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Volume 4: Genesis 23 - 27

Emanuel Swedenborg

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Emanuel Swedenborg - A Biographical Primer

By Thomas Hitchcock

Swedish philosopher, born in Stockholm, Jan. 29, 1688, died in London, England, March 29, 1772. He was the son of Jesper Swedberg, bishop of Skara, the name being changed to Swedenborg in 1719 on the occasion of the ennobling of the family. This advancement entitled him, as head of the family, to a seat in the house of nobles of the Swedish diet, but did not confer the title of baron, as has been supposed. Emanuel was educated at Upsal, completing his studies in 1709. After two years of travel in England, Holland, and France, he went to reside at Greifswald in Pomerania, then a Swedish town, and busied himself with scientific research. He also wrote some Latin fables, which were published under the title of *Camena Borea*. A collection of Latin poems, written by him during his travels, was also published about the same time in a volume entitled *Ludus Heliconius*. In 1716 he returned to Sweden and established a periodical called *Dædalus Hyperboreus*, devoted to mathematics and mechanics, which appeared irregularly for two years. During this time he had become intimate with Christopher Polhem, an eminent engineer, and Polhem introduced him to Charles XII., who appointed him assessor extraordinary of the college of mines, and associate engineer with Polhem. For two years Swedenborg maintained close personal relations with the king, and assisted him much in his military operations. During the siege of Frederickshald, at which

Charles met his death, Swedenborg constructed, under Polhem's direction, the machines by which several vessels were transported overland from Strömstad to the Iddefjord, 14 miles. At the king's suggestion, it is said, Polhem betrothed his daughter to Swedenborg; but as the young lady preferred another man, Swedenborg relinquished his claim and never married. From 1717 to 1722 he published pamphlets on scientific subjects; among them one describing a method of determining longitude by means of the moon. In 1721 he made a short tour on the continent, visiting mines and smelting works. On his return in 1722 he was promoted to be full assessor of mines, and for the next 12 years he devoted himself to the duties of that office, refusing the professorship of mathematics at Upsal in 1724. In 1734 he published *Opera Philosophica et Mineralia* in three large folio volumes, illustrated with numerous plates, viz.: vol. i., *Principia*; vol. ii., *De Ferro*; vol. iii., *De Cupro et Orichalco*. In the same year also appeared his *Prodromus de Infinito*. In 1736 he began another tour of travel, which, with study and writing, occupied him for several years. In 1740-'41 he published his *Œconomia Regni Animalis*, in two parts, and in 1744-'5 his *Regnum Animale*, in three parts. Between 1729 and 1741 he was elected successively a member of the academy of sciences at Upsal, corresponding member of the imperial academy of sciences at St. Petersburg, and member of the academy of sciences at Stockholm. His series of scientific publications ended in 1745 with the treatise *De Cultu et Amore Dei, &c.*, in which is set forth, under the form of a prose poem or allegory, his theory of the process of creation. Thereafter, as he says, he was called by God to the work of revealing to men a new system of religious truth. For that end he was permitted to converse with spirits and angels, and behold the wonders of the spiritual world. That he might be more free to perform his task, he resigned his assessorship, retaining half the salary by way of pension. He devoted himself first

to the study of the Bible in the original, and then to the writing of books explanatory of his new doctrines, which were published entirely at his own expense. From 1749 to 1756 appeared the *Arcana Cœlestia* (8 vols. 4to), containing a commentary on Genesis and Exodus, interspersed with accounts of “wonderful things seen and heard in heaven and in hell.” This was followed in 1758 by the *De Cœlo et Inferno*, *De Telluribus in Mundo*, *De Ultimo Judicio*, *De Nova Hierosolyma*, and *De Equo Albo*. In 1763 were published the four doctrinal treatises: *Doctrina Vitæ*, *De Fide*, *De Domino*, and *De Scriptura Sacra*, with a *Continuatio de Ultimo Judicio*, and the treatise *De Divino Amore et de Divina Sapientia*. In 1764, the *Divina Providentia* appeared; in 1766, the *Apocalypsis Revelata*; in 1768, *De Amore Conjugiali*; in 1769, *Summaria Expositio Doctrinæ* and *De Commercio Animæ et Corporis*; and in 1771, the *Vera Christiana Religio*. Besides these, he left at his death an immense mass of manuscripts, of which the following have been since printed: *Itinerarium*, *Clavis Hieroglyphica*, *Opuscula*, *Apocalypsis Explicata*, *Adversaria in Libros Veteris Testamenti*, *Diarium Spirituale*, *Index Biblicus*, *Sensus Internus Prophetarum et Psalmorum*, *Dicta Probantia*, *De Athanasio Symbolo*, *De Charitate*, *Canones*, *Coronis Veræ Christianæ Religionis*, and *Invitatio ad Novam Ecclesiam*. Copies of a few of these manuscripts have recently been reproduced by the photolithographic process, by subscription, not so much for circulation as for the sake of preserving the contents of the originals from destruction by decay. — Swedenborg's manner of life was simple and modest. He spent much of his time, in later years, in Holland and England, for which countries he expressed great admiration on account of the freedom of speech and writing permitted there. He made no efforts to gain proselytes to his doctrines further than by printing and distributing his writings, and never referred to his intercourse with the spiritual world except when

questioned. Several instances are reported of his obtaining information from departed souls respecting affairs unknown even to their families, and describing events in distant places in advance of news by the ordinary means of communication. It is related that, as he lay on his deathbed in London, Ferelius, a Swedish clergyman, solemnly adjured him to tell the truth in regard to his teachings. Swedenborg raised himself half upright in bed, and placing his hand on his breast said with emphasis: "As true as you see me before you, so true is everything I have written. I could have said more had I been permitted. When you come into eternity, you will see all things as I have stated and described them, and we shall have much to say concerning them to each other." He then received the holy supper from Ferelius, and presented him with a copy of his *Arcana Cœlestia*. A day or two afterward he peacefully breathed his last. His body was buried in a vault of the Swedish church in Prince's square, a little east of the tower. A eulogium was pronounced upon him in the Swedish house of nobles in October, 1772, by Samuel Sandels, which accords him high praise, not merely for learning and talent, but also for uprightness and fidelity in the discharge of his duties as a public functionary. Several of his acquaintances have also left written testimony to his virtuous character.—Swedenborg's scientific works have long since ceased to be of practical value, but are still highly interesting as collections of facts, and as exhibiting their author's peculiar method of philosophizing. The system he followed was substantially that of Descartes, of whom he continued to the end of his life to speak with admiration, and this led him to conclusions resembling in some striking points those of Spinoza, who was likewise a Cartesian. His "Economy of the Animal Kingdom" is the best of his many productions anterior to his theological career. In it he attempts to deduce a knowledge of the soul from an anatomical and physiological knowledge of the body, and evolves many

doctrines which he afterward elaborated in his theological works. Indeed, some of his disciples hold that his seership was the natural result of his intellectual and moral development, and by no means an abnormal condition of mind. According to his own account, it came upon him gradually, and neither astonished nor alarmed him, although in its early stages he was subject to great mental excitement, the phenomena of which may have given rise to exaggerated stories of his insanity. The works written by him subsequent to this change in his mind are quite as systematic and coherent as his earlier productions, and only his claim to a divine mission, and his frequent descriptions of what he saw and heard in the spiritual world, mark them as peculiar. They are consistent from first to last, and though they appeared at intervals during a period of 27 years, they nowhere deviate from the fundamental principles laid down at the outset.—The general features of Swedenborg's theology are presented in his treatise called the “True Christian Religion.” He teaches that God is one in essence and in person, and has been revealed to men as the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Lord is a trinity, not of persons but of principles, and it is these principles which are spoken of in the Scriptures as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Father is the divine love, the Son the divine wisdom, and the Holy Ghost the divine operation or energy acting upon the universe. The Lord is infinite, eternal, self-existent, omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent, and not only the creator but the sustainer of all creation, which without him would cease to exist. For the sake of redeeming mankind he assumed a natural body born of the Virgin Mary, and glorified it or made it divine, so that it is now invisible to men, and also usually to the angels except as the sun of heaven. Redemption consisted, not in suffering vicariously the punishment of men's sins (for that could not be done, and, if it could, would be useless), but in actual combats, by means of the assumed

humanity, with the powers of hell, and overcoming them. This victory restored to man spiritual freedom, which had begun to be impaired by diabolic possessions as narrated in the Gospels, and enabled him to work out his salvation. This he does by looking to the Lord, with faith in him, by repentance, and above all by a life according to the commandments of the decalogue. The chief points that Swedenborg insists on in religion are faith in the Lord and the avoidance of evils as sins against him. Upon everything else, such as outward worship, prayer and meditation, and works of eleemosynary charity, he lays but little stress. The essence of charity is love to the neighbor and occupation in some useful employment. The Word, he says, is the divine truth itself, written to reveal the Lord to man and to serve as a medium of conjunction between earth and heaven. This Word consists of the books of Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Leviticus, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, the Psalms, the prophecies, the four Gospels, and the Apocalypse. The other books bound up with these in our Bibles are not the Word, although good and useful to the church. The distinction between the two consists in this: that the Word contains an internal or spiritual sense, which the rest of the Bible has not. This spiritual sense is symbolical, and may be discerned by the application of the law of symbolism resulting from the universal correspondence of natural with spiritual things. Thus, the garden of Eden and all things mentioned as existing in it symbolize the human soul and its affections and thoughts; and the disobedience of Adam and Eve, the alienation of mankind at a remote period from their original state of innocence. Hence, too, the decalogue forbids not merely outward sins, but the inward spiritual sins corresponding to them, and the Psalms and prophecies relate not merely to David and the Jews, but to experiences of the human soul independent of dates and localities. At the same time the literal sense alone can be relied on as a basis of doctrine,

and Swedenborg is careful to cite it profusely in support of his teachings. The reason he gives for his mission is that the knowledge of true doctrine had been lost and the church destroyed by a false theology and accompanying evils of life. By the promulgation of the truth revealed to him a new church has been established by the Lord, and thus the prophecies in the Apocalypse of the descent of the New Jerusalem have been fulfilled in their symbolical sense. The second coming of the Lord, predicted in Matt, xxiv., has also been accomplished in the same way, a last judgment having been effected in the spiritual world in the year 1757, so that we are now living under a new dispensation. The treatise on "Heaven and Hell" embodies Swedenborg's teachings on the nature of those two realms, and their relations to this world. They exist, he says, not in some other region of space, but within the natural world, as the soul of man exists within his body, being in fact in the souls of men and resting in them as our souls rest in our bodies. At death the body, which is the material envelope of the soul, is cast aside, never to be resumed, and consequently its resurrection is not to be looked for. The soul is the man himself, and is a perfect human being, with a spiritual body of its own, and rises into a conscious perception of the spiritual world, of which the man had previously been unconsciously an inhabitant. He sees and feels and possesses all the other senses, and retains all his personal characteristics. After a longer or shorter preparation in an intermediate state called the world of spirits, which lies between heaven and hell, he is drawn by his own elective affinity to the place where he belongs, and remains there to eternity. Both heaven and hell consist of innumerable societies, each composed of human beings of similar and concordant affections; and both are divided into three distinct regions, according to the degrees of perfection or depravity of their inhabitants. The Arcana Cœlestia, Swedenborg's largest work, is mainly an

exposition of the internal or symbolical sense of Genesis and Exodus, with accounts of his experiences in the spiritual world, and various doctrinal teachings interspersed between the chapters. "The Apocalypse Revealed" and "The Apocalypse Explained" are similar expositions of the Apocalypse. In his "Conjugal Love" Swedenborg expounds his doctrine of the relations of the sexes. Males, he says, are masculine and females feminine in soul as well as in body. The masculine element is love clothed with wisdom, while the feminine is wisdom clothed with love. Hence the characteristic of man is wisdom or understanding, and that of woman love or affection. Marriage is the conjunction of two souls who complement each other, and by their union make one complete being, just as the will and the understanding make the individual. Hence the only true marriage is of one man and one woman, and it exists in the next world as well as in this. Polygamy is a degraded state, but not a sin with those whose religion permits it; but adultery is destructive of the life of the soul, and closes heaven against those who confirm themselves in it. The treatises on the "Divine Love and Wisdom" and the "Divine Providence" embody Swedenborg's spiritual philosophy, and exhibit the symmetrical relations of the various parts of his religious system. Love, he says, is the life of man. God alone is Love itself and Life itself, and angels and men are but recipients of life from him. He is very Man, and our humanity is derived from him, so that it is literally true that we are created in his image and likeness. His infinite love clothes itself with infinite wisdom and manifests itself in ceaseless operation, producing, maintaining, and reproducing the boundless universe, with all its innumerable parts and inhabitants. In like manner men, being made in the image of God, also have love or the will, and wisdom or the understanding, and the two produce in them their finite operation. It being the nature of love to desire objects upon

which to exercise itself, God could not but create the universe. The creation of this and other solar systems, all of which are inhabited, was effected by a spiritual sun, which is the first emanation proceeding from God, and which is seen in the spiritual world as our sun is seen by us. By means of this spiritual sun natural suns were created, and from them atmospheres, waters, earths, plants, animals, and finally man. Angels, spirits, and devils are men who have been born and died on this or some similar planet. Hence, all things were created from God, and not out of nothing. The spiritual world is related to the natural as cause is to effect, and the supreme first cause of all is God himself. These three, end, cause, and effect, constitute three distinct or discrete degrees, which are repeated in various forms in all created things, and on a grand scale in the universe as a whole. Creation, being from God, is, like the individual man, an image of him, and hence is in the human form in its greatest and least parts, and with more or less approximation to perfection. As we are finitely men, because God is an infinite Man, so all animals, plants, and even minerals wear a resemblance to man, and throughout all nature there is an incessant effort to evolve the human form. In the sight of God and the angels, larger and smaller bodies of human beings and the societies of heaven and hell appear organized like men, and Swedenborg calls the universe the Grand Man (Maximus Homo). As infinite love was the end and infinite wisdom the cause of creation, so the divine life and power are constantly active in sustaining and directing it. This activity is the Divine Providence, and it reaches to every smallest particular of nature and humanity. Man has freedom, because without it he could not be an adequate recipient of the divine love, and by the abuse of his freedom he has introduced evil into the world. The Divine Providence seeks, without destroying this freedom, to lead man back to his original integrity. Hence all the wonderful dealings of God with man recorded in the

Scriptures; hence the incarnation; and hence the various forms of religion which exist in the world, all of which embody more or less the essentials of salvation, namely, the worship of God and abstinence from evils as sins against him. The smaller treatises of Swedenborg are mostly extracts from his larger works, with amplifications and additions.—The fullest account of him and his writings is that of William White (2 vols., London, 1867, since republished in one volume). See, also, “Documents concerning Swedenborg,” by R. L. Tafel (London, 1875 et seq.). All of his theological and some of his scientific works have been translated into English. The theological works have also been reprinted in Latin by Dr. J. F. I. Tafel, of Tübingen, Germany, and partially translated and published in French, German, Italian, Danish, and Swedish. Societies for promoting their circulation are in operation both in the United States and in Europe. The principal writers who have undertaken the exposition of Swedenborg's doctrines in England are John Clowes, Robert Hindmarsh, C. A. Tulk, Samuel Noble, J. J. G. Wilkinson, and Jonathan Bayley; in France, E. Richer and J. F. Les Boys-des-Guays; and in the United States, George Bush, Theophilus Parsons, E. H. Sears, Henry James, B. F. Barrett, W. B. Hayden, and Chauncey Giles. For an account of the ecclesiastical organization based upon Swedenborg's doctrines.

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PREFACE TO THE 23rd CHAPTER

We read in John: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light appeareth in the darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt within us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (1:1-5, 14). Few know what is here meant by the "Word." That it is the Lord, is evident from the several particulars; but the internal sense teaches that it is the Lord as to His Divine Human that is meant by the "Word," for it is said: "the Word was made flesh and dwelt within us, and we beheld His glory." And because the Divine Human is meant by the "Word," all that Truth also is meant which relates to Him, and is from Him, in His kingdom in the heavens, and in His church on the earth. Hence it is said that "in Him was life, and the life was the light of men, and the light appeareth in the darkness." And because Truth is meant by the "Word," all revelation is meant, and thus also the Word itself or Holy Scripture.

2895.

As regards the Word specifically, it had existed in all times, but not the Word which we have at this day. There had been another Word in the Most Ancient Church which was before the flood, and another Word in the Ancient Church which was after the flood; then came the Word written by Moses and the prophets in the Jewish Church; and lastly the Word that was written by the Evangelists in the new church. The reason why there has been a Word at all times, is that by the Word there is communication of heaven with earth; and also because the Word treats of good and truth, from which man is to live happy forever; and on this account in the

internal sense it treats of the Lord alone, because all good and truth are from Him.

2896.

The Word in the Most Ancient Church which was before the flood was not a written Word, but was revealed to everyone who was of that church. For they were celestial men, and therefore were in the perception of good and truth, as the angels are (with whom moreover they were in company), so that they had the Word written on their hearts (concerning which things see n. 597, 607, 895, 920, 1114-1125). As they were celestial men, and had companionship with angels, all the things which they saw and apprehended by any of the senses were to them representative and significative of the celestial and spiritual things which are in the Lord's kingdom; so that they indeed saw worldly and earthly things with their eyes, or apprehended them by some other sense, but from them and by means of them they thought of celestial and spiritual things. In this way, and in no other, were they able to speak with angels; for the things with the angels are celestial and spiritual things, and when they come down to man they fall into such things as are with him in the world. That each one of the things in the world represents and signifies something in the heavens, has been shown from the first chapter of Genesis up to this point. Thence came the representatives and significatives which, when communication with angels began to cease, were collected by those meant by "Enoch," as was signified by the words (Gen. 5:24) "Enoch walked by himself with God, and was no more, for God took him" (see n. 521).

2897.

From this source was the Word in the Ancient Church which was after the flood. As the man of this church was

spiritual and not celestial, he knew but did not perceive what the representatives and significatives involved; and as they involved Divine things, they came to be in use among those men, and were employed in their Divine worship; and this in order that they might have communication with heaven; for as before said, all things in the world represent and signify such things as are in heaven. They also had a written Word, which consisted of Histories and Prophecies, like the Word of the Old Testament; but in process of time that Word was lost. The Histories were called "Wars of Jehovah," and the Prophecies were called "Enunciations," as is evident in Moses (see Num. 21:14, 27), where they are quoted. Their histories were written in the prophetic style, and were for the most part made up histories, like those in the first eleven chapters of Genesis; as is plain from the quotations from them in Moses, where are these words: Therefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of Jehovah, Vaheb in Suphah, and the rivers of Arnon, and the slope of the rivers that inclineth toward the dwelling of Ar, and leaneth upon the border of Moab (Num. 21:14-15). Their prophecies were written like the prophecies of the Old Testament, as is likewise plain from the quotations made from them also in Moses, where are these words: Wherefore the Enunciations (or the Prophetic Enunciators) say, Come ye to Heshbon, let the city of Sihon be built and established; for a fire is gone out of Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon; it hath devoured Ar of Moab, the lords of the high places of Arnon. Woe to thee, Moab; thou hast perished, O people of Chemosh; he hath given his sons as escapers, and his daughters into captivity, unto Sihon king of the Amorite. And we have shot at them; Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon, and we have laid waste even unto Nophah, which reacheth unto Medeba (Num. 21:27-30). That these prophecies involve heavenly arcana, as do the prophecies of the Old Testament, is clearly manifest not only from their having been transcribed by Moses and

applied to the state of things of which he was then writing, but also from the fact that nearly the same words are found in Jeremiah, inserted in the prophecies of that book; in which it is evident, from what has been said about the internal sense of the Word, that there are as many heavenly arcana as there are words. The words in Jeremiah are: A fire is gone forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from among Sihon, and hath devoured the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the sons of tumult. Woe unto thee, O Moab, the people of Chemosh has perished, for thy sons are taken into captivity, and thy daughters into captivity (Jer. 48:45-46). From this also it is plain that that Word also had an internal sense. (Concerning the Ancient Church which was after the flood, see above, n. 640, 641, 765, 1238, 1327, 2385.)

2898.

That with them there were prophecies which in the internal sense treated of the Lord and of His kingdom, may be seen not only from what has been shown, but also from the prophecies of Balaam, who was from Syria, spoken of in Moses (Num. 23:7-10, 18-25; 24:3-10, 15-25), which are expressed in a style similar to the other prophecies of the Word, and plainly foretell the Lord's coming, in these words: I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not nigh; there shall come forth a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel and shall smite through the corners of Moab, and break down all the sons of Sheth (Num. 24:17). These prophecies, like the former, are called "Parables" , for the same word is used (Num. 23:7, 18; 24:3, 15, 20).

2899.

A Word afterwards followed in the Jewish Church that in like manner was written by representatives and significatives, so that it might have within it an internal sense understood in heaven, and that thus by the Word there might be communication, and the Lord's kingdom in the heavens be united to the Lord's kingdom on earth. Unless everything in the Word represents, and unless all the words by which everything therein is written, signify the Divine things pertaining to the Lord, thus the celestial and spiritual things belonging to His kingdom, the Word is not Divine; but being so it could not possibly be written in any other style; for by means of this style and not possibly by any other, human things and human words correspond to heavenly things and heavenly ideas, even to the least jot. From this it is that if the Word is read even by a little child, the Divine things therein are perceived by the angels (see n. 1776).

2900.

In regard to the Word of the New Testament which is in the Evangelists, as the Lord spoke from the Divine itself, the several things spoken by Him were representative and significative of Divine things, thus of the heavenly things of His kingdom and church, as has been abundantly shown above. GENESIS 23 1. And the lives of Sarah were a hundred years and twenty years and seven years, the years of the lives of Sarah. 2. And Sarah died in Kiriath-arba, the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan; and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. 3. And Abraham rose up from upon the faces of his dead, and spoke unto the sons of Heth, saying, 4. I am a sojourner and a dweller with you; give me a possession of a sepulcher with you, and I will bury my dead from before me. 5. And the sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, 6. Hear us, my lord, thou art a prince of God in the midst of us; in the choice of

our sepulchers bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulcher, from burying thy dead. 7. And Abraham rose up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, to the sons of Heth. 8. And he spoke with them, saying, If it is with your soul that I should bury my dead from before me, hear me, and intercede for me with Ephron the son of Zohar. 9. That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field; in full silver let him give it to me, in the midst of you, for a possession of a sepulcher. 10. And Ephron was sitting in the midst of the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the ears of the sons of Heth, of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying, 11. Nay, my lord, hear me; the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein I give it thee; to the eyes of the sons of my people give I it thee; bury thy dead. 12. And Abraham bowed himself before the people of the land. 13. And he spoke unto Ephron in the ears of the people of the land, saying, But if thou wilt, I pray thee, hear me; I will give the silver of the field; take it of me, and I will bury my dead there. 14. And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, 15. My lord, hear me; land of four hundred shekels of silver, what is that between me and thee? Bury therefore thy dead. 16. And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver which he had spoken of in the ears of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver current with the merchant. 17. And the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field and the cave which was therein, and every tree that was in the field, that was in all the border thereof round about, were made sure, 18. Unto Abraham for an acquisition to the eyes of the sons of Heth, of all that went in at the gate of his city. 19. And after this Abraham buried Sarah his wife, in the cave of the field of Machpelah, upon the faces of Mamre, the same is Hebron, in the land of Canaan. 20. And the field

and the cave that is therein were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a sepulcher from the sons of Heth.

THE CONTENTS. In the internal sense a New Spiritual Church is here treated of, that was raised up by the Lord after the former church had altogether expired; and also the reception of faith with those who were of the church. "Sarah" here, is the truth Divine which expired; "burial," is raising up again; "Ephron and the sons of Heth," are those with whom the good and truth of the church were received; "Machpelah which is before Mamre," is regeneration; "Hebron in the land of Canaan," is a new church.

2902.

Truth Divine, that it expired, is treated of (verses 1-3); and that the Lord set up again a new church (verse 4); and was kindly received (verses 5, 6); from which there was joy (verses 7, 12); that their first state was obscure, and they believed the good of charity and the truth of faith to be from themselves (verses 8-11, 14-15); but they were instructed that good and truth were not from themselves, but from the Lord (verse 13); and thus they were redeemed (verse 16); and regenerated (verses 17, 18); and thus there was a new church (verse 19); from the Gentiles (verse 20).

2903.

THE INTERNAL SENSE. Verse 1. And the lives of Sarah were a hundred years and twenty years and seven years, the years of the lives of Sarah. "The lives of Sarah were," signifies the times and states of the church as to the truths Divine that preceded; "a hundred years and twenty years and seven years," signifies their fullness; "the years of the lives of Sarah," signifies while any truth Divine remained on earth.

The lives of Sarah were. That this signifies the times and states of the church as to the truths Divine that preceded, is evident from the signification here of "lives;" and from the representation of "Sarah." "Lives," here, because they regard age and its periods, namely, infancy, youth, adult age, and old age, signify states, as do all times in general (see n. 2625, 2788, 2837); and because the following verses treat of the church, therefore "lives" signify the times and states of the church. That "Sarah" is truth Divine, may be seen above (n. 1468, 1901, 2063, 2172, 2173, 2198, 2507); from which it follows that by "the lives of Sarah were," in the internal sense are here signified the times and states of the church as to the truths Divine which preceded. That Sarah, while alive as Abraham's wife, represented the Lord's Divine Truth conjoined with His Divine Good, may be seen from the places above cited; and because the Lord's Divine Truth was represented by her, so also the truth Divine of the church is signified; for in the church there is no other truth than that which is the Lord's. Truth which is not from Him is not truth; as is also evident from the Word and from the doctrine of faith derived from it. It is evident from the Word, in John: A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven (John 3:27). Without Me ye can do nothing (John 15:5). And the same is evident from the doctrine of faith, in that the all of faith, that is, all truth, is from the Lord. All and each of the representatives and significatives in the Word, in the highest sense regard the Lord; hence is the very life of the Word; and as they regard the Lord, they regard His kingdom also, for the Lord is the all in His kingdom; the Divine things which are from the Lord in His kingdom make the kingdom. Therefore insofar as an angel, spirit, or man receives good and truth from the Lord, and believes that it is from the Lord, so far he is in

His kingdom; but insofar as he does not receive and does not believe that it is from the Lord, so far he is not in His kingdom. Thus the Divine things that are from the Lord make His kingdom, or heaven; and this is what is meant by the Lord being the all in His kingdom.

2905.

A hundred years and twenty years and seven years. That this signifies their fullness, is evident from the signification of a "hundred," as being what is full (see n. 2636); and of "twenty," or twice ten, as being also what is full (see n. 1988); and of "seven," as being what is holy (see n. 395, 433, 716, 881); thus it is the fullness or the end of what is holy belonging to the church that is here signified. (That numbers in the Word all signify things, may be seen above, n. 482, 487, 647, 648, 755, 813, 1963, 1988, 2075, 2252.) Their fullness, that is, the fullness of the states and times of the church, signifies their end; for the case with the church is like that of the ages of man, of which the first is childhood, the second youth, the third adult age, the fourth old age; the last, or old age, being called the fullness or end. It is also like the times and states of the year; of which the first is spring, the second summer, the third autumn, and the fourth winter; and this last is the end of the year. It is also like the times and states of the day, the first of which is dawn, the second noon, the third evening, and the fourth night; and when this has come, there is fullness or the end. To all these are the states of the church compared in the Word, and they are signified by the same; for by times are signified states (see n. 2625, 2788, 2837). The good and truth with those who are of the church are wont to decrease in this manner; and when there are no longer any good and truth (or as is said, when there is no longer any faith, that is, no charity) then the church has come to its old age, or its winter, or its night; and its time and state

then are called "decision," "consummation," and "fulfillment" (see n. 1857). The same is signified when it is said of the Lord that He came into the world in the fullness of times, or when there was fullness; for there was then no longer any good, not even natural good; and consequently there was no truth. These are the things specifically signified by what is said in this verse.

2906.

The years of the lives of Sarah. That this signifies while any truth Divine remained, is evident from the signification of a "year," as being an entire period of the church from beginning to end; thus from the signification of the "years," as being periods (see above, n. 2905); and from the signification of the "lives of Sarah," as being states as to truth Divine (of which also just above, n. 2904); thus denoting here the limit when there was no longer any truth Divine remaining; which also follows from what immediately precedes. That a "year" signifies the entire time of a state of the church from beginning to end, or what is the same, an entire period; and consequently that "years" signify times or periods within the general period, may be seen from the following passages in the Word. In Isaiah: Jehovah hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the afflicted; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and an opening of every kind to the bound, to proclaim the year of Jehovah's good pleasure, and the day of vengeance to our God (Isa. 61:1-2); said of the Lord's advent; the "year of Jehovah's good pleasure" denotes the time of a new church. In the same: The day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed is come (Isa. 63:4); this too is said of the Lord's advent; the "year of the redeemed" denotes the time of a new church. In the same: It is the day of vengeance to Jehovah; the year of retributions for the

controversy of Zion (Isa. 34:8); where the signification is similar. The same time is also called the "year of visitation" in Jeremiah: I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, in the year of their visitation (Jer. 11:23). In the same: I will bring upon Moab the year of their visitation (Jer. 48:44). Still more plainly in Ezekiel: After many days thou shalt be visited; in the futurity of years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, that is gathered out of many peoples, upon the mountains of Israel, which shall be for a waste continually (Ezek. 38:8); "the futurity of years" denotes the last time of the church, which then becomes no church, those being rejected who before were of the church, and others received from elsewhere. In Isaiah: Thus hath the Lord said unto me, Yet within a year, according to the years of a hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall be consumed (Isa. 21:16); here also is meant the last time. In Ezekiel: Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast shed, and art defiled in thine idols which thou hast made; and thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come even unto thy years; therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the nations, and a mocking to all the lands (Ezek. 22:4); "to come even unto the years" denotes to the end, when the Lord withdraws from the church. In Isaiah: Now hath Jehovah spoken, saying, "Within three years, as the years of a hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be brought into contempt, with all his great multitude, and the remnant shall be very small (Isa. 16:14); "within three years" also denotes the end of the former church. That "three" denotes what is complete, and a beginning, may be seen above (n. 1825, 2788). Similar is the signification of "seven," and also of "seventy" (n. 720, 728, 901); and therefore it is said in Isaiah: And it shall come to pass in that day that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king; after the end of seventy years it shall be to Tyre as in the song of a harlot. And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy

years that Jehovah will visit Tyre, and she shall return to her harlot hire (Isa. 23:15-17); "seventy years" denotes the entire period, from the time at which the church began even till it expires; which is also meant by "the days of one king," for a "king" signifies the truth of the church (see n. 1672, 1728, 2015, 2069). The "seventy years" of captivity in which the Jews were, also involve something similar, of which likewise it is said in Jeremiah: These nations shall serve the king of Babel seventy years; and it shall come to pass when seventy years are fulfilled, I will visit their iniquity upon the king of Babel, and upon this nation, saith Jehovah (Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10). That a "year," and also "years," denote the entire period of a church, or the time of its duration, may be seen still further in Malachi: Behold I send Mine angel, and he shall prepare the way before Me; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple, even the angel of the covenant whom ye desire; behold He cometh, said Jehovah Zebaoth; and who may endure the day of His coming? Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto Jehovah, according to the days of an age, and according to the ancient years (Mal. 3:1-2, 4); where the advent of the Lord is treated of; the "days of an age" denote the Most Ancient Church; "ancient years," the Ancient Church; the "offering of Judah," worship from celestial love; and the "offering of Jerusalem," worship from spiritual love; that Judah is not meant here, nor Jerusalem, is plain. In David: I have considered the days of old, and the years of the ages (Ps. 77:5); where the "days of old" and the "years of the ages" denote the same churches. This is still more plain in Moses: Remember the days of an age, understand the years of generation and generation; ask thy father, and he will show thee; thine elders, and they will tell thee. When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of man (Deut. 32:7-8). That a "year" and "years" denote the full time of a church, is also plain in

Habakkuk: O Jehovah, I have heard Thy fame, I was afraid; O Jehovah, revive Thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in anger remember mercy. God will come from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran (Hab. 3:2-3); This is said of the Lord's advent; "in the midst of the years" denotes in the fullness of times; and what is meant by the fullness of times" may be seen just above (n. 2905). As a "year" and "years" signify the full time between its two limits, which are the beginning and the end when predicated of the Lord's kingdom on earth (that is, the church) so they signify what is eternal when predicated of the Lord's kingdom in heaven. As in David: O God, Thy years are to generation and generation; and Thou art He, and Thy years shall not be brought to an end. The sons of Thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before Thee (Ps. 102:24, 27-28). In the same: Thou wilt add days to the days of the king, his years shall be as generation and generation; he shall dwell before God forever (Ps. 61:6-7); where "years" denote what is eternal, for this treats of the Lord and His kingdom. The lambs which were offered for burnt-offering and sacrifice being "sons of their year" (see Lev. 12:6; 14:10; Num. 6:12; 7:15, 21, 27, 33, 39, 45, 51, 57, 63, 69, 75, 81, and other places), signified the celestial things of innocence in the Lord's kingdom, which are eternal. And for this reason also the burnt-offering of calves that were "sons of a year" is mentioned as being most grateful (Micah 6:6). That in the internal sense a "year" does not signify a year, is also evident from the fact that the angels, who are in the internal sense of the Word, cannot have an idea of any year; but because a year is a full period of time in nature, which belongs to the world, therefore instead of a year they have an idea of what is full in respect to states of the church, and of what is eternal in respect to states of heaven; times with them are states (see n. 1274, 1382, 2625, 2788, 2837).

2907.

Verse 2. And Sarah died in Kiriath-arba, the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan; and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. "Sarah died," signifies night as to the truths of faith; "in Kiriath-arba, the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan," signifies in the church; "and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her," signifies the Lord's state of grief.

2908.

Sarah died. That this signifies night as to the truths of faith, is evident from the signification of "dying," of "dead," and of "death," when these are predicated of the church, as denoting its last time, when all faith, that is, charity, has expired; which time, throughout the Word, is called "night" (see n. 221, 709, 1712, 2353); that "dying" denotes ceasing to be such, may be seen above (n. 494). The same is further evident from the representation of Sarah, as being truth Divine (see above, n. 2904); and thus it is plain that the signification is as has been said.

2909.

In Kiriath-arba, the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan. That this signifies in the church, is evident from the signification of "Kiriath-arba," as being the church as to truth; and from the signification of "Hebron in the land of Canaan," as being the church as to good. In the Word, and especially in the prophetical parts, where truth is treated of, good is treated of also, because of the heavenly marriage in everything of the Word (see n. 683, 793, 801, 2173, 2516, 2712); therefore here, when Kiriath-arba is mentioned, it is also said, "the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan." (That the "land of Canaan" denotes the Lord's

kingdom, may be seen above, n. 1413, 1437, 1607; also that the places in that land were variously representative, n. 1585, 1866.) In regard to Kiriath-arba which is Hebron, it was the region where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob dwelt. That Abraham dwelt there, appears from what was said in a preceding chapter: "Abraham came and dwelt in Mamre, which is in Hebron" (Gen. 13:18). That Isaac dwelt there, appears from what is said in a later chapter: "Jacob came unto Isaac his father, to Mamre, to Kiriath-arba, the same is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned" (Gen. 35:27). That Jacob dwelt there is evident from Joseph being sent to his brethren by Jacob his father, from the valley of Hebron (Gen. 37:14). From the representation of the three, as spoken of above, it is plain that Kiriath-arba which is Hebron represented the church before Jerusalem did. That every church in process of time decreases, until it has nothing left of faith and charity, and then is destroyed, was also represented by Kiriath-arba which is Hebron, in its being possessed by the Anakim, by whom were signified dire persuasions of falsity (n. 581, 1673). That it was possessed by the Anakim, may be seen in several places (Num. 13:21, 22; Josh. 11:21; 14:15; 15:13, 14; Judges 1:10); and that it came to its end or consummation and was destroyed, was represented by all things therein being given by Joshua to the curse (Josh. 10:36, 37; 11:21); and the Anakim being smitten by Judah and Caleb (Judges 1:10; Josh. 14:13-15; 15:13, 14). And that there was again a new church, was represented by Hebron being assigned to Caleb for an inheritance, as to field and villages (Josh. 21:12); but the city itself was made a city of refuge (Josh. 20:7; 21:13); and a priestly city for the sons of Aaron (Josh. 21:10, 11); in the inheritance of Judah (Josh. 15:54). Hence it is evident that Hebron represented the Lord's spiritual church in the land of Canaan. And likewise on this account David was required by the command of Jehovah to go to Hebron, and was there anointed to be king over the house

of Judah; and after he had reigned there seven years and six months, he went to Jerusalem and took possession of Zion (see 2 Sam. 2:1-11; 5:5; 1 Kings 2:11); and then for the first time the spiritual church of the Lord began to be represented by Jerusalem, and the celestial church by Zion.

2910.

And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. That this signifies the Lord's state of grief on account of the night as to truths of faith in the church, is evident from the representation of Abraham, as being the Lord (see n. 1893, 1965, 1989, 2011, 2172, 2501, 2833, 2836). That to "mourn" and to "weep" signify a state of grief is evident without explication; to "mourn" has respect to grief on account of night as to good in the church, and to "weep" as to truths. These two verses treat of the end of the church; its end is when there is no longer any charity. This state is treated of in many places in the Word, especially in the Prophets, and in John in Revelation; the Lord also describes this end by many things in the Evangelists, and calls it the "consummation of the age," and also "night." For with churches the case is this: In the beginning charity is fundamental with them; everyone then loves another as a brother, and is affected from good, not for his own sake, but for the sake of the neighbor, the community, the kingdom of the Lord, and above all things for the Lord's sake. But in process of time charity begins to grow cold and to become naught. Afterwards comes hatred of one another; which, although it does not appear outwardly, because in civic society men are under laws, and are under outward bonds of restraint, still is nourished inwardly. These outward bonds of restraint come from the love of self and of the world; they are the love of honor and eminence, the love of gain and hence also of power, thus the love of reputation. Under these loves hatred against the neighbor conceals

itself, which is of such a nature that men desire to have command over all, and to possess all things that are another's; and when these desires are opposed, they treasure in their hearts contempt for the neighbor, they breathe revenge, they take delight in his ruin, and even practice cruelties so far as they dare. Into things like these does the charity of the church at its end at last decline, and then it is said of it that there is no longer any faith, for where there is no charity there is no faith, as has been shown many times. There have been a number of churches, known to us from the Word, that had such an end. The Most Ancient Church thus expired about the time of the flood; in like manner the Ancient Church which was after the flood; also a second Ancient Church, called the Hebrew Church; and at last the Jewish Church, which was by no means a church that commenced from charity, but was only the representative of a church, to the intent that by representatives communication with heaven might survive, until the Lord came into the world. Afterwards a new church was raised up by the Lord, called the Church of the Gentiles, which was internal, for interior truths had been revealed by the Lord; but this church is now at its end, because now there is not only no charity, but there is hatred instead of charity; which hatred, though it does not appear outwardly, yet is within, and breaks out whenever possible with anyone, that is, whenever outward bonds do not restrain. Besides these churches there have been very many others that are not so fully described, which in like manner decreased and destroyed themselves. There are many causes for such decrease and self-destruction; one is that parents accumulate evils, and by frequent practice, and at length by habit, they implant them in their nature, and so by inheritance transcribe them upon their offspring; for what parents acquire from actual life by frequent use is rooted in their nature and is transmitted by inheritance to posterity; and unless the posterity is reformed or

regenerated, it is continued to successive generations and is all the time increasing; and thus the will becomes more prone to evils and falsities. But when a church is consummated and perishes, then the Lord always raises up a new church somewhere; but rarely, if ever, from the people of the former church; but from nations that have been in ignorance. Concerning these in what follows.

2911.

Verse 3. And Abraham rose up from upon the faces of his dead, and spoke unto the sons of Heth, saying. "Abraham rose up," signifies elevation; "from upon the faces of his dead," signifies in that night; "and spoke unto the sons of Heth, saying," signifies those with whom there was to be a new spiritual church.

2912.

Abraham rose up. That this signifies elevation, is evident from the signification of "rising up," as implying some elevation (see n. 2401, 2785); here elevation from grief, since a new church was about to be raised up in place of the former that perished. From upon the faces of his dead. That this signifies in that night, is evident from the signification of "dying," of "death," and of "dead," as denoting night in regard to the state of the church (concerning which see above, n. 2908).

2913.

And spoke unto the sons of Heth, saying. That this signifies those with whom there was to be a new spiritual church, is evident from the signification of "Heth," and of the "Hittites." There were many inhabitants of the land of Canaan, who are enumerated in various places in the Word,