

## Old Testament

I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy;  
In fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple.  
(Psalm 5:7)

For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand....  
For the Lord God is a sun and shield;  
The Lord will give grace and glory;  
No good thing will He withhold  
From those who walk uprightly.  
O Lord of hosts,  
Blessed is the man who trusts in You!  
(Psalm 84:10-12)

Serve the Lord with gladness;  
Come before His presence with singing.  
Know that the Lord, He is God;  
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;  
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.  
(Psalm 100:2-3)

Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning,  
For in You do I trust;  
Cause me to know the way in which I should walk,  
For I lift up my soul to You.  
(Psalm 143:8)

Blessed is the man You choose,  
And cause to approach You,  
That he may dwell in Your courts.  
We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house,  
Of Your holy temple.  
(Psalm 65:4)

[T]he eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.  
Then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
And the tongue of the dumb sing.  
For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness  
And streams in the desert.  
(Isaiah 35:5-6)

The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him.  
(Habakhuk 2:20)

## New Testament

“A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’ Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.’ And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper’” (Luke 14:16-24).

“Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20).

[The Lord] entered Capernaum..., and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.” And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, “Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!” (Mark 2:1-12)

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, “Do you want to be made well?” The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.” Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.” And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.... The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well (John 5:1-15).

## The Lord's Church

The Church is the Lord's heaven on earth (*Arcana Coelestia* 10151:3).

The Lord's Church is with all in the whole world who live in good according to their religious system. All who live in good—wherever they are—and acknowledge one God, are accepted by the Lord and come into heaven (*New Jerusalem and the Heavenly Doctrines* 246).

Good and truth of faith themselves are what make a Church, indeed they are the Church, for present within the good and truth of faith there is the Lord, and where the Lord is, there is the Church also (*Arcana Coelestia* 3379).

All are initiated into the church by knowing evil and not doing it, because it is against God (*The Doctrine of Charity* 27).

[A] person is a Church when goodness and truth are present in him, and groups of such people make up the Church in general (*Arcana Coelestia* 6113).

Whatever the quality of a person's understanding of the Word is, so is the quality of the Church in him (*Arcana Coelestia* 10707).

### Invitation to the Great Supper

“To eat” and to “drink” symbolize to eat and drink spiritually.... This is why the Lord likened the kingdom of God to a great supper, to which those invited did not come, and to which only those came who were brought in from the streets (Luke 14:16-24) (*Apocalypse Explained* 617:5).

To make a dinner and a supper, and to call them, symbolizes the same as giving to eat and drink, or giving bread and wine, namely, to do good to the neighbor, and to teach truth, and thus to be associated in love (*Apocalypse Explained* 695:6).

A “dinner,” “supper,” or “feast,” denotes the good of charity, in which there is the Lord's dwelling-place with a person (*Arcana Coelestia* 2371:4).

As suppers symbolize consociations by love, and consequent communication of delights, therefore the Lord compared the church and heaven to a “supper” in Luke: “The master of the house made a great supper, and bade many; but all those that were called excused themselves. Therefore, being angry, he ordered his servant to bring in the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind; saying of those called, that none of them should taste of the supper” (14:16-24). The “supper” here means heaven and the church.... Heaven and the church are here likened to “a supper” and to “a wedding,” because heaven is the conjunction of angels with the Lord by love, and their consociation among themselves by charity, and the consequent communication of all delights and felicities. The like is true of the church, since the church is the Lord's heaven on the earth (see *Apocalypse Explained* 252:2).

### **Excuses for Not Coming to the Great Supper**

In the parable of the Lord concerning those who were invited to the great supper, one of them excused himself on the ground that he had bought five yoke of oxen, and must go to prove them (Luke 14:19). By oxen in the Word are meant the natural affections, and by five yoke of oxen are meant all those affections or disorderly desires that lead away from heaven. Heaven and the church, in regard to spiritual nourishment or instruction, are meant by the great supper to which they were invited (*Apocalypse Explained* 548:5).

When the goods of the world [are] separated from the goods of heaven, people do not know what internal pleasures are, because they do not read the Word and look to the Lord. They only know what external pleasures are, and in these things they find their sole delight. This state is what is meant by the answers of those who were invited to the great supper, one of whom said that he had bought a field, to which he must go, another that he had bought a yoke of oxen, which he must prove, and a third that he had married a wife (Luke xiv. 18-20). The goods of the world are meant by all these things, or external goods without internal [heavenly] goods (see *Apocalypse Explained* 1162).

### **Who Are the Poor, Maimed, Lame, and Blind?**

By “the poor and needy” are symbolized those who believe that of themselves they know nothing; and also those who are destitute of knowledge because they have not the Word (*Apocalypse Explained* 118:3).

In Luke: Then the master of the house being angry, said to his servants, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and maimed and blind and halt (Luke 14:21). “Their going out into the streets and lanes of the city” symbolizes that they should enquire where those are who receive the truths of the doctrine. “Streets” and “lanes” are the truths of doctrine. “City” means doctrine. The “poor,” “the maimed,” “the halt,” and “the blind,” symbolize those who are not in truths and goods, and yet long for them (*Apocalypse Explained* 223:22).

In the Word, those who have an abundance of cognitions of good and truth, thus who are within the Church where the Word is, are meant in the spiritual sense by the “rich”; while those who lack these cognitions, and yet desire them, thus who are outside the Church and where there is no Word, are meant by the “poor” (*Heaven and Hell* 365).

By “miserable and poor,” in the spiritual sense of the Word, are meant they who are without the knowledges of truth and good, for they are spiritually miserable and poor (*Apocalypse Revealed* 209).

The poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, do not mean such in a natural sense, but such in a spiritual sense, namely, those who, not having the Word, were in ignorance of truth, and therefore in want of good, but who still desired truths by means of which they might attain to good (*Apocalypse Explained* 652:30).

“Limping” means possessing good which contains general truths into which genuine ones can be instilled, and the “lame” symbolize those who do possess good such as gentiles possess who lead charitable lives with one another (see *Arcana Coelestia* 4302:4).

“The blind” stands for people who have no knowledge of the truth (see *Arcana Coelestia* 2383).

In Luke, the master of the house said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind (14:21)... [E]ach of these words contains deep secrets within it, for they are the Lord’s words. That he should “go into the streets and lanes,” symbolizes that he should seek everywhere for some genuine truth, or truth which shines from good, or through which good shines (*Arcana Coelestia* 2336:4).

### **Arise, Take Up Your Bed and Walk**

That “a bed” symbolizes doctrine is from correspondence, for as the body rests in its bed, so does the mind rest in its doctrine. But by “bed” is meant the doctrine which everyone acquires to himself either from the Word, or from his own intelligence, for therein the mind rests and, as it were, sleeps.... This is meant by “a bed” in John: “Jesus saith unto the sick man, ‘Rise, take up thy bed, and walk’; and he took up his bed, and walked” (John 5:8-9) and in Mark: “Jesus said unto the palsied, ‘Son, thy sins be forgiven thee’...then He said, ‘Arise, take up thy bed, and walk’; and he took up the bed, and went forth from them (Mark 2:5, 9, 11-12).... By “carrying his bed and walking” is meant to meditate in doctrine (*Apocalypse Explained* 137:1,2).

By the “healing of the sick” is symbolized the purifying of a person from evils and the falsities of evil, by a “bed” is symbolized doctrine, and by “walking” is symbolized life (*Arcana Coelestia* 10360:8).

The Lord saying to these sick, “Arise, take up thy bed, and walk,” symbolizes doctrine, and a life according to it. “Bed” symbolizes doctrine, and “to walk” life. “The sick man” symbolizes those that have transgressed and sinned (*Apocalypse Explained* 163:7).

### **The Pool of Bethesda**

“Water” in the spiritual sense means truth (*Apocalypse Explained* 183:10).

At the pool of Bethesda lay a large multitude of sick people; and an angel went down at a certain time to the pool and stirred up the water. Then whoever stepped in first after the movement of the water was cured of whatever disease he had (John 5:2-7). ‘Stirring up the water’ here was in like manner a sign of the endowment of life through acknowledgement and faith, and therefore also a sign of purification by means of truths (*Arcana Coelestia* 10083:4).

By means of the truths of faith also a person is regenerated. This was meant by the washings used in former times for ritual cleansings; and the same thing is also meant at the present day by the waters of baptism. For the waters are a sign of the truths of faith, by means of which evils are removed (*Arcana Coelestia* 9088:2)

## **Come Unto Me**

What enables a person to draw near the Lord is faith and love. Since both faith and love come from Jehovah, that is, from the Lord, drawing near Him is also the acceptance of goodness and truth flowing in from Him (*Arcana Coelestia* 8439).

When a person is governed by good, and from good is guided by truth, he is drawn by the Lord to Himself and joined to Him (*Arcana Coelestia* 8604:3).

[A] person is unable of himself to come near the Lord and be joined to Him; rather the Lord has to come near the person and be joined to him. Yet since the Lord draws a person toward Himself the appearance is that the person does of himself come near and join himself. This happens when the person refrains from evils, for refraining from evils is left to a person's own decision or free will. At this time good from the Lord is flowing in; and it is never lacking, for it is present within the very life a person has from the Lord. But the good accompanying that life is received only in the measure that evils have been removed (*Arcana Coelestia* 9378:2).

The reason why the Word is the means by which the Lord's togetherness with and presence among people is achieved is that the Word unites a person to heaven and through heaven to the Lord. For the Word is Divine Truth emanating from the Lord, and therefore those who adhere to that truth in doctrine and life, or in faith and love, adhere to what is Divine emanating from the Lord, and in so doing are joined to Him (*Arcana Coelestia* 9378:2).

[I]t is a wonderful thing that where the Word is read with reverence and the Lord is worshipped from the Word, the Lord is present together with heaven. This is because the Lord is the Word, and the Word is Divine Truth which constitutes heaven; therefore the Lord says: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20) (*Divine Providence* 256:2).

[T]hat every truth of doctrine, of the church, and of worship, is from the Lord alone is meant by "Jehovah is in the temple of His holiness." "Temple of holiness" means heaven, where and from which is Divine truth (*Apocalypse Explained* 587:8).