heart that there is a God, that the Lord is the God of heaven and earth, that the Word is from Him, and is therefore holy, that there is a heaven and a hell, and that there is a life after death, is able to shun these evils. But he is not able who despises these truths and casts them out of his mind, and not at all he who denies them. For how can one who never thinks about God think that anything is a sin against God? And how can one who never thinks about heaven, hell, and the life after death, shun evils as sins? Such a person does not know what sin is. A person is placed in the middle between heaven and hell. Out of heaven goods unceasingly flow in, and out of hell evils unceasingly flow in; and as a person is between he has freedom to think what is good or to think what is evil. This freedom the Lord never takes away from anyone, for it belongs to his life, and is the means of his reformation. So far, therefore, as a person from this freedom has the thought and desire to shun evils because they are sins, and prays to the Lord for help, so far the Lord removes them and gives a person the ability to refrain from them as if of himself, and then to shun them. [3] Everyone is able from natural freedom to shun these same evils because of their being contrary to human laws; this every citizen of a kingdom does who fears the penalties of the civil law, or the loss of life, reputation, honor, wealth, and thus of office, gain, and pleasure; even an evil person does this. And the life of such a person appears exactly the same in external form as the life of one who shuns these evils because they are contrary to the Divine laws; but in internal form it is wholly unlike it. The one acts from natural freedom only, which is from a person; the other acts from spiritual freedom, which is from the Lord; both acting from freedom. When a person is able to shun these same evils from natural freedom, why is he not able to shun them from spiritual freedom, in which he is constantly held by the Lord, provided he thinks to will this because there is a hell, a heaven, a life after death, punishment, and reward, and prays to the Lord for help? [4] Let it be known that every person when he is beginning the spiritual life because he wishes to be saved, fears sins on account of the punishments of hell, but afterwards on account of the sin itself, because it is in itself heinous, and finally on account of the truth and good that he loves, thus for the Lord's sake. For so far as any one loves truth and good, thus the Lord, he so far turns away from what is contrary to these, which is evil. All this makes clear that he that believes in the Lord shuns evils as sins; and conversely, he that shuns evils as sins believes; consequently to shun evils as sins is the sign of faith.

AE 938:2. A previous article (n. 936) treated of refraining from evils from spiritual freedom, in which every person is held by the Lord. But as all the evils into which a person is born derive their roots from the love of ruling over others and from the love of possessing the goods of others, and all the delights of a person's own life flow forth from these two loves, and all evils are from them, so the loves and delights of these evils belong to a person's own life. And since evils belong to the life of a person, it follows that a person from himself can by no means refrain from them, for this would be from his own life to refrain from his own life. The ability to refrain from them of the Lord is therefore provided, and that he may have this ability the freedom to think that which he wills and to pray to the Lord for help is granted him. He has this freedom because he is in the middle between heaven and hell, consequently between good and evil. And being in the middle he is in equilibrium; and he who is in equilibrium is able easily and as of his own accord to turn himself the one way or the other; and the more so because the Lord continually resists evils and repels them, and raises a person up and draws him to Himself. And yet there is combat, because the evils which belong to a person's life are stirred up by the evils that unceasingly rise up from hell; and then a person must fight against them, and, indeed, as if of himself; if he does not fight as if of himself the evils are not separated.

AE 939:2,3. It is known that a person's interior must be purified before the good that he does is good; for the Lord says:

You blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside may be clean also (Matt. xiii. 26).

A person's interior is purified only as he refrains from evils, in accordance with the commandments of the Decalogue. So long as a person does not refrain from these evils and does not shun and turn away from them as sins, they constitute his interior, and are like an interposed veil or covering, and in heaven this appears like an eclipse by which the sun is obscured and light is intercepted; also like a fountain of pitch or of black water, from which nothing emanates but what is impure. That which emanates therefrom and that appears before the world as good is not good, because it is defiled by evils from within, for it is Pharisaic and hypocritical good. This good is good from a person and is meritorious good. It is otherwise when evils have been removed by a life according to the commandments of the Decalogue. [3] Now since evils must be removed before goods can become goods the Ten Commandments were the first of the Word, being promulgated from Mount Sinai before the Word was written by Moses and the Prophets. And these do not set forth goods that must be done, but evils that must be shunned. For the same reason these commandments are the first things to be taught in the churches; for they are taught to boys and girls in order that a person may begin his Christian life with them, and by no means forget them as he grows up; although he does so. The same is meant by these words in Isaiah:

What is the multitude of sacrifices to Me? Your meal-offering, your incense, your new moons, and your appointed feasts, My soul hates. And when you multiply prayer I will not hear. Wash you,

make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil. Then though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow; though they be red as purple they shall be as wool (i. 11-19).

“Sacrifices,” “meal-offerings,” “incense,” “new moons,” and “feasts,” also “prayer,” mean all things of worship. That these are wholly evil and even abominable unless the interior is purified from evils is meant by “Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, and cease to do evil.” That afterwards they are all goods is meant by the words that follow.

AE 940:2,3. When a person’s interior is purified from evils by his refraining from them and shunning them because they are sins, the internal which is above it, and which is called the spiritual internal, is opened. This communicates with heaven; consequently a person is then admitted into heaven and is conjoined to the Lord. There are two internals with a person, one beneath and the other above. While a person lives in the world he is in the internal which is beneath and from which he thinks, for it is natural. This may be called for the sake of distinction the interior. But the internal that is above is that into which a person comes after death when he enters heaven. All angels of heaven are in this internal, for it is spiritual. This internal is opened to the person who shuns evils as sins; but it is kept closed to the person who does not shun evils as sins. [3] This internal is kept closed to the person who does not shun evils as sins, because the interior, that is, the natural internal, until a person has been purified from sins, is a hell; and so long as there is a hell there heaven cannot be opened; but as soon as hell has been removed it is opened. But let it be known that in the measure in which the spiritual internal and heaven are opened to a person, the natural internal is purified from the hell that is there. This is not done at once, but successively by degrees. All this makes clear that a person from himself is hell, and that a person is made a heaven by the Lord, consequently that he is snatched out of hell by the Lord, and raised up into heaven to the Lord, not immediately, but mediately. The means are the commandments just mentioned, by which the Lord leads him who wishes to be led.

AE 941:2. When the spiritual internal is opened, and through it communication with heaven and conjunction with the Lord are given, then a person becomes enlightened. He is enlightened especially when he reads the Word, because the Lord is in the Word, and the Word is the Divine truth, and the Divine truth is light to angels. A person is enlightened in the rational, for this directly underlies the spiritual internal, and receives light from heaven and transfers it into the natural when it is purified from evils, filling it with the knowledges of truth and good, and adapting to them the knowledges (*scientiae*) that are from the world, for the sake of confirmation and agreement. Thus a person has a rational, and thus he has an understanding. He is deceived who believes that a person has a rational and an understanding before his natural has been purified from evils, for the understanding is seeing the truths of the church from the light of heaven; and the light of heaven does not flow into those not purified. And as the understanding is perfected the falsities of religion and of ignorance and all fallacies are dispersed.

AE 942:2. After a person has been admitted into heaven by the opening of his internal, and receives light therefrom, the same affections that angels of heaven have, with their pleasures and delights, are communicated to him. The first affection then granted is the affection of truth; the second is the affection of good; and the third is the affection of bringing forth fruit. For when a person has been admitted into heaven and into its light and heat he is like a tree growing from its seed. His first budding forth is from enlightenment; his blossoming before the fruit is from the affection of truth; the putting forth of fruit that follows is from the affection of good; the multiplication of itself again into trees is from the affection of producing fruit. The heat of heaven, which is love, and the light of heaven, which is the understanding of truth from that love, bring forth in subjects of life things like those that the heat of the world and its light bring forth in subjects not of life. That like things are brought forth is from correspondence. But in both cases the production is effected in spring time; and spring time in a person is when he enters heaven, which is effected when his spiritual internal is opened; before that it is the time of winter to him.

AE 943. A person has the affection of truth when he loves truth and turns away from falsity. He has the affection of good when he loves good uses and turns away from evil uses. He has the affection of bringing forth fruit when he loves to do goods and to be serviceable. All heavenly joy is in these affections and from them, and this joy cannot be described by comparisons, for it is super-eminent and eternal.

AE 944:4. Into this state the person comes who shuns evils because they are sins, and looks to the Lord; and so far as he comes into this state he turns away from and detests evils as sins, and acknowledges in heart and worships the Lord only, and His Divine in the Human. This is a summary.

AE 945. When a person is in that state he is raised up from what is his own (*proprium*) for a person is in what is his own (*proprium*) when he is only in the natural external, but he is raised up from what is his own (*proprium*) when he is in the spiritual internal. This raising up from what is his own a person perceives only by this, that he does not think evils, and that he turns away from thinking them, and takes delight in truths and in good uses. And yet if such a person advances further into that state he perceives influx by a kind of thought; but he is not withheld from thinking and willing as if from himself, for this the Lord wills for the sake of reformation. Nevertheless, a person should acknowledge that nothing of good or of truth therefrom is from himself, but all is from the Lord.

AE 946:5. It follows from this that when a person shuns and turns away from evils as sins and is raised up into heaven by the Lord, he is no longer in what is his own (*proprium*), but in the Lord, and thus he thinks and wills goods. Again, since a person acts as he thinks and wills, for every act of a person proceeds from the thought of his will, it follows that when he shuns and turns away from evils, he does goods from the Lord and not from self; and this is why shunning evils is doing goods. The goods that a person then does are meant by good works; and good works in their whole complex are meant by charity. A person cannot be

reformed unless he thinks, wills, and does as if from himself, since that which is done as if by the person himself is conjoined to him and remains with him, while that which is not done by the person as if from himself, not being received in any life of sense, flows through like ether; and this is why the Lord wills that a person should not only shun and turn away from evils as if of himself, but should also think, will, and do as if of himself, and yet acknowledge in heart, that all these things are from the Lord. This he must acknowledge because it is the truth.

AE 948:4,5. Religion with a person consists in a life according to the Divine commandments, which are contained in a summary in the Decalogue. He that does not live according to these can have no religion, since he does not fear God, still less does he love God; nor does he fear a person, still less does he love him. Can one who steals, commits adultery, kills, bears false witness, fear God or a person? Nevertheless every one is able to live according to these commandments; and he who is wise does so live as a civil person, as a moral person, and as a natural person. And yet he who does not live according to them as a spiritual person cannot be saved; since to live according to them as a spiritual person means to so live for the sake of the Divine that is in them, while to live according to them as a civil person means for the sake of justice and to escape punishments in the world; and to live according to them as a moral person means for the sake of honesty, and to escape the loss of reputation and honor; while to live according to them as a natural person means for the sake of what is human, and to escape the repute of having an unsound mind. All laws, civil, moral, and natural, prescribe that one must not steal, must not commit adultery, must not kill, must not bear false witness; and yet a person is not saved by shunning these evils from these laws alone, unless he also shuns them from spiritual law, thus unless he shuns them as sins. For with such a person there is religion, and a belief that there is a God, a heaven and a hell, and a life after death; with such a person there is a civil life, a moral life, and a natural life; a civil life because there is justice, a moral life because there is honesty, and a natural life because there is manhood. But he who does not live according to these commandments as a spiritual person is neither a civil person, nor a moral person, nor a natural person; for he is destitute of justice, of honesty, and even of manhood, since the Divine is not in these. For there can be nothing good in and from itself, but only from God; so there can be nothing just, nothing truly honest or truly human in itself and from itself, but only from God, and only when the Divine is in it. Consider whether any one that has hell in him, or who is a devil, can do what is just from justice or for the sake of justice; in like manner what is honest, or what is truly human. The truly human is what is from order and according to order, and what is from sound reason; and God is order, and sound reason is from God. In a word, he who does not shun evils as sins is not a person. Every one who makes these commandments the principles of his religion becomes a citizen and an inhabitant of heaven; but he who does not make them the principles of his religion, although in externals he may live according to them from natural, moral, and civil law, becomes a citizen and an inhabitant of the world, but not of heaven. [5] Most nations know these commandments, and make them the principles of their religion, and live according to them because God so wills and has commanded. Through this they have communication with

heaven and conjunction with God, consequently they also are saved. But most in the Christian world at this day do not make them the principles of their religion, but only of their civil and moral life; and they do this that they may not appear in external form to act fraudulently and make unlawful gains, commit adulteries, manifestly pursue others from deadly hatred and revenge, and bear false witness, and do not refrain from these things because they are sins and against God, but because they have fears for their life, their reputation, their office, their business, their possessions, their honor and gain, and their pleasure; consequently if they were not restrained by these bonds they would do these things. Because, therefore, such form for themselves no communication with heaven or conjunction with the Lord, but only with the world and with self, they cannot be saved. Consider in respect to yourself, when these external bonds have been taken away, as is done with every person after death, if there are no internal bonds, which are from fear and love of God, thus from religion, to restrain and hold you back, whether you would not rush, like a devil, into thefts, adulteries, murders, false witnesses, and lusts of every kind, from a love of these thus from a delight in them. That this is the case I have both seen and heard.

AE 949:3. So far as evils are removed as sins, so far goods flow in, and so far does a person afterwards do goods, not from self, but from the Lord. As, *first*, so far as one does not worship other gods, and thus does not love self and the world above all things, so far the acknowledgment of God flows in from the Lord, and then he worships God, not from self but from the Lord. *Second*, so far as one does not profane the name of God, that is, so far as he shuns the lusts arising from the loves of self and of the world, so far he loves the holy things of the Word and of the church; for these are the name of God, and are profaned by the lusts arising from the loves of self and of the world. *Third*, so far as one shuns thefts, and thus shuns frauds and unlawful gains, so far sincerity and justice enter, and he loves what is sincere and just from sincerity and justice, and thus does what is sincere and just not from self but from the Lord. *Fourth*, so far as one shuns adulteries, and thus shuns unchaste and filthy thoughts, so far married love enters, which is the inmost love of heaven, and in which chastity itself resides. *Fifth*, so far as one shuns murders, and thus shuns deadly hatreds and revenges that breath slaughter, so far the Lord enters with mercy and love. *Sixth*, so far as one shuns false testimonies, and thus shuns lies and blasphemies, so far truth from the Lord enters. *Seventh*, so far as one shuns the covetousness for the houses of others, and thus shuns the love and consequent lusts for possessing the goods of others, so far charity towards the neighbor enters from the Lord. *Eighth*, so far as one shuns the covetousness for the wives of others, their servants, etc., and thus shuns the love and consequent lusts of ruling over others (for the things enumerated in this commandment are what belong to a person), so far love to the Lord enters. These eight commandments include the evils that must be shunned, but the two others, namely, the third and fourth, include certain things that must be done, namely, that the Sabbath must be kept holy, and that parents must be honored. But how these two commandments should be understood, not by the men of the Jewish Church but by the men of the Christian Church, will be told elsewhere.

Note

An explanation of the literal and spiritual meanings of the Ten Commandments is given at this point in the current work (*The Apocalypse Explained*). That explanation is not included in this document. Explanations of individual Commandments can be found online at www.BeginaNewLife.info, the page titled *In Swedenborg's Own Words*.

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The Ten Commandments in General

AE 1024:2,3. The commandments of the Decalogue are called the Ten Words or Ten Commandments, because “ten” signifies all; consequently the ten words mean all things of the Word, and thus all things of the church in a summary. All things of the Word and all things of the church in a summary are meant, because there are in each commandment three interior senses, each sense for its own heaven, for there are three heavens. The first sense is the spiritual moral sense; this is for the first or lowest heaven; the second sense is the celestial spiritual sense, which is for the second or middle heaven; and the third sense is the Divine celestial, which is for the third or inmost heaven. There are thus three internal senses in every least particular of the Word. For from the Lord who is in things highest, the Word has been sent down in succession through the three heavens even to the earth, and thus has been accommodated to each heaven; and therefore the Word is with each heaven and almost with each angel in its own sense, and is read by them daily; and there are preachings from it, as on the earth. [3] For the Word is Divine truth itself, thus the Divine wisdom, proceeding from the Lord as a sun, and appearing in the heavens as light. Divine truth is the Divine that is called the Holy Spirit, for it not only proceeds from the Lord but it also enlightens a person and teaches him, as is said of the Holy Spirit. As the Word in its descent from the Lord has been accommodated to the three heavens, and the three heavens are joined together as inmosts are with ultimates through intermediates, so, too, are the three senses of the Word; which shows that the Word is given that by it there may be a conjunction of the heavens with each other, and also a conjunction of the heavens with the human race, for whom the sense of the letter is given, which is merely natural and thus the basis of the other three senses. That the ten commandments of the Decalogue are all things of the Word in a summary can be seen only from the three senses of those commandments, which are as above stated.

AE 1025:2-4. What these three senses in the commandments of the Decalogue are can be seen from the following summary explanation. The first commandment of the Decalogue, “You shall not worship other gods besides Me,” involves in the spiritual moral sense that nothing else nor any one else is to be worshipped as Divine; nothing else, that is, nature, by attributing to it something Divine of Itself; nor any one else, that is, any vicar of the Lord or any saint. In the celestial spiritual sense it involves that one God only is to be acknowledged, and not several according to their qualities, as the ancients did, and as some pagans do at this day, or according to their works, as Christians do at this day, who make one God from creation, another from redemption, and another from enlightenment. [3] This commandment in the Divine celestial sense involves that the Lord alone is to be acknowledged and worshipped, and a trinity in Him, namely, the Divine Itself from eternity, which is meant by the Father, the Divine Human born in time, which is meant by the Son of God, and the Divine that proceeds from both, which is meant by the Holy Spirit. These are the three senses of the first commandment in their order. From this commandment viewed in its threefold sense it is clear that it contains and includes in a summary all things that concern

the Divine as to essence. [4] The second commandment, "You shall not profane the name of God, contains and includes in its three senses all things that concern the quality of the Divine, since "the name of God" signifies His quality, which in its first sense is the Word, doctrine from the Word, and worship of the lips and of the life from doctrine; in its second sense it means the Lord's kingdom on the earth and the Lord's kingdom in the heavens; and in its third sense it means the Lord's Divine Human, for this is the quality of the Divine Itself. (That the Lord's Divine Human is "the name of God" in the highest sense may be seen above, n. 224.) In the other commandments there are likewise three internal senses for the three heavens; but these, the Lord willing, will be considered elsewhere.

AE 1026:3. As Divine truth united to Divine good proceeds from the Lord as a sun, and by this heaven and the world were made (John i. 1, 3, 10), it follows that it is from this that all things in heaven and in the world have reference to good and to truth and to their conjunction that they may be anything. These ten commandments contain all things of Divine good and all things of Divine truth, and there is also in them a conjunction of these. But this conjunction is hidden; for it is like the conjunction of love to the Lord and love towards the neighbor, Divine good belongs to love to the Lord, and Divine truth to love towards the neighbor; for when a person lives according to Divine truth, that is, loves his neighbor, the Lord flows in with Divine good and conjoins Himself. For this reason there were two tables on which these ten commandments were written, and they were called a covenant, which signifies conjunction; and afterwards they were placed in the ark, not one beside the other, but one above the other, for a testimony of the conjunction between the Lord and a person. Upon one table the commandments of love to the Lord were written, and upon the other table the commandments of love towards the neighbor. The commandments of love to the Lord are the first three, and the commandments of love towards the neighbor are the last six; and the fourth commandment, which is "Honor your father and your mother," is the mediating commandment, for in it "father" means the Father in the heavens, and "mother" means the church, which is the neighbor.

AE 1027:2-4. Something shall now be said about how conjunction is effected by means of the commandments of the Decalogue. A person does not conjoin himself to the Lord, but the Lord alone conjoins a person to Himself, and this He does by a person's knowing, understanding, willing, and doing these commandments; and when a person does them there is conjunction, but if he does not do them he ceases to will them, and when he ceases to will them he ceases also to understand and know them. For what does willing amount to if a person when he is able does not do? Is it not a figment of reason? From this it follows that conjunction is effected when a person does the commandments of the Decalogue. [3] But it has been said that a person does not conjoin himself to the Lord, but that the Lord alone conjoins a person to Himself, and that conjunction is effected by doing; and from this it follows that it is the Lord with a person that does these commandments. But any one can see that a covenant cannot be entered into and conjunction be effected by it unless there is some reciprocal on a person's part, not only that he may consent but also that he may receive. To this end the Lord has imparted to a person a freedom to will and act as if of himself, and such a freedom that a person does not know otherwise,

when he is thinking truth and doing good, than that the freedom is in himself and thus from himself. This reciprocal is on a person's part in order that conjunction may be effected. But as this freedom is from the Lord, and continually from Him, a person must by all means acknowledge that to think and understand truth and to will and do good are not from himself, but are from the Lord, according to what has been said on this subject above (n. 946, 971, 973). [4] Consequently when a person through the last six commandments conjoins himself to the Lord as if of himself, the Lord then conjoins Himself to a person through the first three commandments, which are that a person must acknowledge God, must believe in the Lord, and must keep His name holy. This person does not believe, however much he may think that he does, unless the evils forbidden in the other table, that is, in the last six commandments, he abstains from as sins. These are the things pertaining to the covenant on the part of the Lord and on the part of a person, through which there is reciprocal conjunction, which is that a person may be in the Lord and the Lord in the person (John xiv. 20).

AE 1028:2-4. It is said by some that he who sins against one commandment of the Decalogue sins also against the rest, thus that he who is guilty of one is guilty of all. It shall be told how far this is in harmony with the truth. When a person transgresses one commandment, by confirming with himself that it is not a sin, thus without fear of God he commits it; because he has thus rejected the fear of God he does not fear to transgress the rest of the commandments, although he may not do this in act. [3] For example, when one does not regard frauds and illicit gains, which in themselves are thefts, as sins, neither does he regard as a sin adultery with the wife of another, hating a person even to murder, lying about him, coveting his house and other things belonging to him; for when he rejects from his heart in any one commandment the fear of God he denies that anything is a sin; consequently he is in communion with those who in like manner transgress the other commandments. He is like an infernal spirit who is in a hell of thieves; and although he is not an adulterer, nor a murderer, nor a false witness, yet he is in communion with such, and can be persuaded by them to believe that such things are not evils, and can be led to do them. For he who has become an infernal spirit through the transgression of one commandment, no longer believes it to be a sin to do anything against God or anything against the neighbor. [4] But the opposite is true of those who abstain from the evil forbidden in one commandment, and who shun and afterwards turn away from it as a sin against God. Because such fear God, they come into communion with the angels of heaven, and are led by the Lord to abstain from the evils forbidden in the other commandments and to shun them, and finally to turn away from them as sins; and if perchance they have sinned against them, yet they repent and thus by degrees are withdrawn from them.

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The Ten Commandments in General, Plus Other Contextual Information

- from -

The Doctrine of Life

Emanuel Swedenborg

1.

*All religion is of the life,
and the life of religion is to do that which is good.*

Life 1. Every person who has religion knows and acknowledges that he who leads a good life is saved, and that he who leads an evil life is damned; for he knows and acknowledges that the person who lives aright thinks aright, not only about God but also about his neighbor; but not so the person whose life is evil. The life of a person is his love, and that which he loves he not only likes to be doing, but also likes to be thinking. The reason therefore why we say that the life is to do that which is good is that doing what is good acts as a one with thinking what is good, for if in a person these two things do not act as a one, they are not of his life. The demonstration of these matters shall now follow.

Life 2. That religion is of the life and that the life of religion is to do that which is good is seen by every one who reads the Word, and is acknowledged by him while he is reading it. The Word contains the following declarations:

Whoever shall break the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of the heavens; but whoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of the heavens. For I say to you that except your righteousness shall exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of the heavens (Matt. v. 19, 20).

Every tree that does not bring forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you shall know them (Matt. vii. 19, 20).

Not every one that says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of the heavens; but he that does the will of My Father who is in the heavens (verse 21).

Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied by Your name, and in Your name done many mighty

things? And then I will profess to them, I never knew you, depart from Me you that work iniquity (verses 22, 23).

Every one who hears these words of Mine, and does them, shall be likened to a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and every one that hears these words of Mine, and does not do them, shall be likened to a foolish man who built his house upon the sand (verses 24, 26).

Jesus said, Behold, the sower went forth to sow; some seeds fell on the hard way, others fell upon the rocky places, others fell among the thorns, and others fell into good ground; he that was sown upon the good ground, this is he that hears the Word, and attends to it, who thence bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundred-fold, some sixty, and some thirty. When Jesus had said these things, He cried, saying, He that has ears to hear, let him hear (Matt. xiii. 3-9, 23, 43).

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father, and then shall He render to every one according to his deeds (Matt. xvi. 27).

The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof (Matt. xxi. 43).

When the Son of man shall come in His glory, then He shall sit on the throne of His glory. And He shall say to the sheep on His right hand, Come you blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry, and you gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me. Then shall the righteous answer, When did we see You so? And the king shall answer and say to them, Verily I say to you, Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me. And the king shall say the like things to the goats on the left, and because they have not done such things, He shall say, Depart from Me, you cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. xxv. 31-41).

Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance; even now is the ax laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bring forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire (Luke iii. 8, 9).

Jesus said, Why do you call Me Lord, Lord, and do not do the things which I say? Every one that comes to Me, and hears My words, and does them, he is like a man building a house, and he laid a foundation upon the rock; but he that hears, and does not, is

like a man that built a house upon the earth without a foundation (Luke vi. 46-49).

Jesus said, My mother and My brethren are these who hear the Word of God, and do it (Luke viii. 21).

Then shall you begin to stand, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us; and He shall answer and say to you, I know you not whence you are; depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity (Luke xiii. 25-27).

This is the judgment: that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil; for every one that does evil hates the light, lest his works should be reprov'd. But he that does the truth comes to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God (John iii. 19-21).

And shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection [of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection] of judgment (John v. 29).

We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone be a worshiper of God, and do His will, him He hears (John ix. 31).

If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them (John xiii. 17).

He that has My commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves Me; and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him; and we will come to him, and make our abode with him. He that does not love Me does not keep My words (John xiv. 21-24).

Jesus said, I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser; every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He cleanses it, that it may bear more fruit (John xv. 1, 2).

Herein is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and you shall be made My disciples (verse 8).

You are My friends if you do the things which I command you; I have chosen you, that you should bear fruit, and your fruit should abide (verses 14, 16).

The Lord said to John, To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: I know your works; I have this against you, that you have left your first charity; repent, and do the first works, or else I will move your lampstand out of its place (Rev. ii. 1, 2, 4, 5).

To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: I know your works (verses 8, 9).

To the angel of the church in Pergamos write: I know your works, repent (verses 12, 16).

To the angel of the church in Thyatira write: I know your works and charity, and your last works are more than the first (verses 18, 19).

To the angel of the church in Sardis write: I know your works, that you have a name that you live, but are dead; I have not found your works perfect before God; repent (Rev. iii. 1-3).

To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: I know your works (verses 7, 8).

To the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: I know your works; repent (verses 14, 15, 19).

I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, for their works follow with them (Rev. xiv. 13).

Another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, all according to their works (Rev. xx. 12, 13).

Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work (Rev. xxii. 12).

In like manner in the Old Testament:

Recompense them according to their work, and according to the deed of their hands (Jer. xxv. 14).

Jehovah, whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his works (Jer. xxxii. 19).

I will visit according to his ways, and will reward him his works (Hos. iv. 9).

Jehovah, according to our ways, according to our works does He to us (Zech. i. 6).

And in many places it is said that the statutes, commandments, and laws were to be done:

You shall observe My statutes, and My judgments, which if a man do, he shall live by them (Lev. xviii. 5).

You shall observe all My statutes, and My judgments, that you may do them (Lev. xix. 37; xx. 8; xxii. 31).

The blessings, if they did the commandments; and the curses if they did not do them (Lev. xxvi. 4-46).

The sons of Israel were commanded to make for themselves a fringe on the borders of their garments, that they might remember all the commandments of Jehovah, to do them (Num. xv. 38, 39).

So in a thousand other places. That works are what make a person of the church, and that he is saved according to them, is also taught by the Lord in the parables, many of which imply that those who do what is good are accepted, and that those who do what is evil are rejected. As in the parable

Of the husbandmen in the vineyard (Matt. xxi. 33-44):

Of the fig-tree that did not yield fruit (Luke xiii. 6-9):

Of the talents, and the pounds, with which they were to trade (Matt. xxv. 14-31; Luke xix. 13-25):

Of the Samaritan who bound up the wounds of him that was wounded by robbers (Luke x. 30-37):

Of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke xvi. 19-31):

Of the ten virgins (Matt. xxv. 1-12).

Life 3. That every one who has religion knows and acknowledges that whoever leads a good life is saved, and that whoever leads an evil one is damned, is owing to the conjunction of heaven with the person who knows from the Word that there is a God, that there is a heaven and a hell, and that there is a life after death. Such is the source of this general perception. Therefore in the doctrine of the *Athanasian Creed* respecting the Trinity, which has been universally received in the Christian world, the following declaration, at the end of it, has also been universally received:

Jesus Christ, who suffered for our salvation, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty, whence He will come to judge the quick and the dead and then they that have done good will enter into life eternal, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.

Life 4. In the Christian Churches, however, there are many who teach that faith alone saves, and not any good of life, or good work, and they add that evil of life

or evil work does not condemn those who have been justified by faith alone, because such are in God and in grace. Wonderful to say, however, although they teach such things, they nevertheless acknowledge (in consequence of a perception from heaven common to all) that those who lead a good life are saved, and that those who live an evil one are damned. That they do acknowledge this is evident from the *Exhortation* which not only in England but also in Germany, Sweden, and Denmark is read in the places of worship before the people coming to the Holy Supper. As is well known, it is in these kingdoms that those are found who teach that faith alone.

Life 5. The *Exhortation* read in England before the people who approach the Sacrament of the Supper, is as follows:

The way and means to be received as worthy partakers of that Holy Table is, first, to examine your lives and conversations by the rule of God's commandments; and whereinsoever you shall perceive yourselves to have offended, either by will, word, or deed, there to bewail your own sinfulness, and to confess yourselves to Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of life; and if you shall perceive your offenses to be such as are not only against God, but also against your neighbors, then you shall reconcile yourselves to them, being ready to make restitution and satisfaction, according to the uttermost of your powers, for all injuries and wrongs done by you to any other, and being likewise ready to forgive others that have offended you, as you would have forgiveness of your offenses at God's hand; for otherwise the receiving of the Holy Communion does nothing else but increase your damnation. Therefore if any of you be a blasphemer of God, a hinderer or slanderer of His Word, an adulterer, or be in malice or envy, or in any other grievous crime, repent you of your sins, or else come not to that Holy Table; lest after the taking of that Holy Sacrament the devil enter into you as he entered into Judas, and fill you full of all iniquities, and bring you to destruction both of body and soul.

Life 6. [In this paragraph Swedenborg presents a translation into Latin of the foregoing *Exhortation*.]

Life 7. I have been permitted to ask some of the English clerk who had professed and preached faith alone (this was done in the spiritual world), whether while they were reading in church this *Exhortation*--in which faith is not even mentioned--they believed it to be true; for example, that if people do evil things, and do not repent, the devil will enter into them as he did into Judas, and destroy them both body and soul. They said that in the state in which they were when reading the *Exhortation* they had no other knowledge or thought than that this was religion itself; but that while composing and elaborating their discourses or sermons they had a different thought about it, because they were then thinking of faith as being the sole means of salvation, and of the good of life as being a moral accessory for the public good. Nevertheless it was incontestably proved to them that with them too there was that common perception that he

who leads a good life is saved, and that he who leads an evil one is damned; and that they possess this perception when they are not in what is their Own.

Life 8. The reason why all religion is of the life, is that after death every one is his own life, for the life stays the same as it had been in this world, and undergoes no change. For an evil life cannot be converted into a good one, nor a good life into an evil one, because they are opposites, and conversion into what is opposite is extinction. And, being opposites, a good life is called Life, and an evil one Death. This is why religion is of life, and why its life is to do what is good. (That after death a person is such as had been his life in this world may be seen in the work on *Heaven and Hell*, n. 470-484).

2.

*No one can from him- or herself do what is good
that is really good.*

Life 9. That hitherto scarcely any one knows whether the good done by him is from self or from God, is because the church has sundered faith from charity, and good is of charity. A person gives to the poor; relieves the needy; endows places of worship and hospitals; has regard for the church, his country, and his fellow-citizen; is diligent in his attendance at a place of worship, where he listens and prays devoutly; reads the Word and books of piety; and thinks about salvation; and yet is not aware whether he is doing these things from himself, or from God. He may be doing the very same things from God, or he may be doing them from self. If he does them from God they are good, if from self they are not good. In fact there are goods of this kind done from self which are eminently evil, such as hypocritical goods, the purpose of which is deception and fraud.

Life 10. Goods from God, and goods from self, may be compared to gold. Gold that is gold from the inmost, called pure gold, is good gold. Gold alloyed with silver is also gold, but is good according to the amount of the alloy. Less good still is gold that is alloyed with copper. But a gold made by art, and resembling gold only from its color, is not good at all, for there is no substance of gold in it. There is also what is gilded, such as gilded silver, copper, iron, tin, lead, and also gilded wood and gilded stone, which on the surface may appear like gold; but not being such, they are valued either according to the workmanship, the value of the gilded material, or that of the gold which can be scraped off. In goodness these differ from real gold as a garment differs from a person. Moreover rotten wood, dross, or even ordure, may be overlaid with gold; and such is the gold to which pharisaic good may be likened.

Life 11. From science a person knows whether gold is good in substance, is alloyed and falsified, or is merely overlaid; but he does not know from science whether the good he does is good in itself. This only does he know: that good from God is good, and that good from a person is not good. Therefore, as it concerns his salvation for him to know whether the good he does is from God, or

is not from God, this must be revealed. But before this is done something shall be said about goods.

Life 12. There are civic good, moral good, and spiritual good. Civic good is that which a person does from the civic law: by means of and according to this good is the person a citizen in the natural world. Moral good is that which a person does from the law of reason: by means of and according to this good is he a person. Spiritual good is that which a person does from spiritual law: by means of and according to this good is he a citizen in the spiritual world. These goods succeed one another in the following order: spiritual good is the highest, moral good is intermediate, and civic good is last.

Life 13. A person who possesses spiritual good is also a moral person and a civic person; but a person who does not possess spiritual good may appear to be a moral person and a civic person, yet is not so. The reason why a person who possesses spiritual good is also a moral person and a civic person, is that spiritual good has the essence of good within it, and moral and civic good have this essence from spiritual good. The essence of good can be from no other source than Him who is good itself. Think the matter over from every point of view, and try to find out from what it is that good is good, and you will see that it is so from its inmost being (*esse*), and that that is good which has within it the *esse* of good; consequently that that is good which is from good itself, thus from God; and therefore that good which is not from God, but from a person, is not good.

Life 14. From what has been said in the *Doctrine of the Holy Scripture* (n. 27, 28, 38), it may be seen that what is highest, what is intermediate, and what is last, make a one, like end, cause, and effect; and that because they make a one, the end itself is called the first end, the cause the intermediate end, and the effect the last end. From this it must be evident that in the case of a person who possesses spiritual good, what is moral in him is intermediate spiritual, and what is civic is ultimate spiritual. And for this reason it has been said that a person who possesses spiritual good is also a moral person and a civic person; and that a person who does not possess spiritual good is neither a moral person nor a civic person, although he may appear to be so both to himself and to others.

Life 15. That a person who is not spiritual can yet think rationally and speak from that thought, like a spiritual person, is because a person's understanding can be uplifted into the light of heaven, which is truth, and can see from it; but his will cannot be in the same way uplifted into the heat of heaven, which is love, so as to act from that heat. It is for this reason that truth and love do not make a one in a person unless he is spiritual. And it is for this reason also that a person can speak; and it is this which makes the difference between a person and a beast. It is by means of this capacity of the understanding to be uplifted into heaven when as yet the will is not so uplifted, that it is possible for a person to be reformed and to become spiritual; but he does not begin to be reformed and become spiritual until his will also is uplifted. It is from this superior endowment of the understanding over the will, that a person, of whatever character he may be, even if evil, is able to think and therefore to speak rationally, as if he were spiritual. That still in spite of this he is not rational, is because the understanding

does not lead the will, but the will leads the understanding. The understanding merely teaches and shows the way, as has been said in the *Doctrine of the Holy Scripture* (n. 115). And so long as the will is not in heaven together with the understanding, the person is not spiritual, and consequently is not rational; for when he is left to his will or love, he throws off the rational things of his understanding respecting God, heaven, and eternal life, and adopts in their stead such things as are in agreement with his will's love, and these he calls rational. But these matters shall be elucidated in the treatises on *Angelic Wisdom*.

Life 16. In the following pages, those who do what is good from themselves will be called natural men, because with them the moral and the civic is in its essence natural; and those who do what is good from the Lord will be called spiritual men, because with them the moral and the civic is in its essence spiritual.

Life 17. That no one can from himself do any good that is really good, is taught by the Lord in John:

A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven (iii. 27).

He that abides in Me, and I in him, the same bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing (xv. 5).

"He that abides in Me, and I in him, the same bears much fruit," means that all good is from the Lord; "fruit" means what is good. "Without Me you can do nothing," means that no person can from himself do anything. Those who believe in the Lord, and from Him do what is good, are called

Sons of light (John xii. 36; Luke xvi. 8);

Sons of the bridechamber (Mark ii. 19);

Sons of the resurrection (Luke xx. 36);

Sons of God (Luke xx. 36; John i. 12);

Born of God (John i. 13);

It is said that they shall see God (Matt. v. 8);

That the Lord will make His abode with them (John xiv. 23);

That they have the faith of God (Mark xi. 22);

That their works are done from God (John iii. 21).

These things are all summed up in the following words:

As many as received Him, to them gave He power (potestas) to be sons of God, to them that believe in His name; who were born, not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John i. 12, 13).

To “believe in the name of the Son of God,” is to believe the Word and to live according to it; “the will of the flesh,” is what is proper to a person’s will, which in itself is evil; “the will of man,” is what is proper to his understanding, which in itself is falsity from evil; those “born of” these, are those who will and act, and also think and speak, from what is proper to themselves; those “born of God,” are those who do all this from the Lord. In short: that which is from a person is not good; but that which is good is from the Lord.

3.

*In proportion as a person shuns evils as sins,
in the same proportion he or she does what is good,
not from him- or herself, but from the Lord.*

Life 18. Who does not or may not know that evils stand in the way of the Lord’s entrance to a person? For evil is hell, and the Lord is heaven, and hell and heaven are opposites. In proportion therefore as a person is in the one, in the same proportion he cannot be in the other. For the one acts against the other and destroys it.

Life 19. So long as a person is in this world, he is midway between hell and heaven: hell is below him, and heaven is above him, and he is kept in freedom to turn himself to either the one or the other; if he turns to hell he turns away from heaven; if he turns to heaven he turns away from hell. Or what is the same, so long as a person is in this world he stands midway between the Lord and the devil, and is kept in freedom to turn himself to either the one or the other; if he turns to the devil he turns away from the Lord; if he turns to the Lord he turns away from the devil. Or what is again the same, so long as a person is in this world he is midway between evil and good, and is kept in freedom to turn himself to either the one or the other; if he turns to evil he turns away from good; if he turns to good he turns away from evil.

Life 20. We have said that a person is *kept* in freedom to turn himself one way or the other. It is not from himself that every person has this freedom, but he has it from the Lord, and this is why he is said to be kept in it. (Concerning the equilibrium between heaven and hell, and that a person is in it and owes his freedom to that fact, see the work on *Heaven and Hell* (n. 589-596; 597-603). That every person is kept in freedom, and that from no one is it taken away, will be seen in its proper place.

Life 21. It is plainly evident from all this that in proportion as a person shuns evils, in the same proportion is he with the Lord and in the Lord; and that in

proportion as he is in the Lord, in the same proportion he does goods, not from self but from Him. From this results the general law:

IN PROPORTION AS ANY ONE SHUNS EVILS,
IN THE SAME PROPORTION HE OR SHE DOES WHAT IS GOOD.

Life 22. Two things however are requisite: first, the person must shun evils because they are sins, that is, because they are infernal and diabolical, and therefore contrary to the Lord and the Divine laws and secondly, he must do this as of himself, while knowing and believing that it is of the Lord. But these two requisites will be considered in subsequent chapters.

Life 23. From what has been said three things follow:

- A. If a person wills and does goods before he shuns evils as sins, the goods are not good.
- B. If a person thinks and speaks pious things while not shunning evils as sins, the pious things are not pious.
- C. If a person knows and is wise in many things, and does not shun evils as sins, he is nevertheless not wise.

Life 24. 1. *If a person wills and does goods before he shuns evils as sins, the goods are not good.* This is because, as already said, he is not in the Lord before he does so. For example: if a person gives to the poor, renders aid to the needy, contributes to places of worship and to hospitals, renders good service to the church, his country, and his fellow-citizens, teaches the Gospel and makes converts, does justice in his judgments, acts with sincerity in business, and with uprightness in his works; and yet makes no account of evils as being sins, such as fraud, adultery, hatred, blasphemy, and other like evils, then he can do only such goods as are evil within, because he does them from himself and not from the Lord, and therefore self is in them and not the Lord, and the goods in which is a person's self are all defiled with his evils, and have regard to himself and the world. And yet these very deeds that have just been enumerated are inwardly good if the person shuns evils as sins (such as fraud, adultery, hatred, blasphemy, and other like evils), because in this case he does them from the Lord, and they are said to be "wrought in God" (John iii. 19-21).

Life 25. 2. *If a person thinks and speaks pious things while not shunning evils as sins, the pious things are not pious.* This is because he is not in the Lord. If for example he frequents places of worship, listens devoutly to the preaching, reads the Word and books of piety, goes to the sacrament of the Supper, pours forth prayers daily, and even if he thinks much about God and salvation, and yet regards as of no moment the evils which are sins (such as fraud, adultery, hatred, blasphemy, and other like evils), he then cannot do otherwise than think and speak such pious things as inwardly are not pious, because the person himself is in them with his evils. At the time indeed he is not aware of them, yet they are present within deeply hidden out of his sight; for he is like a spring the water of which is

foul from its source. His performances of piety are either mere customs of habit, or else are the outcome of self-merit or hypocrisy. They do indeed rise up toward heaven, but turn back before they get there, and settle down, like smoke in the atmosphere.

Life 26. I have been permitted to see and hear many after death who reckoned up their good works and performances of piety, such as those mentioned above (n. 24, 25), and many others besides. Among them I have also seen some who had lamps and no oil. Inquiry was made as to whether they had shunned evils as sins, and it was found that they had not, and therefore they were told that they were evil. Afterwards also they were seen to go into caverns where evil ones like them had their abode.

Life 27. 3. *If a person knows and is wise about many things, and does not shun evils as sins, he is nevertheless not wise.* This is so for the reason already given: that he is wise from himself and not from the Lord. If for example he has an accurate knowledge of the doctrine of his church and of all things that belong to it, if he knows how to confirm them by the Word and by reasonings, if he knows the doctrines held by all churches for ages, together with the edicts of all the councils, and even if he knows truths, and also sees and understands them; thus if he knows the nature of faith, charity, piety, repentance and the remission of sins, regeneration, baptism, the Holy Supper, the Lord, and redemption and salvation, still he is not wise unless he shuns evils as sins, because his knowledges (*cognitiones*) are devoid of life, being of his understanding only and not at the same time of his will; and such knowledges in time perish, for the reason given above (n. 15). After death also the person himself throws them off, because they are not in accordance with his will's love. Nevertheless knowledges are in the highest degree necessary, because they teach how a person is to act; and when he acts them, then they are alive in him, and not till then.

Life 28. All that has been said thus far is taught by the Word in many places, of which only the following shall be presented. The Word teaches that no one can be in good and at the same time in evil, or what is the same, that no one can be (in respect to his soul) in heaven and at the same time in hell. This is taught in the following passages:

No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (Matt. vi. 24).

How can you, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and the evil man out of its evil treasure brings forth evil things (Matt. xii. 34, 35).

A good tree does not produce evil fruit, nor does an evil tree produce good fruit. Every tree is known by its own fruit; for of

thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush do they gather grapes (Luke vi. 43, 44).

Life 29. The Word teaches that no one can do what is good from himself, but that he does it from the Lord:

Jesus said, I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He cleanses, that it may bear more fruit. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can you except you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he that abides in Me, and I in him, the same bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If a man does not abide in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather him, and cast him into the fire, and he is burned (John xv. 1-6).

Life 30. The Word teaches that in proportion as a person has not been purified from evils, his goods are not good, nor are his pious things pious, and neither is he wise: it also teaches the converse:

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like to whited sepulchers, which outwardly indeed appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly indeed appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe to you, for you cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. You blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside thereof may become clean also (Matt. xxiii. 25-28).

The same appears from these words in Isaiah:

Hear the word of Jehovah, you princes of Sodom; give ear to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me? bring no more a meat-offering of vanity; incense is an abomination to Me; new moon and Sabbath, I cannot bear iniquity; your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; therefore when you spread forth your hands I will hide My eyes from you; yea, if you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of bloods. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doing from before My eyes; cease to do evil; though your sins have been as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they have been red, they shall be as wool (i. 10-18).

These words in brief amount to this: that unless a person shuns evils, nothing of his worship is good, and in like manner nothing of his works, for it is said, "I cannot bear iniquity, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to do evil." In Jeremiah:

Return you every man from his evil way, and make your works good (xxxv. 15).

[2] That the same are not wise is declared in Isaiah:

Woe to them that are wise in their own eyes, and intelligent before their own faces (v. 21).

The wisdom of the wise shall perish, and the intelligence of the intelligent; woe to them that are deeply wise, and their works are done in the dark (xxix. 14, 15).

Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help, and put their stay on horses, and trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because they are strong; but they look not to the Holy One of Israel, neither seek Jehovah. But He will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity. For Egypt is man, and not God; and the horses thereof are flesh, and not spirit (xxxi. 1-3).

Thus is described a person's self-intelligence. "Egypt" is memory-knowledge; a "horse," the understanding therefrom; a "chariot," the doctrine therefrom; a "horseman," the intelligence therefrom; of all of which it is said, "Woe to them that look not to the Holy One of Israel, neither seek Jehovah." Their destruction through evils is meant by: "He will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity." That these things are from a person's Own, and that consequently there is no life in them, is meant by its being said that "Egypt is man and not God," and that "the horses thereof are flesh and not spirit." "Man," and "flesh," denote what is a person's Own; "God," and "spirit," denote life from the Lord; the "horses of Egypt," denote self-intelligence. There are many such things in the Word concerning intelligence from self, and intelligence from the Lord, which can be seen only by means of the spiritual sense.

[3] That no one is saved by means of goods from self, because they are not good, is evident from the following:

Not every one that says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he that does the will of My Father: many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied by Your name, and by Your name cast out demons, and in Your name done many mighty things? but then I will profess to them, I never knew you, depart from Me, you that work iniquity (Matt. vii. 21-23).

Then you shall begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us; and you shall begin to say, We ate and drank in Your presence, and you have taught in our streets; but He

shall say, I tell you I know you not whence you are, depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity (Luke xiii. 25-27).

For such persons are like the Pharisee,

Who stood in the temple and prayed, saying that he was not as other men, an extortioner, unjust, an adulterer; that he fasted twice in the week, and gave tithes of all that he possessed (Luke xviii. 11-14).

Such persons moreover are those who are called

Unprofitable servants (Luke xvii. 10).

Life 31. That no person can from himself do what is really good, is the truth. But so to use this truth as to do away with all the good of charity that is done by a person who shuns evils as sins is a great wickedness, for it is diametrically contrary to the Word, which commands that a person shall *do*. It is contrary to the commandments of love to God and love toward the neighbor on which the Law and the Prophets hang, and it is to flout and undermine everything of religion. For every one knows that religion is to do what is good, and that every one will be judged according to his deeds. Every person is so constituted as to be able (by the Lord's power, if he begs for it) to shun evils as of himself; and that which he afterwards does is good from the Lord.

4.

*In proportion as any one shuns evils as sins,
in the same proportion he or she loves truths.*

Life 32. There are two universals that proceed from the Lord: Divine good, and Divine truth. Divine good is of His Divine love, and Divine truth is of His Divine wisdom. In the Lord these two are a one,⁷ and therefore they proceed from Him as a one, but they are not received as a one by angels in the heavens, or by men on earth. There are both angels and men who receive more from Divine truth than from Divine good; and there are others who receive more from Divine good than from Divine truth. This is why the heavens are distinguished into two distinct kingdoms, one of which is called the celestial kingdom, and the other the spiritual kingdom. The heavens that receive more from Divine good constitute the celestial kingdom, and those which receive more from Divine truth constitute the spiritual kingdom. (Concerning these two kingdoms into which the heavens are divided, see the work on *Heaven and Hell*, n. 20-28.) But still the angels of all the heavens are in wisdom and intelligence in proportion to the degree in which the good in them makes a one with truth. The good that does not make a one with truth is to them not good; and on the other hand the truth that does not make a one with good is to them not truth. From this we see that good conjoined

⁷ That is, a complex whole which constitutes a unity. [Translator]

with truth constitutes love and wisdom in both angel and a person; and as an angel is an angel, and a person a person, from the love and wisdom in him, it is evident that good conjoined with truth causes an angel to be an angel of heaven, and a person a person of the church.

Life 33. As good and truth are a one in the Lord, and proceed as a one from Him, it follows that good loves truth and truth loves good, and they will to be a one. It is the same with their opposites: evil loves falsity, and falsity loves evil, and these will to be a one. In the following pages the conjunction of good and truth will be called the Heavenly Marriage, and that of evil and falsity the Infernal Marriage.

Life 34. It follows from these premises that in proportion as any one shuns evils as sins, in the same proportion he loves truths (for in the same proportion he is in good, as has been shown in the preceding chapter); and also that in proportion as any one does not shun evils as sins, in the same proportion he does not love truths, because in the same proportion he is not in good.

Life 35. It is indeed possible for a person to love truths who does not shun evils as sins; yet he does not love them because they are truths, but because they minister to his reputation, and thereby to his honors or gains, so that if they do not minister to it he loves them not.

Life 36. Good is of the will, truth of the understanding. From the love of good in the will proceeds the love of truth in the understanding; from the love of truth proceeds the perception of truth; from the perception of truth comes thought about truth; and from all of these together comes the acknowledgment of truth which in the true sense is faith. (That this is the progression from the love of good to faith, will be shown in the treatise on *Divine Love and Divine Wisdom*.)

Life 37. As good is not good unless it is conjoined with truth, as already said, it follows that previous thereto good does not come into manifest being. But as it continually desires to come into manifest being it longs for and procures truths in order to do so, for truths are the agency of its nourishment and formation. This is the reason why a person loves truths in the same proportion that he is in good, consequently in the same proportion that he shuns evils as sins, for it is in proportion that he does this that any one is in good.

Life 38. In proportion as any one is in good, and from good loves truths, in the same proportion he loves the Lord, because the Lord is good itself and truth itself. The Lord is therefore with a person in good and in truth. If the latter is loved from good the Lord is loved, but not otherwise. This the Lord teaches in John:

He that has My commandments, and does them, he it is that loves Me; He that does not love Me does not keep My words (xiv. 21, 24).

If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love (xv. 10).

The “commandments” and “words” of the Lord are truths.

Life 39. That good loves truth may be illustrated by comparison with a priest, a soldier, a trader, and an artificer. With a *priest*: If he is in the good of the priesthood, which is to care for the salvation of souls, to teach the way to heaven, and to lead those whom he teaches, then in proportion as he is in this good (thus from his love and its desire) he acquires the truths which he may teach, and by means of which he may lead. But a priest who is not in the good of the priesthood, but is in the delight of his office from the love of self and of the world, which to him is the only good, he too from his love and its desire acquires those truths in abundance in proportion as he is inspired by the delight which is his good. With a *soldier*: If he is in the love of military service, and is sensible of its good, whether it be that of national defense, or that of his own fame, from this good and according to it he acquires its special knowledge, and if he is a commander, its intelligence; these are like truths by which the delight of love which is his good is nourished and formed. With a *trader*: If he has taken up this calling from the love of it, he learns with avidity everything that enters into and makes up that love as its means; these also are like truths, while trading is his good. With an *artificer*: If he applies himself with earnestness to his work, and loves it as the good of his life, he purchases tools, and perfects himself by whatever pertains to a knowledge of it, and by these means he so does his work that it is a good. From these comparisons it is evident that truths are the means through which the good of love comes into manifest being, and becomes something; consequently that good loves truths in order that it may do so. Hence in the Word to “do the truth” means to cause good to come into manifest being. This is meant by

Doing the truth (John iii. 21);

Doing the Lord’s sayings (Luke vi. 47);

Keeping His commandments (John xiv. 24);

Doing His words (Matt. vii. 24);

Doing the Word of God (Luke viii. 21); and by

Doing the statutes and judgments (Lev. xviii. 5).

And this also is to “do what is good,” and to “bear fruit,” for “good” and “fruit” are that which comes into manifest being (*est id quod existit*).

Life 40. That good loves truth and wills to be conjoined with it, may also be illustrated by comparison with food and water, or with bread and wine. Both are necessary. Food or bread alone effects nothing in the body in the way of nourishment; it does so only together with water or with wine; and therefore the one has an appetite and longing for the other. Moreover in the Word “food” and “bread” mean good, in the spiritual sense; and “water” and “wine” mean truth.

Life 41. From all that has been said it is now evident that he who shuns evils as sins, loves truths and longs for them; and that the more he shuns them, so much the more love and longing does he feel, because so much the more he is in good. The result is that he comes into the heavenly marriage, which is the marriage of good and truth, in which is heaven, and in which must be the church.

5.

*In proportion as any one shuns evils as sins,
in the same proportion he or she has faith and is spiritual.*

Life 42. Faith and life are distinct from each other in the same way as are thinking and doing; and as thinking is of the understanding and doing is of the will, it follows that faith and life are distinct from each other in the same way as are the understanding and the will. He who knows the distinction between the two latter knows that between the two former; and he who knows the conjunction of the two latter knows that of the two former. For this reason something shall first be set forth about the understanding and the will.

Life 43. A person possesses two faculties, one of which is called the Will, and the other the Understanding. They are distinct from each other, but are so created that they may be a one, and when they are a one they are called the Mind, so that the human mind consists of these two faculties, and the whole of a person's life is in them. Just as all things in the universe that are in accordance with Divine order bear relation to good and truth, so do all things in a person bear relation to the will and the understanding; for the good in a person belongs to his will and the truth in him belongs to his understanding, these two faculties being their receptacles and subjects; the will, of all things of good, and the understanding of all things of truth. The goods and truths in a person are nowhere else, and so therefore neither are the love and faith, because love is of good and good is of love, and faith is of truth and truth is of faith. It is of the utmost importance to know how the will and the understanding make one mind. They do so in the same way that good and truth make a one, for there is a like marriage between the will and the understanding to that which exists between good and truth. The nature of this latter marriage has been in some measure told in the preceding chapter, and to this we should add that just as good is the very being (*esse*) of a thing, and truth is its derivative manifestation (*existere*), so the will in a person is the very being of his life, and the understanding is its derivative manifestation, for the good that is of the will shapes itself forth in the understanding, and presents itself to view within fixed and settled outlines (*certo modo*).

Life 44. It has been shown above (n. 27, 28) that a person may know many things, may think them over, may understand them, and yet may not be wise. And as it is the province of faith to know and to think, and still more to understand, that a thing is true, a person may well believe that he has faith and yet not have it. The reason why he has it not, is that he is in evil of life, and evil of life and truth of faith cannot possibly act as a one. The evil of life destroys the truth of faith, because the evil of life is of the will and the truth of faith is of the

understanding, and the will leads the understanding and makes it act as a one with itself, so that if there is anything in the understanding that is not in accord with the will, and the person is left to himself, and thinks from his own evil and the love of it, he then either casts out the truth that is in the understanding, or else by falsifying it forces it into oneness. Quite different is it with those who are in the good of life: such when left to themselves think from what is good, and love the truth that is in the understanding because it is in accord. In this way there takes place a conjunction of faith and life such as is that of truth and good, and both these conjunctions are like that of the understanding and the will.

Life 45. From all this then it follows that just in so far as a person shuns evils as sins, just so far has he faith, because just so far is he in good, as shown above. This is confirmed also by its contrary: that he who does not shun evils as sins, has not faith because he is in evil, and evil inwardly hates truth. Outwardly indeed he may act as a friend to truth, and suffer it to be in the understanding, may even love to have it there; but when what is outward is put off, as is done after death, he first casts out truth his friend in this world, then denies that it is truth, and finally feels aversion for it.

Life 46. The faith of an evil person is an intellectual faith, in which there is nothing of good from the will. Thus it is a dead faith, which is like the breathing of the lungs without there being any life or soul in it from the heart. Moreover the understanding corresponds to the lungs, and the will to the heart. Such faith is also like a good-looking harlot dressed up in crimson and gold, but full of disease and corruption. A harlot also corresponds to the falsification of truth, and therefore in the Word signifies it. Such faith is also like a tree luxuriant in foliage but barren of fruit, which the gardener cuts down. A tree moreover signifies a person, its leaves and blossoms signify the truths of faith, and its fruit the good of love. But very different is that faith in the understanding which has in it good from the will. This faith is living, and is like a breathing of the lungs in which there is life and soul from the heart. It is also like a lovely wife whose chastity endears her to her husband. It is also like a tree that bears fruit.

Life 47. There are many things that appear to be mere matters of faith, such as that there is a God; that the Lord, who is God, is the Redeemer and Savior; that there is a heaven and a hell; that there is a life after death; and many other things of which it is not said that they are to be done, but that they are to be believed. These things of faith also are dead with a person who is in evil, but are living with a person who is in good. The reason is that a person who is in good not only acts aright from the will but also thinks aright from the understanding, and this not only before the world but also before himself when he is alone. Not so a person who is in evil.

Life 48. We have said that these things appear to be mere matters of faith. But the thought of the understanding derives its coming into manifest being (*trahit suum existere*) from the love of the will, which is the inmost being (*qui est esse*) of the thought in the understanding, as has been said above (n. 43). For whatever any one wills from love, he wills to do, he wills to think, he wills to understand, and he wills to speak; or, what is the same, whatever any one loves from the will,

he loves to do, he loves to think, he loves to understand, and he loves to speak. To this is also to be added, that when a person shuns what is evil as a sin, he is in the Lord, as shown above, and the Lord then works everything. And therefore to those who asked Him what they should do that they might work the works of God, He said:

This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent (John vi. 28, 29).

To “believe in the Lord” is not only to think that He is, but also to do His words, as He teaches elsewhere.

Life 49. That those who are in evils have no faith, no matter how much they may suppose themselves to have it, has been shown in the spiritual world in the case of persons of this character. They were brought into a heavenly society, which caused the spiritual sphere of faith as existing with the angels to enter into the interiors of their faith, and the result was that the angels perceived that those persons possessed only what is natural or external of faith, and not what is spiritual or internal of it, and therefore those persons themselves confessed that they had nothing whatever of faith, and that in the world they had persuaded themselves that to believe or have faith consists in thinking a thing to be true, no matter what the ground for so thinking. Very different was perceived to be the faith of those who had not been in evil.

Life 50. From all this it may be seen what spiritual faith is; and also what is faith not spiritual. Spiritual faith exists with those who do not commit sins, for those who do not commit sins do things that are good, not from themselves but from the Lord (see above, n. 18-21), and through faith become spiritual. Faith with these is the truth. This the Lord teaches in John:

This is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light, because their works were evil. For every one that does evil hates the light, and comes not to the light, lest his works should be reprov'd. But he that does the truth comes to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God (iii. 19-21).

Life 51. All the foregoing is confirmed by the following passages in the Word:

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which is evil, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Luke vi. 45; Matt. xii. 35).

The “heart” in the Word means a person’s will, and as a person thinks and speaks from this, it is said: “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”

Not that which goes into the mouth defiles the person; but that which goes out of the heart, this defiles the person (Matt. xv. 11, 18).

The "heart" here too means the will. Jesus said of the woman who anointed His feet with ointment:

Her sins are forgiven for she loved much; your faith has saved you (Luke vii. 47, 50);

from which it is evident that when sins have been remitted or forgiven, thus when they exist no longer, faith saves. That those are called "sons of God" and "born of God" who are not in the Own of their will, and consequently are not in the Own of their understanding; that is to say, who are not in evil and from this in falsity; and that these are they who believe in the Lord, He Himself teaches in John i. 12, 13, which passage may be seen explained above in n. 17, at the end.

Life 52. From these premises there follows this conclusion: That no person has in him a grain of truth more than he has of good; thus that he has not a grain of faith more than he has of life. In the understanding indeed there may exist the thought that such or such a thing is true, but not the acknowledgment which is faith, unless there is consent thereto in the will. Thus do faith and life keep step as they walk. From all this it is now evident that in proportion as any one shuns evils as sins, in the same proportion he has faith and is spiritual.

6.

The Ten Commandments teach what evils are sins.

Life 53. What nation in the wide world is not aware that it is evil to steal, to commit adultery, to kill, and to bear false witness? If men were not aware of this, and if they did not by laws guard against the commission of these evils, it would be all over with them; for without such laws the community, the commonwealth, and the kingdom would perish. Who can imagine that the Israelite nation was so much more senseless than other nations as not to know that these were evils? One might therefore wonder why these laws, known as they are the world over, were promulgated from Mount Sinai by Jehovah Himself with so great a miracle. But listen: they were promulgated with so great a miracle in order that men may know that these laws are not only civic and moral laws, but are also spiritual laws; and that to act contrary to them is not only to do evil to a fellow-citizen and to the community, but is also to sin against God. For this reason those laws, through promulgation from Mount Sinai by Jehovah, were made laws of religion; for it is evident that whatever Jehovah God commands, He commands in order that it may be of religion, and that it is to be done for His sake, and for the sake of the person that he may be saved.

Life 54. As these laws were the first-fruits of the Word, and therefore the first-fruits of the church that was to be again set up by the Lord with the Israelite nation, and as they were in a brief summary a complex of all those things of

religion by means of which there is conjunction of the Lord with a person and of a person with the Lord, they were so holy that nothing is more so.

Life 55. That they were most holy is evident from the fact that Jehovah Himself (that is, the Lord) came down upon Mount Sinai in fire, and with angels, and promulgated them from it by a living voice, and that the people had prepared themselves for three days to see and to hear; that the mountain was fenced about lest any one should go near it and should die; that neither were the priests nor the elders to draw near, but Moses only; that those laws were written by the finger of God on two tables of stone; that when Moses brought the tables down from the mountain the second time, his face shone; that the tables were afterwards laid away in the ark, and the ark in the inmost of the tabernacle, and upon it was placed the mercy-seat, and upon this cherubs of gold; that this was the most holy thing of their church, being called the holy of holies; that outside the veil that hung before it there were placed things that represented holy things of heaven and the church, namely, the lampstand with its seven golden lamps, the golden altar of incense, and the table overlaid with gold on which were the loaves of faces, and surrounded with curtains of fine linen, bright-crimson, and scarlet. The holiness of this whole tabernacle had no other source than the Law that was in the ark. [2] On account of this holiness of the tabernacle from the Law in the ark, the whole people of Israel, by command, encamped around it in the order of their tribes, and marched in order after it, and there was then a cloud over it by day, and a fire by night. On account of the holiness of that Law, and the presence of the Lord in it, the Lord spoke with Moses above the mercy-seat between the cherubs, and the ark was called "Jehovah there." Aaron also was not allowed to enter within the veil except with sacrifices and incense. Because that Law was the very holiness of the church, the ark was brought by David into Zion; and later it was kept in the midst of the temple at Jerusalem, and constituted its shrine. [3] On account of the Lord's presence in that Law and around it, miracles were wrought by the ark in which was that Law: the waters of Jordan were cleft asunder, and so long as the ark was resting in the midst of it, the people passed over on dry ground; when the ark was carried round the walls of Jericho they fell; Dagon the god of the Philistines fell down before it, and afterwards lay on the threshold of the temple without his head; and on its account the Bethshemites were smitten to the number of many thousands not to mention other miracles. These were all performed solely by the Lord's presence in His Ten Words, which are the commandments of the Decalogue.

Life 56. So great a power and so great a holiness existed in that Law for the further reason that it was a complex of all things of religion for it consisted of two tables of which the one contains all things that are on the part of God, and the other in a complex all things that are on the part of a person. The commandments of this Law are therefore called the "Ten Words," and are so called because "ten" signifies all. But how this Law is a complex of all things of religion will be seen in the following chapter.

Life 57. As by means of this Law there is a conjunction of the Lord with a person and of a person with the Lord, it is called the "Covenant," and the "Testimony," the "Covenant" because it conjoins, and the "Testimony" because it bears

witness, for a “covenant” signifies conjunction, and a “testimony” the attestation of it. For this reason there were two tables, one for the Lord and the other for a person. The conjunction is effected by the Lord, but only when the person does the things that have been written in his table. For the Lord is constantly present and working, and wills to enter in, but a person must open to the Lord in the freedom which he has from Him; for the Lord says:

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me (Rev. iii. 20).

Life 58. In the second table, which is for people, it is not said that a person must do this or that good, but that he must not do this or that evil, as for example, “You shall not kill, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, you shall not covet.” The reason is that a person cannot do any good whatever from himself, but when he no longer does evils, then he does good, not from himself but from the Lord. That by the power of the Lord a person is able to shun evils as of himself if he begs for that power, will be seen in the following pages.

Life 59. What has been said above (n. 55) respecting the promulgation, holiness, and power of that Law, will be found in the following places in the Word:

That Jehovah came down on Mount Sinai in fire, and that the mountain smoked and quaked, and that there were thunderings, lightnings, and a thick cloud, and the voice of a trumpet (Exod. xix. 16, 18; Deut. iv. 11; v. 22-26).

That before the descent of Jehovah the people prepared and sanctified themselves for three days (Exod. xix. 10, 11, 15).

That bounds were set round the mountain, lest any one should come near its base, and should die; and that not even were the priests to come near, but Moses only (Exod. xix. 12, 13, 20-23; xxiv. 1, 2).

That the Law was promulgated from Mount Sinai (Exod. xx. 2-17; Deut. v. 6-21).

That that Law was written by the finger of God on two tables of stone (Exod. xxxi. 18; xxxii. 15, 16; Deut. ix. 10).

That when Moses brought those tables down from the mountain the second time, his face shone (Exod. xxxiv. 29-35).

That the tables were kept in the ark (Exod. xxv. 16; xl. 20; Deut. x. 5; 1 Kings viii. 9).

That upon the ark was placed the mercy-seat, and upon this the golden cherubs (Exod. xxv. 17-21).

That the ark, together with the mercy-seat and the cherubs, constituted the inmost of the tabernacle, and that the golden lampstand, the golden altar of incense, and the table overlaid with gold on which were the loaves of faces, constituted the exterior of the tabernacle; and the ten curtains of fine linen, bright-crimson, and scarlet, its outermost (Exod. xxv. 1-end; xxvi. 1-end; xl. 17-28).

That the place where the ark was, was called the holy of holies (Exod. xxvi. 33).

That the whole people of Israel encamped around the habitation in order according to their tribes, and marched in order after it (Num. ii. 1-end).

That there was then over the habitation a cloud by day and a fire by night (Exod. xl. 38; Num. ix. 15-end; xiv. 14; Deut. i. 33).

That the Lord spoke with Moses from over the ark between the cherubs (Exod. xxv. 22; Num. vii. 89).

That the ark, from the Law within it, was called Jehovah-There, for when the ark set forward, Moses said, Rise up, Jehovah; and when it rested he said, Return Jehovah (Num. x. 35, 36), and see further 2 Sam. vi. 2; Ps. cxxxii. 7, 8.

That on account of the holiness of that Law Aaron was not allowed to enter within the veil except with sacrifices and with incense (Lev. xvi. 2-14, etc.).

That the ark was brought into Zion by David with sacrifices and with shouting (2 Sam. vi. 1-19). That on that occasion, Uzzah, who touched it, died (verses 6 and 7).

That the ark was placed in the midst of the temple in Jerusalem, where it constituted the shrine (1 Kings vi. 19, etc.; viii. 3-9).

That by the Lord's presence and power in the Law that was in the ark, the waters of Jordan were cleft asunder, and so long as the ark rested in the midst of it, the people passed over on dry ground (Josh. iii. 1-17; iv. 5-20).

That when the ark was carried around them, the walls of Jericho fell (Josh. vi. 1-20).

That Dagon the god of the Philistines fell to the earth before the ark, and afterwards lay upon the threshold of the temple headless (1 Sam. v. 1-4).

That on account of the ark the Bethshemites were smitten, to the number of many thousands (1 Sam. vi. 19).

Life 60. That the tables of stone on which the Law was written were called "the tables of the covenant," and that from them the ark was called "the ark of the covenant," and the Law itself "the covenant," see Num. x. 33; Deut. iv. 13, 23; v. 2, 3; ix. 9; Josh. iii. 11; 1 Kings viii. 19, 21; Rev. xi. 19; and in many other places. The reason why the Law was called the "covenant," is that "covenant" signifies conjunction; and it is therefore said of the Lord that:

He shall be for a covenant to the people (Isa. xlii. 6; xlix. 8);

and He is called:

The messenger of the covenant (Mal. iii. 1);

and His blood:

The blood of the covenant (Matt. xxvi. 28; Zech. ix. 11; Exod. xxiv. 4-10).

And therefore the Word is called the "Old Covenant," and the "New Covenant." Moreover covenants are made for the sake of love, friendship, association, and thus for the sake of conjunction.

Life 61. That the commandments of this Law were called the "Ten Words," see Exod. xxxiv. 28; Deut. iv. 13; x. 4. They are so called because "ten" signifies all, and "words" signifies truths, for there were more than ten words. As "ten" signifies all,

The curtains of the tabernacle were ten (Exod. xxvi. 1);

And for the same reason the Lord said

That a certain person who was to receive a kingdom, called ten of his servants, and gave them ten pounds to trade with (Luke xix. 13).

And for the same reason also the Lord

Likened the kingdom of the heavens to ten virgins (Matt. xxv. 1).

For the same reason also,

The dragon is described as having ten horns, and upon his horns ten diadems (Rev. xii. 3).

In like manner the beast that came up out of the sea (Rev. xiii. 1).

And another beast also (Rev. xvii. 3, 7).

Likewise the beast in Daniel (vii. 7, 20, 24).

The like is signified by ten in Leviticus (xxvi. 26), and in Zechariah (viii. 23), and in other places.

This is the origin of tithes, for “tithes” (or “tenths”) signify something from all.

7.

*Murders, adulteries, thefts, false witness,
together with all concupiscence for these things,
are the evils which must be shunned as sins.*

Life 62. It is well known that the Law of Sinai was written on two tables, and that the first table contains the things of God, and the other the things of a person. That the first table contains all things that belong to God, and the second all that belong to a person, does not appear in the letter, yet are they all in them, and it is for this reason that they are called the Ten Words, by which are signified all truths in the complex (as may be seen just above, n. 61). But in what way all things are in them cannot be set forth in a few words, but may be apprehended from what has been presented in the *Doctrine of the Holy Scripture* (n. 67), which see. This is why it is said “murders, adulteries, thefts, and false witness of every kind.”

Life 63. A religious tenet has prevailed to the effect that no one is able to fulfill the law; the law being not to kill, not to commit adultery, not to steal, and not to bear false witness. Every civic person and moral person is able to fulfill these commandments of the law by a civic and moral life; but this tenet denies that he can do so by a spiritual life; from which it follows that his not doing these evils is only for the sake of avoiding penalties and losses in this world, and not for the sake of avoiding penalties and losses after he has left it. It is for this reason that a person with whom this tenet has prevailed, thinks these evils allowable in the sight of God, but not so in that of the world. [2] And in consequence of such thought from this his tenet, the person is in concupiscence for all these evils, and refrains from doing them merely for the world’s sake; and therefore after death such a person, although he had not committed murders, adulteries, thefts, and false witness, nevertheless desires to commit them, and does commit them when the external possessed by him in this world is taken away from him. Every concupiscence he has had remains with him after death. It is owing to this that such persons act as one with hell, and cannot but have their lot among those who are there. [3] Very different is the lot of those who are unwilling to kill, to commit adultery, to steal, and to bear false witness for the reason that to do these things is contrary to God. These persons, after some battling with these evils, do not will them, thus do not desire to commit them: they say in their hearts that they are sins, and in themselves are infernal and devilish. After death, when the external which they had possessed for this world is taken away from them, they act as one with heaven, and as they are in the Lord they come into heaven.

Life 64. It is a common principle of every religion that a person ought to examine himself, repent, and desist from sins, and that if he fails to do so he is in a state of damnation. (That this is a common principle of every religion may be seen above, n. 4-8.) Teaching the Decalogue is also a common thing throughout the whole Christian world, and by it little children are commonly initiated into the Christian religion, for it is in the hands of all young children. Their parents and teachers tell them that to commit these evils is to sin against God, and in fact while speaking to the children they know nothing different. We may well wonder that these same persons, and the children too when they become adults, think that they are not under this Law, and that they are not able to do the things that belong to it. Can there be any other cause for their learning to think in this way, than that they love evils and consequently the false notions that favor them? These therefore are the people who do not make the commandments of the Decalogue a matter of religion. And that these same persons live without religion will be seen in the *Doctrine of Faith*.

Life 65. All nations in the wide world who have religion possess precepts like those in the Decalogue, and all who from religion live them are saved, and all who do not live them from religion are damned. When those who live them from religion are instructed after death by the angels, they receive truths, and acknowledge the Lord; the reason of which is that they shun evils as sins, and are consequently in good, and good loves truth, and from the desire of this love, receives it (as has been shown above, n. 32-41). This is meant by the words of the Lord to the Jews:

The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof (Matt. xxi. 43).

And also by these:

When therefore the Lord of the vineyard shall come, He will destroy those evil men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, who shall render him the fruits in their season (Matt. xxi. 40, 41).

And by these:

I say to you that many shall come from the east and the west, and from the north and the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God, but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness (Matt. viii. 11, 12; Luke xiii. 29).

Life 66. We read in Mark:

That a certain rich man came to Jesus, and asked Him what he should do to inherit eternal life, and that Jesus said to him, you know the commandments: You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, You shall not steal, You shall not be a false witness, You shall not defraud, Honor your father and mother. And he

answering said, All these things have I kept from my youth. And Jesus looked upon him and loved him, yet said to him, One thing you lack; go, sell whatever you have, and give to the poor; so shall you have treasure in the heavens; and come, take up the cross and follow Me (x. 17-22).

It is said that Jesus “loved him.” This was because the a person said that he had kept those commandments from his youth. But because he lacked three things, which were that he had not removed his heart from riches, had not fought against lusts, and had not yet acknowledged the Lord to be God, the Lord said that he should “sell all that he had,” by which is meant that he should remove his heart from riches; that he should “take up the cross,” by which is meant that he should fight against lusts; and that he should “follow Him,” by which is meant that he should acknowledge the Lord to be God. The Lord spoke these things as He spoke all things by correspondences. (See the *Doctrine of the Holy Scripture*, n. 17.) For no one is able to shun evils as sins unless he acknowledges the Lord and goes to Him, and unless he fights against evils and so removes lusts. But more about these matters in the chapter on combats against evils.

Note

An explanation of the literal and spiritual meanings of *four* of the Ten Commandments (the Commandments on murder, adultery, stealing, and bearing false witness against your neighbor) is given at this point in the current work (*The Doctrine of Life*). That explanation is not included in this document. Explanations of individual Commandments can be found online at www.BeginaNewLife.info, the page titled *In Swedenborg's Own Words*.

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8.

*No one can shun evils as sins
so as to be inwardly averse to them
except by means of combats against them.*

Life 92. Everybody knows from the Word and from doctrine drawn from it that the Own⁸ of a person is evil from his birth, and that this is the reason why from inborn concupiscence he loves evils and is drawn into them. This is why he desires to have revenge, and to commit fraud, defamation, and adultery. And unless he takes thought that such things are sins, and on this account resists them, he does them whenever an opportunity offers, provided that his reputation and thereby his honors and gains do not suffer. Consider also that unless he has religion the person does these things from delight.

Life 93. As this Own of a person constitutes the first root of his life, it is evident what kind of a tree a person would be unless this root were plucked up, and a new root planted in its place. He would be a rotted tree, of which it is said that it must be cut down and cast into the fire (Matt. iii. 10; vii. 19). And this root is not removed and a new one set in its place unless the person regards the evils that constitute the root as injurious to his soul, and on this account desires to rid himself of them. But as these evils belong to a person's Own, and are therefore delightful to him, he cannot do this except against his will, with a struggle, and therefore with battling.

Life 94. Every one does this battling who believes in the existence of hell and of heaven: that heaven is eternal happiness, and hell eternal unhappiness; and that those who do evils go to hell, and those who do goods to heaven. And one who thus fights acts from within, and against the concupiscence itself which constitutes the root of the evil, for one who fights against anything does not will it, and to desire is to will. This shows that the root of evil is not removed except by means of combat.

Life 95. In proportion therefore as any one battles with and thus removes evil, in the same proportion good takes its place, and from this good the person in the same proportion looks evil in the face, and sees that it is infernal and horrible, and on this account he not only shuns it, but feels averse to it, and at last abhors it.

⁸ The Latin word *proprium* is the term used in the original text that in this and other places has been rendered by the expression "Own." The dictionary meaning of *proprius*, as an adjective, is "one's own," "proper," "belonging to one's self alone," "special," "particular," "peculiar." The neuter of this which is the word *proprium*, when used as a noun means "possession," "property;" also "a peculiarity," "characteristic mark," "distinguishing sign," "characteristic." The English adjective "own" is defined by Webster to mean "belonging to," "belonging exclusively or especially to," "peculiar;" so that our word "own" is a very exact equivalent of *proprius*, and if we make it a noun by writing it "Own," in order to answer to the Latin *proprium*, we effect a very close translation. [Translator]

Life 96. A person who fights against evils cannot but do so as of himself, for one who does not fight as of himself does not do so at all, but stands like an automaton that sees nothing and does nothing, and from evil he is continually thinking in favor of evil, and not against it. But be it well known that it is the Lord alone who fights in a person against his evils, and that it only appears to the person that he fights of himself, and also that the Lord wills that it should so appear to him, because without this appearance no combat takes place and therefore no reformation.

Life 97. This combat is not severe except in the case of those who have given free rein to their lusts, and have indulged them of set purpose, and also in the case of those who have stubbornly cast off the holy things of the Word and of the church. With others it is not severe; let them even once in a week, or twice in a month, resist the evils they are inclined to, and they will perceive a change.

Life 98. The Christian Church is called the church militant, and it cannot be called militant except as against the devil, and thus against the evils that are from hell. Hell is the devil. And the temptation that the person of the church undergoes is this warfare.

Life 99. Battles against evils, which battles are temptations, are treated of in many places in the Word. They are meant by these words of the Lord:

I say to you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abides by itself alone; but if it die, it bears much fruit (John xii. 24).

And also by these:

If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever would save his life shall lose it; and whoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it (Mark viii. 34, 35).

The "cross" means temptation (as also in Matt. x. 38; xvi. 24; Mark x. 21; Luke xiv. 27). By his "life" is meant the life of a person's Own (as also in Matt. x. 39; xvi. 25; Luke ix. 24; and especially in John xii. 25), which is also the "life of the flesh that profits nothing" (John vi. 63).

In regard to battles against evils, and victories over them, the Lord speaks in the Revelation to all the churches:

To the church in Ephesus: To him that overcomes, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God (Rev. ii. 7).

To the church in Smyrna: He that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death (verse 11).

To the church in Pergamos: To him that overcomes, to him will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone,

and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows but he that receives it (verse 17).

To the church in Thyatira: He that overcomes, and that keeps My words to the end, to him will I give power (potestas) over the nations; and the morning star (verses 26, 28).

To the church in Sardis: [He that overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels (Rev. iii. 5).

To the church in Philadelphia:] He that overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, of the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name (verse 12).

To the church in Laodicea: He that overcomes I will give to him to sit down with Me in My throne (verse 21).

Life 100. These battles, which are temptations, may be seen specially treated of in the *Doctrine of the New Jerusalem*, published in London in the year 1758 (from n. 187 to n. 201): Whence and what they are (n. 196, 197): How and where they take place (n. 198): What good they effect (n. 199): That the Lord fights for a person (n. 200): Concerning the Lord's battles or temptations (n. 201).

9.

*A person ought to shun evils as sins
and fight against them as of him- or herself.*

Life 101. It is in accordance with Divine order that a person should act in freedom according to reason, because to act in freedom according to reason is to act from himself. And yet these two faculties, Freedom and Reason, are not proper to a person, but are the Lord's in him; and in so far as he is a person they must not be taken away from him, because without them he cannot be reformed, for without them he cannot perform repentance, he cannot fight against evils, and afterwards bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. Now as it is from the Lord that a person possesses freedom and reason, and as a person acts from them, it follows that he does not act from himself, but *as* from himself.⁹

Life 102. The Lord loves a person and wills to dwell with him, yet He cannot love him and dwell with him unless He is received and loved in return. From

⁹ That a person has freedom from the Lord, see above (nos. 19, 20); and in the work on *Heaven and Hell* (nos. 589-596, and nos. 597-603). What freedom is, see the *Doctrine of the New Jerusalem* (nos. 141-149).

this alone comes conjunction. For this reason the Lord has given a person freedom and reason, freedom to think and will as of himself, and reason in accordance with which he may do so. To love and to be conjoined with one in whom there is nothing reciprocal is not possible, nor is it possible to enter in and abide with one in whom there is no reception. As there are in a person, from the Lord, reception and reciprocation, the Lord says:

Abide in Me, and I in you (John xv. 4).

He that abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit (verse 5).

At that day you shall know that you are in Me, and I in you (John xiv. 20).

The Lord also teaches that He is in the truths and in the goods that a person receives and that are in him:

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you. If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love (John xv. 7, 10).

He that has My commandments, and does them, he it is that loves Me and I will love him, and will make My abode with him (John xiv. 21, 23).

So that the Lord dwells in a person in what is His own, and the person dwells in those things which are from the Lord, and thus dwells in the Lord.

Life 103. As there is in a person, from the Lord, this ability to reciprocate and return, and consequently this *mutuality*, the Lord says that a person must do the work of repentance, which no one can do except as of himself:

Jesus said: Except you repent you shall all perish (Luke xiii. 3, 5).

Jesus said: The kingdom of God is at hand; repent you, and believe the gospel (Mark i. 14, 15).

Jesus said: I am come to call sinners to repentance (Luke v. 32).

Jesus said to the churches: Repent (Rev. ii. 5, 16, 21, 22; iii. 3).

It is also said:

They repented not of their works (Rev. xvi. 11).

Life 104. As there is in a person, from the Lord, this ability to reciprocate and return, and consequently this *mutuality*, the Lord says that a person must keep the commandments, and also that he must bring forth fruit:

Why do you call Me Lord, Lord, and do not do the things which I say? (Luke vi. 46-49).

If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them (John xiii. 17).

You are My friends, if you do the things which I command you (John xv. 14).

Whoever shall do and teach them shall be called great in the kingdom of the heavens (Matt. v. 19).

Every one therefore who hears these words of Mine, and does them, I will liken to a wise man (Matt. vii. 24).

Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance (Matt. iii. 8).

Make the tree good, and its fruit good (Matt. xii. 33).

The kingdom shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof (Matt. xxi. 43).

Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire (Matt. vii. 19).

And so in many other places: from all which it is evident that a person must act of himself but from the Lord's power, which he must petition for. For this is to act *as* from himself.

Life 105. As there is in a person, from the Lord, this ability to reciprocate and return, and consequently this mutuality, a person must render an account of his works, and will be requited according to them. For the Lord says:

The Son of man shall come, and shall render to every man according to his deeds (Matt. xvi. 27).

They shall come forth: they that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evils to the resurrection of judgment (John v. 29).

Their works do follow with them (Rev. xiv. 13).

They were judged every man according to his works (Rev. xx. 13).

Behold, I come, and My reward is with Me, to give every man according to his work (Rev. xxii. 12).

If there were in a person no reciprocity, there would be no imputation.

Life 106. As in a person there are reception and reciprocity, the church teaches that a person must examine himself, confess his sins before God, desist from them, and lead a new life. It may be seen above (n. 3-8) that every church in the Christian world teaches this.

Life 107. Unless there were reception by a person, and at the same time a taking thought as it were by him, nothing could have been said about faith, for faith is not from a person. Without this reception and reciprocity, a person would be like chaff in the wind, and would stand as if lifeless, with mouth open, and hands hanging down, awaiting influx, devoid of thought and action in regard to the things that concern his salvation. It is indeed true that he is by no means the agent in regard to these things, but yet he is a reagent as of himself. But these matters will be set forth in still clearer light in the treatises on *Angelic Wisdom*.

10.

*If any one shuns evils for any other reason than
because they are sins, he or she does not shun them,
but merely prevents them from appearing before the world.*

Life 108. There are moral men who keep the commandments of the second table of the Decalogue, not committing fraud, blasphemy, revenge, or adultery; and such of them as confirm themselves in the belief that such things are evils because they are injurious to the public weal, and are therefore contrary to the laws of humane conduct, practice charity, sincerity, justice, chastity. But if they do these goods and shun those evils merely because they are evils, and not at the same time because they are sins, they are still merely natural men, and with the merely natural the root of evil remains imbedded and is not dislodged; for which reason the goods they do are not goods, because they are from themselves.

Life 109. Before men, a natural moral person may appear exactly like a spiritual moral person, but not before the angels. Before the angels in heaven, if he is in goods he appears like an image of wood, if in truths like an image of marble, lifeless, and very different from a spiritual moral person. For a natural moral person is an outwardly moral person, and a spiritual moral person is an inwardly moral person, and what is outward without what is inward is lifeless. It does indeed live, but not the life that is called life.

Life 110. The lusts of evil that constitute the interiors of a person from his birth can be removed by the Lord alone. For the Lord inflows from what is spiritual into what is natural; but a person, of himself, from what is natural into what is spiritual; and this influx is contrary to order, and does not operate into the lusts and remove them, but shuts them in closer and closer in proportion as it confirms itself. And as the hereditary evil thus lurks there, shut in, after death when the person becomes a spirit it bursts the cover that had hidden it here, and breaks out like the discharge from an ulcer that has been healed only outwardly.

Life 111. There are various and many causes that make a person moral in the outward form, but unless he is moral in the inward form also, he is nevertheless not moral. For example: if a person abstains from adulteries and whoredom from the fear of the civil law and its penalties; from the fear of losing his good name and esteem; from the fear of the consequent diseases; from the fear of his wife's tongue in his home, and the consequent inquietude of his life; from the fear of the husband's vengeance, or that of some relative; from poverty, or avarice; from disability caused either by disease, abuse, age, or impotence; nay, if he abstains from such things on account of any natural or moral law, and not at the same time on account of the spiritual law, he nevertheless is inwardly an adulterer and whoremonger, for none the less does he believe that such things are not sins. As toward God, therefore, he in his spirit makes them not unlawful, and so in spirit he commits them, although not in the body in the sight of the world; and therefore after death, when he becomes a spirit, he speaks openly in favor of them. From all this it is evident that an ungodly person is able to shun evils as injurious, but only a Christian can shun them as sins.

Life 112. It is the same with thefts and frauds of every kind, with murders and revengeful acts of every kind, and with false witness and lies of every kind. No one can of himself be cleansed and made pure from such things, for within every concupiscence there are infinite things which the person sees only as one simple thing, whereas the Lord sees the smallest details of the whole series. In a word, a person cannot regenerate himself, that is, form in himself a new heart and a new spirit, but the Lord alone can do this, who Himself is the Reformer and the Regenerator. Therefore if a person wills to make himself new by his own sagacity and intelligence, it is merely like painting an ugly face, or smearing a skin detergent over a part that is infected with inward corruption.

Life 113. Therefore the Lord says in Matthew:

You blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and the platter, that the outside may be clean also (xxiii. 26).

And in Isaiah:

Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your works from before Mine eyes, cease to do evil and then though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they have been red like crimson, they shall be as wool (i. 16, 18).

Life 114. To what has already been said shall be added the following:

- (1) Christian charity, with every one, consists in faithfully performing what belongs to his calling, for by this, if he shuns evils as sins, he every day is doing goods, and is himself his own use in the general body. In this way also the common good is cared for, and the good of each person in particular.
- (2) All other things that he does are not the proper works of charity, but are either its signs, its benefactions, or its obligations.

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The Ten Commandments in General, Plus Other Contextual Information

- from -

True Christianity

Emanuel Swedenborg

1.

*The Catechism, or Ten Commandments, Explained
in Both It's Outer and Its Inner Meanings*

1a. *Introduction*

TC 282. EVERY nation on the face of the earth knows that it is evil to murder, to commit adultery, to steal, and to bear false witness, and knows that any country, state, or civilized society that did not forbid these evils would be doomed. No one thinks the Israelite nation was stupider than other nations and did not know these things were evils. Anyone might be amazed, then, that these laws, universally recognized on earth as they are, were delivered on Mount Sinai in such a miraculous way by Jehovah himself.

I have been told, though, that they were delivered in this miraculous way so that people would know that these laws are not only civil and moral laws but divine laws as well. Therefore to act against them would be not only doing something evil to our neighbor (meaning our fellow citizen and our community) but also sinning against God. When they were delivered by Jehovah on Mount Sinai, therefore, these laws became laws of religion as well. It should be obvious that whatever Jehovah commands, he commands as an aspect of religion; therefore his commands are something we need to follow for the sake of our salvation. Before I explain the Commandments, though, I will give a prefatory statement about their holiness, to show that they have religious import.

1b. *The Ten Commandments Were the Holiest Thing
in the Israelite Church*

TC 283. The Ten Commandments are the most important thing in the Word. As a result, they were the most important thing in the church that was established in the Israelite nation. In a brief encapsulation they included all the elements of religion that provide for God's connection to us and our connection to God. Therefore the Ten Commandments were the holiest thing of all.

The following points show that the Ten Commandments were the holiest thing: Jehovah the Lord himself, together with angels, came down on Mount Sinai in fire and delivered the Ten Commandments by direct speech. The

mountain was fenced all around so that no one would approach and die. Not even the priests or the elders were allowed to approach; only Moses. The commandments were written on two tablets of stone by the finger of God. When Moses carried the tablets down for the second time, his face was glowing.

Afterward, the tablets were stored in an ark that was at the heart of the tabernacle. There was a mercy seat on top of the ark with angel guardians made of gold over it. The inmost area in the tabernacle, where the ark was placed, was called the most holy place. Outside the veil behind which the ark stood there were several things that represented holy things in heaven and the church: a table overlaid with gold that had the showbread on it, a golden altar for burning incense, and a golden lampstand with seven lamps. There was also a curtain around the tabernacle made out of [threads of] fine linen and of purple and scarlet [yarn]. The holiness of the whole tabernacle came from no other source than the law that was inside the ark.

Because of the holiness of the tabernacle that came from the law in the ark, the entire Israelite population camped around the tabernacle, tribe by tribe, in an arrangement that was given by command. When they traveled, the tribes moved in a specific sequence behind the ark, and there was a cloud over the ark by day and a fire by night.

Because of the holiness of this law and Jehovah's presence in it, Jehovah spoke to Moses from over the mercy seat between the angel guardians. In fact, the ark was called "Jehovah" there. Aaron was not allowed inside the veil unless he offered sacrifices and burned incense, or else he would die.

Because of Jehovah's presence in this law and surrounding it, the ark containing the law performed miracles. For example, the waters of the Jordan were split apart, and as long as the ark was resting in the middle of the riverbed the people crossed on dry land. When the ark was carried around the walls of Jericho, the walls fell. Dagon, an idol of the Philistines, at first fell face down before the ark. Later, Dagon lay decapitated with the palms of its hands across the threshold of the shrine. Because of the ark, as many as several thousand inhabitants of Beth Shemesh were struck down. Uzza died because he touched the ark. David brought the ark back into Zion with sacrifices and shouts of triumph. Later on Solomon brought the ark into the Temple in Jerusalem where he had made a sanctuary for it; and so on. All these things make it clear that the Ten Commandments were the holiest thing in the Israelite church.

TC 284. The points just made about the delivery, holiness, and power of this law are found in the following passages in the Word: Jehovah came down on Mount Sinai in fire, and then the mountain smoked and quaked, and there was much thunder and lightning, a thick cloud, and the sound of a trumpet (Exodus 19:16–18; Deuteronomy 4:11; 5:22–26). Before Jehovah came down, the people prepared and sanctified themselves for three days (Exodus 19:10, 11, 15). The mountain was fenced all around to prevent anyone from dying as a result of approaching it. Not even priests went up; only Moses (Exodus 19:12, 13, 20–23; 24:1, 2). The law was delivered on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20:2–14; Deuteronomy 5:6–21). The law was engraved on two tablets of stone and was written by the finger of God (Exodus 31:18; 32:15, 16; Deuteronomy 9:10). When Moses carried the tablets down the mountain for the second time, his face was glowing so much that he covered it with a veil while he was speaking to the people (Exodus 34:29–35). The

tablets were stored in the ark (Exodus 25:16; 40:20; Deuteronomy 10:5; 1 Kings 8:9). The mercy seat was placed on top of the ark, and angel guardians made of gold were placed on top of the mercy seat (Exodus 25:17–21). The ark with its mercy seat and angel guardians was put in the tabernacle and constituted the primary and inmost part of it. The table covered with gold for the showbread, the golden altar for incense, and the golden lampstand with its lamps constituted an outer part of the tabernacle. The ten curtains made of [threads of] fine linen and of purple and scarlet [yarn] constituted the tabernacle's outermost part (Exodus 25:1–40; 26:1–37; 40:17–28). The place where the ark was kept was called the most holy place (Exodus 26:33). The entire Israelite population camped around the tabernacle tribe by tribe in a specific arrangement and traveled in a specific sequence behind it (Numbers 2:1–34). At those times there was a cloud over the tabernacle by day and a fire by night (Exodus 40:38; Numbers 9:15, 16–23; 14:14; Deuteronomy 1:33). Jehovah spoke to Moses from a place on top of the ark between the angel guardians (Exodus 25:22; Numbers 7:89). Because of the law that was inside it, the ark was called "Jehovah" there. When the ark would set out, Moses would say, "Arise, Jehovah." When it would rest, he would say, "Return, Jehovah" (Numbers 10:35, 36; also 2 Samuel 6:2; Psalms 132:7, 8). Due to the holiness of this law, Aaron was not allowed to go behind the veil unless he offered sacrifices and burned incense (Leviticus 16:2–14 and following). The waters of the Jordan river were split by the presence of the Lord's power in the law that was inside the ark; and as long as the ark was resting in the middle of the riverbed, the people crossed on dry land (Joshua 3:1–17; 4:5–20). When the ark was carried around the walls of Jericho, they fell down (Joshua 6:1–20). Dagon, an idol of the Philistines, fell to the ground in front of the ark, and afterward lay on the threshold of the shrine decapitated, with the palms of its hands cut off (1 Samuel 5). Because of the ark, as many as several thousand inhabitants of Beth Shemesh were struck down (1 Samuel 5 and 6). Uzza died because he touched the ark (2 Samuel 6:7). David brought the ark back into Zion with sacrifices and shouts of triumph (2 Samuel 6:1–19). Solomon brought the ark into the Temple in Jerusalem where he had made a sanctuary for it (1 Kings 6:19 and following; 8:3–9).

TC 285. Since this law provides for the Lord's partnership with us and our partnership with the Lord, it is called *the covenant* and *the testimony*. It is called the covenant because it provides for partnership; it is called the testimony because it confirms the agreements in the covenant. In the Word a "covenant" means a partnership and "testimony" means something confirming and witnessing to its agreements. This is why there were two tablets, one for God and one for us. The partnership comes from the Lord, but it comes when we do the things that have been written on our tablet. The Lord is constantly present and wanting to come in, but we have to use the freedom we have been given by the Lord to open the door. He says, "Behold! I am standing at the door and knocking. If any hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and will dine with them and they with me" (Revelation 3:20).

The stone tablets on which the law was engraved were called *the tablets of the covenant*. Because of them the ark was called *the ark of the covenant* and the law itself was called *the covenant* (see Numbers 10:33; Deuteronomy 4:13, 23; 5:2, 3; 9:9; Joshua 3:11; 1 Kings 8:21; Revelation 11:19; and elsewhere).

Because “covenant” means partnership, it is said of the Lord that he will be “a covenant for the people” (Isaiah 42:6; 49:9). He is also called the angel or messenger of the covenant (Malachi 3:1), and his blood is called the blood of the covenant (Matthew 26:28; Zechariah 9:11; Exodus 24:4–10). This is why the Word is called the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Covenants are made for love, friendship, association, and partnership.

TC 286. There was tremendous holiness and power in this law because it is a synopsis of all the elements of religion. It was engraved on two tablets, one of which contains a synopsis of all things related to God, and the other, a synopsis of all things related to us. For this reason the commandments of this law are called *the ten words* (Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 4:13; 10:4). They are called this because “ten” means all and “words” mean truths. Of course, they contained more than ten words. For an explanation that “ten” means all, and that tithes were established because of that meaning, see *Revelation Unveiled* 101; on the point that this law is a synopsis of all aspects of religion, see below [§289].

*1c. In Their Literal Meaning, the Ten Commandments
Contain General Principles to Be Taught and Lived;
in Their Spiritual and Heavenly Meanings,
They Contain Absolutely Everything*

TC 287. It is generally recognized that the Ten Commandments in the Word are called the law in a supreme sense because they contain all the principles to be taught and lived. They contain not only all the principles related to God but also all the principles related to us. For this reason this law was engraved on two tablets, one of which relates to God and the other to us.

It is also generally recognized that all the principles to be taught and lived come down to loving God and loving our neighbor. The Ten Commandments contain all the teachings about these two kinds of love. The entire Word teaches nothing else, as the Lord’s words make clear:

Jesus said, “You are to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself. The Law and the Prophets hinge on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:37–40)

“The Law and the Prophets” means the entire Word.

Further,

A lawyer tested Jesus by saying, “Master, what should I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus said to him, “What has been written in the law? How do you read it?” He replied, “You are to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” And Jesus said, “Do this and you will live.” (Luke 10:25–28)

Because everything in the Word is about loving God and loving our neighbor, and the first tablet of the Ten Commandments contains a summary of everything about loving God while the second tablet contains a summary of everything about loving our neighbor, it follows that the Ten Commandments contain everything to be taught and lived.

If you visualize the two tablets, it is clear how they are connected. God looks at us from his tablet and we look at God from ours. The two tablets are therefore turned toward each other. On God's side it never fails that he is looking at us and doing what has to be done for our salvation. If we accept and do the things on our tablet, a reciprocal partnership [with God] develops. What happens to us then is indicated by the Lord's words to the lawyer: "Do this and you will live."

TC 288. The Word often mentions "the law." I will now say what that means in a narrow sense, in a broader sense, and in the broadest sense. In a narrow sense, "the law" means the Ten Commandments. In a broader sense, "the law" means the rules that Moses gave to the children of Israel. In the broadest sense, "the law" means the entire Word.

People know that *in a narrow sense "the law" means the Ten Commandments. In a broader sense, "the law" means the rules that Moses gave to the children of Israel.* This becomes clear from the individual rules laid out in Exodus—they are called "the law":

This is the law of the trespass offering. (Leviticus 7:1)

This is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings. (Leviticus 7:11)

This is the law of the grain offering. (Leviticus 6:14 and following)

This is the law of the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sacrifices for sin and guilt, and the consecrations. (Leviticus 7:37)

This is the law of the animals and the birds. (Leviticus 11:46 and following)

This is the law for a woman who has given birth to a son or a daughter. (Leviticus 12:7)

This is the law of leprosy. (Leviticus 13:59; 14:2, 32, 54, 57)

This is the law for someone who has a discharge. (Leviticus 15:32)

This is the law of jealousy. (Numbers 5:29, 30)

This is the law of the Nazirite. (Numbers 6:13, 21)

This is the law of cleansing. (Numbers 19:14)

This is the law of the red heifer. (Numbers 19:2)

[This is] the law for a king. (Deuteronomy 17:15–19)

In fact, the entire five books of Moses are called “the Law” (Deuteronomy 31:9, 11, 12, 26). They are called this in the New Testament as well (Luke 2:22; 24:44; John 1:45; 7:22, 23; 8:5; and elsewhere).

When Paul says, “We are justified by faith apart from the works of the Law” (Romans 3:28), by “the works of the Law” he means the rules just mentioned. This is clear from the words that follow this passage in Romans, as well as from Paul’s words to Peter chiding him for making others follow Jewish religious practices. In the latter context, Paul says three times in one verse, “No one is justified by the works of the Law” (Galatians 2:14, 16).

In the broadest sense, “the law” means the entire Word. This is clear from the following passages: “Jesus said, ‘Is it not written *in your law*, “You are gods”?’” (John 10:34, referring to something written in Psalms 82:6). “The crowd answered, ‘We have heard from *the law* that Christ remains forever’” (John 12:34, referring to something written in Psalms 89:29; 110:4; and Daniel 7:14). “This was to fulfill the Word that was written in *their law*, ‘They hated me for no reason’” (John 15:25, referring to something written in Psalms 35:19). “The Pharisees said, ‘Do any of the rulers believe in him? But the crowd does, who do not know *the law*’” (John 7:48, 49). “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for *the tip of one letter of the law* to fall” (Luke 16:17). In these passages, “the law” means the entire Sacred Scripture. There are a thousand passages like this in [the Psalms of] David.

TC 289. In their spiritual and heavenly meanings, the Ten Commandments contain absolutely all the instructions to be taught and lived—all aspects of faith and goodwill. This is because each and every thing on both a large and a small scale in the Word’s literal meaning conceals two inner meanings. One inner meaning is called spiritual, and the other, heavenly. Divine truth exists in its own light and divine goodness exists in its own warmth within these meanings. Because the Word has these characteristics as a whole and in each of its parts, the Ten Commandments need to be explained in all three meanings, called the earthly meaning, the spiritual meaning, and the heavenly meaning. You can see that this is the nature of the Word from the things I have shown above in the chapter on Sacred Scripture, or the Word, §§193–208.

TC 290. If people were not told what the Word is like, none of them could have any idea that there is an infinity in the Word’s least details, meaning that it contains things beyond number that not even the angels could ever fully draw out. Everything in it is comparable to a seed that has the capability of growing out of the ground to become a huge tree, which produces a tremendous number of seeds that are capable in turn of producing similar trees that together make up a whole grove, whose seeds in turn lead to many groves, and so on to infinity. This is the nature of the Lord’s Word on a detailed level; it is especially true of the Ten Commandments. Because they teach love for God and love for our neighbor, they are a brief synopsis of the entire Word.

In fact, the Lord used a similar analogy to explain that this is the nature of the Word:

The kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed that someone took and sowed in a field. It is the least of all seeds, but when it has grown, it is bigger than all other plants and becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches. (Matthew 13:31, 32; Mark 4:31, 32; Luke 13:18, 19; compare also Ezekiel 17:2–8)

If you think about angelic wisdom, you can see that the Word has this infinity of spiritual seeds, or truths. All angelic wisdom comes from the Word and grows inside the angels to eternity. The wiser they become, the more clearly they see that wisdom has no end, and the more clearly they perceive that they themselves are only in its front hall; they could never in the least touch the Lord's divine wisdom, which they call a bottomless depth. Since the Word comes from this bottomless depth, in that it is from the Lord, clearly all its parts have a kind of infinity.

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Note

An explanation of the literal and spiritual meanings of the Ten Commandments is given at this point in this work (*True Christianity*). That explanation is not included in this document. Explanations of individual Commandments can be found online at www.BeginaNewLife.info, the page titled *In Swedenborg's Own Words*.

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1d. *The Ten Commandments Contain Everything about
How to Love God and How to Love Our Neighbor*

TC 329. Eight of the commandments—the first, second, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth—say nothing about loving God or loving our neighbor. They do not say that we must love God or we must keep God’s name holy. They do not say that we must love our neighbor, or deal honestly and uprightly with our neighbor. They say only, “There is to be no other God before my face; you are not to take God’s name in vain; you are not to kill; you are not to commit adultery; you are not to steal; you are not to testify falsely; and you are not to covet what your neighbor has.” Briefly put, we are not to intend, think, or do evil against God or against our neighbor.

We are not commanded to do things that directly relate to goodwill; instead, we are commanded not to do things that are the opposite of goodwill. This is because the more we abstain from evils because they are sins, the more we want the goodness that relates to goodwill.

In loving God and our neighbor, the first step is not doing evil, and the second step is doing good, as you will see in the chapter on goodwill [§§435–438].

[2] There is a love of intending and doing good, and there is a love of intending and doing evil. These two loves are opposite to each other. The second is a hellish love and the first is a heavenly one. The entirety of hell loves doing evil and the entirety of heaven loves doing good.

We, the human race, have been born into evils of every kind. From birth onward we have tendencies toward things that come from hell. Unless we are born again or regenerated, we cannot come into heaven. Therefore the evil attributes we have from hell have to be removed first before we are able to want good attributes that come from heaven. None of us can be adopted by the Lord before we have been separated from the Devil. How our evil actions are removed and how we are brought to do good things will be shown in two chapters below: the chapter on repentance [§§509–570]; and the chapter on reformation and regeneration [§§571–625].

[3] The Lord teaches in Isaiah that our evil actions have to be moved aside first before the good things we are doing become good before God:

Wash yourselves; purify yourselves. Remove the evil of your actions from before my eyes. Learn to do what is good. Then, if your sins had been like scarlet, they will become as white as snow; if they had been red as crimson, they will be like wool. (Isaiah 1:16, 17, 18)

The following passage in Jeremiah is similar:

Stand in the entrance to Jehovah’s house and proclaim there this word. “Thus spoke Jehovah Sabaoth, the God of Israel: ‘Make your ways and your works good. Do not put your trust in the words of a lie, saying, “The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah is here [that is, the church].” When you steal, kill, commit adultery, and swear falsely, then do you come and stand before me in this house that carries my name? Do you say, “We were carried away,” when you are committing all these

abominations? Has this house become a den of thieves? Behold I, even I, have seen it,' says Jehovah." (Jeremiah 7:2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11)

[4] We are also taught by Isaiah that before we are washed or purified from evil, our prayers to God are not heard:

Jehovah says, "Woe to a sinful nation, to a people heavy with wickedness. They have moved themselves backward. Therefore when you spread out your hands, I hide my eyes from you. Even if you increase your praying, I do not hear it." (Isaiah 1:4, 15)

When someone puts the Ten Commandments into action by abstaining from evil, goodwill is the result. This is clear from the Lord's own words in John:

Jesus said, "The people who love me are those who have my commandments and follow them. Those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and manifest myself to them, and we will make a home with them." (John 14:21, 23)

The "commandments" mentioned here are specifically the Ten Commandments, which prescribe that we should not do, or crave to do, what is evil. If we do not do evil or crave to do evil, we love God and God loves us. This is the benefit we receive after something evil has been removed.

TC 330. I have stated that the more we abstain from what is evil, the more we will and intend what is good, because evil and good are opposites. Evil comes from hell and good comes from heaven. Therefore the more hell—that is, evil—is removed, the closer we get to heaven and the more we focus on good.

The truth of this becomes obvious when we see eight of the Ten Commandments in this way. For example: (1) The less we worship other gods, the more we worship the true God. (2) The less we take the name of God in vain, the more we love the things that come from God. (3) The less we want to kill and to act on the basis of hatred and revenge, the more we want what is good for our neighbor. (4) The less we want to commit adultery, the more we want to live faithfully with our spouse. (5) The less we want to steal, the more we aim to be honest. (6) The less we want to testify falsely, the more we want to think and speak what is true. (7) and (8) The less we covet what our neighbors have, the more we want our neighbors to be doing well with what they have. From this it becomes clear that the Ten Commandments contain everything about how to love God and our neighbor. Therefore Paul says,

Those who love others have fulfilled the law. "You are not to commit adultery, you are not to kill, you are not to steal, you are not to be a false witness, you are not to covet things," and if anything else is commanded, it is included in this saying: are to love your neighbor as yourself." Goodwill does no evil to our neighbor. Therefore the fulfillment of the law is goodwill. (Romans 13:8, 9, 10)

To the above list, two principles need to be added that will benefit the new church: (1) On our own, none of us can abstain from evils because they are sins or do good things that are good before God. The more we abstain from evils because they are sins, the more we do good things from the Lord instead of from ourselves. (2) We need to abstain from evils and fight against them as if we were acting on our own. If we abstain from evils for any other reason than because they are sins, we are not abstaining from them, but merely making them invisible to the world.

TC 331. Evil and good cannot coexist; the more evil is removed, the more good is focused on and felt. This is the case because all who are in the spiritual world have a field of their particular love emanating around them. This field spreads all around and has an effect on others. It creates feelings of harmony or antipathy. These fields separate the good from the evil.

The fact that evil has to be removed before goodness is recognized, perceived, and loved could be compared with many situations that are possible in our world; for example, the following: Suppose someone keeps a leopard and a panther in an apartment and, as the one who feeds them, is able to live safely with them. No one else can visit unless their owner first removes these wild animals.

[2] Guests invited to the table of the king and queen would not forget to wash their faces and hands before attending. No bridegroom goes into the bedroom with his bride after the wedding without first washing himself all over and putting on a wedding garment. Anyone must first purify ore with fire and remove slag before getting pure gold or silver. Everyone separates the tares or weeds from the harvested wheat before taking it into the barn. Everyone removes the beards from harvested barley with threshing tools before bringing it home.

[3] Everyone cooks some of the juice out of raw meat before it becomes edible and is set on the table. Everyone knocks the grubs and caterpillars off the leaves of trees in the garden to prevent them from devouring the leaves and causing a loss of fruit. Everyone removes garbage from the house and the front entrance and cleans up those areas, especially when expecting a visit from a prince or the prince's daughter to whom one is engaged. Does any person love a young woman and propose to marry her if she is riddled with malignancies or covered all over with pustules and varicose veins, no matter how much she puts makeup on her face, wears gorgeous clothing, and makes an effort to be attractive by saying nice things and paying compliments?

[4] The need for us to purify ourselves from evils, and not to wait for the Lord to do it without our participation, is like a servant coming in with his face and clothes covered in soot and dung, approaching his master, and saying, "Lord, wash me." Surely his master would tell him, "You foolish servant! What are you saying? Look, there is the water, the soap, and a towel. Don't you have hands? Don't they work? Wash yourself!"

The Lord God is going to say, "The means of being purified come from me. Your willingness and your power come from me. Therefore use these gifts and endowments of mine as your own and you will be purified." And so on.

The need for the outer self to be cleansed, but to be cleansed through the inner self, is something that the Lord teaches in Matthew chapter 23 from beginning to end.

Four Memorable Occurrences

TC 332. To these points I will add four memorable occurrences.

The first memorable occurrence. On one occasion I heard sounds of shouting that seemed as if they were bubbling up through water from below. One shout was to the left: *"They are so just!"* A second shout was to the right: *"They are so learned!"* A third shout was at the back: *"They are so wise!"* Because I was struck by the thought that there might be just, learned, and wise people in hell as well, I had a desire to see whether there were in fact people like that down there. From heaven I was told, "You will see and hear."

I left home in the spirit and saw an opening in front of me. I went over to it and looked down. There was a ladder! I climbed down it. When I was below, I saw plains that were covered in shrubs, with thorn bushes and stinging-nettles here and there. I asked whether it was hell. The people said that it was the lower earth, which is the next level up from hell. I tracked down the uproars one at a time.

I went toward the first shout: *"They are so just!"* I saw a group of people who in the world had been judges who took bribes and showed favoritism. Then I went toward the second shout: *"They are so learned!"* I saw a group of people who had been debaters in the world. I went toward the third shout: *"They are so wise!"* I saw a group of people who in the world had been providers of arguments. I turned away from this last group and headed back toward the first group, where there were judges who took bribes, showed favoritism, and were proclaimed just.

To one side I saw a kind of amphitheater made of bricks with a black-tiled roof. I was told that this was their courtroom. There were three doorways into it on the north side and three on the west side. There were no doorways on the south side or the east side. This was an indication that their judgments were arbitrary and had nothing to do with justice.

[2] In the middle of the amphitheater there was a fireplace. The keepers of the fire were throwing pitch-pine logs full of tar and sulfur into it. The light that these logs cast onto the plaster walls created colorful images of birds that come out only in the evening or the night. The fireplace and the light cast from it that took the shape of these images were in fact symbolic of these people's judgments—they reflected the ability these people had to color the issues in any case and make the issues look a certain way, depending on the favor the judges would receive.

[3] After half an hour, I saw elders and youths coming in wearing robes and gowns. They took their hats off and sat down on chairs behind tables to hear cases.

I heard and sensed how, by way of looking out for their friends, the judges skillfully and ingeniously bent and inverted their decisions into something that seemed just. They were so effective that they themselves were not able to see their injustice as anything but just, and justice as unjust. Their conviction of this was apparent in their faces and audible in the sound of their voices.

At that point enlightenment from heaven was granted to me, which enabled me to perceive whether individual points were lawful or not. I saw how energetically these judges covered up injustice and overlaid it with an appearance of justice. Out of all laws they would pick one that was supportive and bend the central issue of the case in its direction, using skillful argumentation to set other laws aside.

After they arrived at their judgments, they handed down sentences in favor of their clients, friends, and supporters. To pay back the favor the judges had done them, the clients, friends, and supporters went all the way down a long road shouting, "*They are so just! They are so just!*"

[4] After that I talked to angels of heaven about these judges, recounting some of the things I had seen and heard. The angels said, "Judges like that seem to others as if they have the sharpest intellects, when in fact they do not see what is just and fair at all. If favoritism is not involved, they sit like statues during the trials and say only, 'I accede,' and 'I am willing to go along with this person or that person.' The reason is that all their judgments are prejudiced; prejudice and favoritism dog their cases from beginning to end. They see nothing but what would benefit their friends. They avoid looking directly at anything that would argue against their friends; they only glance at it out of the corner of their eyes. If they have to address it, they wrap it up in argumentation and devour it the way a spider wraps its prey in silken threads.

"Therefore if they are not following the web of their prejudice they see no law. In fact, they have been assessed to find out whether they could see the law; the finding was that they could not. The people who live in your world will find this incredible; but tell them that this is a truth discovered by angels of heaven. Because these judges do not see justice at all, we in heaven view them not as human beings but as monstrous human images: their heads are made of friendship, their chests are made of injustice, their arms and legs are made of supporting arguments, and the soles of their feet are made of justice. If a particular form of justice doesn't favor their friend, they remove it and trample it. [5] You are about to find out what they are truly like inside. Their end has come."

Then suddenly the ground split open. Tables crashed into tables. Along with the whole amphitheater, the people were swallowed up. They were thrown into caves and imprisoned.

Then I was asked, "Do you want to see them there?"

To my amazement I saw that their faces were like polished steel; from their necks to their groins their bodies were like statues clothed in leopard skins, and their legs were like snakes. I saw that the law books that they had set on their tables had turned into playing cards. Now instead of being judges, they were given the task of turning vermilion into makeup and applying it to the faces of promiscuous women to make them beautiful.

After seeing this I wanted to go to the other two groups, the one that consisted entirely of debaters and the other that consisted entirely of providers of arguments, but I was told, "Rest for a little while. You will be given angels from the community directly above those groups to accompany you. The Lord is going to give you light through these angels, and you are going to see amazing things."

TC 333. *The second memorable occurrence.* After a time I heard again the voices from the lower earth that I had heard before: “*They are so learned! They are so learned!*”

I looked around to see who was beside me, and to my surprise there were angels from the heaven that was directly above the people who were shouting, “*They are so learned.*”

I talked to the angels about the shouting. They said, “These are the type of scholars who argue only about *whether something exists or not*. They rarely think, *it does exist*. Therefore they are like the wind that blows and goes on by; they are like bark around a tree with nothing inside it; they are like almond shells without almonds; they are like skins empty of fruit. Their minds lack inner judgment and are connected only to their bodily senses. If their senses cannot discern something, they are unable to come to a conclusion about it. They are exclusively oriented to their senses. We call them *debaters* because they never come to a conclusion. Whatever they hear about, they take up for discussion and dispute whether it exists. They always take a contrary position. The thing they love the most is to attack things that are true and tear those things apart by making them the subject of debate. These are people who believe they are more learned than anyone else in the world.”

[2] Once I had heard that, I asked the angels to take me to them. The angels brought me to a little valley that had steps going down toward the lower earth. We went down the steps and followed the voices that were shouting, “*They are so learned.*”

We came upon several hundred people standing in one spot treading the ground. Amazed by this I asked, “Why are they standing and treading the ground with their feet like this?” I added, “If they keep it up they could dig a hole in the ground with their feet.”

The angels smiled at this and said, “They seem to be standing in one place like this, because they never think that anything exists; they think only about whether it exists, and argue over it. Since their thinking never advances beyond this stage, they look as if they are treading and wearing down one patch of ground without moving forward.”

The angels also said, “When people arrive in this world from the physical one and hear that they are in another world, they gather together in many places to form groups. They ask where heaven and hell are, and also where God is. After they have been taught, they start arguing, disputing, and fighting about whether God exists. This is a result of the great number of materialists in the physical world today. When the topic of religion comes up, materialists start to debate about it with one another and with other groups. The ensuing proposition and debate rarely results in an affirmation of the faith that God exists. Materialists associate more and more with the evil, because only from God can one do something good with a love for what is good.”

[3] Then I was taken down into their gathering. To my surprise they looked to me like people with pleasant faces and good-looking clothes. “They look this way in their own light,” the angels said, “but if light from heaven flows in, their faces and clothes change.”

Then that happened. They looked as if they had dark faces and clothes made out of black sacks. Then the light from heaven was taken away and they looked the way they had before.

Soon I started speaking with some people from the group. I said, "I heard shouting from the crowd around you—'*They are so learned!*' Might I be allowed, therefore, to enter a discussion with you on points that are of the utmost scholarly importance?"

"Say whatever you wish," they replied, "and we will give it adequate attention."

I asked, "What does a religion need to be like in order to save people?"

They said, "We are going to divide this question into a number of subquestions. Before we have come to conclusions on these we will not be able to give a reply to your question. The points for discussion will be the following. (1) Is religion anything? (2) Does salvation exist or not? (3) Is one religion more effective than another? (4) Do heaven and hell exist? (5) Does everlasting life after death exist? And more as well."

I asked for the first question: "Is religion anything?" They began discussing this with a host of arguments. I asked them to refer the question to the audience. They did so. The general response was that this question needed so much investigation that there was no way it could be finished by the end of the evening.

"Could you finish within a year?" I asked.

Someone answered that it could not be finished within a hundred years.

I said, "Meanwhile you have no religion; and because salvation depends on religion, you have no concept of, faith in, or hope of salvation."

The person replied, "Won't someone have to show first whether religion exists, then what it is, and if it is anything? If it is something, it must exist for the wise; if it is not, then it exists only for the general public. As we know, religion is called a restraint, but there is the question of whom it restrains. If it is only a restraint for the general public, then it is not really anything. But if it is also a restraint for the wise, then it is something."

[4] On hearing that I said, "You are all anything but learned, because you are incapable of any other thought except whether something exists, and you deflect this question into subquestions. Can anyone be learned without knowing something for certain? Only when something is established can we move forward with it, just as people walk, putting one foot in front of the other; then we advance gradually into wisdom. Otherwise, rather than touching truths with even the tip of your finger, you move them farther and farther out of sight. Reasoning solely about whether something exists is reasoning about a hat that you never put on, or about a shoe that you never wear. What comes of it except not knowing whether anything exists or is anything other than an idea? What comes of it but not knowing whether salvation exists, or whether there is eternal life after death, or whether one religion is better than another, or whether there is a heaven or a hell? You are incapable of having any thought on these issues as long as you are stuck on the first step, treading the sand there, rather than lifting one foot after another and moving forward. While your minds are standing out in the open like this away from the shelter of a decision, watch out that your minds don't harden inside and become statues of salt."

After I said this I left. They were considerably irritated and threw stones at me. At that point they looked to me like statues that had no human reason inside. I asked the angels about the final outcome of their lives. The angels said, "The lowest of them are sent down deep to a desert and are forced to carry loads.

Because they cannot offer anything on the basis of reason, they blather and speak nonsense. From far away they look like donkeys carrying burdens."

TC 334. *The third memorable occurrence.* Afterward one of the angels said, "Follow me to the place where people are shouting, *'They are so wise!'*" He added, "The people you are going to see are bizarre. You will see faces and bodies that make them look human, though they are not."

I said, "They are animals, then?"

He answered, "They are not true animals; they are human animals. They are completely unable to see whether a truth is true or not, yet they can take anything they want and make it appear to be true. We call them *providers of arguments.*"

We followed the sound of shouting and came to the place. There we found a group of men. The group was surrounded by a crowd of people, some of whom were of noble lineage. When the nobles heard that the men in the group were providing arguments to support everything the nobles had said and were favoring them with such obvious agreement, the nobles turned to one another and said, *"They are so wise!"*

[2] The angel said to me, "We should not go up to them; instead we should call one of them away from the group."

We called one away and left with him. We said various things and he provided arguments to support all the details to the point where what we had said seemed absolutely true. Then we asked him whether he could provide arguments to support points that were opposite to these. He said, "Just as well as I could for the first points."

Then openly and from the heart he said, "What is truth? Does any truth exist in the nature of things beyond what people make out to be true? Say whatever you like and I will make out that it is true."

I said, "Make this true, that faith is the most important thing in the church."

He did this with such skill and ability that scholars who were nearby were amazed and burst into applause. Then I asked him to make it true that goodwill was the most important thing in the church. He did it. Then I asked him to make it true that goodwill has nothing to do with the church. In both cases he fleshed out and adorned his argument with seemingly good material to the point where others present looked at each other and said, "He *is* wise, isn't he!"

I said to him, "Don't you know that goodwill is living a good life and having faith is believing the right things? Isn't it true that people who live a good life have a good faith? Therefore having faith is part of goodwill, and goodwill is part of having faith. Don't you see that this is the truth?"

"I will make it true and then see," he replied. He did so and said, "Now I see it." Yet he soon made its opposite true and said, "I also see that this is true."

We laughed and said, "Aren't they opposites? How can you see two opposite things as both being true?"

Annoyed, he answered, "You're mistaken. They are in fact both true, since nothing is true except what people make out to be true."

[3] Standing near him there was someone who had been a high-ranking ambassador in the world. He was astounded at this and said to the provider of arguments, "I will admit that something similar goes on in the world, but you

are nevertheless insane. If you can, make it true that light is darkness and darkness is light."

The provider of arguments replied, "I'll do it with ease! What is light and darkness other than a state of our eye? Doesn't light change into shadow when our eye comes out of the bright sun and also when we stare intently straight at the sun? We all know that the state of our eye then changes so that light looks like a shadow. And the reverse: when the state of our eye stabilizes, the shadow looks like light. Night birds see the darkness of night as the light of day and the light of day as the darkness of night, and the sun itself looks to them like nothing but a dark and dusky ball. If we had eyes like a night bird, which would we call light and which would we call darkness? What then is light but a state of our eye, and if it is only a state of our eye, isn't light darkness and darkness light? Therefore the first point is true and the second point is true."

[4] Because this argumentation was actually convincing to some people, I said, "I notice that the provider of arguments doesn't know there is such a thing as true light and deceptive light. Both of these types of light appear to be light, but faint, deceptive light is not a true light. Relative to true light it is darkness. Night birds function in faint, deceptive light. Inside their eyes there is an obsession to hunt and devour birds. This light enables their eyes to see at night. Similarly, cats' eyes in basements look like candles because of the faint, deceptive light inside their eyes from their obsession to hunt and devour rats and mice. Clearly then, the light of the sun is true light; the light of obsession is faint, deceptive light."

[5] After that the ambassador asked the provider of arguments to make it true that crows are white, not black. He responded, "This too I will do with ease."

"Take a needle or a razor," he said, "and cut open the feathers of a crow. Then pluck the feathers out and look at the crow's skin. Aren't they both white? What is the surrounding blackness then except a shadow that shouldn't be used as a basis for judging the color of the crow? Blackness is only a shadow, as people skilled in the science of optics will tell you. Or grind a black stone or a black piece of glass to a fine powder and you'll see that the powder is white."

The ambassador replied, "But in fact the crow looks black to our eyes."

The provider of arguments rejoined, "Are you, a human being, really sure you want to think about something on the basis of appearances? On that basis it is indeed acceptable to speak of crows as being black, but you cannot think it. For another example, on the basis of appearance it is fine to say that the sun rises and sets, but because you are human you cannot think that, because the sun stands still while the earth moves around it. It is the same with the crow. Appearance is appearance. Say whatever you want—crows are completely and utterly white. In fact, they become white as they age. I've seen it myself."

The people nearby turned to look at me, so I said, "It is true that the shafts of crows' feathers are whitish, as is their skin. This is true, however, not only of crows but also of all the birds in the universe; and we all distinguish birds on the appearance of their color. If this were not the case, we would say that every bird is white, which would be pointless and absurd."

[6] Then the ambassador asked him, "Can you make it true that you yourself are insane?"

The provider of arguments said, "I could, but I don't want to. Who isn't insane?"

Then people asked the provider of arguments to say from the heart whether he was joking or whether he really believed that there is no truth except what people make out to be true. He replied, "That is what I believe, I swear."

Afterward this provider of arguments that support all points of view was sent to angels who had the ability to assess his nature. After the assessment they said, "He does not possess even a speck of understanding. In his case, everything above his rational faculty is closed off; only what is below it is opened up. Above people's rational faculty there is spiritual light; below it there is earthly light. The nature of earthly light with people is that it can provide arguments to support whatever they want; but if no spiritual light flows into the earthly light, people cannot see whether anything true is true or not. They also cannot see whether anything false is false or not. Spiritual light flowing into earthly light is what allows us to see truth and falsity. Spiritual light comes from the God of heaven, who is the Lord. Therefore this provider of arguments to support all points of view is not a human being or an animal: he is a human animal."

[7] I asked the angels what happens in the long run to people like this: "Can they keep company with the living, given that human life comes from spiritual light and that it is spiritual light that gives us understanding?"

The angels said, "When they are alone, people like this cannot think or say anything. They stand like silent robots, as if they were utterly unconscious. They wake up as soon as their ears catch any sound."

"It is people who are inwardly evil who become like this," the angels added. "Spiritual light cannot flow into them from above; they merely bring something spiritual from the world that gives them the ability to come up with supporting arguments."

[8] After that I heard the voice of one of the angels who had assessed the provider of arguments saying to me, "Draw a universal conclusion from what you have heard."

The conclusion I drew was the following: *Being able to provide arguments to support whatever you want is not intelligence; intelligence is being able to see that what is true is true and what is false is false and to provide arguments to support that.*

Afterward I looked over at the group where the providers of arguments were standing. The crowd around them was shouting, "They are so wise!" To my surprise, a dark cloud encompassed them. There were bats and screech owls flying around in the cloud.

I was told, "The bats and screech owls flying in the cloud are correspondences and manifestations of the thinking of the providers of arguments. In this world those who provide arguments to support falsities until they look like truths are represented in the form of night birds. The eyes of night birds are lit from inside by a faint, deceptive light that allows them to see objects in the dark as if they were in the light. People who provide arguments to support falsities until they look like truths and then believe they are true have a similar but spiritual form of faint, deceptive light. All of them have lower vision; none has higher sight."

335. *The fourth memorable occurrence.* Once when I woke up in the early light before dawn, I saw ghostly shapes of various kinds before my eyes. Later on,

when it was morning, I saw a faint, deceptive light taking various forms [in the sky]. Some of the forms were like sheets of parchment covered in writing that kept folding in on themselves until they looked like shooting stars falling through the air and disappearing. Others were like open books, some of which shone like little moons, while others burned like candles. Some of the books went higher and higher until they passed out of sight, while others fell down to the earth and smashed into powder. On the basis of these visions, I conjectured that there were people standing below these aerial phenomena and that the people were having a dispute over things that were figments of their imagination, but that they nevertheless thought were very important. In the spiritual world, phenomena like this appear in the atmospheres because of the false reasoning of the people standing below them.

Soon the sight of my spirit was opened and I noticed a number of spirits whose heads were ringed with laurel leaves and who were wearing togas with a floral pattern—signs that they were spirits who had been famous scholars in our world. Because I was in the spirit, I went over and mingled with the group. I could hear then that they were having a sharp and ardent dispute about *innate ideas*. At issue was whether people are born with innate ideas the way animals are. The spirits who thought that people are not born with innate ideas were turning away from the spirits who thought that people are. Eventually the two groups were squared off against each other like the ranks of two armies about to battle with swords, except that since they had no swords they were battling with sharply pointed words.

[2] At that point an angelic spirit suddenly stood among them and spoke out in a loud voice, saying, “From not too far away I could hear that you are having a blazing dispute with one another about innate ideas and whether people have them the way animals do; but I say to you, *People have no innate ideas, and animals have no ideas at all*. This means that what you are fighting about is actually nothing or, as the saying goes, goat’s wool or beards in a clean-shaven age.”

When the spirits heard this, they were all outraged and shouted, “Throw him out! What he is saying goes against common sense.”

When they tried to throw the angelic spirit out, however, they saw him surrounded with a heavenly light. Because he was an angelic spirit, they could not break through the light. They backed up and moved a little farther away from him.

After the light drew back, he said to them, “Why did you get angry? Hear me out first. Put together the reasons I am about to give; then you yourselves draw a conclusion based on them. I foresee that those of you who have outstanding judgment will accede, and the storms that have arisen in your minds will grow calm.”

In response, although the spirits still sounded annoyed, they said, “Speak then, and we will hear you out.”

[3] Then the angelic spirit rose to speak and said, “You believe that animals have innate ideas. You have drawn this conclusion from the fact that their actions seem to be based on thought. Yet they have no thought at all; and if they have no thought, they cannot be said to have ideas. A sign that thought processes are active is that people behave in one way or another for one reason or another.

“Ponder, then, whether a spider that is weaving a web with the utmost skill is thinking in its tiny head, ‘I am going to lay out threads in this sequence and then stabilize them with perpendicular threads so that my web doesn’t fall apart when the air shakes it violently. At the outermost ends of threads that run in to the center I will fashion a seat for myself. There I will sense if anything comes in and will hurry to the center. For example, if a fly flies in and gets caught, I will quickly go in and wrap it up and it will become my food.’

“Does a bee think in its tiny head, ‘I am going to fly away. I know where the fields are that have flowers in them. There I will extract wax from some flowers and honey from others. With the wax I will build adjacent cells one after the other, laid out in such a way that my colleagues and I can easily get in and out on passageways. Later we will put lots of honey away in the cells so that there will be enough to prevent our death over the coming winter’? Not to mention other miraculous behaviors that not only emulate human political and economic prudence but even outdo it in some respects [see §12:7 above].

[4] “Again, does a hornet think in its tiny head, ‘My colleagues and I will build a little home out of thin paper. We will curve its inside walls into a labyrinth and fashion the heart of it into a gathering place with a way in and a way out so cleverly designed that no other living thing that is not part of our clan will be able to find the way to the center where we are gathered’?

“Again, is a silkworm during its caterpillar phase thinking in its tiny head, ‘Now is the time for me to get ready to spin silk. My goal is that when I have finished spinning silk I will fly off, and in the air—a place I have never been able to reach before—I will play with my friends and ensure that I will have offspring’? The same with other caterpillars that crawl along walls and then become chrysalises, pupas, nymphs, and finally butterflies. Does a fly ever have an idea about breeding with another fly, that the breeding should take place here and not over there?

[5] “It is the same for creatures with larger bodies as it is for these insects—for example, when birds and winged creatures of all kinds mate, build nests, lay eggs in them, incubate the eggs, hatch young, give them food, raise them until they fly away, and then drive them from the birds’ nests as if they weren’t the birds’ own offspring, not to mention countless other phenomena. It is the same for animals, snakes, and fish.

“From what I have said, you can all see that the spontaneous actions of living creatures do not flow from any thought, and that ideas come into play only where there is thought. The mistaken concept that animals have ideas comes solely from the false belief that animals think just as people do and only verbalization differentiates them.”

[6] After that the angelic spirit looked around. Since he saw that the spirits were still undecided on the issue of whether animals think or not, he continued his speech and said, “I sense that you are still stuck with an imaginary idea about brute animals thinking, since they have actions that are similar to human actions. I will tell you then where animals’ actions come from.

“Every animal, every bird, every fish, reptile, and insect has its own earthly, sensory, and physical love. These loves dwell in the brains inside their heads. The spiritual world flows directly through their brains into their physical senses and uses those senses to determine their actions. This is why their bodily senses are far more refined than human senses. This inflow from the spiritual

world is what is known as instinct. It is called instinct because it comes about without the help of thought. Instinct is also supplemented by the development of habits.

“The love animals have is a love solely for nutrition and propagation. A determination to act comes from the spiritual world through that love. They have no love for knowledge, intelligence, or wisdom, which are the means of developing higher levels of love in human beings.

[7] “As for people having no innate ideas, this is obvious from the fact that people have no innate thinking. Where there is no thinking, there are no ideas, for thinking and ideas go hand in hand. This conclusion can be reached by studying newborn babies. They are unable to do anything except nurse and breathe. They are able to nurse not from anything innate but from continually sucking while they are in their mother’s womb. They are able to breathe because they are alive—breathing is universal to life. Their physical senses are in extreme darkness; by [encountering external] objects they climb out of that obscurity bit by bit. Similarly, their ability to move develops through habitual movement. As they learn to babble words and sound them out, at first without any idea, a dim form of visualization gradually arises. As this becomes clearer, a dim form of imagination develops, and this leads to a dim form of thought. As this state gradually develops, ideas develop, which as I said go hand in hand with thought. Thought grows out of no thought as a result of education. This is how people have ideas. Ideas are formed; they are not innate. From these ideas flow people’s words and actions.”

On the point that people have nothing else innate except a faculty for knowing, understanding, and becoming wise, as well as a tendency to love not only knowledge, understanding, and wisdom but also their neighbor and their God, see above in the memorable occurrence at §48, and also a memorable occurrence below [§692].

After that I looked around and saw Leibniz and Wolff nearby. They were paying close attention to the reasoning put forward by the angelic spirit. Leibniz then acceded and expressed his agreement, but Wolff went away both denying it and affirming it. Wolff’s inner judgment was not as well developed as Leibniz’s.