

# E-READ

## The General Conference of the New Church **Articles and Letters**

### About Us

To find out more about The General Conference of the New Church, including the locations of our Churches, visit our web site at: [gcnc.org.uk](http://gcnc.org.uk)

### Contributions

If you would like to contribute a letter or article to future issues of e-Read, please send it via email to : [gemma.mclean@gcnc.org.uk](mailto:gemma.mclean@gcnc.org.uk)

Please note that publication is at the discretion of our Spiritual Leadership.

### Share E-Read

Feel free to print and share this publication.

### Sign up

Sign up for E-News and E-Read email notifications at: [gcnc.org.uk/signup](http://gcnc.org.uk/signup)

### Home Worship

To download the latest Home Worship material please visit: [gcnc.org.uk/resources/home-worship](http://gcnc.org.uk/resources/home-worship)

To subscribe via email, please sign up at: [gcnc.org.uk/hwsignup](http://gcnc.org.uk/hwsignup)

### Donations

E-News and E-Read are provided completely free of charge.

If you would like to donate to support this ongoing resource, please do so here:

<https://www.generalconference.org.uk/resources/donations>

### Humility

*By Revd David Gaffney*

*And Jesus said to His disciples, “ ... truly I say unto you, except you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt 18:3)*

The disciples were arguing as to which one of them would be the greatest in heaven, and the Lord's response was that unless they become as little children they wouldn't be able to enter heaven at all. The disciples would have been puzzled by this; and probably taken aback; much the same as when Nicodemus in the gospel of John answered Jesus: *"How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" (Jn 3:4).* But Jesus had said, unless you become *as* little children, you cannot enter heaven. I wonder if you or I consider ourselves *as* little children? Children are very trusting, lacking in worldliness, wanting to learn, looking for a good teacher, looking for security, needing someone to trust. The Writings tell us that:

*"Children in the Word represent those people who love the*

*truths of the Word and desire them.”<sup>1</sup>*

The Writings also tell us that some things in the Word are primarily for the excitement and delight of children; they are thrilling. These are stories such as: “The Creation story,” “Noah’s ark,” “Moses in the bull-rushes,” “David and Goliath,” and so on. These stories give children, whilst they are still young, a desire to learn more of the Word. The joy which flows into them when they hear such stories comes from the celestial angels who accompany them.

As we get older we may study more deeply in order to find answers to the bigger questions of life. But the Word of God is complex; it is from the Lord and *is* the Lord, as the Lord is fully in it; every ‘jot and tittle’ is there intentionally, set there by the Lord God Himself. It is an infinite document. Some of us might say to ourselves, “I don’t understand this part or that part, therefore the Word cannot be trusted.” But it would be much better to say, “I don’t yet understand it, I will pray to the Lord for enlightenment, and await His answer, because His Word is perfect.”

To become heavenly, we need to remain humble before the Lord and His Word; to nurture our humility and not be haughty. We need to be positive in the belief that the Lord will open up new vistas of thought leading to exciting places; as children do when they read their stories. Children are teachable; we adults also need to be teachable. People are teachable - as little children are - when they are in humility before the Lord’s Word.

We begin life in the innocence of ignorance, we need to end life in the innocence of wisdom. To do this we need a conversion of the soul and reliance on His Word. We need to promise the Lord that we accept Him; that He will be our God and our Teacher and we will be His students. There will for most of us, be temptations along the road; possibly severe temptations; but the rewards will be out of this world.

### **A Prayer**

Dear Lord Jesus, may we be constantly vigilant and guard against haughtiness, maintaining a sense of humility before you and your Holy Word. Help us to be diligent in reading your Word and asking for the guidance of your Holy Spirit to interpret it’s meanings, and to live the life required of us. Amen

Rev. D Gaffney. 1/11/22.

1. (*Swedenborg, Apocalypse Explained §187/7, re. Lam 2:19*).