

- I. Today we read two prophecies from Isaiah that are famous because they are so evocative
 - A. Wouldn't it be a better world if we could go up to the mountain of the Lord and from that place of love beat our swords into mattocks and our spears into pruning hooks?
 1. What if we took the ideas and truths we know that we have used to hurt, and instead used them to heal and to build?
 - B. And even more, what if we could create a world of safety such that the fierce emotions depicted as a wolf, a leopard and a lion could coexist with our more gentle, innocent emotions depicted by a lamb or a kid, or a world in which children could play safely near vipers and basilisks?
 1. That would be heaven on earth
 2. It would be a world without Coronavirus
 3. Even more it would be a world without rancorous partisan politics where the good of the country often does not seem to be the primary concern
 4. And far more importantly, it would be a world without corruption and fraud, without infidelity, without character assassination or hate
 5. It would be a world in which our gentle tender selves could come out more, and could thrive. It sounds like heaven on earth
- II. And of course we know that such a world doesn't exist, and is not likely to exist any time in the next few millennia, human nature being what it is
 - A. So how do we view this beautiful, aspirational imagery? If the God of heaven and earth presented it to us it must be true in a powerful way
 1. While it is possible that this world could someday become a heaven on earth, it is far more possible and likely that we watching here today could experience this imagery in our lifetimes
 2. We will return to the imagery at the end of the talk because the images are of the goal, what peace on earth or peace of mind could be
 3. The parts of the prophecy that come before describe what needs to happen for us to experience it, so we'll explore that, focusing on a few key images or themes
- III. We have just celebrated Easter, the fulfillment of the prophecy that opened our reading: "And there shall come out a Shoot from the trunk of Jesse, and a Stem from his roots shall become fruitful." (SS 15:2)
 - A. The Lord, the son of David, is referenced here, because Jesse was David's father.
 - B. Although the rest of the description is about who the Lord is, and what He became, as we'll explore, it also describes the things in Him that we need to respond to in order to find that safety
- IV. Something striking about this prophecy is the repeated use of the word "spirit": the spirit of Jehovah shall rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah

- A. This word is important, partly because of the obvious connection with the fact that the Lord comes to us through the Holy Spirit, but what this means requires explanation
- B. Spirit literally means breath, and as such it has to do with the things that emanate out of a person just like we breathe out
 - 1. So for instance, we read in Genesis, “And the Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being” (Gen 2:7)
 - a. The image here is of the Lord’s life force animating Adam
 - 2. Similarly after He rose the Lord breathed on His disciples, we’re told, and said to them “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22)
 - 3. The Lord’s spirit is His life force that He shares with us (Lord 50)
- V. In New Church teaching, we’re told that this presence with us that is the spirit of the Lord is the Divine Truth
 - A. This part may seem very technical and not important, but it is vital to a true understanding of the Lord
 - B. Who we are is what we love, and from that we form ideas. We use ideas to clothe and express what we love, and we use actions to do the same
 - C. Love exists inside us and truth emanates from us, just as light emanates from a fire. Fire is our essence, light is the spirit that flows from us
- VI. When the Lord was on earth, we are told, He was Divine truth. He was the embodiment of the Divine love showing itself on earth in human form
 - A. As He said, “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12). Light is truth
 - B. But when He glorified that humanity, He made it one with His Divine soul, which is pure love
 - C. And when He did so He became, not merely Divine truth, but Divine love in human form,
 - D. To use the analogy above, He was no longer the light shining from the Divine soul. He was the fire that was the source of light in the world
 - E. As one teaching puts it, “after the Lord’s Human was glorified it was made Divine Good. At this point it was from Him as Divine Good that Divine Truth went forth, and goes forth still. Such Divine Truth is the Spirit of Truth whom the Lord will send” (AC 4577)
 - F. If you think about it, a fire is not light within itself. It is pure fire. The light emanates from it.
 - 1. The fire is the source and the light is what proceeds
- VII. So think of this analogy
 - A. Imagine waking up on a cold morning and watching the sun rise. Gradually the light and heat of the sun will warm your surroundings, but slowly
 - B. That’s what the world was like before the Lord was born on earth. His Divine love was deep within us, like the sun in the sky and He gave us truth so we could in time experience His love
- VIII. When He glorified His humanity, He became Divine love, even down here on the natural plane. So going back to our analogy, imagine if you wake up on

that cold morning and there is a sun here, down on earth, your own personal heater and light source

- A. That's what the Lord changed by coming on earth. He brought His power down to our most natural states
 - B. We won't go into it today, but New Church teaching places great emphasis on how important it is to realize that the Holy Spirit proceeds from Jesus Christ in His glorified Humanity, and not from the Divine soul within Him (AR 962:10-12).
 - 1. Thinking this way turns us toward a visible God whom we can relate to and love, and it gives us access to His power
- IX. So the Lord came on earth as the spirit of Jehovah – the manifestation of Jehovah – but He became one with Jehovah and now from Him there emanates a “spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah”
- A. And that means when we turn to Jesus Christ as the one God we can receive wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, and we can fear Him, which means we can worship Him from love (AC 2826:8)
 - B. This last one, the spirit of the fear of Jehovah, is one New Church teaching focuses on because when we 1) Turn to Jesus Christ as the one Lord, 2) Receive His truth, and then 3) Hold that truth as precious by trying to live it, we come to a place of fearing to harm what is the Lord's
 - C. It's the difference between being polite because it's the rules, and being polite because we want to treat people respectfully, or between staying faithful to a spouse because we should and don't want to get in trouble versus doing so because the thought of hurting the marriage that way causes us pain and fear
 - 1. One is acting from rules and the other is from love
- X. This section of the prophecy, then, comes down to acknowledging two things:
- A. The Lord, Jesus Christ who walked on earth and glorified His Human, is the one God
 - B. From Him comes all truth, all wisdom, intelligence and knowledge
 - 1. We understand all other knowledge in the light of it. Not dogmatically or blindly, but affirming the truth of the Word as fundamental
- XI. When we do this, His truth has power in our lives, symbolized by the rod coming out of His mouth (AE 176:4-5)
- XII. And even more significantly, we read “and justice shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His hips/thighs.”
- A. This image of a belt or girdle is symbolically important
 - B. A belt is the last thing you put on and it pulls the outfit together
 - C. Perhaps you have accidentally gone out without your belt and felt only partly dressed
 - D. Think now about living in an era of wearing billowing robes and what a difference a belt or girdle would make
 - E. Just as a belt pulls an outfit together, so a girdle symbolizes “a common bond to ensure that everything has the same end in view” (AC 9828:1).

- F. A belt, that last thing put on, stands for the reason we get dressed, the reason we get up in the morning, if you will.
- G. That purpose “gathers together, encloses, holds in connection within itself, and strengthens everything within, which without it would fall apart and drift away” (Ibid.) That’s strong language
- H. We could ask ourselves as we get up from watching and participate in church today, what is the belt that holds my day together? What is a purpose I can use to hold my day from drifting from one pleasure to another?
- I. That purpose is described in New Church teaching in two ways. The first is as the ways we serve others. So we could ask how we can make a difference in the life of someone else today
- J. The second is as the reason we try, so we could think of a value we love that it central to our thinking and purpose. If you love marriage, what can you do to support marriage, or the marriage of a friend? If you love justice, what can you do to promote justice in this confused world of ours?
- K. What is your bottom line? What is one thing that you stand for that is deeply important, so important that you are willing to act on?
- L. This question ties us back to the opening idea. Because the Lord came on earth and glorified His humanity, He put on a girdle of the love of saving us
- M. We love Him in return when we receive some of His love and make it ours
- XIII. This act, putting on a girdle of love, is what creates the peace described by the lamb and wolf living together, by the child playing on the viper’s hole (AE 780:6-7)
 - A. We tend to want safety to come from outside, from a secure job and secure health, from seeing friends, and a host of things that we don’t have right now
 - B. In reality, safety comes from the things described so far:
 1. Turning to Jesus Christ in His Divine Humanity
 2. Receiving truth from Him
 3. Loving it enough to let it become the girdle that holds our lives together
 - C. When we do these things, then we become a lamb, we become, slowly, bit by bit, an embodiment of innocence, we become that child that can play unworriedly at the viper’s hole
 1. A lam and a child describes the deepest commitment to the Lord and to loving His truth we can make
 2. Maybe we’re not there yet, maybe we are able to have the cow and bear pasture together – doing our best in this natural world to do what is right
- XIV. The Lord said, “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10)
 - A. His Holy Spirit, the presence with us that He created because of His life on earth, is the source of life. He wants us to experience His abundance
 - B. To do that He requires that we turn directly to Him, receive His truth and allow it to become our purpose
 - C. I invite you to think about one place in your life where you might have consider being a bit more like that lamb, a lamb that trusts so completely in

the sheltering protection of His Shepherd, that he hears His voice, follows Him, trusting Him to keep his tender self safe

- D. The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. Yeah though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for You are with me

Is 11:1-10 And there shall come out a Shoot from the trunk of Jesse, and a Stem from his roots shall become fruitful. And the spirit of Jehovah shall rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah; and cause Him to breathe in the sweet smell of the fear of Jehovah; He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor shall He reprove by the hearing of His ears; but with justice shall He judge the poor, and with uprightness shall He reprove the meek of the earth; and He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the spirit of His lips shall He put the wicked to death. And justice shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His hips.

And a wolf shall sojourn with a lamb, and a leopard shall lie down with a kid, and a calf and a young lion and a fatling together; and a little child shall direct them. And the cow and the bear shall pasture; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw as the cattle. And the nursing infant shall play [lit: be pleased] by the hole of the adder; and the weaned child put his hand on the den of the basilisk. They shall not do evil nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.

And it shall be in that day that the Root of Jesse shall stand for a banner to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of Him, and His rest shall be glory.

Is 2:1-5 This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into mattocks, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

TCR 139 *The Holy Spirit Is Divine Truth, and Also the Divine Power and Activity Which Proceeds from the One God, in Whom Is the Divine Trinity, and So from the Lord God the Savior.*

The Holy Spirit means properly the Divine Truth, so also the Word; and in this sense the Lord is Himself also the Holy Spirit. But the present-day church uses the term 'Holy Spirit' to describe the way God works, that is, the actual process of making a person righteous, so this is the meaning given here to the Holy Spirit, and this will be the principal subject discussed. Another reason is that the activity of God takes place by means of the Divine Truth which proceeds from the Lord; and that which proceeds is of one and the same essence as He from whom it proceeds. This is like the trio of soul, body and what proceeds making up a single essence, which in the case of a human being is purely human, but in the case of the Lord is Divine and Human at the same time, these essences after His glorification being united as what is prior is with what follows from it, or like essence and the appropriate form. So the three essentials

called the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one in the Lord.