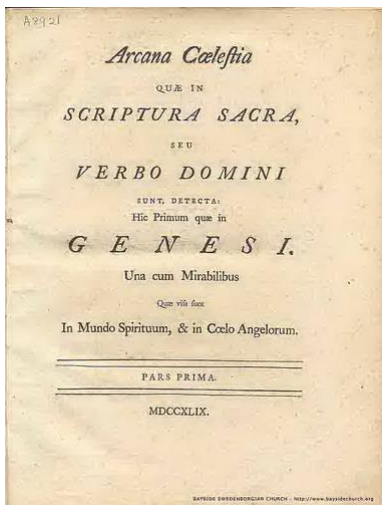


**Collected Works of Emanuel
Swedenborg
Heaven and Hell, Divine love and
Divine Wisdom, Divine Providence
and others
Illustrated**

Arcana Cœlestia (1749-1756)

Translated by John Faulkner Potts, 1910

In June 1747, Swedenborg resigned his post as assessor of the Swedish Board of Mines (Bergskollegium) in Stockholm. He explained that he was obliged to complete a work that he had begun and requested to receive half his salary as a pension. He then immersed himself in the study of Hebrew and began work on a spiritual interpretation of the Bible, with the goal of interpreting the meaning of every verse. For over ten years he devoted his energy to the task, which would become his magnum opus and the basis of all his further theological works.



The *Arcana Cœlestia* ('Heavenly Mysteries' or 'Secrets of Heaven'), Swedenborg's first and largest work, was written in Neo-Latin and published in eight volumes, one volume per year, from 1749 until 1756. It is an exposition of the spiritual sense of the books of *Genesis* and *Exodus*, according to the doctrine of correspondence (theology), supported by numerous quotations from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. Although Swedenborg does not deny the historicity of the stories of the Patriarchs (Bible) and The Exodus from Egypt, he explains them as describing symbolically the process of spiritual growth and struggles in each individual person. *Arcana Cœlestia* is

structured as a verse-by-verse exposition of the Biblical text, showing the correspondences (connections through symbols between the material and spiritual world) in which, according to Swedenborg, the Bible is written. Each chapter features embedded sections describing the author's own spiritual experiences and expounding on his own theological views.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

(1) FROM THE mere letter of the Word of the Old Testament no one would ever discern the fact that this part of the Word contains deep secrets of heaven, and that everything within it both in general and in particular bears reference to the Lord, to His heaven, to the church, to religious belief, and to all things connected therewith; for from the letter or sense of the letter all that anyone can see is that-to speak generally-everything therein has reference merely to the external rites and ordinances of the Jewish Church. Yet the truth is that everywhere in that Word there are internal things which never appear at all in the external things except a very few which the Lord revealed and explained to the Apostles; such as that the sacrifices signify the Lord; that the land of Canaan and Jerusalem signify heaven-on which account they are called the Heavenly Canaan and Jerusalem-and that Paradise has a similar signification.

(2) The Christian world however is as yet

profoundly unaware of the fact that all things in the Word both in general and in particular, nay, the very smallest particulars down to the most minute iota, signify and enfold within them spiritual and heavenly things, and therefore the Old Testament is but little cared for. Yet that the Word is really of this character might be known from the single consideration that being the Lord's and from the Lord it must of necessity contain within it such things as belong to heaven, to the church, and to religious belief, and that unless it did so it could not be called the Lord's Word, nor could it be said to have any life in it. For whence comes its life except from those things that belong to life, that is to say, except from the fact that everything in it both in general and in particular bears reference to the Lord, who is the very Life itself; so that anything which does not inwardly regard Him is not alive; and it may be truly said that any expression in the Word that does not enfold Him within it, that is, which does not in its own way bear reference to Him, is not Divine.

(3) Without such a Life, the Word as to the letter is dead. The case in this respect is the same as it is with man, who-as is known in the Christian world-is both internal and external. When separated from the internal man, the external man is the body, and is therefore dead; for it is the internal man that is alive and that causes the external man to be so, the internal man being the soul. So is it with the Word, which, in respect to the letter

alone, is like the body without the soul.

(4) While the mind cleaves to the literal sense alone, no one can possibly see that such things are contained within it. Thus in these first chapters of Genesis, nothing is discoverable from the sense of the letter other than that the creation of the world is treated of, and the garden of Eden which is called Paradise, and Adam as the first created man. Who supposes anything else? But it will be sufficiently established in the following pages that these matters contain arcana which have never yet been revealed; and in fact that the first chapter of Genesis in the internal sense treats in general of the new creation of man, or of his regeneration, and specifically of the Most Ancient Church; and this in such a manner that there is not the least expression which does not represent, signify, and enfold within it these things.

(5) That this is really the case no one can possibly know except from the Lord. It may therefore be stated in advance that of the Lord's Divine mercy it has been granted me now for some years to be constantly and uninterruptedly in company with spirits and angels, hearing them speak and in turn speaking with them. In this way it has been given me to hear and see wonderful things in the other life which have never before come to the knowledge of any man, nor into his idea. I have been instructed in regard to the different kinds of spirits; the state of souls after death; hell, or the lamentable state of the unfaithful; heaven, or the blessed state of the faithful;

and especially in regard to the doctrine of faith which is acknowledged in the universal heaven; on which subjects, of the Lord's Divine mercy, more will be said in the following pages.

CHAPTER 1

[THE AUTHOR, WRITING in Latin, has given his own translation, in that language, of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Word, in which, for the sake of the spiritual sense, he has rendered the originals almost as literally as possible, and it has been deemed necessary to follow him in the translation of the present work into English, but with the endeavor to avoid any needless departure from the language of the English Bible.]

1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2. And the earth was a void and emptiness, and thick darkness was upon the faces of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the faces of the waters. 3. And God said, Let there be light, and there was light. 4. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God distinguished between the light and the darkness. 5. And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. 6. And God said, Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it distinguish between the waters in the waters. 7. And God made the expanse, and made a distinction between the waters which were under

the expanse, and the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. 8. And God called the expanse heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. 9. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together in one place, and let the dry [land] appear; and it was so. 10. And God called the dry [land] earth, and the gathering together of the waters called He seas; and God saw that it was good. 11. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the tender herb, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree bearing fruit after its kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so. 12. And the earth brought forth the tender herb, the herb yielding seed after its kind, and the tree bearing fruit, whose seed was in itself, after its kind; and God saw that it was good. 13. And the evening and the morning were the third day. 14. And God said, Let there be luminaries in the expanse of the heavens, to distinguish between the day and the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years. 15. And let them be for luminaries in the expanse of the heavens, to give light upon the earth; and it was so. 16. And God made two great luminaries, the greater luminary to rule by day, and the lesser luminary to rule by night; and the stars. 17. And God set them in the expanse of the heavens, to give light upon the earth; 18. And to rule in the day, and in the night, and to distinguish between the light and the darkness; and God saw that it was good. 19. And the evening and the morning were the

fourth day. 20. And God said, Let the waters cause to creep forth the creeping thing, the living soul; and let fowl fly above the earth upon the faces of the expanse of the heavens. 21. And God created great whales, and every living soul that creepeth, which the waters caused to creep forth after their kinds, and every winged fowl after its kind; and God saw that it was good. 22. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and the fowl shall be multiplied in the earth. 23. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. 24. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living soul after its kind; the beast, and the thing moving itself, and the wild animal of the earth, after its kind; and it was so. 25. And God made the wild animal of the earth after its kind, and the beast after its kind, and everything that creepeth on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good. 26. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the heavens, and over the beast, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27. And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. 28. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the heavens, and over every living thing that creepeth upon the earth. 29. And God

said, Behold, I give you every herb bearing seed which is upon the faces of all the earth, and every tree in which is fruit; the tree yielding seed, to you it shall be for food. 30. And to every wild animal of the earth, and to every fowl of the heavens, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth wherein is a living soul, every green herb for food; and it was so. 31. And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

(6) THE CONTENTS. The six days, or periods, which are so many successive states of the regeneration of man, are in general as follows.

(7) The first state is that which precedes, including both the state from infancy, and that immediately before regeneration. This is called a “void” “emptiness” and “thick darkness.” And the first motion, which is the Lord’s mercy, is “the Spirit of God moving upon the faces of the waters.”

(8) The second state is when a distinction is made between those things which are of the Lord, and those which are proper to man. The things which are of the Lord are called in the word “remains” and here are especially knowledges of faith, which have been learned from infancy, and which are stored up, and are not manifested until the man comes into this state. At the present day this state seldom exists without temptation, misfortune, or sorrow, by which the things of the body and the world, that is, such as are proper to man, are

brought into quiescence, and as it were die. Thus the things which belong to the external man are separated from those which belong to the internal man. In the internal man are the remains, stored up by the Lord unto this time, and for this use.

(9) The third state is that of repentance, in which the man, from his internal man, speaks piously and devoutly, and brings forth goods, like works of charity, but which nevertheless are inanimate, because he thinks they are from himself. These goods are called the “tender grass” and also the “herb yielding seed” and afterwards the “tree bearing fruit.”

(10) The fourth state is when the man becomes affected with love, and illuminated by faith. He indeed previously discoursed piously, and brought forth goods, but he did so in consequence of the temptation and straitness under which he labored, and not from faith and charity; wherefore faith and charity are now enkindled in his internal man, and are called two “luminaries.”

(11) The fifth state is when the man discourses from faith, and thereby confirms himself in truth and good: the things then produced by him are animate, and are called the “fish of the sea” and the “birds of the heavens.”

(12) The sixth state is when, from faith, and thence from love, he speaks what is true, and does what is good: the things which he then brings forth are called the “living soul” and the “beast.” And as he then begins to

act at once and together from both faith and love, he becomes a spiritual man, who is called an “image.” His spiritual life is delighted and sustained by such things as belong to the knowledges of faith, and to works of charity, which are called his “food;” and his natural life is delighted and sustained by those which belong to the body and the senses; whence a combat arises, until love gains the dominion, and he becomes a celestial man.

(13) Those who are being regenerated do not all arrive at this state. The greatest part, at this day, attain only the first state; some only the second; others the third, fourth, or fifth; few the sixth; and scarcely anyone the seventh.

(14) THE INTERNAL SENSE. In the following work, by the name Lord is meant the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, and Him only; and He is called “the Lord” without the addition of other names. Throughout the universal heaven He it is who is acknowledged and adored as Lord, because He has all sovereign power in the heavens and on earth. He also commanded His disciples so to call Him, saying, “Ye call Me Lord, and ye say well, for I am” (John 13:13). And after His resurrection His disciples called Him “the Lord.”

(15) In the universal heaven they know no other Father than the Lord, because He and the Father are one, as He Himself has said: I am the way, the truth, and the life. Philip saith, Show us the Father; Jesus saith to him, Am I so long time with you, and hast thou not known

Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me (John 14:6, 8-11).

(16) Verse 1. In the beginning God created the heavens [coelum] and the earth. The most ancient time is called “the beginning.” By the prophets it is in various places called the “days of old” [antiquitatis] and also the “days of eternity.” The “beginning” also involves the first period when man is being regenerated, for he is then born anew, and receives life. Regeneration itself is therefore called a “new creation” of man. The expressions to “create” to “form” to “make” in almost all parts of the prophetic writings signify to regenerate, yet with a difference in the signification. As in Isaiah: Everyone that is called by My name, I have created him for My glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him (Isa. 43:7). And therefore the Lord is called the “Redeemer” the “Former from the womb” the “Maker” and also the “Creator;” as in the same Prophet: I am Jehovah your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King (Isa. 43:15). In David: The people that is created shall praise Jah (Ps. 102:18). Again: Thou sendest forth Thy spirit, they are created, and Thou renewest the faces of the ground (Ps. 104:30). That “heaven” signifies the internal man; and “earth” the external man before regeneration, may be seen from what follows.

(17) Verse 2. And the earth was a void and emptiness, and darkness was upon the faces of the deep [abyssi]; and the Spirit of God was brooding upon the faces of the waters. Before his regeneration, man is called the “earth void and empty” and also the “ground” wherein nothing of good and truth has been sown; “void” denotes where there is nothing of good, and “empty” where there is nothing of truth. Hence comes “thick darkness” that is, stupidity, and an ignorance of all things belonging to faith in the Lord, and consequently of all things belonging to spiritual and heavenly life. Such a man is thus described by the Lord through Jeremiah: My people is stupid, they have not known Me; they are foolish sons, and are not intelligent; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. I beheld the earth, and lo a void and emptiness, and the heavens, and they had no light (Jer. 4:22-23).

(18) The “faces of the deep” are the cupidities of the unregenerate man, and the falsities thence originating, of which he wholly consists, and in which he is totally immersed. In this state, having no light, he is like a “deep” or something obscure and confused. Such persons are also called “deeps” and “depths of the sea” in many parts of the Word, which are “dried up” or “wasted” before man is regenerated. As in Isaiah: Awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art not thou it that drieth up the sea, the waters of the great deep, that maketh the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed

to pass over? Therefore the redeemed of Jehovah shall return (Isa. 51:9-11). Such a man also, when seen from heaven, appears like a black mass, destitute of vitality. The same expressions likewise in general involve the vastation of man, frequently spoken of by the Prophets, which precedes regeneration; for before man can know what is true, and be affected with what is good, there must be a removal of such things as hinder and resist their admission; thus the old man must needs die, before the new man can be conceived.

(19) By the “Spirit of God” is meant the Lord’s mercy, which is said to “move” or “brood” as a hen broods over her eggs. The things over which it moves are such as the Lord has hidden and treasured up in man, which in the Word throughout are called remains or a remnant, consisting of the knowledges of the true and of the good, which never come into light or day, until external things are vastated. These knowledges are here called “the faces of the waters.”

(20) Verse 3. And God said, Let there be light, and there was light. The first state is when the man begins to know that the good and the true are something higher. Men who are altogether external do not even know what good and truth are; for they fancy all things to be good that belong to the love of self and the love of the world; and all things to be true that favor these loves; not being aware that such goods are evils, and such truths falsities. But when man is conceived anew, he then begins for the

first time to know that his goods are not goods, and also, as he comes more into the light, that the Lord is, and that He is good and truth itself. That men ought to know that the Lord is, He Himself teaches in John: Except ye believe that I am, ye shall die in your sins (John 8:24). Also, that the Lord is good itself, or life, and truth itself, or light, and consequently that there is neither good nor truth except from the Lord, is thus declared: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word. 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 shineth in darkness. He was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world (John 1:1, 3-4, 9).

(21) Verses 4, 5. And God saw the light, that it was good, and God distinguished between the light and the darkness. And God called the light day, and the dark He called night. Light is called “good” because it is from the Lord, who is good itself, The “darkness” means all those things which, before man is conceived and born anew, have appeared like light, because evil has appeared like good, and the false like the true; yet they are darkness, consisting merely of the things proper to man himself, which still remain. Whatsoever is of the Lord is compared to “day” because it is of the light; and whatsoever is man’s own is compared to “night” because it is of darkness. These comparisons frequently occur in

the Word.

(22) Verse 5. And the evening and the morning were the first day. What is meant by “evening” and what by “morning” can now be discerned. “Evening” means every preceding state, because it is a state of shade, or of falsity and of no faith; “morning” is every subsequent state, being one of light, or of truth and of the knowledges of faith, “Evening” in a general sense, signifies all things that are of man’s own; but “morning” whatever is of the Lord, as is said through David: The spirit of Jehovah spake in me, and His word was on my tongue; the God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me. He is as the light of the morning, when the sun ariseth, even a morning without clouds, when from brightness, from rain, the tender herb springeth out of the earth (2 Sam. 23:2-4). As it is “evening” when there is no faith, and “morning” when there is faith, therefore the coming of the Lord into the world is called “morning;” and the time when He comes, because then there is no faith, is called “evening” as in Daniel: The Holy One said unto me, Even unto evening when it becomes morning, two thousand and three hundred (Dan. 8:14, 26). In like manner “morning” is used in the Word to denote every coming of the Lord, consequently it is an expression of new creation.

(23) Nothing is more common in the Word than for “day” to be used to denote time itself. As in Isaiah: The day of Jehovah is at hand. Behold, the day of Jehovah

cometh. I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall be shaken out of her place: in the day of the wrath of Mine anger. Her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged (Isa. 13:6, 9, 13, 22). And in the same Prophet: Her antiquity is of ancient days. And it shall come to pass in that day that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king (Isa. 23:7, 15). As “day” is used to denote time, it is also used to denote the state of that time, as in Jeremiah: Woe unto us, for the day is gone down, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out (Jer. 6:4). And again: If ye shall make vain My covenant of the day, and My covenant of the night, so that there be not day and night in their season (Jer. 23:20, also 25). And again: Renew our days, as of old (Lam. 5:21).

(24) Verse 6. And God said, Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it distinguish between the waters in the waters. After the spirit of God, or the Lord’s mercy, has brought forth into day the knowledges of the true and of the good, and has given the first light, that the Lord is, that He is good itself, and truth itself, and that there is no good and truth but from Him, He then makes a distinction between the internal man and the external, consequently between the knowledges [cognitiones] that are in the internal man, and the memory-knowledges [scientifica] that belong to the external man. [Knowledges (cognitiones) are what we really know, as when we say I do not merely think

so, I know it.” Memory knowledges (scientifica) are what we have in the external memory—a vast accumulation of all kinds, theological and otherwise. For precise definitions of these words by Swedenborg himself, see *Arcana Coelestia*, n. 27, 896, 1486, 2718, 5212. See also the Reviser’s Prefatory Notes.] The internal man is called an “expanse;” the knowledges[cognitiones] which are in the internal man are called “the waters above the expanse;” and the memory-knowledges of the external man are called “the waters beneath the expanse.” [2] Man, before he is being regenerated, does not even know that any internal man exists, much less is he acquainted with its nature and quality. He supposes the internal and the external man to be not distinct from each other. For, being immersed in bodily and worldly things, he has also immersed in them the things that belong to his internal man, and has made of things that are distinct a confused and obscure unit. Therefore it is first said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters” and then, “Let it distinguish between the waters in the waters;” but not, Let it distinguish between the waters which are “under” the expanse and the waters which are “above” the expanse, as is afterwards said in the next verses: And God made the expanse, and made a distinction between the waters which were under the expanse, and the waters which were above the expanse, and it was so. And God called the expanse heaven (Gen. 1:7-8). [3] The next thing

therefore that man observes in the course of regeneration is that he begins to know that there is an internal man, or that the things which are in the internal man are goods and truths, which are of the Lord alone. Now as the external man, when being regenerated, is of such a nature that he still supposes the goods that he does to be done of himself, and the truths that he speaks to be spoken of himself, and whereas, being such, he is led by them of the Lord, as by things of his own, to do what is good and to speak what is true, therefore mention is first made of a distinction of the waters under the expanse, and afterwards of those above the expanse. It is also an arcanum of heaven, that man, by things of his own, as well by the fallacies of the senses as by cupidities, is led and bent by the Lord to things that are true and good, and thus that every movement and moment of regeneration, both in general and in particular, proceeds from evening to morning, thus from the external man to the internal, or from “earth” to “heaven.” Therefore the expanse, or internal man, is now called “heaven.”

(25) To “spread out the earth and stretch out the heavens” is a common form of speaking with the Prophets, when treating of the regeneration of man. As in Isaiah: Thus saith Jehovah thy Redeemer, and He that formed thee from the womb; I am Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by Myself (Isa. 44:24). And again, where the advent of the Lord is openly spoken of:

A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench; He shall bring forth judgment unto truth (Isa. 42:3); that is, He does not break fallacies, nor quench cupidities, but bends them to what is true and good; and therefore it follows, Jehovah God createth the heavens, and stretcheth them out; He spreadeth out the earth, and the productions thereof; He giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein (Isa. 42:5). Not to mention other passages to the same purport.

(26) Verse 8. And the evening and the morning were the second day. The meaning of “evening” of “morning” and of “day” was shown above at verse 5.

(27) Verse 9. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together to one place, and let the dry [land] appear; and it was so. When it is known that there is both an internal and an external man, and that truths and goods flow in from, or through, the internal man to the external, from the Lord, although it does not so appear, then those truths and goods, or the knowledges of the true and the good in the regenerating man, are stored up in his memory, and are classed among its knowledges [scientifica]; for whatsoever is insinuated into the memory of the external man, whether it be natural, or spiritual, or celestial, abides there as memory-knowledge [scientificum], and is brought forth thence by the Lord. These knowledges are the “waters gathered together into one place” and are called “seas” but the