

A Sermon on True Christian Religion 2
Lessons: Exodus 3:1-10; Luke 1:41-55;
T.C.R. 598, 599

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"The Faith of the New Heaven and the New Church in Universal form, is this: That the Lord from the eternal, who is Jehovah, came into the world in order that He might subjugate the hells, and glorify His Human: and that apart from this no one of mortals could have been saved; and that they are saved who believe in Him."
(T.C.R. 2.)

We are taught that the Word consists of the celestial sense, the spiritual sense, and the natural sense which is the sense of the letter. The celestial sense treats of the Lord and His Glorification, the spiritual sense, of the regeneration of man and of the Lord's Kingdom, the natural sense, of the reformation of the natural man.

In the Third Testament in its literal sense, all these subjects are treated of. This appears like a paradox.

We read: "There are in Heaven and in this world a successive order and a simultaneous order. In successive order one thing follows another from highest to lowest; but in simultaneous order one thing is next another from inmost to outmost. Successive order is like a column with successive parts from top to bottom; but simultaneous order is like a connected structure with successive circumferences from center to surface. It shall now be told how in the ultimate successive order becomes simultaneous order. It is in this way: The highest things of successive order become the inmost things of simultaneous order, and the lowest things of successive order become the outmost ones of simultaneous order. Comparatively speaking it is as if a column of successive parts were to sink down and become a connected body in a plane...Apply this to the Word. The celestial, the spiritual, and the natural proceed from the Lord in successive order, and in the ultimate are in simultaneous order; thus now the celestial and spiritual sense of the Word are simultaneous in its natural sense." (Sacred Scripture 38)

The Faith of the New Heaven and the New Church, concerning the Lord, as first taken up, is the celestial sense in the natural or literal sense of the Word.

It is only as by regeneration man's mind is opened to the spiritual or celestial degree, that one is in the spiritual or celestial sense proper.

When we first read the Faith of the New Heaven and the New Church concerning the Lord we see it as something outside of ourselves, something which took place two thousand years ago, by which we are in danger of thinking that we are saved by what the Lord did when in the world apart from the Lord's particular redemption of us.

We read: "The regeneration of a man, inasmuch as it is a separation and deliverance from evils and falses, is a particular redemption by the Lord, existing from His general redemption." (Coro. 21)

Again "In the temptations of men the Lord works a particular redemption...After His universal redemption, the Lord reduced into order all things in Heaven and hell; and He does in like manner with man after temptations. After redemption, the Lord instaurated a New Church; in like manner He instaurates the things of the Church with man...After redemption the Lord gifted with peace those who believed in Him...So likewise He gives a man to feel peace, after temptation....From these things it is evident that the Lord is the Redemmer into the eternal." (T.C.R. 599)

One cannot come to a celestial idea proper of the Lord's Redemption, until after one has come to a spiritual idea of the Lord's Redemption and made it of His life. A spiritual idea of redemption is an idea of man's regeneration, thus of the Lord saving us by a particular redemption.

The Lord's particular Redemption of a man, is a perfect image and likeness of His universal redemption. Let us consider, the universal of faith concerning the Lord, which treats of His universal redemption, in relation to His particular redemption of man.

At the end of every Church the Lord made a Coming to instauration a New Church, but there was only One Coming or Advent of the Lord in which He was born as a person in the world. We read: "This Second Advent of the Lord is not an advent in person, but in the Word, which is from Him and is Himself." (T.C.R.776)

Further: "There was evening and there was morning. Morning is taken in the Word for every Advent of the Lord." (A.C. 22) This is said of the Seven Days of Creation, but the First Advent of the Lord, His Advent into the world, was different from His other Advents. It is the same in relation to man, the Lord makes many comings to man, namely, "As often as the good of love and of faith is operating with him," ... (A.C. 2405) but His being born as a person in the man's natural mind is unique.

When the Lord as the Word is born in man's natural mind, one sees the Word as the Divine True in Human form, that is, as a man speaking to us, and leading us. We tend to regard the Word as a book sent by the Lord to instruct us concerning Himself, concerning Heaven, and the life we should lead; but until the Lord makes His First Coming, we do not see the Word in Human form as a man speaking and performing miracles of healing. We are told that we should think of the Lord as "Divine Love in Human form," but this only comes with the Second Coming. With the Lord when in man's natural mind or in the world with him, the Word, or the Lord as the Divine True, is not yet fully one with the Father, that is, with the Divine Love. In this state therefore one sees the Word as the Christ, the Son of the living God, but not as yet as one with the Father, that is, as Divine Love.

The Faith of the New Heaven and New Church commences with the words. That the Lord from the eternal, (usually translated from eternity) came into the world in order that He might subjugate the hells and glorify His Human, and that apart from this, no mortal could have been saved, and that they are saved who believe in Him.

"From the eternal," has various significations according to the series. In relation to man "from the eternal" signifies from his first conception. From man's first conception, even before his birth, the Lord in His Divine Human is now present in man's soul.

We read: "That the Lord's Human Essence might be conjoined to His Divine Essence, and become at the same time Jehovah." (A.C. 1402) In relation to man this signifies that the Word becomes the Divine Love in man.

As we said in our last sermon, the Lord's Divine Human is now in the sun of Heaven, but He is also in the Heaven of human internals or in the soul which is above the plane of the Celestial Heaven. The immediate influx of the Divine Human into the mind is from the presence of the Divine Human in the soul of everyone now born into the world. This presence has its origin in the Divine Human in the sun of Heaven. It is the Lord in His Divine Human in the soul of man, who comes into the world of man, that is, into the natural mind and is born there when the Lord makes His First Coming to man, and this, in order that He may subjugate the hells.

Before the Lord made His First Advent, the hells had so risen up that the Lord could not save the human race by His presence in the Heavens. He therefore came into the world and took on a Human of His own, in order that He might unite the Divine and the Human in Himself. In a corresponding way when the Lord's presence, not only His presence in man's soul, but also His presence in the remains with man, which remains are his Heaven, can no longer save man, on account of his external being so far sundered from his internal, the Lord comes into man's world. The world is his natural mind. He there takes on a Human natural of His own in the natural mind of man.

The natural which receives, and is like a mother, is the love or affection of the true of the Word; but adjoined to this love is all the heredity of the human race. Wherefore the Lord as the Divine Human or Word in man's soul takes on in man an infirm human, by which He can come in contact with the things in man's natural mind and subjugate the hells in man, that is, his proprium. Then the Lord as the Word, by means of temptations and combats, removes these hereditary things, and glorifies the Human of the Word in man, and then, as the Word made Divine, He returns into the Divine Human or Word in the soul, and apart from this, nothing in man's human could be saved; and those things are saved which believe in the Word, as being the Lord.

The Lord can only make His Coming into the world of our natural mind, if we feel the need for His Coming, realizing that without His Coming we cannot be saved.

As we said in our last sermon, in time our natural rational mind becomes so hard and stiff that the Lord's presence in our soul can no longer flow in through remains into our natural mind. When the presence of the Lord in man's internal is severed from the Word in our external memory, we would be lost if the Lord did not make His Coming to us and unite the external to the internal in Himself, that is, unite the Human to the Divine of the Word in us. By this union man's external can be again united to his internal, and man is thus saved by the Lord.

Exodus treats of how the spiritual goods and trues which are in the natural that is, which are in Egypt, are saved by the Lord at His Coming.

The break between the external and the internal in man is described as follows: "And there arose a new king over Egypt. That this signifies separated scientifics which are opposed to the trues of the Church...A new king is mentioned, for he who was king in Joseph's time represented the scientific that was in agreement with the trues of the Church." (A.C. 6651) When the presence of the Lord in the internal of the Word with us does not inflow into the scientifics of the Word, as we take them up from without, the literal sense of the Word is turned against the internal. The new king, who knew not Joseph, signifies the ruling principle in the natural mind, which is opposed to the internal of the Word.

We read: "Who knew not Joseph. That this signifies which were completely alienated from the internal....Scientifics alienated from the internal are scientifics opposed to the Church for the good and true which make the Church flow in through the internal, and if these are not received by the natural, the internal is closed, and so the man is alienated from the good and true, and then no other scientifics are acknowledged but those which are false." (A.C. 6652)

When man is in this state the spiritual goods and trues in man's natural mind are made to serve with cruelty. We read: "This signifies an intention to subjugate." "With cruelty signifies unmercifulness." (A.C. 6667)

If a man realizes he is in this state he cries to the Lord for help. As we read: "And Jehovah said, Seeing I have seen the affliction of My People, signifies mercy towards those who are of the spiritual Church after infestations by falsities; and I have heard their cry from before their taskmasters, signifies the aid of mercy against those who desire to compel them to serve; for I have

known their sorrows, signifies foresight in regard as to how much they would be immersed in falsities; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, signifies that He would let Himself down to them to set them free from the power of false scientifics which endeavor to destroy the trues of the Church; and to make them come up out of the land, signifies that they should be elevated; unto a land good and broad, signifies to Heaven, where are the good of charity and the true of faith." (A.C. 6850)

When we realize how the hells infest us, and how difficult it is to be delivered from false scientifics, that is, from a misunderstanding of the Word, and cry to the Lord for aid, then the Lord can come to redeem and save us.

AMEN