

Some quotations from the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg:

And the feast of ingathering, in the going out of the year, when thou gatherest in thy works out of the field. That this signifies worship from a grateful mind on account of the implantation of good therefrom, thus on account of regeneration and complete liberation from damnation, is evident from the signification of “a feast,” as being the worship of the Lord and thanksgiving, thus worship from a grateful mind; from the signification of “ingathering,” when said of the implantation of truth in good, as being the implantation of good itself; from the signification of “the going out of the year,” as being the end of the works; and from the signification of “when thou gatherest in thy works out of the field,” as being the enjoyment and use of all things that have been implanted in good. For, by “the works” are signified not only the things of the field, but also those of the vineyard and the olive yard, consequently those of the fruit of the earth.

Arcana Celestia #9296

... Everything that flows in from the Lord through the internal into the external or into the natural is given gratuitously. The Lord does indeed demand humility, adoration, thanksgivings, and many other things from mankind, which appear like repayings, and thus not gratuitous; but the Lord does not demand these things for his own sake.... In the Divine, anything of the love of self is utterly inconceivable (that such things should be done for his own sake). But they are for the sake of the individual, for when a person is in a state of humility one can receive good from the Lord, because one has then been separated from the love of self and its evils, which are an obstacle. Therefore the Lord wills a state of humility in the individual for their own sake, because when in this state the Lord can flow in with heavenly good. The case is similar with adoration, and with thanksgiving.

Arcana Celestia #5957

When one’s mind is in a state of humility (acknowledgment that any good and truth that seems to be one’s own is really the Lord’s) the Lord’s Divine love and wisdom can flow in because the loves of self and the world are quieted. One can then also perceive in the understanding that humility is needed not for the sake of the Lord’s love of glory, but for the sake of the Lord’s Divine love and in order that the Lord can thereby inflow with good and truth making one blessed and happy. The faculty of being able to understand what is good and true although one does not will it has been to people in order that they may have the capacity of being reformed and regenerated.

Arcana Celestia #3539.5

Everything that befalls or happens, or in other words is called accidental and is ascribed to chance or fortune, is a matter of providence. The Divine providence operates thus invisibly and incomprehensibly in order that one may in freedom ascribe an event either to providence or to chance; for if providence were to act visibly and comprehensibly, there would be danger of one’s believing, from what one sees and comprehends, that the thing was from providence, and afterwards believing the opposite. Thus truth and falsity would be conjoined in the interior mind, and truth would be profaned.... Therefore it is better for one to be kept in unbelief, than to be at one time in faith and then to recede from it.

Arcana Celestia #5508

SUNDAY MORNING FORUM
BIBLE STUDY & SWEDENBORGIAN IDEAS
THANKFULNESS

The Biblical statutes on thank offerings call us from our natural-minded condition into a spiritual state of thankfulness. When one is thankful, one is focusing on what one has received and is becoming. Thank offerings correspond to gratitude for the Lord's guidance and regeneration.

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Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land that the LORD promised ... to your forefathers. Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna... to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. Observe the commands of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and revering him. For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land — a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills. When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.

Deut. 8:1-3, 6-10 (17-20)

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

James 1:17-18

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Matthew 6:25-33