

THE HISTORY OF THE WORD ON EARTH

The Word always comes from the Lord, and the celestial or Most Ancient Church saw the Lord AS the Word. There was no difference. All their perception, dreams and knowledge of correspondences led them to see heavenly things instead of worldly. For example,. when they looked at the stars, they saw the Lord's kingdom (*Arcana Coelestia* 1806). That is how the Most Ancient Church continued until it began to fall away. At some stage, writing was invented just for the sake of preserving the Word. The Lord was born on this planet for that very reason (*Earths in the Universe* 112). The preservation began with that era of the Most Ancient Church meant by Cain. A "mark was set upon him lest anyone slay him," means "doctrinal things..., collected by [him] and stored up that they might not be lost" (*Arcana Coelestia* 609). This collection consisted of "enigmatical things, significations of various objects on the face of the earth, e.g. mountains," etc. (*Arcana Coelestia* 920) It was the first dictionary of correspondences! This written material was afterwards reduced into doctrine by another later group of people collectively called "Enoch." They "collected correspondences from the mouth of those" last remnants of the Most Ancients who know them, and "transmitted the knowledge ... to posterity." (*De Verbo* 3:5) However, it was of no use to anyone at that time, which is meant by "God took him"(*Arcana*

Coelestia 609). “This doctrine [was] reserved for use by descendants” (*Arcana Coelestia* 521).

The Word was always spoken to begin with: first, the Lord spoke “face to face,” then angels revealed it continuously. It was “written” only on the heart! Much later it went from mouth through hearing into the first manuscript, first lists of meanings and then into doctrine. This doctrine, incorporating Cain’s list, was Enoch’s Word: “It was a manuscript [for] the coming churches after the deluge” (*Apocalypse Explained* 728). How this first written Word of the Lord on earth was protected from harm is found in the story of Noah’s Ark. The Ark includes that Word in the minds of the people at that time. Enoch’s manuscript was preserved by Noah, from the similar-minded Nephilim (*Arcana Coelestia* 788) who “would offer harm to it” if they “found it” (*Apocalypse Explained* 728).

It was by this process of protection and preservation that the names of all the places in the “Garden of Eden,” i.e. from the Nile to the Euphrates, were transferred from Most Ancient time into Bible events and then stories: “The Most Ancient Church... gave the names. The Church was to be there...[and] the Word was to be given in which all things were to be representative and had a meaning of spiritual and celestial things, which could not be done unless the names of places and of persons had meaning” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6516). All places represented “heavenly and Divine realities...the Lord’s kingdom” (*Arcana Coelestia* 7439:4). Therefore, Biblical names were also contained in that first Word, linking us with the first peoples on this planet! Bethlehem used to be called Ephratah, and it always “meant” the Lord’s Advent (*Apocalypse Explained* 700:9). The Mount of Olives was there in the Most Ancient Church, and referred to the comfort of the Lord after temptations (*Lord* 14).

Thus, when Noah came out of the Ark, it meant the Ancient Church coming after the Most Ancient. The First Ancient Church arose from the Word of Enoch, because this “was their

Word” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1241). “This Church did not have a Word other than that which had been acquired from the most ancient people, a Word which was representative of the Lord and served spiritually to mean His kingdom. Thus to them the internal sense was the Word itself” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3432:2). The internal sense of course yields and is the same as doctrine. However, establishing the Ancient Church using Enoch’s Word was enormously difficult. It had to move from being a “significant” church to a “representative.” “All significations ...afterwards, when the significant church had ceased, were made representatives” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1361). Their task was to turn written “significatives into actual representatives” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1410). It was like building an airplane from just blueprints! How do you go from a manuscript to a practice of representative worship?

This process is involved in “Ham” tattling on “Noah’s” disgraceful drunkenness. The story means people trying to mock the entire process, putting a bad interpretation on everything. They had to overcome all the negative remarks which was “Shem” and “Japheth” walking backwards to cover “Noah.” They “interpreted everything for good with all their might” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1085). They turned their back on and disregarded all the problems. Eventually they succeeded in making things representative from written meanings, and this process, we surmise, moved the First Ancient Church from being just a “few people” just after the Flood (*Arcana Coelestia* 468) to very many nations (*Arcana Coelestia* 1238e), as when they “came from the east” at the occasion of the Tower of Babel. Thus after the Flood via Enoch’s Word, the First Ancient Church came to its fullness, and it was at this time that the Ancient Word was inspired. “Afterwards...they also had a written Word, both historical and prophetic” (*Arcana Index* 23, *Arcana Coelestia* 3432:2). It was a separate document from Enoch’s Word.