

**First the Lord prophesied He would come again, then He came.  
SECOND COMING PROPHECIES FULFILLED  
Rev. Jan H. Weiss**

**INTRODUCTION**

**While on earth, the Lord prophesied that He would come again. In the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg we find the claim that this coming has taken place. In several places of the work "Arcana Coelestia" it is shown how these prophecies have been fulfilled (between paragraphs 3353 and 5071 in volumes 4, 5, 6 and 7).**

**In this book I have tried to do several things. First I have brought these paragraphs together into one book, so the fulfillment of prophecies is seen in one view.**

**Second, I have tried to make the material more easily read. For example, we have removed all references to other parts of these Writings and references to other parts of the Old and New Testaments.**

**Third, I have removed repetitious statements that arose when Swedenborg placed the fulfillment of prophecies between the explanations of the Book of Genesis.**

**Fourth, at the beginning of this treatise I give a description of the various states of the church that occur in the Last Judgment and the Consummation of the Age. This way the reader can keep this overview clearly in mind, while going through the detailed accounts of these states.**

**Fifth, an effort was made to make the reading of this material easier. Explaining the internal sense of the literal sense by itself is not easy. In addition there is the problem of translating the material from the Latin that Swedenborg used. A literal translation of the Latin construction yields an English construction that is not easy to read.**

**The Editor has dared to transliterate, but he encourages any reader to go back to the original unabridged text in English once you have a pretty good grasp of this simplified version.**

**To enable the reader to compare this book with the original text in the Arcana Coelestia, the Arcana references were left in the book, always at the beginning of the paragraph. It will be a number beginning with the letters AC. AC is an abbreviation of the title Arcana Coelestia.**

**Jan H. Weiss, Editor**

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## **STATES OF THE ENDING AND BEGINNING OF A CHURCH**

**AC4422:2 When the Christian Church began to recede from good it went through several states.**

**First, they began not to know what good is and what truth is. Then they began to argue about these amongst themselves.**

**Second, they began to despise what is good and true.**

**Third, deep at heart they did not acknowledge that there is good and truth.**

**Fourth, they began to profane what is good and true.**

**Fifth, the truth of faith and the good of charity still remained with the "elect."**

**Sixth, "and then the state of charity**

**Seventh, the beginning of a new church is treated of**

**Eighth, the state in regard to good and truth within the so called church, when that church is rejected and a new church is adopted.**

## **PREVAILING BELIEF ABOUT THE LAST JUDGMENT**

**AC3353 Most men believe that when the Last Judgment comes, all things in the visible world will be destroyed. The earth will be consumed by fire, the sun and the moon will be dissipated. The stars will vanish away, and a new heaven and a new earth will afterward arise. They have conceived this opinion from prophetic revelations in which such things are mentioned.**

**But this opinion about the Last Judgment is not correct. The Last Judgment is nothing else than the end of the church with one nation, and its beginning with another. This end and beginning occur when there is in the church no acknowledgment of the Lord, and when there is no faith.**

**There is no acknowledgment, and no faith, when there is no charity. For faith is not possible with those who are not in charity. When there is no faith and no charity, there is a transference of it to others.**

### **UNDERSTAND LITERAL SENSE BY KNOWING THE KEY**

**The Writings tell us that there is a great deal more to the Word of the Lord as we see it on earth than we realize. Besides the Word on earth, which we will call the literal sense, there is also a divine Word in the three heavens in the spiritual world. These are called the celestial, spiritual and natural sense because they exist in the celestial, spiritual and natural heaven. In the following you will find one general term for these senses, namely the internal sense.**

**This internal sense is the key to understanding the Lord's wonderful Word, and so it is the key to the Lord's love and wisdom. It is the key to His divine heart. The Writings of the New Church reveal a great deal about this internal sense. It is truly glorious because, when used, it opens your eyes to the divinity of the Word on earth. You will never again doubt that the Lord reveals Himself, and you will never doubt again that this revelation is divine and therefore has divine authority. Now we return to the Writings.**

### **WHEN AND WHAT SIGN?**

**AC3353:2 But as these "prophetic" passages cannot be understood by anyone without the key, which is the internal sense, the things contained in these prophetic passages will be unfolded in regular order, beginning with these words in Matthew 24:"The disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the consummation of the age"? And Jesus answered and said unto them, See that no man lead you astray. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am the Christ and shall lead many astray. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled; for these things must come to pass; but the end is not yet. For nation shall he stirred up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. But all these things are the beginning of sorrows."**

**It is impossible for those who remain in the sense of the letter to know whether these things and those which follow in this chapter of Matthew were spoken concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jewish nation, or concerning the end of days, called the Last Judgment.**

**But they who are in the internal sense see clearly that the Lord speaks here about the end of the church, which end is called the coming of the Lord**

and the consummation of the age. Because these passages in Matthew speak about the end of the church, therefore all these expressions there signify things of the church.

#### **DETAILS OF THE INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 24:3-8**

But what they signify will appear from the several particulars in the internal sense. When it is said that "many shall come in My name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall lead many astray". There "name" signifies that by which the Lord is worshiped; and "Christ" signifies truth itself. Thus it is meant that there would come those who would say, " This is of faith," or "This is true," when yet it is neither of faith, nor true, but false.

That they "should hear of wars and rumors of wars" denotes that there would be disputes and strife concerning truths. That "nation should be stirred up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" signifies that evil would fight with evil, and falsity with falsity.

"And there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places," signifies that there would be no longer any knowledges of good and of truth, and thus that the state of the church would be changed, which is an "earthquake."

AC3354 By these words of the Lord is meant the first state of the church's perversion, which comes to pass when men begin to loose the knowledges of what is good and what is true, but argue among themselves about them, whence arise falsities. As this is the first state, it is said that "the end is not yet," and that "these things are the beginning of sorrows". This state is called "earthquakes in divers places," which signifies in the internal sense a change of the state of the church, in part or at first.

All this was said to the disciples, and this signifies that it is said to all who are of the church, for the twelve disciples represented the church, and therefore it is said, "See that no man lead you astray;" also, " Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled."

AC3355 "An earthquake" signifies a change in the state of the church. The "earth" signifies the church; and "quaking" signifies a change of state in regard to the things of the church.

AC3356 Quaking in this world always takes place in space and in time. But in the other life there is no idea of space and of time but in their stead there is state. It is indeed true that in the other life all things appear as in space, and follow one another as if in time; but in themselves the space and time there are changes of state, for they come from this source.

Every spirit, even the most evil, know this well. By changes of state induced on others they cause these to appear in another place, when yet they are not there. Men may know the same from the fact that in so far as a man is in a state of the affections and the derivative joy he is not in a state. In so far as he is in a state of the thoughts and of a consequent absence from the body, so far he is not in time. Many hours then appear to him scarcely as one. As "motion" is a successive progression in space and time, in the internal sense it is a change of state.

## **TRIBULATION AND FALSE PROPHETS**

**AC3486** In the same chapter in verses 8-14 we read : "All these things are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you into tribulation, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall deliver up one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray. And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the charity of many shall wax cold. But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole inhabited earth, for a testimony unto all nations and then shall the end come".

**AC3487** By these words is described the second state of the perversion of the church, which is that they would despise good and truth, and turn away from them. And as charity would cease, faith in the Lord would step by step expire.

## **DETAILS OF THE INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 24:8-14**

**AC3488** The second state of the perversion of the church was described by the internal sense of the Lord's words in Matthew 24:8-14, which is now given. "All these things are the beginning of sorrows" signifies those things which precede. These are of the first state of the perversion of the church, which is that they would begin no longer to know what is good and what is true, but would dispute about it among themselves. From such disputes would arise falsities and heresies. Such falsities and heresies perverted the church before many centuries had elapsed.

**AC3488:2** "Then shall they deliver you into tribulation, and shall kill you", signifies that good and truth would perish, first by "tribulation" or perversion, and afterwards by their "killing" them, that is, by denial. By "you", that is, by the apostles, are signified all things of faith in one complex, its good as well as its truth. It is not the preaching of the apostles that is treated of, but the consummation of the age.

**AC3488:3** "And ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake" signifies contempt and aversion for all things which are of good and truth.

**"To hate" is to despise and hold in aversion, for this is of hatred. "Of all nations" signifies by those who are in evil. "For My name's sake" is on account of the Lord, thus on account of all things which are from Him.**

**AC3488:4 "And then shall many be offended, and shall deliver up one another, and shall hate one another" signifies enmities on account of these things. "Many shall be offended" denotes enmity in itself. The Human itself of the Lord is that against which there is enmity. This would be an offence and a stumbling-block is here and predicted in the Word. "They shall deliver up one another" denotes enmity among themselves from falsity against truth. "And shall hate one another" denotes enmity among themselves from evil against good.**

**AC3488:5 "And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray" signifies preachings of falsity. "And shall lead many astray" denotes that there should be derivations therefrom.**

**AC3488:6 "And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the charity of many shall wax cold" signifies the expiring of charity and faith. "Because iniquity shall be multiplied" denotes according to the falsities of faith. "The charity of many shall wax cold" denotes the expiring of charity, for they keep pace together. Where faith is not, there charity is not, and where charity is not, faith is not. Charity is that which receives faith, and charity is not charity if it rejects faith. This is the origin of every falsity and every evil.**

**AC3488:7 "But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved" signifies the salvation of those who are in charity. "He that endureth to the end" is he who does not suffer himself to be led astray, who does not succumb in temptations.**

**AC3488:8 "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole inhabited earth, for a testimony unto all nations" signifies that this should first become known in the Christian world. "Shall be preached" denotes that it should be made known. "This gospel of the kingdom" is this truth that it is so. "Gospel" denotes the annunciation, and "kingdom" denotes truth. "In the whole inhabited earth" denotes the Christian world. The church here is called "inhabited" from the life of faith, and from the good which results from the application of truth. For in the internal sense "to inhabit" denotes to live; and the "inhabitants" are the goods of truth. "For a testimony" denotes that they may know, and not make a pretext that they have been ignorant. "To all nations" denotes to evils; for when they are in falsity and evil, they no longer know what is true and what is good. They then believe falsity to be truth, and evil to be good, and the reverse and when the church is in this state, then shall the end come.**

**AC3489** That the church is of such a character does not appear to those who are within the church. They do not see that they despise and hold in aversion all things which are of good and truth. They do not see that they bear enmities against such things, and especially against the Lord Himself. For they frequent places of worship, hear preaching, and are in a kind of sanctity when there. They go to the Holy Supper, and at times converse with one another in a becoming manner concerning such things. This is done by bad men as well as by good men. They also live among themselves in civic friendship. Consequently in the eyes of men no contempt appears, still less aversion; and less still enmity against the goods and truths of faith, and thus against the Lord. These things however are external forms by which one person misleads another. The internal forms of the men of the church are different and altogether quite contrary to the external forms. The internal forms are here described, and are as above mentioned. Their real quality is seen in the heavens, for the angels attend only to internal things, as to ends, or to intentions and desires, and to the thoughts created by them.

**AC3489:2** These internals are very different from the externals. This is clear from those who come from the Christian world into the other life. In the other life they think and speak according to their internals alone, for externals are left behind together with the body. There it is manifest that however peaceable such have seemed in the world, they nevertheless entertained hatred one against another, and against all things which are of faith, and especially against the Lord. For when in the other life the Lord is merely mentioned in their presence, a sphere not only of contempt but also of aversion and enmity against Him is manifestly exhaled and diffused from them. This is even true with those who in appearance had spoken and preached piously about Him and it is the same when charity and faith are mentioned.

**AC3489:3** They are of such a character, that if, while in this world, their externals had been loosed and removed, if they had not then feared for their life and they had they not feared the laws, and especially if they had not feared for their reputation, on account of the honors which they solicited and pursued, and on account of the wealth which they desired and eagerly sought, they would have rushed one against another with intestine hatred, in accordance with their impulses and thoughts. They would have seized the goods of others without any conscience, and likewise without any conscience would have butchered others, most especially the innocent. Such are Christians at this day, [A. D. 1751] in regards to their internals, except a few whom they do not know. From this it is evident what the quality of the church is. **THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION**

**AC3650 Now we will explain the contents of verses 15 to 18 of Matthew 24: "When therefore ye shall see the abomination of desolation which was told of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place, let him that readeth understand, then let them that are in Judea flee into the mountains; let him that is upon the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house; and let him that is in the field not return back to take his garment".**

#### **DETAILS OF THE INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 24:15-18**

**AC3652 "When therefore ye shall see the abomination of desolation" signifies the devastation of the church, which occurs when the Lord is no longer acknowledged, when there is no love and no faith in Him. It occurs when there is no longer any charity toward the neighbor, and consequently when there is not any faith of good and truth. When this is the case in the region where the Word is in existence, then there is "desolation", and the things just mentioned are its "abomination". So the words "when ye shall see the abomination of desolation" signify when any one observes such things.**

**AC3652:2 "Which was told of by Daniel the prophet" in the internal sense signifies by the prophets. Where a**

**prophet is mentioned by name in the Word, it is not the prophet that is meant, but the prophetic Word. Names never penetrate into heaven. And yet, one prophet does not signify the same as another. By "Daniel" is signified everything prophetic concerning the Lord's advent, and concerning the state of the church. In this case its last state is signified.**

**The subject of devastation is largely treated of in the Prophets, and while in the sense of the letter it speaks about the devastation of the Jewish and Israelitish Church, in the internal sense it signifies the devastation of the church in general, thus also the devastation which is now at hand.**

**AC3652:3 "Standing in the holy place" signifies devastation as to all things which are of good and truth; the "holy place" is a state of love and faith; the holy of this state is the good which is of love, and the derivative truth which is of faith. Nothing else than these is meant by "holy" in the Word, because these things are from the Lord, who is the Holy itself. "Let him that readeth understand" signifies that these things are to be well observed by those who are in the church, especially by those who are in love and faith.**

**AC3652:4 "Then let them that are in Judea flee into the mountains" signifies that they who are of the church will not look elsewhere than to the Lord, thus to love to Him, and to charity toward the neighbor. According to the sense of the letter the meaning would be that when Jerusalem was**

besieged, as it came to be by the Romans, then they should not go to any other place but to the mountains. (See Luke 21:20 and 21).

**AC3652:5** In this passage in the sense of the letter it is Jerusalem which is understood, while in the internal sense it is the Lord's church. Each thing recorded in the Word concerning the Jewish and Israelitish people are representative of the Lord's kingdom in the heavens, and of His kingdom on earth or the church. By "Jerusalem" in the internal sense is not meant Jerusalem, nor by "Judea," Judea. These matters were of such a nature that they were able to represent the celestial and spiritual things of the Lord's kingdom, and the events took place for the sake of the representation. In this way the Word could be so written as to be adapted to the apprehension of the man who should read it, and also to the understanding of the angels who are with the man. This was the reason why the Lord spoke in the same manner; for had He spoken otherwise, His Word would not have been adapted to the understanding of those who read it, especially at that time. Nor would it have been adapted to the understanding of the angels. It would neither have been received by man, nor understood by the angels.

**AC3652:6** "Let him that is upon the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house" signifies that such as are in the good of charity should not betake themselves to those things which belong to doctrinal matters of faith. In the Word the "housetop" signifies the higher state of man, thus his state as to good. Those things which are below signify the lower state of man, thus his state as to truth. As regards the state of a man of the church, the case is this: While he is being regenerated he learns truths for the sake of good, for he has the affection of truth on this account. But after he has been regenerated he acts from truth and good. After a man has arrived at this state he should not go back to his former state, for if he does this, he would reason from truth concerning the good in which he is, and would thereby pervert his state. All reasoning ceases, and ought to cease, when a man is in a state to will what is true and good; for he then thinks and acts from the will, consequently from conscience, and not anymore from the understanding. If he should think and act from the understanding, he would fall into temptations in which he would succumb. This then is what is signified by "Let him that is upon the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house."

**AC3652:7** "And let him that is in the field not return back to take his garment or tunic" signifies that such as are in the good of truth should not betake themselves from the good thereof to what is doctrinal of truth. In the Word a "field" signifies this state of man in respect to good; and a "garment or tunic" signifies that which clothes good, that is, what is

doctrinal of truth, for this is as clothing to good. Every one can see that in these words deeper things are hidden than those which appear in the letter, for they were spoken by the Lord Himself.

AC3653 There are three kinds of men within the church; namely, those who are in love to the Lord; those who are in charity toward the neighbor; and those who are in the affection of truth. Those who belong to the first class, who are in love to the Lord, are specifically signified in the words, "let them that are in Judea flee into the mountains." Those in the second class, who are in charity toward their neighbor, are specifically signified in the words, "let him that is upon the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house." Those in the third class, who are in the affection of truth, are specifically signified in the words, "and let him that is in the field not return back to take his garment."

#### WHO ARE WITH CHILD AND GIVE SUCK

AC3751 Now we will unfold the contents of Matthew 24 verses 19 to 22 namely, the words: "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! and pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath; for then shall be great affliction, such as was not since the beginning of the world even until now, neither shall be. And except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be preserved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened".

AC3753 Every one who thinks about the Lord with reverence and who believes that the Divine was in Him, and that He spoke from the Divine, is able to know and believe that the above words, like the rest the Lord taught and spoke, were not spoken of one nation only, but of the universal human race; and not of its worldly, but of its spiritual state; and also that the Lord's words comprehended the things which are of His kingdom and of the church, for these are Divine and eternal. Whoever believes in this manner, concludes that these words : "Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days," do not signify those who are with child and give suck; and that the words : "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath," do not signify any flight on account of worldly enemies and so in regard to the rest.

AC3754 In these verses the fourth and last state is discussed. This state is the state of profanation of good and truth. Here are the particulars of this state as given in the internal sense.

#### DETAILS OF THE INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 24:19-22

AC3755 "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days" signifies those who have been imbued with the good of love

to the Lord and the good of innocence. "Woe" is a form of expression signifying the danger of eternal damnation; "to be with child" is to conceive the good of heavenly love; "to give suck" is also a state of innocence; "In those days" denote the states in which the church then is.

AC3755:2 "And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath" signifies removal from those things, that it be not done precipitately, in a state of too much cold or of too much heat. "Flight" is removal from a state of the good of love and of innocence, just now spoken of; "flight in the winter" is removal therefrom in a state of too much cold; "cold" is when there is aversion to love and innocence, which is induced by the loves of self; "flight on the sabbath" is removal from them in a state of too much heat; "heat" is external sanctity, while within are the love of self and the love of the world.

AC3755:3 "For then shall be great affliction, such as was not

since the beginning of the world even until now, neither shall

be" signifies the highest degree of the perversion and vastation of the church in respect to good and truth, which is profanation; for profanation of what is holy occasions death eternal and much more grievous than any other states of evil, and so much the more grievous in proportion as the goods and truths profaned are of a more interior kind; and inasmuch as such interior goods and truths are open and known in the Christian Church, and are profaned, it is said that "then shall be great affliction such as was not from the beginning of the world even until now, neither shall be."

AC3755:4 "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be preserved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" signifies the removal of those who are of the church from interior goods and truths to exterior, so that those may still be saved who are in the life of good and truth; by the "days being shortened," is signified a state of removal; by "no flesh being preserved," is signified that otherwise none could be saved; by "the elect" are signified those who are in the life of good and truth.

## **ABOUT PROFANATION**

AC3757 Few people know what profanation is. People who know, acknowledge, and become imbued with good and truth, can profane. But those who do not acknowledge, and still less those who do not know truth and good cannot profane. In other words, they who are within the church can profane holy things, but they who are without it cannot profane. They who are of the celestial church can profane holy goods, and they who are

of the spiritual church can profane holy truths. For that reason interior truths were not disclosed to the Jews, lest they should profane them. The Gentiles least of all can profane. Profanation is a commingling and conjunction of good and evil, and also of truth and falsity. This was signified by the eating of blood, which was so severely prohibited in the Jewish Church. Therefore in so far as possible men are withheld from the acknowledgment and faith of good and truth, unless they are able to remain therein. On this account they are kept in ignorance and worship becomes external. Internal truths are not revealed until the church has been vastated, because then good and truth can no longer be profaned. This was the reason why the Lord then first came into the world.

### **FALSE CHRISTS AND FALSE PROPHETS**

**AC3897** Now we will discuss what the Lord taught concerning the Last Judgment, or the last times of the church in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew from the 23rd to the 28th verse.

**"Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is the Christ,**

**or there, believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs**

**and false prophets, and shall give great signs and wonders, to**

**lead astray if possible even the elect. Behold I have told you before. If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold He is in the desert, go not out; Behold He is in the inner chambers, believe it not. For as the lightning cometh forth out of the east and appeareth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together".**

**AC3898** These things do not seem to stand in any series as to the sense of the letter; but yet in the internal sense they are in a most beautiful series.

**AC3898:2** The reason why the Lord spoke in this manner was in order that the people might not understand the Word, lest they should profane it. For when the church has been vastated, as it then was with the Jews, if men understood the Word, they would profane it. For the same reason the Lord spoke by parables, as He Himself teaches in Matthew (xiii. 13-15; Mark iv. 11, 12; Luke viii. 10). For the Word cannot be profaned by those who do not know its mysteries, but only by those who do and more by those who appear to themselves learned than by those who seem to themselves unlearned.

**AC3898:3** The reason why the interiors of the Word are

now being opened, is that the church at this day has been vastated so far, it is so devoid of faith and love, that although men know and understand, still they do not acknowledge, and much less believe, except a few who are in the life of good, and are called the "elect". These can now be instructed, and with these a New Church is to be instituted. But where these are, the Lord alone knows. There will be few within the church. Among the Gentiles previous new churches have been set up.

AC3899 The subject now treated of is the state of the church in respect to its quality at that time as to doctrine in general, and with those specifically who are in holy external worship, but in profane internal worship; that is, who with the mouth profess the Lord with holy reverence, but at heart worship themselves and the world, so that with them the worship of the Lord is a means of gaining honors and wealth.

In so far as these persons have acknowledged the Lord, and the heavenly life and faith, so far do they profane them when they become of such a character. This state of the church is now treated of, as may better appear from the internal sense of the Lord's words quoted above.

#### DETAILS OF THE INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 24:23-28

AC3900 "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is the Christ, or there; believe it not" signifies an exhortation to beware of their doctrine. "The Christ" is the Lord as to Divine truth, and hence as to the Word and as to doctrine from the Word. That here the contrary is meant, namely, Divine truth falsified, or the doctrine of falsity is evident.

AC3900:2 "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets" signifies the falsities of that doctrine. That "false Christs" are doctrinal things from the Word falsified, or truths not Divine, is manifest from what has been said just above; and that "false prophets" are those who teach such falsities. In the Christian world they who teach falsities are especially those who have as their end their own pre-eminence, and the riches of the world; for they pervert the truths of the Word in their own favor; for when the love of self and of the world is the end, nothing else is thought of. These are "false Christs and false prophets."

AC3900:3 "And they shall give great signs and wonders" signifies things that confirm and persuade from external appearances and fallacies, by which the simple suffer themselves to be led astray.

AC3900:4 "To lead astray if possible even the elect" signifies those who are in the life of good and truth, and are

consequently with the Lord. These are they who in the Word are called the "elect". They are rarely seen in the company of those who veil over profane worship with what is holy. If seen, they are not known, for the Lord hides them, and thus protects them. Before they have been confirmed, they suffer themselves to be easily led away by external sanctities. But after they have been confirmed, they remain steadfast, being kept by the Lord in the company of angels, without knowing it. It is then impossible for them to be led astray by that wicked crew.

AC3900:5 "Behold, I have told you before" signifies an exhortation to prudence, that is, to beware for they

are among false prophets, who appear in sheep's clothing, but

inwardly are ravaging wolves (Matt. vii. 15). The "false

prophets" are the sons of the age, who are more prudent in their generation (that is, more crafty) than the sons of light (as described in Luke xvi. 8). For which reason the Lord exhorts them in the words "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore prudent as serpents and simple as doves" (Matt. x. 16).

AC3900:6 "If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold He is in the desert, go not forth: Behold He is in the inner chambers, believe it not" signifies that what they say about truth, and what they say about good, as well as many other things, are not to be believed. That this is what is signified, no one can see except the man who is acquainted with the internal sense. That a mystery is contained in these words may be known from the fact that the Lord spoke them, and that without any other sense more interiorly hidden the words amount to nothing--namely, that if they should say that the Christ was in the desert they were not to go forth; and if they should say that He was in the inner chambers, they were not to believe it. But it is vastated truth that is signified by the "desert;" and vastated good by the "inner chambers," or secret recesses. The reason why vastated truth is signified by the "desert," is that when the church is vastated (that is, when there is no longer any Divine truth in it, because there is no longer any good, or love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor), it is then said "to be a desert, or to be in a desert;" for by a "desert or wilderness" is meant whatever is not cultivated or inhabited; also whatever has little life, as is then the case with truth in the church. This shows that the "desert" here is a church in which there is no truth.

AC3900:7 But the "inner chambers," or secret recesses, in

the internal sense signify the church as to good, and also simply good. The church that is in good is called the "house of God."The "inner chambers,"

and the things within the house, are goods. The reason why that which men say about truth, and what they say about good, is not to be believed, is that they call falsity truth, and evil good; for they who regard themselves and the world as their end, understand nothing else by truth and good than that they themselves are to be adored, and are to receive benefits; and if they breathe forth piety, it is that they may appear in sheep's clothing.

**AC3900:8** The Word spoken by the Lord contains innumerable things within it. "Desert or wilderness" is a word of wide signification. All that is called a "wilderness" is not cultivated and inhabited. All interior things are called "inner chambers". Therefore by a "desert" is signified the Word of the Old Testament, because this is regarded as abrogated; and by "inner chambers" the Word of the New Testament, because this teaches interior things which concern the internal man. So also the whole Word is called a "desert," because it no longer serves for doctrinal things; and human institutions are called "inner chambers," which, because they depart from the precepts and institutes of the Word, make the Word to be a "desert." This is also known in the Christian world. For they who are in holy external worship and in profane internal worship, because they want their pre-eminence and their opulence above all as their goal, abrogate the Word, and this so far as not even to permit it to be read by others. And although they who are not in such profane worship hold the Word to be holy, and permit it to be among the people, they nevertheless bend and explain all things therein in favor of their doctrinal matters, which causes the rest of what is in the Word, and which is not in accordance with their doctrinal matters, to be a "desert." Consider the case of those who make salvation to consist in faith alone, and hold in contempt the works of charity. All that the Lord Himself has spoken in the New Testament, and so many times in the Old, concerning love and charity, they make as a "desert;" and all the things that belong to faith without works, they make as "inner chambers."

**AC3900:9** "For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and

appeareth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" signifies that it was with the internal worship of the Lord as with lightning, which is instantly dissipated. "Lightening" denotes heavenly light, and thus what is preached about love and faith, because these are of heavenly light. In the supreme sense the "east" is the Lord, and in the internal sense, the good of love, of charity, and of faith from the Lord. The "west" in the internal sense is that which has gone down or has ceased to be. It signifies no acknowledgment of the Lord, nor of the good of love, charity, and faith. So "the lightning that cometh out of the east and appeareth even unto the west" denotes dissipation. The coming of the Lord is not according to the letter, that He is to appear again in the world; but it is His presence in every one; and this exists whenever the gospel is preached and what is holy is thought of.

**AC3900:10 "For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together" signifies that confirmations of falsity by means of reasonings will be multiplied in the vastated church. When the church is without the good and consequently without the truth of faith, it is said to be "dead". When it is dead, it is compared to a "carcass".**

**Reasonings concerning goods and truths that make these out to be nothing except in so far as they are apprehended, and confirmations of evil and falsity thereby, are the "eagles". The "carcass" is the church devoid of the life of charity and faith.**

**AC3901 The reason why the last state of the church is compared to "eagles" gathered together to a "carcass," or to a "body," is that by "eagles" are signified man's rational things, which when predicated of the good, are true rational things; but when predicated of the evil, are false rational things or reasonings. "Birds" in general signify man's thoughts, in both senses good and bad; and every species has a special signification. As eagles fly high and are sharp-sighted, they signify rational things.**

**AC4056 The words which remain to be explained, are verses 29, 30, and 31, where we read these words : "But immediately after the affliction of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall nor give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the non of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth wail and they shall see the non of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send forth His angels with a trumpet and a great voice, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the end of the heavens even to the end thereof".**

**AC4058 In these verses, now to be explained, there is described the state of charity and of love, and also the beginning of a New Church.**

#### **DETAILS OF INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 24:29-31**

**AC4060:2 "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light" signifies love to the Lord, which is the "sun;" and charity toward the neighbor, which is the "moon." "To be darkened and not to give their light" signifies that they will not appear, and thus will vanish away. The reason why this is the signification of the "sun and moon," is that in the other life the Lord appears as a sun to those in heaven who are in love to Him, and who are called the celestial; and as a moon to those who are in charity toward the neighbor, and who are called the spiritual. AC4060:3 The sun and moon in the heavens (that is, the Lord) is never darkened, nor does it lose its light, but it shines perpetually; and so neither is love to the Lord darkened with the celestial, nor does charity toward the neighbor lose its**

light with the spiritual, in the heavens; nor on earth with those with whom these angels are, that is, those who are in love and charity. Those however who are in no love and charity, but in the love of self and of the world, and consequently in hatred and revenge, bring that "darkening" upon themselves. The sun of this world shines continuously, but when the clouds interpose, it does not appear.

AC4060:4 "And the stars shall fall from heaven"; signifies that the knowledges of good and truth will perish. Nothing else is signified by "stars" when these are mentioned in the Word. "And the powers of the heavens shall be shaken"; signifies the foundations of the church, which are said to be "shaken and made to quake" when they perish. For the church on earth is the foundation of heaven, because the influx of good and truth from the Lord through the heavens finally terminates in the goods and truths that are with the man of the church. When therefore the man of the church is in such a perverted state as no longer to admit the influx of good and truth, the powers of the heavens are said to be "shaken." For this reason it is always provided by the Lord that something of the church shall remain; and that when an old church perishes, a new - one shall be set up again.

AC4060:5 "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in

heaven"; signifies the appearing of Divine truth at that time the "sign" signifies the appearing; "the Son of man," the Lord as to Divine truth. It was this appearing or this "sign," concerning which the disciples asked when they said,

"Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the consummation of the age" (verse 3). For they knew from the Word that when the age should be

consummated, the Lord would come; and they learned from the Lord Himself that He would "come again," by which they understood that the Lord would once more come into the world; not yet knowing that the Lord has come whenever the church has been vastated, not indeed in person, as when He assumed the human by birth and made it Divine; but by means of appearings, - either manifest, as when He appeared to Abraham in Mamre, to Moses in the bush, to the people of Israel on Mount Sinai, and to Joshua when he entered the land of Canaan; or not so manifest, as by inspirations through which the Word was given, and afterwards through the Word; for the Lord is present in the Word, because all things in the Word are from Him and concerning Him, as may be seen from what has already been frequently shown. This latter is the appearing here signified by the "sign of the Son of man," and which is described in this verse.

**AC4060:6 "And then shall all the tribes of the earth wail"; signifies that all who are in the good of love and the truth of faith shall be in grief.**

**AC4060:7 "And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of the heavens with power and great glory" signifies that the Word will then be revealed as to its internal sense, in which the Lord is; the "Son of man" is the Divine truth therein; the "cloud" is the literal sense; "power" is predicated of the good, and "glory" of the truth, therein. This is the "coming of the Lord" here meant, and not that He will literally appear in the clouds. Now follows the object of the setting up of a New Church, which takes place when the old one is vastated and rejected.**

**AC4060:8 "He shall send forth His angels with a trumpet and a great voice"; signifies election, not by visible angels, still less by trumpets, and by great voices; but by the influx of holy good and holy truth from the Lord through angels; and therefore by "angels" in the Word there is signified something of the Lord; here, there are signified things that are from the Lord and concerning the Lord. By the "trumpet" and the "great voice" there is signified evangelization, as elsewhere in the Word.**

**AC4060:9 "And they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the end of the heavens even to the end thereof" signifies the setting up of a New Church. The "elect" are those who are in the good of love and of faith; the "four winds" from which they shall be gathered together, are all states of good and truth; "from the end of the heavens to the end of them" denotes the internals and the externals of the church. Such therefore are the things signified by these words of the Lord.**

## **PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE**

**AC4230 In this section we will explain what is contained in Matthew 24 verses 32 to 35: "Now learn a parable from the fig-tree. When her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh. So also ye, when ye see all these things, know that it is nigh, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all these things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away".**

## **DETAILS OF THE INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 24:32-35**

**AC4231 "Now learn a parable from the fig-tree. When her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh" signifies the first of a new church. The "fig-tree" is the good of the natural. Her "branch" is the affection of this. And the "leaves" are truths. The**

**"parable from which they should learn" is that these things are signified. He who is not acquainted with the internal sense of the Word, cannot possibly know what is involved in the comparison of the Lord's coming to a fig-tree and its branch and leaves; but as all the comparisons in the Word are also significative, it may be known from this signification what is meant. A "fig-tree" wherever mentioned in the Word signifies in the internal sense the good of the natural. That her "branch" is the affection of this, is because affection springs forth from good as a branch from its trunk. And "leaves" are truths. From all this it is now evident what the parable involves, namely, that when a new church is being created by the Lord, there then appears first of all the good of the natural. Good of the natural is good in the external form together with its affection and truths. By the good of the natural is not meant the good into which man is born, or which he derives from his parents, but a good which is spiritual in respect to its origin. Into this no one is born, but is led into it by the Lord through the knowledges of good and truth. Therefore until a man is in this good (that is, in spiritual good), he is not a man of the church. However from a good that is born with him, he may appear to be so.**

**AC4231:2 "So also ye, when ye see all these things, know that it is nigh, even at the doors" signifies that when those things appear which are signified in the internal sense by the words spoken just before, and by these concerning the fig-tree, then it is the consummation of the church, that is, the Last Judgment, and the Coming of the Lord. The old church is then being rejected, and a new one is being set up. It is said, "at the doors," because the good of the natural and its truths are the first things which are insinuated into a man when he is being regenerated and is becoming the church.**

**"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be accomplished" signifies that the Jewish nation shall not be extirpated like other nations.**

**AC4231:3 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away" signifies that the internals and the externals of the former church would perish, but that the Word of the Lord would abide. By the Lord's "words" are plainly meant not only these now spoken respecting His coming and the consummation of the age, but also all that are in the Word. These words were said immediately after what was said about the Jewish nation, because that nation was preserved for the sake of the Word. From all this it is now evident that the beginnings of a New Church are here foretold.**

**THE HOUR OF HIS COMING**

**AC4332** There are now to be unfolded the words that follow in Matthew 24 verses 36 to 42, namely these: "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not the angels of the heavens, but My Father only. And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as they were in the days before the flood, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field one shall be taken, and one shall be left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; one shall be taken, and one shall be left".

**AC4333** In the internal sense is described what the state will be when the old church is being rejected and the new is being set up. A Last Judgment has several times taken place on this globe: first, when the Lord's celestial church, which was the Most Ancient, perished in the antediluvians by an inundation of evils and falsities, which in the internal sense is the "flood;"

**AC4333:2** second, when the spiritual church, which was after the flood, and is called the Ancient, being spread over much of the Asiatic world, ceased of itself;

**AC4333:3** third, when the representative of a church among the posterity of Jacob was destroyed, which took place when the ten tribes were carried away into perpetual captivity and dispersed among the nations; and finally when Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Jews also were dispersed. Because there was then a consummation of the age after the Lord's coming, therefore also many things said by the Lord in the Evangelists concerning the consummation of that age are also applicable to the Jewish nation, and are likewise applied to them by many at this day. Nevertheless the subject treated of in the above words is specifically and especially the consummation of the age now at hand (1752), namely, the end of the Christian Church, which is also treated of by John in the Apocalypse. This will be the fourth Last Judgment on this globe.

#### **DETAILS OF THE INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 24:36-42**

**AC4334** "But of that day and hour knoweth no one" signifies the state of the church at that time as to goods and truths, that it would not appear to any one, neither on earth nor in heaven. For by "day and hour" here is not meant day and hour, or time; but state as to good and truth. That it is here state as to good and truth, is because the subject treated of is the church, for good and truth make the church.

**AC4334:2** "Not the angels of the heavens, but My Father only" signifies that heaven does not know the state of the church as to good and truth specifically, but the Lord alone, and also when that state of the church will

come. They who believe that the Father is one and the Son another, and who separate them from each other, do not understand the Scriptures.

AC4334:3 "For as they were in the days before the flood" signifies the state of vastation of those who are of the church, which is compared to the state of vastation of the first or Most Ancient Church; the consummation of the age or Last Judgment of which is described in the Word by the "flood."

AC4334:4 "Eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" signifies their state as to the appropriation of evil and falsity, and the consequent conjunction with these. That "to eat" denotes the appropriation of good, and "to drink" the appropriation of truth; thus in the opposite sense the appropriation of evil and falsity. That "to marry" denotes conjunction with evil, and "to give in marriage," conjunction with falsity. Whatever the Lord spoke, being Divine, is not the same in the internal sense as in the letter. Thus eating and drinking in the Holy Supper do not signify in the spiritual sense eating and drinking, but the appropriation of the good of the Lord's Divine love. And as when predicated of the church and the Lord's kingdom the conjugal is the conjunction of the good of love with the truth of faith, therefore from this conjunction the Lord's kingdom is called in the Word the heavenly marriage.

AC4334:5 "Until the day that Noah entered into the ark"

signifies the end of the former church, and the beginning of the new. For by "Noah" is signified the Ancient Church in general which succeeded the Most Ancient after the flood; and by the "ark," the church itself. "Day" signifies state.

AC4334:6 "And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away" signifies that the men of the church will not then know that they are inundated by evils and falsities, because on account of the evils and falsities in which they are they will not know what the good of love to the Lord is, and the good of charity toward the neighbor, and also what the truth of faith, and that this is from that love and charity, and is not possible except with those who live in this love and in this charity. They will also be ignorant that the internal is what saves and condemns, but not the external separate from the internal.

AC4334:7 "So shall the coming of the Son of man be" signifies the Divine Truth, and that they will not receive it. It has been said before (at verses 27 and 30), that the "coming of the Son of man" is the Divine Truth which will then be revealed.

AC4334:8 "Then shall two be in the field one shall be taken, and one shall be left" signifies those within the church who are in good, and those within

**the church who are in evil that they who are in good will be saved, and that they who are in evil will be condemned.**

**AC4334:9 "Two women shall be grinding at the mill, one shall be taken, and one shall be left" signifies those within the church who are in truth, that is, in the affection of it from good, that they will be saved; and those within the church who are in truth, that is, in the affection of it from evil, that they will be condemned. That in the Word "to grind," and a "mill" have this signification, will be evident from what now follows.**

## **BE WATCHFUL**

**AC4422 Now the Lord's words in Matthew 24 verse 42 to the end, remain to be unfolded. These words are the last in that chapter which treat of the consummation of the age, or the advent of the Lord, and which in the letter are these: "Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord cometh. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would assuredly have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through. Therefore be ye also ready, for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man will come. Who therefore is the faith and prudent servant, whom his lord hath set over his domestics, to give them their food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he will set him over all his goods. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth to come; and shall begin to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour when he knoweth not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth".**

**AC4422:2 These are words of exhortation to those in the church, that they should be in the good of faith, and that if not they must perish.**

**AC4423. Scarcely any one knows how the case is with the rejection of an old church and the adoption of a new church. He who does not know man's interiors and their states, and consequently man's states after death, cannot but infer that those who are of the old church, and in whom good and truth have been laid waste, that is, are no longer at heart acknowledged, are to perish, either as the antediluvians perished by the flood, or as did the Jews by expulsion from their land, or in some other way. But when the church has been laid waste, that is, when it is no longer in any good of faith, it perishes chiefly in respect to the states of its interiors, thus in respect to its states in the other life. Heaven then removes itself away from them and consequently the Lord and transfers itself to others, who are adopted in their stead; for without a church somewhere on**

the earth there is no communication of heaven with man; for the church is like the heart and lungs of the Grand Man on the earth.

AC4423:2 They who are then of the old church, and thus are removed from heaven, are in a kind of inundation as to their interiors, and in fact in an inundation over the head. This inundation the man himself does not observe while he lives in the body, but he comes into it after death. In the other life this inundation plainly appears like a thick cloud by which they are encompassed and separated from heaven. The state of those who are in this thick cloud is that they cannot possibly see what the truth of faith is, and still less what is its good; for the light of heaven, in which is intelligence and wisdom, cannot penetrate into this cloud. This is the state of a vastated church.

AC4424. What the Lord's words quoted above involve in the internal sense may be seen without explication; for the Lord spoke them not so much by representatives and significatives, as by comparatives. There shall be stated merely what is signified by the words of the last verse, namely: "He shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

#### DETAILS OF THE INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 24:LAST VERSE

"He shall cut him asunder"; signifies separation and removal from goods and truths; for they who are in knowledges of good and truth, as are those who are within the church and yet in a life of evil, are said to be "cut asunder" when they are removed from these knowledges. For the knowledges of good and truth are separated from them in the other life, and they are kept in evils, and therefore also in falsities. This is done in order to prevent them from communicating with heaven by the knowledges of truth, and with hell by evils and the derivative falsities, and thus hanging between the two. It is done also to prevent them from profaning goods and truths, which is done when these are commingled with falsities and evils. The same is also signified by the Lord's words to him who hid the talent in the earth: "Take therefore the talent from him; and give it unto him that hath ten talents; for unto every one that hath shall he given, and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away" (Matt. xxv. 28, 29); also by what the Lord says in another place in Matthew xiii. 12; and in Mark iv. 25; and in Luke viii. 18.

AC4424:2 "And appoint his portion with the hypocrites" signifies his lot (which is his "portion") with those who outwardly appear to be in truth as

to doctrine and in good as to life, but inwardly `believe nothing of truth and will nothing of good, who are the "hypocrites." In this manner they are "cut asunder." Therefore when their externals are taken away from them, as takes place with all in the other life, they appear such as they are as to their internals, namely, devoid of faith and charity, of which they nevertheless have made a show in order to win others and acquire honors, gain, and reputation. Those within a vastated church are almost all of this character, for they have externals, but no internals. This is the origin of that inundation of their interiors.

AC4424:3 "There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" signifies their state in the other life, "wailing," their state as to evils, and "gnashing of teeth," their state as to falsities. For in the Word the "teeth" signify the lowest natural things, in the genuine sense the truths of these natural things, and in the opposite sense their falsities.

The teeth moreover correspond to these things, and therefore the "gnashing of teeth" is the collision of falsities with truths. They who are in mere natural things, and who are in these from the fallacies of the senses, and who believe nothing but what they see thereby, are said to be in the "gnashing of teeth," and also in the other life appear to themselves to be so when they draw conclusions from their fallacies concerning the truths of faith. In a church vastated as to good and truth such persons abound. The like is signified elsewhere also by the "gnashing of teeth," as in chew.

AC4535 They who do not see beyond the literal sense must suppose that the Last Judgment is the destruction of the world, and this especially from the Book of Revelation, where it said:"I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven"(xxi. 1, 2).

And also from the prophecies of Isaiah, where are similar words:"Behold I create new heavens and a new earth; therefore the former things shall not be remembered, nor come up upon the heart; but be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create, for behold I create Jerusalem an exultation, and her people a gladness"(lxv. 17, 18; lxvi. 22).

AC4535:2 They who do not see beyond the literal sense must infer that the universal heaven together with this earth will be annihilated, and that the dead will then for the first time rise again, and dwell in a new heaven and upon a new earth. But that the Word is not to be so understood may be seen from many other passages where the heavens and the earth are mentioned. They who have any faith in an internal sense can plainly see that by "a new heaven and a new earth" is meant a new church, which shall

succeed when the former church passes away; and that the "heaven" is its internal and the "earth" its external.

AC4535:4 That "earth or land" denotes the church, comes from the fact that the land of Canaan was the land where the church had been from the most ancient times, and where afterwards there was the representative of a church among the descendants of Jacob. When this land is said to be "consummated," it is not the nation in it that is meant, but it is the holy of worship that exists with the nation where the church is. For the Word is spiritual, and the land itself is not spiritual, nor the nation therein, but that which is of the church.

### **THE PARABLE OF THE FIVE VIRGINS**

AC4635 I may unfold the internal sense of Matthew 25 verses 1 to 13. The predictions in the letter are as follows : "Then shall the kingdom of the heavens be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were prudent, but five were foolish. They that were foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them; but the prudent took oil in their vessels with their lamps. And while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight a cry was made, Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. But the foolish said unto the prudent, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. But the prudent answered, saying, Perchance there will not be enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the wedding, and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh".

AC4636 By this parable the Lord described His own coming, which is evident from the particulars, and from the end. He says: "Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh". Also in the foregoing chapter, He is speaking expressly of His coming in verse 42: "Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord cometh". His "coming" is the consummation of the age, or the last time of the church.

AC4637 It is very evident that each and all things the Lord spoke in parables are representative and significative of the spiritual and celestial things of His kingdom, and in the highest sense, of the Divine things with Him; and therefore the man who does not know this must suppose that the Lord's parables have no more in them than ordinary comparisons.

Such must be the case with the parable of the ten virgins unless it is known what is signified in the internal sense by the virgins, and also by ten and five, and by the lamps, the vessels, and the oil, and by them that sell, the wedding, and all the rest; and the same with all the other parables. The things which the Lord spoke in these parables appear in the outward form like ordinary comparisons; but in their inward form they are of such a nature as to fill the universal heaven. For there is an internal sense in every particular, which is of such a nature that its spiritual and celestial diffuses itself through the heavens in every direction like light and flame. This sense is quite uplifted above the sense of the letter, and flows from the several expressions, and from the several words, nay, from every jot. What this parable involves in the internal sense will appear from what follows.

#### **DETAILS OF THE INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 25:1-13**

**AC4638** "Then shall the kingdom of the heavens be likened unto ten virgins". This signifies the last period of the old church and the first of the new. The church is the Lord's kingdom on earth, The "ten virgins" are all who are in the church, namely, both those who are in good and truth, and those who are in evil and falsity. "Ten" in the internal sense denotes remains, and also fullness, thus all; and "virgins" denote those who are in the church.

**AC4638:2** "Who took their lamps" signifies spiritual things in which is the celestial, or truths in which there is good, or what is the same, faith in which there is charity toward the neighbor, and charity in which there is love to the Lord; for "oil" is the good of love. But lamps in which there is no oil denote the same in which there is no good.

**AC4638:3** "And went forth to meet the bridegroom" signifies their reception. And five of them were prudent, but five were foolish signifies a part of them in truths in which there is good, and a part of them in truths in which is no good. The former are the "prudent," and the latter the "foolish." In the internal sense "five" denotes some, here therefore a part of them. "They that were foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them" signifies not having the good of charity in their truths. In the internal sense "oil" denotes the good of charity and of love. But "the prudent took oil in their vessels with their lamps" signifies that they had the good of charity and of love in their truths. Their "vessels" are the doctrinal things of faith.

**AC4638:4** "And while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept" signifies delay, and hence doubt. To "slumber" in the internal sense is to grow sluggish from the delay in the things of the church, and to "sleep" is to cherish doubt. The prudent cherish a doubt in which there is affirmation; the foolish, a doubt in which there is negation.

**"But at midnight a cry was made" signifies the time which is the last of the old church and the first of the new. This time is what is called "night" in the Word, when the state of the church is treated of. The "cry" denotes a change. "Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him" signifies the same as the judgement, namely, acceptance and rejection.**

**AC4638:5 "Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps" signifies preparation of all. Those who are in truths in which there is no good are equally in the belief of being accepted as are those who are in truths in which there is good, for they suppose that faith alone saves, not knowing that there is no faith where there is no charity.**

**"But the foolish said unto the prudent, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out" signifies that they desire good to be communicated by others to their empty truths, or to their destitute faith. For in the other life all spiritual and celestial things are mutually communicated, but only through good.**

**AC4638:6 "But the prudent answered, saying, Perchance there will not be enough for us and you" signifies that it cannot be communicated, because the little of truth that they had would be taken away from there. For as to the communication of good in the other life to those who are in truths without good, these as it were take away good from those who have it, and appropriate it to themselves, and do not communicate it to others, but defile it; for which reason no communication of good to them is possible.**

**AC4638:7 "But go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves" signifies the good of merit. They who boast of the good of merit are "they that sell." Moreover in the other life they who are in truth in which there is no good, above all others make a merit of all they have done which appeared good in the outward form, although in the inward form it was evil, according to what the Lord says in Matthew: "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied by Thy name, and by Thy name have cast out demons, and in Thy name done many mighty works? But then will I confess unto them, I know you not; depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity" (vii. 22, 23). And in Luke: "When the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, then shall ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, lord, open to us. But he shall answer and say to you, I know you not whence ye are; then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets; but he shall say, I tell you I know you not whence ye are, depart from me all ye workers of iniquity" (xiii. 26, 27). Such are those who are here meant by the foolish virgins, and the like is therefore said of them in these words: "they also came, saying, Lord, lord, open to us; but he answered and said, verily I say unto you, I know you not."**

**AC4638:8 "And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came". This signifies they applied the truth. "And they that were ready went in with him to the wedding" signifies that they who were in good and thence in truth were received into heaven. Heaven is likened to a wedding from the heavenly marriage, which is the marriage of good and truth; and the Lord is likened to the bridegroom, because they are then conjoined with Him; and hence the church is called the bride. "And the door was shut" signifies that others cannot enter.**

**AC4638:9 "Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, lord, open to us" signifies that they desire to enter from faith alone without charity, and from works in which there is not the Lord's life, but the life of self. "But be answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not" signifies rejection. "His not knowing them" means in the internal sense that they were not in any charity toward the neighbor and thereby in conjunction with the Lord. They who are not in conjunction are said "not to be known".**

**AC4638:10 "Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" signifies an persistent application of life in accordance with the precepts of faith, which is "to watch." The time of acceptance, which is unknown to man, and the state, are signified by "their not knowing the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is to come".**

**Elsewhere also in Matthew he who is in good, that is, he who acts according to the precepts, is called "prudent;" and he who is in knowledges of truth and does them not is called "foolish:" "Every one that heareth My words and doth them, I will liken him unto a prudent man; and every one that heareth My words and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man" (vii. 24,26).**

## **PARABLE OF THE SERVANTS**

**AC4661 After the parable of the five wise virgins and the five foolish virgins follows the parable of the servants to whom the man going into a far country gave talents, to one five, to another two, and to another one, that they might trade therewith; and of these servants he who received five talents gained by them five more, he who received two also gained by them two, and he who received the one hid it in the earth (Matthew 25:14-30). As this parable involves almost the same things as the parable of the ten virgins, I may pass on to explain the concluding part of the same chapter, which in the letter is as follows:**

## **PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND GOATS**

**AC4662 "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory; and before**

Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world for I was a hungered, and ye gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me to drink; I was a stranger, and ye gathered Me; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, lord, when saw we Thee a hungered, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee to drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and gathered Thee? or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. Then shall He say also unto them on the left had, Depart from Me ye cursed into eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels for I was a hungered, and ye gave Me not to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me not to drink I was a stranger, and ye gathered Me not; naked, and ye clothed Me not [sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not]. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee a hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee ? Then shall He answer them saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal"(Matthew 25 31 to the end).

AC4663 One who does not know about the internal sense cannot but think that these words were spoken by the Lord of some last day, when all in the whole world will be gathered before Him, and will then be judged; and also that the procedure of the Judgment will be just as is described in the letter, namely, that He will set those who are to be judged on the right hand and on the left, and will speak to them as in the parable. But he who knows about the internal sense, and has learned from other passages in the Word that the Lord judges no one to eternal fire, but that every one judges himself, that is, casts himself into it; and who has also learned that the Last Judgment of every one is when he dies, may know in some measure what these words involve in general.

And one who from the internal sense and from correspondence knows the interior meaning of the words, may know what they specifically mean, namely, that in the other life every one receives a reward in accordance with his life in the world.

AC4663:2 Those who teach the salvation of man through faith alone, cannot explain these words in any other way than by saying that what the Lord said of works means the fruits of faith. They say the Lord mentioned them merely for the sake of the simple, who are unacquainted with

mysteries. But even according to their opinion it would still follow that the faults of faith are what make man blessed and happy after death. The fruits of faith are nothing else than a life in accordance with the precepts of faith. Consequently, a life in accordance with these precepts saves, but not faith without life. After death man carries with him all the states of his life, so that he is such as he has been in the body. For instance, one who in the life of the body has despised others in comparison with himself, in the other life also despises others in comparison with himself. One who in the life of the body has regarded the neighbor with hatred, also in the other life regards the neighbor with hatred. One who in the life of the body has acted deceitfully toward his companions, in the other life also acts deceitfully toward his companions. Every one retains in the other life the nature which he has acquired in the life of the body; and it is known that a man's nature cannot be cast out, and that if it is cast out, nothing of life remains.

**AC4663:3** It is for this reason that only works of charity are mentioned by the Lord. He who is in the works of charity, or what is the same, in a life of faith, is capable of receiving faith, if not in the body, then in the other life. But one who is not in the works of charity, or in a life of faith, is not able to receive faith, either in the body or in the other life. For evil does not agree with truth, but the one rejects the other. If those who are in evil speak truths, they speak them from the lips, and not from the heart, and so evil and truths are still very far apart.

**AC4808** Now will he unfolded what is contained in verses 31 to 33: "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory; and before Him shall he gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left".

#### **DETAILS OF THE INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 25:31-33**

**AC4809** "When the Son of man shall come in His glory" signifies when the Divine truth shall appear in its light, which takes place with every man when he dies. for he then comes into the light of heaven, in which he can perceive what is true and good, and hence what is his quality. The "Son of man," in the internal sense of the Word, is the Lord as to Divine truth. It is the Divine truth which is from the Lord. "Glory" is the intelligence and wisdom thence derived, which appear before the angels as the resplendence of light. This resplendence of light, in which are wisdom and intelligence derived from the Divine truth which is from the Lord, is what in the Word is called "glory."

**AC4809:2** "And all the holy angels with Him" signifies the angelic heaven. The "holy angels" are the truths which are from the Lord's Divine good; for

by "angels" in the Word are not meant angels, but those things which are from the Lord. The angels are recipients of the life of truth proceeding from the Lord's Divine good, and in so far as they receive, so far they are angels. From this it is plain that "angels" are these truths. The subject here treated of is the state of every one after death, and the judgment of every one according to his life. It is said that all the holy angels will be with Him. By this is signified that the judgment will be effected by means of heaven; for all influx of Divine truth takes place through heaven, and immediate influx can be received by no one.

**AC4809:3 "Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory" signifies the Judgment, for a "throne" is predicated of the Lord's royalty, and the Lord's royalty is the Divine truth, and the Divine truth is that from which and according to which is the Judgment.**

**AC4809:4 "And before Him shall be gathered all nations"**

signifies that the goods and evils of all will be made manifest. By "nations" in the internal sense of the Word are signified goods, and in the opposite sense evils. Goods and evils will appear in Divine light, in light from the Divine truth. This is signified by "all nations being gathered before Him".

**AC4809:5 "And He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats" signifies the separation of good from evil; for the "sheep" are they who are in good, and the "goats" they who are in evil. They are properly called "sheep" who are in charity and thence in faith, and they "goats" who are in faith and not in charity, both being here treated of.**

**AC4809:6 "And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left" signifies separation according to truths from good, and according to falsities from evil. In the other life they who are in truths from good actually appear to the right, and they who are in falsities from evil to the left. Hence to be set on the right hand and on the left, is to be set in order according to the life.**

## **THE PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS**

**AC4810 From all this it is evident that these words of the Lord are not to be understood according to the letter, namely that the Lord at some last time will come in glory, and all the holy angels with Him, and will sit upon a throne of glory, and judge all nations gathered before Him. Instead it teaches that every one will be judged according to his life, when he passes out of life in this world into life eternal.**

## **POSSESSING THE KINGDOM**

**AC4954 "Then shall the king say to them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry, and ye gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye gathered Me; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me"(Matthew 25 verses 34 to 39).**

#### **DETAILS OF THE INTERNAL SENSE MATTHEW 25:34-39**

**AC4955 What these words involve in the internal sense will appear from what follows. Be it known in the first place that the works here enumerated are the very works of charity in their order. This no one can see who is not acquainted with the internal sense of the Word, that is, who does not know what is meant by giving the hungry to eat, giving the thirsty to drink, gathering the stranger, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, and coming unto those who are in prison. He who thinks of these acts from the sense of the letter only, infers that they mean good works in the external form, and that there is nothing secret in them beyond this; and bet there is something secret in each of them, which is Divine, because from the Lord. But the secret is not at this day understood, because at this day there are no doctrinals of charity; for ever since men have separated charity from faith, these doctrinals have perished, and in place of them the doctrinals of faith have been invented and received, which do not at all teach what charity is and what the neighbor. The doctrinals existing among the ancients taught all the genera and all the species of charity, and also who the neighbor is toward whom charity is to be exercised, and bow one is the neighbor in a different degree and in a different respect from another, and consequently how the exercise of charity varies in its**

**application toward different persons. They also grouped the neighbor together into classes, and assigned them names, calling some the poor, needy, miserable, afflicted; some the blind, lame, halt, and also fatherless and widows; and others the hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick, bound, and so on; thus knowing what duty they owed toward one and toward another. But as before said these doctrinals perished, and with them the understanding of the Word, insomuch that no one at this day knows otherwise than that by the "poor and the fatherless," in the Word, none other are meant than they who are so called; in like manner here by the "hungry, the thirsty, the strangers, the naked, the sick, and those who are in prison;" when yet by these charity is described such as it is in its essence, and the exercise of it such as it must be in its life.**

**AC4956 The essence of charity toward the neighbor is the affection of good and truth, and the acknowledgment of self as being evil and false; yea, the neighbor is good and truth itself, and to be affected by these is to have charity. The opposite to the neighbor is evil and falsity, which are held in**

aversion by one who has charity. He therefore who has charity toward the neighbor is affected by good and truth, because they are from the Lord, and holds in aversion what is evil and what is false because these are from self; and when he does this, he is in humiliation from self-acknowledgment, and when he is in humiliation, he is in a state of reception of good and truth from the Lord. These are the characteristics of charity which in the internal sense are involved in these words of the Lord: "I was hungry, and ye gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye gathered Me; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me." That these words involve such things, no one can know except from the internal sense. The ancients, who had the doctrinals of charity, knew these things; but at this day they appear so remote that every one will wonder at its being said that these things are within. Moreover the angels who are with man perceive these words no otherwise, for by the "hungry" they perceive those who from affection desire good; by the "thirsty," those who from affection desire truth; by a

"stranger," those who are willing to be instructed; by the "naked," those who acknowledge that there is nothing of good and of truth in themselves; by the "sick," those who acknowledge that in themselves there is nothing but evil; and by the "bound," or those who are "in prison," those who acknowledge that in themselves there is nothing but falsity. If these things are reduced into one meaning, they signify what has been stated just above.

AC4957 From all this it is evident that there were Divine things within everything the Lord said, although to those who are in merely worldly things, and especially to those who are in bodily things, His words appear to be such as any man might say. Nay, they who are in bodily things will say of these and all other words of the Lord, that they have not so much grace, and therefore not so much weight, as the discourse and preaching of those of the present age who speak with eloquence and learning; when yet their discourse and preaching are like the husk and chaff in comparison with the kernel and grain.

AC4959 The reason why the Lord says these things of Himself is that He is in those who are such, and therefore He also says: "Verily I say unto you, In so far as ye have done it to one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it to Me" (verses 40, 45).

#### **THE HUNGRY, THE NAKED AND THE SICK**

AC5063 Now we will discuss Matthew 25 verses 37 to 46, where we read these words: "Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee hungry and fed Thee? or thirsty and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger and gathered Thee? or naked and clothed Thee? When

saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? But the King shall say to them, Verily I say to you, In so far as ye did it to one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it to Me. Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me ye cursed into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and ye gave Me not to eat, I was thirsty and ye gave Me not to drink, I was a stranger and ye gathered Me not, naked and ye clothed Me not, sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say to you, In so far as ye did it not to one of these least, ye did it not to Me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal".

AC5065 As the same things are thrice repeated in what has already been quoted and explained, it is unnecessary to show in detail, or word by word, what these expressions signify in the internal sense. In this place I will merely state what is signified by the answer made both by those on the right hand, and by those on the left--that they had not seen Him hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick, and in prison; and afterward what is signified by the "King," and also by the "righteous and eternal life," and by the "cursed and eternal fire."

AC5066 The answer made by those on the right hand:"Lord, when saw we Thee hungry and fed Thee? or thirsty and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger and gathered Thee? or naked and clothed Thee? When saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee"? signifies that if they had seen the Lord Himself, every one of them would have performed these offices, not from love toward Him, but from fear. They would have done it from fear because He was to be the judge of the universe; thus not for His sake, but for the sake of themselves; thus not from within or from the heart, but from without and in act only. This is as when one sees a king whose favor he desires to gain in order that he may become great or rich, and therefore bears himself submissively toward him. It is similar with those who are in holy external worship, in which they as it were see the Lord, and submit themselves to Him, believing that in this way they will receive eternal life. And yet, they have no charity, and do no good to any one except for their own sake, thus only to themselves. They are like persons who in outward form pay court to their king with much respect, and yet deride his commands because at heart they disregard him. These and similar things are what are signified by those on the right hand so answering. As the evil also do the same things in outward form, therefore they who were on the left made nearly the same answer. AC5067 As the Lord does not care for external but for internal things, and as man testifies to his internal things, not by worship only, but by charity and its acts, the Lord answered:"Verily I say to you, In so far as ye did it to one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it to Me". "Brethren" are those who

are in the good of charity and of life. The Lord is with them, because they are in good itself; and they are the neighbor. In these also the Lord does not manifest Himself, for in respect to Him they are vile; but the man manifests himself before the Lord, in that he worships Him from within.

AC5068 That the Lord calls Himself "King" is because the Lord's royalty is the Divine truth, from which and according to which judgment is effected. But from and according to it the good are judged in one way, and the evil in another. The good, because they have received Divine truth, are judged from good, and thus from mercy. The evil, because they have not received Divine truth, are judged from truth, and thus not from mercy. For they have rejected mercy, and so they continue to reject it in the other life. To receive Divine truth is not only to have faith, but also to practise it, and to cause that doctrine to become of life. It is from this that the Lord calls Himself "King."

AC5069 They on the right hand are called "the righteous".

"The righteous shall go into eternal life" signifies that they are in the Lord's righteousness. All who are in the good of charity are called the "righteous"-not that they are righteous from themselves, but from the Lord, whose righteousness is appropriated to them. They who believe themselves righteous from themselves, or made so righteous that there is no longer anything of evil in them, are not among the righteous, but among the unrighteous. They attribute good to themselves, and also feel self-merit on account of it. Such can never adore the Lord from true humiliation. Those who in the Word are called the "righteous, and the saints," are those who know and acknowledge that all good is from the Lord, and that all evil is from themselves. Actually it that is theirs from hell.

AC5070 The "eternal life" which is given to the righteous, is life from good. Good has life in itself, because it is from the Lord, who is life itself. In the life which is from the Lord there are wisdom and intelligence; for to receive good from the Lord and thence to will good, is wisdom; and to receive truth from the Lord and thence to believe truth, is intelligence; and they who have this wisdom and intelligence have life. Happiness is joined to such life, such eternal happiness is signified by "life." The contrary is the case with those who are in evil. These do indeed appear--especially to themselves--as if they had life, but it is such life as in the Word is called "death," and also is spiritual death. They are not wise in any good, nor intelligent in any truth. This may be seen by every one who takes the matter into consideration, for as there is life in good and in its truth, there cannot be life in evil and in its falsity, because these are opposite and extinguish life. Therefore the persons in question have no other life than such as belongs to the insane.

**AC5071 They on the left hand are called "cursed," and their punishment "eternal fire". "Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me ye cursed into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; and, These shall go away into eternal punishment". Such have averted themselves from good and truth, and have turned to evil and falsity. A "curse," in the internal sense of the Word, signifies a turning away. The "eternal fire" into which they must depart is not natural fire, nor is it torment of conscience, but is lust of evil; for the lusts in man are spiritual fires which consume him in the life of the body, and torment him in the other life. By these fires the infernals torture one another in direful ways.**

**AC5071:2 "Eternal fire" is not natural fire. is evident. It is not torment of conscience because all who are in evil have no conscience, and they who have had none in the life of the body cannot have any in the other life. But that it is lust is because all living fire is from the loves in man--heavenly fire from the love of good and truth, and infernal fire from the love of evil and falsity. All the fire or heat within man is from this source. Any one may know if he pays attention to the matter. It is for this reason also that love is called spiritual heat, and that by fire and heat in the Word nothing else is signified. The living fire in the evil is such that when they are in the vehemence of their lusts, they are in a kind of fire or ardor and fury of tormenting others. But the living fire in the good is such that when in a high degree of affection, they also are in a kind of fire, but from it they are in the love and zeal of benefiting others.**