

Memorable Relations—Week 1

## Introduction

and

## Memorable Relations about God



“And His face was as the sun appears in its  
power.”

*Revelation 1:16*

“Then the Lord appeared like the sun, in whose  
midst [was] the Lord, surrounded by a solar ring,  
as it were.”

*Diary of Spiritual Experiences 3292*

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## DAY ONE: INTRODUCTION

### *Passages Regarding the Nature of the Memorable Relations*

**CL 1** (see also TCR 851). I foresee that many who read the following Relations and those after the chapters will believe they are fictions of the imagination; but I declare in truth that they are not fictions, but things actually done and seen. Nor were they seen in any state of the mind asleep, but in a state of full wakefulness. For it has pleased the Lord to manifest Himself to me, and to send me to teach the things that will belong to the New Church which is meant by the New Jerusalem in the Apocalypse. To this end He has opened the interiors of my mind and spirit, whereby He has given me to be in the spiritual world with angels and at the same time in the natural world with men, and this now for five and twenty years.

**AR 962.** Since it has been given me by the Lord to see the wonderful things which are in the heavens and below the heavens, I must, from command, relate what has been seen.

**Index to Memorable Relations** [in *True Christian Religion*]. The things contained in the Memorable Relations which follow the chapters are true; and similar things were seen and heard by the prophets before the coming of the Lord, and similar things by the apostles after His coming, as by Peter, Paul, and especially by John in the Apocalypse; these things are set forth.

**DSE 4123.** CONCERNING REVELATIONS [through Swedenborg]

There are spirits who are averse to anything being said about the things revealed, but it was replied that they are instead of miracles, and that without them men would not know the character of the book, nor would they buy it, or read it, or understand it, or be affected by it, or believe it—in a word, that they would remain in ignorance [of the whole subject] and would not wish to hear anything about the interiors of the Word, which they regard as mere phantasies. Such as are merely men of learning will for the most part reject them. – 1748, December 9.

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**Invitation to the New Church 39.** That miracles are not done at this day, is on account of the reasons which are stated in *True Christian Religion* (n. 501); wherefore, the Lord said that they would seduce (Matt. 24:24). Again, what is more common with the Roman Catholics than filling the tombs of the saints, and the walls of monasteries with miracles? How many plates of gold and silver are there not in the tomb of Anthony of Padua? How many are there not where the three wise men are said to be buried? And how many are there not at Prague? And in other places? What else than illusions can be derived from them?

The fact that I converse in the spiritual world with angels and spirits, that I have described the states of heaven and hell and the life after death; and further, the fact that there has been disclosed to me the spiritual sense of the Word—besides many other things—is worth more than all these miracles. Such communication, as far as I know, has not been granted by the Lord to anyone before. These are evidence that this has been granted for the sake of the New Church, which is the crown of all the churches, and which will endure forever. Being in the spiritual world, seeing the wonderful things of heaven and the miserable things of hell; and being there in the very light of the Lord in which are the angels, surpasses all miracles. Evidence that I am there may be seen in abundance in my books.

### *Passages Regarding the Appearances of Things in the Spiritual World and the Letter of the Word*

**AE 410.** No one can understand all these things [written in *Isaiah* 2:10-21] except from the internal sense, and unless he knows what the appearance of things is in the spiritual world.

**AE 503.** The sense of the letter of the Word comes for the most part from appearances in the spiritual world.

### *Letters Regarding Reactions to the Memorable Relations*

**Letter of Count von Hopken** (a Swedish noble and contemporary of Swedenborg), writing to a friend:

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“Once I asked [Swedenborg] why he wrote and published those memorable relations, which seemed to throw so much ridicule on his doctrine, otherwise so rational; and whether it would not be best for him to keep them to himself, and not publish them to the world? But he answered that he had orders from the Lord to publish them, and that those who might ridicule him on that account would do him an injustice. For, he said, why should I, who am a man in years, render myself ridiculous for fantasies and falsehoods?”

**Letter from Swedenborg** to Dr. Gabriel Andersson Beyer, April 8, 1766:

”At the conclusion of every chapter [of *Apocalypse Revealed*] there are memorable relations, separated from the text by asterisks. Please read over these first. From these, a thorough knowledge may be gathered of the wretched state into which the Reformed Churches have been brought by faith alone. I am now going from this place to England, where some noise is probably being made on account of the bishops of England being somewhat severely treated in the memorable relations; yet necessity required it.”

### Questions and Comments

1. The Lord presents the Divine truths of the Heavenly Doctrine in three different styles: expositional, doctrinal and experiential. Books like the *Arcana* are mostly expositional in that they expound the internal sense of a story in the Word. Books like *True Christian Religion* are mostly doctrinal in that they teach about subjects like “The Unity of God” or “The Holy Supper” in a series. And then there are the parts of the Heavenly Doctrine that relay experiences that occurred in the spiritual world. These experiences are often set apart in the doctrinal works as “Memorable Relations,” but also appear in the expositional works as well. Do you have a favorite style: expositional, doctrinal, or experiential?
2. What are some purposes that Memorable Relations serve that other parts of the Heavenly Doctrine may not?

**TCR 25.** On one occasion, awaking from sleep, I fell into a profound meditation about God. And looking up, I saw above me in heaven an exceedingly bright light of oval form. And as I fixed my gaze upon it, the light withdrew to the sides and formed a circle, and then, behold! heaven opened to me, and I saw magnificent scenes, and angels standing in a circle on the southern side of the opening talking together. As I greatly wished to hear what they were saying, I was permitted first to hear the sound of their voices, which was full of heavenly love, and afterwards what they said, which was full of wisdom from that love.

They were talking together about the One God, and conjunction with Him, and salvation thereby. They uttered things ineffable, most of which could not possibly be expressed in any natural language. But at different times I had been in company with the angels in heaven itself, and at such times had been in a state like theirs and in a similar language, and consequently I was now able to understand them, and select from what they said some things that can be rationally expressed in the words of natural language.

[2] They said that the Divine Esse [Being] is **One, the Same, the Itself, and Indivisible**. They illustrated this by spiritual ideas, saying that the Divine Esse could not separate itself into several, each of them possessing the Divine Esse, and still itself be One, the Same, and Indivisible, since each one from His own Esse would then think from Himself and by Himself separately. And even if the Divine Esse could so separate itself, and all should think unanimously, each from the others, there would still be several unanimous Gods and not one God. For unanimity, which means the agreement of several, each for himself and by himself, is not consistent with unity but only with plurality of God.

The angels did not say “of Gods,” because they could not; for such an expression would be strenuously resisted by the light of heaven, which is the source of their thought, and by the aura in which their words are conveyed. They said furthermore that when they wished to utter the word “Gods,” meaning each one a person by himself, the effort to utter it fell at once into the expression “one God,” and even “one only God.”

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To this they added that the Divine Esse is Divine Esse in itself, not from itself, because the expression “from itself” implies esse-in-itself from another and prior Esse; and this implies a God from God, which is impossible. That which is from God is not called God, but is called Divine; for what is a God from God? Thus what is a God born from God-from-eternity? And is a God going forth from God, through a God born from eternity, anything else than words in which there is no light from heaven?

[3] They said still further, that the Divine Esse, which is in itself God, is **the Same**; not the Same simply but infinitely, that is, the Same from eternity to eternity; the Same everywhere and the Same with everyone and in everyone; and that all variableness and change are in the recipient, caused by the state of the recipient.

That the Divine Esse which is God in Himself is **the Itself**, they illustrated thus: God is the Itself because He is love itself and wisdom itself, that is, He is good itself and truth itself, and therefore life itself. Unless these in God were love and wisdom itself and were good and truth itself and therefore life itself, they would not be anything in heaven and in the world, because there would be nothing in them related to the Itself. Every quality is what it is from the fact that there is an Itself in which it originates, and to which it must be related in order to be what it is.

This Itself, which is the Divine Esse, is not in place; but it is present with and in those who are in place in accordance with their reception of it, since place, or progress from place to place, cannot be predicated of love and wisdom nor of good and truth, nor of life from them, which are Itself in God, and are even God Himself. On this rests His omnipotence. So the Lord says that He is in the midst of them, and that He is in them and they in Him.

[4] But as He can be received by no one as He is in Himself, what He is like in His essence is made manifest as a sun above the angelic heavens; and what goes forth from that sun as light is Himself in respect to wisdom, and what goes forth as heat is Himself in respect to love. That sun is not God Himself, but the Divine love and Divine wisdom as they most nearly proceed from

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Him, all around Him, are seen by the angels as a sun. He Himself within the sun is a Man. He is our Lord Jesus Christ, in regard both to the Divine from which [are all things] and in regard to the Divine Human, because the Itself, which is love itself and wisdom itself, was His soul from the Father, that is, the Divine life, or life in itself. It is not thus in any man. In man the soul is not life, but a recipient of life. The Lord teaches this, saying:

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6).

And again:

As the Father has life in Himself, so He has given to the Son to have life in Himself (John 5:26), “life in Himself” meaning God.

To this they added that those who are in any spiritual light can perceive from these statements that the Divine Esse, because it is One, the Same, the Itself, and Indivisible, cannot exist in several; and if the opposite is asserted, manifest contradictions must result.

**TCR 26.** When I had heard this, the angels perceived in my thought those ideas of God that prevail in the Christian Church respecting a trinity of persons in unity and a unity of persons in a trinity; also respecting a birth of the Son of God from eternity; and they said, “What are you thinking? Are you not thinking from natural light, which is not in accord with our spiritual light? Unless, therefore, you dismiss these ideas, we must shut up heaven against you and depart.”

But I said, “Please enter more deeply into my thought, and you will see, perhaps, that there is agreement between us.” This they did; and they saw that by three persons I understood three Divine attributes going forth, Creation, Redemption, and Regeneration, and that these are attributes of one God. Also, by the birth of the Son of God from eternity, I understood His birth foreseen from eternity and provided in time; also, to think of a Son born of God from eternity would, to me, be not above nature and reason, but contrary to nature and reason; while to think of the Son born of God in time through the virgin Mary as the only Son of God, and the only-begotten, is very different; and to believe otherwise than



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this would be a monstrous error. I then told them that the source of my natural thought about a trinity and unity of persons, and the birth of a Son of God from eternity, was the church's doctrine of faith, which has its name from Athanasius.

Then the angels said, "It is well." And they asked me to say from them that only those who approach the very God of heaven and earth can enter heaven, because heaven is heaven from that only God, and that this God is Jesus Christ, who is the Lord Jehovah, from eternity the Creator, in time the Redeemer, and to eternity the Regenerator, thus who is at once Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and this, they said, is the gospel to be preached.

After this the heavenly light which had been seen before over the opening returned, and gradually descended and filled the interiors of my mind and enlightened my ideas on the trinity and unity of God. And the ideas which I had first formed on these subjects, and which had been merely natural, I then saw separated as chaff is separated from wheat by winnowing and carried away as by a wind to the north of heaven and scattered.

### Questions and Comments

1. The first paragraph of this Memorable Relation describes the opening of heaven. What do you think about that description?
2. Why couldn't the angels say the word "Gods?"
3. The angels used Scripture in their conversation with Swedenborg about the nature of God. Often the Memorable Relations involve conversations about doctrinal questions in which applicable Scripture is discussed.
4. What happened in the end of the Memorable Relation to Swedenborg's mind? Does that description help to better understand how the spiritual world works?

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**TCR 111.** In the natural world, man's speech is twofold, because his thought is twofold, external and internal. For he can speak from internal thought and at the same time from external thought; and he can speak from external thought and not from internal thought, and even contrary to internal thought; and this is the source of pretenses, flattery, and hypocrisy. But man does not have this twofold speech in the spiritual world. His speech there is single; he speaks as he thinks; or if not, the tone of his voice is grating and hurts the ear. Nevertheless, he can be silent and not divulge the thoughts of his mind. So when a hypocrite gets among wise men he either leaves or takes himself to a corner of the room and avoids notice and keeps silent.

[2] At one time a large number had assembled in the world of spirits and were talking together about this matter, saying that to be able to speak only as one thinks is a hardship to such as have not thought rightly about God and the Lord, whenever they come into association with the good. In the midst of the assembly were the Reformed and some of their clergy, and next to them the Papists with their monks. The clergy and the monks spoke first, saying, "This is not a hardship; what need is there for anyone to speak otherwise than as he thinks? If perchance he does not think rightly, can he not close his lips and keep silent?" And a clergyman said, "Who does not think rightly about God and about the Lord?"

But some of the assembly said, "Let us test them." And they asked those who had confirmed themselves in a trinity of persons in the Godhead to say from their thought "one God," and they could not. They twisted and folded their lips in various ways but were unable to articulate a sound into any words except such as were harmonious with the ideas of their thought, which were of three persons, and consequently of three Gods.

[3] Again, those who had confirmed themselves in faith apart from charity were asked to utter the name "Jesus," but they could not, though they could all say "Christ" and also "God the Father." They wondered at this and inquired as to the cause; and they found it to be that they had prayed to God the Father for the sake of the

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Son, but they had not prayed to the Savior Himself; and “Jesus” means Savior.

[4] Again, from their thought of the Lord’s Human, they were asked to say “Divine Human.” But not one of the clergy present there could do so, though some of the laity could; and therefore this fact was made a subject of serious discussion.

First, the following passages from the Gospels were read to them:

The Father has given all things into the hand of the Son (John 3:35).

The Father has given to the Son power over all flesh (John 17:2).

All things are delivered unto Me by the Father (Matt. 11:27).

All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth (Matt. 28:18).

And from these passages, they were asked to keep in their thought that Christ, both as to His Divine and as to His Human, is the God of heaven and earth, and then to pronounce the words, “Divine Human”; but still they could not. They said that although from these passages, they retained from the understanding some thought about the matter, they still had no acknowledgment of it, and therefore they could not bring it into speech.

[5] Afterwards there was read to them from Luke (1:32, 34, 35) that the Lord as to His Human was the Son of Jehovah God and is there called “the Son of the Most High,” and in many other places, “the Son of God” and also “the Only-begotten.” And they were asked to retain this in their thought, as well as that the only-begotten Son of God born in the world could not but be God, since the Father is God, and then to utter the words “Divine Human.” But they said, “We cannot, because our spiritual thought, that is, our more internal thought, does not allow into the thought that lies nearest to speech any other ideas except those that are in harmony with the internal thought. And from this we perceive that we are not now permitted, as we were in the natural world, to divide our thoughts.”

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[6] Therefore, the Lord's words to Philip were read to them:

Philip said, Lord, show us the Father. And the Lord said, He that sees Me sees the Father. Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? (John 14:8-11)

and also other passages, as:

That the Father and He are one (John 10:30).

And they were asked to retain these passages in thought and then to say, "Divine Human." But because that thought was not rooted in the acknowledgment that the Lord is God even in respect to the Human, they twisted their lips into folds till they grew angry, desiring to force their mouths to speak the words, but they did not succeed. And this was for the reason that with those who are in the spiritual world, the ideas of thought which flow from acknowledgment make one with the words of speech. And where these ideas do not exist, words cannot be had, for in speaking, ideas become words.

[7] Still again, there was read to them the following from the doctrine accepted throughout the Christian world: "The Divine and Human in the Lord are not two, but one, even one Person, united like soul and body in man." This is from the Athanasian Creed, and has been recognized by the councils. And it was said to them, "From this, surely you can gain an idea from acknowledgment that the Human of the Lord is Divine, since His soul is Divine, for this statement is from the doctrine of your church which you accepted while in the world. Moreover, the soul is the very essence of the man, and the body is the form of this essence; and essence and form make one like esse and existere, or like the effecting cause of the effect and the effect itself." They retained this idea, and from it wished to utter the words "Divine Human," but they could not; for their more internal idea of the Human of the Lord banished and erased this new supplementary idea, as they called it.

[8] Once again, this passage from John was read to them:

The Word was with God, and God was the Word, and the Word became flesh (1:1, 14).

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Also this:

Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life (1 John 5:20).

Also from Paul:

In Jesus Christ dwells all the fullness of Divinity bodily (Col. 2:9).

And they were requested to think accordingly, namely, that God, who was the Word, became Man; that He was the true God; and that in Him dwelt all the fullness of Divinity bodily. This they did, but only in external thought. And therefore, because of the resistance of internal thought, they were unable to pronounce the words "Divine Human." And they said frankly, "We can form no idea of a Divine Human, because God is God, and man is man, and God is a Spirit, and we have always thought of spirit as being wind or ether."

[9] Finally, it was said to them, "You know that the Lord said:

Abide in Me, and I in you. He that abides in Me, and I in him, the same bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing (John 15:4, 5)."

And as there were some of the English clergy present, the following from one of their exhortations at the Holy Communion was read to them: "For when we spiritually eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us." And it was said, "If your thought now is that this is not possible unless the Lord's Human is Divine, pronounce the words 'Divine Human' from acknowledgment in thought." But still they could not, so deeply impressed upon them was the idea that the Divine could not be Human, nor the Human be Divine, and that the Lord's Divine was from the Divine of a Son born from eternity, and His Human like that of any other man. They were asked, "How can you think this way? Can a rational mind ever conceive of a Son born of God from eternity?"

[10] Then the inquirers turned to the Evangelicals, saying that the Augsburg Confession and Luther taught that the Son of God and the Son of Man in Christ is one Person; and that He, even as to His

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Human nature, is omnipotent and omnipresent, and as to that nature He sits at the right hand of God the Father, governs all things in heaven and on earth, fills all things, is present with us, and dwells and operates in us; also that there is no difference of adoration, because the Divinity that is not discerned is worshiped through the nature that is discerned; and that in Christ, God is Man, and Man is God. Hearing this they said, "Can this be so?" And they looked around and said presently, "We did not know this before; therefore we are unable to say 'Divine Human.'" And first one and then another said, "We have read this, and we have written it; and yet when we thought about it in our minds it was mere words, of which we had no interior idea."

[11] Finally they turned to the Papists and said, "Perhaps you can say 'Divine Human,' since you believe that Christ is wholly present in the bread and wine of your Eucharist and in every part of them; and you also worship Him as God most holy when you exhibit and carry around the host; also because you call Mary 'Deipara,' that is, 'Mother of God.' Consequently, you acknowledge that she gave birth to God, that is, to the Divine Human." Then they wished to pronounce it, but they could not, because a material idea of Christ's body and blood then suggested itself, and also a belief that His Human is separable from the Divine, and with the pope is actually so separated, since to him the human power only, and not the Divine, was transferred.

Then one of the monks arose and said that he could conceive of a Divine Human with reference to the most holy virgin Mary, and also with reference to the saint of his monastery. And another monk came forward and said, "From an idea of my thought which I now entertain, I am able to say 'Divine Human,' but with reference to his holiness the pope rather than in reference to Christ." But some of the Papists pulled him back, saying, "For shame."

[12] After this heaven was seen open, and tongues like little flames were seen descending and alighting upon some. And they then celebrated the Divine Human of the Lord, saying, "Have done with

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the idea of three Gods, and believe that in the Lord dwells all the fullness of Divinity bodily, that the Father and He are one, as soul and body are one, and that God is not wind or ether, but a Man. Then you will be conjoined with heaven, and from the Lord you will be able to speak the name 'Jesus,' and to say 'Divine Human.'”

Questions and Comments

1. Did you notice in section 4 that none of the clergy could say “Divine Human” but some of the laity could? Why do you think that was that case?
2. Do the Scriptures given by the angels in this Memorable Relation help you better understand the Lord and especially His Divine Human?
3. What were some of the reasons given for why the different groups could not say “Divine Human”?
4. Following the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord, it says in *Acts 2:3-4*, when the disciples gathered together fifty days after the Passover, that “there appeared to them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” The end of the Memorable Relation seems to describe something similar. Why do you think that is?

DAY FIVE: A MEMORABLE RELATION ABOUT THE RIGHT HAND OF  
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**TCR 136.** I saw at a distance five gymnasia, each one surrounded by a light from heaven. A purple light, such as there is in the clouds in the morning before sunrise on earth, surrounded the first; a yellowish light, like that in the east after sunrise, surrounded the second; a bright light, like that of noonday in the world, surrounded the third; and a moderate light, like daylight when it begins to be tempered by the shades of evening, surrounded the fourth. The fifth stood in the actual shade of evening. Gymnasia in the spiritual world are halls where the learned assemble and discuss various arcana that are serviceable to their knowledge, intelligence, and wisdom.

Seeing these gymnasia I felt a strong desire to visit one of them, and went in spirit to the one that was surrounded by the moderate light; and entering I saw an assembly of the learned, who were discussing with one another what is involved in the statement that the Lord was taken up to heaven and sits at the right hand of God (Mark 16:19).

[2] The greater part of the assembly said that this should be understood in accordance with the very words, that the Son does so sit beside the Father; and it was asked why He did so. Some said that the Son had been placed by the Father at His right hand on account of the redemption He had accomplished; others said that it was from love that He sat there; others that it was in order that He might be the Father's counselor, and being such, that He might be honored by the angels; others that it was because it had been granted Him by the Father to rule in His stead, for it is written that all power was given to Him in heaven and on earth. But the greater number said that it was in order that He might hear, from the right hand, those for whom He intercedes; for in the church at the present day all approach God the Father, and pray to Him to be merciful for the Son's sake; and this causes the Father Himself to turn to the Son, that He may receive the Son's mediation. Some, however, said that it is only the Son of God from eternity who sits at the right hand of the Father, that He may impart His Divinity to the Son of man born in the world.



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[3] Hearing this, I was greatly astonished that learned men, who had already been living for some time in the spiritual world, should be so ignorant of heavenly things. But I perceived why it was so, namely, that from confidence in their own intelligence they had not suffered themselves to be taught by the wise.

But that they might no longer remain ignorant of the meaning of the Son's sitting at the Father's right hand, I raised my hand, asking them to give ear to a few words that I wished to say on that subject. And as they assented, I said, "Do you not know from the Word that the Father and the Son are one, that the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father? The Lord plainly says this in John 10:30, and 14:10, 11. If you do not believe this, you divide God into two; and when this is done you are unable to think about God otherwise than naturally, sensually, and even materially. And this has been done in the world since the time of the Council of Nicaea, which introduced the doctrine of three Divine persons from eternity, and thereby turned the church into a theater furnished with painted hangings, in which the actors were presenting new plays. Who does not know and acknowledge that God is one? If you acknowledge this in heart and spirit, all that you have just said is of itself dissipated, or rebounds into the air like nonsense from the ear of a wise man."

[4] At these remarks many were incensed and burned to pull my ears and order me to be silent. But the president of the congregation said with indignation, "This discussion is not about the unity and plurality of God, for we believe in both, but about what is involved in the statement that the Son sits at His Father's right hand. If you know anything about this, speak."

I replied, "I will speak, but please suppress the noise." And I said, "'To sit at the right hand' does not mean to sit at the right hand, but it means God's omnipotence through the Human that He assumed in the world. By means of this He is in last things as well as in first things. By means of [the Human], He entered and overthrew and subjugated the hells. By means of it He restored order in the heavens. And thus by means of it He redeemed both men and

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angels, and will continue to redeem forever. If you consult the Word, and are capable of enlightenment, you will perceive that ‘right hand’ means here omnipotence, as it does in *Isaiah*:

My hand has founded the earth, and My right hand has spanned the heavens (47:13).

Jehovah has sworn by His right hand and by the arm of His strength (62:8).

Thy right hand upholds Me (Ps. 18:35).

Look to the Son, whom Thou didst make strong for Thyself; let Thy hand be for the Man of the right hand, for the Son of man whom Thou didst make strong for Thyself (Ps. 80:15, 17).

From this it is plain how the following is to be understood:

The saying of Jehovah to my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet. Jehovah shall send the staff of Thy strength out of Zion; rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies (Ps. 110:1, 2).

This whole Psalm treats of the Lord’s combat against the hells and His subjugation of them. As ‘the right hand of God’ signifies omnipotence:

The Lord says that He is to sit at the right of power (Matt. 26:63, 64)

And at the right hand of the power of God” (Luke 22:69).

[5] But at this the assembly became tumultuous, and I said, “Take heed; for a hand may appear from heaven, and when it appears (as it had appeared to me), it strikes the beholder with an incredible terror of its power; and this has been to me a proof that ‘the right hand of God’ signifies omnipotence.”

Scarcely had I spoken when beneath heaven an outstretched hand was seen, at the appearance of which such terror seized them that they rushed in crowds toward the doors, and some to the windows to throw themselves out, and some fell down unable to breathe. But I remained unterrified and went out calmly after them; and when some distance away, I turned and saw the building enveloped in a dense cloud, and was told from heaven that this happened

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because they had spoken from a belief in three Gods, and that the former light would return when those who were more sane should meet there.

Questions and Comments

1. Section 3 describes Swedenborg's initial reaction to the discussion about what it means for the Son to sit at the right hand of God. What do you think of this reaction?
2. Section 5 says that the people became tumultuous when Swedenborg explained that the 'right hand' meant omnipotence. Why do you think that made them mad?
3. What do you make of the outstretched hand that appeared at the end? Why wasn't Swedenborg afraid of it?
4. At both the beginning and the end of this Memorable Relation, the light is described. How does this help us understand how the spiritual world works?

## DAY SIX: VARIOUS EXPERIENCES REGARDING THE LORD IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

**HH 6.** There were certain spirits who while living in the world had professed to believe in the Father, but of the Lord they had the same idea as of any other man, and therefore did not believe Him to be the God of heaven. For this reason, they were permitted to wander around and inquire wherever they wished whether there were any other heaven than the heaven of the Lord. They searched for several days, but nowhere found any. These spirits were such as place the happiness of heaven in glory and dominion; and as they were unable to get what they desired, and were told that heaven does not consist in such things, they became indignant, and wished for a heaven where they could lord it over others and be eminent in glory like that in the world.

### **DSE 5600. ABOUT A CERTAIN CHRISTIAN AMONG MOHAMMEDANS**

There was a report about the Mohammedans that they acknowledge the Lord, but only as a very great Prophet, and do not acknowledge His Divinity, for the reason that they have not been able to understand how the Divine could exist divided into three persons, consequently into three Gods, and that therefore, they have acknowledged one God, the Creator of the universe, but the Lord as a very great Prophet; and they have affirmed the Holy Spirit to be spirits and angels. That Christian wanted to know whether such was their doctrine and sentiment. He approached them at the western part, wishing to question them about that matter. They spoke as they thought from their religion.

But they asked the Christian what he believes about God, whether he believes that He is One. He said that he believed that God was One. But they examined the ideas of his thought, which easily takes place in the other life. They said that he does not believe that God is one, but that He is three, because in his thought he sets up three persons, and every one of them as God. They then said further that he says "one God," but, in heart, in faith, or in thought, he believes in three, when, nevertheless, a Christian ought to speak as he thinks and believes and not differently.

## DAY SIX: VARIOUS EXPERIENCES REGARDING THE LORD IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

Since he was unable to deny this, they then went on to say that it ought to be to the shame of Christians to think three gods, and that the very heathen are wiser, for their wise ones think that there is one God and do not have more in their idea, as the Christians do. Wherefore he went away and said that he would never return to them, for he was overwhelmed with shame. He wanted to say that the three were one through agreement, but still, he set up the idea of three Gods who were unanimous, when yet God is one.

**EU 40.** There were certain spirits who knew from heaven that once, a promise was made to spirits of the earth Mercury that they would see the Lord. Therefore they were asked by the spirits around me whether they recollected that promise. They said that they did recollect it, but they did not know whether it had been promised in such a way as to be beyond doubt. While they were thus talking together, the sun of heaven then appeared to them. The sun of heaven, which is the Lord, is seen only by those who are in the inmost or third heaven; others see the light from it. On seeing the sun, they said that this was not the Lord God, because they did not see a face. Meanwhile the spirits were talking with each other, but I did not hear what they said. But suddenly, the sun again appeared, and in the midst of it the Lord, encompassed with a solar circle. On seeing this, the spirits of Mercury humbled themselves profoundly and sank down. Then also the Lord, from that sun, appeared to spirits of this earth who, when they were men, saw Him in the world; and they all, one after another, and thus many in order, confessed that it was the Lord Himself. They made this confession before all the company. Then also the Lord, outside of the sun, appeared to the spirits of the planet Jupiter, who declared aloud that it was He Himself whom they had seen on their earth when the God of the universe appeared to them.

**DSE 5880.** THOSE WHO, SOLELY OWING TO BIRTHPLACE, ARE IN NO KNOWLEDGE OF GOD OR OF RELIGION.

There were some who appeared to me in sleep, sometimes like men, and again like a certain kind of birds, with whom also many as it were ludicrous things occurred, such as are characteristic of

## DAY SIX: VARIOUS EXPERIENCES REGARDING THE LORD IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

sleep, by confining those birds in a cage, and so forth. At length they appeared like men. When I awoke, it was shown me that they were men born in a certain island in the West Indies who had no knowledge of God whatever, consequently no religion, but still lived honestly and in a friendly way. It was said that in the other life, at first they appear as if not possessed of rationality, but that still, since they have not adopted any principles contrary to religion, inasmuch as they have been in ignorance, they are instructed in the other life almost like children, and gradually perfected, so that they become better than those who were born in a religion in which there are falsities, by which their good of life has been formed. It was shown that they were in such an affection of truth as is not surpassed anywhere else. This was shown by the fact that they wished to serve others; but reply was made that they were not able, because they did not understand anything. Some riches were then given them. These they presented to a teacher, but this was in order that he might take them as servants, and they might thus be instructed how to live.

### Questions and Comments

1. What universal truths about heaven and the Lord can be drawn from these accounts?
2. In DP 255, the Lord explains that Islam was provided to re-establish monotheism. DSE 5600 seems to indicate that this use extended to Christians holding a belief in a trinity of persons.
3. What do you think about the account in EU 41 about the Lord appearing to spirits from Mercury, Earth and Jupiter?
4. Sometimes it can be very difficult to understand how the Lord provides for all, regardless of the circumstances into which we are born. Does DSE 5880 help?