

The Book of Revelation

Chapter 10 – Passages from the *Apocalypse Revealed*

General meaning: The exploration and manifestation of those who are in the churches of the Reformed is still treated of; here what they believe concerning the Lord, as being the God of heaven and earth, as He Himself taught (Matthew 28:18); and that His Human is Divine; and that this is not received there; and that it can be received with difficulty, so long as the dogma of justification by faith alone is seated in their hearts.

Verse 1: "And I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven," signifies the Lord in Divine majesty and power. "Encompassed with a cloud, and a rainbow was over his head," signifies His Divine natural and Divine spiritual. "And his face was as the sun," signifies the Divine love, and at the same time the Divine wisdom. "And his feet as pillars of fire," signifies the Lord's Divine natural as to the Divine love, which sustains all things.

"He was seen as an angel, because He appears as an angel in the heavens and below the heavens, when He manifests Himself; for He fills some angel with His Divine in accommodation to the reception of those to whom He grants to see Him. His presence itself, such as He is in Himself or in His own essence, cannot be supported by any angel, much less by any man; wherefore He appears above the heavens as a sun, at a distance from the angels, as the sun of this world is from men. There He dwells in His Divine from eternity, and at the same time in His Divine Human, which are a one like soul and body. He is here called "a mighty angel" from His Divine power; and it is said, "another angel," by reason of another Divine attribute of His, different from the former, being here described." (AR 465)

"It is to be known, that the Lord is present with men in His Divine natural, but, with the angels of His spiritual kingdom, in His Divine spiritual, and with the angels of His celestial kingdom, in His Divine celestial; still He is not divided, but appears to everyone according to his quality." (AR 466)

"The reason why His feet seemed like 'pillars of fire' is, because the Lord's Divine natural, which in itself is the Divine Human which He assumed in the world, sustains His Divine from eternity, as the body does the soul, and in like manner as the natural sense of the Word sustains its spiritual and celestial sense." (AR 468)

Verse 2: "And he had in his hand a little book open," signifies the Word as to this doctrinal point therein, that the Lord is the God of heaven and earth and that His Human is Divine. "And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth," signifies that the Lord has the whole church under His auspices and dominion.

"The little book' is said 'to be open' because that doctrine appears manifestly in the Word, and is evident to everyone who reads it, if he attends. This is the subject now treated of, because it is the very essential of the New Church. The reason is, because on the knowledge and acknowledgment of God depends the salvation of everyone; for, as was observed in the Preface, 'The whole heaven, and the whole church on earth, and, in general, all religion, is founded on a just idea of God; because by it there is conjunction, and by conjunction light, wisdom, and eternal happiness.'

Since the Lord is the very God of heaven and earth, therefore, no one, who does not acknowledge Him, is admitted into heaven, for heaven is His body; but he stands below, and is bitten by serpents, that is, by infernal spirits, for whose bite there is no cure but that which the sons of Israel experienced by looking up to 'the brazen serpent' (Num. 21:1-9); by which is meant the Lord as to the Divine Human, as is plain from this passage in John: As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:14-15)." (AR 469)

Verse 3: "And cried with a great voice, as a lion roareth," signifies grievous lamentation that the church is taken from Him. "And when He cried, seven thunders uttered their voices," signifies that the Lord will disclose throughout the whole heaven what is in the little book.

"That by 'crying as a lion roareth' is signified grievous lamentation respecting the church, and that it has been taken away from Him is evident from what is explained in the foregoing chapter, where the states of life of those who are of the church were explored and made manifest, which were lamentable; also from its being said in this chapter, that 'the angel swore by him that liveth for ages of ages, that there should be time no longer,' by which is signified that there would be no church; and, in the following chapter, that 'the beast, which came up out of the abyss, killed his two witnesses'; and especially from his not being acknowledged and approached, although He is the God of heaven and earth. Lamentation concerning these things is signified by "His roaring as a lion," for a lion roars when he sees his enemies and is assaulted by them, and when he sees his whelps and prey taken away; so does the Lord, comparatively, when He sees His church taken away from Him by devils." (AR 471)

"But I will open what was in the little book. In the little book were those things which are contained in The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem Concerning the Lord, from beginning to end, which are as follows:

That the whole Sacred Scripture is concerning the Lord, and that the Lord is the Word (n. 1-7).

That by the Lord fulfilled all things of the law is meant that He fulfilled all things of the Word (n. 8-11).

That the Lord came into the world to subdue the hells and glorify His Human, and that the passion of the cross was the last combat, by which He fully conquered the hells, and fully glorified His Human (n. 12-14).

That the Lord, by the passion of the cross, did not take away sins, but that He bore them (n. 15-17).

That the imputation of the Lord's merit is nothing else than the remission of sins after repentance (n. 18).

That the Lord, as to His Divine Human, is called the Son of God, and, as to the Word, He is called the Son of man (n. 19-28).

That the Lord made His Human Divine from the Divine in Himself, and thus He became one with the Father (n. 29-36).

That the Lord is God Himself, from whom and concerning whom the Word is (n. 37-44).

That there is one God, and that the Lord is that God (n. 45).

That the Holy Spirit is the Divine proceeding from the Lord, and that it is the Lord Himself (n. 46-54).

That the doctrine of the Athanasian faith agrees with the truth, if only by a Trinity of Persons is understood a Trinity of Person, which is in the Lord (n. 55-61)." (AR 472)

Verse 4: "And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not," signifies that these things indeed are made manifest, but that they are not received till after they who are meant by the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, are cast out of the world of spirits, because there would be danger were they to be received before.

"The reason is, because by "the dragon," "the beast," and "the false prophet," are signified they who are in faith separated from charity, and these constantly and tenaciously adhere to their belief, that God the Father is to be approached, and not the Lord immediately, and that the Lord is not the God of heaven and earth as to His Human; therefore if the above-mentioned doctrine (n. 472), which has been manifested and is still being manifested, which is signified by "the little book was opened," were to be received by any others than those who are in charity and its faith, who also are those who are signified by "John" (n. 5, 17), before the dragon is cast out, it would be rejected not only by them, but also through them, by the rest; and if not rejected, still it would be falsified, yea, profaned.

That this is the case, evidently appears from what now follows in Revelation, when seen in its series, as, that they killed the Lord's two witnesses (Rev. 11:7); that the dragon stood by the woman who was about to be delivered, that he might devour her offspring; and after he had fought with Michael he persecuted the woman (Rev. 12:1-17); and that the two beasts which came up, one out of the sea, and the other out of the earth, made one with him (Rev. 13:1-18); as also that he gathered together his followers to battle at the place called Armageddon (Rev. 16:16); and, finally, that they assembled the nations, Gog and Magog, to war (Rev. 20:8, 9). But that the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, were cast into the lake of fire and brimstone (Rev. 20:10); and this being effected, the New Church, which is to be the Lamb's wife, came down out of heaven." (AR 473)

Verse 5: "And the angel whom I saw standing upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven."

Verse 6: "And swore by Him that liveth for ages of ages," signifies the attestation and testification of the Lord by Himself. "Who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things that are therein" signifies, who vivifies all that are in heaven and that are in the church, and each and everything with them. "That time shall be no longer," signifies that there cannot be any state of the church, or any church, except one God be acknowledged, and that the Lord is that God.

"But what is the case at this day? That there is one God is not denied, but that the Lord is He is denied; and yet there is not one God, in whom is the Trinity at the same time, but the Lord. That the church is from Him, who is the Savior and Redeemer, is not denied; but that He, as the Savior and Redeemer, ought to be approached immediately, is denied. Hence it is evident, that the church is about to expire, unless a new one comes into existence, which acknowledges the Lord alone to be the God of heaven and earth, and, for this reason, immediately approaches Him." (AR 476)

Verse 7: "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound" signifies the final exploration and manifestation of the state of the church which must perish, unless a new one be established by the Lord. "And the mystery of God shall be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets," signifies that then it will appear, that it is foretold in the Word of both Testaments, but has hitherto been concealed, that after the Last Judgment is executed upon those who have devastated the church, the Lord's kingdom will come.

"By 'declaring' (evangelizing) is signified to announce the Lord's advent and His kingdom, for the Gospel is a glad messenger. That this will come to pass, after the Last Judgment is executed upon those who have devastated the church, is also foretold in the Word, therefore this also is signified. From this it may appear, that all these are meant by these words.

Something shall first be said of what is foretold in the Word of both Testaments, concerning the coming of the Lord, and His kingdom. In the Word of the Old Testament, which is called prophetic, in the spiritual sense, and also where this sense shines forth, in the natural sense, the Lord alone is treated of, that is to say, His advent in the fullness of time; which is, when there is no longer any good of charity and truth of faith in the church, which state of the church is called the consummation, devastation, desolation, and decision. It also treats of His combats with the hells and victories over them, which likewise constitute the Last Judgment executed by Him; and afterwards of the creation of a new heaven, and the establishment of a new church, which are the Lord's kingdom that is to come. These things are also treated of in the Word of the New Testament, which is called apostolic, and particularly in Revelation....

It is said that "the mystery of God shall be finished"; by which is meant that now will be fulfilled that which has not been fulfilled before, which is that the kingdom will be the Lord's. For it was not fulfilled by the Jews, because they did not acknowledge the Lord. Nor was it fulfilled by the Christians, for neither did they acknowledge the Lord as the God of heaven and earth even as to His Human; for they make this like the human of another man: wherefore they do not go immediately to Him; when yet He is Jehovah, who came into the world." (AR 478)

Verse 8: "And the voice which I heard from heaven, spake unto me again, saying, Take the little book, which is open in the hand of the angel who is standing upon the sea and upon the earth," signifies a command from heaven, that they should admit that doctrine, but that it should be made manifest by John how it would be received in the church, before those are removed, who are meant by "the dragon," "the beast," and "the false prophet".

Verse 9: "And I went unto the angel, saying unto him, Give me the little book," signifies a motion of the mind with many to receive the doctrine. "And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up, and it shall make thy belly bitter, but in thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey," signifies that reception of the acknowledgment that the Lord is the Savior and Redeemer, is grateful and pleasing, but that the acknowledgment that He alone is the God of heaven and earth, and that his Human is Divine, is disagreeable and difficult by reason of falsifications.

Verse 10: "And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it up, my belly was made bitter," signifies that so it came to pass, and was thus manifested.

"The falsifications, by which that doctrine is perceived as disagreeable and difficult are especially that the Lord is not acknowledged to be one with the Father, although He Himself so taught; they have not acknowledged the Lord's Human to be Divine, which, nevertheless, is the Son of God (Luke 1:35); and thus it may be said, that they have made God three, and the Lord two; besides the falsities continued from them: from these falsities flows faith alone, and faith alone afterwards confirms those falsities. That from these falsities, so great a bitterness and internal repugnance exists, that they cannot, after death, even name the Divine Human from acknowledgment in thought." (AR 481)

Verse 11: "And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings," signifies that because it is so, the quality of those who are in faith alone must be further shown.

"John being told that "he must prophesy again" signifies that it is necessary to teach further what is the quality of those who are in faith alone, to the end that their falsities may be disclosed and thus abolished; inasmuch as no falsity is abolished before it is disclosed." (AR 483)

Three Memorable Relation - Apocalypse Revealed #484

"The First Relation is this: I once heard there the sound as of a mill. It was in the northern quarter. I wondered at first what this was; but I recollected that by "a mill" and by "grinding" in the Word is meant to seek from the Word what is serviceable for doctrine (n. 794). On which account I approached the place where that sound was heard; and when I was near, the sound died away; and I then saw a kind of arched roof above the earth, the entrance to which was through a cave. Seeing which, I descended and entered. And behold there was a chamber, in which I saw an old man sitting among books, holding before him the Word, and seeking therefrom what might be serviceable for his doctrine. Scraps of paper lay around, on which he wrote down what served him. There were scribes in an adjoining room, who gathered up the papers, and copied them upon an entire sheet. I asked first about the books around him. He said that they all treated of justifying faith; "those which were from Sweden and Denmark profoundly, those which were from Germany more profoundly, and those that were from Britain more profoundly still, and most profoundly those from Holland." And he added that they disagree in various things, but that in the article of justification and salvation by faith alone they all agree. Afterwards he said to me that he was now collecting from the Word this first point of justifying faith, that God the Father fell away from grace towards the human race on account of their iniquities; and that it was therefore a Divine necessity for the saving of men, that satisfaction, reconciliation, propitiation, and mediation should be made by some one, who should take upon himself the condemnation of justice; and this could by no means be done but by His only Son; and that after this was done, access to God the Father was open for His sake. And he said, "I see and have seen, that this is according to all reason. How otherwise could God the Father be approached, except through faith in that merit of the Son? I have now found also, that this is likewise according to Scripture."

I heard this, and was astounded that he should say that it was according to reason and according to Scripture, when yet it is contrary to reason and contrary to Scripture; which I also told him plainly. He then rejoined in the wrath of his zeal, "How can you speak so?" Wherefore I opened my mind, saying, "Is it not contrary to reason to think that God the Father fell away from grace towards the human race, and rejected it? Is not the Divine Grace an attribute of the Divine Essence? Wherefore, to fall away from grace would be to fall away from His Divine Essence; and to fall away from His Divine Essence, would be to be no longer God. Can God be alienated from Himself? Believe me, that grace on the part of God, as it is infinite, is also eternal. The grace of God may be lost on the part of man, if he does not receive it; but never on the part of God. If grace should recede from God, there would be an end of the entire heaven and with it the entire human race, insomuch that man would no longer be man in any respect; for which reason grace on the part of God endures forever, not only towards angels and men, but also towards the devil himself. Since this is according to reason, why do you say that the only access to God the Father is through faith in the Son's merit, when yet there is perpetual access through grace?"

"But why do you say, access to God the Father for the sake of the Son? and why not to God the Father through the Son? Is not the Son the Mediator and Saviour? Why do you not go to the Mediator and Saviour Himself? Is He not God and Man? Who on the earth goes immediately to an emperor, king, or prince? Must there not be a deputy or introducer? Do you not know that the Lord came into the world, that He might introduce us to the Father; and that access is not given, except through Him? Search now in the Scriptures, and you will see that this is according to them; and that your way to the Father is contrary to Scripture, as it is contrary to reason. I tell you, too, that it is presumption to climb up to God the Father, and not through Him who is in the bosom of the Father, and alone is with Him. Have you not read John 14:6?" Hearing these things, the old man was so angry, that he leaped from his seat, and cried out to his scribes to cast me out. And when I immediately went out of myself, he threw out of doors after me the book which his hand by chance took hold of, and that book was the Word."

"The Second Relation. After I went out, I again heard a harsh sound, but like that of two millstones in collision with each other. I went in the direction of the sound, and it died away. And I saw a narrow gate leading obliquely downwards into a kind of roofed building divided into little cells, in each of which two were sitting, who were also collecting from the Word confirmations in favor of faith; one collected, and the other wrote; and this alternately. I went up to one cell, and stood in the door, and asked, "What are you collecting and writing?" They said, "Concerning the act of justification, or, concerning faith in act; which is faith itself justifying, vivifying, and saving, and is the chief doctrine in Christendom." And I then said to him, "Tell me some sign of the act, when that faith is brought into the heart and into the soul of a man." He answered, "The sign of the act is in the moment when the man, moved with distress that he is condemned, thinks of Christ, that He took away the condemnation of the law, and takes hold of this His merit with confidence; and with this in his thought, goes to God the Father, and prays."

Then I said, "Thus the act takes place, and this is the moment." And I asked, "How shall I comprehend what is said of this act, that not anything of the man contributes to it, any more than it would if he were a stock or a stone; and that the man, as to that act, cannot begin, will, understand, think, operate, cooperate, apply, and accommodate himself in any respect. Tell me how this agrees with your saying, that the act takes place at the time when the man thinks of the rightful power of the law, of his condemnation as taken away by Christ, of the confidence by which he takes hold of that merit of His; and when in thought concerning this he goes to God the Father, and prays; and all those things are done by the man as of himself." But he said, "They are not done actively by the man, but passively."

And I replied, "How can one think, have confidence, and pray, passively? Take away the active or the reactive from the man at that time, do you not take away the receptiveness also, and thus the whole, and with it the act itself? What then becomes of your act, unless it be a mere ideal, which is called a thing of the reason? I know that you do not believe, with some, that such an act is given only with the predestined, who know nothing whatever of the infusion of faith with themselves. These may play at dice, to find out whether it is so. For which reason, my friend, believe that in the things of faith man operates and cooperates as of himself; and that without that cooperation, the act of faith, which you have called the chief of doctrine and of religion, is nothing but the statue of Lot's wife, tinkling as mere salt when scratched by the scribe's pen, or fingernail (Luke 17:32). I have said this, because, as to that act, you make yourselves like statues." When I said this, he rose, and seized the candlestick with the full force of his hand to cast it in my face; but the candle being then suddenly extinguished, in the thick darkness he threw it against the forehead of his companion; and I went away laughing."

"The Third Relation. In the northern quarter of the spiritual world I heard as it were the roar of waters; therefore I approached thither; and when I was near, the roar ceased, and I heard a sound like that from a congregation. And then a house was seen full of holes, surrounded by a rough wall, from which that sound proceeded. I approached, and there was a doorkeeper there, whom I asked who were there. He said that they were the wisest of the wise, who decide among themselves concerning supernatural things. He spoke thus from his simple belief. And I asked whether it was permitted to enter. He said that it was, "provided you say nothing. I may admit you, because I have leave to admit Gentiles, who stand with me at the door." I therefore entered; and behold, it was a circus, and in the midst of it a pulpit; and an assembly of the wise, and thus of the learned, were discussing the arcana of faith. And the matter or proposition then submitted for discussion was, whether the good which a man does in the state of justification by faith, or in the progression of it after the act, is the good of religion or not. They said unanimously, that by the good of religion was meant the good which contributes to salvation.

The discussion was sharp; but those prevailed who said that the goods which a man does in the state or in the progression of faith, are only moral, civil, and political goods, which contribute nothing to salvation; but that faith only can do this. And they confirmed it thus. "How can any work of man be conjoined with free grace? Is not salvation of free grace? How can any good of man be conjoined with Christ's merit? Is not salvation by that alone? And how can man's operation be conjoined with the operation of the Holy Spirit? Does not this do all, without the man's help? Are not these three things alone saving in the act of faith? And these three things also remain as alone saving in the state or progression of faith. For which reason accessory good from the man can by no means be called the good of religion, which, as was said, contributes to salvation. But if one does this for the sake of salvation, it is rather to be called the evil of religion."

Two Gentiles were standing in the entry near the doorkeeper; and they heard these things, and said to each other, "These people have not any religion. Who does not see that to do good to the neighbor for the sake of God, and thus with God, and from God, is what is called religion?" And the other said, "Their faith hath infatuated them." And they then asked the doorkeeper, "Who are these?" The doorkeeper said, "They are wise Christians." And they answered, "Nonsense, you are deceiving us; they are play-actors; they speak like them." And I went away. And when I looked, after a time, to the place where that house was, behold it was a marsh.

These things which I saw and heard, I saw and heard in the wakefulness of my body and at the same time of my spirit; for the Lord has so united my spirit to my body, that I may be in both at the same time. It was of the Divine auspices of the Lord, that I came to those houses, and that they then deliberated concerning these things, and that it took place as it is described."