

LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED

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*Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.
In My Father's house are many mansions (John 14:1-2).*

Our Lord spoke these words to His disciples as they reclined about the supper table on the last occasion of His eating with them. On the morrow, He would be crucified. He had said to Peter, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward" (John 13:36). Because He had spoken to them of His departure, their hearts were full of sorrow. This sorrow was reflected in their troubled faces, their anxious eyes, their trembling hands.

At this moment the Lord had been on earth only thirty-three and a half years. Could it be that in this short time His earthly work was finished? Was it possible that the full meaning of His work could be brought forth only by the pain and sorrow of His departure? "Because I have said these things to you," He declared, "sorrow has filled your heart" (John 16:6).

Yet the Lord also gave His disciples this Divine consolation, "You believe in God, believe also in Me." The disciples were men of loyalty and conviction. Their belief in God was simple, sincere, and complete. The Lord knew that they would one day unite that unswerving faith in God with their faith in Him, and come to realize to the full that He *was* that one God.

But this could not take place without the pangs of suffering. The disciples had to lose all, in order that through an all-consuming faith they might gain all. "Whoever loses his life for My sake," the Lord said, "will find it" (Matthew 16:25). They had seen Him with the eyes of the body, but real faith demanded that they should see Him with the eyes of the spirit. Not until that sight had come to them could they be His messengers, the true evangelists of the Christian Church. So in that dark night of betrayal they all forsook Him and fled. Not until their spiritual eyes were opened to behold their risen Lord did they regain their spiritual courage.

So, as the first Easter faded into night, ten of the disciples were locked in a room in Jerusalem, for fear of the Jews. And Jesus came and stood in the midst of them and said, "Peace to you" (John 20:21). And He showed them His hands and His side. But Thomas was not there, and so when the others told him about it, he doubted. One week later, however, the disciples were together again in a room, and Thomas was there.

Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:26-29).

From that moment, trouble left the hearts of those men. They saw their beloved Lord with their spiritual eyes; they saw also the kingdom which was not of this world, and they remembered His words, "Let not your heart be troubled." From that hour on we find those disciples changed!

They were no longer cowards, but courageous soldiers, willing to bear their cross and eager to seek their crown. Wherever the Gospel was to be preached, they would not falter! Our Lord knew that the courage and steadfastness of those disciples would be imparted to thousands and thousands of men and women yet unborn.

Today, disciples of the Lord in His second coming are not called upon to bear witness only of the risen Lord. Rather they are called upon to bear witness to the resurrection of all people from the dead. For it is the knowledge of the life after death that characterizes the revelation which is the second coming of the Lord. The veil of the temple has been rent in twain, and through the Heavenly Doctrines, which have been given to us by the Lord through His servant, Emanuel Swedenborg, we are able to picture the spiritual world with all its beauty and wonders—a kingdom of heavenly uses, so intertwined that the arrival of one new angel brings an increased joy to all who are already there.

So Easter is a time of rejoicing. First, because on that day the Lord conquered death and rose in His Divine majesty and glory, and, second, because it is a time for the renewal of our own faith in the life after death. “Because I live,” He declared, “you will live also” (John 14:19). “He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live” (John 11:25). ““Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them’” (Revelation 14:13).

For the New Church, death is the gate of life. We know that “a person who conjoins himself with [the Lord] by a life according to His commandments, is more blessed and happy after death than before it in the world...exceeding it a thousandfold” (*Conjugal Love* 29). Thus, the words with which the Lord comforted His disciples on the eve of the crucifixion are now fulfilled. In the deepest sense, we can understand what the Lord meant when He said, “Let not your heart be troubled, you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions.”