

Quotes from the Word: Children in Heaven

OLD TESTAMENT

Come, and let us return to the Lord.
After two days He will revive us;
on the third day He will raise us up,
that we may live in His sight.
(Hosea 6:1,2)

The eternal God is your refuge,
and underneath are the everlasting arms.
(Deuteronomy 33:37)

You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.
(Psalm 16:11)

I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.
For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand.
(Isaiah 41:13)

NEW TESTAMENT

“It is not the will of your Father who is in heaven
that one of these little ones should perish.”
(Matthew 18:14)

“I am the way, the truth and the life.”
(Matthew 3:3)

“Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them;
for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”
(Mark 10:14)

“I am the resurrection and the life.
He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.
And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.”
(John 11:25, 26)

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HEAVENLY DOCTRINE

LIFE IS ETERNAL

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 has been created to live to eternity in a blessed state. All love wills the good of another. Parental love wills the good of the children. A bridegroom's or husband's love wills the good of his bride or wife. And a friend's love wills the good of his friends. What would Divine love not will? (*Divine Providence* 324).

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

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

Because a person instantly begins a new phase of his life when he dies, he is awakened into life as soon as he has cast aside the material body which had served him for use in the world (*Arcana Coelestia* 6036).

People have a general perception that one lives as a person after death, happily if he has lived well, and unhappily if he has lived ill. What man, who has loved his married partner and his infants and children, does not say to himself when they are dying or dead...that they are in the hand of God, and that following his own death he will see them again and join with them once more in a life of love and joy? (see *Conjugal Love* 28).

LITTLE CHILDREN WHO DIE ARE RAISED IN HEAVEN

All little children in the world who die, are raised again by the Lord and are taken up into heaven. They are brought up and instructed among angels who have the care of them, and they grow up in proportion to their advance in intelligence and wisdom.... [T]hey are all instructed in the truths of faith and in the goods of mutual love, and become angels (*Arcana Coelestia* 2289).

Every little child, wherever born, whether within the Church or outside it, whether of pious or impious parents, is received when he dies by the Lord and educated in heaven, and in accordance with Divine order taught and imbued with affections of good, and through these with concepts of what is true. Afterwards, as he is perfected in intelligence and wisdom he is introduced into heaven and becomes an angel (*Heaven and Hell* 329).

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Little children are all raised under the immediate guidance of the Lord.... After they have passed through this first age, they are transferred to another heaven, where they receive their schooling (*Conjugal Love* 410).

ANGEL MOTHERS

A love of little children remains after death, especially in women. As soon as little children are resuscitated (which takes place immediately after death), they are raised into heaven and entrusted to angels of the feminine sex who, in the life of their body in the world, loved little children and at the same time venerated God. Because they had loved all little children with a motherly tenderness, they receive these little children as their own, and the little children there almost instinctively love them as though they were their mothers. They have as many little children in their care as their spiritual love of children causes them to desire (*Conjugal Love* 410).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN RAISED IN HEAVEN

Many may suppose that in heaven little children remain little children, and continue as such among the angels. Those who do not know what an angel is may have had this opinion confirmed by paintings and images in churches, in which angels are represented as children. But it is wholly otherwise. Intelligence and wisdom are what constitute an angel, and as long as children do not possess these they are not angels, although they are with the angels. But as soon as they become intelligent and wise they become angels; and what is wonderful, they do not then appear as children, but as adults, for they are no longer of an infantile genius, but of a more mature angelic genius. Intelligence and wisdom produce this effect (*Heaven and Hell* 340).

Children in heaven grow up with a stature and comeliness in accordance with the growth of intelligence in them.... Children in heaven and children on earth are alike in that in their development they are attracted at first to such things as appeal to their physical senses, then little by little to such things as affect their inner contemplative sense, and by degrees to such things as infuse their will with affection. Then, when they reach an age midway between immaturity and maturity, they develop an attraction towards marriage, which in a young woman is an attraction towards a young man, and in a young man, towards a young woman (*Conjugal Love* 187).

Like all angels, they [children who are raised in heaven] are so withheld from evil and held in good by the Lord as to seem to themselves to be in good from themselves. For this reason when children have become adults in heaven, so that they may not have the false idea about themselves that the good in them is from themselves and not from the Lord, they are now and then let down into their evils which they inherited. They are left in them until they know, acknowledge, and believe the truth of the matter (*Heaven and Hell* 342).

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THE LIFE OF LITTLE CHILDREN IN HEAVEN

Little children learn to talk from their angel mothers. Their earliest speech is simply a sound of affection. This becomes more distinct as ideas of thought enter, for ideas of thought from affections constitute all angelic speech. By means of heavenly things are perfected each day. But when this first age is completed, they are transferred to another heaven, where they are taught by teachers (*Heaven and Hell* 334; cf. *Spiritual Experiences* 5668).

Little children in heaven are taught chiefly by representations suited to their state. These are beautiful and full of wisdom from within, beyond all belief.... One such representation was of the Lord's rising from the sepulcher, and at the same time of the uniting of His Human with the Divine. This was done in a manner so wise as to surpass all human wisdom, and at the same time in an innocent infantile manner.... Other representations are there given, such as plays adapted to the minds of children by which they are guided into knowledges of truth and affections for good (see *Heaven and Hell* 335).

All things are instilled into little children in heaven by delightful and pleasant means suited to them. They are charmingly attired, having garlands of flowers resplendent with most beautiful and heavenly colors twined about their breasts and around their tender arms. I once saw them accompanied by those in charge of them and by maidens, in a beautiful park with arbors and covered walks of laurel and paths leading inward. When the children entered, the flowers over the entrance shone forth most joyously. This indicates the nature of their delights and how they are led by means of pleasant and delightful things into the goods of innocence and charity (see *Heaven and Hell* 337).

[On the variety of beautiful skies seen in heaven] There are adamantine skies which glitter...as if made of tiny spherical diamonds. There are skies that resemble the sparkling of every precious stone. There are skies that look like great pearls with light streaming through their centers and shot through with the brightest colors. There are skies aflame as if made of gold or of silver.... There are skies consisting of flowers varying in color, but too small to be seen individually. Such [skies], in their countless varieties, fill the heaven of little children. Indeed skies also manifest themselves there which seem to contain the shapes of little children at play, but too small to be seen individually and perceptible solely in the inner recesses of the mind. From these shapes little children gain the idea that everything around them is alive and shares in the Lord's life. This idea gives them a feeling of happiness in their inmost being (*Arcana Coelestia* 1621).

All that has been presented above shows the character of young children's upbringing in heaven, namely that it is through intelligence and wisdom—which essentially are truth and good respectively—that they are brought into the angelic life, which consists in love to the Lord and mutual love, which loves have innocence within them (*Arcana Coelestia* 2309).

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THE LIFE OF OLDER CHILDREN IN HEAVEN

How girls are educated in the other life and in heaven: Three, four, or five, are kept together and each one has her own room. They embroider flowers and such things; and the things they make are either for their own use or they give them to others. The girls receive garments with which they clothe themselves every day; a better garment for feast days. And they have a little garden, also. While they are growing up, there are only flowers in the gardens—no fruits until they become wives (see *Spiritual Experiences* 5660-5663).

When they [girls in the other life] see spots on their clothes, it is a sign that they have been thinking ill, and that they have done something which ought not to be done. The spots cannot be washed out, as from clothes in the world. When they find out what they have thought and done—for, at such a time, they always think about that—they, then, see their blemishes and their evils. If they then get the better of them again, the spots disappear from the clothes of their own accord. In like manner, when they see in their chamber that any one of their clothes is missing, they then immediately know that they have done amiss. Hence is their self-examination; and, if they do not themselves know [what is wrong], a wife comes, who tells them. If they see that there is a new garment in their chamber, they then inwardly rejoice, because they know that they have done well (*Spiritual Experiences* 5664).

When they see that the flowers in their little gardens become dim, or change into worse ones, their attention is arrested—if into better and more beautiful ones, they rejoice, because it is a token that they have thought well (*Spiritual Experiences* 5665).

They are given coins of silver or of gold. These they carefully treasure up, because they are tokens of industry or of virtue (*Spiritual Experiences* 5666).

They have the written Word and Psalters, and they take these with them to worship services. They likewise read in them. If they do not read, either some garment is taken away, or the little garden disappears (*Spiritual Experiences* 5666-5667).

“Around noon, the doors are opened, and here and there in the afternoon the windows, too, and boys and girls are seen playing games in the streets, under the supervision of their nursemaids and teachers sitting on the porches of the houses. On the edges of the city, in its outskirts, various activities go on for boys and adolescent youths. There are running games, ball games, and games with rebounding balls, called rackets. Competitive exercises are held among the boys to show who is quicker and who is slower in speaking, acting and comprehending. And the quicker ones receive several laurel leaves as a prize. There are also many other activities which serve to encourage the latent abilities in boys. Moreover, outside the city theatrical performances are put on by comic actors on stages, who portray the various honorable qualities and virtues of moral life, with dramatic actors among them also to provide points of comparison. But it has been prescribed by law that they may not exhibit anything of the

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opposite that is called dishonorable and unbecoming, except symbolically (*Conjugal Love* 17:3-5).