

## The Book of Revelation

### Chapter 8 – Passages from the *Apocalypse Revealed*

**General meaning:** The church of the Reformed is here treated of, as to the quality of those therein who are in faith alone: the preparation of the spiritual heaven for communication with them (verses 1-6). The exploration and manifestation of those therein, who are in the interiors of that faith (verse 7). Of those who are in its exteriors (verses 8-9). What they are as to the understanding of the Word (verses 10-11). That they are in falsities and thence in evils (verses 12-13).

"There are two kingdoms into which the entire heaven is divided, the celestial kingdom and the spiritual kingdom. The celestial kingdom consists of those who are in love to the Lord and thence in wisdom; and the spiritual kingdom consists of those who are in love towards the neighbor, and thence in intelligence; and as love towards the neighbor is at this day called "charity" and intelligence, "faith," the latter kingdom consists of those who are in charity, and thence in faith. Now, because heaven is distinguished into two kingdoms, hell also is distinguished into two kingdoms that are opposite to them; into the diabolical kingdom and into the satanic kingdom. The diabolical kingdom consists of those who are in the love of dominion from love of self and thence in foolishness; for this love is opposite to celestial love, and its foolishness is opposite to celestial wisdom; but the satanic kingdom consists of those who are in the love of dominion from the pride of their own intelligence, and thence in insanity; for this love is opposite to spiritual love, and its insanity is opposite to spiritual intelligence....

Now, as Revelation treats only of the state of the church at its end (as was observed in the preface, and at n. 2), therefore what now follows treats of those who are in the two kingdoms of heaven, and of those who are in the two kingdoms of hell, and of their quality. From this chapter (Rev. 8-16), of those who are in the spiritual kingdom, and in the satanic kingdom opposite to it; in chapters 17-18, of those who are in the celestial kingdom, and in the diabolical kingdom opposite to it; and afterwards of the Last Judgment; and at length of the New Church which is the New Jerusalem; this bringing all that goes before to a conclusion, because it is the end on account of which they are." (AR 387)

**Verse 1:** "And when He had opened the seventh seal," signifies exploration by the Lord of the state of the church, and thence of the life of those who are in His spiritual kingdom, being those who are in charity and its faith, in this case who are in faith alone. "There was silence in heaven as of half an hour," signifies that the angels of the Lord's spiritual kingdom were greatly amazed when they saw those who said they were in the faith in such a state.

**Verse 2:** "And I saw the seven angels who stood before God," signifies the entire spiritual heaven in the presence of the Lord, hearing and doing what He commands. "And there were given to them seven trumpets," signifies the exploration and disclosure of the state of the church, and thence of the life of those who are in faith alone.

"Here, by "trumpets" the same thing is signified as by "sounding," because they sounded with them, and by "sounding with trumpets" is signified to call together upon solemn occasions, which were various; in this case, to explore and discover the quality of those who are in faith alone, thus the quality of those who are at this day of the churches of the Reformed. It should be known, that the church in the Reformed world is at this day divided into three, from the three leaders, Luther, Calvin, and Melancthon, and that these three churches differ in various things; but in this article, that man is justified by faith without the works of the law, they all agree, which is remarkable." (AR 391)

**Verse 3:** "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer," signifies spiritual worship, which is from the good of charity by the truths of faith. "And there was given him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne," signifies propitiation lest the angels of the Lord's spiritual kingdom should be hurt by the spirits of the satanic kingdom that were below.

**Verse 4:** "And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the angel before God," signifies the protection of them by the Lord.

**Verse 5:** "And the angel took the censer, and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it unto the earth," signifies spiritual love, in which is celestial love, and its influx into lower things, where they were who were in faith separated from charity. "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake," signifies that after communication was opened with them, there were heard reasonings concerning faith alone, and confirmations in favor of it.

"Spiritual love, which is charity, draws its essence out of celestial love, which is love directed to the Lord. Without this love there is no vitality in spiritual love or charity, for spirit and life is from no other source than the Lord. This was represented in the Israelitish Church by the fact that they should not take fire in the censers and offer incense from anywhere else but the altar of burnt." (AR 395)

"After communication was opened with them there were heard reasonings about faith alone and confirmations in favour of it, and that the state of the Church with them was perceived to be tottering to destruction. That 'lightnings, thunderings and voices' signify enlightenments, perceptions and instructions by means of an influx out of heaven may be seen above (n. 236). Here, however, with those who were in faith alone, with whom there was no enlightenment, perception and instruction by influx out of heaven, by 'voices, thunderings and lightnings' are signified reasonings about faith alone, and arguments and confirmations in favour of it. By 'earthquakes' are signified changes of the state of the Church (n. 331), here that the state of the Church with them was perceived to be tottering to destruction; for earthquakes occur in the world of spirits whenever the state of the Church in the societies is perverted and inverted. The reason why the censer was cast upon the ground by the angel before the seven angels began to sound with the trumpets, was in order that by means of the influx communication might be opened between those who were in the spiritual heaven and those below who were in faith alone. As a result of this communication there arose reasonings and confirmations in favour of it, and these also were heard and perceived. Therefore it is said that after the communication was opened they were heard and perceived." (AR 396)

**Verse 6:** "And the seven angels that had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound," signifies that they were prepared and girded to explore the state of the church and thence the state of life with those whose religion is faith alone.

**Verse 7:** "The first angel sounded," signifies the exploration and manifestation of the quality of the state of the church with those who are interiorly in that faith. "And there became hail and fire mingled with blood," signifies falsity from infernal love destroying good and truth, and falsifying the Word (n. 399). "And they were cast upon the earth, and the third part of the trees was burnt up," signifies that with them, every affection and perception of truth, which constitute the man of the church, had perished. "And all green grass was burnt up," signifies thus every living thing of faith.

"The reason why by "the sounding of this first angel," is meant the exploration and manifestation of the state of the church with those who are interiorly in that faith, is, because its operation was directed upon "the earth," as appears from what follows; and the operation of the sounding of the second angel was into "the sea," and by "the earth and the sea," throughout Revelation, when named together, is meant the entire church; by "the earth," the church consisting of those who are in its internals, and by "the sea," the church consisting of those who are in its externals: for the church is internal and external; internal with the clergy, and external with the laity; or internal with those who have studied its doctrinals interiorly, and have confirmed them from the Word, and external with those who have not." (AR 398)

"This is signified, because such things appear in the spiritual world when the sphere of the Lord's Divine love and Divine wisdom descends from heaven into the societies below, where there are falsities from infernal love, and the Word is falsified thereby." (AR 399)

"By "a tree" is signified man; and as man is man from affection, which is of the will, and from perception, which is of the understanding, therefore these also are signified by "a tree." There is also a correspondence between man and a tree; wherefore in heaven there appear paradises of trees, which correspond to the affections and the perceptions therefrom of the angels; and, likewise, in some places in hell there are forests of trees which bear evil fruits, according to correspondence with the lusts and the thoughts therefrom of those who are there." (AR 400)

"They who separate faith from charity, not only in doctrine but also in life, in the spiritual world pass the time in a desert, where there is not even grass. As "a fruit tree" signifies man as to the affections of good and the perceptions of truth, so "green grass" signifies man as to that of the church which is first conceived and also born in him, and "grass not green" signifies the same destroyed. In general all things which are in gardens, woods, fields, and plains, signify man as to something of the church, or what is the same, something of the church with him; the reason is, because they correspond." (AR 401)

**Verse 8:** "And the second angel sounded," signifies the exploration and manifestation of what the state of the church is with those who are exteriorly in that faith. "And as it were a mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea," signifies the appearance of infernal love with them. "And the third part of the sea became blood," signifies that all general truths with them were falsified.

"General truths are falsified with such because they are in them alone, for they do not know the particulars of that faith, as the clergy do; it is from the general truths with them that they appear as in a sea in the spiritual world; the reason is, because waters signify truths, and the sea is their general receptacle." (AR 404)

**Verse 9:** "And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea that had souls, died," signifies that they who have lived and do live this faith cannot be reformed and receive life. "And the third part of the ships perished," signifies that all the knowledges of good and truth from the Word, serving for the use of life, were destroyed with them.

"By "having souls" is signified to be capable of receiving life by reformation; by "they died" is signified that they who live that faith alone cannot receive life; the reason why they cannot is because all are reformed by faith united to charity, thus by the faith of charity, and no one by faith alone, for charity is the life of faith." (AR 405)

"That these are signified by "ships" is because ships cross the sea, and bring back the necessaries which are for the natural man for every use; and the knowledges of good and truth are the necessaries which are for the spiritual man for every use of it; for from them is the doctrine of the church, and according to this is life. "Ships" signify these knowledges, because they are containers; and in many places in the Word the container is taken for the thing contained, as a cup for wine, a platter for food, the tabernacle and the temple for the holy things in them, the ark for the law, the altars for worship, and so on." (AR 406)

**Verse 10:** "And the third angel sounded," signifies the exploration and manifestation of the state of the church with those whose religion is faith alone, as to the affection and reception of truths from the Word. "And there fell from heaven a great star, burning as it were a lamp," signifies the appearance of their own intelligence from pride arising from infernal love. "And it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters," signifies that thence all the truths of the Word were altogether falsified.

"The appearance of their own intelligence from pride arising from infernal love is signified by "the great star falling from heaven," because it was seen "to burn as a lamp," and because its name was "wormwood," as it follows; and by "a star" and also by "a lamp" intelligence is signified, here one's own intelligence, because it seemed to burn, and all self-intelligence burns from pride; and the pride of it arises from infernal love, which is signified by "the mountain burning with fire". By "wormwood" infernal falsity is signified, from which that intelligence exists and is enkindled." (AR 408)

**Verse 11:** "And the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood," signifies the infernal falsity from which their own intelligence is derived, by which all the truths of the Word are falsified. "And many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter," signifies the extinction of spiritual life from the falsified truths of the Word.

"Wormwood' signifies infernal falsity, from its intense bitterness, whereby it renders food and drink abominable." (AR 410)

"A Christian man has spiritual life from no other source than from the truths of the Word, for in them there is life; but when the truths of the Word are falsified, and man understands and views them according to the falsities of his religion, then spiritual life with him is extinguished. The reason is, because the Word communicates with heaven, therefore when it is read by man, the truths therein ascend into heaven, and the falsities to which truths are adjoined or conjoined, tend towards hell, whence there is a rending asunder, whereby the life of the Word is extinguished. But this is the case only with those who confirm falsities by the Word, but not with those who do not confirm them. I have seen such rendings asunder, and have heard the noise like that of wood split by the fire on a hearth." (AR 411)

**Verse 12:** "And the fourth angel sounded," signifies the exploration and manifestation of the state of the church with those whose religion is faith alone, as being in the evils of falsity, and in the falsities of evil. "And the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars, and the third part of them was darkened," signifies that by reason of evils from falsities and of falsities from evils, they did not know what love is, or what faith is, or any truth. "And the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise," signifies that there is no longer any spiritual truth nor natural truth serviceable for doctrine and life from the Word with them.

"Evils from falsities are with those who assume the falsities of religion, and confirm them till they appear as truths, and when they live according to them they do evils from falsities, or the evils of falsity. But those have falsities from evils, who do not regard evils as sins; and still more those who, by reasonings from the natural man, and more still from the Word, confirm with themselves that evils are not sins. The confirmations themselves are falsities from evils, and are called the falsities of evil." (AR 413)

"By 'the day not shining,' is meant that there was no light from the sun; and by "no night likewise," is meant that there was no light from the moon and stars. By 'light,' in general, is signified the Divine truth, which is truth from the Word; by "the light of the sun," Divine truth spiritual; and by the light of the moon and stars, the Divine truth natural, both from the Word. The Divine truth, in the spiritual sense of the Word, is like the light of the sun by day; and the Divine truth in the natural sense of the Word, is like the light of the moon and stars by night. The spiritual sense of the Word also flows into its natural sense as the sun does with its light into the moon, which gives forth the light of the sun in a mediate manner. In the same way does the spiritual sense of the Word enlighten men, even those who know nothing at all concerning it, whilst they read the Word in its natural sense; but it enlightens the spiritual man, as the sun's light does the eye; but the natural man, as the light of the moon and stars enlighten his eye. Everyone is enlightened according to the spiritual affection of truth and good, and at the same time according to genuine truths, by which he has opened his rational faculty." (AR 414)

**Verse 13:** "And I saw, and I heard an angel flying in the midst of heaven," signifies instruction and prediction from the Lord. "Saying with a great voice, Woe, woe, woe, to them that dwell on the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are about to sound," signifies the deepest lamentation over the damned state of those in the church, who in doctrine and life have confirmed themselves in faith separate from charity.

## Memorable Relation - Apocalypse Revealed #417

"To the above I will add this Relation. I saw in the spiritual world two flocks, one of goats and the other of sheep; I wondered who they were, for I knew that animals, seen in the spiritual world, are not animals, but correspondences of the affections and thence of the thoughts of those who are there. Wherefore I approached nearer, and as I drew near, the likenesses of animals disappeared, and instead of them were seen men. And it was shown, that they who constituted the flock of goats, were those who had confirmed themselves in the doctrine of justification by faith alone; and they who constituted the flock of sheep, were those who believed that charity and faith are a one, as good and truth are a one.

And then I spoke with those who had been seen as goats, and said, "Why are you thus assembled?" They consisted chiefly of clergy, who gloried in their fame for erudition, because they knew the arcana of justification by faith alone. They said that they were assembled to sit in council, because they had heard that what is said by Paul (Romans 3:28), that "man is justified by faith without the works of the Law," was not rightly understood, because Paul by "the works of the Law" meant the works of the Mosaic law, which was for the Jews; which we also clearly see from his words to Peter; whom he rebuked for judaizing, when yet he knew that "no one is justified by the works of the Law" (Galatians 2:14-16); also, that he distinguishes between the law of faith and the law of works; and between Jews and Gentiles, or circumcision and uncircumcision, meaning by circumcision, Judaism, as everywhere else; and likewise from his summing up with these words:

Do we then abrogate the law through faith? Not so, but we establish the Law (Rom. 3:31).

He says all these things in one series (Romans 3:27-31); and he also says in the preceding chapter:

For not the hearers of the Law are justified by God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified (Rom. 3:13).

God will render to every man according to his deeds (Rom. 2:6).

We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, whether they be good or evil (2 Cor. 5:10).

Besides many other things from him; from which it is evident that Paul rejects faith without good works, equally with James (2:17-26).

That the works of the Mosaic law, which were for the Jews, were meant by Paul, we are additionally confirmed in by this consideration, that all the statutes for the Jews in Moses are called "the Law," thus "the works of the Law," which we perceive from these passages:

This is the law of the meal-offering (Lev. 6:9 seq.).

This is the law of the sacrifice (Lev. 7:1).

This is the law of the sacrifice of the peace-offering (Lev. 7:7, 11 seq.).

This is the law of the burnt offering, of the meal-offering, of the sacrifice for sin and guilt, for the consecration (Lev. 7:37).

This is the law of the beast and of the bird (Lev. 11:46 seq.).

This is the law for her that bringeth forth a son or a daughter (Lev. 12:7).

This is the law of leprosy (Lev. 13:59; 14:2, 32, 54, 57).

This is the law of him that hath an issue (Lev. 15:32).

This is the law of jealousy (Num. 5:29-30).

This is the law of the Nazarite (Num. 6:13, 21).

This is the law of cleansing (Num. 19:14).

This is the law concerning the red heifer (Num. 19:2).

The law for the king (Deut. 17:15-19).

Yea, the whole book of Moses is called:

The book of the law (Deut 31:9, 11-12, 26; also in the evangelists, Luke 2:22; 24:44; John 1:45; 7:22-23; 8:5; and other places).

To this they added also what they had seen in Paul, that the law of the Decalogue was to be lived, and that it is fulfilled by charity, which is love towards the neighbor (Romans 13:8-11); thus not by faith alone. They said that this was the reason of their being convened.

But that I might not disturb them, I retired; and then they again appeared, at a distance, like goats, and sometimes as lying down, and sometimes as standing; but they turned themselves away from the flock of sheep. They appeared as if they were lying down, when deliberating, and as standing up, when they came to a conclusion. But, keeping my eyes fixed upon their horns, I wondered on seeing that the horns on their foreheads sometimes appeared to extend forward and upward, then to be bent backward, and at last to be thrown back entirely. And then they all suddenly turned round to the flock of sheep, but still appeared as goats. Wherefore I drew near to them again, and inquired, What now? They replied, that they had come to this conclusion, that faith alone produces the goods of charity, which are called good works, as a tree produces fruit. But then thunder was heard, and lightning seen from above; and presently there appeared an angel standing between the two flocks, who cried to the flock of sheep, "Do not hearken to them; they have not receded from their former faith, which is, that God the Father hath compassion for the sake of the Son; which faith is not faith in the Lord; neither is faith a tree, but man is a tree; but do the work of repentance, and look to the Lord, and you will have faith; faith before that, is not a faith in which there is anything living." Then the goats, whose horns were directed backward, wished to approach the sheep; but the angel standing between them, divided the sheep into two flocks, and said to those on the left, "Join yourselves to the goats; but I say to you, that a wolf will come, which will snatch them away; and you with them."

But after the two flocks of sheep had separated, and they on the left hand had heard the threatening words of the angel, they looked at one another, and said, "Let us confer with our former associates." And then the left-hand flock spoke to the right, saying, "Why have you receded from your pastors? Are not faith and charity a one, as a tree and its fruit are one? For the tree by its branch is continued into the fruit. Tear away anything from the branch which flows by continuity into the fruit,

and will not the fruit perish? Ask our priests if it is not so." And then they asked, and the priests looked around to the rest, who winked with their eyelids to intimate that they had spoken well. And then they replied that it was so, that faith is preserved by the fruit; but they would not say faith is continued in the fruit.

But then one of the priests, who was among the sheep on the right hand, rose up and said, "They have answered you that it is so, but they have told their companions that it is not so; for they think otherwise." Wherefore they inquired, "How, then, do they think? Do they not think as they teach?" He said, "No; they think that every good of charity, which is called a good work, done by man for the sake of salvation or eternal life, is not good but evil, by reason that man desires to save himself by his own works, by claiming to himself the justice and merit of the only Savior; and that it is so with every good work, in which man feels his own will. Therefore among themselves they call good works from man, not blessed, but cursed; and say that they merit hell rather than heaven."

But the flock on the left hand said, "You speak falsehoods against them; do they not preach manifestly before us charity and its works, which they call the works of faith?" He replied, "You do not understand their preachings; only a clergyman, who is present, attends and understands. They think only of moral charity, and its civil and political goods, which they call the goods of faith, which yet are not at all so. For a man may be an atheist, and perform these works in the same manner, and under the same form. Wherefore they are unanimous in saying that no one is saved by any works, but by faith alone; but this shall be illustrated by comparisons. An apple tree produces apples; but if a man does what is good for the sake of salvation, as the tree produces apples by continuity, then those apples are rotten within, and full of worms. They say, also, that a vine produces grapes; but that if a man were to do spiritual goods as a vine grapes, he would produce wild grapes."

But then they asked, "What is the nature of their goods of charity or works, which are the fruits of faith?" He replied, "They are inconspicuous, being inwardly in man from the Holy Spirit, concerning which man knows nothing." But they said, "If a man knows nothing concerning them, there must surely be some conjunction, or how could they be called works of faith? perhaps those insensible goods are then insinuated into the voluntary works of man by some mediating influx, as by some affection, aspiration, inspiration, incitation, and excitation of the will; by a tacit perception in thought and thence exhortation, contrition, and thus by conscience, and thence by impulse and obedience to the Decalogue and the Word, as an infant, or as a wise man, or by something else of a similar nature."

But he replied, "No; and if they say it is effected by such means because by faith, still they bury them with words in their discourses in such a manner that the result after all is, that they do not proceed from faith; some, however, do maintain such things, but as the signs of faith, but not as its bonds with charity. Some have nevertheless thought of a conjunction by the Word." And then they said, "Is there not thus conjunction, when man voluntarily acts according to the Word?" But he replied, "This is not what they think; they ascribe it solely to the hearing the Word, thus not

to the understanding of the Word, lest anything should manifestly enter by the understanding into the thought and will of man; since they assert that everything voluntary in man is meritorious, and that in spiritual things, man cannot begin, will, think, understand, believe, operate, and cooperate anything, any more than a stock; but yet it is different with the influx of the Holy Spirit by faith into the speech of the preacher, because these are acts of the mouth, and not acts of the body; likewise because man acts by faith with God, but by charity with men."

But when one of them heard that it was done merely by hearing the Word, and not by understanding the Word, being indignant, said, "Is this through the understanding of the Word, by the Holy Spirit alone, whilst man, throughout the church service, turns himself away, or sits deaf as a post, or while he is sleeping, or only from an exhalation from the volume of the Word? What is more ludicrous?" After this a certain man of the flock of the right hand, who excelled the rest in judgment, requested to be heard, and said, "I heard a certain person say, 'I have planted a vineyard, now will I drink wine even to intoxication.' But another asked, 'Will you drink the wine out of your own cup by your own right hand?' And he said, 'No; but out of an inconspicuous cup from an inconspicuous hand.' And the other replied, 'Of a certainty then you will not be intoxicated.'" Presently the same man said, "But hear me, I beseech you; I say unto you, drink wine from the Word understood. Do you not know that the Lord is the Word? Is not the Word from the Lord? Is he not therefore in it? If then you do good from the Word, do you not do it from the Lord, from his mouth and will? And if you at the same time look to the Lord, he will also lead you, and will cause you to do it, and this he will do through you, and you as from yourselves. Who can say, when doing anything from a king, from his mouth and will, 'I do this from myself, from my own mouth or command, and from my own will?' After this he turned to the clergy, and said, "Ye ministers of God, seduce not the flock."

On hearing these things, the greater part of the flock on the left hand receded, and joined themselves with the flock on the right; some of the clergy also then said, "We have heard what we have not heard before; we are shepherds; we will not leave the sheep." And they receded along with them, and said, "That man spoke a true word. Who can say, when he does anything from the Word, thus from the Lord, from His mouth and will, I do this from myself? Who that does anything from the mouth and will of a king, says, 'I do this from myself'?" Now we see Divine providence, why a conjunction of faith and works has not been discovered, which has been acknowledged by the ecclesiastical body. It could not be found, because no such conjunction can be given, for theirs is not a faith in the Lord, who is the Word, and therefore neither is it a faith from the Word. But the other priests went away, flourishing their caps, and crying out, "Faith alone! faith alone, it will live still."