

FROM THE LORD'S WORD

OLD TESTAMENT

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And Your dominion endures throughout all generations.
(Psalm 145:13).

All the ends of the world
Shall remember and turn to the Lord,
And all the families of the nations
Shall worship before You.
For the kingdom is the Lord's,
And He rules over the nations.
(Psalm 22:28)

One thing I have desired of the Lord,
That will I seek:
That I may dwell in the house of the Lord
All the days of my life.
(Psalm 27:4)

I rejoice at Your word
As one who finds great treasure.
(Psalm 119:162)

Lift up your heads, O you gates!
And be lifted up, you everlasting doors!
And the King of glory shall come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The Lord of hosts,
He is the King of glory.
(Psalm 24:7, 10)

Behold, the day of the Lord is coming.
And the Lord shall be King over all the earth.
(Zechariah 14:1, 9)

NEW TESTAMENT

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:20, 21).

Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us then to go and gather them up?’ But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, “First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn” ‘ “ (Matthew 13:24-30).

Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches” (Matthew 13:31-32).

Another parable He spoke to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened” (Matthew 13:33).

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field (Matthew 13:44).

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it” (Matthew 13:45).

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away” (Matthew 13:47-48).

“[E]very scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old” (Matthew 13:52).

“Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:1-4).

“Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:31-32).

HEAVENLY DOCTRINE

The Kingdom of Heaven

All who receive love and faith from the Lord, both angels and men, have heaven residing in them. People therefore who have heaven within themselves while they are living in the world enter heaven after death (*Arcana Coelestia* 10717).

“The kingdom of heaven” stands for the good and truth present with a person, and so for heaven present with him (*Arcana Coelestia* 5886:4).

“The kingdom of God” means both heaven and the church, for the church is the kingdom of God on earth (*True Christian Religion* 572).

In the universal sense, “the kingdom of God” is used to mean the whole of heaven, in the less universal sense the Lord’s true Church, and in particular every individual who has true faith, that is, who has been regenerated by means of the life that inheres in faith. For that reason the individual is also called “heaven”, for heaven is within him, and “the kingdom of God”, since that too is within him (*Arcana Coelestia* 29).

“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so also upon the earth. Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory” (Matt. 6:10, 13). “Thy kingdom come” is a prayer that truth may be received. “Thy will be done,” that it may be received by those who do God’s will. “Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,” means Divine truth from God alone.... From all this it can be seen what “the kingdom of God” means in many passages in the Word, namely, the church in respect to truths, and also heaven, and in the highest sense the Lord in respect to the Divine Human. “Kingdom,” in the highest sense, symbolizes the Lord in respect to the Divine Human, because from Him all Divine truth proceeds. And “kingdom” symbolizes heaven, because heaven with the angels is from no other source than from the Divine truth that proceeds from the Lord’s Divine Human (*Apocalypse Explained* 48:3).

Life After Death

Human life, from infancy to old age, is nothing else than a progression from the world to heaven. The last age, which is death, is the transition itself (*Arcana Coelestia* 3016).

After death a person is immediately in the other life, and his life in this world is continued there, and is of the same quality as it had been in this world (see *Arcana Coelestia* 5006:4).

The death of the body is but a continuation and also a perfecting of life (*Arcana Coelestia* 1854).

Wherefore let him who wishes to be eternally happy know and believe that he will live after death. Let him think of this and keep it in mind, for it is the truth (*Arcana Coelestia* 8939:3).

Every person is born for heaven and he who receives heaven in himself in the world, is received (see *Heaven and Hell* 420).

Every one who has any religion knows and acknowledges that he who lives well will be saved, and that he who lives wickedly will be condemned. This is because of the conjunction of heaven with the person who knows from the Word that there is a God, that there is a heaven and a hell, and that there is a life after death; and consequently there arises this general perception (*Doctrine of Life* 3).

As far as a person's affections, thoughts, and actions look toward the doing of good from the heart, the person, spirit, or angel dwells in heaven. As far as a person looks toward doing evil from the heart, he is in hell (see *Arcana Coelestia* 3645).

Carrying Your Heaven within You

Everyone who becomes an angel carries his own heaven within him, because he carries the love that belongs to his heaven. For man from creation is a little effigy, image and replica of the larger heaven. The human form is nothing else. Therefore everyone comes into a society of heaven of which he is a form in individual effigy. Consequently when he comes into that society, he enters into a form corresponding to himself, thus passing as if out of himself into that larger self, and entering as if from that larger self into the same self within him (*Conjugal Love* 10).

Wheat and Tares

[Regarding the parable of the wheat and the tares] "The man that sowed" means the Lord. The "field" means the spiritual world and the church, in which there are both good and evil. The "good seed" and the "wheat" mean the good, and the "tares" mean the evil. A complete separation of the good from the evil takes place at the time of the Last Judgment, and it cannot take place before because otherwise the good would perish with the evil. The separation of the good from the evil is effected by a gentle and moderate influx of the Divine proceeding from the Lord, while the casting out of the evil into hell is effected by a powerful and intense influx of the Divine (see *Apocalypse Explained* 426:3).

Evil people of their own free will separate themselves from the good... (*Conjugal Love* 524:4).

Because "to be awake" symbolizes receiving spiritual life, therefore "sleeping" symbolizes natural life apart from spiritual life, since natural life compared with spiritual life is as sleep compared with wakefulness. This is what "sleeping" signifies in Matthew: "The kingdom of the heavens is like unto a man that sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat" (Matt. 13:24-25) (see *Apocalypse Explained* 187:8).

Mustard Seed

"A tree from a grain of mustard seed" symbolizes a person of the church, and also a church beginning from a very little spiritual good by means of truth. For if only a very little spiritual good takes root with a person it grows like a seed in good ground. And as a "tree" symbolizes a person of the church, it follows that "the winged things of heaven" that made nests in its branches mean the knowledges of truth and thoughts therefrom (*Apocalypse Explained* 1100:8).

“A grain of mustard seed” is the good a person has before he becomes spiritual. It is “the smallest of all seeds” because he imagines that he himself is the source of the good he does. In reality what he does of himself is nothing but evil, yet because he is in a state of being regenerated there is some element of good, though it is quite “the smallest of all”. Later on when faith is being joined to love it grows larger and becomes “a plant”. Once it has finally been joined to love it develops into a tree, and at that point “the birds of the air”, which here are truths or intellectual concepts, “nest in its branches”, which are facts (*Arcana Coelestia* 55:3).

If a person by means of combat against evils as sins has acquired anything spiritual in the world, be it ever so small, he is saved, and afterwards his uses grow like a grain of mustard seed into a tree (*Divine Love* 17:5).

Leaven

Spiritual conflicts or temptations are fermentations in the spiritual sense, for during them falsities wish to link to truths, but the truths reject them and in that way becoming refined. This is how to understand what the Lord teaches about leaven in Matthew: The kingdom of the heavens is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened (13:33). “Meal” denotes the truth from which is good (see *Arcana Coelestia* 7906:3).

Treasure in a Field

The “treasure” [hidden in a field] symbolizes the Divine truth that is in the Word. And the “field” symbolizes the church and its doctrine. “To sell all things whatsoever that he had and buy the field” symbolizes to set aside what is one’s own and to acquire for oneself the Divine truth that is in the Lord’s church (see *Apocalypse Explained* 840:10).

[T]here are natural affections of truth which exist in almost everyone, especially during childhood and youth. But natural affections of truth have reward as an end, at first reputation, and afterwards honor and gain. Spiritual affections of truth have for their end eternal life and the uses of that life. Those who are in such affections love truths because they are truths, thus apart from the world’s glory, honors, and gains. And those who love truths apart from such considerations love the Lord; for the Lord is with a person in the truths that are from good. Consequently he that receives truth from spiritual love because it is truth, receives the Lord.... “The treasure hidden in a field” and “the pearls” symbolize the truths of heaven and the church. The “one precious pearl” symbolizes the acknowledgment of the Lord. The affection of truths because they are truths is meant by “the man went in his joy and sold all that he had, and bought the field” in which the treasure was hidden, also by “the merchant’s going and selling all that he had, and buying the precious pearl” (*Apocalypse Explained* 863).

The Lord compares the kingdom of heaven to one selling and buying, “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man finds and hides, and in his joy he goes and sells whatever he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a trader seeking fine pearls, who, when he has found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it” (Matt. 13:44-46). “The kingdom of heaven” stands for the good and truth present with a person, and so for heaven present with him. “Field” stands for good and “pearl” for truth, while “buying” stands for acquiring these and making them one’s own. “Selling all that one has” stands for alienating that which previously was properly one’s own, thus alienating evil desires and false ideas... (*Arcana Coelestia* 5886:4).

Pearl of Great Price

The meaning of “buying” is acquiring to oneself and so making one’s own. Spiritually, acquiring and making one’s own is effected by means of good and truth (*Arcana Coelestia* 5374).

The Divine trinity is like the one pearl of great value, but when divided into persons it is like that pearl divided into three parts, whereby it is utterly and manifestly ruined (*True Christian Religion* 184).

The Lord compared the kingdom of the heavens to a merchant seeking beautiful pearls... (Matt. 13:45, 46). “Pearls” symbolize knowledges, and also truths themselves. And “the one of great price” symbolizes the acknowledgment of the Lord. “To sell all that he had” symbolizes to set aside all things that are of one’s own love, and “to buy it” symbolizes to procure for oneself that Divine truth (*Apocalypse Explained* 840:9).

That a “merchant” is one who procures for himself knowledges of truth and good, and thence intelligence and wisdom, is evident from the Lord’s words in Matthew: “The kingdom of the heavens is like unto a merchant man seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it (Matt. 13:45-46). The “goodly pearl” is charity, or the good of faith (*Arcana Coelestia* 2967:7).

Net

The separation of the good and the evil is here likened to “a net cast into the sea bringing together every kind of fish,” for the reason that “fishes” mean natural people in respect to knowledges and cognitions, and at the time of the Last Judgment, such are separated from one another. For there are good natural people and bad natural people; and the separation of these in the spiritual world has the appearance of a net or drag-net cast into the sea, bringing together the fish, and drawing them to the shore, and this appearance is also from correspondence. This is why the Lord likens the kingdom of the heavens to “a net bringing together the fish” (*Apocalypse Explained* 513:17).

Parables

All the details, every single one, mentioned by the Lord in His parables are symbolic and mean the spiritual and celestial attributes of His kingdom, and in the highest sense Divine attributes in Himself.... The details mentioned by the Lord in them look, in the outward form they take, like ordinary comparisons, but in their internal form their nature is such that they fill the whole of heaven. This is because the internal sense is contained within every detail, and that sense is such that its spiritual and celestial content spreads like light and flame throughout the heavens in all directions (*Arcana Coelestia* 4637).