

The Book of Revelation

Chapter 12 – Passages from the *Apocalypse Revealed*

General meaning: It treats here of the New Church and its doctrine: by "the woman" is here meant the New Church, and by "the offspring" which she brought forth, its doctrine: and it also treats of those in the present church, who from doctrine believe in a Trinity of Persons, and in the duality of the Person of Christ, likewise in justification by faith alone; these are meant by "the dragon." Then it treats of the persecution of the New Church by these, on account of its doctrine, and its protection by the Lord, until from a few it increases among many.

Verse 1: "And a great sign was seen in heaven," signifies revelation from the Lord concerning His New Church in the heavens and on earth, and concerning the difficult reception of and resistance to its doctrine. "A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet," signifies the Lord's New Church in the heavens, which is the New Heaven, and the Lord's New Church about to be upon earth, which is the New Jerusalem." And upon the head a crown of twelve stars," signifies its wisdom and intelligence from the knowledges of Divine good and Divine truth from the Word.

"The reason why she was seen "clothed with the sun," is because the church is in love to the Lord, for it acknowledges Him and does His commandments, and this is to love Him (John 14:21-24)...The reason why "the moon" was seen under the woman's feet is because the church on earth, which is not yet conjoined with the church in the heavens, is meant. By "the moon" is signified intelligence in the natural man, and faith; and by being seen "under the feet," is signified that it is about to be upon earth; otherwise by "feet" is signified the church itself when it is conjoined.... The reason why the church cannot subsist in the heavens unless there is a church on earth in conjunction with it, is because heaven where angels are, and the church where men are, act as one, like the internal and the external with man; and the internal with man cannot subsist with its state, unless an external be conjoined with it; for an internal without an external is like a house without a foundation, or like seed upon the ground and not in the ground, thus like anything without a root; in a word, like a cause without an effect in which it may exist. From these things, it may be seen how absolutely necessary it is that there should be a church somewhere in the world, where the Word is, and where by it the Lord is known." (AR 533)

Verse 2: "And being with child, she cried travailing and pained to bring forth," signifies the doctrine of the New Church about to come forth, and its difficult reception on account of the resistance by those who are meant by the dragon.

Verse 3: "And another sign was seen in heaven," signifies revelation from the Lord concerning those who are against the New Church and its doctrine. "And behold a great red dragon," signifies those in the Church of the Reformed who make God three and the Lord two, and who separate charity from faith, and make faith saving, and not charity at the same time. "Having seven heads," signifies insanity from the truths of the Word falsified and profaned. "And ten horns," signifies much power. "And upon his heads seven diadems," signifies all the truths of the Word falsified and profaned.

"These are here meant, and in what follows, by "the dragon;" for they are against the two essentials of the New Church, which are, that God is one in Essence and in Person, in whom there is a Trinity, and that the Lord is that God; also that charity and faith are one like an essence and its form; and that no others have charity and faith, but they who live according to the commandments of the Decalogue, which are that evils are not be done; and so far as anyone does not do evils, shunning them as sins against God, in the same proportion he does the goods which are of charity, and believes the truths which are of faith.

That they who make God three, and the Lord two, and who separate charity from faith, and make faith saving, and not charity, are against those two essentials of the New Church, may be seen by anyone who considers the matter. It is said, they who make God three, and the Lord two, by whom are meant those who think of three Persons as three Gods, and separate the Lord's Human from His Divine. And who thinks otherwise, or can think otherwise, whilst, according to a formula of faith, he prays, "That God the Father for the sake of the Son would send the Holy Spirit?" Does he not pray to God the Father as to one God, and for the sake of the Son as another, and concerning the Holy Spirit as a third? From which it is evident that although in thought he makes three Persons one God, still he divides them, that is, divides his idea into three gods when he so prays. The same formula of faith also makes the Lord two, since he thinks only of the Lord's Human, and not at the same time of His Divine; "for the sake of the Son" means for the sake of His Human which suffered the cross. From what has now been said, it may appear who they are that are meant by the dragon, who would devour the woman's offspring, and afterwards "pursued the woman into the wilderness on account of her offspring....

They who divide God into three Persons, and adhere to these words of the Athanasian doctrine, "There is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit"; and also to these, "The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God"; these, I say, cannot make one God out of three; they may indeed say that they are one God, but they cannot think so. In like manner they who think concerning the Lord's Divine from eternity as concerning the second Person of the Divinity, and concerning His Human in time as concerning the human of another man, cannot do otherwise than make the Lord two, although it is said in the Athanasian doctrine that His Divine and Human are one Person, united as the soul and the body." (AR 537)

"The reason why it is said that the dragon has much power, is, because the salvation of man by faith alone, without the works of the law, which faith is meant by "the dragon," captivates minds, and then confirmations persuade. It captivates, because man, on hearing that the damnation of the law is taken away, and the Lord's merit is imputed to him through faith alone in this, he can indulge in the pleasures of his mind and body, without any fear of hell; hence comes the power which is signified by "the ten horns of the dragon." That such has been his power, evidently appears from the reception of that faith everywhere throughout the Reformed Christian world." (AR 539)

Verse 4: "And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth," signifies that by falsifications of the truths of the Word they have alienated all spiritual knowledges of good and truth from the church, and by applications to falsities have entirely destroyed them. "And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bring forth, that after she had brought forth, he might devour her offspring," signifies that they who are meant by "the dragon" will endeavor to extinguish the doctrine of the New Church at its first appearance.

"That all the truths of the Word have been destroyed by those who are meant by "the dragon" spoken of above (n. 537), cannot be believed by anyone in the world, and yet they have been so destroyed, so that not one doctrinal truth remains; this was examined into in the spiritual world, with the learned of the clergy, and was found to be so. The reasons I know, but I shall here mention only one of them. They assert, that whatsoever proceeds from man's will and judgment is not good; and that therefore the goods of charity, or good works, being done by man, contribute nothing to salvation, but faith only; when, nevertheless, that alone, by virtue of which man is man, and by which he is conjoined with the Lord, is that he can do good and believe truth, as from himself, that is, as from his own will according to his own judgment. If this faculty were taken away from him, all power of conjunction of man with the Lord, and of the Lord with man, would also be taken away at the same time; for this is the reciprocal of love, which the Lord gives to everyone who is born a man, and which He also preserves in him to the end of his life, and afterwards to eternity. If this were taken away from man, every truth and good of the Word would also be taken away, insomuch that the Word would be nothing but a dead letter and an empty volume; for the Word teaches nothing but the conjunction of man with the Lord by charity and faith, and both from man as from himself.

They who are meant by "the dragon" (spoken of above, n. 537), have broken this only bond of conjunction, by asserting that the goods of charity, or good works, which proceed from man, and his will and judgment, are only moral, civil, and political works, by which man has conjunction with the world, and none at all with God and with heaven; and when that bond is thus broken, there is then no doctrinal truth of the Word remaining; and if the truths of the Word are applied to confirm faith alone as saving without the works of the law, then they are all falsified; and if the falsification proceeds so far as to affirm, that the Lord has not commanded good works in the Word for the sake of man's conjunction with Himself, but only for the sake of his conjunction with the world, then the truths of the Word are profaned; for thus the Word becomes no longer a Holy Book, but a profane book" (AR 541)

Verse 5: "And she brought forth a son, a male," signifies the doctrine of the New Church. "Who was to tend all nations with a rod of iron," signifies which, by truths from the literal sense of the Word, and, at the same time, by rational things from natural light will convince all who are in dead worship from faith separated from charity, that are willing to be convinced. "And her offspring was caught up unto God and His throne," signifies the protection of the doctrine by the Lord, and its being guarded by the angels of heaven.

"The doctrine here meant is The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine, published in London, 1758; as also The Doctrines concerning the Lord, concerning The Sacred Scripture, and concerning Life according to the Commandments of the Decalogue, published in Amsterdam; for by doctrine all the truths of doctrine are meant, because doctrine is the complex of them. When these doctrines were written, the dragonists stood around me, and endeavored, with all their fury, to devour, that is, to extinguish them. This news it is permitted me to relate, because of a truth it so happened. The dragonists who stood around me were from all parts of the Reformed Christian world." (AR 543)

Verse 6: "And the woman fled into the wilderness," signifies the church at first among a few. "Where she hath a place prepared by God, that they may nourish her there a thousand two hundred and sixty days," signifies the state of that church then, that meanwhile provision is making for its increase among many until it arrives at its full growth.

"It is of the Lord's Divine providence, that the church should at first be among a few, and that it should successively increase among many, because the falsities of the former church must first be removed; for before this, truths cannot be received, since truths, which are received and implanted before falsities are removed, do not remain, and they are also dissipated by the dragonists; the like happened with the Christian church, which increased successively from a few to many. Another reason is, that the New Heaven is first to be formed, which will act as one with the church that will be on earth; therefore we read that: He saw a New Heaven, and the Holy Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God (Rev. 21:1-2). It is certain that the New Church, which is the New Jerusalem, will exist, because it is foretold in Revelation (chapters 21-22); and it is also certain that the falsities of the former church are first to be removed, because they are what it treats of in Revelation as far as chapter 20." (AR 547)

Verse 7: "And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels," signifies the falsities of the former church fighting against the truths of the New Church.

"By "Michael" is not meant any archangel; neither by "Gabriel, and Raphael," but ministries in heaven are meant; the ministry signified by "Michael" is performed by those who confirm from the Word, that the Lord is the God of heaven and earth, and that God the Father and He are one, as the soul and body are one; also that men ought to live according to the commandments of the Decalogue, and that then men have charity and faith. "Michael" is also mentioned in Daniel (10:13, 21; 12:1); and by him a similar ministry is meant, as appears from chapters 9-11, and from the last verses of chapter 12. But by "Gabriel" is meant the ministry of those who teach from the Word, that Jehovah came into the world, and that the Human He there assumed is the Son of God, and Divine; for which reason, the angel who announced the same to Mary is called "Gabriel" (Luke 1:19, 26-35). They also, who are engaged in those ministries, are named "Michaels" and "Gabriels" in heaven." (AR 548)

Verse 8: "And they prevailed not, and their place was not found any more in heaven;" signifies that they were convinced of being in falsities and evils, but still they remained in them, and that therefore they were torn away from conjunction with heaven and cast down.

Verse 9: "And that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan," signifies this turning from the Lord to themselves, and from heaven to the world, and thence coming into the evils of their lusts and into falsities. "That seduceth the whole world," signifies that they pervert all things of the church. "He was cast out into the earth, and his angels with him," signifies into the world of spirits, which is intermediate between heaven and hell, from whence there is immediate conjunction with men upon earth.

"The reason why by "the earth," upon which the dragon is said to have been cast out, is meant the world of spirits, is, because that world is immediately beneath the heavens, and when anyone is cast down from heaven, he does not fall immediately into hell, but upon the earth of the world immediately beneath it, for that world is intermediate between heaven and hell, or below the heavens and above the hells....All who are in that world communicate immediately with men upon earth; consequently, the dragon and his angels communicate with those who are in falsities, and thence in evils, through the received heresy of faith alone; on which account, it is said below, "Therefore rejoice, ye heavens; woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea, for the Devil is come down unto you, having great anger, knowing that he hath but a short time (verse 12 of this chapter). Also that "he pursued the woman into the wilderness, and went to make war with the rest of her seed" (verses 13-17). It is to be known that every man, as to his affections and thoughts thence, is in society with those who are in the world of spirits, and mediately through them, with those who are either in heaven or in hell. The life of every man depends on that conjunction." (AR 552)

Verse 10: "And I heard a great voice in heaven saying, Now is come the salvation and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ," signifies the joy of the angels of heaven, because the Lord alone now reigns in heaven and in the church, and that they are saved who believe in him. "For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, that accused them before our God day and night," signifies that by the Last Judgment they are removed who opposed the doctrine of the New Church.

Verse 11: "And they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb, and through the word of their testimony," signifies victory by the Divine truth of the Word, and by the acknowledgment of the Lord. "And they loved not their soul even unto death," signifies who did not love themselves more than the Lord.

"Those at the present day, that are in faith alone, believe that, by "the blood of the Lamb," is here meant the Lord's passion of the cross, and this because they make the Lord's passion of the cross the principal one of their dogmas, saying, that thereby He transferred to Himself the condemnation of the law, made satisfaction to the Father, and reconciled the human race to Him; besides many other things. That this, however, is not the case, but 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, may be seen in *The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord* (n. 12-14). Hence it may be seen, that by "the blood of the Lamb" is not here meant the passion of the cross according to the modern dogma. That by "the blood of the Lamb" is meant the Divine truth proceeding from the Lord, which is the Divine truth of the Word, may appear from this consideration, that the Lord is the Word; and because He is the Word, the Divine truth therein is His blood, and the Divine good therein, His body." (AR 555)

Verse 12: "For this rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them," signifies a new state of heaven, that they are in the Lord and the Lord in them. "Woe to those that inhabit the earth and the sea! for the Devil is come down unto you, having great anger," signifies lamentation over those in the church who are in the falsities of faith, and thence in evils of life, because they are in conjunction with the dragon. "Knowing that he hath but a short time," signifies, because he knows that the New Heaven is formed, and that thus there is about to be the New Church upon earth, and that then he with his like will be cast into hell.

"The dragon is here called the Devil, because they are meant who from that heresy are in evils of life; and they are in evils of life from that heresy who live according to this tenet of their faith, that they have no sins who pray in confidence to God the Father, and that if they have they are remitted. All such, because they do not examine themselves, do not know any sin in themselves, and at length do not even know what sin is, as may be seen above (n. 531). That by the dragon, as "the Devil," are meant they who are in the evils of their lusts (n. 550). The reason why every man is in conjunction with those who are in the world of spirits, is because man, as to the affections of his mind and the thoughts thence proceeding, is a spirit; therefore as to such affections and thoughts, he is continually in conjunction with spirits who are in a similar affection, and thence in similar thoughts. There is such a conjunction, that if this bond was broken for a single moment, man would fall down dead. The church has hitherto known nothing of this; nor that man, after death, is his own affection and thought thence, therefore his own charity and faith thence, and that no one can be faith separated from charity." (AR 558)

Verse 13: "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman that brought forth the son," signifies that the dragonists in the world of spirits, immediately upon their being thrust down, began to infest the New Church on account of its doctrine.

Verse 14: "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place," signifies the Divine circumspection over that church, and its protection, while as yet confined to a few. "Where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent," signifies that by reason of the craftiness of seducers, provision is made with circumspection that its numbers may increase until it comes to its full growth.

Verse 15: "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a river after the woman, that he might cause her to be swallowed up by the river," signifies reasonings from falsities in abundance to destroy the church.

"The reasonings of those who are meant by "the dragon," are all from fallacies and appearances, which, if confirmed, appear outwardly like truths, but within they conceal falsities in abundance. This I can declare, that those in the church, who hereafter confirm themselves in faith alone, cannot recede from it, except by serious repentance, because they conjoin themselves with the dragonists, who now are in the world of spirits, and are tumultuous, and there out of hatred against the New Church, they infest all whom they meet; and as they are conjoined with men on the earth, as observed above, they will not suffer those who have once been caught by their reasonings to recede from them; for they hold them bound in chains, as it were, and then shut their eyes so that they can no longer see any truth in light." (AR 563)

Verse 16: "And the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth," signifies that those reasonings in all their abundance fall to nothing before the spiritual truths rationally understood, which the Michaels, of whom the New Church consists, bring forward.

"Since in the New Church this dogma is rejected, that the understanding is to be held captive under obedience to faith, and in the place of it, this is received, that the truth of the church should be seen, in order that it may be believed (n. 224); and since truth cannot be seen otherwise than rationally, therefore, it is said, from truths rationally understood. How can any man be led by the Lord, and conjoined with heaven, who shuts up his understanding in such things as relate to salvation and eternal life? Is it not the understanding which will be enlightened and taught? And what is the understanding closed by religion, but thick darkness, and such thick darkness as rejects from itself the illuminating light? Again, who can acknowledge any truth and retain it, unless he sees it? What is truth not seen but a voice not understood, which, with sensual corporeal men, is usually retained in the memory, but cannot be with the wise? The wise, indeed, cast out empty or unmeaning words from the memory, that is, such as have not entered from the understanding; as that one God consists of three Persons, also that the Lord, born from eternity, is not one and the same with the Lord born in time, that is, that one Lord is God and not the other; and again, that the life of charity, which consists in good works, and likewise in repentance from evil works, effects nothing to salvation; a wise man does not understand such things; therefore from his rationality he says, religion does not effect anything. Is not religion to shun evil and do good? Must not the doctrine of the church teach this, as also what a man should believe, that he may do the good works of religion from God?" (AR 564)

Verse 17: "And the dragon was angry with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ," signifies hatred kindled in those who think themselves wise from their confirmations of the mystical union of the Divine and the Human in the Lord, and of justification by faith alone, against those who acknowledge the Lord alone as the God of heaven and earth, and that the Decalogue is the law of life; and their assaults on novitiates with intent to seduce them.

"The reason why by "the dragon" are here meant those who believe themselves wise from confirmations in favor of the mystic union of the Lord's Divine and Human, is because these are in the pride of their own wisdom, and know how to reason; and from pride proceeds hatred, and from hatred proceed anger and revenge against those who do not believe likewise. By the mystic union, which is also called the hypostatic union, are meant their fictions concerning the influx and operation of the Divine in the Lord's Human as upon another; not knowing that God and Man, or the Divine and the Human in the Lord, are not two but one Person, united like soul and body, according to the doctrine received throughout the whole Christian world, which has its name from Athanasius; but to adduce their fictitious things respecting this mystic union would be an idle thing, because they are absurd." (AR 565)

Memorable Relation - Apocalypse Revealed #566

"There arose a strife among some spirits, whether anyone can see any doctrinal theological truth in the Word, except from the Lord. They all agreed in this, that no one can, except from God, because: No man can receive anything except it be given him from heaven (John 3:27). For which reason the dispute was, whether it is possible to anyone unless he goes immediately to the Lord. They said on the one hand, that the Lord is to be approached directly, because He is the Word; and on the other, that doctrinal truth may also be seen when God the Father is immediately approached. On which account the dispute centered upon this point, Whether it is lawful for any Christian to go immediately to God the Father, and so to climb above the Lord; and whether this is not insolence and audacity both indecent and rash; because the Lord says that: No one cometh to the Father but through Him (John 14:6). But they left this, and said that a man can see a doctrinal truth in the Word from his own natural light [lumen]; but this was rejected. Wherefore they insisted that it might be seen by those who pray to God the Father. Therefore something was read to them from the Word; and then they prayed upon their knees, that God the Father would enlighten them; and as to the words which were read before them from the Word, they said that this and that was the truth therein; but it was false; and this repeatedly even to tediousness. At length they confessed that it was not possible. But on the other side, they who went immediately to the Lord, saw truths, and informed the others.

After this dispute was thus finished, there came up some out of the abyss, who appeared at first like locusts, but afterwards as men. They were those who in the world prayed to the Father, and confirmed themselves in justification by faith alone; and they said that they saw the tenet that man is justified by faith alone without the works of the law, in clear light, and also from the Word. They were asked, "By what faith?" They answered, "In God the Father." But after they were examined, it was said to them from heaven, that they did not know even one doctrinal truth from the Word. But they replied that still they saw this in the light. It was then said to them that they saw it in fatuous light. They asked, "What is fatuous light?" They were informed that fatuous light is the light of the confirmation of falsity; and that this light corresponds to the light in which owls and bats are, to which darkness is light, and light is darkness. This was confirmed by the fact, that when they looked upwards to heaven, where light itself is, they saw darkness; but when they looked downwards to the abyss whence they were, they saw light.

Being indignant at this confirmation, they said that "thus light and darkness are not anything, but only a state of the eye, from which light is called light, and darkness, darkness." But it was shown that their light was fatuous light, which is the light of the confirmation of falsity; and that it was only the activity of their minds arising from the fire of lusts, not unlike the light of cats, whose eyes, owing to their burning appetite for mice in cellars in the nighttime, appear like candles. On hearing these things, being angry, they said that they were not cats, nor like cats; because they could see, if they would. But because they feared being asked why they would not, they retired, and let themselves down into their abyss and into their light. They who are there, and those who are like them, are also called owls and bats.

When they came to their companions in the abyss, and related that "the angels said that we do not know any doctrinal truths, not even one;" and that "they therefore called us bats and owls," there was a great tumult. And they said, "Let us pray to the Lord for permission to ascend, and we will show clearly that we have many doctrinal truths, which the archangels themselves will acknowledge." And because they prayed to the Lord, leave was given, and they ascended to the number of three hundred. And when they appeared above the earth, they said, "We were celebrated and famed in the world, because we knew and taught the arcana of justification by faith alone; and from confirmations we not only saw the light, but also as it were a flashing radiance; as we still do in our cells. And yet we have heard from our companions who were with you, that this light is not light, but darkness; for the reason that we have not, as you said, any doctrinal truth from the Word. We know that every truth of the Word shines; and we believe that our radiance is thence, when we profoundly meditate upon our arcana. We will, therefore, demonstrate that we have truths from the Word in great abundance." And they said, "Have we not this truth, that there is a Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; and that the Trinity must be believed in? Have we not this truth, that Christ is our Redeemer and Savior? Have we not this truth, that Christ alone is justice, and that He alone has merit? and that he is unjust and impious, who wishes to ascribe to himself anything of His justice and merit? Have we not this truth, that no mortal can do any spiritual good of himself, but that all good which is good in itself is from God? Have we not this truth, that there is given meritorious and also hypocritical good, and that these goods are evil? Have we not this truth, that man of his own powers can contribute nothing to his salvation? Have we not this truth, that the works of charity are still to be done? Have we not this truth, that there is faith, and that one must believe, and that everyone has life according to his belief? Besides many other things from the Word? Who of you can deny anyone of these? And yet you said that we have not any truth in our schools, not even one. Have you not asserted such things against us through prejudice?"

But they then received the answer, "All the things which you have advanced are in themselves truths; but you have falsified them, by applying them to confirm a false principle; and hence with you and in you they are falsified truths, which are false by being derived from a false principle. That it is so, we will demonstrate even to the sight. Not far from here is a place into which light flows immediately from heaven. In the midst of it there is a table. When any paper on which a truth from the Word is written is placed upon it, that paper, from the truth written on it, shines like a star. Write your truths, therefore, on a paper, and let it be put upon that table; and you will see." They did so, and gave it to the keeper, who put it upon the table; who then said to them, "Withdraw a little and look at the table." And they withdrew and looked; and behold, the paper shone like a star. And then the keeper said, "You see that the things which you have written upon the paper are truths. But come nearer, and look intently at the paper!" And they did so; and then the light suddenly disappeared, and the paper became black, as if covered with the soot of a furnace. And the keeper said further, "Touch the paper with your hands, but be careful not to touch the writing." And when they did so, a flame burst forth, and consumed it. Seeing this, they fled away; and it was said to them, "If you had touched the writing, you would have heard an explosion, and

would have burned your fingers." And it was then said by them that stood behind, "You have now seen that the truths which you have abused to confirm the arcana of your justification, are truths in themselves; but that in you they are truths falsified." They then looked up, and heaven appeared to them as blood, and afterwards as thick darkness; and they seemed before the eyes of angelic spirits, some like bats, some like owls, some like moles, and some like horned owls; and they fled away into their darkness, which to their eyes shone fatuously.

The angelic spirits who were present wondered that they had not before known anything of that place, and of the table there. And a voice then came to them from the southern quarter, saying, "Come hither, and you will see something still more wonderful." And they came, and entered into a chamber, the walls of which shone as if from gold; and they saw there also a table, upon which lay the Word, set around with precious stones in heavenly forms. And the angel keeper said, "When the Word is opened, a light beams forth thence of ineffable brightness; and at the same time there appears from the precious stones a rainbow above and around the Word. When any angel from the third heaven comes thither, and looks at the open Word, there appears above and around the Word a rainbow of various colors on a red ground. When an angel comes thither from the second heaven, and looks, there appears a rainbow on a blue ground. When an angel from the lowest heaven comes and looks, there appears a rainbow on a white ground. When any good spirit comes and looks, there appears a variegation of light, as of marble." That it was so, was also shown them visibly. The angel keeper further said, "If anyone approaches, who has falsified the Word, the splendor is then first dissipated; and if he approaches, and fixes his eyes on the Word, there is an appearance of blood around; and he is then admonished to depart, because there is danger."

But a certain one, who in the world had been a prominent author on the doctrine of faith alone, boldly approached, and said, "When I was in the world, I did not falsify the Word; I also exalted charity together with faith; and I taught that man in the state of faith, in which he does charity and its works, is renewed, regenerated, and sanctified; and also that faith is then not solitary, that is, without good works; as a tree is not without fruit, the sun without light, and fire without heat; and I also blamed those who said that good works were not necessary, and moreover I magnified the precepts of the Decalogue, and also repentance; and I thus applied all things of the Word in a wonderful manner to the article of faith, which I set forth and demonstrated to be still alone saving." In the confidence of his assertion that he had not falsified the Word, he came up to the table, and, contrary to the warning of the angel, touched the Word. But then suddenly fire with smoke issued from the Word, and an explosion took place with a great crash, by which he was thrown to a corner of the chamber, and lay there as dead for half an hour. This the angelic spirits wondered at; but it was said to them, that that prelate had exalted the goods of charity as proceeding from faith more than others; but that still he meant no other than political works, which are also called moral and civil, and which are to be done for the sake of the world and of prosperity therein; but not any works which are to be done for the sake of God and salvation: and also that he included the unseen works of the Holy Spirit, of which the man knows nothing; which are implanted in the act of faith during its state.

The angelic spirits then conversed among themselves concerning the falsification of the Word: and they agreed upon this, that to falsify the Word is to take truths from it, and apply them to confirm falsities; which is to drag them forth from the Word outside of it, and slay them. As for example: he who takes therefrom this truth, that the neighbor is to be loved, and that good is to be done to him from love for the sake of God and eternal life; if anyone then confirms this, that it is to be done, but not for the sake of salvation, because all good from man is not good, he drags that truth from the Word outside of the Word, and destroys it; since the Lord in His Word enjoins it upon every man who wishes to be saved, to do good to his neighbor as of himself, and yet to believe that it is of the Lord."