

The Book of Revelation

Chapter 7 – Passages from the *Apocalypse Revealed*

General meaning: In this chapter it treats of those who are and will be in the Christian heaven; and first of their separation from the evil (verses 1-3); after that, of those who are in love to the Lord and thereby in wisdom, of whom the higher heavens consist (verses 4-8); and of those who are in charity and its faith from the Lord, because they have fought against evils, of whom are the lower heavens (verses 9-17).

Verse 1: "After these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth," signifies the entire heaven now in the effort to execute the Last Judgment. "Holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree," signifies a withholding and restraining by the Lord, of a nearer and thence more powerful influx into the lower parts, where the good were conjoined with the evil.

"Many things now follow concerning the state of the spiritual world just before the Last Judgment, which no one could know but by revelation from the Lord. And since it has been granted me to see in what manner the Last Judgment was executed, and also the changes which preceded it, and the arrangements which followed; I am thereby enabled to relate the signification of all the particulars contained in this and the following chapters. By "the four angels" is here signified the entire heaven; by "the four corners of the earth" is signified the entire world of spirits, which is in the midst between heaven and hell; for the Last Judgment was executed on those who were in the world of spirits, but not on anyone in heaven, nor anyone in hell....

The reason why the above words signify the effort of the entire heaven to execute the Last Judgment is because the Lord, when the judgment was at hand, caused the heavens to draw near over the world of spirits, and by this approach of the heavens, such a change of state in the interiors of the minds of those who were below, was effected, that they saw nothing but terrors before their eyes." (AR 342)

"It is to be known that the Last Judgment takes place when the evil are multiplied below the heavens in the world of spirits, to such a degree that the angels in the heavens cannot subsist in their state of love and wisdom; for in this case they have no support and no foundation. And as this is caused by the multiplication of the evil below, therefore the Lord, in order to preserve their state, flows in with His Divine more and more strongly, and this continues until they can no longer be preserved by any influx, without a separation of the evil below from the good. This is effected by the letting down and drawing near of the heavens, and thence by a stronger influx, until at length the evil cannot endure it; and then the evil flee away, and cast themselves into hell." (AR 343)

Verse 2: "And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun," signifies the Lord providing and regulating. "Having the seal of the living God," signifies who alone knows all and each, and can distinguish and separate them one from another. "And he cried with a great voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea."

Verse 3: "saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees," signifies the presenting and withholding by the Lord of a nearer and stronger influx into the lower parts. "Till we have sealed the servants of our God upon their foreheads," signifies before they are separated who are in truths from good from the Lord.

"Not to hurt the earth, the sea, nor the trees," signifies that they should not operate by a vehement, but by a moderate, influx. For the Lord, by various degrees of influx into the heavens, disposes, regulates, tempers, and moderates all things there and in the hells, and, through the heavens and the hells, all things in the world." (AR 346)

"By "sealing them in their foreheads," is not meant to seal them there, but to distinguish and separate those who are in the good of love from the Lord; for "the forehead" signifies the good of love....The reason why "the forehead" signifies the good of love, is, because the face is the image of man's affections, and the forehead is the highest part of the face; the cerebrum, from which is the origin of all things of man's life, being immediately under the forehead. As "the forehead" signifies the love, good love in the good, and evil love in the evil, therefore by "sealing them on their foreheads," is signified to distinguish and separate one from another according to the love....

It should be known, that the Lord looks at the angels in the forehead, whilst they look at the Lord through the eyes; by reason that the Lord looks at all from the good of love, and wills that they, on their part, should look at Him from the truths of wisdom; in this manner conjunction is effected." (AR 347)

Verse 4: "And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand," signifies all who acknowledge the Lord as the God of heaven and earth, and are in truths of doctrine from the good of love, from Him through the Word. "Sealed out of every tribe* of Israel" signifies the Lord's heaven and church composed of them.

"From what has been said it may be seen, that by "one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed," and by "twelve thousand out of each tribe," is not to be understood that so many were sealed and elected out of the tribes of Israel, but all who are in the truths of doctrine from the good of love from the Lord. This is what is signified in general by "the twelve tribes of Israel," and also by "the Lord's twelve apostles"; but, in particular, some truth from good is signified by each tribe, and by each apostle. But the signification of each particular tribe shall be explained presently. Since the twelve tribes signify all the truths of doctrine from the good of love from the Lord, they also signify all things of the church; on which account the twelve tribes of Israel represented the church, as did also the twelve apostles....

From what has been said it may now be evident, that by "one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed, twelve thousand out of each tribe," are not meant so many in number of the Jews and Israelites, but all who are of the New Christian Heaven, and the New Church, who will be in truths of doctrine from the good of love through the word from the Lord." (AR 348)

"There are two things which make the church, the good of love and the truth of doctrine; the marriage of these is the church. The twelve tribes of Israel represented, and thence signified the church as to that marriage, and each tribe some universal truth of good or good of truth therein. But what each tribe signifies has not hitherto been revealed to anyone, nor could it be revealed, lest, by an ill-connected explanation, the sanctity which lies concealed in their several conjunctions into one, should be profaned, for their signification is determined by their conjunction." (AR 349)

Verse 5: "Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand," signifies celestial love, which is love to the Lord, and this with all who will be in the New Heaven and the New Church. "Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand," signifies wisdom from celestial love, with them who will be there. "Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand," signifies uses of life, which are of wisdom from that love, with those who will be there.

"Judah" is signified celestial love, which is love to the Lord; and because it is mentioned first in the series, it signifies that love with all who will be of the Lord's New Heaven and New Church; for the tribe first named is the all in the rest, it is as their head, and as a universal entering into all things that follow, collecting, qualifying, and affecting them. Such is love to the Lord." (AR 350)

"There are three things which cohere and cannot be separated: love, wisdom, and use of life; if one is separated, the other two fall to the ground...It must be known, that all the tribes of Israel are here divided into four classes, as in the Urim and Thummin, and in the encampments, and that each class contains three tribes, by reason that three cohere as one, as love, wisdom, and use, and as charity, faith, and work; for, as was said, if one is wanting, the other two are not anything." (AR 352)

Verse 6: "Of the tribe of Asher were sealed twelve thousand," signifies mutual love with them. "Of the tribe of Naphtali were sealed twelve thousand," signifies the perception of use, and what use is with them. "Of the tribe of Manasseh were sealed twelve thousand" signifies the will of serving, and of action, with them.

Verse 7: "Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand," signifies spiritual love, which is love towards the neighbor, with them. "Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand," signifies the affection of truth from good, from whence comes intelligence with them. "Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand" signifies the good of life with them.

"In the two foregoing series they are treated of who are in the Lord's celestial kingdom; but in this series they are treated of who are in the Lord's spiritual kingdom; the love of the latter is called spiritual love, which is love towards the neighbor, and charity....

Love towards the neighbor, is the love of obeying the Lord's commandments, which are chiefly those contained in the second table of the Decalogue, and which are, thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit whoredom; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not covet the things which are thy neighbor's. The man who will not do such things because they are sins, loves the neighbor; for he does not love the neighbor who hates him, and from hatred wishes to kill him; he does not love the neighbor who desires to commit whoredom with his wife; nor does he love the neighbor who wishes to steal and plunder his goods, and so on. This, also, Paul teaches in the following words: For he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit whoredom, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is comprehended in this word, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself; therefore charity is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 8:8-10)." (AR 356)

"Levi represented these things, therefore this tribe was appointed to the priesthood. The tribe of Levi signifies the love of truth, which is the essential love from which the church is a church, and thence intelligence." (AR 357)

Verse 8: "Of the tribe of Zebulon were sealed twelve thousand," signifies the conjugal love of good and truth with them. "Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand," signifies the doctrine of good and truth with them. "Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand," signifies the life of truth from good according to doctrine with them.

"Here, by "Zebulon" is signified the conjugal love of good and truth; he was also named from "cohabitation" (Gen. 30:19, 22); and cohabitation is predicated of married partners whose minds are joined into one, for such conjunction is spiritual cohabitation. The conjugal love of good and truth, which is here signified by "Zebulon," is the conjugal love of the Lord and the church. The Lord is the good of love itself, and gives to the church to be truth from that good; and cohabitation is effected, when the man of the church receives good from the Lord in truths. In this case the marriage of good and truth takes place with man, which is the church itself, and he becomes a heaven. Hence it is that the kingdom of God, that is, heaven and the church, is so often compared in the Word to a marriage." (AR 359)

"The tribe which is first named in a series or class, signifies some love which is of the will; and the tribe which is named after it signifies something of wisdom which is of the understanding; and the tribe which is named last signifies some use or effect derived from them. Thus each series is full." (AR 360)

"In the enumeration of the tribes of Israel neither Dan nor Ephraim is named; the reason is, because Dan was the last of the tribes, and his tribe dwelt in the most remote part of the land of Canaan, and thus could not signify anything in the Lord's New Heaven and New Church, where there will be only celestial and spiritual things; wherefore Manasseh is put in the place of Dan, while Joseph is put in the place of Ephraim" (AR 362)

Verse 9: "After this I saw and behold, a great multitude which no one could number," signifies all the rest who are not of those enumerated, and yet are in the New Heaven and New Church of the Lord, and who constitute the ultimate heaven and the external church, whose quality no one knows but the Lord alone. "Of every nation, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues," signifies all in the Christian world, who are in religion from good, and in truths from doctrine. "Standing before the throne and before the Lamb," signifies hearing the Lord and doing the things which He commands. "Clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands," signifies communication and conjunction with the higher heavens, and confession from Divine truths.

"But who they are in particular, who are meant by those who are called "a great multitude," cannot be known without first revealing an arcanum. The arcanum is this:

The whole heaven, together with the church on the earth, before the Lord, is as one Man; and because it is as one Man, there are those there who make the head, and thus the face with all its organs of the senses; and there are those who make the body with all its members. Those who are enumerated above make the face with all its organs of the senses; but these now mentioned, are those who make the body with all its members. That this is the case has been revealed to me; as also, that they who make the first class of the tribes (verse 5), are those who correspond to the forehead down to the eyes; that they who are of the second class (verse 6) are those who correspond to the eyes, together with the nose; the third class (verse 7), those who correspond to the ears and cheeks; and the fourth class (verse 8), those who correspond to the mouth and tongue.

The Lord's church is also internal and external; those who are meant by "the twelve tribes of Israel" are those who make the Lord's internal church, but they who are now mentioned are those who make the external church, and cohere as one with those enumerated above, as lower things with higher, thus as the body does with the head; therefore the twelve tribes of Israel signify the higher heavens and also the internal church, but these signify the lower heavens and the external church." (AR 369)

Verse 10: "And crying with a great voice, saying, Salvation to our God that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb," signifies acknowledgment from the heart that the Lord is their Savior.

Verse 11: "And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the elders, and the four animals," signifies all in the whole heaven.

Verse 12: "Saying, Amen" signifies Divine verity and confirmation therefrom. "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving," signifies the Divine spiritual things of the Lord. "And honor, and power, and might," signifies the Divine celestial things of the Lord. "Be unto our God for ages of ages," signifies these things in the Lord, and from the Lord to eternity. "Amen," signifies the consent of all.

"All acknowledgment and confession of the Lord in general, comprehends these two, that He is the Divine love itself and the Divine wisdom itself, and consequently that love, and all that is of it, with those who are in heaven and in the church, is from Him; in like manner wisdom, and all that is of it. Whatsoever proceeds from the Lord's Divine love, is called the celestial Divine, and what from His Divine wisdom, is called the spiritual Divine. The Lord's spiritual Divine is meant by "glory, wisdom, and thanksgiving;" and His celestial Divine, by "honor, power, and might," which follow. "The blessing" which precedes, signifies both." (AR 372)

Verse 13: "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, Who are these that are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?"

Verse 14: "And I said unto him, Lord, thou knowest," signifies the desire of knowing and the will of interrogating, and the answer and information. "And he said unto me, These are they that come out of great affliction," signifies that they are those who have been in temptations, and have fought against evils and falsities. "And have washed their robes," signifies who have cleansed their religious principles from the evils of falsity. "And made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb," signifies, and purified them from the falsities of evil by truths, and thus have been reformed by the Lord.

"The reason why John was questioned concerning these things, is, because it is common in all Divine worship, that man should first will, desire, and pray, and the Lord then answer, inform, and do; otherwise man does not receive anything Divine. Now as John saw "those who were arrayed in white robes," and was desirous to know and to ask who they were, and as this was perceived in heaven, therefore he was first asked and then informed.... But yet the Lord gives them to ask, and what to ask; therefore the Lord knows it beforehand; but still the Lord wills that man should ask first, to the end that he may do it as from himself, and thus that it should be appropriated to him." (AR 376)

"Robes," or religious principles, are cleansed only with those who fight against evils, and so reject falsities; thus by temptations, which are signified by "great affliction". That "to be washed" signifies to be cleansed from evils and falsities, and so to be reformed and regenerated." (AR 378)

"All who have fought against evils in the world, and have believed in the Lord, after their departure out of the world, are taught by the Lord, and are withdrawn from the falsities of their religion by truths, and thus are reformed. The reason is because they who shun evils as sins are in the good of life; and the good of life desires truths, and acknowledges and accepts them; but evil of life never. By "the blood of the Lamb" here, and in other parts of the Word, it is believed that the Lord's passion of the cross is signified; but the passion of the cross was the last temptation, by which the Lord fully conquered the hells, and fully glorified His Human, by which two He saved man. And because the Lord thus fully glorified His Human, that is made it Divine, therefore nothing else can be meant by His "flesh," and "blood" but the Divine in Him and from Him; by "flesh," the Divine good of the Divine love; and by "blood," the Divine truth from that good.

"Blood" is mentioned in many places in the Word, and everywhere signifies, in the spiritual sense, the Divine truth of the Lord, which also is the Divine truth of the Word; and, in the opposite sense, the Divine truth of the Word falsified or profaned." (AR 379)

Verse 15: "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them," signifies that they are in the presence of the Lord, and constantly and faithfully live according to the truths which they receive from Him in His church.

"He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them," signifies that the Lord continually gives good in the truths which they receive from Him. That this is signified by "dwelling among them," is because in the Word, "to dwell" is predicted of good, and "to serve," of truth. This arcanum now is to be disclosed, that the marriage of the Lord with the church consists in this: that the Lord flows into angels and men with the good of love, and that angels and men receive Him, or the good of His love, in truths; that hereby the marriage of good and truth is effected, which marriage is the church itself, and becomes heaven with them. Such being the nature of the Lord's influx and reception of Him, therefore the Lord looks at angels and men in the forehead, and they look at the Lord through the eyes; for the forehead corresponds to the good of love, and the eyes correspond to truths from that good, which thus by conjunction become the truths of good. But the Lord's influx with truths into angels and men, is not as the influx of good into them, for it is mediate, flowing from good, as light does from fire, being received by them in the understanding, and only so far in the will as they do truths. This then is the marriage of love and wisdom, or of good and truth from the Lord, with those who receive them in the heavens and on earth. This arcanum was disclosed for the sake of making it known how it is to be understood, that the Lord continually gives good in their truths." (AR 380)

Verse 16: "They shall not hunger any more, neither thirst anymore" signifies that hereafter there shall be no lack of goods and truths with them. "Neither shall the sun fall upon them, nor any heat," signifies that hereafter they shall have no lusts to evil nor to falsity of evil.

Verse 17: "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them," signifies that the Lord alone will teach them. "And shall lead them to living fountains of waters," signifies, and shall lead by truths of the Word to conjunction with Himself. "And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes" signifies that they shall no longer be in combats against evils and their falsities, and thereby in grief, but in goods and truths, and thence in heavenly joys from the Lord.

"If it be asked, how He alone can feed all, be it known that it is because He is God, and because in the whole heaven He is as the soul in its body, for heaven is from Him as one man. "To feed" is to teach, because the church, in the Word, is called "a flock" and the men of the church are called "sheep" and "lambs," hence "to feed" signifies to teach, and "the shepherd" one that teaches." (AR 383)

"By 'a living fountain of waters' is signified the Lord, and also the Word, and by 'waters' are signified truths, and by the Divine truths of the Word, when they are made of the life, which is done when one lives according to them, conjunction is effected with the Lord." (AR 384)

Memorable Relation - Apocalypse Revealed #386

"To the above I will add this Relation. Once when I looked around in the spiritual world, I heard as it were the gnashing of teeth, and also as it were a knocking, and mixed with them a grating sound; and I inquired what they were. And the angels who were with me said, "There are colleges which are called by us diversoria, where disputations are carried on. These disputations are so heard at a distance, but on coming near to them they are only heard as disputations." I drew near and saw small houses, constructed of reeds plastered with mud. And I desired to look in through a window, but there was none; for it was not allowed to enter through the door, because the light from heaven would flow in and confuse them. But suddenly a window was made on the right side; and then I heard them complain that they were in darkness. Shortly afterwards a window was made on the left side, and that on the right was closed; upon which the darkness gradually dispersed, and they seemed to themselves to be in the light. After this I was permitted to go in through the door and hear. There was a table in the middle, and benches round about; but they all seemed to me to stand upon the benches, and to dispute sharply with one another concerning Faith and Charity: on one side, that faith was the principal thing of the church; on the other, that charity was. They who made faith the principal, said, "Have we not to do with God by faith, and with man by charity? Is not faith therefore heavenly, and charity earthly? Are we not saved by what is heavenly, and not by what is earthly? Again, cannot God give faith from heaven, because it is heavenly, and must not man procure to himself charity, because it is earthly? And what man procures for himself, is not of the church, and therefore does not save? Can anyone be justified in the sight of God by works, which are called works of charity? Believe us, we are not only justified, but also sanctified by faith alone, provided that faith be not defiled by things meritorious, which are from the works of charity." Besides many more things.

But they who made charity the principal thing of the church, sharply refuted these things, saying, "That charity saves, and not faith; are not all dear to God, and does He not will the good of all? How can God effect this, except by men? Does God only give to men to talk with one another about such things as relate to faith? and does He not give to men to do those things which are of charity? Do you not see that it is absurd in you to say that charity is earthly? Charity is heavenly, and because you do not do the good of charity, your faith is earthly. How do you receive faith but as a stock or a stone? You say by the hearing of the Word only. But how can the Word operate by being heard only, and this too upon a stock or a stone? Perhaps you are vivified without knowing it; but what is this vivification except in being enabled to say that faith alone saves? But what faith is, and what saving faith, you do not know."

But there then arose one, who, by the angel that was talking with me, was called a Syncretist. He took off a turban from his head, and placed it on the table; but suddenly put it on again, because he was bald. He said, "Attend! you are all in error; it is true that faith is spiritual, and charity, moral; but yet they are joined together; and this by the Word, by the Holy Spirit, and by effect, without man's knowledge, which indeed may be called obedience, but in which man has no part. I have thought of these things with myself for a long time, and have at length discovered, that man may

receive faith from God, which is spiritual, but that he cannot be moved by God to charity, which is spiritual, except as a pillar of salt."

Having said this, he was applauded by those who were in faith alone, but hooted by those who were in charity; and the latter said, with indignation, "Hear, friend; you do not know that there is a moral life which is spiritual, and that there is a moral life merely natural; a moral life which is spiritual with those who do good from God, and yet as if from themselves; and a moral life merely natural with those who do good from hell, and yet as if from themselves."

It was said that the disputation was heard as a gnashing of teeth, and as a knocking, with which a grating sound was mixed. The disputation heard as a gnashing of teeth, was by those who were in faith alone; but the disputation heard as a knocking, was by those who were in charity alone; and the grating sound that was mixed with them was from the Syncretist. The sounds of them were so heard at a distance, because when in the world, they all spent their time in disputations and did not shun any evil, and therefore they did not do any spiritual moral good; and, moreover, they were entirely ignorant that the all of faith is truth, and the all of charity, good, and that truth without good is not truth in spirit, and that good without truth is not good in spirit, and that thus one must make the other. The reason why there was darkness when a window was made on the right side, is because light from heaven flowing in on that side affects the will; and the reason why there was light when the window on the right side was shut, and another was made in the left, is because light flowing in from heaven on the left side affects the understanding, and every man may be in the light of heaven as to his understanding, provided the will be closed as to its evil."