



A
**SWEDENBORG
SAMPLER**

Selections from

HEAVEN AND HELL

DIVINE LOVE AND WISDOM

DIVINE PROVIDENCE

TRUE CHRISTIANITY

SECRETS OF HEAVEN



EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

translated by

GEORGE F. DOLE, LISA HYATT COOPER, &
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ABOUT HEAVEN AND HELL

Heaven and Hell is the best known and most popular of Swedenborg's books. Published in 1758 as *De Coelo et Ejus Mirabilibus, et de Inferno, ex Auditis et Visis* (Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell: Drawn from Things Heard and Seen), the work describes Swedenborg's view of the spiritual realms and their inhabitants.

In Swedenborg's cosmology, the physical world that we live in is surrounded by the world of spirits, an intermediate realm between heaven and hell. When our physical bodies die, angels help our souls transition into the world of spirits, where we undergo a process of instruction and review of our lives. During this time, our true inner natures are gradually revealed. If we have done good works out of a genuine love of service and desire to help others, we are drawn toward heaven; if we are inherently selfish and enjoy causing pain and suffering, we are pulled toward hell. But the Lord does not judge or condemn

people, Swedenborg emphasizes; people find their true home based on what they love most. A person who ends up in hell will find it more pleasant and comfortable than heaven. In a departure from the commonly held beliefs of his time, Swedenborg asserts that people of all faiths can be accepted into heaven, and that even unbaptized children will go there after death. Children, he writes, have a special place in heaven, where they grow to adulthood under the care of angels.

One unusual feature of Swedenborg's theology is that spiritual worlds are populated entirely by human beings—from the highest heaven to the deepest hell, there are no angels or demons who were not once living as people in the physical world. These spirits maintain their human form after death, although that form is affected by their inner nature. People who are good will become more beautiful in heaven. The evil will grow ugly and deformed, particularly when seen in the light of heaven, although to other evil spirits they will look normal, even attractive.

Life in heaven may seem remarkably similar to life on earth. Angels wear clothes, have houses and jobs, and fall in love and get married. However, Swedenborg also describes some significant differences between this world and the next. For example, travel between two places is instantaneous, and people can communicate with each other simply by thinking.

Much of the material for *Heaven and Hell* was drawn from the first theological work Swedenborg published, *Secrets of Heaven*. Issued in eight quarto volumes between 1749 and 1756, *Secrets of Heaven* was Swedenborg's first published attempt to put the information gleaned from his visions into writing. Though the work is primarily an exposition on the inner meaning of Genesis and Exodus, interspersed with the commentary are descriptions of Swedenborg's experiences in the spiritual realms and the things he learned there. However, the length of *Secrets of Heaven*, combined with the heavy biblical

exegesis, daunted many readers in his day. *Heaven and Hell* was an attempt to reach a broader audience by producing a short work focused specifically on the spiritual realms. This approach found more success: *Heaven and Hell* attracted an audience of both skeptics and admirers, and, as Swedenborg's fame spread, was translated into German (1775), English (1778), and French (1782). The English edition had a particularly fateful impact when it found its way into the hands of a young man named Robert Hindmarsh, who became one of the key early organizers of the Church of the New Jerusalem, a denomination founded on the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

In the following extract, Swedenborg describes how he was allowed to experience the process of dying firsthand and discusses the world of spirits, where souls first arrive after leaving their bodies. The footnotes in this translation are Swedenborg's own annotations of the original Latin edition, and the numbers in them refer to sections in *Secrets of Heaven*.



What the World of Spirits Is

THE world of spirits is neither heaven nor hell but a place or state between the two. It is where we first arrive after death, being in due time either raised into heaven or cast into hell from it depending on our life in this world.

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The world of spirits is a place halfway between heaven and hell, and it is also our own halfway state after death. I have been shown that it is a halfway place by seeing that the hells were underneath it and the heavens above it, and that it is a halfway state by learning that as long as we are in it, we are not yet in either heaven or hell.

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A state of heaven for us is the union of what is good and true within us, and a state of hell is a union of what is evil and false within us. When the good in a spirit-person is united to the true, then that individual arrives in heaven, because as already stated that union is heaven within us. On the other hand, when the evil is united to the false within us, then we arrive in hell, because that union is hell within us. The process of union takes place in the world of spirits because then we are in a halfway state. It amounts to the same thing whether you say the union of intellect and will or the union of the true and the good.

First I need to say something about the union of intellect and will and its resemblance to the union of the good and the true, because this union does take place in the world of spirits. Each of us has an intellect and a will, the intellect being open to truths and formed from them and the will being open to things that are good and formed from them. So whatever we understand and therefore think, we call true; and whatever we intend and therefore think, we call good. We are capable of thinking from our intellect and thus observing what is true and also what is good, but we still do not think from our will unless we intend and do it. When we intend it and do it intentionally, then it is in both our intellect and our will and therefore in us. This is because the intellect alone is not what makes a person,

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nor the will alone, but the intellect and the will together. This means that anything that is in both intellect and will is in us and is therefore attributed to us. Whatever is only in the intellect is associated with us but is not in us. It is only a matter of our memory, an item of information in our memory that we can think about when we are not in private but are with other people. So it is something we can talk and argue about and even something we can imitate with our affections and behavior.

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Our ability to think from our intellect and not at the same time from our will is provided us so that we can be reformed, for we are reformed by means of truths; and truths, as already noted, are matters of intellect. We are actually born into total evil as far as our wills are concerned, wishing well to no one but ourselves; if we wish well to ourselves alone, we are delighted when harm comes to others, especially when it is to our advantage. We actually want to channel everyone else's assets to ourselves, whether those assets are high rank or wealth, and are happy to the extent that we succeed. To correct and reform this kind of intent, we are given the ability to understand things that are true and to use them to control the evil urges that well up from our will. This is why we can think true things from our intellect and talk about them and do them even though we cannot think them from our will until we have changed in nature so that on our own, that is from the heart, we intend them and do them. When we have this nature, then the things we think from our intellect are matters of our faith and the things we think from our will are matters of our love. This means that faith and love are now united within us, just as intellect and will are.

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To the extent that truths of the intellect are united to good things of the will, then, or to the extent that we intend and therefore do truths, we have heaven within us, because as already noted the union of the good and the true is heaven. However, to the extent that false elements of intellect are united to evil

elements of will, we have hell within us, because the union of the false and the evil is hell. Still, to the extent that truths of intellect are not united to good elements of will, we are in the halfway state. Almost all of us nowadays are in a state in which we know things that are true and think about them on the basis of our information and also from our intellect. We act on either a lot of them or a few of them or none of them or act contrary to them because of our love of evil and consequent trust in what is false. So in order that we may gain either heaven or hell, after death we are first taken to the world of spirits, where either the union of the good and the true takes place for people who are to be raised into heaven, or the union of the evil and the false for people who are to be cast into hell. This is because no one in heaven or in hell is allowed to have a divided mind, to understand one thing and intend something else. What we intend we understand and what we understand we intend. Consequently, anyone in heaven who intends what is good understands what is true, and anyone in hell who intends what is evil understands what is false. So for good people, the false elements are taken away and they are given truths suited and fitted to their virtue, while for evil people truths are taken away and they are given false elements suited and fitted to their vice. This enables us to see what the world of spirits is.

There is a vast number of people in the world of spirits, because that is where everyone is first gathered, where everyone is examined and prepared. There is no fixed limit to our stay there. Some people barely enter it and are promptly either taken up into heaven or cast down into hell. Some stay there for a few weeks, some for a number of years, though not more than thirty. The variations in length of stay occur because of the correspondence or lack of correspondence between our deeper and our more outward natures.

In the following pages I will be explaining just how we are led from one state into another and prepared.

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After we die, just as soon as we arrive in the world of spirits, we are carefully sorted out by the Lord. Evil people are immediately connected with the hellish community their ruling love had affiliated them with in the world, and good people are immediately connected with the heavenly community their love and thoughtfulness and faith had affiliated them with in the world.

Even though we are sorted out in this way, we are still together in that world and can talk to anyone when we want to, to friends and acquaintances from our physical life, especially husbands and wives, and also brothers and sisters. I have seen a father talking with his six sons and recognizing them. I have seen many other people with their relatives and friends. However, since they were of different character because of their life in the world, they parted company after a little while.

However, people who are coming into heaven from the world of spirits and people who are coming into hell do not see each other any more. They do not even recognize each other unless they are of like character because of a likeness in love. The reason they see each other in the world of spirits but not in heaven or hell is that while they are in the world of spirits they are brought into states like the ones they were in during their physical lives, one after another. After a while, though, they settle into a constant state that accords with their ruling love. In this state, mutual recognition comes only from similarity of love, for as we explained above (§§41–50), likeness unites and difference separates.

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Just as the world of spirits is a state halfway between heaven and hell within us, it is a halfway place. The hells are underneath it and the heavens above it.

All the hells are closed on the side that faces that world, accessible only through holes and crevices like those in rocks and through broad gaps that are guarded to prevent anyone from coming out without permission, which happens in cases

of real need, as will be discussed later. Heaven too is bounded on all sides, and the only access to any heavenly community is by a narrow way whose entry is also guarded. These exits and entrances are what are called the doors and gates of hell and heaven in the Word.

The world of spirits looks like a valley surrounded by mountains and cliffs, with dips and rises here and there. The doors and gates to heavenly communities are visible only to people who are being readied for heaven. No one else finds them. There is one entrance to each community from the world of spirits with a single path beyond it; but as the path climbs, it divides into several.

The doors and gates to the hells are visible only to the people who are going to enter them. They open for them, and once they are opened you can see dark, sooty caves slanting downward into the depths, where there are still more gates. Rank, foul stench breathes out from them, stench that good spirits flee because they are repelled by them, while evil spirits are drawn toward them because they find them delightful. In fact, just as we find delight in our own evil in this world we find delight after death in the stench that corresponds to our evil. We might compare this with the delight of carrion birds and beasts like crows and wolves and pigs who fly or run toward rotting corpses as soon as they get wind of them. I heard one man who screamed aloud in utter torment at a breath of air from heaven, but was calm and happy when a breath from hell reached him.

There are two doors in each of us as well, one facing hell and open to evil and false things from hell, the other facing heaven and open to good and true things from heaven. The door of hell is opened for people who are involved in what is evil and its consequent falsity, though just a little light from heaven flows in through the cracks, which enables us to think, reason, and talk. On the other hand, the door of heaven is opened for

people who are focused on what is good and therefore on what is true. There are actually two paths that lead to our rational mind, one from above or within, through which the good and the true enter from the Lord, and one from below or outside through which the evil and the false infiltrate from hell. The rational mind itself is at the intersection of these two paths, so to the extent that light from heaven is let in, we are rational; but to the extent that it is not let in, we are not rational even though we seem so to ourselves.

I have mentioned these things so that our correspondence with heaven and with hell may be known. While our rational mind is in the process of being formed, it is responsive to the world of spirits. What is above it belongs to heaven, and what is beneath it belongs to hell. The higher things open, and the lower close against the inflow of evil and falsity, for people who are being readied for heaven; while the lower things open, and the higher close against the inflow of goodness and truth, for people who are being readied for hell. As a result, these latter can only look downward, toward hell, and the former can only look upward, toward heaven. Looking upward is looking toward the Lord, because he is the common center that everything in heaven faces. Looking downward, though, is looking away from the Lord toward the opposite center, the center toward which everything in hell faces and gravitates (see above, §§123 and 124).

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In the preceding pages, where it said “spirits,” it meant people in the world of spirits; while “angels” meant people in heaven.

Each of Us Is Inwardly a Spirit

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ANYONE who thinks things through carefully can see that it is not the body that thinks, because the body is material. Rather, it is the soul, because the soul is spiritual. The human soul,

whose immortality has been the topic of many authors, is our spirit; it is in fact immortal in all respects, and it is also what does the thinking in our bodies. This is because it is spiritual and the spiritual is open to the spiritual and lives spiritually, through thought and intention. So all the rational life we can observe in our bodies belongs to the soul and none of it to the body. Actually, the body is material, as just noted, and the matter that is proper to the body is an addendum and almost an attachment to the spirit. Its purpose is to enable our spirit to lead its life and perform its services in a natural world that is material in all respects and essentially lifeless. Since matter is not alive—only spirit—we may conclude that whatever is alive in us is our spirit and that the body only serves it exactly the way a tool serves a live and activating force. We may of course say that a tool works or moves or strikes, but it is a mistake to believe that this is a property of the tool and not of the person who is wielding it.

Since everything that is alive in the body—everything that acts and feels because of life—belongs to the spirit alone and none of it belongs to the body, it follows that the spirit is the actual person. In other words, we are essentially spirits and have much the same form as well. You see, everything that is alive and sensitive within us belongs to our spirit, and there is nothing in us, from head to toe, that is not alive and sensitive. This is why when our bodies are separated from our spirits, which is called dying, we still continue to be human and to be alive.

I have heard from heaven that some people who die, while they are lying on the slab, before they have been revived, are still thinking in their cold bodies, and cannot help but feel that they are alive, but with the difference that they cannot move a single part of the matter that makes up their bodies.

We could not think or intend if there were no agent, no substance as the source and focal point of thought and intent. Anything we may imagine happening apart from a substantial

agent is nothing. We can tell this from the fact that we could not see without an organ serving as the agent of our sight or hear without an organ as the agent of our hearing. Apart from these, sight and hearing would be nothing, would not exist. The same holds true for thought, which is inner sight, and for attention, which is inner hearing. Unless these happened in and from agents that are organic forms, as subjects, they would not happen at all. We may gather from this that our spirit is also in a form and that it is in human form, that it enjoys sensory organs and senses when it is separated from the body just as it did when it was in it. We may gather that all of the eye's life, all of the ear's life, in fact all of our sensory life belongs not to the body but to the spirit that is in these functions and even in their least details. This is why spirits see and hear and feel just as much as we do, though after we have left the body this does not happen in the natural world but in the spiritual one. The reason the spirit was sensitive on the natural level when it was in the body is that it worked through the material part that was appended to it. However, it was still spiritually sensitive in its thinking and intending.

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I have presented this to convince rational people that, seen in our own right, we are spirits, and that the physical nature appended to us so that we can function in the natural and material world is not the real person but only the tool of our spirit.

But some supporting instances from experience would be better, because rational arguments are beyond many people, and the ones who have convinced themselves of opposite opinions make these arguments grounds for their skepticism by arguing on the basis of sensory illusions.

People who have convinced themselves of an opposite opinion tend to think that animals live and sense just the way we do, so that they too have a spiritual nature like ours; yet this dies along with their bodies. However, the spiritual nature of animals is not the same as ours. We have an inmost nature that

animals do not, a nature into which the Divine flows and which it raises toward itself, in this way uniting us to itself. So we, unlike animals, can think about God and about divine matters of heaven and the church. We can love God because of these matters and by engaging with them; and can so be united to him; and anything that can be united to the Divine cannot be destroyed. Anything that cannot be united to the Divine, though, does disintegrate. In §39 above, I discussed this inmost that we have and animals do not. The reason for mentioning it again here is that it is important to dispel the illusions many people get from [believing that animals are just like humans], people who cannot draw rational conclusions about these subjects because they lack information or because their intellect is not open. What I said there was as follows:

I should like to disclose a particular secret about the angels of the three heavens that people have not been aware of until now because they have not understood the levels discussed in §38. It is this, that within every angel—and within every one of us here—there is a central or highest level, or a central and highest something, where the Lord's divine life flows in first and most intimately. It is from this center that the Lord arranges the other, relatively internal aspects within us that follow in sequence according to the levels of the overall design. This central or highest level can be called the Lord's gateway to angels or to us, his essential dwelling within us.

It is this central or highest level that makes us human and distinguishes us from the lower animals, since they do not have it. This is why we, unlike animals, can be raised up by the Lord toward himself, as far as all the deeper levels of our mind and character are concerned. This is why we can believe in him, be

moved by love for him, and therefore see him. It is why we can receive intelligence and wisdom, and talk rationally. It is also why we live forever.

However, what is arranged and provided by the Lord at this center does not flow into the open perception of any angel, because it is higher than angelic thought, and surpasses angelic wisdom.

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A great deal of experience has taught me that we are spirits inwardly, experience that would fill whole volumes, as they say, if I were to include it all. I have talked with spirits as a spirit and I have talked with them as a person in a body. When I have talked with them as a spirit, they could not tell that I was not a spirit myself, in just as human a form as theirs. That is how my inner nature looked to them, because when I talked with them as a spirit, they could not see my material body.

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We may gather that inwardly we are spirits from the fact that after we depart from our bodies, which happens when we die, we are still alive and just as human as ever. To convince me of this, [the Lord] has allowed me to talk with almost all the people I had ever met during their physical lives, with some for a few hours, with some for weeks and months, and with some for years. This was primarily so that I could be convinced and could bear witness.

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I may add here that even while we are living in our bodies, each one of us is in a community with spirits as to our own spirits even though we are unaware of it. Good people are in angelic communities by means of [their spirits] and evil people are in hellish communities. Further, we come into those same communities when we die. People who are coming into the company of spirits after death are often told and shown this.

Actually, we are not visible as spirits in our [spiritual] communities while we are living in the world because we are thinking on the natural level. However, if our thinking is withdrawn

from the body we are sometimes visible in our communities because we are then in the spirit. When we are visible, it is easy to tell us from the spirits who live there because we walk along deep in thought, silent, without looking at others, as though we did not see them; and the moment any spirit addresses us, we disappear.

To illustrate the fact that we are spirits inwardly, I should like to explain from experience what happens when we are *taken out of the body* and how we are *led by the spirit into another place*. 439

The first experience, being taken out of the body, is like this. We are brought into a particular state that is halfway between sleep and waking. When we are in this state, it seems exactly as though we were awake; all our senses are as alert as they are when we are fully awake physically—sight, hearing, and strange to say, touch. These senses are more perfect than they can ever be during physical wakefulness. This is the state in which people have seen spirits and angels most vividly, even hearing them and, strange to say, touching them, with hardly anything physical interfering. It is the state described as *being taken out of the body* and *not knowing whether one is in the body or outside it*. 440

I have been admitted to this state three or four times, simply to let me know what it was like, and also to teach me that spirits and angels enjoy all the senses and that we do too, as to our spirits, when we are taken out of the body.

As for the second kind of experience, being led by the spirit into another place, I have been shown by firsthand experience what happens and how it happens, but only two or three times. I should like to cite just one experience. While I was walking through city streets and through the countryside, absorbed in conversation with spirits, it seemed exactly as though I were just as awake and observant as ever, walking without straying, though all the while I was in visions. I was seeing groves, rivers, mansions, houses, people, and more. After I had been walking for some hours, though, I suddenly found myself back in 441

consciousness of my physical sight and realized that I was somewhere else. I was utterly stunned by this, and realized that I had been in the state of people described as *being led by the spirit into another place*; for as long as it lasted I was not thinking about my route, even though it might have been many miles, or about the time, though it might have been many hours or even days. I was not conscious of any fatigue, either. This is how we can be led by ways we know nothing of all the way to some predetermined place, without straying.

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These two states, though, which are states we have when we are awake to our deeper nature or (which is the same thing) our spirit, are out of the ordinary. They were shown me simply to teach me what they were like because they are known in the church. But talking with spirits, being with them as one of them—this is something I have been granted when I was fully awake physically, and it has been going on now for years.

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There is further support of our being spirits inwardly in the material presented in §§311–317 above, where I discussed the fact that heaven and hell are from the human race.

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Our being spirits inwardly has reference to our capacities for thinking and intending because these are our actual inner natures. They are what make us human, and the quality of our humanity depends on their quality.

Our Revival from the Dead and Entry into Eternal Life

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WHEN someone's body can no longer perform its functions in the natural world in response to the thoughts and affections of its spirit (which it derives from the spiritual world), then we say that the individual has died. This happens when the lungs' breathing and the heart's systolic motion have ceased. The person, though, has not died at all. We are only separated from the physical nature that was useful to us in the world. The essential person is actually still alive. I say that the essential person is still alive because we are not people because of our bodies but

because of our spirits. After all, it is the spirit within us that thinks, and thought and affection together make us the people we are.

We can see, then, that when we die we simply move from one world into another. This is why in the inner meaning of the Word, “death” means resurrection and a continuation of life.^a

The deepest communication of our spirit is with our breathing and our heartbeat; thought connects with our breathing, and affection, an attribute of love, with our heart.^b Consequently, when these two motions in the body cease, there is an immediate separation. It is these two motions, the respiratory motion of the lungs and the systolic motion of the heart, that are essential ties. Once they are severed, the spirit is left to itself; and the body, being now without the life of its spirit, cools and decays.

The reason the deepest communication of our spirit is with our breathing and our heart is that all our vital processes depend on these, not only in a general way, but in every specific.^c

After this separation, our spirit stays in the body briefly, but not after the complete stoppage of the heart, which varies depending on the cause of death. In some cases the motion of the heart continues for quite a while, and in others it does not. The moment it does stop, we are awakened, but this is done by the Lord alone. “Being awakened” means having our spirit

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a. Death in the Word means resurrection because when we die, our life still goes on: *Secrets of Heaven* 3498, 3505, 4618, 4621, 6036, 6222 [6221].

b. The heart corresponds to our volition and therefore to affection of love as well, while the breathing of the lungs corresponds to our intellect and therefore to thought: 3888. In the Word, then, the heart means volition and love: 7542, 9050, 10336; and the soul means intellect, faith, and truth, so that “from the soul and from the heart” means what comes from intellect, faith, and truth, and what comes from intent, love, and good: 2930, 9050. On the correspondence of the heart and lungs [Latin *anima*, “soul,” also means “breath”] with the universal human or heaven: 3883–3896.

c. The heartbeat and the breathing of the lungs are regulative throughout the body and flow in together everywhere: 3887, 3889, 3890.

led out of our body and into the spiritual world, which is commonly called “resurrection.”

The reason our spirit is not separated from our body until the motion of the heart has stopped is that the heart answers to affection, an attribute of love, which is our essential life, since all of us derive our vital warmth from love.^d Consequently, as long as this union lasts there is a responsiveness, and therefore the life of the spirit is [still] in the body.

448

I have not only been told how the awakening happens, I have been shown by firsthand experience. The actual experience happened to me so that I could have a full knowledge of how it occurs.

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I was brought into a state in which my physical senses were inoperative—very much, then, like the state of people who are dying. However, my deeper life and thought remained intact so that I could perceive and retain what was happening to me and what does happen to people who are being awakened from death. I noticed that my physical breathing was almost suspended, with a deeper breathing, a breathing of the spirit, continuing along with a very slight and silent physical one.

At first then a connection was established between my heartbeat and the heavenly kingdom, because that kingdom corresponds to the human heart.^e I also saw angels from that kingdom, some at a distance, but two sitting close to my head. The effect was to take away all my own affection but to leave me in possession of thought and perception. [2] I remained in this state for several hours.

Then the spirits who were around me gradually drew away, thinking that I was dead. I sensed a sweet odor like that of an

d. Love is the very being of human life: 5002. Love is spiritual warmth and is therefore our own vital essence: 1589, 2146, 3338, 4906, 7081–7086, 9954, 10740. Affection is a corollary of love: 3938.

e. The heart corresponds to the Lord’s heavenly kingdom and the lungs to his spiritual kingdom: 3635, 3886, 3887.

embalmed body, for when heavenly angels are present anything having to do with a corpse smells sweet. When spirits sense this, they cannot come near. This is also how evil spirits are kept away from our spirit when we are being admitted into eternal life.

The angels who were sitting beside my head were silent, simply sharing their thoughts with mine (when these are accepted [by the deceased], the angels know that the person's spirit is ready to be led out of the body). They accomplished this sharing of thoughts by looking into my face. This is actually how thoughts are shared in heaven.

[3] Since I had been left in possession of thought and perception so that I could learn and remember how awakening happens, I noticed that at first the angels were checking to see whether my thoughts were like those of dying individuals, who are normally thinking about eternal life. They wanted to keep my mind in these thoughts. I was later told that as the body is breathing its last, our spirit is kept in its final thought until eventually it comes back to the thoughts that flowed from our basic or ruling affection in the world.

Especially, I was enabled to perceive and even to feel that there was a pull, a kind of drawing out of the deeper levels of my mind and therefore of my spirit from my body; and I was told that this was being done by the Lord and is what brings about our resurrection.

When heavenly angels are with people who have been awakened they do not leave them, because they love everyone. But some spirits are simply unable to be in the company of heavenly angels very long, and want them to leave. When this happens, angels from the Lord's spiritual kingdom arrive, through whom we are granted the use of light, since before this we could not see anything but could only think.

I was also shown how this is done. It seemed as though the angels rolled back a covering from my left eye toward the center of my nose so that my eye was opened and able to see. To the

spirit, it seems as though this were actually happening, but it is only apparently so. As this covering seemed to be rolled back, I could see a kind of clear but dim light like the light we see through our eyelids when we are first waking up. It seemed to me as though this clear, dim light had a heavenly color to it, but I was later told that this varies. After that, it felt as though something were being rolled gently off my face, and once this was done I had access to spiritual thought. This rolling something off the face is an appearance, for it represents the fact that we are moving from natural thinking to spiritual thinking. Angels take the greatest care to shield the awakening person from any concept that does not taste of love. Then they tell the individual that he or she is a spirit.

After the spiritual angels have given us the use of light, they do everything for us as newly arrived spirits that we could ever wish in that state. They tell us—at least to the extent that we can grasp it—about the realities of the other life. However, if our nature is such that we do not want to be taught, then once we are awakened we want to get out of the company of angels. Still, the angels do not leave us, but we do leave them. Angels really do love everyone. They want nothing more than to help people, to teach them, to lead them into heaven. This is their highest joy.

When spirits leave the company of angels, they are welcomed by the good spirits who are accompanying them and who also do all they can for them. However, if they had led the kind of life in the world that makes it impossible for them to be in the company of good people, then they want to get away from these as well. This happens as long and as many times as necessary, until they find the company of people their earthly life has fitted them for. Here they find their life; and remarkable as it may sound, they then lead the same kind of life they had led in the world.

This first stage of our life after death does not last more than a few days, though. In the following pages I will be

describing how we are then brought from one state into another until finally we arrive either in heaven or in hell. This too is something I have been allowed to learn from a great deal of experience.

I have talked with some people on the third day after their death, when the events described in §§449 and 450 have been completed. I talked with three whom I had known in the world and told them that their funeral services were now being planned so that their bodies could be buried. When they heard me say it was so that *they* could be buried, they were struck with a kind of bewilderment. They said that they were alive, and that people were burying what had been useful to them in the world. Later on, they were utterly amazed at the fact that while they had been living in their bodies they had not believed in this kind of life after death, and particularly that this was the case for almost everyone in the church.

Some people during their earthly lives have not believed in any life of the soul after the life of the body. When they discover that they are alive, they are profoundly embarrassed. However, people who have convinced themselves of this join up with others of like mind and move away from people who had lived in faith. Most of them link up with some hellish community because such people reject the Divine and have no use for the truths of the church. In fact, to the extent that we convince ourselves in our opposition to the ideal of the eternal life of the soul, we also convince ourselves in opposition to the realities of heaven and the church.

After Death, We Are in a Complete Human Form

THE fact that the form of a spirit-person is the human form or that a spirit is a person as far as form is concerned follows from what has been presented in a number of the earlier chapters, especially where I explained that every angel is in a perfect human form (§§73–77), that everyone is a spirit inwardly

(§§432–444), and that the angels in heaven are from the human race (§§311–317).

[2] This may be grasped even more clearly from the fact that we are human because of our spirit, not because of our body, and because our physical form is appended to the spirit in keeping with its form, not the other way around, since a spirit is clothed with a body that suits its form. As a result, the human spirit acts upon the individual parts of the body, even the smallest ones, even to the point that any part that is not activated by the spirit, any part in which there is no spirit acting, is not alive. Anyone may realize this by considering that thought and intent activate absolutely everything in the body and are so completely in control that nothing dissents, and that if anything does not consent it is not part of the body. It is actually expelled as something with no life in it. Thought and intent are attributes of our spirit, not of the body.

[3] The reason we cannot see the human form of spirits who have left the body and spirits still within the people we meet is that our physical organ of sight, the eye, is material to the extent that it can see in this world, and what is material sees only what is material. What is spiritual, though, does see what is spiritual; so when the material eye is covered over and loses its coordination with the spirit, then spirit is visible in its own form. This is a human form not only for spirits who are in the spiritual world but also for spirits in people we meet while they are still in their bodies.

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The reason the form of a spirit is a human one is that in regard to our spirits we have been created in the form of heaven, since all the elements of heaven and its design are summed up in the elements of the human mind.^a

a. In us all the elements of the divine design are gathered together, and by virtue of creation we are the divine design in form: 4219, 4220, 4223, 4523, 4524, 5114, 5368, 6013, 6057, 6605, 6626, 9706, 10156, 10472. To the extent that we

This is the source of our ability to accept intelligence and wisdom. It makes no difference whether you talk about our ability to accept intelligence and wisdom or our ability to accept heaven, as you may gather from what has been presented concerning heaven's light and warmth (§§126–140), heaven's form (§§200–212), angels' wisdom (§§265–275), and from the chapter titled "The Whole Heaven, Grasped as a Single Entity, Reflects a Single Individual" (§§59–77). This is caused by the Lord's divine human nature, which is the source of heaven and its form (§§78–86).

Rational individuals can understand what has been said so far because they can see this from the chain of causes and from truths in their pattern. However, people who are not rational do not understand these things. There are several reasons why they do not understand. The primary one is that they do not want to understand because these things contradict the false opinions that they have made their truths. People who do not want to understand for this reason close off the path of heaven into their rational ability. Even so, it can still be opened if only their will does not offer resistance (see above, §424). A great deal of experience has shown me that people can understand what is true and be rational if only they are willing. Quite often, evil spirits who have become irrational by denying the Divine and the truths of the church in this world (and convincing themselves in their denial) have by divine compulsion been faced toward people who were in the light of truth. Then they understood everything like angels and admitted that they were true and that they understood everything. However, the moment they turned back toward the love proper to their own intentions, they did not understand anything and said just the opposite. [2] I have

live according to the divine design, in the other life we look like complete and lovely people: 4839, 6605, 6626.

even heard some hellish people saying that they knew and recognized that what they were doing was evil and what they were thinking was false, but that they could not resist the gratification of their love and therefore of their will. This moved their thoughts to see evil as good and falsity as true. I could see from this that people who are immersed in false notions because of their malice could understand and could therefore be rational, but that they did not want to. The reason they did not want to was that they loved false notions more than true ones because the former supported the evil pursuits they were engaged in. Loving and intending are the same thing because we love what we intend and intend what we love.

[3] Since we are by nature able to understand what is true if we are willing to, I have been granted the privilege of supporting spiritual truths, truths of the church and heaven, by rational considerations. This is to the end that the false notions that have obscured the rational functioning of many people may be dispelled by rational considerations and their eyes perhaps opened a little. If people are focused on truths, it is granted them to support spiritual truths by rational ones. Who would possibly understand the Word simply from its literal meaning unless they saw some truths in it by enlightened reason? What else is the cause of the many heresies drawn from the same Word?^b

b. A starting point should be derived from the truths of church doctrine drawn from the Word, and these should be acknowledged first; then it is all right to take factual knowledge into account: 6047. So if people have an affirmative attitude toward truths of faith, it is all right for them to support them rationally with factual knowledge; but this is not appropriate for people who have a negative attitude: 2568, 2588, 4760, 6047. It is in accord with the divine design to work rationally from spiritual truths into factual knowledge, natural truths, but not from the latter into the former, because there is an inflow of spiritual things into natural ones but not from natural or physical things into spiritual ones: 3219, 5119, 5259, 5427, 5428, 5478, 6322, 9110, 9111.

Years and years of daily experience have witnessed to me that after separation from the body the human spirit is a person and is in a similar form. I have seen this thousands of times, I have heard such spirits, and I have talked with them even about the fact that people in the world do not believe that they are what they are, and that scholars think people who do believe are simpletons. Spirits are heartsick over the fact that this kind of ignorance is still common in the world and especially in the church. [2] They say, however, that this belief stems especially from academics who have thought about the soul on the basis of physical sensory reality. The only concept this can yield is one of pure thought, and when this lacks any medium in which and on the basis of which it is examined, it is like some volatile form of pure ether that can only dissipate when the body dies. Since the church believes in the immortality of the soul on the basis of the Word, though, they cannot help but attribute something vital to it, something thoughtlike. However, they do not attribute to it any sensory capacity like ours until it is reunited with its body. Their doctrine of the resurrection is based on this notion, as is their belief that there will be a reunion [of soul and body] when the Last Judgment comes. The result is that when people think about the soul on the basis of both doctrine and speculation, they do not at all grasp the fact that it is the spirit and that it is in human form. There is also the fact that hardly anyone nowadays knows what the spiritual is, let alone that people who are spiritual, as all spirits and angels are, have a human form.

[3] This is why almost all the people who arrive from this world are as astonished as they can be to find that they are alive and that they are just as human as ever, that they are seeing and hearing and talking, that their bodies are still endowed with the sense of touch, and that nothing at all has changed (see §74 above). Once they get over their amazement, though, then they are amazed that the church does not know anything about this

state of ours after death and therefore does not know anything about heaven or hell, even though all the people who have lived in this world are in the other life and are living people. Since they do keep wondering why this has not been made plain to people on earth through visions, inasmuch as it is essential to the faith of the church, they have been told from heaven that such visions could happen whenever it pleased the Lord—nothing could be easier. However, people would not believe even if they were to see, because they have convinced themselves of the opposing false notions. Further, it is dangerous to use visions to convince people of anything if they are immersed in false opinions, because they will believe at first and then deny. In this way they will desecrate the truth itself, since desecration is believing and then denying. People who desecrate truths are forced down into the lowest and direst hell of all.^c

[4] This is the danger meant by the Lord's words, "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts lest they see with their eyes and understand with their heart and turn themselves

c. Desecration is the mingling of the good and the evil and of the true and the false within us: 6348. The only people who can desecrate what is true and good, or the holy things of the Word and the church, are people who have first acknowledged them, all the more if they have lived by them, and later fall away from their faith, deny them, and live for themselves and the world: 593, 1008, 1010, 1059, 3398, 3399, 3898, 4289, 4601, 10284, 10287. If we fall back into prior evils after heartfelt repentance, we commit desecration; and then our later state is worse than our former one: 8394. People cannot desecrate holy things if they have not acknowledged them, and still less if they have not even known about them: 1008, 1010, 1059, 9188, 10284. Non-Christians who are outside the church and do not have the Word are incapable of desecration: 1327, 1328, 2051, 2081. This is why deeper truths were not disclosed to the Jews, because if they had been disclosed and acknowledged, they would have desecrated them: 3398, 3489 [3479], 6963. The fate of desecrators in the other life is the worst of all because the good and truth they acknowledged is still there and so is what is evil and false; and since these coexist, there is a wrenching of their very life: 571, 582, 6348. So the Lord takes the greatest care to prevent desecration: 2426, 10384.

and I might heal them” (John 12:40); and the fact that people immersed in false opinions still would not believe is meant when it says, “Abraham said to the rich man in hell, They have Moses and the prophets, let them heed them. But he said, No, Father Abraham, but if someone from the dead were to come to them, they would change. But Abraham said, If they do not heed Moses and the prophets, then even if someone were raised from the dead, they would not believe” (Luke 16:29–31).

When we first enter the world of spirits (which happens shortly after the reawakening just described), our spirit has a similar face and tone of voice as it did in the world. This is because at that point we are in the state of our external concerns, with our deeper concerns not yet uncovered. This is our initial state after decease. Later, though, our face changes and becomes quite different. It comes to look like the ruling affection in which the deeper reaches of our minds were engaged in the world, the kind of affection characteristic of the spirit within our body, because the face of our spirit is very different from the face of our body. We get our physical face from our parents and our spiritual face from our affection, which it images. Our spirit takes on this face after our physical life is over, when the outer coverings have been removed. This is our third state.

I have seen some newcomers from the world and have recognized them by their faces and voices; but when I saw them later, I did not recognize them. People who were engaged in good affections had lovely faces, while people who were engaged in evil affections had ugly ones. Seen in its own right, our spirit is nothing but our affections, whose outward form is our face.

The reason our faces change is that in the other life no one is allowed to pretend to affections they do not really have, so we cannot put on a face that is contrary to the love we are engaged in. We are all refined down to a state in which we say what we think and manifest in expression and act what we intend. This

is why our faces all become forms and images of our affections; and this is why all the people who have known each other in the world still recognize each other in the world of spirits, but not in heaven or hell, as already noted (§427).^d

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The faces of hypocrites change more slowly than those of other people, because by constant practice they have formed the habit of arranging their inner minds into a counterfeit of good affections. So for a long time they look fairly attractive. However, since this false front is gradually stripped off and the deeper elements of their minds are arranged in the form of their affections, eventually they are uglier than other people.

Hypocrites are people who talk like angels but who inwardly respect only nature, not the Divine Being, and who therefore deny the realities of the church and of heaven.

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It does need to be known that our human form is lovelier after death to the extent that we have more deeply loved divine truths and have lived by them, since our deeper levels are opened and formed according to both our love of these truths and our life. So the deeper the affection and the more it accords with heaven, the lovelier the face. This is why the angels who are in the inmost heaven are the loveliest—because they are forms of heavenly love. On the other hand, people who have loved divine truths more outwardly and have therefore lived by them more outwardly are less lovely, since only the more outward aspects radiate from their faces, and the deeper heavenly love—which means the form of heaven as it is in its own

d. Our faces are formed to be responsive to our inner natures: 4791–4805, 5695. On the correspondence of our faces and their expressions with the affections of our minds: 1568, 2988, 2989, 3631, 4796, 4797, 4800, 5165, 5168, 5695, 9306. For heaven's angels, the face forms a single whole with the deeper levels of the mind: 4796, 4797, 4798, 4799, 5695, 8250. So in the Word, "the face" means the deeper levels of the mind, or of affection and thought: 1999, 2434, 3527, 4066, 4796, 5102, 9306, 9546. How the inflow from the brains into the face changed in the course of time, and with it the face itself in regard to its responsiveness to our deeper natures: 4326, 8250.

right—does not shine through these more outward forms. You can see something relatively dim in their faces, not enlivened by a light of their inner life shining through. In short, all perfection increases as you move inward and lessens as you move outward. As the perfection increases or lessens, so does the beauty.

I have seen faces of angels of the third heaven so beautiful that no painters, with all their skill, could render a fraction of their light with their pigments or rival a thousandth part of the light and life that show in their faces. The faces of angels of the outmost heaven, though, can be mirrored to some extent.

Finally, I should like to offer a secret no one has ever known before, namely that everything good and true that comes from the Lord and makes heaven is in the human form. This is true not only of the greatest whole but also of every least part. This form influences everyone who accepts what is good and true from the Lord, and causes everyone in heaven to be in a human form according to that acceptance. This is why heaven is consistent with itself in general and in particular, why the human form is the form of the whole, of each community, and of each angel, as explained in the four chapters from §59 to §80. I need to add here that this is also the form of the details of thought that come from heavenly love in angels.

This secret may not fit well into the understanding of anyone on earth, but it is clear to the understanding of angels because they are in heaven's light.

*After Death, We Enjoy Every Sense, Memory, Thought,
and Affection We Had in the World: We Leave Nothing
Behind except Our Earthly Body*

REPEATED experience has witnessed to me that when we move from the natural world into the spiritual, which happens when we die, we take with us everything that pertains to our character except our earthly body. In fact, when we enter the

spiritual world or our life after death, we are in a body as we were in this world. There seems to be no difference, since we do not feel or see any difference. This body is spiritual, though, so it has been separated or purified from earthly matter. Further, when anything spiritual touches and sees something spiritual, it is just like something natural touching and seeing something natural. So when we have become a spirit, we have no sense that we are not in the body we inhabited in the world, and therefore do not realize that we have died.

[2] As “spirit-people,” we enjoy every outer and inner sense we enjoyed in the world. We see the way we used to, we hear and talk the way we used to; we smell and taste and feel things when we touch them the way we used to; we want, wish, crave, think, ponder, are moved, love, and intend the way we used to. Studious types still read and write as before. In a word, when we move from the one life into the other, or from the one world into the other, it is like moving from one [physical] place to another; and we take with us everything we owned as persons to the point that it would be unfair to say that we have lost anything of our own after death, which is only a death of the earthly body. [3] We even take with us our natural memory, since we retain everything we have heard, seen, read, learned, or thought in the world from earliest infancy to the very end of life. However, since the natural objects that reside in our memory cannot be reproduced in a spiritual world, they become dormant the way they do when we are not thinking about them. Even so, they can be reproduced when it so pleases the Lord. I will have more to say soon, though, about this memory and its condition after death.

Sense-centered people are quite incapable of believing that our state after death is like this because they do not grasp it. Sense-centered people can think only on the natural level, even about spiritual matters. This means that anything they do not sense—that is, see with their physical eyes and touch with their hands—they say does not exist, as we read of Thomas in John

20:25, 27, 29. The quality of sense-centered people has been described above in §267, and in note c there.

Nevertheless, the difference between our life in the spiritual world and our life in the natural world is considerable, in regard both to our outer senses and the way they affect us and to our inner senses and the way they affect us. People who are in heaven have far more delicate senses. That is, they see and hear and also think more discerningly than when they were in this world. This is because they are seeing in heaven's light, which vastly surpasses the world's light (see above, §126), and they hear by way of a spiritual atmosphere that vastly surpasses the atmosphere of the earth (see §235). The difference in their outer senses is like that between something clear and something hidden by a cloud, or like noonday light and the dimness of evening. Because it is divine truth, heaven's light enables angels' sight to notice and differentiate the slightest things. [2] Further, their outer sight is responsive to their inner sight or discernment, since for angels the one sight flows into the other and they act as a single faculty. This is why they are so keen. Their hearing is similarly responsive to their perception, which is a function of both discernment and volition. So they pick up in the tone and words of speakers the slightest shadings of their affection and thought—shadings of affection in the tone, and shadings of thought in the words (see above, §§234–245).

However, the other senses are not as delicate for angels as their senses of sight and hearing, because sight and hearing serve their intelligence and wisdom, while the others do not. If the other senses were as sensitive, they would take away the light and pleasure of angels' wisdom and interject a pleasure of motivations centering in various physical appetites, appetites that obscure and weaken the intellect to the extent that they flourish. This happens to people in the world as well, who become dull and mindless in regard to spiritual truths to the extent that they pander to their taste and to the sensual allurements of the body.

[3] What was presented in the chapter on the wisdom of heaven's angels (§§265–275) may suffice to indicate that the deeper senses of heaven's angels, the senses of their thought and affection, are more delicate and perfect than the ones they had in the world.

As for the difference in state of people who are in hell from their state in the world, this too is substantial. The perfection and wonder of the outer and inner senses of angels in heaven is paralleled by their imperfection for people in hell. However, we need to deal with their state later.

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As for our keeping our whole memory when we leave the world, I have been shown this by many examples and have seen and heard a great deal worth talking about. I should like to cite a few examples in a sequence. There have been people who denied the crimes and transgressions they had committed in the world. To prevent them from believing they were blameless, everything was disclosed and drawn out of their own memory in sequence from the beginning of their life to the end. Most of these transgressions were acts of adultery and promiscuity.

[2] There were people who had deceived others with malicious skill and had stolen from them. Their deceptions and thefts were also recounted one after the other, many of them known to practically no one in the world other than themselves. They even admitted them because they were made plain as day, along with every thought, intention, pleasure, and fear that mingled in their minds at the time.

[3] There were people who had taken bribes and made money from judicial decisions. They were similarly examined from their own memories, and everything was recounted from their first taking office to the end. The details of amount and value, of the time, and of their state of mind and intention, all consigned to their remembrance together, were brought to view, a hundred or more instances. In some cases, remarkably

enough, the very diaries in which they had recorded these deeds were opened and read to them, page by page.

[4] There were men who had lured virgins to dishonor and violated their chastity. They were summoned to a similar judgment, and the details were drawn out of their memory and listed. The actual faces of the virgins and other women were presented as though they were there in person, along with the places, the words, and the thoughts. It was done as instantaneously as when something is actually being witnessed first-hand. Sometimes these presentations lasted for hours.

[5] There was one man who thought nothing of slandering others. I heard his slanders recounted in sequence as well as his blasphemies, along with the actual words, the people they were about, and the people they were addressed to. All these were presented together as lifelike as could be even though he had very carefully kept them hidden from his victims while he was living in the world.

[6] There was one man who had defrauded a relative of his legacy by some devious pretext. He was exposed and judged in the same way. Remarkably, the letters and documents they exchanged were read aloud to me, and he said that not a word was missing. [7] This same man had also secretly killed a neighbor by poison just before his own death, which was disclosed in the following way. A trench seemed to open under his feet, and as it was opened, a man came out as though from a tomb and screamed at him, "What have you done to me?" Then everything was disclosed—how the poisoner had talked amicably with him and offered him a drink, what he had thought beforehand, and what happened afterward. Once this was uncovered, the murderer was condemned to hell.

[8] In a word, all their evils, crimes, thefts, wiles, and deceptions are made clear to every evil spirit. They are drawn from their own memories and exposed. There is no room for denial because all the circumstances are presented together.

I also heard that angels have seen and displayed from the memory of one individual everything he had thought one day after another over the course of a month, with never an error, recalled as though he himself were back in those very days.

[9] We may gather from these instances that we take our whole memory with us, and that nothing is so concealed in this world that it will not be made known after death, made known in public, according to the Lord's words, "Nothing is hidden that will not be uncovered, and nothing concealed that will not be known. So what you have said in darkness will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear will be proclaimed from the rooftops" (Luke 12:2–3).

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When we are being faced with our deeds after death, angels who have been given the task of examining look searchingly into the face and continue their examination through the whole body, beginning with the fingers first of one hand and then of the other and continuing through the whole. When I wondered why this was so, it was explained to me. The reason is that just as the details of our thought and intention are inscribed on our brains because that is where their beginnings are, so they are inscribed on the whole body as well, since all the elements of our thought and intention move out into the body from their beginnings and take definition there in their outmost forms. This is why the things that are inscribed on our memory from our intention and consequent thought are inscribed not only on the brain but also on the whole person, where they take form in a pattern that follows the pattern of the parts of the body. I could therefore see that our overall nature depends on the nature of our intention and consequent thought, so that evil people are their own evil and good people are their own good.^a

a. Good people, spirits, and angels are their own good and their own truth: that is, the nature of the whole person depends on the nature of that good and truth: 10298, 10367. This is because the good constitutes our volition and the true constitutes our intellect, and volition and intellect constitute the entire

We may also gather from this what is meant by our book of life, mentioned in the Word. It is the fact that all our deeds and all our thoughts are written on our whole person and seem as though they are read from a book when they are called out of our memory. They appear in a kind of image when our spirit is looked at in heaven's light.

I should like to add to this something noteworthy about the memory that we keep after death, something that convinced me that not just the general contents but even the smallest details that have entered our memory do last and are never erased. I saw some books with writing in them like earthly writing, and was told that they had come from the memories of the people who had written them, that not a single word was missing that had been in the book they had written in the world. I was also told that all the least details could be retrieved from the memory of someone else, even things the person had forgotten in the world. The reason for this was explained as well; namely, that we have an outer and an inner memory, the outer proper to our natural person and the inner proper to our spiritual person. The details of what we have thought, intended, said, and done, even what we have heard and seen, are inscribed on our inner or spiritual memory.^b There is no way to erase anything there,

life for a person here, for a spirit, and for an angel: 3332, 3623, 6065. This is the same as saying that people here, spirits, and angels are their love: 6872, 10177, 10284.

b. We have two memories, an outer and an inner, or a natural one and a spiritual one: 2469–2494. We are not aware that we have this inner memory: 2470, 2471. How much better the inner memory is than the outer one: 2473. The contents of our outer memory are in the world's light, while the contents of our inner memory are in heaven's light: 5212. It is because of our inner memory that we can think and talk intelligently and rationally: 9394. Absolutely everything we have thought, said, done, seen, and heard is inscribed on our inner memory: 2474, 7398. That memory is our book of life: 2474, 9386, 9841, 10505. In our inner memory are the true things that have become matters of our faith and the good things that have become matters of our love:

since everything is written at once on our spirit itself and on the members of our body, as noted above. This means that our spirit is formed in accord with what we have thought and what we have done intentionally. I know these things seem paradoxical and hard to believe, but they are true nevertheless.

Let no one believe, then, that there is anything we have thought or done in secret that will remain hidden after death. Believe rather that absolutely everything will come out into broad daylight.

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While our outer or natural memory is still part of us after death, still the merely natural things that are in it are not recreated in the other life, only spiritual things that are connected to the natural ones by correspondence. Still, when they are presented visually, they look just the same as they did in the natural world. This is because everything we see in the heavens looks as it did in the world, even though in essence it is not natural but spiritual, as has been explained in the chapter on representations and appearances in heaven (§§170–176).

[2] As for our outer or natural memory, though, to the extent that its contents are derived from matter, time, space, and everything else proper to nature, it does not fulfill the same function for the spirit that it fulfilled in the world. This is because in the world, when we thought on the basis of our outer sensitivity and not at the same time on the basis of our inner or intellectual sensitivity, we were thinking on the natural level and not on the spiritual one. However, in the other life, when our spirit is in the spiritual world, we do not think on the

5212, 8067. Things that have become second nature to us and part of our life and therefore have been erased from our outer memory are in our inner memory: 9394, 9723, 9841. Spirits and angels talk from their inner memory, which is why they have a universal language: 2472, 2476, 2490, 2493. Languages in the world are matters of the outer memory: 2472, 2476.

natural level but on the spiritual one. Thinking on the spiritual level is thinking intelligently or rationally. This is why our outer or natural memory then goes dormant as far as material things are concerned. The only things that come into play are what we have gained in the world through those material things and have made rational. The reason our outer memory goes dormant as far as material things are concerned is that they cannot be recreated. Spirits and angels actually talk from the affections and consequent thoughts of their minds, so they cannot utter anything that does not square with these, as you may gather from what was said about the language of angels in heaven and their communication with us (§§234–257). [3] This is why we are rational after death to the extent that we have become rational by means of languages and the arts and sciences in this world, and emphatically not to the extent that we have become skilled in them.

I have talked with any number of people who were regarded as learned in the world because of their knowledge of such ancient languages as Hebrew and Greek and Latin, but who had not developed their rational functioning by means of the things that were written in those languages. Some of them seemed as simple as people who did not know anything about those languages; some of them seemed dense, though there still remained a pride, as though they were wiser than other people.

[4] I have talked with some people who had believed in the world that wisdom depends on how much we have in our memory and who had therefore filled their memories to bursting. They talked almost exclusively from these items, which meant that they were not talking for themselves but for others; and they had not developed any rational function by means of these matters of memory. Some of them were dense, some silly, with no grasp of truth whatever, no sense of whether anything was true or not. They seized on every false notion sold as true by people who called themselves scholars. They were actually

incapable of seeing anything as it actually was, whether it was true or not, so they could not see anything rationally when they listened to others.

[5] I have talked with some people who had written a great deal in the world, some of them in all kinds of academic fields, people who had therefore gained an international reputation for learning. Some of them could quibble about whether truths were true or not. Some of them understood what was true when they turned toward people who were in the light of truth; but since they still did not want to understand what was true, they denied it when they focused on their own false opinions and were therefore really being themselves. Some of them did not know any more than the illiterate masses. So they varied depending on the way they had developed their rational ability through the treatises they had written or copied. Still, if people had opposed the truths of the church, had based their thinking on the arts and sciences, and had used them to convince themselves of false principles, they had not developed their rational ability but only their skill in argumentation—an ability that is confused with rationality in the world, but is in fact a different ability from rationality. It is an ability to prove anything one pleases, to see false things rather than true ones on the basis of preconceptions and illusions. There is no way people like this can be brought to recognize truths because it is impossible to see truths from false principles, though it is possible from true principles to see what is false.

[6] Our rational faculty is like a garden or flower bed, like newly tilled land. Our memory is the soil, information and experiential learning are the seeds, while heaven's light and warmth make them productive. There is no germination without these latter. So there is no germination in us unless heaven's light, which is divine truth, and heaven's warmth, which is divine love, are let in. They are the only source of rationality.

Angels are profoundly grieved that scholars for the most part keep attributing everything to nature and therefore close the

deeper levels of their minds so that they can see no trace of truth from the light of truth, the light of heaven. As a result, in the other life they are deprived of their ability to reason so that they will not use reason to spread false notions among simple people and mislead them. They are dismissed to desert areas.

One particular spirit resented the fact that he could not remember much of what he had known during his physical life. He was grieving over the pleasure he had lost because it had been his chief delight. He was told, though, that he had not lost anything at all and that he knew absolutely everything. In the world where he was now living he was not allowed to retrieve things like that. It should satisfy him that he could now think and talk much better and more perfectly without immersing his rational functioning in dense clouds, in material and physical concerns, the way he had before, in concerns that were useless in the kingdom he had now reached. Now he had whatever he needed for his functioning in eternal life, and there was no other way he could become blessed and happy. So it was the counsel of ignorance to believe that the removal and dormancy of material concerns in the memory led to the disappearance of intelligence, when in fact the more the mind can be led out of the sensory concerns that are proper to the outer person or the body, the more it is raised up to spiritual and heavenly concerns.

In the other life, people are sometimes shown what memories are like by having them presented visually in forms that are merely appearances (many things are presented visually there that for us here are strictly conceptual). The outer memory there looks like a callus, while the inner looks like the medullary substance found in the human brain. This also enables us to recognize their quality.

For people who have focused solely on memorization during their physical lives, without developing their rational ability, their memory has a callused quality that looks hard and streaked with tendons inside. For people who have filled their memories with false notions it looks shaggy because of the random mass

of disorganized stuff. For people who have focused on memorization with themselves and the world first in mind, it looks stuck together and bony. For people who have tried to probe divine secrets through acquired information, especially philosophical information, without believing anything before they are convinced by the information, their memory looks dark, with a quality that actually absorbs rays of light and turns them into darkness. For people who have been guileful and hypocrites it looks bony and hard as ebony that reflects light rays.

However, for people who have focused on the good of love and truths of faith, no such callus is visible. This is because their inner memory is transmitting rays of light into their outer memory, and those rays find definition in its objects or concepts as though it were their foundation or their soil, and find congenial vessels there. This is because the outer memory is the outmost element of the design, where spiritual and heavenly matters come gently to rest and dwell when there are good and true contents in it.

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While we are living in the world, if we are engaged in a love for the Lord and in thoughtfulness toward our neighbor, we have with and within us an angelic intelligence and wisdom, but it is hidden away in the depths of our inner memory. There is no way this intelligence and wisdom can become visible before we leave our bodies. Then our natural memory is put to sleep and we are awakened into consciousness of our inner memory and eventually of our actual angelic memory.

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I do need to explain briefly how our rational ability is developed. A genuine rational ability is made up of true elements and not of false ones. Anything made up of false elements is not rational. There are three kinds of true elements: civic, moral, and spiritual. Civic truths have to do with judicial matters and the governmental affairs of nations—in general, with what is fair and equitable. Moral truths have to do with matters of personal life in its societal and social contexts, in general with what is honest and upright, and in particular with all kinds of virtues.

Spiritual truths, however, have to do with matters of heaven and the church, in general with what is good in respect to love and what is true in respect to faith.

[2] There are three levels of life in every individual (see above, §267). Our rational ability is opened at the first level by means of civic truths, at the second level by moral truths, and at the third level by spiritual truths.

We need to realize, though, that our rational ability is not formed and opened simply by virtue of our knowing these truths, but by virtue of our living by them. Living by them means loving them out of a spiritual affection; and loving them out of a spiritual affection means loving what is fair and equitable because it is fair and equitable, what is honest and upright because it is honest and upright, what is good and true because it is good and true. On the other hand, living according to them and loving them out of a physical affection is loving them for the sake of oneself, one's repute, prestige, or profit. Consequently, to the extent that we love these truths out of a carnal affection, we do not become rational because we do not love them; we love ourselves, with the truths serving us the way slaves serve their master. When truths become slaves, they do not become part of us or open any level of our life, not even the first. Rather, they stay in our memory like information in material form and unite with love for ourselves there, which is a physical love.

[3] We may gather from this how we become rational, namely that at the third level it is through a spiritual love of what is good and true in regard to heaven and the church; at the second level it is through a love of what is honest and upright; and on the first level it is through a love of what is fair and equitable. The latter two loves also become spiritual from a spiritual love of what is good and true that flows into them and unites itself to them and forms its own face in them, so to speak.

Spirits and angels have memory just as we do. What they hear and see and think and intend and do stays with them;

and through their memory they are constantly developing their rational ability forever. This is why spirits and angels are being perfected in intelligence and wisdom through experiences of what is true and good just the way we are.

I have been shown that spirits and angels have memory by a great deal of experience as well. I have seen everything they had thought and done called up from their memory both in public and in private, when they were with other spirits. I have also seen people who had been focused on some truth from simple virtue become steeped in insights and in a consequent intelligence and then taken up into heaven.

It should be realized, though, that they are not steeped in insights and a consequent intelligence beyond the level of the affection for what is good and true that engaged them in the world. In fact, each spirit and angel retains the amount and kind of affection she or he had in the world, and this is afterward perfected by being filled in. This too goes on forever, since everything is capable of infinite variation and enrichment by different means, so it can be multiplied and can bear fruit. There is no end to any instance of goodness, since its source is the Infinite.

The fact that spirits and angels are constantly being perfected in intelligence and wisdom by means of insights into what is true and good has been presented in the chapters on the wisdom of heaven's angels (§§265–275); on non-Christians or people outside the church in heaven (§§318–328); and on infants in heaven (§§329–345). This happens at the level of the affection for the good and the true that engaged them in the world, and not beyond it (§349).

*Our Nature after Death Depends on
the Kind of Life We Led in the World*

ANY Christian knows from the Word that our life is still with us after death, since it says in many places that we will be judged

according to our deeds and works and rewarded accordingly. Further, anyone who thinks on the basis of what is good and from real truth cannot help but see that people who live well enter heaven and people who live evil lives enter hell. However, people who are intent on evil do not want to believe that their state after death depends on their life in the world. They think rather, especially when their health begins to fail, that heaven is granted to all on the basis of mercy alone no matter how people have lived, and that this depends on a faith that they keep separate from life.

It does say in many places in the Word that we will be judged and requited according to our deeds and works. I should like to cite a few passages here.

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The Human-born One is to come in the glory of the Father with his angels, and then he will render to everyone according to his or her works. (Matthew 16:17 [16:27])

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Truly, says the spirit, so that they may rest from their labors, their works follow them. (Revelation 14:11 [14:13])

I will give to all according to their works. (Revelation 2:23)

I saw the dead, small and great, standing in the presence of God, and books were opened, and the dead were judged according to what was written in the books, according to their works; the sea gave up those who had died in it, and death and hell gave up the people who were in them, and they were all judged according to their works. (Revelation 20:13, 15 [20:12, 13])

See, I am coming; and my reward is with me, and I will give to all according to their works. (Revelation 22:12)

Everyone who hears my words and does them I will compare to a prudent person, but everyone who hears my words and does not do them is like a foolish person. (Matthew 7:24, 26)

Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in the heavens. Many people will say to me on that day, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied through your name, and through your name cast out demons, and in your name done many powerful deeds?” But then I will confess to them, “I do not recognize you. Get away from me, workers of iniquity.” (Matthew 7:22, 23)

Then you will begin to say, “We have eaten in your presence and drunk, and you have taught in our streets.” But he will say, “I tell you, I do not recognize you, workers of iniquity.” (Luke 13:25–27)

I will repay them according to their work, and according to the deeds of their hands. (Jeremiah 25:14)

Jehovah, whose eyes are open upon all our paths, to give to us all according to our ways and according to the fruit of our works. (Jeremiah 32:19)

I will visit upon their ways and repay them their works. (Hosea 4:9)

Jehovah deals with us according to our ways and according to our works. (Zechariah 1:6)

Where the Lord is predicting the Last Judgment, he recounts only deeds, and [says] that the people who have done good works will enter eternal life, and that the people who have done

evil works will enter damnation (Matthew 25:32–46). There are many other passages as well that deal with our salvation and damnation.

We can see that our outward life consists of our works and deeds, and that the quality of our inner life is manifested through them.

“Works and deeds,” though, does not mean works and deeds solely the way they look in outward form. It also includes their deeper nature. Everyone knows, really, that all our deeds and works come from our intention and thought, for if they did not come from there they would be no more than motions like those of machines or robots. So a deed or work in its own right is simply an effect that derives its soul and life from our volition and thought, even to the point that it is volition and thought in effect, volition and thought in an outward form. It follows, then, that the quality of the volition and thought that cause the deed or work determines the quality of the deed or work. If the thought and intent are good, then the deeds and works are good; but if the thought and intent are evil, then the deeds and works are evil, even though they may look alike in outward form. A thousand people can behave alike—that is, can do the same thing, so much alike that in outward form one can hardly tell the difference. Yet each deed in its own right is unique because it comes from a different intent.

[2] Take for example behaving honestly and fairly with an associate. One person can behave honestly and fairly with someone else in order to seem honest and fair for the sake of self and to gain respect; another person can do the same for the sake of worldly profit; a third for reward and credit; a fourth to curry friendship; a fifth out of fear of the law and loss of reputation and office; a sixth to enlist people in his or her cause, even if it is an evil one; a seventh in order to mislead; and others for still other reasons. But even though all of their deeds look good (for behaving honestly and fairly toward a colleague is good),

still they are evil because they are not done for the sake of honesty and fairness, not because these qualities are loved, but for the sake of oneself and the world, because these are loved. The honesty and fairness are servants of this love, like the servants of a household whom their lord demeans and dismisses when they do not serve.

[3] People behave honestly and fairly toward their colleagues in a similar outward form when they are acting from a love of what is honest and fair. Some of them do it because of the truth of faith, or obedience, because it is enjoined in the Word. Some of them do it for the sake of the goodness of faith or conscience, because they are moved by religious feeling. Some of them do it out of the good of thoughtfulness toward their neighbor, because one's neighbor's welfare is to be valued. Some of them do it out of the goodness of love for the Lord, because what is good should be done for its own sake; so too what is honest and fair should be done for the sake of honesty and fairness. They love these qualities because they come from the Lord, and because the divine nature that emanates from the Lord is within them. So if we see them in their true essence, they are divine. The deeds or works of these people are inwardly good, so they are outwardly good as well; for as already noted, the nature of deeds and works is entirely determined by the nature of the thought and intent from which they stem, and apart from such thought and intent they are not deeds and works but only lifeless motions.

We may gather from this what is meant by works and deeds in the Word.

Since deeds and works are matters of intention and thought, they are also matters of love and faith to the point that their quality is the quality of their love and faith. That is, it amounts to the same thing whether you talk about our love or about our intentions, whether you talk about our established faith or about our thought, since what we love we also intend, and

what we believe we also think. If we love what we believe, we intend it as well and do it to the extent that we can. Anyone can realize that love and faith dwell within our intentions and thought and not outside them, since intent is what is kindled by love and thought is what is enlightened in matters of faith. This means that only people who can think wisely are enlightened; and depending on their enlightenment they think what is true and intend what is true, they believe what is true and love what is true.^a

We do need to recognize, though, that volition makes us who we are. Thought does so only to the extent that it arises from our volition, while deeds and works come from both. Or in other words, love is what makes us who we are; faith does so only to the extent that it arises from love, and deeds and works come from both. It follows from this that love or intent is the actual person, for the things that come forth belong to the person they come forth from. To come forth is to be produced and presented in a form suited to observation and sight.^b

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a. Just as everything in the universe that occurs in an orderly fashion goes back to what is good and true, so everything in us goes back to volition and intellect: 803, 10122. This is because it is our volition that receives what is good and our intellect that receives what is true: 3332, 3623, 5332, 6065, 6125, 7503, 9300, 9930. It amounts to the same thing whether you talk about what is true or faith, since faith is a matter of truth and truth is a matter of faith; and it also amounts to the same thing whether you talk about what is good or love, since love is a matter of what is good, and what is good is a matter of love: 4353, 4997, 7178, 10122, 10367. So it follows that intellect is the recipient of faith and volition the recipient of love: 7178, 10122, 10367; and since our intellect can accept faith in God and our volition love for God, we can be united to God by faith and love; and anyone who can be united to God by faith and love cannot die forever: 4525, 6323, 9231.

b. Our volition is the essential reality of our life, since it is the vessel of love or what is good; and our intellect is the consequent manifestation of life because it is the vessel of faith or what is true: 3619, 5002, 9282; so our voluntary life is our primary life and our intellectual life is secondary to it: 585, 590, 3619, 7342, 8885, 9282, 10076, 10109, 10110. It is like light from a fire or flame: 6032,

We may gather from this what faith is apart from love—no faith at all, only information with no spiritual life in it. The same holds true for deeds apart from love. They are not deeds or works of life at all, only deeds or works of death containing some semblance of life derived from a love of evil and a faith in what is false. This semblance of life is what we call spiritual death.

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We should realize as well that we present our whole person in our works and deeds and that our volition and thought, or the love and faith that are our inner constituents, are not complete until they are [embodied] in the deeds and works that are our outer constituents. These latter are in fact the outmost forms in which the former find definition; and without such definitions they are like undifferentiated things that do not yet have any real presence, things that are therefore not yet in us. To think and intend without acting when we can is like a flame sealed in a jar and stifled, or it is like seed sown in the sand that does not grow but dies along with its power to reproduce. Thinking and intending and doing, though, is like a flame that sheds its light and warmth all around, or like seed sown in the soil, that grows into a tree or a flower and becomes something. Anyone can see that intending and not acting when we can is not really intending, and loving and not doing good when we can is not really loving. It is only thinking that we intend and love; so it is a matter of isolated thought that disintegrates and

6314. It follows from this that we are human because of our volition and our consequent intellect: 8911, 9069, 9071, 10076, 10109, 10110. Every individual is loved and valued by others in proportion to the virtue of her or his intentions and the consequent thought. We are loved and valued if we intend well and understand well, rejected and demeaned if we understand well but do not intend well: 8911, 10076. After death we retain the quality of our intentions and our consequent understanding: 9069, 9071, 9386, 10153. This means that after death we retain the quality of our love and faith. Any elements that are matters of faith but not at the same time of love vanish then because they are not within us and therefore are not part of us: 553, 2364, 10153.

vanishes. Love and intent are the very soul of the deed or work. It forms its own body in the honest and fair things that we do. This is the sole source of our spiritual body, the body of our spirit; that is, our spiritual body is formed entirely from what we have done out of love or intent (see above, §463). In a word, everything of our character and our spirit is [embodied] in our works or deeds.^c

We may gather from this what is meant by the life that stays with us after death. It is actually our love and our consequent faith, not only in theory but in act as well. So it is our deeds or works because these contain within themselves our whole love and faith.

There is a dominant love that remains with each of us after death and never changes to eternity. We all have many loves, but they all go back to our dominant love and form a single whole with it, or compose it in the aggregate. All the elements of our volition that agree with our dominant love are called loves because they are loved. There are deeper and more superficial loves, loves that are directly united and loves that are indirectly united; there are closer and more distant ones; there are loves that serve in various ways. Taken all together they make a kind of kingdom. They are actually arranged in this way within us even though we are utterly unaware of their arrangement. However, the arrangement becomes visible to some extent in the other life because the outreach of our thoughts and affections

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c. Deeper things flow sequentially into more outward ones and ultimately into what is outmost or final, which is where they find presence and permanence: 634, 6239, 6465, 9216, 9217. They not only flow in, they form a simultaneous whole on that outmost level, in a particular design: 5897, 6451, 8603, 10099. This is why all our deeper elements are held in connection and are stable: 9828. Deeds or works are the final forms in which our deeper elements exist: 10331; so being repaid and judged according to our works is [being repaid and judged] according to everything that pertains to our love and faith or our intentions and thought, since these are the deeper realities within our works: 3147, 3934, 6073, 8911, 10331, 10333.

there depends on it. The outreach is into heavenly communities if our dominant love is made up of loves of heaven, but it is into hellish communities if our dominant love is made up of loves of hell.

On the outreach into communities of all the thought and affection of spirits and angels, see the previous chapters on the wisdom of heaven's angels and on heaven's form, which determines its gatherings and communications [§§265–275, 200–212].

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What I have said so far, though, is addressed only to our rational thought. In order to present the matter to sensory observation, I should like to add some experiences that may serve to illustrate and support the claims that *first*, we are our love or intention after death; *second*, we remain the same forever in regard to our volition or dominant love; *third*, we come into heaven if our love is heavenly and spiritual, and into hell if our love is carnal and worldly without any heavenly and spiritual dimension; *fourth*, our faith does not stay with us unless it comes from a heavenly love; and *fifth*, love in action, and therefore our life, is what remains.

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A great deal of my experience has testified to the fact that *we are our love or intention after death*. All heaven is differentiated into communities on the basis of differences in the quality of love, and every spirit who is raised up into heaven and becomes an angel is taken to the community where her or his love is. When we arrive there we feel as though we are in our own element, at home, back to our birthplace, so to speak. Angels sense this and associate there with kindred spirits. When they leave and go somewhere else, they feel a constant pull, a longing to go back to their kindred and therefore to their dominant love. This is how people gather together in heaven. The same applies in hell. There too, people associate according to loves that oppose heavenly ones. On the fact that both heaven and hell are made up of communities and that they are all differentiated according to differences of love, see §§41–50 and 200–212 above.

[2] We may also gather that we are our love after death from the fact that anything that does not agree with our dominant love is then removed and apparently taken away from us. For good people, what is removed and apparently taken away is everything that disagrees and conflicts, with the result that they are admitted to their love. It is much the same for evil people, except that what is taken away from them is everything true, while for good people everything false is taken away. Either way, the result is that ultimately everyone becomes his or her own love. This happens when we are brought into our third state, which will be discussed below.

Once this has happened, we constantly turn our faces toward our love and have it constantly before our eyes no matter which way we face (see above, §§123–124).

[3] All spirits can be led wherever you want as long as they are kept in their dominant love. They cannot resist even though they know what is happening and think that they will refuse. Spirits have often tried to do something in opposition, but without success. Their love is like a chain or rope tied around them, with which they can be pulled and which they cannot escape. It is the same for people in this world. Our love leads us as well, and it is through our love that we are led by others. It is even more so when we become spirits, though, because then we are not allowed to present a different love or pretend to a love that is not ours.

[4] It is obvious in every gathering in the other life that our spirit is our dominant love. To the extent that we act and talk in keeping with someone else's love, that individual looks whole, with a face that is whole, cheerful, and lively. To the extent that we act and talk against someone else's dominant love, though, that individual's face begins to change, to dim, and to be hard to see. Eventually it disappears as though it were not even there. I have often been amazed at this because this kind of thing cannot happen in the world. However, I have been told that the same thing happens to the spirit within us, in that when we

turn our attention away from someone, that individual is no longer in our sight.

[5] I have also seen that our spirit is our dominant love from the fact that every spirit seizes and claims whatever suits his or her love and rejects and repels whatever does not suit it. Our love is like a spongy, porous wood that absorbs whatever liquids prompt its growth, and repels others. It is like animals of various kinds. They recognize their proper foods, seek out the ones that suit their natures, and avoid the ones that disagree. Every love actually wants to be nourished by what is appropriate to it—an evil love by falsities and a good love by truths. I have occasionally been allowed to see that some particular simple and good people wanted to teach evil people things that were true and good. Faced with this teaching, though, the evil people fled far away; and when they reached their own kind, they seized on whatever falsities suited their love with great delight. I have also been allowed to see good spirits talking with each other about truths, which other good spirits in attendance listened to eagerly, while some evil ones who were there paid no attention, as though they did not hear anything.

In the world of spirits you can see paths, some leading to heaven and some leading to hell, each one leading to some specific community. Good spirits travel only the paths that lead to heaven, and to the community engaged in their own quality of love. They do not see paths that lead anywhere else. On the other hand, evil spirits travel only the paths that lead to hell and to that community there which is engaged in the evil of their own love. They do not see paths that lead anywhere else; and if they do see them, they still do not want to follow them.

Paths like this in the spiritual world are “real appearances” that correspond to true and false [understandings]; so this is what “paths” in the Word mean.^d

d. A way, road, track, lane, or street means things that are true and that lead to something good, as well as false things that lead to something evil: 627, 2333,

These proofs from experience support what was said above on rational grounds, namely that after death we are our own love and our own intent. I say “intent” because for each of us, our intent is our love.

A great deal of experience has also convinced me that *after death we remain the same forever in regard to our volition or dominant love*. I have been allowed to talk with some people who lived more than two thousand years ago, people whose lives are described in history books and are therefore familiar. I discovered that they were still the same, just as described, including the love that was the source and determinant of their lives.

There were others who had lived seventeen centuries ago, also known from history books, and some who had lived four centuries ago, some three, and so on, with whom I was also allowed to talk and to learn that the same affection still governed within them. The only difference was that the pleasures of their love had been changed into corresponding ones.

Angels have told me that the life of our dominant love never changes for anyone to all eternity because we are our love, so to change it in any spirit would be to take away and snuff out his or her life.

They have also told me that this is because after death we can no longer be reformed by being taught the way we could in this world, since the outmost level, made up of natural insights and affections, is then dormant and cannot be opened because it is not spiritual (see above, §464). The deeper functions of our mind or spirit rest on this level the way a house rests on its foundation, which is why we do stay forever like the life of our love in the world. Angels are utterly amazed that people do not realize that our nature is determined by the nature of

10422. To sweep a path is to prepare to accept what is true: 3142. To make a path known, when it is said of the Lord, is to teach people about the truths that lead to what is good: 10564.

our dominant love and that many people actually believe they can be saved by instantaneous mercy, simply on the basis of their faith alone, regardless of the kind of life they have led, not realizing that divine mercy operates through means. The means involve being led by the Lord in the world as well as afterward in heaven, and the people who are led by mercy are the ones who do not live in evil. People do not even know that faith is an affection for what is true, an affection that comes from a heavenly love that comes from the Lord.

481

We come into heaven if our love is heavenly and spiritual and into hell if our love is carnal and worldly without any heavenly and spiritual dimension. My evidence for this conclusion is all the people I have seen raised into heaven and cast into hell. The ones who were raised into heaven had lives of heavenly and spiritual love, while the ones who were cast into hell had lives of carnal and worldly love. Heavenly love is loving what is good, honest, and fair because it is good, honest, and fair, and doing it because of that love. This is why they have a life of goodness, honesty, and fairness, which is a heavenly life. If we love these things for their own sakes and do or live them, we are also loving the Lord above all because they come from him. We are also loving our neighbor, because these things are our neighbor who is to be loved.^e Carnal love, though, is loving what is good and

e. In the highest sense, the Lord is our neighbor because he is to be loved above all; however, loving the Lord is loving what comes from him because he is in everything that comes from him, so [our neighbor is] whatever is good and true: 2425, 3419, 6706, 6711, 6819, 6823, 8123. Loving what is good and true, which come from him, is living by them, and this is loving the Lord: 10143, 10153, 10310, 10336, 10578, 10648. Every individual and community, our country and church, and in the broadest sense the Lord's kingdom, is our neighbor; and loving our neighbor is helping them from a love for their good in keeping with their state. This means that their welfare, which we are to value, is the neighbor: 6818–6824, 8123. Moral good, or what is honest, and civic good, or what is fair, are our neighbor as well; and acting honestly and fairly out of a love for what is honest and fair is loving the neighbor: 2915, 4730, 8120, 8121, 8122, 8123. Consequently, thoughtfulness toward our

honest and fair not for their own sakes but for our own sake, because we can use them to gain prestige, position, and profit. In this case we are not focusing on the Lord and our neighbor within what is good and honest and fair but on ourselves and the world, and we enjoy deceit. When the motive is deceit, then whatever is good and honest and fair is actually evil and dishonest and unfair. This is what we love within [the outward appearance].

[2] Since these loves define our lives, we are all examined as to our quality immediately after death, when we arrive in the world of spirits, and we are put in touch with people of like love. If we are focused on heavenly love, we are put in touch with people in heaven; and if we are focused on carnal love, we are put in touch with people in hell. Further, once the first and second states have been completed the two kinds of people are separated so that they no longer see or recognize each other. We actually become our own love not only as to the deeper levels of our minds but outwardly as well, in face, body, and speech, since we become images of our love even in outward things. People who are carnal loves look coarse, dim, dark, and misshapen; while people who are heavenly loves look lively, clear, bright, and lovely. They are completely different in spirit and in thought as well. People who are heavenly loves are intelligent and wise, while people who are carnal loves are dense and rather silly.

[3] When leave is given to examine the inner and outer aspects of the thoughts and affections of people engaged in heavenly love, the inner reaches look as though they were made of light, in some cases like the light of a flame; and their outer

neighbor includes all aspects of our lives, and doing what is good and fair, and acting honestly from the heart in every position we hold and in everything we do, is loving our neighbor: 2417, 8121, 8124. The doctrine of the early church was a doctrine of charity, and this was the source of their wisdom: 2417, 2385, 3419, 3420, 4844, 6628.

manifestations are of various lovely colors, like a rainbow. In contrast, the inner reaches of people who are engaged in carnal love look gloomy because they are closed in, in some cases like a smoky fire for people who were inwardly maliciously deceptive. Their outer manifestations have an ugly color, depressing to look at (both the inner and outer aspects of the mind and spirit are presented visually in the spiritual world whenever it so pleases the Lord).

[4] People who are engaged in carnal love do not see anything in heaven's light. Heaven's light is darkness to them, while hell's light, which is like the light of glowing embers, is like daylight to them. In fact, in heaven's light their inner sight is deprived of light to the point that they become insane. As a result, they run away from it and hide in caves and caverns of a depth that corresponds to the false convictions that stem from their evil intentions. Exactly the reverse is true for people who are engaged in heavenly love, though. The deeper or higher they enter into heavenly light, the more clearly they see everything and the lovelier it all looks, and the more intelligently and wisely they grasp what is true.

[5] There is no way that people who are engaged in carnal love can live in heaven's warmth, because heaven's warmth is heavenly love. They can live in hell's warmth, though, which is a love of cruelty toward people who do not support them. The pleasures of this love are contempt for others, hostility, hatred, and vengefulness. When they are absorbed in these they are in their very life, with no knowledge whatever of what it means to do good for others out of sheer goodness and for the sake of the good itself. All they know is how to do good out of malice and for the sake of malice.

[6] People who are engaged in carnal love cannot breathe in heaven either. When evil spirits are taken there, they draw breath like someone who is struggling painfully. On the other hand, people who are engaged in heavenly love breathe more freely and feel more alive the deeper into heaven they come.

We may gather from this that a heavenly and spiritual love is heaven for us because everything heavenly is written on that love; and that carnal and worldly love apart from heavenly and spiritual love is hell for us because everything hellish is written on that love.

We can see, then, that people come into heaven who have a heavenly and spiritual love, and people come into hell who have a carnal and worldly love without a heavenly and spiritual one.

The fact that *our faith does not stay with us unless it comes from a heavenly love* has been brought home to me by so much experience that if I were to relate what I have seen and heard about it, it would fill a book. I can attest to this: that there is no faith whatever and there can be none for people who are engrossed in carnal and worldly love apart from heavenly and spiritual love. There is only information, or a secondhand belief that something is true because it serves their own love. Further, a number of people who thought they had had faith were introduced to people of real faith; and once communication was established they perceived that they had no faith at all. They even admitted later that simply believing the truth or the Word is not faith; but faith is loving what is true from a heavenly love and intending and doing it from a deep affection. I was also shown that the secondhand belief they called faith was only like the light of winter in which everything on earth lies dormant, bound by the ice and buried in snow because there is no warmth to the light. As a result, the moment it is touched by rays of heaven's light, the light of their secondhand faith is not only extinguished but actually becomes a dense darkness in which people cannot even see themselves. At the same time, too, their deeper reaches are so darkened that they cannot discern anything and ultimately go mad because of their false convictions.

The result is that all the truths such people have learned from the Word and from the teaching of the church are taken away from them, all the things they claimed were part of their faith, and in their place they are filled with everything false that

accords with the evil of their life. They are actually all plunged into their loves and into the false notions that support them as well. Then, since truths contradict the false, malicious notions they are absorbed in, they hate the truths, turn their backs on them, and reject them.

I can bear witness from all my experiences of what happens in heaven and in hell that people who have confessed faith alone as a matter of doctrine and have engaged in evil as regards their lives are all in hell. I have seen thousands of them sent there and have described them in the booklet *The Last Judgment and Babylon Destroyed*.

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The fact that *love in action, and therefore our life, is what remains* follows logically from what I have presented from experience and what I have just said about deeds and works. Love in action is the work and the deed.

484

We do need to know that all works and deeds are matters of moral and civic life and therefore focus on what is honest and right and what is fair and equitable. What is honest and right is a matter of moral life, and what is fair and equitable is a matter of civic life. The love these come from is either heavenly or hellish. The works and deeds of our moral and civic life are heavenly if we do them from a heavenly love, because things that we do from a heavenly love we do from the Lord, and everything we do from the Lord is good. On the other hand, the deeds and works of our moral and civic life are hellish if they come from a hellish love, since whatever we do from this love, which is a love for ourselves and the world, we do from ourselves, and whatever we do from ourselves is intrinsically evil. In fact, seen in our own right, or in terms of what is actually ours, we are nothing but evil.^f

f. Our own nature is to love ourselves more than God and the world more than heaven, and to regard the neighbor as nothing in comparison to ourselves, so it is a love for oneself and for the world: 634 [694], 731, 4317. This is the self into which we are born, and it is solid evil: 210, 215, 731, 874, 875, 876,

*After Death, the Pleasures of Everyone's Life
Are Turned into Things That Correspond*

I EXPLAINED in the last chapter that our dominant affection or predominant love stays with us forever. Now, though, I need to explain that the pleasures of that affection or love change into things that correspond. “Changing into things that correspond” means changing into spiritual things that answer to the natural ones. We may gather that they change into spiritual things from the fact that as long as we are in our earthly bodies we are in the natural world; but once we leave that body behind, we arrive in the spiritual world and put on a spiritual body. (On angels having perfect human forms and being people after death, and on the bodies they wear being spiritual, see above, §§73–77 and 453–460; and for a description of the correspondence of spiritual things with natural ones, see §§87–115.)

485

All our pleasures stem from our dominant love, for the only things that feel pleasant to us are the ones that we love; so the most pleasant of all is what we love above all. Whether you say “our dominant love” or “what we love above all,” it amounts to the same thing.

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There are different pleasures—as many, generally speaking, as there are different dominant loves, which means as many as there are of us, and of spirits and angels, since no one's dominant love is entirely like that of anyone else. This is why no

987, 1047, 2307, 2318 [2308], 3518, 3701, 3812, 8480, 8550, 10283, 10284, 10286, 10731 [10832]. From our self-image comes not only everything evil but also everything false: 1047, 10283, 10284, 10286. The evils that come from our self-image are contempt for others, hostility, hatred, vengefulness, cruelty, and deceit: 6667, 7372, 7373, 7374, 9348, 10038, 10742 [10743]. To the extent that our self-image rules, we either reject or stifle or pervert the goodness of love and the truth of faith: 2041, 7491, 7492, 7643, 8487, 10455, 10743. Our self-image is hell for us: 694, 8480. Anything good that we do because of our self-image is not good but is essentially evil: 8478 [8480, 8487].

one's face is exactly like that of anyone else, since the face is the image of the mind, and in the spiritual world is an image of the dominant love. The pleasures of any specific individual are infinitely varied as well, with no pleasure ever entirely like any other. This applies both to the pleasures that come in sequence and to the ones that occur simultaneously. No two are ever alike. However, the specific pleasures of any given individual go back to that single love which is that individual's dominant love. In fact, they constitute it and therefore become one with it. In much the same way, all pleasures overall go back to one love that is universally dominant—in heaven, a love for the Lord, and in hell, a love for oneself.

487

The only way to know the kinds and qualities of the spiritual pleasures into which natural pleasures turn after death is through a knowledge of correspondences. This teaches in general that there is nothing natural to which something spiritual does not answer, and it teaches specifically the identity and nature of whatever does so correspond. This means that people who are engaged in this knowledge can recognize and know their state after death provided they know their love and how it relates in its nature to the universally dominant love to which, as we have just stated, all loves go back.

However, people who are involved in self-love cannot know what their dominant love is because they love whatever is theirs and call their evils good. They also call false things true, the false notions that support them and that they use to rationalize their evils. If they were willing, though, they could still know [their dominant love] from other people who are wise, because these latter see what they themselves do not. This does not happen, though, in the case of people who are so enmeshed in their self-love that they have nothing but contempt for any teaching of the wise.

[2] On the other hand, people who are in heavenly love do accept instruction and do see the evils into which they were

born when they are led into them. They see them from truths because truths make evils obvious. Anyone can in fact see what is evil and the distortion it causes by seeing from the truth that arises from what is good; but no one can see what is good and true from an evil standpoint. This is because the false notions that arise from evil are darkness and correspond to it. So people who are caught up in false notions that arise from evil are like blind people who do not see things that are in the light, and they avoid them the way owls avoid daylight.^a On the other hand, the true perceptions that arise from good are light and correspond to light (see above, §§126–134). So people who are focused on the true perceptions that arise from good are sighted and open-eyed and can differentiate between things that are in light and shade.

[3] I have been granted confirmation of this too by experience. The angels who are in the heavens both see and grasp the evil and false promptings that well up in them from time to time; and they can also see the evil and false promptings that engage the spirits in the world of spirits who are in touch with the hells, though the spirits themselves cannot see their own evil and false promptings. They do not grasp what the virtue of heavenly love is, what conscience is, what is honest and fair (except as it is to their own advantage), or what it means to be led by the Lord. They say these things do not exist and therefore make no difference whatever.

All this has been presented to encourage people to examine themselves and to identify their dominant love on the basis of

a. By reason of correspondence, darkness in the Word means falsities, and dense darkness or gloom means falsities that stem from evil: 1839, 1860, 7688, 7711. Heaven's light is darkness to evil people: 1861, 6832, 8197. People who are in the hells are said to be in darkness because they are engrossed in false notions that stem from evil; with some discussion: 3340, 4418, 4531. In the Word, "the blind" means people who are engrossed in false convictions and do not want to be taught: 2383, 6990.

their pleasures, so that according to their grasp of the knowledge of correspondences, they may know their state of life after death.

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It is possible to know from a knowledge of correspondences how our life pleasures are changed after death into what corresponds to them; but since this is not common knowledge, I should like to shed some light on the matter from experience.

People who are caught up in evil and who have formed fixed false convictions against the truths of the church, especially people who have rejected the Word, flee from heaven's light. They plunge into cellars that look murky through their openings and into crevices in the rocks and hide themselves there. This is because they have loved their false notions and hated true ones. Cellars like this, and crevices in the rocks as well,^b and false things, correspond to darkness;^c and light corresponds to things that are true. They find it pleasant to live there, and painful to live out in the open.

[2] People who took delight in covert plotting and in manufacturing deceptive schemes in secret also live in these cellars and move into rooms so dark that people can barely see each other. They whisper in each other's ears in the corners. This is what becomes of the pleasures of their love.

If people have loved the academic disciplines only in order to sound learned, without using them to develop their ability to reason, taking delight in their pride at the contents of their memories, they love sandy areas and prefer them to meadows and gardens because sandy areas correspond to these kinds of study.

[3] People who are wrapped up in knowing the doctrines of churches, their own and others', without applying them to life,

b. In the Word, rocky crevices and fissures mean what is dim and false in faith: 10582; because rocks mean faith from the Lord: 8581, 10580; and stone means truth of faith: 114, 643, 1298, 3720, 6426, 8608, 10376.

c. [Swedenborg's note at this point refers the reader back to the note in §487:2.]

love stony areas and live among rock piles. They avoid cultivated land because it is repulsive to them.

If people have given nature—and their own prudence—credit for everything and have used various devices to gain high office and a great deal of wealth, in the other life they study magical arts that are misuses of the divine design, and find in them the greatest pleasure of their life.

[4] People who have adapted divine truths to their own loves and have therefore falsified them love urinary things because urinary things correspond to the pleasures of this kind of love.^d

People who were filthy misers live in cubicles and love the filth of pigs and the foul odors they breathe out from half-digested food in their stomachs.

[5] If people have devoted their lives wholly to pleasure, living elegantly, pandering to the gullet and the belly, loving this as the greatest good of life, in the other life they love feces and latrines and find them delightful. This is because pleasures like these are spiritual filth. They avoid places that are clean and free from filth because they find them distasteful.

[6] People who took pleasure in adultery pass their time in brothels where everything is filthy and foul. They love these places and avoid chaste homes. The moment they come near such homes they feel faint. Nothing pleases them more than to break up marriages.

People who have been bent on revenge and have therefore taken on a savage and sadistic nature love places like morgues, and are in hells of that sort.

Others fare differently.

In contrast, the life pleasures of people who have lived in heavenly love in the world change into the kinds of corresponding things that exist in the heavens, things that come into being from heaven's sun and from its light. The things which that light renders visible have hidden within them divine realities.

d. Defilement of truth corresponds to urine: 5390.

What comes to view from this source moves the deeper reaches of angels' minds and the outer levels of their bodies as well; and since a divine light (which is divine truth emanating from the Lord) is flowing into their minds, which have been opened by heavenly love, it presents in outward form things that answer to the pleasures of their love. In the chapter that dealt with representations and appearances in heaven (§§170–176) and the chapter on the wisdom of heaven's angels (§§265–275), I have explained that the things presented to angels' sight in the heavens answer to their own deeper natures or to elements of their faith and love, and therefore to their intelligence [and] wisdom.

[2] Since I have begun supporting this general proposition by examples drawn from my experience, to shed light on what has been said so far on the basis of the causes of things, I should also like to bring in at this point something about the heavenly pleasures into which the natural pleasures turn for people who live in heavenly love in the world.

People who have loved divine truths and the Word from a deep affection, or from an affection for the truth itself, live in the light, in uplands that look like mountains, and are constantly bathed in the light of heaven there. They know nothing of the kind of darkness we have at night in the world, and they live in a springtime climate as well. Their scenery offers them views like fields ripe for harvest and vineyards. Everything in their houses gleams as though it were made of precious stones. Looking through their windows is like looking through pure crystal. These are their visual pleasures; but they are actually deeper pleasures because of their correspondence with divine heavenly qualities, since the truths from the Word that they have loved correspond to the harvest fields, vineyards, precious stones, windows, and crystals.^e

e. A harvest in the Word means a state of acceptance and growth of what is true because of the good: 9291. Standing grain means truth being conceived: 9146. Vineyards mean the spiritual church and the truths of that church: 1069,

[3] People who have applied the teachings of the church from the Word directly to their lives are in the inmost heaven and more than anyone else are absorbed in the pleasures of wisdom. They see divine realities in particular objects. They actually do see the objects, but the corresponding divine realities flow directly into their minds and fill them with a sense of blessedness that affects all their sensory functions. As a result, everything they see seems to laugh and play and live (on this, see above, §270).

[4] If people have loved learning and have developed their rational ability accordingly and thereby gained intelligence, and if they have acknowledged the Divine Being at the same time, their delight in knowledge and pleasure in reasoning changes in the other life into a spiritual pleasure that is the delight of first-hand knowledge of what is good and true. They live in gardens where you can see flower beds and lawns beautifully marked off, surrounded by rows of trees with arcades and promenades. The trees and flowers change from day to day. Looking at all this brings pleasure to their minds generally, and the specific changes make it constantly new. Further, since all this corresponds to divine qualities, and since these people are drawn to their knowledge of correspondences, they are constantly being filled with new insights and thereby having their spiritual rational faculty perfected. They enjoy these pleasures because gardens, flower beds, lawns, and trees correspond to information, insights, and the intelligence that ensues.^f

9139. Precious stones mean truths of heaven and of the church translucent from the good: 114, 9863, 9865, 9868, 9873, 9905. Windows mean the intellectual function of our inner sight: 655, 658, 3391.

f. Gardens, groves, and parks mean intelligence: 100, 103, 3220. Therefore the early people held their holy worship in groves: 2722, 4552. Flowers and flower beds mean truths of information and insight: 9553. Small plants, grasses, and lawns mean true information: 7571. Trees mean perceptions and insights: 103, 2163, 2682, 2722, 2972, 7692.

[5] If people have given the Divine credit for everything and regarded nature as relatively dead, simply subservient to spiritual concerns, and if they have convinced themselves of this, they are in heavenly light; and everything that presents itself to their eyes derives a kind of translucence from that light. In that translucency they see innumerable shadings of light that their inner sight seems to drink directly in. This is how they perceive deeper pleasures. The objects in their houses look like diamonds with similar variegations of light. I have been told that their walls look like crystal and are therefore also translucent, and that within them one can see what looks like fluid forms representative of heavenly things, again with constant variety. This is because this kind of translucence corresponds to an intellect that has been enlightened by the Lord, with the shadows that arise from faith in and love of natural things taken away. Things like this—and infinitely more—are what people who have been in heaven are talking about when they say that they have seen what the eye has never seen, and that from the grasp of divine things conveyed to them in this connection, they have heard what the ear has never heard.

[6] If people have not acted covertly but have wanted everything they were thinking to be out in the open to the extent that civil law allows, then since they have thought nothing but what was honest and fair because of the Deity, in heaven their faces are radiant. Because of that radiance, the details of their thoughts and affections are visible in their faces as though presented in a form; and in both speech and action they are virtual images of their feelings. They are more beloved than others. When they are talking, their faces dim a little, but after they have spoken, then the very things they have said can be fully and plainly seen in their faces. Further, since everything around them answers to their deeper natures, everything takes on a countenance that enables others to see clearly what they represent and mean. Spirits who have found pleasure in covert

activity get as far from them as they can, and seem to themselves to slither away from them like snakes.

[7] People who have regarded adultery as unspeakable and have lived in chaste love of their marriage are more in the pattern and form of heaven than anyone else. This gives them a total beauty and a constant flower of youth. The pleasures of their love are indescribable, and increase to eternity. This is because all the joys and delights of heaven flow into that love; and this in turn is because that love comes down from the Lord's union with heaven and with the church and in general from the union of the good and the true that is heaven in general and in every individual angel in particular (see above, §§366–386). Their external pleasures are so wonderful that they cannot be described in human words.

Still, what I have said about the correspondences of pleasures for people who are involved in heavenly love is only a little.

This enables us to know that after death our pleasures do change into corresponding ones, but that the love itself remains the same forever, especially marriage love, the love of what is fair, honest, good, and true, the love of information and insights, the love of intelligence and wisdom, and the rest. The things that flow from these loves like streams from their spring are pleasures that not only last but are raised to a higher level when they are changed from natural pleasures into spiritual ones.

