



A FEW
PLAIN ANSWERS
TO THE
QUESTION,
WHY DO YOU RECEIVE THE TESTIMONY
OF
BARON SWEDENBORG ?

ADDRESSED FROM A MINISTER TO HIS
CONGREGATION,

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Cambridge.

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"Be ready always to give an answer to every one that asketh you a reason of the
hope that is in you, with meekness and fear"....1. Pet. iii. 15.

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A FEW PLAIN ANSWERS,

&c. &c.

I.

I receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, because he respects whatsoever is truly respectable in the Doctrines and Opinions of the Theological Writers, whether Jewish, Christian, or Heathen.

HE admits, therefore and maintains the authority of Divine Revelation, and that the book which we call the BIBLE, contains that revelation in all its fullness. He admits also and maintains a number of important doctrines deducible from that revelation, such as the doctrine of the Divine Unity, and of a Trinity in that Unity; the doctrine of the Divinity of JESUS CHRIST, and of His miraculous conception in the womb of the Virgin Mary; the doctrine of Christian redemption, and of the absolute necessity of such redemption for the salvation of fallen man; the consequent doctrine of Hereditary Evil or corruption, which rendered such redemption necessary; the doctrines also of Repentance, of Reformation and Regeneration, without which acts on the part of man, co-operating with Divine Grace, his corruptions cannot be removed, neither can the benefits of redemption be applied to him; the doctrine likewise of the two Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Supper, and of their Divine Expediency, together with the further Expediency of Public Worship, Preaching and Teaching; and, lastly, the doctrines of the Resurrection from the Dead, of Heaven and of Hell, or of a state of eternal happiness for those who have lived well, and of eternal misery for those who have lived otherwise; besides a variety of other scriptural tenets, too tedious to enumerate; but all tending to prove that Baron Swedenborg, in his Theological Speculations, was not one of those rash innovators, who is at variance with every opinion but his own, and who conceives the antiquity of a sentiment a sufficient ground for opposition to it; but that on the contrary, he respected and embraced in his System of Theology, some of the most interesting and edifying doctrines of the Christian Faith and Life, venerable alike for their age, wisdom and their sanctity.

Not that it is to be understood as if Baron Swedenborg asserted nothing *new*, for he is perpetually suggesting both *new* and grand ideas on all the above subjects, but then the *novelty* of his ideas is grounded on the same authority with the subjects to which they apply, and therefore only proves, with greater clearness and certainty, his deserved claim to the high title of that *Scribe instructed unto the kingdom, who is like unto a man, an householder which bringeth forth out of his treasures things new and old**.

* Matt. xiii. 52.

II.

I receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, because in all his Writings, whether philosophical or theological, he magnifies the Divine Goodness and Wisdom in the creation of the world, and of all its parts, and at the same time conducts the devout reader to a more extended knowledge and more profound adoration of the Great Creator.

NOTHING can be conceived more enlarged than the views of Baron Swedenborg respecting the works of GOD, as exhibited in what may be called the universe of matter, except it be the sublime piety which accompany those views. For the philosophy of Baron Swedenborg is neither superficial nor cold, but proceeding from a highly-cultivated understanding and an equally purified heart, it at once enlightens and warms, instructs and edifies. The reason is, he never loses sight of the connection subsisting perpetually between the FIRST DIVINE CAUSE and the effects thence derived, and therefore he contends, that as all effects argue the presence of their cause, so the works of GOD bespeak in like manner, and with equal certainty, the presence of their cause, which is Divine. Preservation therefore, according to his enlightened idea, is perpetual creation, and alike manifests the First-Creating Power, since if that power should be removed for an instant, in that instant preservation and subsistence would cease.

But the philosophy of Baron Swedenborg presents yet a more luminous and edifying view of the wonders of creation, by regarding them in their indefinite varieties, and considering those varieties as so many distinct manifestations of the Divine Goodness, Wisdom, and Power, in their several degrees, whether existing in the DIVINE CREATOR, Himself, or in His invisible kingdom. According to this sublime idea, the whole of this world, with all its parts, which stand in the Divine Order, are both figures and proofs of that eternal world and its eternal and various realities from whence they proceed; and of consequence, to the enlightened eye of piety, they demonstrate and exhibit those realities as in a glass. Yea, even those parts of creation, which stand in the disorder, whether they be elementary, animal, vegetable, or mineral, are seen to have their peculiar uses, by presenting to the observer's view so many exact images of that infernal and disorderly kingdom from which they proceed, and by thus exciting his most vigilant caution against those spiritual corruptions of life in which they originate. Hence the Volume of Nature is shewn to be a Book replete with the deepest wisdom, whilst all the objects of order contained in it are seen connected with their First Divine Cause and his heavenly kingdom, and exhibiting, in the variety of their forms and qualities, all the possible gradations and kinds of that Infinite Mercy, Truth, and Power, from which they spring; and whilst even the objects

of disorder read to the attentive mind lessons of holy circumspection, vigilance and abhorrence of every thing that bears the stamp of evil and corruption. Thus, as it is expressed in the Book of Truth, "*The heavens declare the glory of God* *;" and thus too, as the Apostle testifies, "*The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal Power and Godhead* †."

III.

I receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, because the ideas suggested in his Writings concerning the Redeemer and Redemption are equally just, grand, and edifying, with those suggested concerning the Creator and Creation.

FOR the Redeemer, according to the testimony of Baron Swedenborg, is shewn to be the same DIVINE BEING with the CREATOR, with this only difference, that to become a REDEEMER, the CREATOR assumed the Human nature, and became a man, or *was God manifest in the flesh*. And Redemption, in like manner, is shewn to be the same Divine work with CREATION, and the same operation of Omnipotence, with this only difference, that by Creation the world was originally made in the order of GOD, and by Redemption it was restored again to that order, when it had lost it by falling into the disorder of sin. Baron Swedenborg, therefore, in ascertaining the Person and Character of the REDEEMER, keeps close to the idea suggested continually by the Prophets, and grounded in the declaration of the CREATOR Himself, the GREAT I AM, or JEHOVAH, Who so repeatedly affirms "*I am Jehovah, and besides Me there is no Saviour*," Isaiah xliiii. 11. And again, "*That all flesh may know that I Jehovah am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer*," Isaiah xlix. 26. And again, "*I JEHOVAH AM THY GOD, and thou shalt not acknowledge any GOD besides ME, AND THERE IS NO SAVIOUR BESIDES ME*," Hosea xiii. 4. And again, "*As to our Redeemer, Jehovah Zebaoth is His Name*," Isaiah xlvii. 4. He keeps close also to the idea suggested by the Redeemer Himself, who declares to the same effect, "*Before Abraham was I AM*," John viii. 58: "*I and my Father are One*," John x. 30: "*He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father*," John xiv. 9. Agreeable therefore to the doctrine of Baron Swedenborg on this important subject, the JESUS of the Christians is the same identical Being with the JEHOVAH of the Jews, differing only as that which is manifest and made visible differs from that which is unmanifested and

* Psalm xix. 1.

† Romans i. 20.

‡ See the Hon. Author's Work entitled *Angelic Wisdom*, concerning the Divine Love and wisdom throughout; also in the Treatise entitled *True Christian Religion*, n. 5. to 18; and likewise in the Hon. Author's two grand philosophical works entitled *Regnum Minerale*, the other *Regnum Animale*.

invisible, or that which is clothed and embodied differs from that which is unclothed and unembodied. For by the human nature which JEHOVAH assumed, and which, before its final glorification, was called the SON of GOD, He put on the cloathing of humanity, and thus made himself visible as a GOD-MAN to those, who before had lost all sight and knowledge of Him in His unmanifested state as the hidden Father*. In his body and flesh too, he was enabled to combat more effectually man's spiritual adversaries, the powers of darkness, and thereby to destroy that dominion which they had usurped over the minds, and in some instances over the bodies of mankind, and which rendered redemption necessary. In these two Divine Acts therefore, the Glorification of the Human Nature, by making it Divine, or uniting it most intimately with the ETERNAL FATHER, and the subjugation thereby of the powers of darkness consisted the Grand and Divine Work of Redemption; for, by this work, the Divine Powers of Life and Salvation were brought near to man, and were rendered visible and approachable in the Glorified Humanity of JESUS CHRIST, and at the same time the spirits of death and of destruction were removed from man, so that they could no longer exert their malignant and fatal influences on those humble and penitent disciples who believed in and drew nigh unto the INCARNATE GOD.

Redemption then, according to this testimony, doth not consist in the vicarious suffering of one God, to appease the wrath, or, as some express it, to satisfy the justice of another God, but it consists in the Labours, the Temptations, the Combats, and the Victories of the *One Only Living and Eternal God, the God-Man Jesus Christ*, whereby He satisfied the Divine Emotions of his Own infinite Love, requiring that man should be saved, and requiring further the only orderly means or mediums of salvation, viz. the subjugation of the infernal powers, and the Glorification of that *Humanity*, by which he might again have access to His creatures, and His creatures have access unto Him†.

IV.

I receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, because his doctrine concerning the Divine Trinity in Unity, is at once Scriptural, Rational, Simple and most edifying.

IT must be observed that the ideas of Baron Swedenborg on this important subject are not quite in unison with those, which are generally circulated at this day throughout Christendom, under

* This human nature He finally glorified, or made Divine, by uniting it most intimately with Himself, and Himself with It, agreeable to those words of Jesus Christ in reference to such reciprocal union, "Father, all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine. Jo ha xvii. 10.

† See the Hon. Author's work entitled, *The Doctrine of the Lord*; and also in the *True Christian Religion*, n. 81. to n. 134.

the venerable title of *Orthodoxy*: But the question is, not concerning what is *commonly called* Orthodoxy, but concerning what *is* Orthodoxy; and if the sentiments of Baron Swedenborg be candidly examined according to the proper answer to this question, there is every solid reason to conclude, that they will be found *strictly Orthodox*. For Orthodoxy, as the term implies, means a *right opinion*, and a right opinion can only be an opinion grounded in the unerring Truth of the *Word of God*. But the *Word of God*, it is plain, may be diversely understood, so that one man may form one opinion from it, and another another, even on the same subject. It is not enough then to constitute an opinion *orthodox*, that it be derived from the *Word of God*, but that it be derived from the *Word of God, rightly interpreted and well understood*; for an heterodox opinion may be derived from the *Word of God*, but then it is from some wrong interpretation and corrupted sense of the *Holy Book*.

Now Baron Swedenborg contends, that the Doctrine of a Divine Trinity is plainly taught in that declaration of *Jesus Christ* to His Apostles after His resurrection, where He says “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in [or as it might be more properly rendered into] *the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost**. And he contends further, that the orthodoxy, or right opinion, contained in the terms *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, is this, that they all concenter and are united in the One Divine Person of the *Lord God the Saviour Jesus Christ*, Who, as to His Essential Divine Nature, is called, and is the *Father*, and as to the Human Nature, which He assumed and glorified is called and is the *Son*, and as to His Divine Operation, or proceeding Virtue and Energy, is called and is the *Holy Spirit*. This orthodox or right opinion concerning the Divine Trinity in Unity, Baron Swedenborg confirms by abundant declarations of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, especially by that of Isaiah, where *Jesus Christ* is expressly termed the *Everlasting Father* †, and also by those of *Jesus Christ* Himself, where He says, that the *Father dwelleth in Him, and that whosoever seeth Him seeth the Father* ‡; also by that of St. Paul, that *in Jesus Christ dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead* §. Thus Baron Swedenborg proves to a demonstration, that the *Father* and the *Son*, or the Divine and Human Natures, are *One in Jesus Christ*, comparatively as the soul and body are one in the person of every individual man, agreeable to the declaration in the Creed ascribed to Athanasius, where it is said, *As the reasonable soul and flesh are one man, so God and man are One Christ*. And that the *Holy Spirit* proceeds from this Union, as a Divine Energy or Operation on all human minds,

*Matt. xxviii. 19. † Isaiah ix. 6. ‡ John xiv. 9, 10. § Coloss. ii. 9.

to enlighten, to sanctify, and to save, and may thus be regarded as One with the Father, and the Son. Baron Swedenborg proves further from these considerations, that Jesus Christ after His resurrection *breathed on His Disciples and said, receive ye the Holy Spirit**; and that previous to his departure out of the world, He called this Spirit *the Spirit of Truth †*, consequently *His own Spirit*, because He was *the Truth*; and accordingly declared of those, who were happy enough to receive this Spirit, that they received *Himself*, for He says to His Disciples, in speaking of this Spirit, “*I will not leave you orphans, I will come unto you ‡*.” Besides, Baron Swedenborg proves abundantly that the Spirit of Truth, and the Divine Truth of the Eternal Word, mean and are the same thing, and consequently, that since the Divine Truth of the Eternal Word is from *Jesus Christ*, because He is both that Word Itself and likewise the All of its Truth, therefore the *Holy Spirit* must be from *Jesus Christ* also, agreeable to His own declaration in another place, “*The Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life §*.”

All the difference then between the orthodoxy of Baron Swedenborg, and what is commonly called orthodoxy, in the explication of the mysterious doctrine of the Holy Trinity, appears to be this, that according to the orthodoxy of Baron Swedenborg, the *Eternal Father*, called *Jehovah*, dwelleth essentially *in the Humanity of Jesus Christ*, and is *One* with that Humanity, as soul and body are one, consequently no Godhead called the *Father*, or *Jehovah*, is to be found *out of Jesus Christ*, and in like manner the Holy Spirit proceeds from *Jesus Christ*, that is to say, from the *Father and Son* united in Him, consequently is the Divine Operation of the Divine Humanity of *Jesus Christ*; whereas, according to what is commonly called orthodoxy, the Godhead called the *Father* or *Jehovah*, is supposed to be *out of Jesus Christ*, and separate from Him, whilst the Holy Ghost is represented as another Divine Agent separate from both.

Of these two opinions, or conceptions, every reader will naturally take that, which is in most agreement with his own preconceived ideas. But let him remember the words of *Jesus Christ* to all His followers, “*Come unto me; abide in Me ¶*; no man cometh to the Father but by Me ††; and let him take heed that his preconceived ideas be conformable to the tenor of these words, by being grounded in the Divine idea of him who spake them, and thus in the Divine Truth of that idea. Let him thus learn, as the Sacred Scriptures teach throughout, that no part or portion of the Godhead is to be found *out of Jesus Christ*, but that the whole is to be found *in Him*, consequently that all, who wish to approach unto

* John. xx. 22. † John xv. 26. Chap. xvi. 13. ‡ John xiv. 18. § John vi. 63.

¶ Mat. xi. 28.

‡ John xv. 4.

†† John xiv. 6.

and enjoy any communication of life with the Eternal Godhead, are bound to approach unto the *Glorified* or *Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ* in which, and in which *Alone* that Godhead resides *in all fulness, and by or through* which It can alone be approached, found, and known.

Thus according to the Creed of Baron Swedenborg, there is only one God in the Church, in whom is a Divine Trinity, and *Jesus Christ* the Great Redeemer and Saviour is *That God*: and thus the devout worshipper is no longer perplexed and confused as to *the object of his worship*, but approaching the *God-Man Jesus Christ*, and seeking conjunction of life with Him, he knows, to his unutterable consolation that he at the same time approaches, and enjoys conjunction of life with *Father, Son* and *Holy Ghost*, consequently with all that can be called *God or Divine**.

V.

I receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg because in his Theological Writings are presented the most sublime, the most edifying, and justest ideas of the Sacred Scriptures, or word of God.

IT is not possible, in the compass of the present work, so to compress those ideas, as to enable the reader to form an adequate conception of their united grandeur, simplicity, and instructive tendency. Suffice it therefore to observe, that Baron Swedenborg is agreed with the whole Christian Church in asserting the *plenary inspiration* of the Sacred Scriptures, insisting and proving from their own authority, that they are indeed the Speech and Word of the *Most High God*, and thus contain a full Revelation of His Divine Will and Wisdom to men on earth. But what more particularly distinguishes the writings of Baron Swedenborg on this subject from those of other theologians, is the view which they present of the *Nature and Quality* of the inspiration insisted on, in other words of what that inspiration involves, or what it is which principally and solely constitutes the Divine Inspiration of the Sacred Volume. For Baron Swedenborg contends, both on the ground of Scripture and of Reason, that the Divine Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures implies, 1st, the Divine Inspiration of *all* its parts; and 2dly, That every part alike, and every expression component of every part, contains an *internal or spiritual sense*, perfectly distinct from that of the letter, and yet making one with it, by virtue of the correspondence, or constituted harmony and agreement, which subsists from creation between things spiritual and things natural. This internal or spiritual sense, he further shews is that *Spirit and Life* †, which *Jesus Christ* declares His

*See the Hon. Author's work entitled True Christian Religion, n. 163 to 185, and in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem, n. 280 to 310.

† John vi. 63.

words to be, and to the discernment of which he conducted His disciples, when, as it is written, *He opened their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures* *. It constitutes also that Divine Testimony concerning *Jesus Christ*, of which he speaks in another place, where he says to the unbelieving Jews, *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me* †. For the spiritual or internal sense of the Sacred Volume, it is shewn in the writings of Baron Swedenborg, treats solely of the *Great Incarnate God* and of the things of His spiritual and eternal kingdom. It consists therefore of various orders and degrees of truth, adapted to the various orders and degrees of spiritual intelligencies, from the lowest to the highest, from man to angel, and from angel to the *Lord Himself*. For the Sacred Scriptures, in their literal sense, are adapted to the apprehension of man, and in their spiritual sense to the apprehension of spirits and angels, and in their inmost or highest sense they are the *Divine Wisdom or Word Itself*, which is *God*, by which *all things were made* ‡, and which of consequence is infinitely above the comprehensions of all finite intelligencies. Thus the *Holy Book*, called the *Word of God*, is proved to be like that *mysterious ladder* seen by the Patriarch Jacob in a dream, of which it is written, *“That it was set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the Angels of God ascending and descending on it; and behold the Lord stood above it §.”*

Moreover it is futher shewn, that this wonderful Book is not only written according to the doctrine of correspondence between things spiritual and things natural, by virtue whereof it is distinguished from all other books, since the language of correspondence is the appropriate language of *God Himself*, but it is written also with a view to what is properly called the *Heavenly Marriage*, viz. the conjunction of the *Divine Love* and of the *Divine Wisdom* or of the *heavenly Good* and the *heavenly Truth* hence derived. For since such Marriage must needs have place in the *Godhead Himself*, Who is the Supreme Love and the Supreme Wisdom, or the Supreme Good and Supreme Truth, in compleat and perfect union; and since it must needs descend from the *Godhead* into every thing which is from Him, and produced by Him, therefore it must needs be eminently manifested in His *Holy Word*, which is the proximate and highest emanation from Himself. Accordingly it is shewn, that the most evident traces of this Divine and Heavenly Marriage are discoverable even in the letter of the Sacred Volume, in which it is worthy of observation, that *two* expressions frequently occur, which appear to have nearly the same sense and meaning, and, (until they be well understood) to be an useless tautology, such as *nations and people, joy and gladness,*

* Luke xxiv. 45. † John v. 39. ‡ John i. 3. § Gen. xxviii. 12, 13.

poor and needy, sickness and disease, justice and judgment, mourning and weeping, desert and wilderness, anger and wrath, vanity and emptiness, enemy and foe, sin and iniquity, when yet the truth is, that one expression has relation more to the principle of the *Divine Love* and the other more to the principle of the *Divine Wisdom*, and both to the union or conjunction of both those principles.

It may be proper on this occasion to note, that in the works entitled *Arcana Coelestia*, and the *Apocalypse Revealed*, the internal or spiritual sense of the Books of Genesis, of Exodus, and of the Revelations, is discovered and made known, agreeable to the above doctrines of correspondence and of the heavenly marriage, according to which the Sacred Scriptures are written throughout: and in perusing those most astonishing and edifying works, it is impossible for the devout reader not to be led to adore, with sentiments of the purest gratitude, and of the deepest humiliation, the Divine Mercy and most gracious Providence of His *Heavenly Father*. Who has been pleased, in these last days of darkness and of error, to indicate so fully and satisfactorily His own Divine Revelation, by proving in a manner so clear and convincing, that His Word is from Himself; and by demonstrating further what are its sublime and heavenly contents, and thus through the interior wisdom of the Holy Book, reconciling all those apparent contradictions which appear in the letter; giving dignity and importance to what before seemed trifling and insignificant; and convincing all who wished to be convinced, that, as the Apostle testifies, “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.*”*

The enlightened Swedenborg therefore, in contradiction to the *Enthusiasts* of the day, (with whom nevertheless, he has been confounded by the ignorant and the ill designing) exalts the *Word of God* above every other source of spiritual instruction, and is perpetually pointing out the danger of forsaking this *Fountain of living Waters* †, to hew out the broken cisterns either of *self-derived intelligence*, or, what is alike perilous, of *fancied inspiration*. All his doctrines are thus founded on and confirmed by the infallible testimony of the *Eternal Truth* and in this he gives a convincing proof of his being a *Scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven*, that it is impossible for any reader seriously and devoutly to consult his various Writings but he must find kindled in his bosom a warmer affection for the *Sacred Scriptures*, and a purer reverence towards their instructive pages, disposing him to unite earnestly in that just and delightful acknowledgment of the

*2. Tim. iii. 16, 17.

†Jer. ii. 13.

Psalmist, "More to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honey comb * †."

VI.

I receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, because his ideas concerning the Atonement or Reconciliation wrought by the Great Saviour, appear to be in perfect agreement with the genuine uncorrupted sense of the Sacred Scriptures.

IT is called the *Atonement* or *Reconciliation* because in the original Greek of the new Testament, the same term is used to express both, being rendered atonement in Rom. v. 11, whereas in 2. Cor. v. 18, 19, it is rendered reconciliation. We may therefore take it for granted, that the terms atonement and reconciliation were regarded by the English translators of the New Testament, as synonymous, and that therefore by the atonement made by *Jesus Christ* is to be understood every Divine act performed by Him here on earth, whereby he effected reconciliation between sinful man and his *God*. Some have been rash or thoughtless enough to insist, that Baron Swedenborg totally denies this atonement, whereas the truth is he asserts it in all its fullness and efficacy, and only denies what appears to him a very partial and literal apprehension of what the term *atonement*, as applied to the work of the *Great Redeemer*, properly and truly involves in it. This partial and literal apprehension of the sense of the term is, that reconciliation between God and man was effected solely by the *passion of the cross*, and especially by the *shedding of the blood of Christ* on that occasion; whereas Baron Swedenborg proves most satisfactorily, that the passion of the cross and the shedding of blood on the occasion, were only the *concluding parts* of that grand and saving process of the Redeemer's life here on earth, whereby he fought against and subdued the powers of darkness, and thus removed them from man, and at the same time, and by the same acts, glorified His human nature by making it one with the Divine. This therefore is what Baron Swedenborg calls the *proper the spiritual and the scriptural idea of the atonement or reconciliation wrought by the Son of God*, and of the infinite merit and effect of His sufferings and death. For to reconcile God and man, it was become necessary *first* to rescue man from the dominion of the powers of darkness, under which, through the corruptions of sin, he was unhappily fallen, and this could only be effected by the previous subjugation and removal of those powers: in the *second* place it was alike necessary to bring near to him the powers of

* Psalm xix. 10.

† See the Hon. Author's Work entitled True Christian religion, n. 109 to 277: also in the Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the sacred scriptures, n. 1 to 118.

heaven, of holiness, and of salvation, which could only be done by the manifestation of *God* in the flesh, or human nature, and by His final glorification of that human nature, through its union with the Divine. *Jesus Christ* speaks of the former of these Divine acts, when He says at the time of his last suffering, “*Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out**;” He speaks of the latter, when He says on the same occasion, “*Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in Him; if God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him +*”.—Hence Baron Swedenborg concludes, that the proper and spiritual idea of the *Atonement* is this, that *Jesus Christ*, by fighting against and subduing the powers of darkness, and thus removing them from man, and at the same time by glorifying His human nature or making it one with the Divine, accomplished and provided all necessary means for the delivery of man from the dominion of sin, and for his restoration to holiness and eternal life, which two blessings were alone wanting for his reconciliation with his *God*, and the reconciliation of his *God* with him.

In regard to the Scripture expression, that *man is cleansed from sin by the Blood of Christ*, Baron Swedenborg asserts it to be strictly true, but at the same time insists, that the *Blood of Christ*, is an expression used to denote the whole of the suffering process above spoken of, whereby the powers of darkness were combated and moved, and the powers of heaven were brought near to man, in the *Glorified Humanity of the great Saviour*. Besides, the *Blood of Christ* (Baron Swedenborg abundantly proves) is an expression applied to denote not merely that *material* blood which was shed on the cross, but a living spiritual principle from the *Incarnate God*, whereby the true believer is inwardly cleansed from the defilements of sin, and according to which sense it is declared necessary that man should drink it, that is to say, incorporate it into his life. *Jesus Christ* therefore says to his disciples, “*Except ye eat the flesh and drink the Blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you; but he that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life †*; and in another place, “*Now ye are clean through the words which I have spoken unto you §*,” which is expressly declaring, that the Divine Truth of His Word, and the Divine Life of His Blood, are one and the same thing, having the same living, cleansing, atoning, and reconciling efficacy ||.

* John xii. 31.

+ Ibid. xiii. 31, 32.

† John vi. 53, 54.

§ John xv. 3.

|| See the Honourable Author's Work entitled *The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem* concerning the Lord, n. 12, to 13.

VII.

I receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, because the Doctrine of Life which his Writings inculcate, as being truly evangelical and saving life, is at once both scriptural rational, and most edifying.

FOR, according to the testimony of Baron Swedenborg, no life can be either evangelical or saving, but what is grounded in sincere repentance, and faith in the *Incarnate God*. By *repentance* is meant, not the mere regulation of the outward man in conformity to the laws of civil society, or even of what is called morality, but the regulation of the inward man in conformity to the laws of God, by exploring diligently, and renouncing courageously, all those affections, thoughts, appetites, and propensities of the mere natural mind, which are opposite to the pure love of *God* and charity towards men. And by *faith in the Incarnate God* is meant, not a mere speculative faith, which pleads the merit of that *God* in abatement of the great duties of repentance and obedience on the part of man, but a heartfelt acknowledgement that *Jesus Christ is the One Only True and Living God* and that there can be no approach to, or communication with, the Infinite, the Eternal, the Omnipresent and Omnipotent *Divinity* but in and through that *Divine Humanity*, which the *Great Jehovah* assumed, and made *Divine*, for the sole purpose of effecting such approach and communication.

Baron Swedenborg therefore, it is plain from this testimony, doth not, like some theologians, separate *faith* from *charity* and *good works*, accounting the former to be saving, independent of the latter, and insisting that the latter are merely the fruits and manifestations of the former; neither doth he make a division, like some other teachers, between a *moral*, a *civil*, and a *spiritual* life; but he contends on the strong authority of the *Word of God*, that a saving life is the *joint* effect of faith, of charity, and of good works united, and that to separate any one of the three from the other two is to destroy *all*. In like manner he argues that a *moral*, a *civil*, and a *spiritual* life are *conjointly* necessary to man's salvation, since man's salvation depends on the restoration of the life and order of heaven in all the forms and degrees of his life, both *inward* and *outward*, which life and order cannot be restored, only so far as man conforms to the laws of *morality*, of *civility*, and of *spirituality* in conjunction. For the laws of *morality* and *civility*, it is proved in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, are laws of heaven but then they are laws of heaven for the direction and government of the *external man*, and for the regulation of man's life in regard to his *external conduct* amongst his fellow men; whereas the laws of *spirituality*, are laws of heaven for the direction and government of the *internal man*, or for the

regulation of man's *internal spiritual life* in regard to God and His Eternal Kingdom. To separate then moral and civil life from spiritual, or spiritual life from moral and civil, is to separate the external man from the internal, and the internal man from the external, the certain consequence of which separation is the destruction of both, since neither can subsist without the other, any more than charity towards man can subsist without love to God, or love to God without charity towards man. But to unite moral and civil life with spiritual, as is the case when man lives a moral and civil life from spiritual motives, and with a view to spiritual ends, this is to unite the internal and external man with each other, and both with God, and thus to introduce into both the life and the order of heaven; and the certain blessed effect of this union is, that man is restored to the Divine Image and Likeness in every form and degree of his life, *rendering unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's, and unto God the things that are God's*, so that both the internal and external man, like the visible heaven and earth, are a mutual blessing to each other, whilst the one *gives* and the other *receives*, and both unite in being instrumental, under the *Supreme Father* of each, in bringing forth fruit of "*Glory to God in the the Highest, and on Earth Peace, Good-will towards Men.*"—Luke ii. 14.

VIII.

I receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, because his Writings appear to suggest the clearest and most edifying ideas on the subject of the great Scripture duties of Self-denial, and bearing the Cross.

IN explaining the intention, and enforcing the practice of these evangelical duties, Baron Swedenborg keeps at an equal distance from the rigorous severity of the *Asectic*, from the gloomy seclusion of the *Anchoret*, and from the uncontroled indulgencies of the *Libertine*. Accordingly he insists, that the proper and profitable idea of that *self-denial*, which the Gospel enforces, is the denial of the *selfish affections*, and concupiscencies of the flesh, which are opposite to heavenly love and charity, and which, by leading man to prefer *his own* interest, *his own* gain, *his own* glory, and *his own* pleasure to that of others, nourish in his bosom a dangerous self love, and inordinate love of the world. In like manner, the proper and profitable idea of *taking up and bearing the cross*, is shewn to result from the above denial, and to be in connection with it, involving in it all those spiritual labours, combats and difficulties, called *temptations*, which are to be suffered and surmounted, before the corruptions of *selfishness* and of its concu-

* See the Hon. Author's Work, entitled, The Doctrine of Life for the New Jerusalem from the Precepts of the Decalogue, throughout.

discencies can be so removed in the human mind, as to make way for the admission of the sublime and heavenly graces derived from love towards God, and mutual love.

A religious life then, according to Baron Swedenborg, has its *difficulties*, but they are not the difficulties arising from a morose or pharisaical austerity, from an annihilation of natural gratifications, nor from an unsocial rejection of the business, the interests, and even the pleasures of the world. For he proves to a demonstration, that a religious life is a life *in* the world, and not *out* of it, agreeable to the Prayer of Jesus Christ, where He supplicates concerning His disciples, "*I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou wouldst keep them from the evil.*"* He proves also that a religious life, separate from a life of employment in worldly offices, business, and engagements, in other words, a life of piety, separate from a life of charity, cannot possibly exist, being like a house without a foundation, and thus wanting its proper supports, on which it may at once both rest and fulfil its purposes of use to mankind. He proves yet further, that man must have his *natural delights*, otherwise it is impossible that he should live as a man, and fulfil his duties as a man. The Divine Providence has accordingly appointed, that by *delights* even infants are supported and grow, and that without *delights* neither the child nor the man can be fully and completely formed, since it is by the delight of *pastime* that the limbs of the child expand themselves and acquire strength; and by the *delights of affection* and of *appetite*, that both the minds and the bodies of men receive their proper nourishment, formation and support.

There is no mischief then in the enjoyment of *natural delights*, only so far as they become obstacles to those spiritual and eternal delights in which they originate and to which they were designed to conduct the penitent and the faithful, by opening their minds to the Divine Fountain from which all delights primarily flow, whether they be natural or spiritual. For the same reason, there is no mischief in the possession and enjoyment of *worldly riches* and *dignities*, only so far as they exalt themselves in the affections above those heavenly riches and heavenly dignities from which they spring, of which they are the instructive figures, and to which they were intended in the order of Providence to administer.

The grand labour and difficulty then in religion, according to Baron Swedenborg, is to bring the *natural delights*, the *natural riches*, and *natural dignities* into submission to spiritual delights, to spiritual riches, and to spiritual dignities, and thus into connection with them, and thereby into conjunction with their *Divine*

* John xvii. 15.

Original, that He may be acknowledged to be their Father and Preserver. The *mortification* therefore which the Gospel requires is not a gloomy and melancholy duty, which *annihilates* man's joys, and *literally* deprives him of all that he hath, but it is rather a duty which conducts to the highest possible cheerfulness and gladness of heart, by depriving him of nothing but that *selfishness*, which alone renders him at any time either gloomy or melancholy, and at the same time by keeping alive those delights which otherwise destroy themselves, whilst they separate themselves and their possessor from their great Author and only Nourisher. *Mortification* therefore and *self-denial*, according to this view, are man's best friends and most beneficent companions, opposing only those bad passions which would otherwise lay waste his choicest gratifications, and leaving him thus at perfect liberty to enjoy every natural and rational delight, which will submit itself to the government of reason, of virtue, and of the fear of God. Thus the cross is not the *grave* of human happiness, as some suppose, but rather its *resurrection to life*; it doth not *kill*, but *save*; and not only saves, but *increases and multiplies a hundred fold* the seeds of bliss. agreeable to those words of JESUS CHRIST: "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake and the Gospel's; but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecution; and in the world to come eternal life."^{*}

IX.

I receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, because in his Writings the Great Scripture Doctrines of Repentance, and the Remission of Sins are restored, to their original instructive meaning and high importance.

THAT these doctrines have been most lamentably misinterpreted and perverted in the Christian Church, and are so misinterpreted and perverted at this day, must be obvious to every one who is acquainted with the general received systems of modern theology. For in most of those systems, repentance is regarded merely as a *work of the lips*, in making external confession of sins, or as a *work of the eyes*, in shedding a few tears of apparent contrition over them, or as a *work of the external man*, in quitting only *external* transgressions, without making any account of those *internal* defilements and disorders of the love and affections, in which all external transgressions originate. In like manner the

* Mark x. 29, 30.

† See the Honourable Author's Work entitled the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem, n. 187 to 202.

Remission of Sins, according to the same systems, is considered solely as an effect of that *atoning Blood* of Christ, as it is called, which was shed upon the cross; or as an arbitrary act of Divine Mercy, which pardons and forgives sin, just as an earthly Prince pardons and forgives an offender against the laws of his country.

In contradiction to these ideas of *Repentance* and the *Remission of Sins*, it is insisted continually and urgently in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, that, nothing properly constitutes repentance but a real heart-felt acknowledgment of the internal Defilements of Sin, in consequence of self-exploration or self-examination, under the influence of the light or Truth of *God's Holy Word*, attended with a sincere inward desire to be delivered from such defilements, because they are offensive and contrary to the purity of God and the Order of His Kingdom.

To make a true penitent, therefore, according to Baron Swedenborg, it is not enough that a man *confesses* himself a sinner, unless he at the same time *sees and acknowledges* in what he is a sinner; neither is it enough to see and acknowledge himself a sinner, unless also he *hates and abominates* the evils which he discovers and perceives to have taken root in himself; nor yet is it sufficient to hate and abominate those evils, unless his hatred and abomination of them are grounded in the conviction that they are offences against the Mercy, Truth, and Purity of the *Most high and Holy God*, and thus lead to separation of life from *Him*. For it is possible that a man may hate and renounce evil, because it is an enemy to his temporal interest and reputation in the world; thus he may renounce *dishonesty* because it is injurious to his character; and *adultery* because it is injurious to his health; and *murder* because he fears the penalties of human laws. But in all such cases, it is plain, that the man may in heart still be a *dishonest man*, an *adulterer*, and a *murderer*, since he doth not renounce those evils because he *inwardly*, or in his *inner man*, disapproves and detests them, but only because he condemns them *externally*, or with his *outer man*, as being contrary to his temporal advantages; thus his *inner man* is still in the evils which his *outward man* rejects, and therefore the man himself is in them, notwithstanding all external semblances and assumed appearances of Repentance.

In like manner the *Remission of Sins*, according to Baron Swedenborg, is not the effect of a mere arbitrary act of the Divine Mercy, which pardons an offender in compliance with the intercession of the *Saviour* pleading the Merits of His atoning Blood, but it is a *real removal*, through the Mercy of that *Saviour*, of all those evils and corruptions of which a man sincerely repents, so that they no longer are *his* or make any part of him. This *Remission*, it is futher shewn, is a Divine Work, being effected solely by the *Great Incarnate God* Whose Name is *Jesus Christ*, and Who is

therefore emphatically called "*The Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.*"* And the manner in which this work is effected, according to the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, is this: Whensoever a man repents truly of his sins and corruptions, he instantly becomes the subject of that spirit and life from the *Great Redeemer*, which are contrary to his sins and corruptions, and above them. Indeed his very repentance is the effect of the presence and operation of that Divine Spirit and Life, since no one can see evil in himself, but by virtue of something above himself which makes it manifest, still less can he hate evil in himself but by virtue of the love of that heavenly good which is also above himself, and inspires the detestation of what is opposite to itself. Whensoever therefore a man truly repents of his sins, from that moment he comes under the regenerating influences of the Supreme Good and supreme Truth of the most adorable Love, and most holy Wisdom of *Jesus Christ*, His Word and Kingdom, which in such case, incorporate and form themselves in his penitent mind and life, rendering him thereby a *child of God*, and thus elevating him out of and above his natural corruptions. The blessed consequence is, that all sin is *remitted* or put away from him, everlastingly, because it is an eternal law of spiritual or eternal life, that what a man loves, remains with him, but what he hates is separated from him, and therefore if he loves what is of *God* that remains, and if he hates what is contrary to *God* that is separated.

Hence it will appear plain what is meant in the Sacred Scriptures when it is said that man is *cleansed from sin by the Blood of Christ*; for the *Blood of Christ*, according to the testimony of Baron Swedenborg, is an expression to denote the whole process of His Life and Death, whereby He became a *Redeemer* and a *Saviour*; thus it involves and implies further the Divine Truth of that process, which is the same thing with the Divine Truth of the Holy Word and Commandment of *Jesus Christ*: Therefore *Jesus Christ* said of His Disciples, "*Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you,*" † from which words it is plain that the only power in the universe which cleanses from sin, is the Divine Truth of that most Holy Commandment which cometh from *Jesus Christ*, and is in continual connection with Him, because He is its *Spirit and Life*, and makes it spirit and life, in all those who become obedient to its cleansing virtues by incorporating it into their lives. Thus without Repentance there can be no Remission of Sins, because without Repentance man cannot admit the pure Goods and Truths of the Word of *Jesus Christ* into his heart and life: But so soon as he doeth the work of repent-

* John i. 29.

† John xv. 3.

ance, so soon he admits those purities, and with them he drinks the *real Blood of the Great Saviour*, by which he is cleansed from sin, being separated and delivered from its defiling and condemning influences.*

X.

Receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, because in his Writings the Great Evangelical Doctrines of Reformation and Regeneration, like those of Repentance and Remission of Sins, are also restored to their original instructive meaning and high importance.

WHAT eye of penitence and of piety hath not wept in secret, at observing the *limited* ideas in some cases, the *confused* and *mistaken* ones in others and the *negative* ones in others, according to which the scriptural and most edifying doctrines of spiritual Reformation and Regeneration have been either *mutilated* or *misapprehended*, or *annihilated*, in the various systems of modern Theology? Thus some writers acknowledge indeed the truth and importance of the doctrines, but then the acknowledgement is on a scale so partial and confined, that it can scarcely be called an acknowledgement, amounting to no more than a *general* apprehension of the subject, which fall as far short of evangelical truth, as the general apprehension that the *grass is green* and the *sky is blue*, falls short of philosophical truth.

Others again assent, and say indeed, that man must be reformed, and must be regenerated before he can be saved, but then, in explaining what they mean by being reformed and regenerated, they more mislead their readers by their misconceptions, than satisfy them by their expositions. Others, lastly, absolutely and altogether deny that there is any such thing as reformation and regeneration, except *in the way of comparison and similitude*, and one celebrated Writer in particular insists that the expressions have reference solely to the Gentiles who were first admitted into the Christian Church, but *mean nothing, nothing to us*; (these are his awful words) *nothing to be found or sought for in the present circumstances of Christianity.*†

It ought then to be regarded as a further confirming seal to the Truth of the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, that the doctrine taught in his Writings concerning *Reformation and Regeneration* has not only a tendency to rescue the human understanding from the errors in which those Grand Subjects are at this day lamentably involved, but also to reinstate it in all the light and comfort resulting from a clear, a distinct, and scriptural elucidation of their proper and genuine meaning.

* See the Honourable Author's Work entitled True Christian Religion, n. 509 to n. 567: also in The Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem, n. 159 to n. 173.

† See Dr. Paley's Visitation Sermons preached at Carlisle, July 15, 1777.

For having established the *necessity* of regeneration, as grounded in the declaration of *Jesus Christ*, that, "*Except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,*" Baron Swedenborg proceeds next to shew what this birth of water and of the spirit really is and means. And here he takes a previous view of the natural state of man, or of that natural life he receives hereditarily from his parents, proving that this natural life is a life of mere self-love and the love of the world, connected with all the natural persuasions and thoughts proper to those loves, and is therefore in direct contrariety to spiritual life, which is the life of love towards God, and of charity towards our neighbour. Hence, he proceeds to prove further, arises the necessity of which *Jesus Christ* speaks, that man must be born of water and of the spirit, before he can enter into the Kingdom of God, since to be born of water and of the Spirit implies the reception of spiritual life and without the reception of spiritual life, it is impossible that man can be any subject of the heavenly kingdom, which is also a spiritual kingdom. By being born of water it is further shewn is meant the reception of heavenly Truth from the Word of God in the understanding, since all such Truth is not only compared to, but is called water in the Sacred Scriptures, as in John iv. 13, 14; chap. vii. 37, 38. And by being born of the Spirit, is meant the reception of heavenly Good of love and charity in the will and life, since all such Good is in the Sacred Scriptures called Spirit. The first of these states therefore, viz. when man is influenced more by the knowledge of Truth in his understanding, is called *reformation*, but the second, viz. when he is brought to act more from the influence of heavenly Good of love and charity in his will, is called *regeneration*. Thus Reformation and Regeneration combined together imply, that the Truths of God's most Holy Word are formed and operative first in man's understanding, and next in his will and life, leading him to note and to reject all those defiled loves and false persuasions, which are opposite to the spiritual life of love and charity, and in so doing to admit the life of love and charity from *Jesus Christ* to be fully and compleatly incorporated and fixed in him.

Reformation therefore and *regeneration*, according to Baron Swedenborg, imply the formation of a real new spiritual man, produced, like the natural, from seed, but from Divine Seed, which is the Word of God, or Divine Truth, and also carried in the womb, brought forth, educated, and lastly fully grown and formed, agreeable to spiritual processes answering to those of the natural man. This formation therefore is not sudden, but gradual, not instantaneous, but successive, in proportion as man receives the

* John iii. 5.

Truths of faith and lives accordingly; neither is it of God's Operation alone, without man's co-operation, but it is of God's Operation and man's co-operation united. Nevertheless the law of man's co-operation is shewn to be this, and only this, that he should exert himself as if left merely to his own exertion but that in the operation of every such energy, he should humbly and gratefully acknowledge that all his power of operation is continually from God.

Baron Swedenborg lastly teaches, that man thus reformed and regenerated, as to his internal man, is in heaven, and is there an angel with the angels, into whose society also he is admitted after death, when he is enabled to live the life of heaven, to love the Lord above all things, and his neighbour as himself, to understand what is true, to relish what is good, and perceive and enjoy all the blessedness thence derived.*

XI.

I receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, because the ideas suggested in his Writings concerning the Lord's second Advent, and the Judgment then to be executed, appear to be in the most perfect agreement both with the best sense of the Sacred Scriptures, and with the most enlightened views of human reason.

IT was the grand and fatal error of the Jewish nation, at the time of the *first advent* of their predicted Messiah, that in consequence of abiding in a mere *literal* interpretation of the Sacred Oracles, and not correcting the external signification of the *letter* by the internal sense of the spirit, they were rendered as completely blind to the knowledge of the *Saviour God*, when he was presented visible before their eyes, as if they had never received the slightest notice, or indulged the least expectation, of any such mysterious manifestation of God in the flesh. With this terrible example before our eyes of the mischievous consequences resulting from a mis-interpretation of the Sacred Oracles, it might reasonably have been expected, that we Christians at this day should have been upon our Guard against stumbling on the same ground, and that therefore in contemplating and explaining the great mystery of the *second advent* of the same *Redeeming God*, as predicted in the Records of the Eternal Truth, we should have trembled at that mere *literal* and *gross* explication of the Sacred Scriptures, by which the Jews of old were blinded and deluded.

But has this reasonable expectation been fulfilled? rather, has it not been totally disappointed, whilst we hear it asserted by those, who are supposed to be the most skilful interpreters of

* See the Hon. Author's Work entitled True Christian religion, n. 571 to 621, also in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the sacred scriptures, p. 173 to 187.

the Sacred Oracles, that the second advent of the *Great Saviour* will be to *destroy* the earth, not to *renovate* it; and that on this occasion He will appear *literally* in the clouds of heaven with all His holy angels; and will then execute a *general judgment* on all who have lived since the creation of the world, and who have since been reserved in some obscure and indeterminate state of existence, short of that compleat happiness, or compleat misery, which will then be allotted them; and that at this awful period the sun shall *literally* be darkened, and the moon shall *literally* not give her light, and the stars shall *literally* fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall *literally* be shaken, according to the description given in Matt. xxiv 29? For such are the ideas, grounded in the *mere letter* of the Sacred Scriptures, which at present occupy and darken the minds of christians, both learned and unlearned, on the edifying and important subject of the Lord's *second advent* and *judgment*.

It is in opposition to these gross and groundless notions, and for the establishment of the christian world in the genuine uncorrupted knowledge of the truth, that Baron Swedenborg contends for a *spiritual* interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures, in regard to all that is predicted in them on the above interesting events.— From this interpretation it is shewn clearly, so as to convince the best reason of the humble and unprejudiced, that the Second advent of the *Great Redeemer* will not be for the *destruction* of the earth, but like His first advent, for its *renovation, preservation, and blessedness*. Indeed this truth, † it is further evinced, is even confirmed by the *letter* of the Sacred Scriptures, where it is expressly said, “*Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left:**” and where it is asserted further, “*That the tabernacle of God shall then be with men, and he will dwell with them, &c. †*” Agreeable to the same spiritual interpretation it is further insisted, that the *sun* which on this occasion shall be *darkened*, the *moon* which shall *not give her light*, and the *stars* which shall *fall from heaven*, do not mean *literally* the sun, the moon and the stars, but those spiritual and eternal principles which they represent and signify according to the sense in which the apostle Peter applies the prophecy of Joel, as relating to the Lord's first advent; (see Acts ii. 16 to 22,) and according to the sense likewise in which the terms are used by the prophet Isaiah, where, speaking of the Lord's manifestation of the flesh, he predicts, that “*the light of the moon shall then be as the light in the sun, and the light of the sun seven-fold, as the light of seven days, †*”

* Matt. xxiv. 40, 41.

† Rev. xxi. 3.

‡ Isaiah xxx. 26.

which words, if it is plain, were never fulfilled, or intended to be fulfilled, according to the sense of the letter. In the same spirit of enlightened and enlightening Interpretation, it is also proved that *the judgment*, which is to take place at the Lord's appearing, doth not mean a general judgment extending to all who have lived since the creation of the world, inasmuch as they have been sentenced long ago to their respective destinations, whether of happiness or of misery, but a judgment on those in the spiritual world who have not yet passed to their final allotment, and also on those in the natural world, *who are living at that time*, agreeable to what Jesus Christ declares concerning the effect of His first advent, where He says, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out."* From which words, it is plain, that a work of judgment was accomplished at that very period of time, the nature of which judgment is explained in another place where He asserts, "For judgment am I come into the world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." — John ix. 39.

The result then and complex of Baron Swedenborg's explanations of the above grand mystery amount to this, that in the *consummation of the age*, as it is expressed in Matthew, Chap. 28, verse 20, by which is signified, not the end of the visible creation, but the consummation or desolation of the Church, through successive corruptions of Life and Doctrine, *Jesus Christ* will open anew, and is now opening (through the instrumentality of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem) the Internal, Spiritual, and uncorrupted Sense of His Most holy Word, in which, and by which, He can alone come; and make Himself known to man for instruction and salvation. In this His most Holy Word thus opened, He will reveal Himself as the Great I AM, the Infinite and the Eternal, the Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, the Alpha and Omega, the Only Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator of men, because the Alone God-Man, and consequently the Alone Giver of Eternal Life and Happiness. Thus He will come and appear to the humble and the penitent in power and great glory, as their only God and deliverer, purifying and regenerating them through the communications of His eternal Love and Wisdom, and thereby establishing amongst them a new Church of enlightened, devout, and pure worshippers. At the same time he will execute judgment on the careless and impenitent, by separating them from His Church, and from all communication and conjunction with Himself in knowledge and in life, since it is an eternal effect of the manifestation of Divine Truth from heaven, that whilst it enlightens, consoles, and elevates the righteous, it blinds, torments,

* John xii. 32.

and depresses the wicked. And thus will be fulfilled the blessed predictions, that, "*When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all His holy Angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory: And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats: And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.*"* And again, "*I John saw the Holy City New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, behold the Tabernacle of God is with men,*" &c. †

That the above is the just and proper idea of the *Lord's Second Advent*, may appear plain to every unprejudiced mind from an impartial and *spiritual* interpretation of those passages in the Sacred Scripture which refer to the blessed event. . . And that the present time is the precise period in which it may be expected, may also appear evident, from the present state of the Christian Church, and its exact coincidence with the description given of it in the prophetic pages. For how is the *Saviour God* at this day either *altogether* rejected or *partially* and *imperfectly* received, by them who call themselves His disciples, whilst some totally deny His Divinity, and whilst others, though they admit that Divinity, yet do not admit it *solely* and *entirely* to the exclusion of all other Divinity! How few therefore at this day approach unto and worship *Jesus Christ*, as the *Only God* of heaven and earth, by virtue of His compleat and perfect union with the *Eternal Father*! How are the minds of Christians thus perplexed and distracted as to the *Supreme Object* of their adoration, some adoring *they know not what*, whilst they approach the unknown and Unmanifest God alone; and others adoring both an unknown and a known God at the same time; whilst they address one part of their worship to the Eternal unmanifested *Father*, and the other part to the Eternal manifested *Son*, without ever considering that these Two are One in the glorified Person of the *Great Redeemer*, and that whosoever worships that Redeemer worships both! And how is the *Sun* (of Righteousness) hereby darkned! How doth the moon *withdraw* her light! And how are the *powers of heaven shaken* in the minds of men! For if the knowledge of God be lost in the Church, what can remain in it, either of heavenly love, of heavenly wisdom, or of heavenly life? Will not also the Word of God, in such case, become that *sealed Book*, spoken of by the prophet, ‡ which *none can read*? Will not its spiritual and internal sense, which treats solely of the manifested God and of His kingdom and Church, be likewise denied or perverted, as it is at this day? And what is to be expected, *when these things come to pass*, but that terrible flood and

* Matt. xxv. 31, 32, 33.

† Rev. xxi. 2, 3.

‡ Isaiah xxix. 10, 11, 12.

dessolation of iniquity and ungodliness described in Matt. xxiv. Mark xiii. Luke xxi. and Rev. xii. xiii. xiv. xv. xvi. xvii. xviii. xix. which so tremendously characterize the present awful times? And what shall oppose this flood and dessolation, but the fulfillment of the blessed prediction, that "*Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven to gather together His elect,*"* and thus establish His New Church (called the New Jerusalem) of pure, spiritual, and uncorrupted worshippers? Is it possible then to conceive a more sublime, more just, or more edifying idea of the *Second Advent* of the *Great Saviour* than what is here presented to view, whilst He is seen in these latter days unveiling Himself again in his most *Holy Word*, as the God of that Word and of the Church, as having *all power both in heaven and in earth*, as *One with the Eternal Father*, and as thus checking all the infernal powers of evil and of error by the Revelation of the lost and needful knowledge of Himself, His Word and Kingdom?

Let us therefore take heed lest that rebuke come upon us, which fell on the Jews of old, where it is written, "*Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.*"† And let us labour rather to secure all the opposite commendation and recompense announced in those consolatory and animating words, which the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of Elizabeth the mother of John the Baptist, "*Blessed is she who believeth that there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.*"‡ §

XII.

I receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, because he is presented to the world in the honourable and highly distinguished character of a Seer, as well as an expositor of the Sacred Scriptures, and because in that character he has been enabled to communicate information of the highest importance to the happiness and well-being of mankind.

THE doubt and reluctance with which the above character is at this day admitted by some, added to the utter denial and aversion with which it is altogether rejected by others; the immeasurable distance thus interposed between the two worlds of matter and of spirit, and the immoveable barrier which is conceived to obstruct all communication between their respective inhabitants, are considerations which excite in the bosom of the sincere christian a source of the deepest regret, because they convince him, to his pain, at what a lamentable variance the prevailing sentiments of mankind are with the eternal principles and persuasions presented to view in the Word of the *Most High*.

* Matt. xxiv. 30, 31.

† Acts xiii. 41.

‡ Luke i. 45.

§ See the Hon. Author's Work entitled, *True Christian Religion*, n. 753 to n. 791.

latter days, "*Your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.*"*

The Saviour of the world too was pleased to confirm the same gracious prediction and promise in those memorable words, "*Hereafter ye shall see heaven open and the Angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.*"†

It must nevertheless be acknowledged, that a *lesson of caution* will be always found necessary to be practised by the humble and sincere, as to the measure of faith proper to be attached to relations of a supernatural kind, since the spiritual adversary of man is ever on the watch to take his advantage on all occasions, even the most sacred, and as in the case of the *magicians of Egypt*, to confound *truth* with *error*, what is *real* with what is *pretended*, and thus to perplex and mislead the ignorant and unwary. Accordingly the *Almighty*, in His Most Holy Word, has been pleased to supply us with rules of such necessary caution, in order to enable the faithful to distinguish at all times between the *genuine* and the *spurious*, between what ought to be *believed*, because it is from above, and what ought to be *rejected* because it is from beneath; for thus we find it written. "*If there arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass whereof he spake unto thee, saying let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*"‡ and again, "*To the law and to the testimony: If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.*"§ And again, "*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God.*"||

Here then we have several sure and infallible tests, by which to try all pretences to extraordinary and supernatural communications, and thus to discriminate between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. The spirit of truth in no case leads to the worship of *other Gods*, but ever confesses the manifested God, *the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* to be *the true and only God*, and conducts all to the blessed adoration and service of this God. And since the adoration and service of the only true God imply the love and the practice of his commandments, consequently an obedience to *the law and the testimony*, by a sincere departure from

* Joel ii. 28.

† John i. 51.

‡ Deut. xiii. 1, 2, 3.

§ Isaiah viii. 20.

|| John iv. 1, 2, 3.

every principle of human corruption and depravity, therefore the Spirit of Truth, together with the True prophet and dreamer of dreams, may at all times be distinguished by these never failing badges of authority and of sanctity.

To these infallible tests then let the supernatural communications of Baron Swedenborg be candidly submitted, and let them stand or fall according to their agreement or disagreement with the tenor of those tests. If they lead to the worship of any other god, but the True and Manifested God, Whose Name is *Jesus Christ*; or if they countenance and encourage any way of life, but what is in perfect agreement with *the Law and the Testimony*, the Spirit and commandments of that *Great and Holy God*, then let them fall, because then they must needs contain in them the surest and fullest proofs that they are *not of God*, consequently do not originate in Him or in His Kingdom. But then, on the other hand, if they be found to exalt above every other Name the Name of the *Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ*, as having all dominion both in heaven and in earth: If they loudly and powerfully call all men from their sins, to worship this *Holy and Only God*, that they may become His new born sons and children: If they vindicate His providence in the government of human concerns, and excite all mankind to renounce the guidance of their own self-will and their own self intelligence, that they may be governed, guided, and guarded by the merciful operation of an Infinite Love and as infinite a Wisdom: If they both appeal to and confirm the *Law and the Testimony*, by bearing witness to the Divine Origin of the Book of Revelation, and by affecting man with the most devout and enlarged sense of its importance and astonishing contents, whilst they convince him at the same time of the necessity of a life conformable to its heavenly dictates: If in these latter days of thick darkness, they bring *life and immortality* again to *light*, by drawing aside the veil which hides from mortal eyes, the great realities of another world, and by thus overturning all the persuasions of the Infidel, and the delusive reasonings of the Sceptic: If, at the same time, they suggest the most animating motives to holiness of life, and the most powerful checks against sin, by exhibiting to view the bright recompence awaiting the righteous in the realms of bliss, and the tremendous punishments into which the ungodly plunge themselves in the regions of misery: If their continuation too, protracted through the extraordinary period of twenty-seven successive years, allowed the Honourable Author time to recollect himself, and thus obviates the charge of *sudden* impulse, whilst their harmony and consistency prove them to be the result of *deliberate and cool experience*, rather than of a *hasty and heated imagination*: Then let the whole Christian World bow down in humiliation and thankfulness before their *God and Saviour*, for

having done so great things for them: Then let it no longer be said to the reproach of the followers of that God, "*Behold I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and erucify: and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city;*"* but let it rather be said, "*Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear;*"† "*Blessed are they which are called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.*"‡ And then too let every christian seriously confess, with the pious ones of old, that "*a Great Prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited His people;*"§ and let him receive with devotion and obedience the wonderful testimony, which not only convinces him so clearly of his Eternal destination, but proves also to a demonstration, that the *Almighty* is ever watchful over His Church to protect and cherish it, and that *when sin abounded grace did much more abound*, consoling the afflicted, confirming the weak, enlightening the blind, exalting the lowly, and opening to the humble and the penitent the doors of heaven, agreeable to the sure prediction, "*The Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*"||

* Matt. xxiii. 34. † Matt. xiii. 16. ‡ Rev. xix. 9. § Luke vii. 16.
|| Rev. xxii. 17.



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FINIS.  
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TO THE READER.

HAVING been favoured with the permission of the Rev. Author to reprint this work, it is with much zeal and earnest solicitude for the good of mankind we recommend these few Plain Answers to their serious and attentive perusal.

In order to make this edition cheap, and as much within the purchase of every person as possible, we have been under the necessity of omitting the pious Author's excellent Address to his Congregation, contained in the edition published by himself in the course of the last year, which formed a preface to the work.

The importance of these twelve Plain Answers will be seen to consist in this—that they shew, in the clearest and most convincing manner, the reasons *why* the testimony of BARON SWEDENBORG *is* and *ought* to be received: and it is our ardent prayer that all who read this little pamphlet may be enabled to see that *that* testimony is in perfect agreement with the *Word of God*, and that its tendency is to open the divine and heavenly truths contained in that Word, and likewise to promote the regeneration of the heart and life.

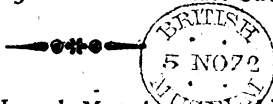
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