

## HEAVENLY CLOTHING

by the Rev. D. L. Rose

How do we know about clothes in heaven? Of course, the answer is that the Lord teaches us. We know that there is no worry about clothes in the Lord's kingdom because He said: "Why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed (or dressed) like one of these... Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field... shall He not much more clothe you?" (Matt. 6:28-30), (Lk. 12).

Has anyone ever seen angels to know whether they have beautiful clothes? Think of the Easter story. The angel who rolled the stone away and sat on it had "raiment white as snow" (Matt. 28:3). When they came to the sepulcher "two men stood by them in shining garments" (Lk. 24:4). When the women went into the sepulcher they saw "a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment" (Mk. 16:15).

The Lord says in the book of Revelation: "He that overcometh shall be clothed in white garments" (Rev. 3:5). "Overcome" means "to try."

The Lord teaches that the angels "are clothed freely, for garments are given to them" (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 334), but we know about the clothing especially because the Lord allowed Swedenborg to see the angels and their clothing hundreds of times (see *Heaven and Hell* 181), and there is a chapter in *Heaven and Hell* about the garments, or clothes, of the angels.

As you can imagine, the clothes of the angels are more beautiful and wonderful than the clothes of this world. The wiser, more intelligent angels have the more beautiful clothes, and *sometimes angels have clothing that shines very brightly* (see *HH* 178).

You can see why when the Lord appeared on the mountain to Peter, James and John, His garments were seen to be glistening and "shining exceeding white as snow" (Mk. 9:3; Lk. 9:29).

When Swedenborg had seen angel clothing, we read: "I asked the angels where they got their garments, and they said from the Lord, and that they received them as gifts" (*HH* 181). You know that it can be very nice to have new clothes. And this is more joyful in heaven when it is known that clothing is given according to wisdom. Once an angel woman made a wreath of roses and sprinkled water from a fountain on it, and put it on the head of a little boy and said, "Receive the delights of intelligence. You know that a cap means intelligence, and a wreath from this rose-bed means delights" (*Conjugal Love* 293:7).

## Family Talk

When Swedenborg asked the angels where they got their clothes and the angels said “From the Lord.” They also said that “Sometimes they are clothed without knowing how” (HH 181). Once when angels were teaching some young men and women who listened carefully, wreaths of flowers appeared on the heads of some of the listeners. They asked why this was, and the angels answered that these listeners had understood most deeply (CL 183e).

Something wonderful happened when some men who had recently come into the other world and were invited to a wedding in heaven. An angel prince sent them garments to wear, and when they put them on for the wedding, they shone with a flaming light. They asked an angel why this happened, and the angel answered: “Because you are going to a wedding. At such times our garments become bright and become wedding garments” (CL 19e).

It is important to know that the garments that come to angels from the Lord are real garments that they can see and feel with their hands. Each angel has many garments “and they take them off and put them on and care for those that are not being used” (HH 181). Little girls in heaven have a special little room for their clothing and other things. “There is also given them a cupboard, with cases, or drawers; so that they may put away things which they value. In these they take much delight, and store such things up in them” (*Spiritual Experiences* 5660).

What if a young child in heaven saw spots appear on his or her clothes? It would make them stop and think, and they would try to remember what they have been doing wrong. “But when they have *good* thoughts their clothes are shining, bright white and glow beautifully” (SE 5061). “If they see that there is a new garment in their chamber, they then inwardly rejoice, because they know that they have done well” (SE 5664). (Sometimes a garment is taken away to remind them that they have not been doing their reading in the Word (SE 5666).

Now let us see a story that shows how much meaning there can be in clothing: Two angels from the highest heaven came in a chariot holding two doves, and Swedenborg was given to see them closely and to know that the beauty of their faces and also the beauty of their clothing was a sign of conjugal love from the Lord. The most wonderful thing was that the rubies on her clothing sparkled differently depending on whether she was facing her husband. “But what I marveled at, the colors varied according to her aspect towards her husband. According to this aspect, they also sparkled now more, now less, more when they faced each other directly, and less when their glance was somewhat aslant” (CL 42:4).

*Texts: Matt. 6:28-30; HH 181; CL 42*