

Psalms about the New Church

Week Five



Happy are those dwelling in Thy house.

Psalm 84:4

Prophets and Psalms 0.

The [Topics] that follow *[in this little work treat of]*:

- 1. The Lord's advent.**
- 2. The successive vastation of the church.**
- 3. The church totally devastated, and its rejection.**
- 4. The rejection of the Lord by the church.**
- 5. The Lord's temptations in general.**
- 6. Temptation even to despair.**
- 7. The combats of the Lord with the hells.**
- 8. Victory over them, or their subjugation.**
- 9. The passion of the cross.**
- 10. The glorification of the Human of the Lord, or its union with the Divine.**
- 11. A new church in place of the former.**
- 12. A new church together with a new heaven.**
- 13. The state of humiliation before the Father.**
- 15. A last judgment by the Lord.**
- 16. Celebration and worship of the Lord.**
- 17. Redemption and salvation by the Lord.**

This week the focus is on numbers 11 & 12.

TCR 787. This New Church is the crown of all the churches that have hitherto existed on the earth, because it is to worship one visible God in whom is the invisible like the soul in the body.... Conjunction with a visible God... is like beholding a man in the air or on the sea spreading forth his hands and inviting to his arms. For all conjunction of God with man must be also a reciprocal conjunction of man with God; and no such reciprocation is possible except with a visible God.

Day One: Divine Truth in the Church

Psalm 19

- 1 To the victor; a psalm of David.
The heavens recount the glory of God;
And the expanse tells the work of His hands.
- 2 Day to day utters a saying,
And night to night shows knowledge.
- 3 There is no saying and there are no words,
Without their voice being heard....
- 5 And He, as a bridegroom going out from His chamber,
Has joy as a hero to run the path.
- 6 From the end of the heavens is His¹ going out,
And His circuit upon the ends of them;
And there is nothing hidden from His heat.
- 7 The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul;
The testimony of Jehovah is faithful, making wise the
simple.
- 8 The precepts of Jehovah are upright, making glad the heart;
The commandment of Jehovah is pure,
enlightening the eyes.
- 9 The fear of Jehovah is clean, standing forever;
The judgments of Jehovah are truth,
They are just altogether.
- 10 More to be desired are they than gold,
and than much fine gold;
And sweeter than honey and the dropping of honeycombs.
- 11 Also by them is Thy servant warned;
In keeping them there is much reward.
- 12 Who can understand errors?
From such as are hidden, hold me innocent.
- 13 Also keep back Thy servant from the presumptuous ones;
Let them not rule over me.
Then shall I be perfect,
And I shall be innocent from much transgression.
- 14 Let the sayings of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be for good pleasure before Thee,
O Jehovah, my Rock, and my Redeemer.

¹ "This refers to the Lord, whose state of Divine power is here described by such things as are of space" (AC 3387:5).

Day One: Divine Truth in the Church

verses	topic	Summary of Spiritual Sense
title, 1-4	11	The Divine truth will go forth in every direction.
5, 6	12	This truth will go forth from the Lord from the first things to the last things of heaven and the church.
7-11	12	This Divine truth perfects man, because it is wisdom.
12, 13	12	There will be no pride.
14	12	Thus there will be what is pure and acceptable.

The heavens recount the glory of God (v. 1).

AC 9409:2. That in the internal sense “heaven” is the angelic heaven, is from correspondence, and also from the appearance. Hence it is that when mention is made in the Word of “the heavens,” and also of “the heavens of heavens,” in the internal sense are meant the angelic heavens. For the ancients had no other idea of the visible heaven than that the heavenly inhabitants dwell there, and that the stars are their habitations. Similar also at this day is the idea of the simple, and especially of little children. From this also men look upward to heaven when praying earnestly to God. This also is from correspondence; for in the other life a heaven with stars appears, yet not the heaven that appears to men in the world; but a heaven that appears in accordance with the state of intelligence and wisdom of the spirits and angels. The stars there are knowledges of good and truth; and the clouds which are sometimes seen beneath the heaven are of various signification according to their colors, their translucence, and their movements; the blueness of heaven is truth transparent from good. From all this it can be seen that by “the heavens” are signified the angelic heavens; but by “the angelic heavens” are signified truths Divine, because the angels are receptions of the truth Divine that proceeds from the Lord.

Day One: Divine Truth in the Church

Sweeter than honey (v. 10).

AC 5620. That “honey” is delight is because it is sweet, and everything sweet in the natural world corresponds to what is delightful and pleasant in the spiritual world. The reason why it is called its delight, that is, the delight of truth from good in the exterior natural, is that every truth and especially every truth of good has its own delight; but a delight from the affection of these, and from the derivative use.... In David, Psalm 19:9-10, the “judgments of Jehovah” are truth Divine; “sweeter than honey and the dropping of honeycombs” is delights from good and pleasantnesses from truth.

O Jehovah, my Rock, and my Redeemer.

AE 411:10. “Jehovah [my] Rock” has a like signification as “Jehovah God,” namely, the Lord in respect to Divine good and Divine truth; and He is called “Redeemer” from regeneration, which is effected by Divine truth; “the sayings of [my] mouth” signify the understanding of truth, and “the meditation of [my] heart” the perception of good.

Questions and Comments

1. AC 9409:2 is a beautiful passage about stars in the heavens. Does it change how we view the stars?
2. Verse 10 of this psalm refers to truth being sweeter than honey. What truths do we find the most delightful?
3. The psalms have so many verses that we can learn and say in our prayers to the Lord. Verse 14 seems to be especially good for this purpose.

Psalm 23

- 1 A psalm of David.
Jehovah is my Shepherd;
I shall not want².
- 2 He makes me to lie down in pastures of tender herb;
He guides me by waters of rest.
- 3 He restores my soul;
He leads me in paths of justice for the sake of His
name.
- 4 Yea, though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
For Thou art with me;
Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.
- 5 Thou arrangest a table before me
In the presence of my adversaries;
Thou anointest³ my head with oil;
My cup runs over⁴.
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
And I shall dwell in the house of Jehovah
for length of days.

Verses	Topic	Summary of Spiritual Sense
title, 1-3	12	He teaches and leads to the truths and goods of heaven and the church;
5	12	hence there will be no fear of the hells, for He guards, and imparts good and truth in abundance,
6	12	in heaven with the Lord to eternity.

² be in want

³ Literally, "makest fat"

⁴ Literally, "has abundance"

Day Two: The Lord Teaches, Leads and Guards the Church

He makes me to lie down in pastures (v. 2).

AC 6078:4. "Pasture" in the internal sense is that which sustains the spiritual life, and especially it is the truth of memory-knowledge, for the soul of man desires this as the body desires food. This truth nourishes, and therefore "to feed" is to be instructed.... That memory-knowledges and truths sustain the soul of man is very evident from man's longing to know things, and also from the correspondence of food with memory-knowledges.... This correspondence also shows itself in man when he is partaking of food, for if this is done while he is speaking and listening, the vessels which receive the nourishment are opened, and he is more fully nourished than if he is alone. Spiritual truths and instruction in them would have the same effect with men if they were in the affection of good.

That truths nourish the spiritual life is especially manifest with good spirits and with the angels in heaven, for both good spirits and angels have a constant longing to know things and to be wise. And when they lack this spiritual food they feel desolate, their life is languid, and they are hungry; and they are not restored and raised into the bliss of their life until their longing is satisfied.

But in order that memory-knowledges may yield healthful nourishment to the soul, there must be life in them from the goods of truth. If there is no life from this source, the memory-knowledges do indeed sustain the man's interior life, but only his natural life, and not his spiritual life.

My Shepherd (v. 1-2, 5).

AE 375:34. This means, in the internal sense, that he who trusts in the Lord is led into all the goods and truths of heaven, and overflows with the enjoyments of them. "My Shepherd" means the Lord. "The pastures of tender herb" signify the knowledges of truth and good. "The waters of

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rest” signify the truths of heaven from them. “A table” signifies spiritual nourishment. “To make fat the head with oil” signifies wisdom which is from good. “My cup will overflow” signifies intelligence which is from truths, “cup” signifying the like as “wine.” “The pastures of the tender herb” and “the waters of rest” seem to be mentioned as if they were comparisons, because the Lord is called a shepherd, and the flock of the shepherd is led into pastures of herbs and to limpid waters; but still these are correspondences.

Questions and Comments

1. AC 6078:4 explains that “a ‘pasture’ in the internal sense is that which sustains the spiritual life.” How does the 23rd Psalm sustain our spiritual life?
2. At the end of AE 375:34, comparisons and correspondences are mentioned. What is the difference and why does it matter?
3. Why does this psalm have such universal appeal?

Day Three: Happiness in the Church

Psalm 84

- 1 To the victor, on the gittith⁵; of the sons of Korah, a psalm.
How beloved are Thy habitations, O Jehovah of Armies!
- 2 My soul is eager and is even all consumed for the courts of Jehovah;
My heart and my flesh sing aloud to the living God.
- 3 Even the bird has found a house,
And the swallow a nest for herself, in which she may put her hatchlings,
Thine altars, O Jehovah of Armies, my King and my God.
- 4 Happy are those dwelling in Thy house;
They will still be praising Thee. Selah.
- 5 Happy is man having strength in Thee;
Thy highways are in their heart.⁶
- 6 Passing through the valley of weeping, they set it as a fountain;
Even the earlier rain cloaks it with blessings.
- 7 They go from virtue to virtue;
He appears to God in Zion.
- 8 O Jehovah, God of Armies, hear my prayer;
Give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.
- 9 See our shield, O God,
And look on the face of Thine anointed.
- 10 For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand;
I have chosen to stand at the threshold in the house of my God,
Rather than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

⁵ a musical instrument (AC 8337:5)

⁶ Prophets and Psalms says that this verse is about the church. The church is both singular and plural in the same way that the Hebrew word adam (“man” or “mankind”) can be singular and plural, especially when the Lord’s church is treated of.

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- 11 For Jehovah God is a sun and shield;
 Jehovah will give grace and glory:
 He will not withhold good
 To those who walk in integrity.**
- 12 O Jehovah of Armies,
 Happy is man trusting in Thee.**

verses	topic	Summary of Spiritual Sense
title, 1-4	11	Love and desire for the church and heaven.
5-7	11, 17	Because of trust in the Lord, the church will increase in truths and goods.
8-12	11, 17	Her happiness arises from trust in the Lord.

Thine altars, O Jehovah of Armies (v. 3).

AE 391:11. "Altars" here mean the heavens.... "Tabernacles" mean the higher heavens, and "courts" the lower heavens, where the entrance is. These are also called "altars" from worship; and as all worship is from the good of love by means of truths, it is said, "Thine altars, O Jehovah of Hosts, my King and my God," for the Lord is called "Jehovah" from Divine good, and "King" and "God" from Divine truth. And because the heavens are meant, it is also said, "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house," "the house of Jehovah God" meaning heaven in the whole complex. It is also said, "Yea, the bird has found a house, and the swallow her nest," because "bird" signifies spiritual truth and "swallow" natural truth, by which there is worship. And as all truth by which there is worship is from the good of love, it is first said, "My heart and my flesh sing for joy unto the living God," "heart and flesh" signifying the good of love, and "sing for joy" worship from the delight of good.

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The house of my God (v. 10).

AE 220:7. That it may be known that the “temple” [or “house of God”] means heaven and the church, as also Divine truth proceeding from the Lord, I will cite these passages here, lest the mind should cling to the idea that a mere temple is meant, and not something more holy; for the temple in Jerusalem was holy because it represented and thus signified what is holy. That “temple” signified heaven is evident from these passages. In David: [*includes Ps. 84:10*]

I called upon Jehovah, and cried unto my God;
He heard my voice from His temple (Ps. 18:6).

The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They that are planted in the house of Jehovah shall flourish in the courts of our God (Ps. 92:12-13).

One thing have I asked of Jehovah, that I may dwell in the house of Jehovah, and to visit early His temple (Ps. 27:4).

I shall be at rest in the house of Jehovah for length of days (Ps. 23:6).

Questions and Comments

1. According to the Summary of the Spiritual Sense in *Prophets and Psalms* for Psalm 84, happiness in the church arises from trust in the Lord. How does trust in the Lord lead to happiness?
2. Does singing in church ever feel like what is described in Psalm 84:2?
3. Heaven and the church are described as the house of the Lord in this Psalm. What do you think about the church being described as the house of the Lord?

Day Four: Peace in the Church

Psalm 122

- 1 A song of the ascents, of David.
I am glad when they say to me,
Let us go to the house of Jehovah.
- 2 Our feet are standing within Thy gates,
O Jerusalem;
- 3 Jerusalem is built as a city
That has cohered to herself as one;
- 4 Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of Jah,
A testimony to Israel, to confess the name of Jehovah.
- 5 For thrones sit there for judgment,
The thrones for the house of David.
- 6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem;
They shall be tranquil who love thee.
- 7 Peace be in thy ramparts,
Tranquility within thy palaces.
- 8 For the sake of my brothers and my companions,
I will now speak, Let peace be within thee.
- 9 For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God,
I will seek good for thee.

verses	topic	Summary of Spiritual Sense
title, 1-9	11, 16	Joy of the Lord over the new church where He reigns.

Jerusalem (v. 3)

TCR 782:4. That “Jerusalem” here means a church about to be established by the Lord, and not the Jerusalem inhabited by the Jews, is evident from the particulars of its description in the passages quoted; as that Jehovah God was to create a new heaven and a new earth, and after that Jerusalem; and that she should be a crown of glory and a royal diadem; that she should be called holiness, a city of truth, the throne of Jehovah, a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that should not be

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taken down; that there the wolf and the lamb are to feed together; that the mountains there will drop down new wine, and the hills flow with milk, and Jerusalem shall abide to generation and generation, with many other things. It is also said of the people there that they are holy, that they are all written unto life, and shall be called the redeemed of Jehovah. All these passages, moreover, treat of the Lord's coming, especially of His second coming, when Jerusalem is to be such as is there described; for until then she was not married, that is, made the bride and wife of the Lamb, as the New Jerusalem is said to be in the Apocalypse.

A testimony to Israel, to confess the name of Jehovah (v. 4).

AE 392:10. "Jerusalem" signifies the church in relation to doctrine, which is said to be "built" when it is established by the Lord. "As a city that is conjoined together" signifies doctrine in which all things are in order, "city" meaning doctrine. "Thither the tribes go up, the tribes of Jah," signifies that in it are all truths and goods in the complex. "A testimony to Israel, to confess to the name of Jehovah," signifies the confession and acknowledgment of the Lord there. "For there are set thrones for judgment" signifies that Divine truth is there, according to which judgment is executed.

Peace in thy ramparts, tranquility within thy palaces (v. 7).

AE 365:35. "Jerusalem" does not mean Jerusalem, but the church in relation to doctrine and worship. "Peace" means everything of doctrine and worship, for when these are from a heavenly origin, that is, out of heaven from the Lord, then they are from peace and in peace, from which is evident what is meant by "ask for the peace of Jerusalem." And as those who are in that peace are said to be "tranquil," it is also said, "Let them be tranquil who love thee," that is, who

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love the doctrine and worship of the church. "Peace be within thy rampart, and tranquility within thy palaces" signifies in the exterior and in the interior man. For the exterior man with the things that are in it, which are natural knowledges and delights, is like a rampart or fortification to the interior man, since it is outside or in front of it and protects it. And the interior man with the things that are in it, which are spiritual truths and goods, is like a palace or house, since it is within the exterior. Therefore the exterior things of a man are signified by "a rampart," and his interior things by "palaces" "For the sake of my brothers and companions" signifies for the sake of those who are in goods and in truths from them, and in a sense abstracted from persons it signifies goods and truths.... "The house of Jehovah our God" signifies the church in which these things are.

Questions and Comments

1. Have there been times when you have experienced peace in the church?
2. How could the church be more peaceful?
3. Can there be peace in the church during tumultuous times in the world? If so, how?
4. In *John 14:27* Jesus says, "Peace I leave to you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, give I to you. Let not your heart be disturbed, neither let it be afraid." How does that apply to peace in the church?

Day Five: Safety in the Church

Psalm 125

- 1 A song of the ascents.
They who trust in Jehovah are as Mount Zion;
It shall not be moved;
To eternity it shall sit.
- 2 Jerusalem, mountains are all around her,
And Jehovah is all around His people,
From now, and even to eternity.
- 3 For the rod of wickedness shall not rest
Upon the lot of the just,
So that the just put not forth their hands into
perversity.
- 4 Do good, O Jehovah,
To the good,
And to those who are upright in their hearts.
- 5 But those who go aside to their crookedness,
Jehovah shall make them go with the workers of the
iniquity.
Peace be upon Israel.

verses	topic	Summary of Spiritual Sense
title, 1-5	11	From the Lord the new church is kept from falsities of evil.

Mount Zion (v. 1)

AR 612:4. By "Mount Zion" is signified heaven and the church, where the Lord alone is worshiped....

For the rod of wickedness shall not rest upon the lot of the just (v. 3).

AE 727:15. "The staff of wickedness" signifies the power of falsity from evil; "upon the lot of the just" signifies over truths from good, which the faithful have, and especially with those who are in love to the Lord, for these in the Word are called "the just." "Lest the just put forth their hands to perversity" signifies lest they falsify truths.

Psalm 127

- 1 **A song of the ascents, of Solomon.**
If Jehovah build not the house,
In vain they labor who build it;
If Jehovah keep not the city,
In vain the keeper watches.
- 2 **It is vain for you to arise, getting up early,**
To delay, sitting up,
Eating the bread of grief;
So He gives to His beloved sleep.
- 3 **Behold, sons are a heritage of Jehovah;**
The fruit of the belly is His reward.
- 4 **As arrows in the hand of a mighty man,**
So are the sons of youth.
- 5 **Happy is the mighty man**
Who has filled his quiver from them;
They shall not be ashamed,
For they speak with the enemies in the gate.

verses	topic	Summary of Spiritual Sense
title, 1, 2	16, 11	All things of the church are from the Lord, and nothing from man.
3, 4	16, 11	He who is in truths from the Lord remains safe.

Behold, sons are a heritage of Jehovah (v. 3).

AE 357:10. "Sons that are a heritage of Jehovah" signify truths by which there is intelligence. The "fruit of the belly" that is "His reward" signifies the goods, by which there is happiness. "The sons of youth" that are "as arrows in the hand of a mighty one," signify the truths of the good of innocence; because nothing evil or false can resist these truths, it is said that they are "as arrows in the hand of a mighty one." The good of innocence is the good of love to the Lord. Because these truths have such power it is said,

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“Happy is the man who has filled his quiver with them,” “quiver” here having a like signification as “bow,” namely, the doctrine from the Word. “They shall not be ashamed when they speak with the enemies in the gate” signifies that there shall be no fear because of evils from the hells, “enemies” meaning evils, and “gate” hell.

Questions and Comments

1. How does the Lord keep the New Church safe from falsities as described in the summary of the spiritual sense in *Prophets and Psalms* for Psalm 127?
2. How does the literal sense of Psalm 127 help us understand the way truths from the Lord keep us safe, as it says in *Prophets and Psalms*?
3. What descriptions in these Psalms help us picture the safety of the church?

Psalm 133

- 1 **A song of the ascents, of David.**
Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brothers to dwell even as one!
- 2 **It is as the good oil upon the head,**
Going down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron;
Which goes down upon the mouth⁷ of his robes,
- 3 **As the dew of Hermon, which goes down upon the**
mountains of Zion;
For there Jehovah commanded the blessing:
Life, even to eternity.

verses	topic	Summary of Spiritual Sense
title, 1	11, 12	Good itself is the conjunction of good and truth,
2	11, 12	for the good of love flows into the truths of the external or natural man.
3	12, 17	The truth of good is from heaven upon those who are in the church, in which is salvation.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell even as one! (v. 1)

AE 375:26. “Brothers” here signify good and truth, for these are called “brothers” in the Word. Therefore, “Behold, how good and how lovely it is for brothers to dwell together” signifies that in the conjunction of good and truth is every heavenly good and delight, for every heavenly good and delight is from the conjunction of good and truth. “The oil upon the head that comes down upon the beard, Aaron’s beard, that comes down upon the hem of his garments,” signifies that from that conjunction is the good and delight of heaven, from inmosts to ultimates, “head” signifying the inmost, “beard” the ultimate. “To come down upon the hem

⁷ The opening at the neck (see AC 9913, 9914)

Day Six: Brotherhood in the Church

of his garments” signifies the influx and conjunction of celestial good and spiritual good.... This is said of Aaron, because he represented the Lord in respect to Divine good, since every good and every conjunction of good and truth is from Him.... “The dew of Hermon” signifies Divine truth, and “the mountains of Zion” signify Divine good. Therefore “like the dew of Hermon that comes down upon the mountains of Zion” signifies the conjunction of truth and good, which is here treated of. And as angels and men have all their spiritual life from that conjunction, it is added, “There Jehovah has commanded the blessing of life to eternity.” ...From this it is clear what is the nature of the Word in its spiritual sense, notwithstanding its sound in the letter.

AE 746:20. The Lord means by “brother” the like as by “neighbor,” and “neighbor” signifies in the spiritual sense good in the whole complex, and good in the whole complex is the good of charity. “Brother” has a similar meaning in the spiritual sense in many passages in the Old Testament. As in Moses:

Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart (Lev. 19:17).

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Questions and Comments

1. Have you ever experienced a sense of “brotherhood” in the church?
2. What kind of things create unity in the church?
3. What kinds of things create disunity in the church?
4. What should we do when there is disunity in the church?