

Sermons Concerning The LORD

By WILLIS LINDSAY GLADISH 1945

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FOREWORD

The writer of these sermons well remembers when his parents believed in the creation of heaven and earth in six days and the resurrection of the material body, for they reasoned that God's Word must be true though all men were liars. Later, however, they sat under the Reverend Thomas F. Houts who was then reading New Church literature. Through him they were delighted to get glimpses of the internal sense of the Scriptures, and to learn that the fulness of the Trinity is in our Lord Jesus Christ. These new views began to be talked of in the home when the boy was in his earliest 'teens and were eagerly taken up by him, not altogether from a love of truth but because he loved to argue with his Methodist friends.

Finally after some years Rev. Mr. Houts and his wife joined the New Church, and came back to Olney to tell their old parishioners why. The result was a judgment and separation. Ah, those were the days! Excitement ran high. Nothing else was talked of. All took sides, either for or against the new movement. The Rev. L. P. Mercer came from Chicago and organized a Church of the New Jerusalem, consisting at first of nineteen members, but soon embracing over fifty. The boy was proud to be one of those nineteen.

The fall of 1888 found him in Chicago looking for a job. Here he became a member of Mr. Mercer's congregation. When a little later he found the girl of his choice, a love that had long lain dormant awoke and would not be denied - the love of the ministry. Like Hannah his mother had consecrated him to the ministry, meaning of course the Methodist ministry, and this had been early impressed on him. And now that the deepest love of his heart was awakened this love awoke too.

It was not uncommon in those days for Rev. Mr. Mercer to prepare candidates for the ministry somewhat as a lawyer used to prepare candidates for the law, and he set the Young Man to work studying Theology, the sacred languages, and other branches of learning taught in Theological schools. A year was also spent in the Convention Theological School in Cambridge, Mass.

His first charge was at Indianapolis, looking after not only the local work but also visiting the isolated in Ohio and Indiana. During his pastorate, which lasted ten years, he became convinced that the Academy was right, that the Writings of Swedenborg were equally with the Old and New Testament the Word of God, and accordingly he applied for admission to the General Church. In the fall of 1903 he was received into the Academy Theological School in Bryn Athyn. After a year there he became pastor at Middleport, Ohio, for ten years. And, after several years of teaching in the public schools he filled the pulpit at Sharon Church, Chicago from 1920 till 1938, when ill health compelled his retirement.

It was enough for the first Christian Church to acknowledge Christ the Lord as the Son of God. That is all they could be brought to see. But it is not enough to save the world at the present time. It is not enough for rational thought. It involves a Trinity that no rational mind can fathom. It was left for the Lord in His Second Coming to open the Spiritual Sense of His Word and to explain how "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." (2 Corinthians 5:19), and that "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Colossians 2:9). This the Lord Himself has done through a chosen human instrument in the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

These writings constitute the Second Coming of the Lord, a coming not in person but in the opening of the Spiritual Sense of the Word. By such a coming the Lord made Himself present in new Light and Power, performed a Last Judgment in the Spiritual World, and raised up a New Church on the earth. This is the Church of the New Jerusalem described by John in the twenty-first chapter of Revelation as coming down from God out of heaven.

In this Heavenly Doctrine thus revealed the Lord no longer speaks in parables or dark sayings but tells us plainly of the Father. He shows that God and man are not two but one in the Person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Since His Soul was the Divine and only His body was human it was possible for Him to replace the human by the Divine until finally by the death of the mortal He put on immortality, rising from the tomb with His Body all glorious and Divine.

In this way God became Man and man became God. In Him the eternal God became visible, knowable, and lovable. It is now possible for man to be conjoined with God and thus to enter life eternal. It is in the hope that these sermons will contribute something to this end that they are published. W. L. G.

THE ANNUNCIATION

"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son and shalt call His Name Jesus."
Luke 1:31.

By the birth of our Lord all time was divided. All time before His birth looked forward to His Advent, and all things since look back to that happy event as a new beginning.

Before His coming all worship, all religion, all doctrine,--all things of the Divine Word,--were representative, consisting of prophecy, type and symbol of Him Who was to come and redeem fallen man. But now we look back to the incarnation as the dawning of a day that shall increase in light and glory to eternity.

And it could not be otherwise. The coming of the eternal God Himself, into the finite realm, by birth of a virgin mother, that He might by a human life,--human yet Divine,--even from the cradle to the tomb, might reveal Himself as very Man, might conquer our foe and redeem us from his cruel power, might open to us once more to the road to heavenly happiness and walk before us in that path as our example and Leader. This is almost too much for the natural mind of man to believe or understand.

In fact no one in the first Christian Church ever did quite grasp it. It was seventeen centuries after the event, and then as a revelation from Heaven constituting the second coming of the Lord, that this great truth was clearly seen and rationally taught: namely, that our Saviour is none other than our Creator; our Redeemer is the one and only God, our heavenly Father.

It would seem as though anyone might learn this truth from the letter of the Word itself; from the prophecies, and from what our Lord Himself clearly taught with His own mouth.

"His name shall be called the mighty God, the everlasting Father." "Prepare ye the way of Jehovah, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

And He Himself said, "I and the Father are one." "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Even the doubting Thomas finally cried out, and suffered no rebuke, "My Lord and my God."

Yet, while in their hearts men felt the unity of the Saviour with God, still no one quite dared to say so with full confidence. Or if a man was found like Michael Servetus, who dared to teach the full Deity of the Lord, he was hardly able to demonstrate it rationally. And this both because the necessary scientific facts were unknown concerning the paternal and the maternal part in the conception of offspring; and (2) because the possibility of the glorification of the assumed human was unknown, whereby the human was taken up into the Divine at the same time that the Divine was brought down into the Human.

And yet the incarnation is but the glorious crown and fulfillment of all that was promised in the first creation of the earth and man upon it; without which creation itself would have been a futile thing; as tho the infinite God had begun a work that He was not able to bring to a successful conclusion. The coming of God the Creator into the world to restore all nature to its pristine order, and to remedy the havoc caused by the abuse of man's free will, bringing man back like a lost sheep from the wilderness,

this is demanded by every consideration both of the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom, by the whole nature of God.

Nor is it beyond belief of anyone who believes in a personal God, a God Who is a Divine Man. Who made man in His own image and likeness.

If man is an image and likeness of God his Creator, what is to prevent the infinite God from taking on Himself that humanity and restoring its integrity, and revealing His Divine perfection in it by removing its finite limits and replacing its dead matter with His own living Divine Substance?

If the truth be known that God is life, and the only life; while nature in itself is dead, but capable of living from Him, because put forth from His own self-substance; then it can be seen how thoroly logical it is to recognize that God could take upon Himself that nature which He had created and live in it in Person, even as from the beginning He had as from afar lived in it through the finite wills and understandings of created men.

Had not the Fall occurred, had man remained in his integrity, the incarnation would have been unnecessary. The race as a whole would have passed through its stages of development corresponding to childhood, youth and maturity, growing into ever riper wisdom. Its golden age of infancy would have been succeeded by the increasing knowledge of childhood, youth and manhood. As the maturing mind of the race turned outward more to nature and the world, it would at the same time have broadened and deepened its knowledge of the nature of God and of the life of uses to the neighbor. Thus with increasing knowledge, intelligence and wisdom the Lord would have dwelt ever more fully in the hearts and minds of the race. No separate manifestation of Himself in a human of His own would have been necessary. For all would know Him by an interior preception, from the least unto the greatest.

But when mankind, almost as one man, turned from reliance upon God to trust in the sensual, making the testimony of the senses their criterion of truth, thus closing the upper door by which the love and wisdom of God had freely inflowed, then it became necessary that God should announce His coming into the world.

In no other way could faith in God as a Person, a Divine Man, be maintained.

Therefore the prophecy is given at the very time of the Fall that the Lord would come into the world and conquer the power of evil. The Lord says to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; He shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise His heel." Genesis 3:15.

This was rather a cryptic saying, which would not have been understood by the people of a later age, but it was understood by the men of that time as meaning that the one Lord would come into the world by birth of a woman, and would conquer the power of hell. And it renewed and prolonged the life of the Church.

As that church declined in the days before Noah, it became a fond hope among them that the Lord the Saviour might be born to them, hence they loved to have many children.

Just what Messianic prophecies the Ancient Church had after the flood we do not know, for the ancient Word has been lost. But we do know from the Writings that that Church was built upon the hope and the knowledge and the representation of Him Who was to come. The men of that Church knew many of the arcana of the Lord's temptation combats with the hells, and the glorification of His Human, knew that He was to suffer death, hence later arose the abominable practice of sacrificing their sons as a propitiation to their god. But the indications from the mythologies of many nations, which were derived from the Ancient Word, the indications are that that Word was largely made up of prophetic representations of the redemptive work of the Lord in His combats with the hells.

Take the life of Hercules, from his strangling the serpents which attacked him in his cradle, through his twelve labors, his painful death, and his final exaltation among the gods, although born of mortal woman,--what New Churchman can fail to see in this hero a prophetic representation of the incarnation and glorification of the Lord through His combats with the infernal hosts!

Again, the life of Perseus plainly appears to anyone who knows of correspondences, as having been drawn from prophecies of the redemptive work of the Lord who was to come.

In our Word the second direct prophecy of the Lord's coming is found in Jacob's blessing of Judah, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." Genesis 49:10. Then follows Balaam's prophecy, "I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh; there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall arise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth." (Nu. 24:17).

Moses also gave to the children of Israel the Lord's promise, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I command Him." Deuteronomy 18:18.

As time went on the prophecies grew ever more definite. He was to be the anointed One, the Messiah, the King; He was to be of the tribe of Judah, of David's royal line. His kingdom would know no end. He would be born of a virgin. He would be born in Bethlehem, the city of David.

Those who have studied the times and history of the Jews are agreed that at the time of the Lord's birth there was a universal expectation of His coming. Throughout Jerusalem, Judaea and Galilee, wherever Jews or Israelites met together they were wont to talk of the Messianic prophecies and to express the feeling that the time was at hand. There were many reasons for this both natural and spiritual, more than can be even briefly mentioned at this time; there was the utter corruption of the priesthood, its truckling to the temporal power of Rome, its growing rich through abuses connected with the sacrifices and the temple worship; so that many were in expectation of the promised day of wrath at the Lord's coming to judgment.

The Jews also, with their peculiar views of the clean and the unclean suffered much more under the rule of Rome than did other nations. There had been the cruel and galling reign of Herod the great.

But the chief of all reasons for expecting the coming of the Lord was, as we know from the Heavenly Doctrine, that the time was at hand; that He must come soon or it would be too late,--there would be

nothing salvable among men to which He could appeal. And when the Lord is about to do any work of universal import among men, He, acting through heaven, prepares men for it, stirs up their affections, awakens in their minds an expectation and desire for what He is about to do. He brings the heavens down near to men and draws men up to a closer conjunction with heaven,--else He could not accomplish what He wills to do. For there must be a human reciprocal. The Lord indeed acts, but man must also react, in freedom, as of himself, to the Divine action. The Lord draws near to give, but man must also draw near to receive, must, as it were, reach up his hands to receive that which is offered.

Little is told us of Mary in the Word; nothing to satisfy our natural curiosity concerning her personal history. And we recognize that it is better so. All is recorded that conduces to our salvation. But from what is given in the Word together with what we know from doctrine concerning the human reciprocal in every Divine work we may deduce all that is essential concerning Mary's part in the assumption of the Human through her.

She was not a merely passive instrument, chosen without regard to her own thought or desire. She was chosen and "highly favored" because her own desire had led her to fit herself to be the mother of the Lord. We may be sure that in the state of expectation which existed at that time among devout Jews every virgin cherished the hope that she might be chosen as the mother of the Messiah.

This would be due to two causes, one external and the other internal; due on the one hand to the state of the church on earth; due on the other to the downward pressure of the Spirit of God through the heavens, seeking one who could give appropriate clothing of flesh to the Divine Word which sought such embodiment. It cannot be doubted that every act of Mary's life had conspired to fit her to be the mother of the Lord. She must have been a devout student of the Word. That this was so is shown by her response to the salutation of Elisabeth, known as the Magnificat; for this is made up entirely from phrases of the Old Testament, which must have been in her memory from repeated reading and meditation to be called forth as it were spontaneously, in beautiful order and sequence under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Through the Word of God Mary became the embodiment of the Church on earth; she must have so filled her heart and her mind with the Messianic prophecies that her very body and womb became a receptacle fitted and prepared for the quickening life from above.

That life as a Divine soul could not be received and retained so as to cause conception had it not been covered by successive clothings through the angelic heavens; but this was done. The Lord "bowed the heavens" and came down for our salvation. He took on from the heavens the three internal degrees of the soul which in the birth of finite men are in the seed from the father; while from the virgin mother He took the flesh which served to embody Him in the world.

This quickening in the womb of Mary without a human father, the infinite God Himself being Father to that holy body which was born of her, this indeed transcends the commonly-known laws of conception, yet is not contrary to them. He who can quicken human seed and through it produce a finite man, can He not act directly, when there is the need for it,--to save the human race,--and cause a virgin to conceive and bring forth a Son of God?

Is not this the legitimate crown of Evolution?

As to the Human from Mary our Lord was therefore from conception and birth like another man; as to the degrees of the internal man He was like the threefold angelic heavens; but inmosty He was one with the everlasting God. Every man comes successively into the ruling love of his father, which is his soul; the Lord's ruling love and proprium even from birth was the love of men, of conjoining them with Himself and blessing them eternally. From this love, which was His soul and His "Father," the Lord could not but put off successively all that He found in His maternal Human not in harmony with the "Father" within Him. As he put off the affections and thoughts from His maternal heredity, He put on those from the indwelling Father. Thus He was continually changing the interior forms and substances of His body and brain bringing them into harmony with angelic and Divine forms and substances; and finally, at the last displacing all finite forms and substances and replacing them with those wholly Divine. So He rose from the tomb in His own glorious Divine Human Body, wholly Divine both in form and substance; one with the infinite God, yet visible to finite men because accommodated to the reception of men; visible to the sight of man's spirit even while he lives in the world, provided that his spirit can be enlightened to believe in a God Who became Man. Amen.

Lessons: Isaiah 7, Luke 1:26-56, @CL 61-67.

THE ADVENT

"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy Thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke 1:35.

How wonderful it is that the living God, who dwelleth in light inaccessible, should have willed to come down and dwell in the finite universe which He had created, that He might show Himself in Person to men and angels, might teach them with His own lips, might show by incontestable proofs His love for them, might redeem them from the hand of the enemy, and by the glorification of His assumed Human take to Himself the power to hold them forever with His own right hand, in triumph over the power of evil.

It is true that this follows from the nature of the Divine Love, as that nature is revealed to us in the Word of His Second Coming: that in His love and pity for our misery He could not but come to rescue us, to heal us, to save us; yet, nevertheless, it is most wonderful that it should be so: almost too wonderful to be believed. Nor is it at all strange that the unregenerate man, who depends upon his own intelligence, cannot believe it.

To the man whose heart the Lord hath touched, who is enabled to believe in a God whose love is infinite, it is easily the crowning work of creation, causing him to humble himself profoundly in the presence of such Divine Love, such Divine Wisdom, such a Heavenly Father.

To the rational man of the Church who knows that God sees the end from the beginning, that all the future is as the present to Him, it cannot but appear that the Lord from the beginning willed to thus come into the work of His hands, to impart His life in fullness to it: and yet the marvel of it but grows with man's thought about it.

As man's wisdom increases so does his awe increase that the Most High should become the most humble, the Lord of all should become the servant of all; and that by doing this He drew all men unto Himself. The instructed man of the Church cannot but abase himself profoundly in the presence of such love and such wisdom, saying, It is high, I cannot attain unto it. Yet at the same time that he falls at the Lord's feet as if dead, he prays that the Lord will lift him up again that he may live and follow on to know the Lord.

To man as a rational, thinking being there are two doors, an upper and a lower, a spiritual and a natural door. Through the upper door life, consisting of love and wisdom, inflows from God, making man a living soul. Through the lower door inflow the objects of nature. The two streams meet in the rational mind. The rational is formed as the man by virtue of his wisdom imparted from above recognizes the uses of the objects coming in through the senses. So long as the upper door was open in man and unobstructed, all was well with him. He was guided by an unerring perception. The Lord alone taught him and there was no strange god with him. All nature was subject to him. His love was good: and his understanding was true. He lived in a golden age.

But when man turned away from God, and closed the upper door, when he refused to harken to the

voice of God, trusting only in the testimony of the senses for wisdom, then, do you not see, that unless the Lord God could come into nature and present Himself by an outward way to man's consciousness, fallen man would have no God' For to a sensual man what is above nature is, at best, but the stuff that ghosts are made of,—dim, airy, unorganized, unsubstantial fading away as the light grows brighter, and becoming nothing.

Therefore immediately after the fall the promise was made that the Lord would come into the world. And that promise, together with the manifestation of the Lord in the person of an angel filled with His look, served for ages to keep alive faith in the Lord who was to come. This is the reason that all the churches until the Advent are called "Representative Churches": they represented the Lord who was to come.

But as ages passed mankind sank ever lower in sensuality, until with the Israelites and Jews there was no knowledge that their law and ritual had any inner significance, any representative meaning. They indeed expected a Messiah, but had no idea of a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men, but a purely worldly kingdom of power and wealth. It was only by a continual miracle that Heaven could still be bound to the earth: and if these slender bonds should be broken, man on this earth would perish in everlasting death.

But in that desire and expectation of a Messiah who should come from above and save them from their enemies, lay the possibility of salvation of Israel and of the world. Not only on the earth was the Lord's coming awaited. The heavens also were praying for His Advent, for they too were oppressed by the power of the infernals. And now that the time was at hand the aroused heavens inflowed into the church on earth stirring men to expect His coming. Thus heaven and earth were united, strongly moved by the spirit of God looking to the one end of the incarnation.

It was in response to this stir and pressure from the Lord through Heaven that Mary was moved to prepare and offer herself as a medium for the Lord's birth. For unless some suitable virgin could be found, desiring to serve as the handmaid of the Lord, the Lord could not be born. The Lord ever respects human freedom. All inspiration and aspiration come from Him: yet must He find a reciprocal willingness in man or He can do nothing for man's salvation. The whole nation was profoundly stirred by the approaching incarnation, each one according to his nature: but we can think of Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth, of Mary and her betrothed husband Joseph, of Anna and Simeon, who were to greet Him in the temple, we can think of them as constituting a remnant in Israel whom the Lord could use to do His will because they were willing "walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

And so, when all things were prepared, both in heaven and on earth, the angel Gabriel was sent unto Mary to announce her acceptance as the mother of the Lord: and as she accepted she conceived in her womb, in response to the overshadowing power of the Highest, that Holy Thing that was called the Son of God.

Let no man think that this is beyond the power of God, to cause a virgin to conceive without a man: or that it is contrary to natural law, or involves a breaking of law. Law is unbreakable: because all law is but the expression of the changeless wisdom of God: but there are higher laws that can supersede the lower one's when necessary: such are the laws by which miracles are performed. The fact that the

Lord usually operates in nature in a certain way does not make it sure that He can not operate in other ways when necessary for some great use. "For with God all things are possible." (Lk 1:37). All things that are according to order: but never anything of disorder.

The very fact that God created man that He might bless him with eternal life; that He might impart to him His own love and wisdom and joy to feel as his own; and that, as already said, God knew from the beginning that man would abuse his freedom to depart from wisdom; these things involved, by every reason, that the infinite almighty God both knew and could apply the remedy to man's apostasy.

To be sure the remedy,--the taking on of our flesh by virgin birth,-- involved almost infinite operations, and ages of time. By new revelation the Lord raised up church after church, which would flourish for a while and then die: but as the church perished in one nation He would transfer it to another.

The wisdom of the Golden Age gave way to the bright intelligence of the Silver Age: and this was succeeded in time by the Copper Age, and this in turn by the hard truth of the Iron Age before all things were prepared for the Lord's Advent.

Let us pause here a few minutes to speak of the inadequacy of man's natural reason to understand the steps of man's redemption. I am not now speaking of enlightened reason, formed in the light of the Word of God. To that reason the ways of God can be fully justified. But an enlightened man must recognize that there are two sources of intelligence: one from above, the other from below: one from Revelation the other from science. The spiritual man accepts every proven fact of science but insists that it be interpreted by the eternal light of the world of causes, the Spiritual World, as revealed in the Word of God. He alone Who created the world and men upon it, says the enlightened man, can tell for what purpose it was created, and how it was redeemed. The merely natural man, on the other hand, derives all his light from science. He would rule out all revelation, would not recognize any spiritual world. Is it not evident that in all matters involving man's relation to an immortal God, his Heavenly Father, the merely natural man is blind as a mole or a bat? Must not the bat, which sleeps by day, and the mole, which burrows in the ground, deny that there is a sun in the heavens? They have never seen the sun nor have any of their kin. So too the man who judges the teachings of the Word solely by the light of nature cannot expect to see the Sun of Heaven. He has turned his back upon that Sun.

The light of nature is inadequate to reveal the wisdom or the justice of Him Who sees the end from the beginning, in whose sight a thousand years are but as a day when it is past, or as a watch in the night.

The Lord has always revealed His love and His wisdom to His children in words adequate to their understanding: and now especially in His Second Coming He has revealed the life after death, the nature of heaven and of hell, lifting the mind of the willing man into the world of causes that he may see as angels see, and understand the purposes of God in Creation.

"Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord": but to reason with Him we must accept as true what He tells us: must rise into His light, the light of the eternal. In His light shall we see light.

The Lord began to come into the world with creation itself. All the life of the mineral kingdom was from Him, all the life of the vegetable and the animal kingdoms flowed in from Him: for nature in herself is dead: that it seems to live is because God the Creator lives in it as the soul of it and causes it

to live from Him. But when He created man, in His own image and likeness, able to understand the wisdom of God and to reciprocate His love, and like God, to love others, then God came as it were anew into His Creation.

Man by virtue of his freedom is able to think, to reason, yes, to choose, as God Himself chooses: thus in unfallen man God lived as man and man lived almost as God. And according to order as men increased and wisdom increased the Lord came ever more fully into His Creation. With every succeeding generation, as the infinite things in God were realized in human life God came ever more fully into the work of His hands. This was especially the case in a heaven of angels where God lived in the angels and they in Him.

Then came the fall: and, as always, the Lord makes the wrath of man to praise Him, so He used this sin of man and the means He took to redeem man, as the occasion for accomplishing more fully the work of His original design.

For God the Creator, now shut out of the hearts and minds of rebellious man, took on a Human of His own, of which He Himself was the Father, the soul, and the only life: thus He could come fully, infinitely and Divinely into Nature, unhindered by man's inadequate reception, making His law supreme in heaven, earth and hell: and at the same time, and of equal importance, He made Himself the visible God to natural men.

When every spiritual love was dead in man - love of God, love of the neighbor, love of uses - when only the loves proper to the body remained - desire for gain, acquisitiveness, with its prudence, leading the man of the church to serve God for the sake of self - then the Lord without violating any law, not even the law of human freedom, but in obedience to all law both Divine and human, came into the world by virgin birth.

This human, born of Mary, was Holy from conception. For the soul is from the father, the body from the mother, in all conception and birth: and since the soul from within forms and organizes the body in the whole and in all its parts, this body formed from the most High God, operating through heaven, was, from conception, unique, and Holy, the Son of God, as to every least fiber of it.

Yet because the body was taken from a woman, having hereditary evil, it could not but carry the taint of every evil that human flesh is heir to. But it was this that enabled the Lord to become our Redeemer. For through the imperfections of the human from Mary the hells were enabled to assault the Lord with temptations, as they assault other men: and He, differently from other men, reacting from the Divine of the Father within, obtained the victory in every temptation, brought forth the truth of God with a power they could not endure. Thus by temptation combats which He endured throughout His whole life, even to the last which was that of the cross, He fully conquered the infernals, rescued His faithful remnant from their power, shut up the evil crew in their hells, brought life and immortality to light, and set men's feet once more in paths of peace.

By these combats and victories the Lord not only became man's Redeemer and Savior from the power of the enemy: but at the same time and to the same degree He glorified His Human, putting off the human from Mary and putting on a Divine Human from the Father: thus He became God as to His very Human, God visible to man in the world--: not indeed visible to the physical eye of the body, for God is

a Spirit, and only spirit can see Spirit, but visible to all who are in the spirit, to all whose spiritual senses the Lord opens, especially if they know the doctrine of the Divine Human.

Thus He who was first also became the Last: as from the beginning He had been the Alpha, so also He became the Omega, the Beginning and the End. Through His Divine Human He took to Himself the full power of omnipotence in His Creation, so that not only in all the spiritual realm, but also in nature all things absolutely obey His will. Yet always with reference to man's final salvation. The Lord's omnipotence is not used to save man from temptations when temptations can be overruled for man's good. Did not the Lord Himself submit to more grievous temptations than ever mortal man can know?

But by His victory over the hells, and by the glorification of His Human He put Himself in power to rule hell forever and make it do His will in the establishment of a heaven of angels from the human race.

The Lord is the God of the Word: He came into the world as the Word made flesh: He came through the Heavens and the Church on earth as the Word came, according to the same pattern, so that at His birth He was holy with the holiness of the Word: then by fulfilling the Word infinitely and Divinely He brought the full power of God down to the sense of the letter and to man's perception in the world. And by retaining the Divine Human He retains forever that power as the visible God.

Even the natural man, even the sensual man, can see Him in His word as God quelling all the power of the hells, and making the wrath of man to praise Him.

The knowledge of these truths of the opened Word carries a responsibility with it. "If ye know these things" said our Lord, "happy are ye if ye do them."

We who have learned from the Word of His Second Coming are made witnesses to all the world of these precious truths that the world so much needs. Let us imbue our minds with them till all our thinking is done in their light. Surely it is not too much to expect of ourselves that we read every day in His opened Word, that, if necessary, we compel ourselves to read every day: that we may not only gain the knowledge of these truths which are life, but that we may gain the zeal and affection which flows in through Heaven to those who read.

Even tho we do not witness with our voice yet the true and greatest witness of all is our regeneration. He who permits the Lord to regenerate him serves greatly in His spiritual kingdom. Here is a witness that is open to all, even the most humble. And it carries its reward with it. "Happy are ye if ye do them." For by knowing and doing these things we enter the joy of our Lord, the joy of heaven, the eternal joy which no one can take from us. Amen.

Lessons: Isaiah 51, Luke 1:1-38, @AC 9350-9361.

SALVATION

"And She Shall Bring Forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." Matthew 1:21.

It is evident that the Church has never realized the purpose of the Lord's Advent. He came to save His people from their sins; but this is the last thing that people wanted to be saved from. The Jews wanted to be saved from the Romans; Christians wanted to be saved from the just punishments of hell; but neither Jews nor Christians wanted to be saved from their sins.

John the Baptist proclaimed the same thing in the beginning of the Lord's public ministry; "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." The Jews would not have such a Savior; they knew not what it meant. An invisible kingdom of God within the heart had no meaning for them.

The Christian Church made some advance over the Jewish. Christians did get some conception of an internal kingdom within the heart and mind; but they did not know what the Lord came to save them from. It is true that some simple souls saw this purpose as in a dream by night; but the organized body of the Church saw it not at all,—if so she would not have taught the vicarious suffering and death of the Lord and the transfer of His merit to the sinner.

It remains for the Church of the New Jerusalem, the true Christian Church now first beginning, to realize this true purpose of the Lord's Advent, to accept it, to rejoice in it, and to reap its benefits.

It may sound strange to hear it proclaimed that for nineteen hundred years the Church has rejoiced in the Lord's coming without knowing the purpose of His coming, especially when it was so clearly taught from the beginning; yet such is the case. And the reason is because the Church has been in the natural, and in the light of this world; not in spiritual light; and the nature of sin, what it is, how it closes the heart to God, does not appear except in spiritual light.

In His second coming the Lord opens the spiritual world, opens the spiritual sense of His Word, reveals His temptation combats by which He conquered the hells and glorified His Human, lifts our love and adoration from the Savior on the cross to the Savior God in the Sun of Heaven. In that light the true nature of sin is revealed, and man's need to be saved not from its just punishment, but from sin itself.

Sin Defined

What, then is sin? Primarily it is an evil love in the heart, the love of self, the love of the world; from these two loves spring all sins. That this is so will appear from the purpose in creation, which is a heaven of angels from the human race. The Divine Love cannot rest in itself but must go forth into creatures created by itself, which It can bless with Its own Life, Its own freedom, Its own wisdom. These children of the Divine Love are not self-existent, are not gods, but are vessels to live from God and in God; He their only Life, their only Love, their only Wisdom; yet these gifts of God to be felt as if their own. So long as the creature looks up to its Creator, loving Him with the whole heart, soul, mind and strength, all is well; sin is unknown. But when man abuses the freedom of the Divine Love to claim the gifts as his own but deny the Giver, then sin arises. For the human consists in loving others. The first effect of the Divine Life in man is to turn man's face upward to the Lord God, the Source of Life,

that he may receive what the Lord would give.

Its second effect is to move man to the performance of uses to the neighbor, that he may fulfill the Divine purpose in creation. Man feels the joy of the Lord as joy in himself when he loves and serves his fellows as the Lord loves and serves them.

But when man, in the abuse of his freedom, turns his face from the Lord, attributes to himself that which inflows above his consciousness, thinks of himself as a god able to decide for himself what is good and evil, then and there sin is introduced. He puts himself in the place of God, loving himself supremely, regarding himself as the source of wisdom. From self he loves others only as they serve him, labor to advance his interests; when they do not do this he hates them, endeavors to subdue them or to destroy them, taking their goods for his own. Thus the order introduced by the Lord into creation is destroyed. Hell comes into existence, not by Divine creation but by the abuse of man's freedom. Fallen man turns his face thither, draws his life thence, infernal spirits rule over him, inspiring their lusts, making him feel them as his own.

The Lord came as the mighty Redeemer, to redeem man from the dominion of the hells, to make it possible for man to be saved; but He saves man from his sins and thus from infernal power only as man sees the nature of sin and desires to be saved from it; desires to take a new attitude toward the Lord the Savior; turns away from hell as the source of infernal life, and to the Lord, seeking to live from Him.

So long as man thinks of life as his own, of his love as his own, of his intelligence and wisdom as his own, therefore of his good deeds as his own, he lives in sin. The Lord God became our Savior that He might save us from these fallacies and errors and might win us back to live from Him and in Him and He in us.

This purpose can now first be realized in any fulness upon the earth in the Church of the New Jerusalem and in the light given from heaven. Let us not however despise the contributions of the past. The present rests upon the past as on its foundation.

Without the Jewish Church there could have been no Christian Church; and without the first Christian, the second Christian or the New Jerusalem could not have been raised up.

We are accustomed to rather despise the Jewish Church for its lack of spirituality. Let us rather realize that without the Jewish character being as it was the Lord's Advent in the flesh would have been impossible. He could not have assumed flesh among a people who received the Divine spiritually. but only where he was received sensually and corporeally. Thus their great service to all humanity, and to all worlds, arose from the fact that they perceived and received the Divine only in ultimates.

The Lord raises up forms of uses only in ultimates. The first of creation was the sun of the spiritual world; from that sun proceeded spiritual atmospheres, the sun of the natural world, and from that sun natural atmospheres, and finally matters at rest as the terminations of atmospheres in the dust of the earth. Now, first, in ultimates, could the Lord create forms to receive His life. Thus out of the mineral kingdom He raised up the vegetable kingdom; out of that the animal, and finally man, capable of believing in God and loving Him and of being conjoined to God by faith and love; thus through man

God conjoined His great work to himself. But these created forms of life could be raised up only in ultimates, not in the plastic substances of the spiritual world.

So when the Lord willed to take on Flesh it could be done according to His Divine laws of order only among a people who received the Divine in a most ultimate way. Among such a people He could find ultimate reception and could, acting through the Heavens, cause conception in the womb of a virgin.

It is among the wonders of creation that the Lord uses the lowest and humblest instruments for the highest uses. He creates man of the dust of the ground. He uses the humblest organs in the body for the purposes of procreation, thus providing for the supreme end of creation, a heaven of angels, through organs which would otherwise be despised as vile.

By the same means he bestows Conjugal Love, the highest human love; for what is highest and inmost must be also lowest and outmost, embracing the whole man from first to ultimates. And even as all forms of uses are to be valued from their highest use so should the Jews be valued from this use, that among them the Lord the Savior could be conceived and born, thus could take our humanity upon Him, and in it meet and conquer our foes, at the same time making Himself the visible God.

It is also to be remembered that although the first Christian Church did not become an instrument of regeneration, and thus of purification from sin, it did serve its purpose in the Divine plan, providing for the reformation of the natural man, and the development of intellectual concepts and doctrinal ideals. Reformation must always precede regeneration. The external man must be brought into order according to the laws of truth before the loves of the internal man can be changed.

So long as true love is lacking,—love to the Lord and toward the neighbor,—the Lord uses the evil loves of the natural man to bring the external into heavenly order.

The high ideals of youth often partake largely of personal ambition and selflove, yet they serve as vessels which later can be filled with a truer, more unselfish love. Enlisting in His service the loves and ambitions of the natural man, the Lord in the first Christian Church extended the dominion of the Church throughout the wide bounds of Christendom, thus bringing His Word to the simple in heart of all nations, softening their evils, providing Christian heavens from their infants and children. Thus He has provided both a Christian ultimate in the world, and a Christian Heaven in the spiritual world as a source of inspiration and strength for a true and internal Church among men. Other men labored and we may enter into their labors.

Now at last the time has arrived when the Church can realize the purpose of the Lord's Advent and can enter into the joy of it.

In the first Christian Church there was little thought of joy and happiness in the Christian life. It was regarded rather as an austere life, a life of self-denial. The Catholic Church at the present day teaches sacrifice as the supreme Christian virtue, the flesh is to be mortified, man's natural desires and delights are to be given up, the Lord is pleased by our sacrifices rather than by our joys and happinesses. He is to be propitiated, man must do penance. The road that leads to heaven is regarded as a difficult road. The celibate life or the monastic life is preferable to the married state and to the happy home life. Religious devotees dress in mourning, fast, keep vigils through the night, make many

prayers. He who would cultivate the spiritual must lacerate the physical.

In the New Church all this is to be changed. Mourning and sadness are to be put off. The Lord finds no pleasure in our afflictions and our griefs. He came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. He Himself has inspired all our legitimate appetites, and has also provided the means of their satisfaction. He who created us joys in our joys, and finds delight in our delights. He uses our physical and bodily delights as the basis on which to build up those delights which are of the spirit. The only requirement is that the spirit shall rule over the body, that order shall prevail, that the rights of the neighbor shall not be infringed; then all bodily delights are made to minister to those which are enduring and eternal.

It is true that evils are to be shunned as sins against God, that the commandments must be obeyed, that both hereditary and acquired tendencies to evil must be curbed; sharply and resolutely restrained. But this is no cause for mourning, but rather for rejoicing; for it is the way and the only way of happiness.

The man of the New Church is not to take his stand with the proprium and the flesh, and to mourn that his life and its joys must be sacrificed.

He is rather to take his stand with his spiritual nature, as the truly human nature. The earthly and natural he has in common with the beasts which perish. But he has also from the Lord the truly human nature, the angelic, which makes him more than all animal. Is not this higher nature as much our own as is the lower?—especially since our lower nature has been so perverted, and has become the habitation of every unclean bird and beast.

To live in the natural and from the natural is to become the prey of infernal spirits, who enslave us and rule over us, and through our evil lusts rob us of all delights, making our life bitter and unhappy; for the very delights of the merely natural man turn to dust and wormwood while they are in his mouth. Not so the pure delights of the righteous; these, although externally like those of the wicked, are made to minister at the same time to the spiritual, to serve as recreation from which, refreshed, he may return with new joy to the uses of his calling.

The difference is one of mental attitude. The man of the First Christian Church takes his stand with the world and the proprium. He looks at the Lord as afar off, on high, as asking him to give up his own life with all that is dear to him for the sake of heaven.

It is the happy privilege of the New Churchman, on the other hand, to take his stand in heaven, with the Lord and the angels - for heaven has now been opened to man - and from thence to look down upon the evils and infirmities of the flesh, as something not rightly his own but imposed upon him by heredity and by evil spirits; as hindrances to his happiness to be fought against and put off not with reluctance but with rejoicing.

To the Jew and to the man of the first Christian Church the Lord was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The crucifix is the Christian symbol. They worship the Lord as He hung on the cross. The New Churchman worships Him in his glory as He sits enthroned in the Sun of Heaven, exalted to full personal union with the Father.

The Lord did sorrow over the sins of the world; in all our affliction He was afflicted. But the Old

Church has exalted that phase of His earthly life out of all rightful proportion to the Divine side, with its supernal joys and felicities. To His disciples He said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." If man in heaven enters into joys and felicities inexpressible in earthly language, what pure and exalted happiness must not have attended the Lord's union with the Father as He put off the human from the mother and put on the Divine Human from the Father. Does not the joy of victory in spiritual temptation wipe away all the grief of the struggle so that it is no more remembered, neither does it come to mind?

It is a common saying that it is more blessed to give than to receive. To receive is the love of the natural man, but to give is the nature of the spiritual man. If this law of the spiritual man can be known and appreciated even in the world, why may not other loves of the spirit of man be understood and accepted here? The natural man loves to rule; the spiritual loves rather to serve. Why should not the man of the Church take his stand rather with his spiritual nature than his natural and overcome the love of ruling by the still greater delight in serving? Into this latter love all the love of the angels pours itself, lending its aid to the man who has definitely taken his stand on the side of heaven and who intends to live as a child of God.

The Lord came into the world to save His people from their sins. We who are of His New Church should let Him really so save us. We do not ask to be saved from the just punishment of our sins, but from the love of sin, and therefore from sin itself.

We can no longer say with Thomas, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; neither do we know the way." He has taught us whither He goes, and the way. And we know that His way is our way; that His life is our life.

The way that leads to heaven is not so difficult as has been supposed. It is only necessary to resist the love of self and of the world and prevent their predominance.

There are two inmost things of heaven, which constitute the esse of all its good and all its joys; these two are innocence and peace. Innocence is the desire to take the same attitude toward the Lord that a little child takes toward its parents and teachers; to trust Him implicitly, to leave all things in His hands, to have no will of our own, but His will as revealed in His written Word; to act indeed as of ourselves, using all prudence, yet to recognize that all prudence, intelligence and wisdom are His gifts to us, imparted freely as we approach Him in His Word.

So far as we take such an attitude toward the Lord our Heavenly Father we come into the peace of heaven, a peace which is the inmost of all joys, delights and felicities. From that peace there comes an inmost tranquillity and joy like that of the early morning in springtime after the darkness of night and the cold of winter are passed, when all nature seems to breathe a vernal joy. Or, again it is like the sport and playfulness of lambs, or of happy conjugal partners: for such peace and happiness flow from the conjunction of the Lord with man.

Such, with infinite variety is the life of heaven and of all in the heavens. And such is the inner life of the man of the church, so that even in the midst of the stress and storm of temptations he is sustained by an inner tranquillity of spirit, a peace that passeth understanding, which the world cannot give, neither take away.

Let us therefore in our rejoicing that the Lord has come not forget the purpose of His coming, which is to save His people from their sins, that he may bestow upon us a far more abundant and abiding happiness than is ever possible to those who love supremely the pleasures of this world. Amen.

Lessons: Jer. 4, Matthew 3, Doct. L. 17.

CHRISTMAS

"And when they were come into the house, they saw the Young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." Matthew 2:11.

The three Wise Men, or Kings as they are also called, were led by a star. They were not led directly to Bethlehem but first to Jerusalem, where they inquired of the cruel Herod and the Jewish Sanhedrin. The star which led them was not a star of the natural world but a society of angels all aglow with the light of His immediate coming. The Wise Men were able to see the light of that star because of the prophecies which they had of the Lord's coming. Among those prophecies, was doubtless that of Balaam of Syria, who was not permitted to curse Israel but blessed them instead, saying,

"I shall see Him but not now: I shall behold Him but not nigh: "There shall come a star out of Jacob and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel." (Nu 24:17).

We are not told in the Word or the Writings whether they came from one place or several, or if from several places how they were guided that they might meet together. But we may know that it was a necessity of Divine order that they should come as representing the Gentiles, who were also His children and equally objects of His love. It may indeed be said that He came especially to save the Gentiles, for the Jews were in a sense like the Elder Brother of whom the father said, "Thou art ever with me and all that I have is thine," while the heathen were like the Prodigal Son or like the lost sheep which the Shepherd came to find and restore to His Father's house.

The wiser among the Gentiles were waiting His coming, and it was fitting that some from among them should come to greet Him at His birth, to worship Him, to give unto Him gifts representing the reception and worship of those vast numbers of another "fold" who could know and follow Him in His Divine Human.

The shepherds "abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" represented those unfallen men of a celestial genius, who, because of the integrity of their wills, could be conjoined to the invisible God. But the Wise Men from the East represented the Spiritual Church, fallen men, with corrupt wills, who yet could be instructed through the senses, by truth in the understanding, and so could be moved to acknowledge the true God made visible in His own Divine Human, to believe in Him and be conjoined to Him.

We are not told that the shepherds offered any gifts to the infant Savior. It is only said of them that they "made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child" and they "returned, glorifying and praising God, for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it had been told unto them."

But the three wise men when they came not only prostrated themselves in worship before the newborn King, but also offered out of their treasures costly gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Guided by the Lord's Spirit these men represented the approach of all the Spiritual who can be saved, their acknowledgment, their worship, their "reciprocal", reaction to the Lord's truth and love as

manifested to them in Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us therefore notice with the greatest care even the individual words describing their approach to the Lord.

"And when they mere come into the house (we read) they saw the Young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented to Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

There is a spiritual sense in the Word of both the Old and New Testaments, which the Lord has now opened up in His Second Coming. This sense constitutes the wisdom of the angels, the Word in heaven. Its treasures are now revealed in the Writings by the Lord Himself through a chosen human instrument, His Servant Emanuel Swedenborg. Every word of the letter is vitally important to this sense, conveying many truths by correspondence. Three things are necessary to gain from the letter the spiritual sense, namely, true doctrine, knowledge of correspondences, and enlightenment. In the Writings, when acknowledged as the Word of God, we have the two first; then let us pray the Lord for enlightenment, knowing that He will give us all we desire for the uses of life.

It is said, "when they were come into the house." A "house" in the Word frequently means the man himself, especially as to his love or his will.

We read in the Arcana, "The ancients compared the mind of man to a house, and the things which are within man to the chambers. Moreover, the human mind is such; for the things which are therein are distinguished scarcely otherwise than as a house into its chambers; the things which are in the midst are the inmost things therein; the things which are at the sides are the exteriors there; these are compared to the courts; and the things which are outside but which cohere with the interiors, to the porches." A 7353.

Or again, "To the angels a house is the mind of man; the bed-chambers and rooms are the interiors of the mind; and the windows, doors, posts and lintels, are the exteriors of the mind which introduce." (7847).

But this was no ordinary house, this to which the Wise Men entered. The Lord Himself was there, in His own Human, where He might be seen and touched.

It was the house of God. There are two names by which the place is known where the Lord meets with His people, "the house of God" or "the Temple." "The Temple" is more stately and formal; it is used when the Lord is approached from doctrine; but the Lord's "House" speaks of His mercy, His pity, His love. We enter His Temple n-hen we worship from duty, from obedience from the truths of faith; but we enter His house when from joy and gratitude we worship Him from love. - - - Think of the emotions of these Wise Men as they entered that house. When they had seen the Star in their own land they recognized it as the Morning Star, for which the nations had waited from the beginning of time. Determined to greet the Lord at His birth they had taken up their long journey, travelling over desert and river, through forests and mountains, taking the risk of being robbed and murdered. The Star had led them to Jerusalem, and then it had disappeared. Here for a time their journey seemed to end in disappointment. None of the rulers or priests had heard of the birth of the King of the Jews. But at last Herod sends them to Bethlehem, charging them straightly to come immediately and bring him word again if they find Him, that he may come and worship Him also.

As soon as they leave Jerusalem the Star which they saw in the East again goes before them till it came and stood over where the Young Child was. We may well believe that "When they saw the Star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." And now, at last their journey is done; they enter into the house where He is. Their hearts are dissolved with joy, with gratitude, with humility. Their strength is gone; they fall at His feet in worship.

May we not, too, feel something of their joy, their gratitude, their humility, as we approach the Lord? Much depends upon how far we have come from the land of our nativity, what difficulties have beset our path, how our hearts are torn by the suffering of humanity and of ourselves as we await a Savior from sin.

But surely, at least once a year, when we celebrate the Lord's birth, we should feel at least a little of the great joy which the Wise Men felt when at Bethlehem they had reached the end of their long, dangerous and arduous journey.

Ah, if only we could feel the full measure of that emotion by which they were overcome; not naturally, perhaps, but spiritually; increased by the measure of our spiritual enlightenment gained by 2000 years of the light of the Gospel, and by the Lord's second Coming, and the opening of the arcana of His Holy Word.

"In my Father's house (said our Lord), are many mansions."--Heaven is really, in spiritual sense, the Lord's House. And it is possible for us with the help of the HEAVENLY DOCTRINE to enter the Lord's House in Heaven when we draw near to worship Him. In fact we cannot worship Him truly until we do enter heaven in spirit. All enlightenment, inspiration, gratitude, love and innocence,--without which our worship is in vain - depend upon our insertion into an angelic society. This is what we should seek as we approach His House. For this we should pray knowing that unless the Lord grant us angelic associates we shall seek His face in vain; but with their help and the guidance of His Spirit our search for Him will be abundantly blessed.

When the Wise Men had entered the house, "they saw the Young Child with Mary His mother." To us the "Young Child" means the Divine Human. All that we know of the incarnation, of how the Lord from Eternity hewed the Heavens and came down, taking on from the angels their nature and from a virgin mother our flesh; yes, and all that we know of how in that Human He wrought our Redemption by temptation combats, and by the glorification of His assumed Human made it His Temple and House in which He meets with His foolish but beloved children and they with Him,--all this is recalled to us when we read of the "Young Child"--all that we know by doctrine and by life associated with the name Jesus Christ our Lord.

And when in our worship we truly enter in spirit the company of the angels all holy things which we have received through them - all remains - are stirred into life.

But it is recorded not only that they saw the "Young Child" but with Him was Mary His mother.

Far be it from us to worship Mary. The Lord alone is to be worshipped. All flesh is grass. The Lord uses men and women to manifest Himself; but they themselves are dead, all life is His, all wisdom, all love. We honor the instrument, the tool, but we ascribe no intelligence, no love, to it, but to Him Who uses it

to manifest His power and His glory. But by "Mary the mother" we understand the Church.

It is the Church which receives and brings forth the Divine among men and angels, clothes it with flesh, manifests it in tangible form; without the Church we would not know the Divine. The Church is the Bride and Wife of the Lamb, the Mother of all living. As the Lord is the Father so the Church is the Mother of all flesh. There is no such thing as solitary love to the Lord without at the same time love to the neighbor. Love to the Lord manifests itself as love to the neighbor, and is cultivated only by a life of uses to the neighbor; and the first place that this love of the neighbor is to be cultivated is in the Church, for the Lord's Church and kingdom is the neighbor in the highest form. It is said in highest form because there, in the Heavenly Kingdom and Church in both worlds is to be found the fullest embodiment of the Lord's Spirit. In the spiritual sense by the Neighbor is meant the Divine in others; a man in greater or lesser form is to be regarded as neighbor according as he receives the Divine and permits it to pass through him in offices of use; surely there can be no higher form of the Neighbor than the Church of the Lord which embraces the communion of Saints both in the heavens and in the earth.

This is why it is recorded that when they saw the "Young Child" they saw also at the same time "Mary His Mother."

It is impossible to see solitary good without truth, so it is impossible to see the Lord without at the same time seeing His heavenly kingdom and church. But they prostrated themselves in worship not before Mary but only before "Him," the Lord, the King.

"And when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts." Does not that seem to you a peculiar expression, "When they had opened their treasures"? I imagine they had these treasures safely and carefully hidden either about their camels or about their persons where the eyes of crafty robbers would find the greatest trouble in spying them. But now at their journey's end all caution is gone. The time in view from the beginning is come. With the greatest eagerness and thankfulness that they had been protected from loss and robbery they opened their treasures and presented unto Him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

We, too, have treasures, given to us through the ministry of angels, that we may worship the Lord; our treasures, too, are tightly sealed and hidden from observation; we have carried them with us through the long journey through infancy, childhood and youth for the sake of rightly greeting the King when He comes. They are the goods and truths of remains, stored within us of the Lord's mercy, that we may know and worship the King of the Jews when He comes. They, too, have been in constant hazard by robbers as we passed through hostile lands, among strangers. But now that we have found the Lord we may safely open to Him our treasures. But these are no earthly treasures, these by which we exalt our worship of the Lord. The gold, the frankincense, the myrrh are all things of love and truth by which we exalt Him. They have been stored within us by the Lord Himself, through the agency of the angels, in all states of innocence, of love, of friendship, in states of holiness, of worship and of conscience, in states of humility, of desire to learn, of obedience.

As they were stored through heaven's offices so they can be opened in no other way; but when we enter into the presence of the Lord and the angels then may we open these treasures.

Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh

The Kings from the East offered gold, frankincense, and myrrh, natural, nay, material, treasures. We may offer celestial and spiritual treasures; instead of "gold" the good of love; our "frankincense" and "myrrh," the truths of spiritual thought and prayer confirmed by passages of Sacred Scripture.

It is said of the four animals in the midst of the throne and, the four and twenty Elders round about the throne, in John's Apocalyptic vision, that they had everyone of them golden harps and vials full of incense, which are the prayers of saints.

The basis of all worship is the good of love,--meant by gold. By the good of love is meant love united to wisdom, guided by wisdom, so that it actually accomplishes the good of the Lord's kingdom. This good is of the Celestial Kingdom. But that good descending into our minds stirs up both internal and external thoughts, both spiritual and sensual truths, according to our store of thoughts and truths from all past experiences. All our worship is thence, rich and abundant or poor and scanty, according to our store and the zeal of our affections.

Concerning incense or worship note the following, "Incense signifies the things of worship, which are perceived gratefully; as confessions, adorations, prayers and the like.... For sweet odors signify what is grateful; and whatever is grateful is grateful from good through truths. Hence it is that by the incense of spices is signified the grateful perception which is of truth from good.... The reason that such things are signified by incense is that they are of the thought and thence of the mouth." A 9475.

Again, "When worship is mentioned there is meant that Holy, which is affected by means of prayers, adorations, confessions, and by means of like things which proceed from the internal things which are of love and charity.

It is these things of worship which are meant by incense." A 10177.

"Statements of Scripture by which truths are confirmed ascend into heaven, they are like the smoke from frankincense." @Inv 51.

Myrrh signified the ultimate of life with man, thus the truth of sensuous experience, received through sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. Hence the ancients preserved the body by myrrh to signify that every thing of memory is preserved after death and goes into the other life with the man. The sensuous truths of the Word are those of the letter, while the frankincense represents internal, spiritual perceptions by which the Lord is worshipped.

When Thomas saw the wound prints in the Lord's hands and side, and put his finger into the prints, and then cried out My Lord and my God, he was convinced by sensual demonstration, signified by the myrrh.

Is it not evident that in this one verse of Scripture is contained by correspondence all the arcana of true worship of the Lord? By the Wise Men from the East are meant those who have been instructed and are in gentile states, states of innocence and ignorance, eager to know the Lord that they may approach and worship Him. Their coming to Jerusalem signifies coming to the vastate Church where the Word is and doctrine therefrom, but where Herod and the Jewish Sanhedrin reign; typical of the

spirit which reigned at the end of both the Jewish and the first Christian Church. Here at Jerusalem from the letter of the Word is found the doctrine which leads to the Lord, but outside the Church, at Bethlehem, the "house of Bread."

Finding the Lord God in His Divine Human, and realizing that there is none other but He, the worshipper enters in spirit into the Lord's House in the heavens, where He alone is worshipped as the First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega, the Almighty.

Thus seeing Him as Almighty God and at the same time the vast communion of saints, meant by Mary the mother, the worshipper falls at His feet as if dead; there is left no strength in him, but all his comeliness is turned into filthy rags.

But after the old life of self-righteousness is perished, then inspired with new life by the Lord and by association with the angels, man rises exalted to new heights of love and faith; all his treasures are opened and he pours forth from his heart and mind all the pent up love, adoration, worship and prayers of many years, into which enter all good states from infancy on up through all his life.

It is added that being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod they departed to their own country by another way. He who has seen the King in His Glory, in His Divine Human, does not return to the Jewish or the Old Church where Herod reigns. He has entered into new states. He is conjoined with the new heaven where the Lord alone is acknowledged and worshipped. By means of the Heavenly Doctrine he sees Heaven opened and the Lord even as to His Human exalted to the midst of the Sun of Heaven, receiving the worship of all the angels. He cannot go back in spirit to those who in the light of the letter of the Word await but an earthly Christ, a worldly ruler. His eyes are set upon the Jerusalem which is above, the Mother of us all. He goes back to his own country by another way. Amen.

Lessons: Isaiah 60, Matthew 2:1-18, @AC 9293.

WITH THE DOCTORS IN THE TEMPLE

"And it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the Temple sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions." Luke 2:46.

Does it not seem strange that we should be told of but one incident in the first thirty years of the Lord's life? But one thing that He Himself did before He came to John to be baptized?

In the four gospels we have four independent accounts of the life of our Lord on earth. Matthew, after tracing His genealogy back to Abraham, tells of the dream in which Joseph was assured that the child of Mary was conceived of the Holy Spirit, whereupon he took her as his wife but knew her not until she had brought forth her first-born son. Matthew also tells of the visit of the magi, and the flight into Egypt, the return to Nazareth; and then of the work of John the Baptist;--thus no word about the childhood or youth of the Lord, no act or word of His as He was growing up and preparing for His mission.

Mark's gospel without any preliminary whatever begins with the ministry of John, and the Lord's coming to him to be baptized.

John begins with the Word which in the beginning was with God and was God, the Creator, Who was made flesh and dwelt among us, but tells us nothing else about Him,--not a word of how He was made flesh, or of His early life until He returns to John the Baptist after His forty days temptation in the wilderness, which followed His baptism.

To Luke alone are we indebted for the account of Zacharias' vision and the birth of John the Baptist, for the annunciation to Mary, and her visit to Elisabeth, the birth of the Lord in a stable, the visit of the shepherds, the presentation in the Temple, and finally, the Lord in the Temple at twelve years of age, both hearing the doctors and asking them questions. Thus Luke gives a number of precious truths connected with the birth and early life of the Lord, but, as was said, only one thing that He Himself did before, at thirty years of age, He began His public ministry. All the rest is summarized in the words which preface this account,--"And the Child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him" (v. 40); in the statement that "He went down to Nazareth and was subject unto them;" and in the concluding words, which are almost a repetition of the fortieth verse, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." v. 52.

Who can help wishing that we had been taught more of the Lord's early life? There must have been innumerable incidents connected with His childhood which would be profoundly interesting and instructive. Who that loves to read of the life of the Savior, the only perfect life ever lived among men, can keep himself from wondering about the daily life of that Holy Child, in His home, in His play, His intercourse with brothers and sisters, and little companions, in His tasks and in His work as a carpenter with Joseph? Can we imagine a child growing up without sin, never yielding to temptation, never giving way to anger? How many times His mother and Joseph, and others, must have noted His acts and His sayings, and treasured them, wonderingly, in their hearts.

What would we not give to know the thoughts and feelings, the reaction to the life of men about Him,

of the one perfect Child, Who was not only without sin but because He was born a Divine celestial Man, had such wisdom as no mere man ever had.

Yet we know that there must be good reasons why these things are not revealed; that the Lord, in His love and wisdom, has revealed all that we need to know, all that it is best for us to know. As Moses taught, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." (De. 29:29).

It is not the purpose of the Gospel to gratify idle curiosity or to teach merely natural truth, except such as can become the basis of spiritual truth. The Word of God is given to teach the means of man's redemption and salvation; therefore not to give knowledge of Jesus the Christ as an earthly man but as the Divine Man. Since we love the things of this world so much more than the things of heaven we are all inclined to dwell too much upon the merely natural life of the Lord, too little upon His spiritual and Divine life. If incidents of His child-life were multiplied it would make it still harder for us to see the Divine in His Human. Even as it is, with only His public ministry described, the first Christian Church has seen in our Lord the human as it were separate from the Divine; has dwelt upon His humiliation, His suffering, His death; has thought of Him as a sacrifice for our sins, as an elder brother; and has lost sight of His claim to be one with the Father, having all power in heaven and on earth.

In the light of the Doctrine of the New Jerusalem it cannot be doubted that the Divine was interiorly within in all that He said or did, even from His earliest childhood; yet the Divine was at that time as it were more thickly veiled with the flesh, more deeply covered by the ignorance of childhood, and the shadows of appearances, than was the case after He had begun His teaching at thirty years of age.

In the life of our Lord there are two things which at first cannot but appear as separate. They are His human life, and His Divine life; His life as a Man among men, and His life as God among men. We can see His Divine life only in His human life.

Therefore we must see Him truly as a Man that we may see within His human life, His words, His individual acts, the love and wisdom of the almighty God. Yet the end of all our knowledge of Him as Man is to know Him as the God Man; to see that in Him the Human and the Divine were perfectly united so that as to His Human, as revealed in the Word, He was God.

We must recognize that the Lord had from His mother a human like that of every other man; that this human had to learn, and grow in wisdom as with others; that therefore as to the human He was in ignorance, in appearances of truth, at times in doubt and uncertainty; could be tempted by the hells; moreover, that in the human from her He had by heredity an inclination to love of self and of the world, thus to all the evils that flesh is heir to. And we must also see that the Divine could not come down into the assumed human except as the faculties of the human were opened. But when the Lord acted, and when He spoke it was not as the son of Mary, but as the Son of God. He permitted the influx of the infernals to open His perverted human faculties; but then He rejected those perversions; He acted from His proprial love, from His soul, which was Divine. Therefore, rightly regarded, we see nought but the infinite and eternal Divine in every act, in every word of our blessed Lord, with only enough of the human to veil and accommodate the Divine to our knowledge and our perception. Knowing that the Lord put off everything from the mother, every affection, every thought, and put on the Divine from the Father, so that He was not only conceived of God but was also born of God,—by the

processes of glorification, to which man's rebirth or regeneration is analogous,--we can then clearly see the Divine and only the Divine in everything told of Him in the Word. We first see the human, but only to see it glorified by the Divine which shines through it.

The Lord's Life as a Child has been Revealed.

The Lord in His mercy has revealed His life as a Child; has revealed it not in the letter of His Word, but in His opening of its spiritual sense. It may be found unfolded step by step, in the order of His development, from the exposition of the life of Abraham in the Arcana Coelestia. All that the heart and mind of the man of the Church can desire to know of the opening faculties, and the developing life of the Lord, from birth onward, is revealed in these chapters of the Arcana. And revealed in such a way that we may see the human and the Divine natures of the Lord in their proper relation; may learn to think always of the Divine in the human and never of the human separate from the Divine.

It is true that nothing new is told of the external life of the Lord when a child; no new incidents of His childhood are given. But everything recorded of Abraham, from his call to leave the land of his nativity to go to a land which the Lord will show him, through all his journeys, and every incident of his life, is shown to prefigure the spiritual journeys of the Lord, from the first awakening of His mind. The call of Abraham represents the call of the indwelling Divine to the human, heard in earliest childhood. as soon as His senses were sufficiently opened to enable Him to hear that call, the call to leave the earthly, the sensual, the maternal, and follow the leading of the Divine. Each stage of Abraham's journey marks a further opening of His infant mind, a further revelation of the will of His Father.

The great famine in the land which drove Abraham down into Egypt, pictures the Lord's great hunger as a child for knowledges. Scientifics and knowledges are the food of the mind and the soul, by which the spiritual man is nourished and built up as is the body by material food, The Lord as a child had a great hunger for such instruction, or what we should call a great curiosity. The infinite Divine Soul within Him, seeking to come forth into His Human could do so only to the extent that His Human mind was opened by scientifics as vessels.

And from His early childhood the Lord was unwilling to imbue His mind with any other scientifics but those of the Word, which were open to the Father; which invited Divine influx.

This was why the Almighty God had provided in the Jews, before He sent His Human into the world, a race of religious zealots, whose whole life was ordered by the Word, who thought nothing and did nothing but at the dictate of the Word. We can scarcely doubt that in the home of Joseph and Mary as the Lord grew up there was a complete copy of all the law and the prophets; and that from His earliest years His parents taught Him all He could understand, both by precept and by example. For the whole life of a devout Jew, his lying down and his rising up, his clothing and his food, his care to avoid uncleanness and his purifying from defilement, his going out and his coming in, his prayers and his meditation, his intercourse with his fellows at home and abroad, and his relation to his God in every incident of life, was regulated by the law and by tradition supposed to safeguard the Law against infringement.

All these things the Lord had to learn as any other boy would learn them; but stimulated as no other boy had ever been by a Divine soul, and by a celestial mind taken from the angelic Heavens. Moreover,

He had to learn very early to distinguish the things which were really of the Law from the vain traditions of the elders which rather tended to obscure the Law and make it void. Do you wonder that He felt a great hunger, a great desire to learn the truth? This was meant by the great famine which drove Abraham down into Egypt. It was to fulfill the Scriptures that the Lord Himself was carried down into Egypt to save Him from Herod, that it might be actually fulfilled in Him, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." It was to satisfy this great hunger that the Lord at twelve years of age tarried in the temple for three days, both listening to the learned rabbis, and asking them questions.

Doubtless He had asked many questions of Joseph and Mary that they could not answer. Perhaps He had asked the ruler of the synagogue in Nazareth, had asked priests and rabbis as occasion offered.

But here in the Temple was a rare chance to have all His questions answered. Jerusalem was the center of learning. In Jerusalem were scribes and lawyers, many great and learned men who gave all their time to the understanding and teaching of the law. It was not uncommon for such rabbis to seat themselves, perhaps upon a cushion, in some of the courts of the Temple, and give free instruction to any who gathered about them, seating themselves upon the ground; they would answer such questions as might be asked. Such rabbis were regarded with very great respect and reverence.

The attitude of the Lord as a boy toward them is indicated by the text. He was not instructing them, though doubtless their trivialities and slavish adherence to the letter of the Law without understanding of its inner meaning must have excited His surprise. He was sitting in the midst of the doctors both hearing them and asking them questions. Yet that He did also express His own views in a becoming manner is indicated by its being added, "And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers."

When Joseph and Mary saw Him thus engaged it is said, "They were amazed." These are strong words, "They were amazed." There must have been something very unusual and surprising in what they saw, beside the fact that they had sought Him sorrowing.

And how much of sorrow and reluctance to be interrupted do the Lord's words indicate. "How is it that ye sought me?" He asks, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Here was the very opportunity for which He had longed. Why could they not leave Him there, that He might prepare Himself for that which He came into the world to do.

Long before this His mother must have told Him of the annunciation of the angel Gabriel before His birth, of the visit of the shepherds with their account of the angels rejoicing when He was born, of the worship of the Magi who had come from afar. It had long been known to Him, revealed by His Father in the Law and the Prophets, that He was the Messiah, the Savior of the world. Yet He yields to His parents. He is but a boy; they are His "parents,"--to use the word given in the forty-first verse, "Now His parents went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover." And Mary said, "Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing." "And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them."

Here for eighteen more years He was to remain in Nazareth, subject unto them, earning His living by the work of His hands, possibly the principal support of His mother after the death of Joseph; for it

seems likely that Joseph died before the Lord began His public ministry.

Thus in silence did He lay the foundations and build the house of the Lord, that there might be fulfilled what was written of Solomon's temple.

"And the house when it was in building was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer, nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building." 1 Kings 6:7.

In the quiet of this humble home, carrying on His work as a carpenter, but in continual meditation on the Word of the Lord, seeking knowledge and purifying Himself from all evil, did the Lord prepare Himself to fulfill in its own time his mission as the Savior of the world. Amen.

Lessons: Isaiah 26, Luke 1:40-52, @AC 1460, '61.

WATER TURNED TO WINE

"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him." John 2:11.

It was not by chance that our Lord's first miracle was to turn water into wine; nor was it without meaning that this occurred at a wedding. The miracle was representative of the work He had come into the world to do, and the wedding was representative of the purpose of His coming, the end He had in view.

For wine represents spiritual truth, which the Lord came to open out of His Word and give to men; while the wedding, in its highest sense, represents the conjunction of the church as bride and wife with her Lord as Bridegroom and Husband.

In a secondary sense the marriage represents the happy union of husband and wife in the bonds of conjugal love in the Church where spiritual truth is known and loved; for such homes constitute the church and are the seminaries of heaven. Our Lord was the Word made flesh. He was in the world to vindicate the Word; to make it, first of all, a living thing before the eyes of men; then to reveal the internal content and life of the Word for man's salvation. He could not but represent this by the first public act of His ministry; by His first miracle, turning water to wine.

Thirty years had He been in the world, among the simple folk who constituted His church at that time; people who had no idea of any internal or spiritual significance of anything of their law or worship. But all things of the Word were open to Him.

He was able to follow the significance of them into and through the heavens, and penetrate even to the Divine meaning which is above the heavens.

Thirty years had he spent in preparation, that He might not only know the Word thoroughly and understand it, but also by life according to it might purify His Human from imperfection and evil that He might be but the pure embodiment of the Word, governed in all things by its precepts, and animated at all times by its spirit.

The time being fulfilled - the time of preparation - He emerges from His obscurity and is publicly baptized by John, who announces that this is the Lamb of God, Whose way he had been sent to prepare before Him.

Again, after this public announcement, making it known not only to men, but also to all the angels and devils that the Lord God had come to redeem and save His people, again He retires to the desert for forty days and nights of struggle with the powers of darkness; that He might not only further purify His Human and consecrate it to the work He came to do, but also that He might partially conquer and cower the hosts of hell so that they should leave His people in freedom to believe on Him.

Emerging from the wilderness He apparently returns to the Jordan where John is baptizing and while there is followed by John later known as the beloved disciple and Peter, Andrew, Philip and Nathanael, who accompany Him on His return to Galilee. Then comes the incident of the marriage.

John's account says that the mother of Jesus was there; and both Jesus was called, and His disciples to the marriage. It sounds as if Mary the mother was already at the house where the wedding took place, and the Lord and His disciples were asked to come for the wedding.

But it is the internal sense of the Word that interests us, and not the literal sense except as a vehicle of the spiritual sense. This spirit it is which flows down from the Lord through heaven and clothes itself with the sense of the letter in such a way as to present the Divine Truth in adequate correspondent forms.

The marriage in Cana of Galilee but served to set forth in dramatic form before angels and men the marriage of the Lord and the Church. He had come from heaven as the Bridegroom to present Himself before His Church for the wedding that makes the kingdom of heaven; and there was no wine for the wedding - no spiritual truth.

It is said that there were at this wedding six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. These stone waterpots represent the state of the church at that time among the Jews. They had the externals of the Word and of worship, with no thought of any internal significance.

There was not an act of the priest in worship, there was not an act of the head of a family in the daily routine of life, but represented the Lord in His Human and the acts by which He should redeem and save the human race. Yet the Jews had no knowledge of this, no care for it. To them the rituals of their religion were but certain forms, holy because done by their forefathers. Their minds were not raised above the dust of the earth by their religion; there was no opening of their internal minds thereby, and no communion with the angels; there was no internal enlightenment in regard to their duty to God and toward the neighbor.

Yet these forms were adequate to contain the water for the purifying of the Jews. Their law and especially the Psalms and the prophets clearly taught that they should love the Lord their God with heart and soul and strength, and the neighbor as themselves; taught that they should put away all hatred, malice, envy and revenge as sins against God. All the essentials of salvation were plainly and clearly taught in their law. It was mercy that the Lord desired and not sacrifice; to walk humbly and justly before their God He valued more than gifts and oblations.

It is said that there were six of these stone waterpots. Six represents the six days of labor which precede the rest of the sabbath; hence the number six always carries the idea of labor, struggle, temptation; the effort to keep the commandments in the work of our daily life.

The servants were commanded by the Lord to fill these six waterpots with water. "And they filled them up to the brim." Truth with man is natural. In his understanding of it and in his obedience it is but natural. The Lord alone can make it spiritual. But man has his part to do in the work of his salvation.

It is man's part to learn the scriptures; to fill the vessels of his mind with the truths of the Word; to learn the doctrines of his church; to think about them, meditate upon them, seek to understand them; see their application to the duties of his life and calling.

This is what is meant by the command to fill the waterpots with water. For in spiritual sense the

waterpots are the vessels of the human mind, placed there for the purifying of the Jews - for the purifying of the affections.

In this work the Lord must have human cooperation; man himself has his part to do; he must labor as of himself to know, and understand the precepts of the Word. He must also draw out and bear the water to the ruler of the feast; that is, he must carry out in uses the truth he learns. The commandments of the Word, known and understood in application to his own problems must be carried out. "Draw out now and bear to the governor of the feast."

In the nearest sense the neighbor whom we serve by our work is the governor of the feast; but in a higher sense the governor is the Lord Himself. He it is Whom we serve in all the activities of our lives. Even as He Himself said; "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

The water was not turned to wine in the stone waterpots, but only as it was drawn out and carried to the governor.

Truth never becomes spiritual while only known and understood, while held in the mind. It is turned into wine by the Lord only in its application to uses, in service to the neighbor, or to the kingdom of the Lord.

A life of uses, or of service, is the third thing that is needed to furnish forth the wedding feast with wine.

First is to know the Sacred Scriptures. And with us of the New Church this includes a knowledge of the Heavenly Doctrine, for this is especially the Scripture given by the Lord to raise up His church at this time. The second thing is to understand the Doctrine; and this too we can do as of ourselves. There is no one of rational age and sound mind but can gain for himself an understanding of the Word and the Doctrine adequate to the needs of his daily life. Light sufficient to our needs is never withheld from one who earnestly seeks it from the Lord.

The third thing is to live according to the truth, to obey it.

This is what is meant in the beginning of the chapter where it says:

"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee." Commentators have puzzled vainly over that third day. It could hardly mean that the third day after leaving the fords of the Jordan, where John baptized, the Lord and His disciples attended this marriage. The distance is too great for that. Some have taken it to mean that it was the third day of the feast when the wine gave out. But that is not what is said, but that the marriage was on the third day. Whatever was in the mind of the apostle which caused him to write that the marriage was on the third day, it was for the sake of the internal sense that this statement is given; and indeed given first place in the chapter, where it governs in all that follows.

The marriage, which is the conjunction of the Lord and the church, is always on the third day. The work of the first day is to gain a knowledge of the Lord; that of the second day to understand the truths of His Word, the laws of His providence; only on the third day, when from knowledge and

understanding we carry out in the uses of life the truths of His Word is there the conjunction with Him meant by marriage.

With the man of the church the first "day" is childhood, when he gains a knowledge of the Lord and the Word; when remains are stored and the letter of the Word is learned and loved. The second "day" is youth when the understanding is opened, the rational mind is formed, and the reason is sought for all the ways of God to man. But not until the third day, in maturity of judgment when a man acts as of himself, in freedom according to reason, can there be the heavenly marriage with the Lord.

What man does in childhood and youth is not properly his own; it is done from others, from parents and teachers; he is in no freedom of choice as yet. He cannot choose for himself until his mind and judgment are mature; not until his hereditary nature awakes and he has opportunity to choose between his hereditary life and the remains from the Word stored in childhood. During the first and second days the Lord prepares man for conjunction with Him; and on the third day, if the man is willing and responds, the Lord betroths the church to Himself.

It is said "the mother of Jesus was there." By the mother of Jesus is meant, in the internal sense, the affection of the Word. It is this affection which gives birth to the Word. It is by affection for the Word that the Lord comes into the heart, and is as it were born there. This affection is what is meant by the mother of Jesus.

It is never recorded that the Lord called His mother mother. When He speaks to her He calls her woman; and this because he put off all that He had from her that He might become wholly Divine. In His glorified human He is no longer her son but her God. Yet in the Word Mary is sometimes called the mother of the Lord. When so mentioned she represents the church, which is as it were the mother of Divine life in the soul.

When it is said that the mother of Jesus was at the marriage, it means that the affection of the Word was present; this is what makes the church in man and fits him for the heavenly marriage.

Then Jesus will be called and His disciples; which means the Lord in His Divine Human and the truths of His Word. For in the abstract sense men are not thought of as His disciples, but the truths of His Word, which follow Him and witness to His Divinity.

When it was realized that there was no wine there must have been consternation and shame in the minds of those who gave the feast. And the mother of Jesus went to Him saying, "They have no wine."

Now the Lord knew what He would do; yet He apparently repulses her, saying:

"Woman what to me and thee? Mine hour is not yet come." So is it often when we seek an answer to our prayers. The Lord does not answer at once. His hour is not yet come. Yet it is not that He is not ready but that we are not ready. He was ready to do His part when they had done all they could. But it is necessary that man shall do all that he can do, so that he shall feel the blessing as his own after it is given. What is given without our asking, without our striving, is but lightly esteemed.

His mother said to the servants, "Whatsoever He saith unto you do." He said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." By the servants are meant all who follow and serve the Lord; in the man of the

church all the faculties of his mind, or the truths of the Word which serve the Lord are the servants.

We have already spoken of the meaning of filling the waterpots with water. The Lord does not inflow into an empty mind with enlightenment and guidance. The Lord does not infuse either knowledge or faith into us while we sit with hanging hands and empty minds. He gives us the ability to get knowledge, gives enlightenment, gives the affection of truth, if we but open our minds to receive; but we must use our faculties as of ourselves. This is our part which makes reception and reciprocation of His love possible.

All conjunction must be reciprocal. The Lord draws near. He stands at the door and knocks. But man must prepare himself for conjunction with the Lord. He must see his evils and shun them. He must use the truth of the Word for his purification. He must in turn draw near to the Lord. If the Lord's hour is not yet come it is because there is yet something for the man to do to prepare himself to accept the Lord's gift.

It is said that when the ruler of the feast tasted the water that had been made wine, and knew not whence it was, he called the bridegroom and said unto him,

"Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now."

An interesting truth is involved in this statement. In every church until the coming of the Lord the highest truth was given in the beginning; then at the end of the church, when men were intoxicated by falsities, a new church was instituted by new revelation of a more external kind. This was the case with the church called Noah also Heber at the end of the first ancient church. It was also the case with the Israelitish church raised up at Mount Sinai at the end of the Hebrew church.

The Hebrew church was more external than the first Ancient church of the silver age; and the church with the sons of Israel was merely a representative of a church.

But at the end of that church the Jewish the Lord in His Advent opened genuine and internal truths out of His Word for the establishment of the Christian Church.

And again at the end of the Christian Church when men were well drunken by the falsification of the whole doctrine that the Lord taught, He opened out of His Word still more internal truths for the establishment of His church of the New Jerusalem.

This eternal truth of the Word, consisting of truths continuous from the Lord is the good wine He has kept until now. This is the noble wine, in greatest abundance, now furnished for the marriage of the Lamb and His Church of the New Jerusalem. Amen.

Lessons: - Genesis 49:1-28, John 2:1-22, @AE 376 (1-3)

RAISING THE WIDOW'S SON AT NAIN

"And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise, and he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother." Luke 7:14-15.

This is a sad scene described by Luke;--a mother, a widow, bereaved of her only son. "Much people of the city was with her." It was a small city, or village, called Nain, two miles south of Mount Tabor, and perhaps eighteen or twenty miles southwest of Capernaum, where on the preceding day the Lord had healed the Centurion's servant.

The Lord was accompanied by many of His disciples and much people. And as He drew near to the gate of the city, behold, there came forth this sorrowing throng, bearing the body of the young man for burial, probably in one of the tombs still to be seen hewn in the rock east of the city.

"When the Lord saw her," we read, "He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bear him stood still. And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother."

Imagine the change in that sorrowing company! Their intense grief so suddenly, so unexpectedly removed, how they must have rejoiced. How great must have been the joy of the mother, as she clasped her son to her bosom, no longer dead, but alive. We can, in imagination, see the two great companies, those with the widow and those following the Lord, mingling together, offering their congratulations, striving to get close enough to see and touch and speak with the young man who had been dead and was now alive again.

No wonder the people glorified God, saying that a great prophet had arisen, and that God had visited His people.

But shall we think of the Lord's pity being aroused, as the pity of a mere man might be, by the grief of the widow, now bereaved of her only son? Shall we think it was from such pity that He restored her son to life? Then why did He not raise from the dead all who died? Many persons must have died when the Lord was here in the world. He must often have seen persons sorrowing over the death of loved ones. Yet He raised but three persons from death; this young man of Nain; the daughter of Jairus; and Lazarus.

The Lord did indeed sorrow with all who sorrow, and grieved with all who grieve; even as He does today. But that sympathy with our sorrow would not in itself be sufficient reason for changing the laws of Divine order, which from the beginning have decreed that after man has made his choice here of good or evil, of life or death, he shall leave this world of matter and shall to eternity live in a better world, the world of spirit.

The Lord's sympathy with us in our grief over the death of our loved one's leads Him to seek by every possible means to lift our eyes above this world, and our hearts above that which is merely temporal, that we may rejoice on the entrance of those we love into a better and happier world, even as we rejoice when good fortune overtakes them.

I was recently greatly impressed on reading in the autobiography of a man of unusual intellect and keen rationality in all worldly affairs, a man who was always seeking to understand the problems of life (Education of Henry Adams), that he gave up all belief in a personal God because of the painful death of a beloved sister. How narrow, how short-sighted, how presumptuous, to demand that He who sees the end from the beginning shall justify to our ignorance the acts of His infinite love and wisdom. Yet this attitude is so common all about us. and everyone is at times assailed by similar thoughts, that it may be worth while to dwell for a few moments upon the other side of the picture.

The Lord God, because He is infinite and eternal, because He is Love itself and Wisdom itself, cannot but regard what is infinite and eternal in all His dealings with the children of men. He looks to our happiness and to that alone; but to our permanent happiness to our happiness in our eternal home; and to our welfare here according as it will minister to that, or detract from it. To that end He takes each one into the other life at the time that His Wisdom sees is best. We cannot know when that time has come, either for ourselves or for others, but must trust in Him who placed us here, and who has shown His love and fatherly care from the day of our birth.

Those who place themselves on an equality with God the Creator, and demand that He shall justify Himself to their ignorance, immediately,--refusing to wait for time to reveal His reasons,--such persons close their hearts and minds to all wisdom, and refuse all Divine consolation. Only the poor in spirit, the meek, the humble, the childlike, can enter into the Divine wisdom. The Divine Wisdom and the Divine Love cannot be seen by those who reject a life after death and seek the Divine only in this world separated from a spiritual and eternal world.

Death is the gate of life. It was to teach this that the Lord came into the world. It was to teach this that He raised three persons from the dead, and that He Himself triumphed over death and hell in His own Person. He could never teach this great truth by raising multitudes from the tomb, or by saving from death everyone whose death would cause grief to his relatives

Therefore, while admitting that the Lord must have felt pity for the grief of the widow of Nain even as a mere man would have felt such pity, we cannot think that He acted from human pity alone. Let us always remember that while He had from the virgin mother a human like ours, and therefore could be touched with the feeling of our infirmity, yet He was at the same time the God Man; moved by the Divine love, thinking from the Divine wisdom, acting only from the "Father" who dwelt within Him.

There must have been other reasons beside mere pity for a mother's grief which caused Him to raise from the dead this young man of Nain.

Among the reasons, we may mention the desire to teach that: (1) they who die are still alive; (2) to show that He had the omnipotent power of God to quicken whom he would; (3) to show His power to restore to life the Church, which was dead.

1) That they who die are still alive. The Lord lived in both worlds. He saw the so-called "dead" all about Him continually, even more alive than those still in the flesh. The demons who obsessed men were seen by Him even as they saw Him, in His spiritual body, and confessed His Divinity. Good spirits and angels were as fully under His view as men in the world. But this was not so with others. The purpose of His coming, His death and resurrection was to show the reality of the spiritual world, and of the

Divine.

Miraculously restoring life to one who was dead taught that truth more forcibly than words could do.

2) To show that He had the power of God to quicken whom He would. All other teachers and miracle workers have claimed to have their power from another, from God, or from some spirit, good or bad. This the Lord never did. As God never said that He did His miracles from the Father or by His power. He taught men to look to Him, to find the Father in Him, that He was Himself the Heavenly Father. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son. Who is in the bosom of the Father. He hath revealed Him." "I and the Father are one. He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

3) To show His power to restore to life the Church which was dead. This is the final end to which the other two look. They are included in this. For belief in the life after death, and belief in the Lord as the eternal God, find their fruit and fulfilment in a Church where men are conjoined with the Lord God in faith and life, and live from Him; He in them and they in Him.

The Divine end in creation is a Heaven of angels from the human race, in which the Lord can dwell as soul in body; all Heaven organized as one Grand Man by the indwelling Divine; having but one life, one love, the Divine love of use and the joy of that love. Through that Heaven the Lord imparts spiritual life to men on earth. But there must be a Church on the earth, having the Word, and knowing the Lord, knowing His will and doing it.

Lacking a Church which lives by the Word the angels would find nothing among men with which they could conjoin themselves; they would turn away; heaven and earth would be separated and the human race would perish. Therefore the Lord always provides that there shall be a church somewhere on the earth, where He shall be known, where His Word shall be read, and worship shall be celebrated according to the Word. Then the Lord through Heaven can conjoin Himself with the Church, and through the Church, with all mankind.

With the Jews there had been but the representative of a Church; yet this had served to impart a kind of external life from the Divine until the Lord should come. But by their hypocrisies and profanations the Jews had brought that Church to its end; it was about to expire. Before the torch of life was altogether gone the Lord must raise up a new Church in the midst of the old: to which the life of the old might pass before its death.

To that end He chose twelve from among His disciples, and ordained them as the first-fruits of His Church. They were to be with Him; to share in His labors and temptations; were to go forth to teach and heal in His name; were, after His resurrection and ascension, to be filled with power from on high, that He might continue His labors through them.

But the Jewish leprosy of profanation must first be healed before spiritual life could be imparted to that remnant drawn out of the former Church. The profanation represented by leprosy, consisted in the hypocritical obedience to the truth in externals, for the sake of worldly prosperity, without any effort to apply the truths of the Church to the purification of one's thoughts, and loves.

This spiritual leprosy of profanation filled the Jewish Church, and made it unclean; was bringing it to its death. After the Lord had ordained the twelve He gave in the sermon on the mount the Christian doctrine designed to remove this profane spirit and impart a spirit of genuine spiritual life. Then, coming down from the mount, He gave a miraculous representation of this same internal work which He was about to do by healing a leper. Thus He taught in fulness; taught by word and by miraculous representation, taught for angels and men, the wise and the simple, the work which He was about to do. Thus the simplest might see His Divine power and the angels, and the Church of the future, might enter into the knowledge of the significance of His miracle.

But the Church first initiated with the twelve would not be established until it had passed to the gentiles. Therefore the Lord, on entering Capernaum, healed the Centurion's servant, to represent the restoration to health of the external or natural man among the gentiles. The Centurion, a gentile, with his childlike faith that the Lord could do by His word whatever He willed, represented that faith which existed among the gentiles, but which the Lord had not found in Israel.

Before the Church, which was about to die, could be raised up to new life, these two things had to be done: First the unclean spirit of profanation had to be cleansed with the Jewish remnant; and, second, the external man had to be brought into harmony and obedience with the internal, so that it might be a servant to the rational or internal man.

Having performed the two miracles which represented this work of preparation and purification, namely, having cleansed a leper, and having healed the Centurion's servant, the Lord straightway went to the city of Nain, where, in the gate of the city, He raised from the dead a young man, the only son of a widow; to represent the raising to life of His church among men.

Think not that it just happened that the Lord met this sad company, and was moved with compassion and raised this widow's only son, from a natural feeling of pity for her bereavement. Nothing in the Lord's life happened by accident. All things about Him were moved at His will to set forth the secret things of His redemption and salvation of men and angels; His providence and government, in which there are no accidents, but every thing is moved and ordered to minister to the eternal welfare of mankind, both as a whole and with each individual.

This widow represented the Church; widowed because the Church had lost her Lord and husband; no longer knew her Lord, was no longer conjoined with Him, but was left as a widow. Her only son represented the faith of the Church, which also now had perished, so that she was left without hope for the future. For unless the Lord Himself had come and restored among men a knowledge of God and faith in Him all life from above would soon have perished, and man would have ceased to live upon this earth.

That the raising from the dead of this widow's only son was done to represent the restoration to life of faith in the Divine, which had perished, or was about to perish, is not only evident from the whole series in the internal sense, but is shown by each word used in the account of it;

--as Nain, which means green pastures, and represents a simple faith, as did the grass upon which the Lord caused the five thousand to be seated before He fed them with the leaves and fishes; that the word city is used, which always represents the Church as to doctrine; that it occurred in the gate of the

city, or the entrance of the doctrine; the gate consisting of general or introductory truths, which must be given first; that the young man sat up and began to speak; speaking, in the internal sense, represents the teaching by means of doctrine. This occurs after the Lord has imparted new life to the doctrine of the Word. And the Lord's delivering him to his mother, represents the Lord's delivering His Divine doctrine into the hands of the Church. The Church is given the freedom to draw and teach doctrine from the Word, even the power to falsify the Lord's own Doctrine; as was indeed done by the Christian Church.

Thus did the Lord set forth and represent by this miracle the work He had come to do, to restore to life the doctrine of the Church which had perished. His other miracles were but tributary to this, and found their fulfillment in this. Yet doctrine alone is not the whole life of the Church. There is also the voluntary life, the life of love, or charity. This, too, must be raised up. Hence the Lord raised from the dead the daughter of Jairus. And finally, to represent the new Church among the gentiles, He restored Lazarus to life. Amen.

Lessons: -1 Kings 17, Luke 7:1-17. @AE 659 (12-15).

THE DEMONIAK IN THE SYNAGOGUE

"And in the synagogue there was a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried with a loud voice,

Saying Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? are Thou come to destroy us I know Thee who Thou art; the holy One of God.

And Jesus rebuked him, saying Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him into the midst (of them), he Came out of him and hurt him not." Luke 4:33-35.

How strange was this testimony of the obsessed man, or, rather of the demons who possessed him, to the Divinity of the Lord. Whence had they this knowledge? How should the devils know him and fear Him when men as yet knew Him not?

This demoniac in the synagogue at Capernaum was not the only case. In the 41st verse of this same chapter it is said;

"And devils also came out of many, crying out and saying, Thou art the Christ, the Son of God. And He, rebuking them, suffered them not to speak; for they knew that He was the Christ."

The same testimony is repeated in Mark, both in regard to the demoniac in the synagogue, and also in regard to the general confession of unclean spirits whom He cast out.

Again, in the land of the Gergesenes on the other side of the sea of Galilee, the two possessed by a legion of devils, cried out, saying, "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus Thou Son of God? art Thou come hither to torment us before the time? But recognizing that their time had come they besought Him that He would suffer them to go into the herd of swine.

And He gave them leave; and the whole herd ran down a steep place and perished in the sea." (Matthew 8:28-34).

The modern Bible critic rejects all belief in demoniac possession, as due to the ignorance and superstition of the Lord's disciples and the Jews at that time. But, in his superior wisdom, he also rejects everything supernatural or miraculous, and, when he feels free to confess it, he also rejects the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this he shows himself more ignorant, further from the truth, than were these ignorant Galileean fishermen. Nor can he explain the testimony of the obsessed to the Lord's Divinity.

The Bible critic has gotten hold of a half truth, which is often worse than to be wholly in ignorance, for it robs him of humility, and leads to the conceit of self-intelligence. It is better to believe in simplicity the Word of God, even if it is not understood.

The half truth that the modern Christian knows is that demoniac possession of the bodies of men does not occur at this day; then he jumps to the conclusion that therefore it never did exist. But that is a pure assumption.

We will readily admit the ignorance of the Jews of the Lord's day concerning devils and angels, and their influence upon sickness and health, sanity and insanity, of men in this world; and we will admit that this ignorance extended even to the disciples. Yet while they did not understand the how or the why they knew the fact that the Lord in His Divine wisdom spoke to devils who had bodily possession of many, and cast them out by His Word; and that these devils knew Him as the Son of God, and were thrown into terror and rage at the sight of Him; and also that instead of welcoming their testimony to His Divinity the Lord rebuked them, commanded them to hold their peace.

Having admitted the ignorance of the disciples concerning the relation of evil spirits to health and sickness, we might ask, in turn, What do the modern doctors and Philistines know on this subject?

Do they know any more than the Jews did about the existence of the spiritual world and its operation into this world? Is not science, in the very nature of the case, forever shut out from an immaterial world? Science knows only the physical, accepts only the testimony of eye and ear and touch; therefore can know only this world of effects; can never know a world of pure mind, of disembodied spirits. For such knowledge man must ever depend upon revelation, and the corroboration of an enlightened rational mind. He who immerses his rational mind in the dust of science, rejecting the light of revelation, can know nothing of God and of the vast spiritual world, and of all the powers of life which inflow through that world.

In His Second Coming the Lord has opened His Word, showing that when rightly understood it contains not only the highest human wisdom, but also the fulness of angelic wisdom, and of Divine wisdom; and this because it was either spoken by the Lord Himself when in the world, or else was dictated by His Spirit through the angelic heavens. Nor is the man of the Church required now to believe blindly what is claimed to be a Divine dictate. But his reason is appealed to. He who gave the Word gave also human reason. The Lord does not desire blind and ignorant acceptance, but enlightened understanding. Now it is permitted to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith; for every truth of the Word is a mirror of the Lord in which the rational man may see His face.

In His new Word. Given through His servant Emanuel Swedenborg. the Lord teaches us that at His first Advent there was bodily obsession, but that such obsession does not obtain at this day; tho at this day there is internal obsession.

"There are also spirits, called natural and corporeal spirits, who when they come to a man do not conjoin themselves with his thought like other spirits, but enter into his body, and occupy all his senses, and speak through his mouth, and act by his members, then not knowing but that all things of the man are theirs.

These are the spirits who obsess man; but they have been cast by the Lord into hell, and thus altogether removed, so that such obsessions are not permitted at this day." H. 257.

"Very many at this day are possessed by those spirits (not the spirits mentioned above but a different kind); for there are at this day interior obsessions (of the life of man's thought and affections), but not as formerly exterior obsessions." @AC 4793.

Life in the Lord's day touched its lowest ebb, below which it could not sink and remain human. It was

the plane of sensual and corporeal life; the Jewish life with no conception of any spiritual reality. Such a nation could be easily obsessed even as to the body by gross spirits, such as the Lord suffered to go into the swine. But after His redemptive work was accomplished, after He had cast them out and into their hells and set men free from their power, after He had established a New Church and had left the Jewish Church and the gross worship of the Jews had ceased, giving place to a more spiritual faith, then bodily obsession ceased. At this day there is, as was said, interior obsession; obsession of a man's will and understanding by evil spirits. But this is with the man's own consent and wish. When man deliberately chooses the life of falsity and evil then evil spirits enter into him and make their home with him and so hold him in the life he has chosen that he lacks the will to be free.

There is no evil either of body or spirit but is caused by evil spirits, spirits of hell. As soon as there is any disorder on any plane of human life, physical, mental, or spiritual, evil spirits are immediately present, stirring it into activity, fanning it into a fever. Still it is our belief that the life of man's soul is a discrete degree above the life of the body; and while his spiritual ills are to be healed by direct approach and prayer to the Lord God the Savior, his physical ills are to be treated by medicines, by those skilled in the healing art.

But let us return to the subject of the demoniac, and how the spirits who obsessed him knew that the Lord Jesus was the Son of God. The two worlds, the natural and the spiritual, are one, even as man's soul and body make one man. The spirits of the departed are all about us. The Lord as a Divine celestial man lived in both worlds at the same time, seeing and being seen by spirits and angels both good and bad. His every act was done simultaneously in both worlds, both for men and spirits. He came to redeem man, to conquer the hells and set man free from their dominion. His power and His glory appeared much more openly in that world than in this.

Witness His transfiguration when He took Peter, James and John up into a high mountain and showed them in vision His glory. They then saw Him in the spiritual world, saw Him as He appeared before the angels. "Now is the judgment of this world, now is the prince of this world cast out," said our Lord on one occasion. Again He said, "Behold, I saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven."

He took our nature upon Him that in it He might meet our foes, and by a Divine Human life in the flesh might take to Himself power to conquer hell and put it under subjection to Himself. This great work of redemption was primarily a work of the spiritual realm. Light from Heaven was shut off by the dense cloud of evil spirits which interposed between heaven and mankind. The way to heaven was beset by thieves and robbers, who would not enter in themselves nor suffer anyone else to enter. These He met in personal encounter by admitting temptations from them into His Human, by rejecting their wiles, by exposing their falses, depriving them of their power to deceive, and so casting them down into hell where they belonged.

This is why the evil spirits knew Him, why in terror they cried out at His approach. The testimony to His Divinity was wrung unwillingly from their fears. But He rebuked them, silenced them, suffered them not to speak, because He is not willing to have men convinced by the testimony of the evil. The kingdom of heaven can be built only upon love, not upon fear.

He came to set men free from the power of unclean spirits, so that they might in freedom see and choose and follow the better way if they are willing to do so. Then to man so delivered from infernal

obsession He shows the path of life, walks before us in that path; draws and leads us to follow Him; but does not compel the unwilling.

"I receive not the testimony of men," He says. "No man can come unto Me except the Father which sent Me draw him."

The Demoniac in the Synagogue at Capernaum.

The Lord had been rejected at Jerusalem. He had been rejected at Nazareth, His home. He went down to Capernaum, "and straightway on the sabbath day entered into the synagogue and taught." Mark 1:21. There He found the demoniac possessed with an unclean spirit, which He cast out. Then He arose out of the synagogue and accompanied by Simon and Andrew, James and John, entered into Simon's house. There He healed Simon's wife's mother of a great fever, so that she immediately arose and ministered unto them.

To one who knows of the internal sense of the Word, now opened by the Lord, every word and act here is of the deepest significance. The Lord's rejection at Jerusalem and Nazareth typified His rejection by the Jewish Church, both in doctrine and in life. His passing to Capernaum in the borders of Zebulon and Naphtali, in Galilee of the Gentiles, (Matthew 4:15) typified His raising up a new Church among the Gentiles. The name Capernaum means "village of consolation."

Casting out the unclean spirit in the synagogue, represented His setting the human mind and heart free from demoniac possession so that men could believe in Him and follow Him. It was called an unclean spirit because the spirit that possessed the Church was unclean;--had no notion that religion was designed to purify the heart from unclean loves, had no knowledge of moral and spiritual wrong, knew nothing of sin against God. This foul spirit the Lord cast out and revealed to men the way of righteousness.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20)

Simon Peter represents the faith of the Church, that is, of the new, the Christian Church, which the Lord was about to establish. Andrew, his brother, represents the obedience of faith. (E. 821). James represents charity, and John his brother the good works of charity. The Lord entering with these four disciples into the house of Simon, represents the Lord conferring these graces of faith and obedience, charity and good works upon those who believe in Him as the Savior of the world.

A wife and mother in the Word represents the affection of truth, and thus the Church, because it is the affection of truth which, as it were, gives birth to the doctrine and life of the Church. The great fever which prostrated Peter's wife's mother, was the infernal love of personal gain by means of the ordinances of religion, which had vitiated and almost destroyed the life of the Church.

Now the Lord, having cast out the unclean demons which obsessed the man of the Church, could take by the hand and lift up the affection of truth that it might minister to Divine life in the soul, instead of being subject to infernal power.

"And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and

Andrew, with James and John."

"But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell Him of her."

"And He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them." Amen.

Lessons: - Deuteronomy 18, Luke 4:16-3, @AC 4792-4.

REJECTED AT NAZARETH

"Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country." Luke 4:24.

The Lord had recently come from Jerusalem, where He had cleansed the temple, where He had taught Nicodemus the need of a new birth by water and the spirit if he would see the kingdom of God. He had tarried a while in Judaea, near where John was baptizing, teaching and baptizing those who came to Him as the Messiah for Whom John had prepared the way "though Jesus baptized not but His disciples." John, who was still preaching and baptizing nearby, again gave eloquent testimony that Jesus was the Bridegroom in whose joy he rejoiced as the friend of the bridegroom. "He must increase," said John, "but I must decrease.

After a time the Lord left Judaea and departed into Galilee, going through Samaria, revealing Himself to the woman of Samaria as the Messiah. From Samaria He went to Galilee and began to teach in their synagogues, being glorified of all; for the Galileans also had gone to the Passover at Jerusalem and had seen and heard of the mighty works He had done there. And He came again to Cana, where Nathanael lived, and where He had made the water wine.

While the Lord was at Cana, probably at the home of Nathanael (an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile) there came to Him a certain nobleman from Capernaum whose son was at the point of death, and the Lord healed his son. John speaks of this as the second miracle which the Lord did when He came out of Judaea into Galilee.

Soon after this He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up, and, as was His custom went into the synagogue on the sabbath day.

Many have thought, from the account given in Luke, that the Lord stood up to read without any invitation to do so. This was hardly the case. The service was in charge of a "ruler" of the synagogue who was held responsible to the congregation that all things should be done in proper order according to the prescribed form. He who read the lesson for the day from the prophets usually conducted the devotions, or what we should call the office of the liturgy. The Lord was no doubt asked to officiate by this ruler of the synagogue either as He entered or probably beforehand.

The office began with certain prescribed prayers, was continued by the repetition of the "Shema" or creed, then by other prayers, eulogies thanksgivings and blessings. The office being completed there followed the primary object of the synagogue, the reading of the law and the prophets, followed, if there was anyone at hand to give such an address, by what we may call the sermon,—a comment or explanation of some portion of the law or the prophets, or perhaps of the traditions of the elders.

"On the sabbath at least seven persons were called upon successively to read portions of the law, none of them consisting of less than three verses." (Edersheim, Life and Times. 1:443). Then he who had conducted the devotional service read from the prophets the portion selected for the day and followed the reading with any address that he cared to make.

Our Lord read from the prophet Isaiah, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance

to the captives, and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

The law and the prophets were read in Hebrew, and then, because few understood the Hebrew, were targumed, or translated, into the Aramaean. But the translation was not to be written lest it be accepted as authority, while all authority was only in the original Hebrew. Therefore the translator might paraphrase what had been read, not giving a literal translation but only conveying the sense. This may explain why the quotations from the Old Testament in the New so often differ from the original, and why they are often nearer to the Greek Septuagint than to the Hebrew text.

Having read the prophet in the Hebrew, and then probably translating it Himself into the vernacular, the Lord gave the roll again into the hand of the minister to be restored to the sacred repository, and sat down. "And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened upon Him. And He began to say unto them, This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears."

The Lord's address to them is not given, but its effect on them is described. "All bear Him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth."

We can imagine the state of intense curiosity and expectancy in the synagogue that sabbath morning in Nazareth. The Lord had grown up among them, they had known Him as a boy, had known Him as the son of Joseph the carpenter, they knew His mother, His brothers and sisters. How could He claim to be the Messiah, the promised Heaven-sent King of Israel? (See Mark 6:1-6). They wondered at His wisdom. His learning, His gracious speech; they wondered that He spoke with such certainty and authority, and not as the scribes who gave all authority to the elders, and to revered rabbis. But they had no faith in His claims

As in Jerusalem He met again the demand for signs and wonders, not because they wished to believe, but because they did not and would not believe in a Messiah who preached an invisible kingdom in the heart, a kingdom to be entered by a new birth from above.

It is not likely that they voiced their unbelief, or demanded a sign. They would listen to His address in the synagogue in silence. But He read their thoughts as readily as tho they had spoken them. "And He said unto them, Ye will surely unto Me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country."

What did He see in their minds and hearts that caused Him to speak to them as He did? He saw the Jewish belief that the kingdom of God is given solely by favor; that Jehovah was their God and they were His people; that their God despised all the other peoples of the earth, as they themselves did. When their Messiah came He would exalt them above all the nations of the earth in power, in riches, and in honor. Then the gentiles would come cringing before them, asking to become their servants that they might share their prosperity, their Divine favor. This is why the Lord spoke to them as He did.

"But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; "But unto none of them was Elijah sent save - but rather unto Serepta of Sidon, unto a woman, a widow."Not to an Israelite but to a gentile was their prophet sent to be sustained through the famine.

And He continued, "And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet: and none of them was cleansed save Naaman the Syrian." Their God had passed by all the suffering lepers of Israel to heal Naaman the Syrian, the captain of the army of their enemy.

When they heard these things all that were in the synagogue were filled with rage, they became an ungovernable mob, they forgot the sanctity of the place and of the day.

They would not have Him in their synagogue or in their city; they rushed Him to the brow of the hill on which the city was built and would have cast Him over to His death, but that He then releasing a moiety of His power, calling to Him some of the legions of angels who ever awaited His commands, cowed them so that they shrank backward in fear, and He passing through the midst of them went His way.

Why did the Lord stir up this rage against Himself among His own friends and neighbors? He did not do it lightly or thoughtlessly, not realizing what the effect of His words would be. He was not led away by the zeal of a young and ardent reformer into saying more than He meant to His words did not proceed from any anger or contempt at their narrowness, their ignorance, their extreme self-love and self-complacency.

I do not say that such thoughts may not have arisen in His mind from His assumed human, through His maternal heredity. Without doubt these evil suggestions had been stirred up, but only to be reproved and corrected. He admitted such temptations from the hells for the sake of the purification of His assumed human; but He never acted from infernal suggestion, but only and ever from the Divine love, from the Father Who dwelt within Him.

He was there as the Savior, moved solely by the Divine love, guided by Divine wisdom. Yet, at the same time, He was as a Man among men. His Human was moved somewhat as the human of another man would be moved in similar circumstances. No wonder the prophet Isaiah said of Him, "He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from Him." (53:3). As to the Divine He could not indeed be tempted or suffer; but to the extent that His Human was not yet fully glorified He did suffer. Let us not forget that whereas the proprial love of every finite man is the love of self, the Lord's proprial love as the God-Man was the love of men, the love of drawing them to Himself that ever awaited His commands, He might confer happiness and blessings upon them.

Let us also recall to mind that the nature of love is to overlook or excuse faults, to impute not the worst but the best possible motives.

Then we may perhaps realize with what love and what zeal the Lord looked upon the faces and into the eyes of those His beloved friends and neighbors in the synagogue that sabbath morning in Nazareth, in His own home. He sought to save them from their sins. But before He could do that He had to make them realize what their besetting sin was.

And at what cost to Himself,—humanly speaking. His fame had gone before Him. In Jerusalem, in Judaea, in Capernaum, throughout all Galilee He had become known as a great rabbi. He had done many mighty works, had performed miracles, had healed the sick, taught with authority, had defied the whole power of the priesthood and cleansed the temple. He had accepted John's testimony that He was the promised Messiah, and had Himself proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Now

He had returned to His own home, and all who knew Him crowded eagerly around Him, expecting Him to show greater signs and do greater works than He had done anywhere else.

But instead of gratifying their love and meeting their desires He felt it necessary to disappoint them, to turn their affection into hatred, their admiration into contempt. The love and mercy of the Lord for these His fellow-townsmen is shown by the fact that afterward He returned, and again taught them in their synagogue, not only once but probably twice. His attitude toward His enemies was that expressed on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

His only hope of finding and rescuing the salvable remnant from the midst of that evil generation was to permit their evil and unjust hatred of Him to show forth because He taught them the truth.

Then, perhaps, afterward, they might be ashamed, even some of those who had been enraged against Him. A realization of sin and a sorrow for sin,—at least contemplated and planned if not actually done,—is a prerequisite of forgiveness.

"Against Thee, against Thee, only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight"

The Divine Love must continually oppose itself to the proprium of man; and the proprium of man ever burns with rage against the Divine Love. This was the Lord's cross. His love of men must lead Him to suffer hatred and death at their hands in order to show them the nature of self-love that He might tread down its head with all who are salvable, with all who in humility, seeing the power of hell in their hearts, invite Him to come in and fight their battles for them against the infernal hosts

No man of himself can lift a hand against the terrible evils which surge up into his bosom from the hells; for in and of himself every man is even as those who are there, whose life is a hatred of Divine control, whose constant raging lust is to destroy the kingdom of God and reign in His stead. Only those men can be saved and drawn as it were out of hell and up into heaven to the Lord, who can in some measure realize this power of hell over them, and their guilt before the Lord, their need of a Savior.

This need of the realization of sin against God in the heart before a man can become a disciple of the Lord explains many of the mysteries of Divine Providence, why the Lord permits so many and so great evils in the world. He could, without changing man's love, by power externally applied, bring the world into a state of order. But this would be hell, not heaven. Hell is kept in a state of external order. But heaven consists of those who have rejected from their hearts the love of dominion and the love of the world, and have enthroned instead the Lord's love of others; who feel the joy of others as joy in themselves.

The self-righteous man is meant by the rich man who can hardly enter the kingdom of heaven. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."

The Lord never tempts a man, never awakens his evils. It is the spirits of hell who do that. Yet when the Lord comes to His own, to seek the good and the true that He may save them, the hells are aroused at His coming, and they fan into a flame man's latent evils. The Lord permits this for the sake of judgment, of self-revelation, of separation of good from evil in the man, of truth from falsity.

Happy the man who then realizes the depth of his evil and prays the Lord to be delivered from it; happy he who realizes that all anger is at its heart anger against the Lord and rebellion against His Providence; for those who do realize this truth can be delivered from the infernal spirits who rule over them and can be saved.

This is one reason why the Lord's coming to His own at Nazareth, and teaching in their synagogue that He was the Messiah and the Savior was willing to awaken in them the desire to put Him to death. Amen.

Lessons: Isaiah 6, Luke 4:14-33, Lord 29.

THE ONLY TRUE GOD AND JESUS CHRIST

"AND THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent." John 17:3.

Here the Lord Himself plainly speaks of two; and this just before leaving His disciples as He goes "out of the world." If, as He taught them, He and the Father are one, and he that hath seen Him hath seen the Father, why should He in the very moment of parting, in His wonderful intercessory prayer, have spoken of the need of knowing both Himself and the Father as tho' they were two separate Persons!

Why, for the very reason that they two are one it is necessary to know both that we may know either. God is known only as revealed in Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is known only when He is seen as the one eternal God. As our Lord said at another time, "All things are delivered to Me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." (Matthew 11:27). And again He said, "No man hath seen the Father at any time; the Only-begotten Son Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him"--or manifested Him.

The eternal God, without beginning or end, Infinite and Omnipotent, what can we poor worms of the dust know of Him except as He reveals Himself in forms accommodated to our intelligence? And even then to know Him aright we must know both the nature of the form that accommodates and reveals Him as well as the Divine nature Itself. Body and soul make one man; but we must know both body and soul to know man; must know each separately and as united together in one; that is, we must know what constitutes the soul, and what the body, and how each modifies the other in forming a unit.

Or, again, will and understanding, love and wisdom, good and truth, are two things that make one; yet they can be separated in thought, and must be so distinguished; each must be known separately that they may be known together; and both must be known as united in one that each may be known for what it is in itself. So is the union of Father and Son in our Lord Jesus Christ. The two are one; but one distinctly. They can and must be distinguished in thought, that they may be seen as one.

IF OUR LORD IS, as He claimed, personally one with the Father - as distinguished from all other men, who are but forms or vessels, dead in themselves, to be animated by the inflowing Life which is God - then must we not know the many things revealed about the Lord wherein He differs from other men; His unique conception by God, having no earthly father, His birth of a virgin mother? Must we not know how God "bowed the Heavens and came down for our salvation"? HOW His soul therefore differed from the soul of a finite man even from conception and birth? Must we not know something of the laws of heredity, what the child inherits from his father and what from his mother, and the relation of the two heredities, whether they are of equal power and permanence or whether one is internal and the other external; whether in ordinary men both heredities are permanent, or whether one is of the very soul and the other of the body, and hence capable of being expelled? And this we need to know in order that we may know how in the unparalleled case of our Lord His Divine Soul could expell all the heredity from the mother that He might gradually be reborn from the indwelling Divine of the Father, that finally the Body might become as the Soul, of one Substance and Form, put forth from His Divine Soul. as in the beginning He was conceived therefrom.

Thus to know God as revealed in Jesus Christ, the Divine as revealed in the Divine Human, we must know the nature of His Human that we may know the nature of the Divine which the Human reveals. We must know His Human both as to its agreement with the human of finite man and as differing therefrom by virtue of His direct conception by a virgin mother from the overshadowing power of the Highest.

To know the only true God we must know Jesus Christ Whom He has sent; must know Him as the God Man; wherein He differs from other men; in what way He was Divine at birth; how He was more fully Divine at His resurrection; what part His maternal human derived from the mother played in His life among men, and what part His Divine Human had in that life. There must be some understanding of His two states, the one state of humility or outpouring, when in the human from the mother He humbled Himself before the Divine, prayed to the Father as to another than Himself, felt in Himself the sins of the human race as an almost insuperable obstacle to His union with the Father; and, on the other hand, His state of glorification when from the Divine Human He spoke as the Father, claiming unity with God, walking on the water, teaching that He is the living bread that came down from heaven, showing Himself transfigured on the mount.

We can hardly conceive of the tenderness of the Lord's love for the eleven chosen disciples as the moment approached when He should be taken from them. While He was with them He had kept them in the Father's name; but now He is to be taken from them and they are to be left alone, although' not alone; in a world that hated them as it had hated Him. They were so little prepared for the separation; had so little conception of the nature of His kingdom.

Yet He had given them the words that the Father had given Him, and they had received them and known surely that He came from the Father and that the Father had sent Him.

These few simple men, together with others who should believe on Him through their word, are the hope of the salvation of the human race; on them hangs the success or the failure of His work of the redemption and salvation of mankind. His work on the earth is done. He has glorified the Father. He has lived a perfect sinless life as the Lamb of God. He has manifested the Divine Name and nature to the men which the Father has given Him. And now He is about to return to the Father who sent Him into the world. And His love broods over these men whom the Father had given Him out of the world; that they may see His glory; that they may be with Him where he is; that filled with His Holy Spirit they may be gathered into one as "Thou, Father art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us."

This was the purpose of His coming into the world; this was why the Father had sent Him; this was why, in obedience to the Father's command, He had done all the works and spoken all the words which His Father gave Him, namely, that those whom the Father gave Him might be with Him; that the purpose in creation a heaven of angels from the human race, might be realized.

This intense love of saving men to eternity, that He might draw them up into His own bosom, prompted all He did and said this last night of His life on earth. It was this love that led Him to lay aside His garments at supper, gird himself with a towel, and wash the disciples' feet. It was this love that led Him to institute the Holy Supper, saying. "This do in remembrance of Me."

He declared to them plainly that He and the Father were one, so that having seen Him they had seen

the Father. They were not to let their hearts be troubled; He was going to prepare a place for them and return and receive them unto Himself, that where He was they might be also. He told them that they ought to rejoice that He was leaving them, for He would send them the Comforter, who would no longer speak in parables, but would show them plainly of the Father; that because of His going to the Father they should do greater works than He had done among them.

He taught them that He was the vine, of which they were branches; that if they would abide in Him He would abide in them; that they were to be witnesses of Him because they had been with Him from the beginning. The world would indeed hate them as it had hated Him, they would be persecuted as He had been persecuted, but their sorrow was but for a night; joy would come in the morning; that whatever they asked in His name He would grant it; finally concluding with the words,

"These things have I spoken unto you that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Then after having taught them all that He could impart by instruction He lifts His eyes to heaven and pours out His soul in prayer, a prayer embodying all the love and solicitude He felt in leaving them, as if alone, to carry on the work He had so far advanced.

He speaks first of the union of Father and Son, the Divine and the Human, saying, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son that thy Son also may glorify Thee." He had come into the world to make the Father known to men. He had revealed the nature of the Divine Love, the power and the wisdom of almighty God in a Human assumed from a virgin mother. Now the hour had come to put off that maternal Human that He might reveal Himself in His own Divine Human, glorious with the full glory of the Father, triumphant over death and hell. He asks the Father to glorify the Son, the Human, that the Human might glorify the Divine.

Peter, James and John had been given a foretaste of His Divine glory on the mount of transfiguration. There they saw Him in His glory, His face shining as the Sun, His garments glistening as the light, "as no fuller on earth could whiten them." They saw Moses and Elias talking with Him.

This vision was not of this world. Their spiritual sight was opened. It was not the Lord's earthly body and garments that so shone, but His spiritual or Divine Body and garments. They saw Him as in His times of exaltation He must have appeared to the angels of the higher heavens. But so long as He was in the world these states of glory would be followed by states of humiliation, when He became conscious of the imperfections and evils of the maternal Human; even as on descending from the mount of Transfiguration they found in the valley at the foot of the mount a man whose son was possessed of a demon, that the disciples were powerless to cast out.

That son was typical of the whole human race, typical even of the maternal human assumed through the virgin; only the immediate power of God could overcome and cast out the demons which possessed our flesh. But the Lord had now finished the work which the Father gave Him to do. He had glorified the Father on the earth. He had gotten the victory over the combined assaults of all the hells. The prince of this world had come and found nothing in the Lord, nothing of evil or of falsity, nothing of his own. There yet remained the last temptation in the Garden and on the cross; but they were already won in spirit; it but remained to endure them as the means of putting off the infirm flesh, as He had

already put off all the infirmities of the spirit.

Now when the Son, or the Human, was made altogether Divine, with the Divine glory of the Father above the Heavens. He could in turn manifest the glory of the Father to angels and to men.

But how slow men are to see that glory. Nineteen hundred years have passed since the Lord glorified the Father on the earth; yet how few, know even in general outline, in what that glorification consisted. The Christian Church, tho' called by the name of Christ, never knew that His glorification consisted in making His Human Divine.

To Christian thought the Lord's Human has ever remained Human and His Divine has remained Divine. In both branches of the Church, both Catholic and Protestant, they speak of His Human as "our Elder Brother," as tho' the Human from Mary was and remained a man by itself, having from her a rational soul. They take literally the statement that He was exalted to the right hand of God; they expect to find Him in heaven as a man like an angel.

It is indeed said in the Athanasian Creed, which all Christians accept, "that as the rational soul and body are one man so God and Christ are one God," yet no one thinks according to the creed. By the Son of God they do not understand the Human born of Mary, but a certain invisible "Son," born from eternity, who dwelt within the assumed Human while He was on the earth, Who then returned to the Father, to sit at His right hand, even as He had done from the beginning.

Not until the time of His second coming, in the power and glory of His Word, could the Lord reveal to His Church on earth how the Father glorified the Son, that the Son also might glorify Him; that it consisted in putting off the human from the mother and putting on in its stead a Divine Human from the indwelling Father. It is in His Divine Human that He becomes to eternity the visible God. It is in this Divine Human that He is God-with-us.

And we whose eyes have been opened of the Lord's mercy to see something of the glory of the Father in the Son and therefore of the Son from the Father, how little of that glory do we see. How little do we care to see. How little satisfies us. That glory is revealed in the Writings in which the Lord has made His second coming. For, as we are taught in the @Inv (44) the Lord reveals Himself in the letter of the Word, the New Testament, in His Human, but in the Writings He reveals His Divine. Here He has revealed Himself in the fulness of His Divine glory.

But think not that when once you have grasped the fact of how His glorification was accomplished you have realized the fulness of His glory. Let us follow on to know the Lord.

He says at the end of His prayer, "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them and I in them."

Having once spoken the truth of His Word the Lord speaks it or declares it again every time we read it or hear it. By His spirit He inflows into His truth anew every time it is spoken, giving new perceptions of its meaning. The Writings are manifold and voluminous, so that we may read daily all the years of our life and still return to them finding as it were new and unremembered statements of truth. These are the words of eternal life; how much more precious and worth while than the concerns of the day and the world which pass away and are forgotten.

It is only by these truths of the threefold Word that we are brought into the presence of the Lord. If we realize the truth now revealed that in our Lord the Human is Divine and the Divine is Human so that He is the one only God made visible to men, we may actually hear Him speaking to us, even as He spoke to His disciples, and to His Servant in His Second Coming. For He speaks anew to every devout soul the words He spoke to them.

It is the "Son" thus glorified by the Father that has power over all flesh. The Father by Himself had not and has not that power, that is, He had not and has not the power to conquer for us and in us the infernal foes of our spiritual life; only the invisible God as revealed in the visible, the Father as revealed in the Son, has that power. Man must first see the Father glorified in the Son by the steps of His glorification before he can receive from the Divine Human the power to carry on a similar work in his own regeneration.

Eternal life cannot be given to what Paul calls "the old man" in us; it can be given only to the new man, received by rebirth and regeneration from the Lord the Savior. Even as He put off the infirm Human from the mother and put on anew a Divine Human, so the man of the New Church who knows the true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, can, in His Name and by His power put off the old Adam and put on a new nature.

But this must be done by means of the truth revealed. The Son of God is that truth. We can know Him only as we know the truth of His Word. He comes to us in that truth. We see and know Him only as we see and know the truth about Him. Each truth of His Word is a mirror of Him in which we may see some of His Divine attributes. But to know the infinite God adequately we must know many truths about Him. The angels are continually, to eternity, learning new truths about Him, about His Divine as revealed in His Divine Human. And the more they learn the more they realize that there is still more to learn.

The highest human and angelic wisdom is to know how God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

But what is "Eternal life"? The "Son" was given power over all flesh that He might give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him; and He says that it is life eternal to know the only true God and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent. But this cannot mean to know merely by hearsay, or by lightly hearing the truths of the Word. It involves a deeper knowledge; such knowledge, comparatively, as the Son had of the Father; the knowledge that comes by faith and love, and from conjunction thereby; knowledge by understanding and by life. It is knowledge gained by living in the Lord and He in man. This is to receive the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of the Lord Himself. This is the spirit of His intercessory prayer,—that all who believe on the Lord may be one; "As Thou Father in Me and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us."

Thus alone can He impart His glory to those whom the Father, the Divine Love, gives to Him; that they may be in Him in the truth and in the Father in the good of love, and in both Father and Son in the heavenly marriage of truth with good and of good with truth; for this is the life eternal which is meant by knowing the true God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. Amen.

Lessons: - Hosea 14, Jno. 16, Lord 55, 47, The Only God, etc.

WALKING ON THE SEA

"And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them walking upon the sea." Matthew 14, 25.

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To the little child every act of God is a miracle. The child knows nothing of natural law as a thing separate from God's will. He thinks of God as a man, all-powerful to do what he pleases with that which He has made.

The man whose mind has been formed under the dominion of science sees everywhere the reign of natural law. He comes to think of the universe as a vast and most complex machine, where there is no place for caprice or direct action, even of God Himself. He believes that no natural law can be broken.

The New Churchman agrees with the scientist that no law can ever be broken, for law is but the operation of God's Divine Love and Wisdom, which know no change. Yet the New Churchman also agrees with the little child in believing that God is a Divine Man, that He holds all nature subject to Himself, and that He is able to do what He wills in the world which He has created, and still sustains and operates.

The reconciliation of the two beliefs, which apparently clash, the New Churchman finds in the fact that there are higher laws than those of the natural world, and at the Lord's good pleasure these higher laws may for a time supersede the lower ones. He has learned that the spiritual world is the world of causes, the natural but the world of effects, and that therefore spiritual forces may when necessary act more directly openly, as it were nakedly, in and upon nature; thus not breaking or destroying any law, but only superseding it for a time by the action of a higher force.

The New Churchman believes in all the miracles recorded in the Word, and he does not believe in miracles in our day. The Israelitish and Jewish dispensation was one of miracles because their hearts were so hardened they could not believe in God except as He manifested His power more openly in the natural realm, thus miraculously The first Christian Church was able, if willing, to know God more internally, so the age of miracle ceased. The man of the New and True Christian Church can see the power of God in natural law equally as in spiritual law; hence for us miracle is now unnecessary;--yet a belief in the miracles of the Word is necessary as the very foundation for our faith that miracles are not now done.

We believe that the Lord led the children of Israel by a pillar of cloud and of fire forty years in the wilderness; yet we do not expect Him to manifestly show His leadership of His Church in natural ways at this day. But we do believe that His leadership of His Church is no less real and actual now;--is in fact more real because more internal and spiritual. He in His Divine Human leads His Church in and through Heaven. He leads each man of His Church through insertion into an appropriate angelic society, through which he is enlightened and led toward his land of promise.

With Israel it was necessary to make that leading manifest before their bodily eyes and the Lord did this by a cloud formed in nature, of material substances, a cloud which moved when the Lord wished them to go forward, and stood where He wished them to encamp. This cloud was but the clothing, and

the manifestation in the natural world, of the presence of the angelic society through which the Lord led them. It was accommodation to their state. It broke no law of nature; it fulfilled all natural law. It required no more effort on the part of God than does His more internal and spiritual leading of the present day.

Yet see what use this miracle performed! Which of us could believe in the personal leading by the Lord through an angelic Society, guiding and guarding us day and night, if this miracle had not been wrought in the Egyptian wilderness?

The age of miracles was an accommodation to the sensual and corporeal state of the Jews, whose internal man could not be opened, but was tightly closed by sordid avarice, by love of self and of the world. Yet this gave the opportunity to the Lord when He came to show forth in a natural manner the things that He is always and constantly doing for man both naturally and spiritually. Without these miracles done by the Lord when He took our flesh upon Him, fallen men, such as we are, could not know and believe that it is He who feeds and clothes us, and leads us by the hand. Seeing only nature we should believe in nature only, and not in the God of nature, to Whom nature is but an obedient handmaid to carry out His will.

Our Lord, when here, led a multitude of men, women and children into the wilderness where He opened for them the internal meaning of their Law, giving the Christian law as it is embodied in the Sermon on the Mount; thus He fed their souls with the Bread of Life, which is Himself.

Then He descended into the plain and had compassion on them, and healed their sick, and finally, when they hungered and had no food, He fed them with material food, miraculously provided for them by His hands. And we are told in the HEAVENLY DOCTRINE He thus daily provides food for the bodies of spirits and angels, and that when He wills this spiritual food which is real food, can be turned into natural food, "in like manner as into manna every morning." (E617)

By this miracle the Lord taught His disciples that the same Divine Being Who feeds man's soul also feeds His body, and that He was personally one with the Father. This truth He also taught openly on the next day when the multitude followed Him to Capernaum, saying "My Father giveth you the true Bread from Heaven..... I am that Bread of life.

Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood ye have no life in you." And when His disciples murmured against this as an hard saying He added, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

There are degrees of life in man. His immortal soul is fed by direct influx from the Divine Human of our Lord; man's mind is fed by truths from His Divine Word; his body is fed by leaves and fishes; all these foods are equally from God, provided by His love, for the sustenance of man.

The miracle of the leaves and fishes convinced those who saw it that this was indeed the Messiah, the Son of God, Who should come into the world. But their reaction was characteristically Jewish. Instead of being overawed in the presence of the Divine, and seeking in humility to know and do His will, they would take Him by force and make Him a temporal, an earthly, king.

Putting forth His Divine power to prevent this,--which was as far from His plan for man's salvation as

hell is from Heaven,--the Lord "Constrained" His disciples to get into a boat and go before Him to Capernaum while he sent the people away, and departed Himself alone into the mountain to pray.

We are not told the subject of His prayer, but it doubtless was for the wisdom and patience to lead all His followers who were capable of learning, to a more spiritual thought of His kingdom. The answer to His prayer is shown in the wonderful address He gave in the synagogue in Capernaum; even tho the result was that "From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him."

He walks upon the sea.

If we remember that the Jews were of such a nature that they could be taught spiritual things only by actual demonstration before their senses, by miracles, we shall see why the disciples, going alone in the ship without the Lord, had to encounter a contrary wind, against which they made no headway all night long.

Together with the multitudes they had placed themselves in opposition to the Lord; they were no longer learners sitting at His feet, doing what He told them; they would make Him a king by force, against His will. They were setting themselves against the Divine purpose; this could he revealed to them, they could be brought back into a submissive state of humility and dependence upon the Lord, only by the physical manifestation of the Divine displeasure. Their opposition to the Lord was made manifest by a contrary wind against which they could make no headway, which in fact threatened their lives, which destroyed their self-confidence.

So they toiled all night, until the morning watch, while the Lord alone in the mountain, watched and waited and prayed for some softening of their hard hearts. For while it was night to them, He had the light of His Father's face, and not only saw them throughout the night but knew their thoughts As soon as He saw that they were sufficiently humbled to be again taught and led by Him, He came to them, walking upon the sea. Just how the Divine power operated to overcome the action of gravity, so that the Lord could walk upon the waves of the sea, I do not at present know. But I can plainly see that God must have that power, as the means of setting forth before sensual men His power to be present in His Divine Human in all the storms and evils of human life, turning evil into good, bringing the morning light, and peace, with His own presence in the boat, as soon as we are willing to give up our evil way and be guided by Him.

Miracle is but the manifestation in the natural world of the same Divine power which is constantly manifest in the spiritual world. In a miracle that power acts nakedly and swiftly in this world as it always acts in the spiritual world; but sometimes in ways that the natural man map misunderstand. We are taught in the HEAVENLY DOCTRINE that when Joshua commanded the sun and moon to stand still in the valley of Aijalona this could not be done actually, for it would mean the destruction of the physical universe, but that a light was given them from the spiritual world appearing like the sun and moon that they might have light from heaven to finish the subjugation of their enemies.

Still, this is but in harmony with the law of all miracles in that miracle breaks no natural law, but only manifests from the spiritual world a more interior and powerful force, which, for the time, appears to suspend the operation of natural law.

The *modus operandi* of the Lord's walking upon the sea may perhaps be found in a study of the two centers, the center of life, which is the sun of the spiritual world, and the center of gravity, which is in the earth. The center of life draws all living things upward to itself, while gravity upon that which is inert and dead. The Divine Human has life in itself even as the Father has life in Himself; and that Life Itself in Him would seem to be able to overcome, at His will, the power of gravity even in the matters of His assumed Human, taken from the virgin. Why not, when life from God daily overcomes gravity in every spear of grass, in every flower which lifts its head toward heaven, in the blood in living animal and man which circulates as freely upward as downward? It does not exceed enlightened belief that the same Divine power which draws all men up to Him in the spiritual world, might also at His good pleasure show itself superior to the force of gravity, not only with His own Body, but even with the body of Peter, so long as Peter's faith in Him was clear and strong.

Is it not, after all, the power of the Lord which lifts our solid earth and carries it year after year about the sun as lightly as a bubble on the sea? He who sees, or is able to see, that all nature's law is but the presence and the power of God, does not need miracle. Yet we in our darkness do need this miracle of the Word to show us whence comes all power and life and light.

The sea here is a symbol of the natural mind of man tossed into waves by evil loves which set themselves in opposition to the will of God, to the acts of His Divine Providence. We set ourselves in rebellion against Him. We insist that He shall do what we wish, instead of praying, "Thy will be done." So in rebellion and internal rage we toil throughout the darkness of the night, determined not to be reconciled to the Lord's will. But finally we grow weary, our strength fails, we feel the need of the Master, we realize our helplessness.

Then He comes to us, walking upon the waves of the sea. He makes our trials and afflictions the very means of His approach. The word which is translated "tossed," where it is said that the boat was "tossed by the waves," means literally to explore or to examine by torture, and this because the spiritual temptations represented by the storm upon the sea serve to reveal the true duality of the evil and selfish loves which cause our opposition to the Lord. (Clowes)

Mark says, "He would have passed by them," and so He would, had they not invited Him into the ship. He comes to every man walking upon the waves of his trials, but to many He remains but an unknown spirit, exciting fear but not love. But to those who have ears to hear He says, "Be of good cheer; I am; be not afraid,"--for the words we have translated "It is I" are literally "I am," thus He proclaimed His name as Jehovah, the "I am" who appeared to Moses in the wilderness.

And when they willingly received Him into the boat the wind ceased, and immediately they were at the land whither they went.

When we receive the Lord into our boat our toil is ended, our night is over, our morning is come, and we have reached our journey's end. Amen.

Lessons: - Dan 6, Mat, 14, De Mir (Frag. 60 or @AC 5291 7-e).

THE BREAD OF LIFE

"I am that Bread of Life." John 6:48.

We cannot separate the Lord's Doctrine as taught in the synagogue in Capernaum from His actual feeding of the multitudes in the wilderness of Bethsaida. A great company had followed the Lord, going on foot across the Jordan to the northeastern shore of the Lake of Galilee. There, sitting on a mountain surrounded by His disciples, He had taught them the Christian Law as distinct from the Jewish Law. "Ye have heard it said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."

He had had compassion on them and healed their sick, and when they had no food He created for them leaves and fishes and fed them.

By this they were convinced that He was the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God who should come into the world.

Then they forgot all about the Christian doctrine He had taught them and would take Him by force and make Him an earthly ruler over the Jews. The Messiah as their king meant to them perpetual leaves and fishes, unlimited abundance of all the good things of the world, riches, power, dominion, revenge upon their enemies and those that had oppressed them. Thus the very acceptance of the Lord by them stirred up all the lusts of their natural man;--created a storm upon the sea.

This storm the Lord must still before He could feed the souls of His disciples with the bread of life. But here again He must, at first, represent before them outwardly what He desired to do within them.

He "constrained" His disciples to get into a boat and go before Him to the other side, then He dismissed the multitudes, and went Himself alone into the mountain to spend the night in prayer.

It is not always so? Does not the Lord's first approach and the blessing of His presence fan our evils into flame, so that He must withdraw for a season into the inner heights of the soul, until the evils of our natural man are seen and judged?

So that glorious day of the realization that the Messiah was indeed come among them ended in the night of storm, when the disciples toiled all night in rowing but made no headway. At last in their extremity, when they thought themselves about to perish, the Lord came to them, walking upon the stormy waters; and when they received Him into their boat the wind ceased, and immediately they were at the land whither they went.

Later in the day the people who had passed the night in the wilderness, after the Lord had fed them, took shipping and came to Capernaum seeking the Lord. And when they had found Him and asked Him, Rabbi, when camest Thou hither? He answered and said. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracle but because ye did eat of the leaves and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed."

This power to create bread from Heaven and feed the multitudes was the seal and testimony of God the Father that He was the Son of God, come down from Heaven to give life unto the world.

"Then said they unto Him, What shall we do that we might work the works of God. Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent."

They had believed on Him, or thought they did, when they saw the miracle of the leaves and fishes; but now that He had refused to be a king, according to their desire, they had come into doubts. What further sign could He give them? He had indeed fed them in the wilderness, but so had Moses fed them with bread from heaven, and Moses was not the Messiah. If He was in truth the Promised One He should be able to give a still greater sign.

Then He told them that Moses had not given them the bread from Heaven, but His Father was offering to them the true Bread from Heaven. Their fathers ate the manna and are dead; He was the true Bread from Heaven; he who ate of this Bread should never die but live forever.

At first they said unto Him, "Lord evermore give us this bread." But later many of His disciples said, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then, that He saith, I come down from Heaven?"

"I am that Bread of Life."

As with them, so with us, the work of God is to believe on Him Whom He hath sent; believe on Him as the Bread by which we are to be nourished and built up into His image and likeness.

How may we receive that Bread, so that we may have eternal life? Is it by a mere act of "faith," so called, whereby we accept the Lord as our Savior?

The Lord knew that some of them could not believe on Him; these were they who were in evil; who were not willing to be taught and led by Him, but who insisted that He should set up such a kingdom as they desired. He taught them that no man could come unto Him except the Father, which had sent Him, draw him. The Divine Love alone could draw men to Him; but all who were willing to receive that Love into their hearts would be able to accept and follow Him.

Those who really believed in Him would not dictate to Him what kind of kingdom He should set up; they would come to Him as disciples, learners that they might learn the nature of His kingdom. To believe in the Lord is to believe in His Doctrine, in His Word; to love His Word, to read it, to go where we shall hear it; to meditate upon it, to seek to understand it, to thus incorporate it into our minds, as food by assimilation is incorporated into our blood and body.

This is what the Lord meant when He called Himself the Living Bread, and the Bread from Heaven; when He said, "Except ye chew the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you; for My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed."

Food for our bodies must be chewed; separated into its smallest parts that it may be prepared by the digestive juices of the body, digested, assimilated, and become a part of us. So with the Lord's Doctrine which goes forth from His mouth. This is the Bread of Heaven for our minds. This, too, we must chew

upon; must examine it minutely by meditation, by rational analysis; must make it our own both by understanding and by the will to do it. No one can do this work for you; each one must do it for himself; and the measure in which he does it is the measure in which he is fed by the Living Bread.

Man is born to be a child of God, an image and likeness of Him; that is, loving as He loves, thinking as He thinks, judging and doing as He does.--Not that man has life of his own; man is but a vessel to receive the Life which is God; but so long as he looks to God, desiring to be conjoined with Him he feels that life as his own, tho knowing it is from God within him.

The first men, those of the Golden Age, who were in innocence like that of a little child had no desire to live their own life; they loved to feel their entire dependence upon God. They looked up to Him as a little child to its parents, delighting to be led by Him in all their affections and thoughts.

But even as the growing child comes to desire his own way, his independence, to be his own master, so the Race, growing up, refused to be led by the inflowing Divine; claimed life as its own,--as it appears to be,--and centered it in self and the world instead of God and Heaven.

Thus man turned from the internal, from the Divine and spiritual, closed the upper door of perception, and opened wide the doors of the senses, calling good all which appealed to his sensual and bodily life.

Now an invisible God, a Spirit, residing on high above the heavens, could have no appeal to such a man. God must be made visible before the senses, in the world. Accordingly the promise was made immediately after the Fall that God would come into the world as a Divine Man, born of woman. And that promise was kept alive by continual theophanies, by manifestations of the Divine through the person of an angel whom He filled with His Spirit and His glory, and through whom the Divine spoke, saying, Thus saith the Lord. Thus the Divine continually strove with man, sending angels, prophets and priests, "rising up early and sending them," delaying man's downward course, keeping alive some knowledge of God and man's duty toward Him and his neighbor.

But finally the time came when except the Lord God Himself should take our flesh upon Him and come into the world, should meet our foes in temptation combats,--the hosts of evil spirits who held man bound so that he could no longer see the truth or walk in it,--should conquer them and confine them in their hells, should thus open again the road to heaven and true happiness, clearing it of thieves and robbers, no flesh could be saved.

But more than that was involved in the coming of the Lord. Not only must man be freed from the power of the hells; he must also be given a visible God, that he can see while still in the world and the flesh; a God that he can know, that he can understand, that he can love, so that he can be conjoined with Him by faith and love, and so live from Him and in Him.

This our Lord was and became, both God and Man; from birth He was inwardly God from the Father; while as to the body a man, from the mother; but by the processes of glorification,--putting off the mere human from the mother and putting on the Divine Human from the indwelling Father,--He became God alone even as to the substance of His flesh and bones. Thus in the Son the invisible Father stands forth to view, the visible God.

And take note that this visibility means not only as to the Body, the glorified Body in which He rose

from the tomb which was wholly of Divine substance; it means also that in the life of the Lord the Divine attributes shine forth fully revealed before the eyes of sinful men. Looking intelligently upon the life of our Lord and Savior, in the light of the Doctrine of the opened Word, we see in every act and every saying, the Love and the Wisdom of the infinite Father Himself shining through the thin veil of the Flesh. "For God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." "In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

In Jesus Christ our Lord, as glorified, God becomes not only the First, but also the Last; not only our Creator, but also our mighty Redeemer and Savior. And yet by the Heavenly Doctrine we see Father and Son not as two but as one, even as soul and body are one; so that with single mind and heart we can worship and adore, follow and obey our Lord as the one visible God, who was and is and is to come.

Is He not then in truest sense the Bread of Life, whence alone comes the life of the world? There is no other means to a knowledge of God, no other way of approach to God, but Jesus Christ our Lord. He who rejects the Lord as a revelation of God, seeking an invisible God apart from the Lord, has no real God but a graven image of his own devising, or impersonal God who is but a part of nature.

It is the Divine Human, the God Man, a personal, visible God, having all the attributes of a man but in an infinite degree,—it is this that the human heart demands as the supreme Object of love and worship. And in the Lord's great mercy and compassion all this has been given us in our Lord Jesus Christ Whose yoke is easy and His burden light.

But be it remembered that we can know the infinite truth and goodness of God as revealed in our Lord and Savior, only through the truths of His Word. He comes to us in His Human in and by the story of His life as recorded in the Gospels, but as to His Divine, in the Heavenly Doctrine, where He gives the light of Heaven upon the story of His earthly life. And the Bread of Heaven by which our minds and souls are nourished is given only through His revealed Word. Our human, our reciprocal, in which the Divine is received to the nourishment of our souls, is in the rational mind, in vessels formed by Divine Revelation. All Divine influx not received in vessels so provided through the body and the senses, passes through us like water through a sieve, leaving no tangible effects. Therefore for us the Bread of Heaven is His Word which we must mentally chew, or meditate upon, with prayer to the Lord that in receiving it we may truly receive Him.

In His love and pity for men, and in His great zeal for our salvation, the Lord has established the Holy Supper as a means of complete conjunction with Him, and has commanded us to observe it in remembrance of Him. In this sacrament the bread is a symbol of His Divine Love which He gives for the life of man, and the wine a symbol of His Divine Truth. He invites us to eat and drink with Him in His kingdom, even as His disciples ate and drank with Him just before the passion of the cross; yet the bread and wine do not represent the mortal body from Mary which was rejected on the cross, but the Divine Body in which He rose triumphant over death and hell.

In His sacrament the whole of the Divine Word is gathered up and dramatized. It calls to mind all the sacrifices of the Jewish Church, looking to the coming of the Lord, in which they offered the best parts by fire to the Lord and then ate before Him in the holy place of what had been consecrated to Him. It embodies also the story of His life and death as given in the Gospels, His love for men which made Him

willing to endure the cross that He might thereby reveal the nature of Divine Love. It symbolizes also His conquest of hell by which He redeemed us, and brought life and immortality to light, and made Himself the visible God with Whom conjunction is possible.

Therefore the bread and the wine, consecrated thus before the Lord, become vessels in which His Divine attributes can be received and imparted to that man who humbly and devoutly partakes of them. Amen.

Lessons: Jno. 6:1-34, Jno. 6:35-71, Liturgy 345 or @TCR 698.

TRANSFIGURATION

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James and John his brother, and bringeth them up into the high mountain apart. And was transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." Matthew 17:1, 2.

When Peter had confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," The Lord told the twelve, "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

This promise was literally fulfilled after six days; for the Lord took Peter, James and John up into a high mountain apart, where, as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was changed; His face shone like the sun, his garments as the light thereof; and Moses and Elijah appeared talking with Him of His death at Jerusalem.

Not often is prophecy so soon fulfilled. How happy were these three chosen one's to receive such signal marks of Divine favor. Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees often demanded a sign from heaven; but it was refused; not even to the other nine was the heavenly vision given, but only to the faithful three, who were closest to Him. Yet the Lord is no respecter of persons; He loves all alike (the not in equal measure); the difference is in human reception and reciprocation of His love. The vision could be given to Peter, James and John because they could be more quickly prepared than others to perceive the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The vision of the Lord in His glory could not be given to scribe and Pharisee: they had hardened their hearts and blinded their eyes lest they see any glory in a kingdom of heaven such as He came to establish. Not even the other nine were able to see the vision as yet. But these three had not listened wholly in vain to the Lord's doctrine. Deep within their hearts, hardly known even to themselves, they had begun to cherish the first rudiments of the Kingdom. Into these vessels in their minds the Lord could inflow, and quicken them into a glorious vision.

And how important was that vision of the Lord's transfiguration. What hopes it must have inspired even while His body lay in the tomb. And what light and glory it has shed through all the darkness of the ages since. Seen only by the three, yet through their testimony it has become the heritage of all the Lord's disciples, its glory increasing with the passing years.

Yet the full significance of the Transfiguration could not be known until after seventeen centuries when the Lord in His Second Advent revealed it. Thrice happy are we of the New Church to whom the Lord has opened the meaning of the vision, increasing sevenfold its light and its glory. Let us cherish it in our hearts, longing for the day when we can share its glory with many.

IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

The first thing the HEAVENLY DOCTRINE does for us is to make it plain that this vision of the Lord in His glory was seen in the spiritual world, by the opening of the spiritual sight of the three disciples.

This understanding of the nature of all the visions recorded in the Sacred Scriptures has become so fundamental and commonplace to us that we do not realize that it is not known to other Christians. But it is not. Even the best and most spiritual of Christian commentators on the Transfiguration think of it as seen in this world, by the light of this world, and with the eyes of the physical body.

It is only in the New Church and by the light of Heaven brought down to men in the Heavenly Doctrine that we are able to think of the spiritual world as a substantial world, having its own sun and its own light thence, its own firmament above and its solid earth underfoot; its own mountains and rivers with all the scenery of a world, yet composed of spiritual substance.

This is to us the first truth, the beginning of truths, concerning the kingdom of heaven; namely that it is a real kingdom, in a real world, composed of all who have ever lived upon the earth; that they are still living as men, a substantial human life. And also that man while living in this world is at the same time an inhabitant of the spiritual world, with the only difference that while here his senses open downward and outward into this world. Within his material body man has a spiritual body, and at the Lord's good pleasure his spiritual senses can be opened directly upward into that world; then he sees in vision all about him the scenery of that world,—perhaps not even knowing that it is not this world.

In the Jewish Church the Lord could reveal Himself and His Kingdom only in dreams and in visions by night, while their natural man lay asleep. In the first Christian Church their eyes were as if heavy with sleep; still there was some awakening of the spirit; but they thought of all things naturally,—saw the vision as of this world, had to believe in the resurrection of the body that they might think substantially of the life after death. But in the Church of the New Jerusalem it is our blessed privilege to see as if with open vision the realities of a substantial spiritual world.

As the Lord led His disciples toward the northern boundary of the Land for His Transfiguration He seems to have been alone with them. There is no mention of thronging crowds, no miracles of healing. He was certainly alone with them when He asked them, Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? After that it was six days before He took Peter, James and John apart on a high mountain where He was transfigured before them.

Yet no mention is made of any act of the Lord during those six days. We shall probably not be mistaken if we think of this period as devoted to the disciples alone, to teaching them and leading them to see from their Law and prophets the nature of the kingdom He had come to set up. How ardently He must have desired to enlighten them, how earnestly He must have prayed to the Father that He might draw them to see in Him the promised Christ, whose kingdom is not of this world. Even if only three can see from the heart a vision of His kingdom it will suffice. He can go down from the glory of the mountain to the cross of Calvary, confident that His Church can be raised up and established on the Rock of His Divinity, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail.

In W. E. (475) we read:

"If the nature of God's kingdom should be described now it would exceed all human belief, especially with those who know nothing but the kingdom of the world ... and who being blinded by the loves of the world and self, acquire wisdom by the external senses alone. If such men were to hear that there is in man a way opening to heaven other than the way through their senses which are called external, they would reject it as among fables. In such men therefore the superior way which opens directly into heaven cannot be opened until those loves which are the loves of the world and of self have been dispersed, and there succeeds in place of them the sole love of the Messiah and His kingdom."

The purpose of the Lord's coming into the world was to open again in man this upper door giving direct approach to the Lord and His kingdom. Here on the mount of Transfiguration was the very first opening of that upper door, the beginning of the kingdom of heaven. The visions given in the Jewish Church were not from any internal reception and perception of heavenly things; they were but representative visions, given externally, and so far as the Jews were concerned, for external purposes.

Here, however, with Peter, James and John there was a beginning of perception of the nature of the Lord's kingdom as founded on the two loves of God and the neighbor. And from that perception,--which can be given to those only who accept the Lord Jesus as the Son of God,--can a sight of the heavenly kingdom be given as an internal kingdom, not of this world, but above and within this world.

Yet was the vision in part prophetic of that which was still to be accomplished, namely, the full glorification of the Lord's Human. This is why Moses and Elijah spake with the Lord of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem and why He told the three to tell the vision to no man till the Son of Man be risen from the dead. His decease and His rising again from the dead signified the rejection of the human from the mother and the putting on of a Divine Human from the Father.

At the time of the Transfiguration this work was not fully accomplished; perhaps as to the internal man but not yet as to the external.

The full meaning of the Transfiguration was not known on the earth,--only in Heaven,--until it was revealed by the Lord in His Second Coming, through His Servant. A similar vision, which throws further light upon the first one, is described in E. U. 40.

Here in the vision given before the Lord's Servant seventeen centuries later was the full significance of the Transfiguration shown,--not now merely before Peter, James and John, but before an assembly composed of spirits from three earths in our solar system, Mercury, our earth and Jupiter. It had been promised the spirits from Mercury that they should see the Lord God. The Sun of Heaven, which is the Lord, or the manifestation of His presence seen constantly in the third heaven, appeared to them.

But when they said that this was not the Lord because they saw no face, thus no person, suddenly He appeared in Person as a Man in the midst of the solar radiance. Then the Lord also appeared out of that Sun to many who had seen Him on the earth, who confessed that it was the Lord Himself; and further He appeared at the same time to spirits from the earth Jupiter who confessed that it was He Whom they saw on their earth when the God of the universe appeared to them.

Thus was made manifest to all who saw the vision that the Lord Jesus Christ in His glorified Human is

personally one with the supreme God of the universe; that His Divine Human was exalted above all the heavens and united with the Divine from eternity, Who from the beginning has appeared as the Sun of Heaven before the angels of the highest heaven.

And this was the meaning of the Transfiguration Moses and Elijah appeared talking with the Lord to represent the Sacred Scriptures; Moses representing the Law, and Elijah the Prophets. Both look forward to the Lord, and in the inmost sense speak of nothing else but the Messiah and the assumption of the human and its glorification, together with the redemption and salvation of the human race then accomplished. That they spoke with the Lord of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem, means that both the Law and the Prophets everywhere teach that the Lord must lay down His maternal human (from the mother) that He might take it again; that He might be reborn both in form and in substance from the indwelling Father, that even as to the Human He might be exalted to the right hand of God, and thus become to eternity the God Man, the medium between the infinite Divine and finite, fallen man. Thus in our Lord Jesus Christ the invisible God was made visible, so that He could appear as a Man even in the Sun of Heaven, and could also appear as a Divine Man outside of that Sun, either on high or at times among the angels of heaven and in earth but distinguished from the angels by the radiance shining from His face and His garments.

Luke says that the three disciples were heavy with sleep, and when they were awake they saw his glory. The sleep was of the body; the waking was of the spirit,—tho they themselves knew it not at the time. Usually visions in spirit are given only while the bodily senses sleep. It was only in the Second Coming of the Lord that He gave full wakefulness in both worlds at the same time to His Servant.

That Peter said, Lord, it is good for us to be here and let us make three tents, one for Thee. and one for Moses and one for Elijah,—not knowing what he said;—this represents the desire of the Church, having seen the vision of the Lord's glory, and the internal sense of the Law and the Prophets - the desire of the Church to preserve that vision by providing receptacles in which the Lord can abide.

The bright cloud out of which a voice proceeded saying "This is my beloved Son; hear Him;" the bright cloud also represented the Word, but the Word of the New Testament, as Moses and Elijah represented the Word of the Old Testament.

And that when the vision was past they saw no man save Jesus only, represents the fact that He is the First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the Almighty. The Trinity is in Him. The Word is from Him and is Himself, so that He is the Word. He is Heaven. He is also the Church. For although heaven is constituted of angels and the Church is constituted of men, yet it is from the Lord's Divine Human alone that heaven is heaven and the Church is the Church.

None of these things signified by the vision of the Transfiguration could be fully revealed to the first Christian Church. They could be made known only by the Lord Himself through the servant of His Second Coming, for the sake of His Church of the New Jerusalem. The vision, like those given to Daniel, had to be sealed up for many days.

Yet its meaning was not wholly unknown. It testified in as bright light as their eyes still heavy with sleep could endure that Jesus was indeed the Christ of God; that His kingdom was not of this world; that His death at Jerusalem was but the means of His triumphing over death and hell, and raising up a

Church that should never perish. Amen.

Lessons: Daniel 7:1-14, Matthew 17:1-13, E. U. 39-41.

PALM SUNDAY

"BLESSED BE THE KING THAT COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD: Peace in heaven and glory in the highest." Luke 19:38.

The Jews welcomed the Lord to Jerusalem as a triumphant King, as they might have welcomed Him had He returned from a signal victory against a strong enemy. There were two throngs, one of his disciples and pilgrims gathered from Bethany and Bethphage which accompanied Him; another which came out of the Temple and the city, pouring down into the Kidron valley, which, meeting the other, turned back and preceded Him into the temple. They strewed palms and branches of trees before Him in the way, waving palms in their hands, casting their garments before him, crying out "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, hosanna in the highest." And the Lord accepted this acclaim, and when some remonstrated at the plaudits of the little children, He said, "If these should hold their peace the very stones would cry out."

And yet in what warfare He had been engaged and in what victory He had earned the right to these royal honors not even His disciples knew.

Nineteen hundred years have passed and the Christian world every spring celebrates again with glad acclaim the Lord's triumphant entry into His royal city and His Temple; and yet the foe which He conquered and the nature of the warfare He was engaged in is still scarcely dreamed of.

His battles were in the spiritual world, against all the hosts of all the hells which assaulted Him with envenomed malice and subtlest craft; a host that had been accumulating for thousands of years, augmented with every passing generation, until their power on the earth, in the hearts and minds of men, was greater than the power of heaven, greater than the power of Jehovah God Himself to lead men in freedom according to reason.

The Lord looked upon the earth and behold "there was no man, none that doeth good, no not one; and He wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore His own arm wrought salvation and His justice it sustained him." He bowed the heavens and came down for man's salvation. He took our human upon Himself by birth of a virgin. In that Human into His Human influx from not a few of the hells, but all of them. "He was tempted in all points like as we are yet without sin."

His life of temptation and combat could not be revealed to his disciples except in a very general way. They knew that after His baptism He was tempted of the Devil in the wilderness for forty days. They knew of His agony in the Garden when He sweat great drops of blood falling down to the ground and they knew of the cross but except for these instances they knew nothing. Yet from His earliest childhood His whole life was a continual temptation and was a continual victory. For as to His external man, His maternal human, He was like another man. Through his mother He inherited a tendency to all the evils flesh is heir to. This made Him subject to the assaults of the infernals.

Then, acting from the love of the Father within, He reproved, corrected and set in order, all the deeds, the thoughts, the loves of His natural man, bringing them first into harmony with the Divine Truth, then making the very vessels of His body, His mind, and His will the Divine Truth Itself, and finally

Divine Good Itself. Thus He was not only conceived but actually born - reborn—from the Father.

And as this was done He brought the truth of Heaven to the evil spirits who tempted Him, brought the angels near them, for wherever the Lord is there is also the angelic Heaven, yea, more, He became the Divine Good and Truth Itself in glorified Human Form, and they could not stand in His presence but fled before Him. Thus He separated Heaven and hell, cast out of heaven many who had feignedly made themselves angels of light, set bounds that they could not pass. And when the work of His glorification was fully finished, when He had not only made Himself the Divine Truth, but also by the victory of the cross had become the Divine Good, personally one with the Father, He was able to rid the world of spirits of their presence, cast them into their hells and confine them there. Theretofore all the light of the Sun of Heaven had to pass through a thick, black cloud to reach men on the earth. By the judgment He executed the Lord dispersed that cloud thus permitting the light of the spiritual Sun to shine undimmed upon men; and, more, because by His glorification He brought the Father forth to view as a Divine Man before all the angels of heaven. That Sun shone now with sevenfold radiance, as the light of seven days.

This was the kingly victory that the Jews and the little children all unknowingly celebrated on that first Palm Sunday, and that Christendom almost as unknowingly celebrates today.

The Lord permitted, yea, willed that it should be celebrated on the earth, in Jerusalem and in the temple; He willed it for two reasons; first, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, that it might be known that He was the Divine Son of the living God, who was to come into the world; second, that there might be some expression in the Church on earth of the joy of the angelic heaven; for unless Heaven can act into the Church on earth, as a soul into the body, the Church would perish. It is as with soul and body, which make one man; when the body longer responds to the life of the soul, soul and body are separated, the soul returns to Him who gave it and the body decays and returns to its dust.

So is it with the Church on earth and with the Church in the angelic heavens; they make one. When the Lord came the two were almost separated, they were still united only as by slender threads. Through more than a thousand years the Israelitish and Jewish Church had responded only by representatives; they represented by their deeds, without understanding, what things were done in heaven. And now, at the end of days, their hypocrisy and love of dominion had vitiated even their most holy acts; so that unless the Lord came and speedily judged them and established a new and true Church heaven and earth could be no longer held together. But until the time had come when the Lord could institute an internal Church it was necessary that there should be on the earth some expression of the joy of Heaven over man's redemption.

It was because of this necessity that He said of the little children - who in their innocence felt and responded to the joy of the heavens - without knowing why--"If these should hold their peace the very stones must cry out."

THE LORD THE REDEEMER

How was it that the Lord Jesus Christ, born of a Jewish mother, could yet be one with the Infinite and eternal God Himself, so that He could become the Redeemer and Savior, and finally the one only Object

of worship?

Can our minds comprehend this mystery, the mystery of Godliness? Yes; now it is permitted to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith. It is only as we enter His Temple, which is His Body, by faith and love, that we are conjoined with Him and have everlasting life.

The plan of Creation was that man, born in the image and likeness of God, might receive God's life, his love, his wisdom, and live from them as his own life, thus in God and God in him. For God alone is life, and man is but a vessel to receive and live from that Life.

Man in the exercise of his freedom - which is the image of God in him - turned away from God, and chose the life of sensual delight instead of the life of heavenly delight. Yet before this was done the Lord had provided a Celestial heaven formed of those who were conjoined to Him, in whom He lived and they in Him.

After the Fall, with the spiritual Church called Noah and his sons Shem, Ham and Japheth, there was a written Word and men were governed by conscience formed therefrom, thus by Truth in the understanding, many were regenerated by that means and a heaven was formed of them - a heaven in which the Lord could dwell as in his own. And as in succeeding ages men sank to lower and lower planes, the Lord always gave revelation and worship adapted to their state, so that some might be redeemed and regenerated. Of these He formed angelic heavens in which He lived, and which lived from Him. Thus the Infinite God dwelt in the angelic heavens as its Soul and only Life, and since God is One the Heavens were organized into one, a Grand Man, the Divine Human from eternity. And when the Lord spoke to men on earth, when He gave the Word, or when He led His people as by the hand of Moses and Joshua, or Samuel, He acted through the heavens as through His own spiritual body.

Thus the Divine had in the heavens the Celestial and Spiritual degrees of a Divine Human, but He had not the natural degree; because no man on the earth was regenerated to the natural degree. That degree of life was filled instead with evil lusts and false beliefs. So the Lord willed to take on that degree - the degree of life of man in the world - by birth of a virgin.

The Lord was born with a hunger for good and a thirst for truth. His proprial love from birth, instead of being the love of himself and of the world, as with finite men, was the love of himself and of the world, as with finite men, was the love of men and of drawing them to Himself and saving them to eternity.

He was born a Spiritual celestial man. His inmost soul was Jehovah God Himself. Therefore as to His Human Soul, which constituted His proprium, He was born without evil; His ruling love was the Love of men. But from the mother He took His body, the external natural, including the five senses. Here evil reigned. From her He inherited a tendency to all the evils of the Jewish race.

It is to be remembered that there is no mind at birth. The mind, through its various planes is built up through the senses; first sensation, then imagination, then rational thought. Hence even the mind of the Lord opened at first in clouds, in appearances. Things were seen in the delusive light of the world. Here came the assaults of the infernals; to make Him think that this first light was the true light. But He guarded Himself against this by the Word - the Word of God. He was unwilling to imbue His mind with

any principle except it was from the Word.

Although His soul was Divine yet must He order His life from first principles by ultimates - from the Divine Love within by the Divine Word without. Although the Word was open to Him from His Father, yet did He not trust an inner voice; the inner voice of perception came to Him as He read the letter of the Word. Thus alone was He enlightened; thus did He fight our battles for us; thus did He meet and confound the hosts of Devils and Satans who said, "This is the Heir; come, let us kill Him and the inheritance will be ours."

I shall not attempt to describe the bravery of the Lord as He fought our battles against all the crews of all the hells. He fought alone. His disciples could not see why He should suffer. Peter said "Spare thyself Lord; this shall not be unto thee. Probably the angels felt the same way. He alone could see the necessity of His laying down His life as the means of His final victory. But sustained by His great love He hesitated not. He came to Jerusalem the Hero of heroes, to suffer for the sake of others; His work was almost done.

And now - not for His own sake, but for the sake of men, that they might rejoice in His salvation, and might both at present and in future ages enter into the fruits of his victory, He accepts the triumphal entry of Palm Sunday.

OUR DUTY

In the providence of the Lord this knowledge of the significance of Palm Sunday has come to us. What shall we do about it? Tell it to others? But they are not interested. The Christian world cannot conceive of such a warfare in the spiritual world, nor if they could would it interest them.

Is it not rather our duty to take up the work He did and carry it forward not in our own strength but in His strength? There is no other way in which His kingdom may be spread He would repeat in the hearts of all His disciples the work He did in His own Human; would repeat that work according to the measure of our love and our truth, our will and understanding, as we receive from Him in freedom according to our reason.

The Kingdom of heaven consists in loving the Lord supremely and the neighbor as ourselves. But we cannot work directly for those loves. It is like happiness. He who seeks happiness as an end never finds it; but in seeking and following duty he finds happiness. So in seeking to establish the kingdom of Heaven in ourselves, we must inquire what are our duties to others.

1. The first of all is to read the Word, especially the Word of the Lord in His Second Coming.
2. To shun one's evils as sins against God.
3. To shun evils especially in regard to the duties of one's calling or employment.
4. To work for the Lord's Church and its establishment.
5. To cultivate friendship with those who love the truths of the opened Word.

1) To read the Word, especially the Word of the Lord's Second Coming.

It is only in the Writings that we find the truths that make God known to us in our Lord Jesus Christ; it is there that we find how He established His Kingdom; the nature of that kingdom; the nature of the spiritual world and its relation to this world; the nature of man, and the steps of his regeneration; the nature of influx, that all our life inflows through good or evil societies in the world of spirits, thus through heaven or through hell. In the Writings and in them alone do we find these and a thousand other truths that make plain the path of life and enable us to escape the snares of the infernals. Here in the Word is our life. How can we afford to let a single day pass without reading the Word? Or at least meditating upon the Word, the truths of the Word, as they exist in our memories. Note well that it must be the Word, and not any pious notions of our own. The Word is alone the medium through which the Lord speaks to fallen man. The Only-Begotten Son of God Himself found it necessary to instruct Himself from the Word; how much more must we find God's will revealed there.

I shall pass by at present the shunning of evils as sins against God in order to use the remaining time to develop the two last propositions, which have to do with the establishment of the Church. They were, 4. To work for the Lord's Church and its establishment; and 5. To cultivate friendship with those who love the truths of the opened Word.

Consider what the Lord did toward establishing a Church. He chose twelve disciples and ordained them; He took them with Him in all His journeys; they were with Him day and night; to them we added others, devout women, also the seventy whom He sent forth at one time, and others whom He commanded to leave all and follow Him. He bound them to Him by ties of the strongest love, even appealing to their natural affections, promising that in His Kingdom the disciples should sit on twelve thrones judging the tribes of Israel. And after His resurrection what care the Lord took to encourage, enlighten and empower His Church; at the Day of Pentacost; at the martyrdom of Steven; or at the miraculous call of Paul.

For now as then the only way in which the kingdom of heaven can be advanced is in a Church composed of those who know the Lord, who know the truths He has newly opened out of his Word, and who are willing to leave all to follow Him. He who would love the Lord must love His Church which is His Kingdom on the earth; must place the good of Jerusalem above his own chief good; must consult with others as to how he may best serve the Church; must value others as they value the truths that further His kingdom and Church.

Let us all, as we live through again these stirring scenes of the Lord's last days upon earth, let us devote ourselves anew to carrying on the work which He then begun; that He may work in us and through us for the establishment of His Church upon the earth, that His will may be done here as it is in Heaven. Amen.

Lessons: Zech. 9, Luke 19:28-48, @AC 9212.

THE SON OF MAN

"The people answered Him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest Thou, The Son of Man must be lifted up? who is this Son of Man" John 12.34.

"The Lord as to the Divine Human is called the Son of God: and as to the Word, the Son of Man." L. 19.

Let us, join this congregation of inquiring Jews, and ask of the Lord as they asked, who is this Son of Man? But let us note, first, the occasion and the place. The place was the Temple: the time, just a few days before the Lord was to suffer. On the first day of the week, our Sunday, had been the Triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when the Lord had accepted the plaudits of the people and their welcome as the Christ, the King of Israel. He had cleansed the Temple, as He had done before at the beginning of His ministry.

All day He taught in the Temple and the night He spent with His disciples on the Mount of Olives. He had met and confounded His enemies: the scribes and Pharisees who asked, By what authority doest Thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?: the Herodians, who asked whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Caesar: The Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection.

He had spoken many parables concerning His rejection, and the nature of His kingdom. And now come these Greek proselytes, saying to Philip. "Sir, we would see Jesus." And when Philip and Andrew take their request to the Lord, He answered them saying. The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. And when, in response to His prayer, Father, glorify Thy Name, there came a voice from Heaven, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again," it was a testimonial to all, both Jews and Greeks, both to His disciples and His enemies, of the approval of heaven.

It recalls to mind the Lord's baptism at the hands of John, when a dove abode upon Him and a voice from Heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Thus both at the beginning and at the end of His public ministry there was given this testimony from Heaven: not, as the Lord told them, for Himself, but for your sakes.

He came first to His own, and His own received Him not: now the Gospel was to be extended also to the Gentiles, and to them also was given a sign from Heaven. Some heard it only as thunder, but some heard the words, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again:" but to all it was testimonial from Heaven, which could not be lightly ignored.

Let us complete the picture, as we can safely do now that, in His Second Coming, the Lord has opened for us the Spiritual World. Let us remember the much greater hosts in the other life who surrounded the Lord as He taught in the Temple. On the one hand were the angels of the higher heavens both from the Golden and the Silver Ages who knew the nature of the Lord's Kingdom, and who could understand the Scripture that the entrance to Life lies through the gate of death: that the Lord to be glorified must suffer. On the other hand were the vast hosts of the infernals, who were saying among themselves. "This is the Heir: come let us kill Him and the inheritance will be ours."

But between these two extremes were hosts vastly greater, from the successive churches and the Gentile nations, who did not know, who were waiting to see, whether this was indeed the Christ, the

Son of the living God, the Redeemer and Savior of the world or not: some hoping that He was, that they might be delivered from the hand of the Evil One: others fearing that He was, lest they be judged and forced to give up their ill-gotten gains.

It was for them, too, that this voice from Heaven came, testifying before hand, that after His resurrection they might believe, that this was indeed the Christ of God.

And it was especially for those in that life that the Lord said, Now is the judgment of this world: now is the prince of this world cast out. For the world of judgment is the world hereafter. No man can be rightly judged in this life: after death comes the judgment.

Herein is the judgment: after the Son of Man has been lifted up all who are salvable will hear His voice, will yield to the attraction of His love, will be drawn to Him: while all who are confirmed in evil and falsity will reject Him and His Kingdom of love to the neighbor.

It is the sign of the prophet Jonah, which the Lord often told the Jews was the only sign given of His Divinity and His Messiahship, For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Every man, Jew or Gentile, bond or free, who treasures at his heart anything of love to the Lord or the neighbor will be moved by this sign, will finally be able to give up his lust for a kingdom of power and wealth. will follow the meek and lowly Savior and learn from Him to love others as himself.

"And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Myself." "This He said signifying what death He should die." The people recognized His meaning. It was a common expression at that time signifying death by crucifixion. No wonder they are astonished and bewildered. Only two or three days ago all Jewry had accepted Him as their Christ, their King. Now He tells them He is to be offered up. They answered Him,

"We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest Thou, The Son of Man must be lifted up? who is this Son of Man?"

The Lord did not try to answer their question. It would have done no good. They were not in a state to hear it: for, as John says, "though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him."

If they had believed on Him, they would have been willing to be taught by Him. How strange it would be to believe that here was indeed the promised Christ come from heaven to be their King and Savior, and yet refuse to accept His teaching about His Kingdom and its nature: to insist obstinately on a kingdom after their own worldly pattern.

To believe in the Lord is to accept His teaching, to acknowledge that He is all wise, while we know nothing. We come to Him to learn, not to teach Him what He must do if we are to follow him.

Those whose hearts and minds are so set on a worldly kingdom of prosperity, of power to command others that they can accept no other kingdom, these have so seared their minds that they cannot see, cannot believe in the Lord. And it is better so: better for them to respect Him than to see clearly, be convinced and acknowledge Him, and yet afterwards turn back and deny.

Instead of answering their question, "Who is this Son of Man?" the Lord spoke to them of "light": "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth."

"While ye have the light believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus and departed and did hide Himself from them."

In the spiritual world only those can see the Lord who believe in Him: others see only darkness when they turn toward Him. It seems as tho' He hides Himself from them. But the darkness is in their own eyes.

Although the Jews rejected the Lord, and His church passed to others, yet the Lord left to them the light of the Old Testament during the whole period of the first Christian Church.

He has even allowed them to serve in a way in His kingdom in reading the Word in the original language, for they have held the Old Testament holier than the Christian Church has held it.

And so, until the Lord in His Second Coming could establish a true and internal Church, He could use the Jews as well as Christians to unite by the Scriptures earth to Heaven, and could give to them the benefits of such service. While, if He had convinced them, as He could easily have done and enrolled them as converts and followers they could not but have become apostates, afterward denying and rejecting the Word entirely. Thus of His mercy He has allowed them to blind their eyes and harden their hearts, and has thus prolonged their day these nineteen hundred years.

It is only in His Second Coming that the Lord has answered this question, "Who is this Son of Man?" The Son of Man is the Lord as to the Word. When this is rightly understood it can be seen that in order to abide forever as the Christ, the Lord as the Son of Man must be lifted up from the earth.

Notice this well: In order to abide forever and reign as the Christ the Son of Man must be lifted up from the earth.

Many names are applied to God and the Lord in the Word, and always with reference to the internal sense: they are used most exactly with reference to the subject. In the Old Testament we read of God as having created the Heavens and the earth: and in the second chapter we read of the Lord God, Jehovah Elohim. Later other names are introduced as Schaddi, the Almighty: He is called a Rock, a Fortress, Redeemer, Savior, with many other names, always with reference to a certain quality of the infinite God expressed by the name applied.

In the New Testament we come to new names applied to the one God as manifested in the person of our Lord. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Jesus, the Christ, Son of God, Son of Man, the Lamb, etc.

In Doctrine of the Lord, No. 22 it is read,

"He who knows what in the Lord the Son of God signifies, and what in Him the Son of Man signifies, can see many arcana in the Word: for the Lord sometimes calls Himself the Son, some times the Son of God, and some times the Son of Man, always according to the subject treated of. When He speaks of His Divinity, His unity with the Father, His Divine power, faith in Him, and life from Him, He then calls

Himself the Son and the Son of God: but where His passion, the Judgment, His Coming, and, in general, redemption, salvation, reformation and regeneration are treated of. He then calls Himself the Son of Man, because He then speaks of Himself as to the Word."

Near the beginning of His ministry the Lord said to Nicodemus, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:14.

"Jesus said to the disciples, Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and to the scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, and will deliver Him to the Gentiles: and they will mock Him, and scourge Him and spit upon Him, and kill Him: and the third day He will rise again." Mk. X :33. Again, "Jesus said, Behold the hour is at hand: the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners." Matthew 26:45. "That the Lord then called Himself the Son of Man, is because He suffered Himself to be treated the same way as they had treated the Word." L. 25.

"That the Lord is called the SON OF MAN when Judgment is treated of is evident from these passages, "When the SON OF MAN shall come in His glory, then will He sit upon the throne of His glory: and He will set His sheep on His right hand and the goats on the left." ...

The Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father, and then will He render to every man according to his deeds.... The Father judgeth no one, but hath given all judgment to the Son, because He is the SON OF MAN. That the Lord calls Himself the SON OF MAN when judgment is treated of is because all judgment is effected according to the Divine truth which is in the Word. That this judges everyone the Lord Himself says in John, "If anyone hear my words and yet believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world: the WORD THAT I HAVE SPOKEN, this will judge him in the last day." L. 25.

That the Lord is called the SON OF MAN where His Coming is treated of, is evident from the following passages: The disciples said to Jesus, What will be the sign of thy coming, and of the consummation of the age? Then the Lord foretold the successive states of the church, even to its end: and concerning its end He said, Then will appear the sign of the SON OF MAN. And they will see the SON OF MAN coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory. By the CONSUMMATION of the Age is meant the last time of the church: by COMING IN THE CLOUDS OF == HEAVEN WITH GLORY, is meant the opening of the Word and the manifestation that the Word is written concerning the Lord alone....

That the Lord meant one thing in Himself by the SON OF GOD and another by the SON OF MAN, appears from His answer to the high priest: The high priest said to Jesus, I adjure Thee by the living God, that "thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said unto him, Thou hast said: I am. Nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter ye will see the SON OF MAN sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

Here He first confessed that He was the SON OF GOD, and afterward said that they should see the SON OF MAN sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven: by which is meant that after the passion of the cross, He would be in the Divine power of opening the Word and establishing the church: which could not be done before, because He had not before conquered hell and glorified His Human." 26.

The Lord had come into the world as the Word, or, what is the same thing, as LIFE FROM GOD AS RECEIVED BY ANGELS AND MEN. This was His soul. He bowed the Heavens and came down for our salvation. Inmosty He was one with the Father: interiorly He was one with the Word as received by the angelic Heavens: externally He was one with the Word as received by the Jewish nation. His task as the Son of Man was to make His life wholly Divine, Divine as to all its forms or vessels, and finally as to its very substance.

Now you can see why it was necessary to lift up the Son of Man. Think what Divine life with the Jews had become. The outward forms were Divine: not a prayer they said but was taken from the Word, not a ritual, no least thing of daily life but was from the Word: yet the spirit of Heaven was gone: interiorly hell ruled in all these things. Instead of a house of prayer for all nations, as it was designed to be, the Jews had made His Temple a den of robbers.

The Lord came to change all that: first, in Himself, in His own assumed Human. For this purpose He admitted temptations into His Human from all the hells, ultimated by the Jews on earth, and by His victories over them purified His Human from every lust of the flesh. This actually involved with Him as God Man the laying down of bodily life by cruel death. There was no other way that could adequately show the Divine love of men and their salvation and its triumph over the selfish love of self and of bodily enjoyment and pleasure.

Thus He gained His power over death and hell, His power to judge the infernal crew: they could not stand before His face, but fled before Him.

And having in His own Person lifted up the serpent of brass, the sensual, He must do a similar work in all who follow Him. "As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us."

That love of man which moved the Lord must be in those who would follow Him. We are told that the angels would gladly suffer all the pains of hell if they could thereby rescue a soul from hell and impart to it the joys of Heaven. But this love is not received at once, but only as the result of many temptations and victories. It is initiated by self examination and the shunning of sins against the Word, until finally, at the last day, the Lord can, in all those who believe in Him, lift up some measure of His Word from the earth, and by it draw them to Himself to live and serve with Him in Heaven. Amen.

Lessons: Isa, 40, Jno. 12:20-50, Lord 19.

IF ANY MAN THIRST

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink." Jno 7: 37.

Three feasts in each year were appointed for the Sons of Israel; these were (1) the Passover, (2) the Feast of First Fruits, (3) the Feast of Tabernacles or of Ingathering. All three feasts were to be celebrated at Jerusalem, and indeed at the Temple; they were religious festivals.

The Passover was celebrated in the early spring. It was in memory of the night in which the angel of death slew all the first born of the Egyptians, but passed over the houses of the Israelites where the Pascal lamb had been slain and the blood placed on the lintel and two posts of the door. It also commemorated the deliverance of the armies of Israel from Egyptian bondage, the miraculous passage of the Red Sea, and the direct Divine leadership through the wilderness. It represented the salvation of all that vast host of good but simple spirits held in bondage to the power of hell who would be liberated and saved by the Lord in His redemptive work. It was thus a feast of thanksgiving for deliverance from damnation. It was fulfilled by the Lord when through His incarnation and temptation combats He conquered the power of hell and after his resurrection led forth His poor from the pits where they were confined in the lower parts of the world of spirits, and instructed and prepared them for heaven.

The feast of First Fruits came fifty days later. At that time an offering of the first ripe fruits was to be brought to the Lord, and eaten with rejoicing before Him in the temple courts.

This feast was representative of their crossing the Jordan and entering the Promised Land. Spiritually it represented the implantation of truths in good, and thus the first fruits of redemption. It was at the time of this feast that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurred on the day of Pentecost, that three thousands souls were converted and baptized and the Christian Church was born.

The third feast, that of Ingathering, was celebrated about the first of October. It was the feast of Harvest, corresponding to our Thanksgiving. It lasted a full week, and was observed with every possible sign of joy and festivity. The people lived in booths made of the branches of trees, to remind them of the years they lived in tents in the wilderness before they possessed the Land. The temple was illuminated all night with lights that lit up the whole city; festive dancing and singing lasted throughout the night in the temple, and during the day all the people joined in the worship. The people carried during the feast in the right hand the lulabh, consisting of a branch of palm, of willow and of "thick trees" bound together, while in the left they carried a citron. It was a common saying among the Jews that he who has not seen the Feast of Tabernacles knows not what joy is. Beside the joy of ingathering the fruits of the earth this feast also commemorated the possession of the Promised Land and dwelling in it. It was also recognized as pointing forward to the conversion of the Gentiles by the Messiah at His coming, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the ingathering of all nations.

In the spiritual sense it represents the completion of the work of regeneration, the implanting of good in truth, thus dwelling in the Promised Land, or Heaven, to eternity. This feast was therefore the completion or fulness of the other two. It represented in the Lord the full union of the Divine with the

Divine Human, whereby He glorified Himself, and became our God even as to the Human. This is why the Lord said to His "brethren," when they wanted Him to go up and show Himself openly at this feast, "My time is not yet come...."

Go ye up unto this feast; I go not yet up unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come."

The time had almost come when He could keep this feast in token that He had fulfilled all its representatives; but that would not be till He had put off the last vestiges of the maternal human and had put on the Divine Human from the Father, thus making Himself the Divine Good even as to His flesh and bones; but that time was not yet full come. Therefore He went not up openly and as a conqueror, but as it were in secret, appearing unannounced in the temple where He taught the people. He kept the feast only in part as having fulfilled it, but in part as representing a work yet to be fully accomplished in Him.

How wonderful it is to think that here in the temple is He to Whom point all the observances of this feast, He in Whom they are all fulfilled, He for whose coming the Jews have waited and prayed; and yet they are so stupefied by the love of evil, so misled by evil leaders, so under the dominion of evil spirits, that they are unable to believe in Him. He pleads with them, tries to open their minds by arguments drawn from their law to show that He is indeed the Messiah or Christ. "If any man will do God's will," he says, "he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God or I speak of Myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh His glory that sent him is true and there is no unrighteousness in him." He tells them that none of them keeps the law of Moses or they would not seek to kill Him for making a man whole on the Sabbath day. He appeals to their own custom of circumcising on the Sabbath, tho this is technically to break the Sabbath, and asks why they are angry at Him for making a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day?

Some of them said, "Is this not he whom they seek to kill? But lo, He speaketh boldly and they say nothing unto Him.

Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?" "And many of the people believed on Him and said, When Christ cometh will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" But the Pharisees and chief priests, when they heard that the people murmured these things concerning Him, sent officers to take Him; who returned empty handed, and when asked, "Why have ye not brought Him?" answered, "Never man spake like this man." What power of persuasion there must have been in His words and in His presence to convince even these officers that He was more than mortal man.

But it was in the last day, that great day of the feast, that the Lord stood and asserted Himself unmistakably before the eyes of all the worshippers as the Living Christ to Whom all these symbols pointed and in Whom they were fulfilled.

Every morning during the seven days of the feast the people gathered in the temple before dawn, and at the sounding of the trumpets announcing the coming of day they divided into three companies, one consisting of those who remained in the temple; another company followed a priest who went with golden pitcher to the pool of Siloam to bring back the water which was to be poured out at the foot of the altar; a third company went to gather fresh willow branches with which to decorate the altar. During this service the "Hallel," consisting of Psalms 113 to 118 were chanted antiphonally by the

priests and people; and the service was closed by the priests marching in procession about the altar. On the last great day of the feast the priests in procession compassed the altar seven times.

The pouring out of the water was the characteristic thing of the Feast, in which this feast differed from all others. It was poured out of the golden pitcher into a funnel which discharged it at the foot of the great altar at the same time that the libation of wine was poured by another priest into another funnel, the people always calling to the priest to raise his pitcher high that they might see that the water ran into the funnel and was not spilt upon the ground.

We are not told when the Lord uttered His cry, "If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink," but it seems likely that it was during this service; the water had been poured out, the Hallel had been chanted, the people had responded with words of thanksgiving from the 118th Psalm, shaking their lulabhs toward the altar, thus praising the Lord with heart and voice and hands; and at a pause in the service, not interrupting but as fulfilling it the Lord may have "stood and cried," His voice ringing through the temple, "If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink." "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

We are not, indeed, told that His cry rang forth at just this time; only that it was on the last day of the feast, and it evidently had reference to the outpouring of the water which was known to be representative of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit when the Christ should come. But we do know from John's testimony that the Lord referred to the Holy Spirit which they who believed on Him should receive after He was glorified. That as the Holy Spirit proceeded from Him so it would also proceed through all those who believe in Him.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

John says that the Holy Spirit "was not yet because that Jesus was not yet glorified." King James' translators, to save the false Christian dogma that the Holy Spirit is a god existing before time began, introduced the word "given," making it read "The Holy Spirit was not yet given," but the italics show that the word is not in the original. If the Holy Spirit is Divine, is the very presence of the Living God, how can it be that the Holy Spirit was not until Jesus was glorified?

It is because the Holy Spirit is the presence of God Himself, and this presence could not be realized by man until "Jesus," that is, the Human, was glorified. God is a Spirit. God is everywhere present. Then what is the need of another Spirit, of the Holy Spirit?

Because the presence of God was no longer realized by man; could not reach his consciousness or understanding. There were no adequate vessels in the human mind to receive and retain the Divine Spirit. Man was spiritually without eyes to see in Divine light; without ears to hear the Divine speech; he was blind and deaf. There was no medium that could carry over these Divine gifts from the invisible God, infinite and eternal, above the Heavens, to sinful man, having no light but that of the world and the senses of the body.

This is why the incarnation was necessary. It was foreseen at the time of the Fall that the human race would successively close every spiritual avenue of approach, and would come into such bondage to infernal spirits, that the only way of salvation would be for God Himself to become Man, present

Himself before man in the Flesh, show Himself before man's physical senses, meet man's foes in temptation combats and conquer them, manifest His omnipotent power in both worlds, thus before both the dead and the living. But this was not enough; having taken man's nature upon Himself the Lord God did not leave it as He found it; He "glorified" it, that is, He made it altogether Divine, putting off successively everything derived from the virgin mother and replacing the mere human forms and substances with forms and substance put on from the indwelling Divine. Thus He was not only as to the Human conceived of God but was throughout life actually born of God. By His Divine Human life among men He thus brought the Divine to man's understanding. In Jesus Christ the God Man the nature of the Divine Love was revealed; and not revealed inadequately through a finite human, but by the processes of glorification just indicated, the Human Itself was also made Divine, that the Divine might be revealed in a Divine Medium, might stand forth to view in His own glory which He had before the world was. The completion of this process of glorification was when the Lord on the cross and in the tomb fully rejected the body from Mary and rose in His own Divine Human Body put on by His incarnation and by His life in the world.

In Jesus Christ thus glorified the invisible God is made visible to fallen men. In the light of His resurrection, but especially in the light of His Second Coming and the opening of the internal sense of His Word, we see in Christ Jesus our Lord no mere man but God as Man; God living our life, perfectly, without sin, as no finite man could live it; God redeeming us from the power of hell; God showing forth His power over death and hell; God in His own Divine Human present now and forever in the world as He is present in Heaven, as He is present above the Heavens in His own inscrutable Infinity. For through His Human glorified, thus not put off but forever retained, He maintains continual contact with man in the flesh.

This is why it is said in the Sacred Scriptures that the Holy Spirit was not yet because that Jesus was not yet glorified. So long as He remained with His disciples in a material body they could indeed think of Him as the Son of the living God, but could not know Him as Jehovah God Himself; but after He was risen they could believe that He was the visible manifestation of the one God.

The Holy Spirit is nothing but the Presence of the Lord Jesus Himself, and this is nothing but the presence of the living God; but that Presence as mediated to us by the Lord. Hence the Holy Spirit is new in the sense that it is a new realization of the omnipresence and omnipotence of God as made known in our Lord. And that Presence is dependent upon our knowledge of His glorification; for the glorification is the proof of His Divinity, of His being the one only God.

The Apostles understood the Lord's glorification but dimly, tho John, the beloved, doubtless more deeply than the others. But the processes of His glorification could not be rationally revealed until an age had passed.

Nevertheless the outpouring and reception of the Holy Spirit in the primitive Christian Church was dependent upon some knowledge of the Lord's glorification. The Holy Spirit is the Presence of God; that Presence could not be received from a finite man, from a finite human, but only from a Man who is at the same time God. Therefore the primitive Christian Church was filled by the Holy Spirit so long as it directed its songs and prayers to the Lord alone. But after the Church began to teach that the Human of the Lord remained finite and merely human, thus like the human of another man, she lost the Holy Spirit, she went back to the worship of an invisible God.

This is why it became necessary for the Lord to come again, even as He had promised, to open the spiritual sense of His Word, to reveal thence in rational, doctrinal form the steps by which He took on and glorified His Human that we might see in Him not a second Person in the Trinity, not an inferior kind of Deity, but the one only God Himself, in His own Divine Human. Thus through the Heavenly Doctrine we are able to see the Divine shining forth through the human even from the Lord's birth, and finally standing forth in its own Divine refulgence. In Jesus Christ glorified we see nothing from the mother but God Himself in His own Divine Human. And from that Divine Human goes forth the Holy Spirit, the acknowledged Presence of the Lord as the one God, having all power to redeem and save.

"If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink;" these words rang out in the temple, in fulfillment of their worship, in the ears of all the people, proclaiming Himself as the only source of living water, and of Divine life. But curiously enough the Lord did not stop there, but added that he who believes in Him becomes also a fountain of living water. "He that believeth on Me," He said, "as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

To understand this promise one must know the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as revealed in the Heavenly Doctrine.

The Holy Spirit is the Divine Truth. This proceeds from the Lord because He is the Truth Itself; but it proceeds through angels and men to other men; it is dependent upon teaching and association. In no wise can the Holy Spirit proceed from any man or angel, for it is Divine, and can go forth only from the Divine; but it does proceed from the Lord through men; in the Church especially through the clergy, because the clergy teach the Word, and administer the sacraments, and thus become the means through which Divine things are carried over to the laity. The Holy Spirit also proceeds through the laity to others, as is shown by the enlightenment given through association with others of similar faith and affection.

Thus the man who believes in the Lord also becomes a new center of living water, a fountain in the desert whence living waters may be derived to the barren land round about him. But this is true only to the extent that the man acknowledges his life to be solely from the Lord; He who thinks of Divine Truth as his own ceases to receive it from the Lord, hence can no longer impart it to others.

This doctrine of the Holy Spirit as passing from the Lord through men and angels to others involves the doctrine of the Church as one before the Lord, the doctrine of the Grand Man, in which the whole has relation to each, and each to all. The Lord in His mercy wills to use all who believe in Him as co-workers in His Kingdom, so far as He can work through them. Thus He setteth the solitary in families, places upon parents the duty of becoming leaders and teachers in Divine things to their children.

But the extent to which this work can be done by the Lord through men depends upon man's regeneration. As the Lord put off the maternal human that He might glorify Himself, even so must the man of the Church allow the Lord to put off in him the evil loves of the old man that he may become a new creature in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Lessons: Jno. 7:1-27, Jno. 7:28-53, @TCR 153, 4.

BY WHAT AUTHORITY?

"By what authority doest Thou these things and who gave Thee this authority?" Matthew 21:23.

The whole world was never before so stirred to its depths by intense and sustained excitement as during the last week of the earthly life of our Lord, and never will be again. By the whole world I mean especially the whole of the spiritual world, heaven, the world of spirits and hell, which taken together constitute the mind of the Grand Man of the whole earth. All these were awaiting the coming of the Messiah, the Christ, to set men free from the bondage under which the whole creation groaned.

Here was the Man who claimed to be the fulfillment of prophecy, the hope of the ages. His birth had been announced by angels. John the Baptist had given his testimony, crying out, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." He Himself had done such miracles as never man had done before, healing lepers, giving sight to those born blind, feeding the multitudes in the wilderness, walking on the water, stilling the winds and the storms, raising the dead, speaking with authority as never man spake, saying, "Before Abraham was I am," and "As the Father hath life in Himself so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." "I and the Father are one."

Yet He did not live as a king, still less as a God. If He had Divine power why did He not show it forth openly before the world? He lived as the simplest and humblest of men, having fishermen as His disciples, consorting with publicans and sinners, antagonizing, and denouncing the chief priests, scribes and rulers of the nation and church.

Whenever there was any move to make Him king He refused, withdrew Himself even from His disciples. Could such a one as this be the Son of God?

But now there is a feeling that He is about to declare Himself, show forth His power, take His kingdom. He comes to Jerusalem, at the Passover, when devout Jews and proselytes from all the known world gather together. "What will He do? Will He indeed declare Himself?" such questions are in the heart and on the lip of everyone as the pilgrims wend their way to the Holy City and the temple.

He reaches Bethany and rests quietly there till the Sabbath is past. Then He does take action. He suffers Himself to be welcomed to Jerusalem and the Temple as a triumphant King. The people go wild with enthusiasm crying, "Hosanna to the son of David, Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest." The whole city is moved and comes forth to meet Him and conduct Him to the temple. But after looking round about upon all things He goes out to Bethany for the night.

Returning to the temple the following day He again shows His power, by cleansing the temple of the money changers and tradesmen. As three years before when beginning His ministry so now again He drove them all forth and would suffer no man to carry a vessel through the temple. And yet, having done these things He goes no further, but resumes his teaching, speaking by parables to those who gather around Him, concerning the nature of the kingdom of God.

Not only are all they in Jerusalem puzzled but all in the spiritual world. Only those in the higher heavens know of a certainty that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world. The good feel drawn to Him, the evil fear He may be the Christ and hate Him; but all are in doubt.

But while they may be puzzled, and even intellectually in doubt, there is no uncertainty as to the attitude toward Him of the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees, the rulers of the people.

They hate Him with a deadly hatred. He daily uncovers their deceits and villainies. He denounces them as hypocrites, vipers, whited sepulchres. He is weaning the people from their leadership. Moreover, He would overturn all the revered traditions by which they interpret the law and enrich themselves at the expense of the common people. If He assumes power they see themselves cast out, imprisoned, perhaps put to death. Into this fear and hatred inflow all the envenomed malice of all the devils and satans, who instinctively hate innocence and goodness, who therefore are driven to frenzy of rage by Goodness Itself and Innocence Itself as embodied in the Lord our Savior.

So now when He takes no further steps toward assuming power His enemies are encouraged. Perhaps they can still succeed in turning the common people away from Him, or can involve Him with the Roman authorities. They gather together; they sink all private differences, all doctrinal differences; they seek to entangle Him in His talk, to lead Him by flattery, or to provoke Him by opposition, to say something which they can seize upon to discredit Him.

Four different groups come to Him as He teaches in the Temple, coming at different times, propounding different questions; but animated by one spirit, and probably by pre-arrangement among themselves.

The first group asks, "By what authority doest Thou these things' and who gave Thee this authority?" When they retire discomfited, a different group comes asking, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not?"

Then come the Sadducees who say there is no resurrection. asking what they think is an unanswerable question, "Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven, for they all had her?"

Finally, when the Sadducees are silenced, the Pharisees return and one of them, a lawyer, tempting Him, asks, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"

And when the Lord in answer declares the two great commandments of love to God and man the lawyer is constrained against his will to agree, saying, "Well, Master, Thou hast said the truth; for there is one God, and there is none other but He; And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love the neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

And then in His turn the Lord propounded a question to all of them, "What think ye of the Christ? whose Son is He?" and when they answered, "David's son," he asks, "How then doth David in spirit (or when inspired) call Him Lord?"

"And no man was able to answer Him, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions."

But let us return to the first question, "By what authority doest Thou these things? and who gave Thee

this authority?"

The question was put by a most august and powerful committee, composed of the chief priests, the scribes and the elders, members of the Sanhedrim, whose power was absolute and final in all matters of doctrine, worship and life.

To realize the full force of the question one must know that the final appeal at that day and among that people was always to authority. No man might hope to establish anything without recognized authority. Every teaching must rest its claim to acceptance upon the authority of some accepted teacher or rabbi. Moreover, no rabbi might teach without authorization; must be vouched for by responsible officers and judges and must be recognized by the Sanhedrim itself, which then gave him authority to teach and to expound the Scriptures. The Lord had no such authority. What authority had He?

The dead hand of authority, of the elders, of tradition, was the only standard of right; they knew no other. An appeal to truth, to common enlightenment, to reason, even to mercy, meant nothing to them. What say the authorities?

The Lord did not cavil, or evade the inquiry, but met it squarely. He answered and said unto them, "I also will ask you one question, and answer Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?"

But they were afraid to answer, "They reasoned with themselves, saying. If we shall say from heaven; He will say, why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, of men; they feared the people, for all men counted John that he was a prophet indeed."

Moreover, it was John who had vouched for the Lord; saying that He who had sent him gave him a sign saying, "Upon whom ye see the Spirit descending like a dove and resting upon him that same is He. And I saw and bear witness that this is indeed the Son of God." (Jno 1).

Now John the Baptist had asked no recognition of the great Sanhedrim. He derived his authority directly from the Lord Jehovah Himself. Yet he had been accepted by the people who came at his call into the wilderness, and were baptized unto repentance, putting away their sins and preparing themselves for the coming of the Christ.

The Lord goes right to the root of the matter, as He always did; as tho He said, "My authority is John (Tho I accept not the witness of man); what think ye of John and his baptism, Was it of God or of men?" John taught and baptized without their authority, yet the people so generally and so heartily believed in him that they feared to deny him, so they said, "We cannot tell." And the Lord responded, "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things."

This curt answer was not merely the Lord's way or repulsing and reproving an attack of wicked and hypocritical men. It was that, but at the same time it was an expression of the eternal truth that the Lord, Who is the spirit of the Word, cannot be known by those who deny the letter of the Word and its prophecies.

As to the first point, that the Lord was willing to "show up" these wicked hypocrites and discredit them

in the eyes of their followers, let it be said that the Lord was not meek and mild in dealing with the scribes and Pharisees who misled the people. Who would not enter the kingdom of God themselves and who hindered those who would enter. He denounced them as strongly as could be done. What denunciation has ever been more bitter than that which He often hurled at them? His whole soul and mind and strength revolted at the sight of these pious cowards who sat in Moses' seat, and for a pretense made long prayers, whose whole idea was to exploit the people for their own exaltation and enrichment. His Father had sent Him into the world to save His people from their hands. Their wickedness and hypocrisy must be made known, they must be shamed before the eyes of all men; and the Lord was not restrained from exposing them by any sentimental pity. No man could accept the Lord and His salvation so long as he trusted and followed the leadership of the rulers of the Jews. Their hypocrisy must be exposed at any cost. This is why the Lord must suffer death at their hands; that the simple good might at length perceive their true nature and turn from them. Therefore the Lord's answer, "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things," was intended as a public rebuke to discomfit them.

But as already said, it was more than that. It was a statement of the universal law that no one can receive the Lord, the living God, unless he first receive the written Word, which testifies of Him.

John was the forerunner who went before the face of the Lord to prepare His way before Him. He rehearsed the prophecies of His coming, told them that the time was at hand, urged them to repent of their sins, to return to the law and amend their lives according thereto lest the Lord's coming bring them a curse and not a blessing. Accordingly almost the whole nation came to John, accepted his baptism, put away their evils, turned with waiting hearts toward Him Whose kingdom was at hand.

Thus they were united in one body with the angelic heavens, were protected from the assaults of the hells, and so far as possible were enlightened and prepared to follow the Lord when He should appear.

Those who held aloof, who did not accept the baptism of John, who refused his testimony, could in no wise accept the Lord when He came. First comes the Law, afterward the Gospel; reformation must precede regeneration; evils must be put away before good can be done; the letter must precede the spirit. He who denies the written Word can never know the Living Word.

In the planet Jupiter, where there is no written Word but men are taught the way of life by angels, a forerunner always comes before the angel, to admonish, to reprove, to warn, that the angel be worthily received.

John testified concerning the Lord, "He it is Who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I and not worthy to unloose." "He must increase, but I must decrease." He is from above, I am from beneath." And yet, although the Lord spoke with Divine authority, He could scarcely be accepted as the Son of the living God by anyone who rejected the testimony of John; for John's testimony was but that of the Law and the prophets.

The Second Advent.

The Lord has come again. He has opened the spiritual sense of His Word, as it is known in the heavens, by the angels, above time and space; in this sense the Lord is perpetually present. He speaks directly

and immediately to the understanding and the heart of the man of the Church. But His new revelation of Himself does not invalidate the old as given in the letter of the Old and New Testaments. The new but confirms and establishes the old. The new is based upon and opened out of the old. The Lord speaks new things to us in the very words of the old. So is it ever and must always be in regard to letter and spirit.

They are one as soul and body are one. The spirit is the only living thing in the letter; the spirit is greater than the letter; yet the spirit is found only in the letter and not outside of it, even as a man's soul is found in his body.

We recognize that the Lord God is infinite and eternal, without beginning or end, having no finite limits; yet must we find Him and learn to know Him in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. If we seek to know the infinite God only in the unbounded universe our minds sink down into nature and we cease to know Him as God Man, thinking of Him as a merely mechanical force. So too if we seek to find the light of the new heaven by direct influx into our own minds, apart from the letter of the Word of His second coming; in such case that light falls into our own proprium and becomes darkness.

It is indeed true that, as Solomon said, "heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain the Lord; how much less this house that I have built" (1 K 8:27); yet whatever the Lord speaks or gives to men in His written Word is able to contain and express the fulness of His Divine Love and Wisdom, and therefore can make Him present to man and man to Him. And there is no other medium of communication between the infinite God and finite man but (1) His written Word, and then (2) He who, by fulfilling the written Word, because the Living Word, the fulness of God in His Divine Human.

If the chief priests, the scribes and the elders, had acknowledged that the baptism of John was from heaven the Lord would gladly have told them by what authority He did His works of mercy; indeed in such case they would not have needed to ask; they would have known that He spoke with the Divine authority of the Father Who dwelt within Him; they would have sat at His feet as his disciples; would have welcomed Him as their Messiah, come to redeem and save the human race.

But having rejected the testimony of John, and spurned his baptism unto repentance, they could not but reject the Lord. Amen.

Lessons: Luke 20:1-26, Luke 20:27-47, @AE 475 (19-21).

THE LORD AND THE SCRIBE

"And the Scribe said unto Him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth; for there is one God and there is none other but He; And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love the neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." Mark 12:32, 33.

Here, at last, appears a more hopeful note in the contest between the authorities of the Jewish Church and the Lord. Three times has He answered their questions shrewdly planned to confound Him by answers that confounded them; but this time the scribe finds himself able to understand and agree with the Lord's answer; and the Lord in turn says to the scribe, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

It is not quite clear what spirit moved this scribe. Mark says, "One of the scribes came and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that He had answered them well (i.e. the Sadducees), asked Him, Which is the first commandment of all?" But Matthew says, "When the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. Then one of them, a lawyer, asked, tempting Him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment of the law?"

Thus Matthew represents this as a continuation of the determined attack of the Lord's enemies in their effort to tempt Him to say something they might seize upon to His hurt, while Mark speaks only of the agreement of the scribe or lawyer with the Lord and the Lord's commendation of the scribe.

Possibly the reconciliation of the two accounts may be found in this; that the scribe did approach the Lord in opposition, yet could not withhold his consent and agreement with the answer the Lord gave. Many a man has approached the Lord in His Word to show its inconsistencies but has been constrained, against his will, to confess that the Lord has spoken the truth, that he himself has been in error. Or, according to the common saying, "He came to scoff and remained to pray."

In either case the explanation is found in the New Church doctrine of the remnant.

In every evil church there is always a salvable remnant in simple good, believing the same false doctrines that the corrupt leaders of the Church teach, who yet retain something of charity toward the neighbor. These can be separated when the evil openly show their true character in the Judgment, can be drawn forth and instructed in the genuine truth of the Word, call be led to know the Lord and to follow on to know Him.

It is both of interest and importance to understand as clearly as may be the end and death of a Church and the raising up of a New Church among a remnant which can be led forth from the Old,—like Israel from the bondage of Egypt, or like the Christian Church from the Jewish; and in our day the Church of the New Jerusalem from the First Christian. This doctrine of the death of a Church as taught in the Heavenly Doctrine is new anti is liable to be misunderstood. It does not mean that every one in a dead Church, or even that any one is beyond the hope of salvation. The Lord alone knows who is internally, in his heart, confirmed in opposition to the Lord; no man knows that, not even the angels know certainly till the end of life. Any one call be saved, however great his sin, if he sincerely repents and

learns to do well.

According to the Doctrine there have been a number of Churches on the earth. There can be but one at a time.

The Lord gathers together into one form those who constitute His Church on the earth, who become as one man before Him, known as to the affection of truth and the conjunction thereby with the Lord as the Bride and Wife of the Lamb,--or before His Advent as "the virgin daughter of Zion or Jerusalem." Each church has passed through its periods of infancy, childhood, maturity, old age and finally death, even as every man does; but it is always provided that before a Church wholly perishes a new one shall be raised up among a salvable remnant from among the Old, which Church then passes to the gentiles taking a new form in harmony with the nature of the people among whom it comes, yet retaining what is essential from the preceding dispensation. There have been four such Churches in the past history of the race. These are known as the Most Ancient, the Ancient, The Israelitish, and the First Christian; and a fifth is now being raised up, known as the Church of the New Jerusalem.

It is not our purpose at this time to go further back than the Jewish Church; to show what is meant by the death of that Church and the raising up of a new church among a remnant. We, indeed, are taught that the Israelitish and later the Jewish Church never was a living Church, because even from the beginning it had nothing of spiritual life, was not animated by love to the Lord or toward the neighbor. It was only a representative of a Church. Yet in the beginning with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and later with Moses and Joshua, and David, and for a time with Solomon, there was an honest effort to obey the Lord, not only on the part of these leaders but also among the people in general. But when the Lord came this will to obey had perished. They were not willing to be taught the true meaning of their law or of the prophets. They were not willing to obey their God but demanded that He obey them. The Lord showed them out of the Scriptures the nature of the kingdom of God, but they would have none of it; He convicted them of their evils - like the defiling of the temple - but they would not give them up.

They were only enraged against Him, were determined upon His death if He would not set up an earthly kingdom. And this was the prevailing spirit among all the Jews, both high and low, learned and unlearned, Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians. That this is so is shown by the fact that as a race and nation the Jews still continue to reject the Lord as the promised Messiah, and that when any of them do profess to become Christians they are often hypocrites actuated by the desire for gain.

Yet there was among them a remnant, a small remnant, at the time of the Advent, which had not closed its heart to the softening influences of heaven;--there were Zacharias and Elizabeth, Mary and Joseph, Simeon and Anna, the Apostles and many devoted women who followed the Lord. It has been estimated that Jewish Christians were as many as 50,000 before the capture of Jerusalem by the Roman armies.

Mary, the mother of the Lord, and His brethren at times thought Him "beside Himself;" His closest disciples could not conceive of a kingdom to be established by His death. They were all, good and bad, together in their desire for a worldly kingdom. And we know from the Heavenly Doctrine that this false idea was so grounded in the minds of the twelve that in the spiritual world at the end of the first Christian Church they were demanding the literal fulfillment of the Lord's promise that they should sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. This was when they were let down into their natural

mind for their final judgment in the light of the Lord's Second Coming. This is mentioned to show the incredible persistence and obstinacy of the false ideals which held all the Jews at the time of the Advent; which could scarcely be broken even by several years personal contact with the Lord the Savior. Yet of the Lord's mercy there were found those who could be saved from these fantasies and the lusts which induced them, the lusts for power and wealth.

Even tho it required persecutions in the world and seventeen hundred years delay in the spiritual world, and the further opening of the Word in the second Advent before that lust for gold and glory could be finally judged and put away.

These things are said - be it well noted - not from any desire to condemn the Jews or hold them up to scorn, but only for our own enlightenment, that we may have our eyes opened and be delivered from the same lusts. As to the natural man we are all Jews our own natural man knows no other loves but those of the world and of the flesh. The Jew is a natural man with the spiritual degree of the mind closed. Of the Lord's great mercy He suffered His Word to be given among such a people; He Himself was willing to be horn among such a people, that the evils of the human proprium might be set forth in all their vile nakedness, that He might save to the uttermost all even among the worst of the sons of men who can be aroused to see the nature of evil and be moved to reject it. It is the only hope for the Jew's salvation that he shall see this nature of his people. It is the only hope for the Christian's salvation that he shall see that as to his natural man he is no whit better than the Jew; that if he does not suffer himself to be dragged down as deeply into the sensual and corporeal life as the Jew does it is not by virtue of any superior goodness of his own but solely because of the light of the Gospel, and of the opened heaven itself which he has enjoyed in greater measure than the Jew

The Sadducees denied that there is any resurrection, any life after death, any possible kingdom of God not of this world. But they are better, more honest,--the Writings say - than Christians who acknowledge spiritual realities and yet think to get into heaven with all the lusts of the flesh unchanged, by the mere lip profession of saving faith in the merit of Christ, or by muttered word of a priest and extreme unction in the hour of death after a life-time of sin.

It was the very same Jewish qualities of supreme love of self and of the world that caused the Christian Church, after three centuries of genuine faith and life to pervert the Lord's teaching. Genuine men, honest men, men who were sincerely seeking the way to heaven, or who were seeking to feed the Lord's sheep, could never have perverted the Lord's clear teaching into a doctrine that Christ suffered in the sinner's stead, so that the burden of his sin call be imputed by God the Father to Christ and Christ's merit imputed to the sinner, so that he may be washed clean in the blood of Christ. Or the doctrine of the pope as Christ's vicar upon earth, exercising the power of God Himself. Such doctrines were hatched in the lowest hell, and could never have been accepted and fastened upon the Lord's Church by honest men but only by hypocrites,--whose desire was to retain in their own hands all the power of the kingdom of heaven, to give up nothing of evil love, and yet as by violence to seize upon that kingdom. Are not the honest Jews much better off who openly reject a kingdom they are unwilling to prepare themselves for?

Three times in the temple the Jewish hierarchy approached the Lord tempting Him; three times He answered condemning them, and they concurred in their own condemnation, accepting it without reply. The fourth time the scribe who propounds the question agrees with the Lord's answer; but in

this he represents not the Jewish Church but the better element among them who are able to see the genuine doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures. In a good sense this reply of the scribe has reference to the attitude of the remnant.

For the Lord called forth the remnant from among the Jews and formed them into a new Church, (1) by the doctrine of love to the Lord and toward the neighbor as embodying the whole spirit of the law and the prophets; and (2) by the doctrine that He Himself was not human but Divine, the Son of the eternal God, even as to His Human. But of this later.

Let us now return briefly to the three questions first put to the Lord. The first was (1) By what authority doest Thou these things and who gave you this authority? He gave them the authority of John who represented the authority of their Scriptures and of their God; but they rejected Divine authority, preferring the authorization of their Sanhedrim. 2. They asked, not sincerely but hypocritically, seeking to entrap Him, Is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar? His answer demanded that the Church recognize two worlds and two kingdoms, a kingdom of this world subordinate to the kingdom of heaven. But they unconsciously, spoke the truth when they said to Pilate, "We have no king but Caesar." 3. Third came the Sadducees who say there is no resurrection, who told their little fable of the woman who had been successively married to seven husbands, who finally without any offspring joined them in death; thus unwittingly describing the decline and death of their own Church, which through seven successive downward stages had failed to bring forth any spiritual offspring, and had finally perished in death, a death from which there could be no resurrection to life but only to damnation.

Now three in the Word signifies what is full, complete, and finished;—hence the trinity in God and in man, the three heavens and hells, the three atmospheres in both worlds natural and spiritual; hence the Lord's resurrection on the third day and man's resurrection into the spiritual world on the same day, and etc.

So these three rejections of the Lord's doctrine by the Jews in the temple represent the three-fold rejection of the Divine. First they wholly falsified their Scriptures by regarding the traditions of the elders as more sacred than the Word of God. Second, they knew not the power of God, they refused to exalt Divine things above worldly things, but on the contrary made their religion but a servant by which to procure the good things of the world. And, third, such a life, of course, brought forth no spiritual offspring, no love to God or the neighbor, thus nothing of life but only death.

Yet, nevertheless it must be shown publicly, there in the Lord's temple, by their own confession, that the Sacred Scripture teaches above all things that man must love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength, and his neighbor as himself. And it must be further taught to those of whom a new Church can be raised up that the Lord Jesus Christ is that one God manifest in His own Divine Human.

Always at the end of a Church the Lord comes again and restores the genuine doctrine of the Church as it was delivered at the beginning. This is both the means of judging the consummated Church and at the same time of rescuing the remnant, of which a new Church can be formed. And because of this necessity at the end of a Church the Lord provided that the same thing should be done, or represented, on His last day in the temple. The Divine is ever and always the same in things greatest and least.

AND NOW IN CONCLUSION a few words on the need to love the Lord with all one's powers and faculties, and to acknowledge His Human as Divine. A man can see the justice of the law that he shall love the neighbor as himself, however hard he may find it to do. Whoever acknowledges God as the Creator cannot but assent that from the Divine standpoint all men are equal, all are sons of God, and the child of God should not love himself more than he loves his brothers.

But how can man love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength? From himself man cannot do this. It is impossible. On the contrary man of himself cannot love God at all; he can only love himself with all his powers and faculties. To recognize this is the first thing in a true relation toward God. The Lord does not expect man to love Him by virtue of any innate power in man himself. Man has no power, no life, no love as his own; and as soon as he makes these things his own by denial of their source in God he perverts them and turns them into their opposites, love into hate, life into death.

To love the Lord supremely, with all one's faculties, is simply to cease to be of a divided mind, to cease striving to serve two masters, to cease trying to be one's own master while professing to serve the Lord. It cannot be done any other way; "for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Lk. 16:13). Man cannot live both in heaven and hell. He must choose one or the other. If he turns his face upward toward God then his life flows in thence; if he turns his face downward to hell then his life flows in thence.

"If the Lord be God follow Him," said Elijah on Mount Carmel, "but if Baal then follow him."

"How can ye, being evil, speak good things?" said the Lord to the Jews, "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Such good words the Lord called "idle words" they are empty within, hypocritical. Man's ruling love must be either in heaven or in hell; and his ruling love must dominate over its adversary. If his ruling love is love to the Lord then love of self and of the world should become servants, should be recognized as such, and never be allowed to sway or rule over his acts.

Therefore the Lord demands a total submission of those who profess to be His disciples; and this for the sake of man himself, and for his happiness. It is better, more human, to be an open honest sinner than a lukewarm Christian. The lot of the profaner is the most terrible of all.

AS TO THE SECOND POINT, the Lord's denial that He was the son of David, this is the very foundation stone of the Christian Church, and especially of the New and true Christian Church, the Church of the New Jerusalem. When Peter confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." the Lord answered, "Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The doctrine of the Lord's glorification was unknown in the first Christian Church; that could not be revealed to a Church Christian in name only, lest it be profaned.

It was reserved for the second Coming. In the light of that doctrine it can be fully and rationally seen that the Son of God could not remain part Divine and part human but by His life in the world lived from the Divine of the Father He must put off all the human from the mother and put on in its place a Divine Human from the Father, until finally He became wholly Divine, not only as to love and wisdom but even as to His flesh and bones. Thus in His Divine Human the God of eternity becomes visible as a Divine Man in the world. In the light of His glorification reflected back upon His whole earthly life we

see that even from infancy He spoke and acted only from the Divine, so that in His Word we have a full, an Infinite, revelation of God to man. His words, His deeds, are finite but on the one side, that turned toward man - in order that they may be accommodated to our finite reception; but upward they open to infinity, because they proceed from the infinity of God Himself. Therefore we say with Paul, In our Lord Jesus Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. We worship Him alone as the visible God whose Human is Divine and whose Divine is Human. Amen.

Lessons: Deuteronomy 9, Mark 12:13-44, @AC 9409.

THE DIVINE ATTRACTION

"And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself." (John 12:32)

We are told in the Heavenly Doctrine that "there is actually a sphere elevating all to heaven which continually proceeds from the Lord and infills the universal spiritual world and the universal natural world; it is like a strong current in the ocean which in a hidden way draws a ship. All who believe in the Lord and live according to His precepts enter that sphere or current, and are elevated; but they who do not believe are unwilling to enter it, but remove themselves to the sides, and are there carried away by a stream that tends toward hell." (@TCR 652.)

There are thus two centers of attraction,—the earth under our feet, and the Lord in heaven, in the spiritual sun, above. One is the center of nature, of matter, of death; the other, the center of life, of that which is immortal, of the soul. The earth draws to itself the material, the physical, the body, and all that is of the body; but the Lord draws to Himself all that is of the spirit, or the mind, all of good and truth, which, especially when conjoined, are like wings, lifting man up into heaven, enabling him to respond to the spiritual current; while evil and falsity, especially when conjoined, are like leaden weights that drag man down to the earth, as was said of Pharaoh and his hosts, "The depths have covered them; they sank into the bottom as a stone. Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters." (Exodus 15:5, 10.)

As long as man lives in the natural world, there are these two attractions, pulling him as to the body downwards, as to the soul upward. He who believes in the Lord, and loves to walk in His precepts, casts off the weights of the material, and is raised after death to heaven. But he who does not believe in the Lord, and is unwilling to respond to the upward current, is dragged down toward hell as by weights of lead and stone.

The physical body is of dead matter. It cannot permanently receive and respond to the spiritual attraction. So in the end it falls back to the earth from whence it was taken. But the spirit of a man who believes in the Lord and responds to His love can take with it the finest things of nature, and all the truths and goods of life,—all that has been touched and made to live by the Lord's own Spirit.

"And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto myself." After the Lord's resurrection, the Divine sphere of attraction was to go forth from His glorified Human to save and uplift men. Yet this Divine sphere was not then first established. From eternity the Divine Love, which had for its end a heaven of angels from the human race, would not only go forth into creation, but would flow back, binding creation to Itself. And the same Divine Love which impelled the Lord to create would continually operate to draw its children into His bosom, that He might evermore increase His blessings of life, of love, of wisdom. Therefore, from the beginning there was a sphere from the Creator which flowed out into His creation and back again. This produced an actual current in the first, the highest, atmosphere of the universe, which, going forth from God into nature, flowed back again to Him, drawing all things spiritual to Himself.

Nature responded to its current, and produced the vegetable kingdom, rising up out of the earth, striving upward; also the animal kingdom, and finally man, with a living soul, capable of receiving and

responding to the Lord's own Love and Wisdom, able to choose good and refuse evil, to choose life and reject death, to choose the wisdom which comes from on high, and reject the pseudo-wisdom which comes from the darkness of mere science.

And the first men responded to this attraction, fixed their eyes upon the Sun of heaven, and walked in its light, as well as the light of the sun of nature. The result was the Golden Age, when men, while yet on earth, lived as angels, and angels walked and talked with men. Leaving the body at death, the man of that Age passed from an earthly to a heavenly paradise, hardly noting the difference. Because sin was unknown, pain, sickness, disease and suffering were unknown.

But that freedom of choice which is the first gift of God to man, which is the likeness of God in man, carried with it the ability to turn to the earth instead of heaven, to choose nature instead of God, to accept as true the appearance that man's life is his own to do with as he chooses, to trust the senses and their testimony as wisdom, and reject the teachings of religion as superstition. And this men did, not all at once, but gradually, with an ever-increasing ratio as the pull of the earth became stronger with them, while the attraction of heaven became weaker, because it found ever fewer remains of good and truth in man to receive it and respond to it. This the Lord had foreseen, and turned it to good, as He always turns evil to good. God is never the origin or the cause of evil. Yet He permits evil so far as He can turn it to good. "He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He restrains."

Somewhere, in His great universe, the Lord was to permit the men of some earth to exercise their freedom of choice to the full, that they might sink to a depth of sin and misery beyond which it is impossible to go and be redeemed, to the end that they themselves, and through them the men on all earths, might know the dreadful results of sin, and also that all men in all earths might partake of the benefits of their redemption and salvation.

For the very apostasy of man at length made it possible and necessary for the Lord Himself to come as a Man into the finite realm, which He had created beneath Himself and outside of Himself,--to come into that realm by virgin birth, to subject Himself as the Son of man to all the laws of order from Himself in nature, to grow in wisdom and in stature as a man, subject to all man's temptations, that He might be tempted as we are, yet without sin, and that He might conquer the hells, and, rising triumphant over death and hell, might, as Divine Man, bring life and immortality to all who could receive the blessings of His victory. For He had said: "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto myself."

The Lord had made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem as her King, and certain Greeks, who had come to the Passover, went to Philip, saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus." Philip and Andrew then told Jesus, and He answered them, saying, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified." The Lord knew that the Jews would reject Him, and that His church must be established with the gentiles,--the Greeks and Europeans. So when these Greeks came desiring to see Him, it was as though, here at hand, were the first fruits from gentile lands. Here were men who could hear and respond to His words, men who could feel and respond to the attraction of the spirit. The Jews, except for a small remnant among them, could not. Therefore He spoke at once of His glorification, and immediately afterward of His death. For the two are inseparably connected. The body must die, if the soul is to rise to life eternal; the desires and pleasures of the body must die, that the joys and delights of the spirit may be realized. The

body from the mother was to be rejected, that the Lord might rise into the glory He had with the Father before the world was. Therefore He said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."

He who chooses the spiritual life must hate the merely natural pleasures of the body, so far as they hold him back from serving the Lord and the neighbor. The man who so hates the life of the world subordinates it to the life of the spirit, so that he puts a new spirit within it. Instead of making his spiritual life natural and dead, he makes his natural life spiritual and living. Thus he keeps all that is good in it, even the pleasures of the body, unto life eternal. For the life which leads to heaven is not a dry or austere life, but a joyful and happy life,—happier a thousand times than the life which leads to hell. It is only necessary that a man shall act sincerely and justly in all things because it is commanded by the Lord. "If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there also shall my servant be."

But then came the Lord's cry: "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name." So long as He was in the world, the Lord had a dual consciousness, as every man has,—a consciousness born of the spirit, and a consciousness born of the body. The body is subject to death, must die, that the spirit may rise into its world of light. There is a conflict. Which shall prevail? The body, with its weights and its darkness, or the spirit? They cannot both prevail. "What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour." (No, I will say,) "Father glorify Thy name." And there came an answering voice from heaven, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

This audible voice came, not for the Lord's sake, but for the sake of men and angels, of those whom He came to redeem. It was a testimony to both Jews and Greeks that the Lord was the Christ, the Son of the living God. Some heard it as a voice from heaven, others only as thunder: but to all it was a testimony from on high of the Lord and His mission.

And therefore the Lord immediately said, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

The prince of this world is the ruling love of the world,—the love that rules the body, the love of self and the world. The Lord was battling, not for Himself, but for mankind. His ruling love was the love of men. This love was the Father which dwelt within Him, and from which He did all His works. He admitted the hells to inflow into His human with all their force and power. He as it were lent a sympathetic ear to all their arts and pleadings. He admitted temptations from all the hells, that in His victory He might triumph over all falsity and all evil to which any man can be tempted.

We cannot know what form this conflict took with Him, but possibly it was the suggestion to the infirm human that it would be better to yield to the Jews, to accept an earthly throne, where He might reign in the flesh to eternity, thus as it were compelling all men to render homage unto Him. But, having examined all that the combined hosts of the infernals could offer, He saw its fallacy in Divine light. He announced a judgment. He separated heaven from hell, and established a great gulf between the two. From the time of the Fall, infernal spirits had labored to destroy that gulf, to obscure it, to make it invisible to man's eyes, to persuade man that there is but one life, one love, one joy,—that all must center in self, in power, in rule, in abundance of possessions, in long life, in health, in pleasures. But

the Lord brought another life, another love, to view,--a love of giving instead of receiving, of serving instead of ruling, of loving others instead of loving self.

These loves are not of the body, but of the spirit. They are opposed to the loves of the body. They come from above. They involve the conquest of the spirit over the body, and finally the death of the body and all its joys. "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto myself.

This He said, signifying what death He should die."

The Lord's way was Divinely clear before Him. His choice was made. There was no hesitation with Him. "For this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name." It was written in the Scriptures, in the eternal Law of God, that He could glorify His name, that is, His Human, only by the gate of death, only by the cross. For only by such a death could He testify to savage man the nature of the Divine love for man and his salvation. But He saw that, if He were lifted up from the earth, He would draw to Himself all who would believe on Him. By the conquest of hell, and by the glorification of His Human, He brought gifts to all men, yea, to the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. He saves all, some to heaven, some only to milder evils. But all, even those in the hells, feel the effects of His redemption and salvation. And these effects, in heaven, on earth, and over the hells, will be felt in an ever-increasing measure as the years unfold. "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto myself. Amen.

Lessons: Habakkuk 3, John 12:12-36, @TCR 650-652.

FATHER FORGIVE THEM

"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34.

"To err is human: to forgive Divine." The truth of this saying was never more fully exemplified than at the cross. It was the day of the Lord's enemies: their day of triumph. It was war to the death between the chief priests, the scribes and Pharisees, and the Lord: a war begun at the commencement of His public ministry when He first cleansed the temple and disregarded their sacred traditions. Their spies had followed wherever He went, seeking only to criticize, seizing everything that they might turn against Him, saying that His wonderful power to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to still the storm, was from Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.

And the Lord had accepted their challenge, and for the sake of the common people, that He might deliver them from their fell power, He had uncovered their hypocrisy, their pride, their lust for power and wealth. They were implacable: their malice knew no bounds: they rested not day nor night. For behind them, inciting their hatred, was all the hosts of the infernals, and the hells themselves.

On Palm Sunday it seemed as if they had lost, and the Lord and Heaven had won. And on Monday, when He again cleansed the temple, overturning the tables of the money changers and the seats of them that sold doves, and suffering no man to carry a vessel thru the temple. And He said unto them, "Is it not written, `My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations?' but ye have made it a den of robbers."

And again on Tuesday of Holy Week while teaching in the temple the Lord hurled against the leaders of the Jews as severe denunciations as have even been spoken against any class of men, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because ye "shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering in to enter.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte: and when he is become so, ye make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for ye tithe mint, anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done and not to have the other undone. Ye blind guides, that strain out the gnat and swallow the camel.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for ye are like whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the damnation of hell?"

But now the tables are turned. The rulers of the Jews have found a traitor in the ranks of the Lord's followers, one of His chosen twelve, who led a band of men to take Him secretly, when the multitude was absent. And, strange to say, the Lord does not resist. He submits to them. He forbids his disciples to fight. He is mocked, He is scourged, is condemned to be crucified. He saved others, but seems helpless to save Himself. And when they nail Him to the cross, He prays, "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do."

So long as the Lord was in the world He fought the rulers of the Jews, that He might gather out and keep His own: but when the time had come for Him to go out of the world He said to the chief priests and captains of the temple and the elders which were come to Him in the garden, "When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against Me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness." Lk. 22: 52.

So long as the use demanded it He fought them bitterly, with all zeal, yet without personal rancor: but when the use demanded that He submit to them, and their power, to the tortures of the cruelest death that they could devise, He accepted that, and from His Divine love freely forgave them, as one would forgive wild beasts for acting out their nature: "they know not what they do." Evil is a kind of insanity: a sickness, in which all things appear distorted: nothing is seen justly, or in its true colors. When the rage of anger is upon one he thinks anything is justified. The Lord never judges a man by what he does in the heat of rage: only by his attitude afterward when in cool blood he reviews and passes judgment upon his deed.

Yet how contagious is the rage and insanity of anger. How quickly evil in one kindles the same spirit in others. How quickly zeal to defend the right degenerates into vengeance: revenge for the wrong done occupies the whole mind, the mob spirit is aroused: Heaven and its law is abolished and the flames of hell encompass both the good and the evil. This should not be.

"Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord." Zeal from self is always lawless. Only that zeal which is checked and curbed by the law of God, and by recognition of His all-ruling Providence, can ever accomplish anything toward the permanent conquest of evil. How futile to fight evil with evil. In such case how can good prevail? Truth from good can alone fight evil successfully.

The Lord as a Man in the World

How wonderful was the state of the Lord as a Man in the world. No man or angel can ever understand thoroly His life. By Jewish heredity and environment He was externally one with His day and generation: yet internally one with the omniscient God: thus with a wisdom finally reaching beyond that of the wisest angels. Moved as all men must be by the things which came to Him thru the external senses of the body, His reaction would always be from His ruling love, thus from the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom of the Father within Him. He spoke and acted from God and as God.

Yet He had another state, a state of exinanition, or outpouring: a state in which His consciousness was in the maternal human: a state in which He examined that human with its limited wisdom and its love of external things, its shadows and appearances, when the Father seemed separate, when He must pray to the Father as tho to another. In this state the hells flowed in, tempting Him, seeking to make Him accept as His own His maternal human.

Thus, as says the Apostle, "He was tempted in all points, like as we are, yet without sin."

It would have been sin for Him to accept anything of the maternal human, any of its limited light, any of its affections. They were of the body, of the world, of self. These He rejected and put off to accept instead from the indwelling Father, the love of men and their salvation to eternity. This was the Love which with its Wisdom sustained Him in all His temptations. He ever spoke and acted only from this

Divine Love and its Divine Wisdom.

Think what it must have been to be closely associated with such a Man: to live with Him day and night, as did the Twelve: to be sure always, whatever happened, of His love and sympathy, of His understanding: and of His Wisdom. Never did there appear any anger, any pride, or contempt of others. Not only had He the power to provide bread from Heaven when they were hungry, to cast out demons, to still the storm, to walk on the angry waters: His wisdom was unfailing.

The scribes, the Pharisees, the Herodians, singly or combined, were no match for Him: He knew their plots, their crafty schemes, even before they spoke: He answered their hard questions in such a way as to confound them.

And yet, altho He was so great that his disciples could not but feel like little children before Him, never did He show impatience with their ignorance: only a desire to impart to them all the wisdom He Himself possessed, in words adapted to their understanding. "All things that I have learned of my Father I have made known unto you."

The Cross

But now, at the cross, He puts aside all His power. His authority, His majesty, and becomes as helpless as another man. This He did for man's salvation. "No man taketh my life from Me." He said: "I have power to lay it down and to take it again: this commandment have I received of my Father." The last degree of temptation always involves non-resistance: non-resistance from self: the devils must appear to be triumphant: self-love and the pride of self, must be uprooted from the heart. With the Lord this involved not only the rejection of the mortal body from the mother, as with every man, but it involved also the putting on of a new body from the Divine which was His soul.

The victory of the hells proved their defeat. They succeeded in destroying His body from the mother only to bring forth to angels and men the clear vision of His Divine Body, with the full majesty and glory of Jehovah God. Before this vision they could not stand, but were constrained to flee to their caverns in the hells, leaving the Lord's sheep free.

The Horizons

What a lifting of man's horizon came with the Lord's victory over hell. The Jew's eyes were fixed at his feet: like the beasts which perish, he saw only the things of this world.

His affections did not extend further, nor could he lift his eyes to a spiritual world.

But with the Lord's resurrection life and immortality were brought to light. Heaven became a real place. The Christian's ambitions, his hopes, were lifted from the flesh pots of earth to a blessed home in Heaven. And while he did not have a clear realization of that world, nor of the spiritual loves which must rule there, still his horizon was extended to take in that world as well as this one.

And now in His Second Coming, after almost two millenniums of Christian faith and culture, the Lord is able to open the wisdom of His Word as angels know it: to reveal the life after death, the true nature of Heaven and the loves which make it: the true nature of hell and the loves that make it hell: the

nature of God and of the Lord our Savior and Redeemer and how in Him the two natures of God and Man were made one: the nature of Divine order according to which God Himself must act because He is Divine Love and Wisdom and cannot act contrary to His own essence and nature: the laws of order for man, that he must rule his little world as the Lord rules His great Universe, in freedom according to reason, as if of himself, yet ever acknowledging that the wisdom and the love to so order his own must be received from the Lord, for in man apart from the Lord dwells only folly and insanity.

Thus before the eyes of the instructed man of the New Church stretches the whole of creation from boundary to boundary. He stands as it were in the middle and at his will lifts his eyes to the first, the second, and even the third Heaven: and above all He sees the Sun of Heaven shining in His strength, with sometimes, the face and figure of the one and only Lord appearing within the circle of the Sun.

Turning his eyes downward He sees the three hells below him: yet even the hells are embraced by the sphere of the Lord, which surrounds them and makes their wrath to praise Him.

They praise Him by furnishing contrasts between the loves of Heaven and the hatreds of hell, stirring men's zeal for the right: and by temptations purging men of evil and so contributing to the purity and power of the heavens.

And in all this vast panorama, embracing life, human, angelic, and infernal, the instructed New Churchman sees no power but that of the Lord of Life and Love Who created it and afterward came into the world to save it. He is omnipresent in it, the Last as well as the First, ordering all things for the eternal happiness of His wise children and to ameliorate the misery of His poor misguided evil children who have foolishly chosen the evil loves of self and of pleasure.

Our Responsibility.

What is our responsibility in this work of saving the human race? or have we any responsibility in the matter? Salvation is of the Lord alone. He is omnipotent. All power is His. Man has no power. Even the devils in hell must obey when the Lord speaks. He can use evil men to preach the Gospel. All the Heavens form one man which is as His body, moved by Him as its soul, to ends of His devising. Nothing can withstand His power. He needs none of our help.

But wait. Not so fast. We have been so disgusted with fanatical Christians who have talked glibly of saving souls, that we are in danger of reacting to the opposite extreme, and washing our hands of our just share in establishing the kingdom of heaven.

The Lord does need human help in establishing His Kingdom. His choice of the Twelve, His ordaining them and sending them forth to preach and baptize all nations. His working with them thru signs and miracles, and the fact that without their testimony the Church could not have been established after He had ascended is proof of that. He needs human cooperation. That there is a heaven and a hell is proof of that.

In the New Church we must shift the emphasis from the results to the doer: must not claim the Lord's work as our own, while yet recognizing that we must be obedient to the Divine command "Go work today in my vineyard."

Only the willing and obedient can obtain part in the Kingdom of the Heavens. For our own salvation we must work unselfishly for others: work in the Lord and for the Lord, in His spirit, animated by His love of men. That means regeneration. It means giving up the supreme love of self and love of the world, that we may receive from the Lord a new love. It means a new birth from above. And this involves not only obedience to the Lord in all things, but self-examination, and temptation combats again the evils of proprium.

The Lord is our example. He glorified Himself for man's salvation by putting off the human from the mother and putting on the Divine Human from the Father. And the true Christian is he who likewise rejects and puts off the evils of his proprium to be born of the Lord's Spirit. And the zeal with which we engage in the work is the measure of our happiness and usefulness in heaven to eternity.

The greatest use any man can do is to allow the Lord to regenerate him. And there is no man but has the means of his regeneration at hand in the work of his calling, however humble it may be. Let him devote himself to that work with all zeal, employing all the truth he knows and can acquire, using all zeal and affection, stirring himself up to perform that work of his use as unto the Lord, because done for children of the Heavenly Father, who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto Me."

And the hardest lesson to learn in man's regeneration is forgiveness, meekness, humility, humble submission to the Lord's will.

How quickly our anger flares up at the first slight to our dignity: how quickly contempt of others for us awakens our contempt for them.

And how we nurse revenge, justifying it to ourselves: deceiving ourselves, or letting evil spirits deceive us, so that we do not recognize it as evil. We even deny that we are angry, or that we are nursing revenge.

Anger, contempt, envy, together with a brood of similar evils, all come from love of self, love of eminence, love of power, love of rule from self love. They hide themselves so deeply and entrench themselves so firmly, that we can hardly recognize them, or see them as evil in ourselves-tho we have no trouble in recognizing them in others.

"Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do" said our Lord as He was nailed on the cruel cross. It is the first and the last of the Christian virtues: the first to be striven for the last to be accomplished.

"Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? (asked Peter) till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, till seven times: but, until seventy times seven" Matthew 18:22.

But it must be well known that real forgiveness is not in any man of himself: it comes from the Lord alone. "Your Father maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." He forgives every sin as soon as it is committed: for He loves the sinner and never turns His face away from him, even tho hating the sin and allowing it to bring its own punishment.

It is only love that can cast out hate and love of others is received only from the Lord who loves all

men. Let these words ring in our ears thruout the whole year, "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do." Amen.

Lessons: -Luke 23:1-26, Luke 23:27-56, Lord 35, pts.

THE LORD IS GOD, THE DIVINE-HUMAN

It is the teaching of the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem that man can see God, can see Him in His own glorified Body in which He rose from the tomb on Easter morning; and this in spite of the fact that He is infinite and man is finite, and between the finite and the Infinite there can be no ratio. How, then, can finite man see the infinite God?

Not as God is in Himself, but as He accommodates Himself to man in a quasi-finite form, in a form as it were finite, or finite on one side, but opening up on the other side to full infinity. Thus man, being finite, is given a finite form to see, which he must have to think of, that he may realize any reality: yet at the same time that he sees the bounded form he is enabled by doctrine to know that its finiteness is but an accommodation to his own state, for in itself the Body too is infinite and Divine.

Such a Divine Body of God Man it is possible for every instructed New Churchman to see in spirit even in this life: and what is seen in spirit here becomes visible before the eyes of the spirit hereafter, in Heaven.

How can man love God and be conjoined by faith and love with a God Whom he has not seen and cannot see? It is impossible. And yet man must know God, must love Him with heart, soul, mind and strength if the Divine end in creation is to be carried out, which is a heaven of angels from the human race.

It was for this cause that Jehovah God came into the world, took our nature upon Him by virgin birth, lived among us a human life, grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man (as to the human), passed through all the phases of life and even death as a man, yet not as a mere man but as God Man, for His soul and only life was the infinite Divine called the Father.

Thus while apparently a man He yet was God, the God Man. His reaction to every experience of life was not as a mere man but as God Man. His first thought as anything of this world impinged on His senses was as a man: His final thought was as God, from the Father which dwelt within Him: His speech and act were always from God and as God. Thus He put off the human from the mother in every act of His earthly life and put on the Divine Human from within: until finally by the passion of the cross and in the tomb He put off the very body from the mother, dissipated its material substances, and put on a Divine Body from the Father (within). Thus He stands forth to view in His own Body, fully Divine. And yet we can see Him as He is, because through His Word and doctrine from His Word we first see Him in His Human, then finally in His Divine Human; first as a Man, afterward as God. And finally we realize that even from the beginning, before ever the world was He was God Man, the only Man, the veriest reality, of Whom we are but finite images.

Such in brief is the Doctrine of the Lord as taught in the New Jerusalem. It is our purpose to examine this doctrine somewhat particularly that we may see how it is possible for man to see God, when yet it was an axiom of the ancients that no man can see God and live.

While recognizing the truth that they pointed out, yet we would rather say no man can live without seeing God.

Let us go to the very beginning and ask, how does man see anything? Is it the eye that sees? Evidently not. The physical eye is but the instrument of sight. It is the mind that sees. What does the infant see, whose mind is not yet developed? As an instrument the eye is perfect at birth: the image on the retina is as clear and full as it will ever be. Yet what the infant sees depends wholly upon the mind he has developed since birth, through the reaction of soul and body.

Looking on the same scene a child will see more than an infant, because he has more mind, through experience he is enabled to take in more of what his eye sees. Ten persons looking on the same scene will see different things, each according to his education or character. The artist will see beauty of line and color, or its absence, hidden from the eye of others: one will notice stream and woods, another horses and cattle: the humanitarian will note the homes, whether they show signs of poverty or prosperity. Still another will direct his eye to the birds, or to the sky and clouds. The picture on the retina of the eye is the same with all, yet each one sees what his education, his culture, his disposition disposes him to see. The deeply religious man sees evidence of the beauty and the love of God when he looks on nature: the scientific mind sees but scientific things, the laws and forces of nature: the agnostic sees evidence that there is no God, that nature was her own creator, that all things came by chance.

Or again ten persons will look on the same face, and each will see in it what he is prepared to see there: one will see brutality, another craftiness, a third sensuality: while others looking on the same lace will see gentleness, intelligence, nobility: each according to his own disposition, or what from heresy or reading he expects to see.

A Hitler or a Mussolini looks like a god to his enthusiastic followers, like a brutal tyrant to his enemies.

I dwell on these things at considerable length that all may realize that to see God one must first know God. Even if it were possible to see God in His own form, so that the same image were impressed on all eyes alike, yet each one would see in that Divine form what he expected to see.

Discrete Degrees

One of the first philosophical truths revealed to the New Church is the nature of discrete degrees: that spirit is not merely matter in a more attenuated form, but is distinctly different: so different that matter cannot see spirit, nor can spirit see matter: they communicate only by correspondence.

Their relation is that of cause and effect: like that of thought and speech, or willing and doing.

Therefore the spiritual world can be seen only by the eyes of the spirit, even as the material world is seen by the eyes of the body. And still above the spiritual world is the Divine, the Infinite, the Uncreate, the Eternal. How can man hope to see God until he knows the nature of the natural world and of the spiritual world, at least in part?

Yet man must know God. The Divine end in creation, a heaven of angels, involved that man must know God and love Him with heart, soul, mind and strength. Hence in the very beginning the Lord must have manifested Himself to the first men and taught them. His Divine Love could not be satisfied otherwise. "Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of

my hands: thy walls are continually before me." Isaiah 49:15, 16.

But what the first men in the Golden Age could know about God can be compared with what the little child can know about his parents. He can know of their love and kindness, may be convinced of their wisdom. But he cannot follow them into their world of adult knowledge, involving science, civil, moral and philosophical intelligence, and wisdom of life. That must wait on time and education: on that mysterious process we call "growing up."

So the Lord accommodated the revelation of Himself to man's reception, giving a written Word, showing Himself in the person of an angel filled with His look, known as the Angel of Jehovah, and promising to come into the world as a Man, a Divine Redeemer and Savior.

And let it be well remembered, and never forgotten, that the purpose of all Divine Revelation must be to reveal God to man: God's will and wisdom, so that man can adjust himself to the Divine law of his life.

Thus man was led by the Lord through his childhood, through his Silver, Copper and Iron Ages, with varying forms of Revelation adapted to his varying states. Until in Jehovah God as revealed to the Jews there appeared almost as much of anger and jealousy as of love and mercy: but this was the only way that the inexorableness of Divine Law could be revealed to an evil and adulterous generation. While the Race was learning that sin brings its inevitable punishment they almost lost sight of the loving Face of God.

But finally, when all things were prepared, the Lord Himself came into the world as He had promised from the beginning. He who had revealed Himself in the terrors of Mount Sinai was born a helpless babe, cradled in a manger. He who had revealed Himself as a consuming fire now reveals Himself as "meek and lowly in heart," a loving Savior, a Shepherd who came to lay down His life for His sheep. He who had taught as the first and great commandment, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord," now divides His unity into three essences Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and suffers Himself to be worshiped for fourteen hundred years as a tri-personal God in the church called by His name.

But listen, I pray: God is infinite, has infinite dualities. Man is finite. Man can receive but one idea at a time. God must reveal Himself successively: first one phase, then another, and another: each one not canceling the other but only adding to it, so that in the history of the Race the Lord God is revealed finally in all His glory and Divinity. To the men of the Golden Age He revealed His love, His beauty, His tender care. To the men of the Silver Age He revealed the glory and the bright light of His truth: to the men of the Iron Age He gave a law showing the retribution of evil, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

So ended one day, with its morning, its noon tide and its evening.

With the Lord's Advent began a new cycle. A new morning began to dawn but it was soon followed by a premature night, because the Church like Judas and like Peter, betrayed and denied her Lord. Nevertheless the Lord's work was done. He had come a mighty Redeemer and Savior, had conquered the power of hell, had accomplished a Last Judgment in the spiritual world, had set the Heavens in order, had glorified His Human, had established a new Church on the earth, had given His Word of the

New Testament.

And although it was not known in the Church that the Lord Jesus was one with the Lord Jehovah, yet it was known in the higher Heavens, formed from the men of the Ancient Churches. And it was taught in the Church that the Lord was Divine. And although it was not realized in the Church that the Lord was the Father yet His love of men was recognized as from the Divine. And so there were added to the qualities attributed to the Divine those connoted by the names Jesus, Christ, Redeemer, Savior, Heavenly Father: for although the Lord Jesus was not called the Heavenly Father, yet all the dualities denoted by the name were revealed to men by the Lord and by Him alone.

Here again man's limitations are shown. We can receive but one idea at a time. Our Lord was recognized as the best man who ever lived, as the one perfect man, as the only sinless One: but His humanity was dwelt upon at the expense of His Divinity. His divinity was not denied, was indeed taught, yet it was not acknowledged that His Human was Divine. As to the Human He was regarded as a man, like another man.

It was only after an age had passed in the light of His Advent and a Natural Rational had been developed in mankind that the Lord could raise up a Servant of His Second Coming, that He might reveal through him the nature of Jesus Christ our Lord.

For such a use it was necessary to find a man whose mind was thoroughly grounded in scientific fact and philosophic intelligence, who still retained the teachableness of a little child, who still believed in the Word of God as the source of wisdom to men: a man who valued human learning only as it led men to the feet of the one God, to learn of Him the way of life. Such a man was found in Emmanuel Swedenborg.

This man was led by the Lord from his early youth through metallurgy and the physical sciences, afterward through a search for the soul, that he might be firmly grounded, in the sciences, yet always with the intention of making his science and philosophy serve to convince men of the wisdom of God.

Finally he was called to a higher use, was led to study the Word of God with all the zeal hitherto devoted to science and philosophy, the spiritual world was opened to him, heaven and hell, that he might know the wisdom of the angels, and the internal sense of the Word.

To such a mind, so prepared, the Lord could open up out of the Word the true nature of God and of man: that God alone is Life and man but dust of the ground, an organ dead in itself, but capable of being moved by God: that all intelligence, all wisdom, all love and all life come to man from God and must be sought from Him, and acknowledged as His with man, tho' to every sense they seem to be in man as his own: that therefore the Word of the Lord is the only source of wisdom to man and to angels, containing in its bosom all angelic and Divine Wisdom.

Therefore it could be made known to rational thought how God could come into His creation by virgin birth, could live a life outwardly human that yet was inwardly Divine, because His soul was the one infinite Divine called the Father; and since the soul is form and doth the body make, it followed that in the end His body would be Divine too, not only conceived from God but actually reborn from God, by processes of putting off the human from the mother and putting on a Divine Human from the Father.

Did not the Lord say to Philip, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father?" ... "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself, but the Father who dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." Jno 14:9, 10.

"In Jesus Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." "He is the true God and eternal life." 1 John.

In order to see God truly in Christ Jesus our Lord our thought must not be simply of man, or of Him as a man only: rather must our thought be of God as infinite, uncreate, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, Wisdom Itself and Love Itself, thus Reality Itself, Man Himself and the only Man. Thus true thought concerning God requires a reversal of our usual thought of matter as reality, spirit as a vague cloud, God, as without body, parts or passions, therefore as nothing. In the light of the opened Word we realize that matter is but a dense cloud, enveloping all our faculties, that spirit is a thousand fold more real than matter, because nearer to God: and that God alone is most real, because He alone lives in and of Himself, and other things live only from Him.

Then we can see that God was in Jesus Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself: that all that Jesus did He did as God of Heaven and earth: That in His glorified Human He is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Almighty. Looking on Him we see God in all His majesty and glory so far as our minds have been prepared to see Him by His opened Word. Amen.

Lessons: Isaiah 52, Jno. 20. Lord pts. 35.