

XXV. - Knowledge and Power.

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be. But we know that when he shall be revealed, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 1 JOH. 3:2.

In what our King already knows, is able to do and does as the Son of Man, i.e. according to his human nature, we can never form too high an idea of it, and on no account must our human existence on earth may serve as a criterion for this. In the exalted King is the end, and no longer the gradually developing. In him is the form that corresponds not to this earthly sphere, but to the sphere of heaven. In him shines not the ordinary, but the highest that our nature is potentially capable of. And in him everything shines with that special highness and excellence, with that singular majesty and excellence which comes from the "extremely exalted" Messiah. He is King also because he excels royally above all else, and in every statement of his royal regiment, therefore, this completely unique highness of his humanity must always come to the fore. Did Jesus Himself declare that He would soon come to judgment as the Son of Man (see Matt. 15:31), then it must be understood that also as reigning King He will carry out this reign first of all humanly; but then it must also be clearly understood how much higher knowledge and power arises in man when he has passed into the state of glory. Especially with regard to knowledge, 1 Cor. 13 gives instruction here. The Apostle says that we do not take our knowledge, acquired here, with us when we die in order to learn even more up there, but our knowledge and expertise acquire a completely different character in glory. Here we know in part, we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, all that is in part will be destroyed." Prophecies, languages, knowledge, he says in vs. 8, they will all be destroyed. Just as a grown man overturns the ideas he had as a child and now sees and understands things in a completely different way, so too there will be a difference between the knowledge and science we have acquired here on earth, some more, some less. Between our present knowledge and our knowledge in the state of glory there will not only be a difference in degree, but a real difference in essence. We must be content here with the knowledge of an appearance. We now see only the image of things in a reflection, and therefore unclear (in a dark reason). But in the state of glory, it will be so very different; then we shall see the essence of things "facially, we shall know as God knows us, that is, immediately, by direct perception. Immediately we are known, and just as immediately we ourselves will then know. We shall know as we are known. The only thing that goes with us in the state of glorification is our faith, our hope, our

love. Everything else was in part, and therefore falls away, and it is true that in the state of glory we will also have knowledge and learning, but of an entirely different kind and obtained in an entirely different way.

Instinct and what Scripture calls Wisdom (the Chokmah) already give us some idea of that completely different kind of knowledge and knowing. Even among animals we observe this kind of immediate knowledge. A spider that spins out her web for the first time, and does this immediately with perfect proportions, has never been to school for this, has not given up anything, has not used a pattern or a calculation, but accomplishes this work of art, which no human being imitates, of her own accord and by herself. And likewise, among uncivilized peoples of nature, this instinctive rule is still much greater than among us. And in connection with this, the Proverbial poet constantly refers to Wisdom, as something that is not learned from books, and not collected by scholars, but in social life among ordinary people reproduces itself as if by itself. It is precisely the scholars, the sorcerers and the learned who lack this wisdom so much, and therefore are often so wrong about practical life. In anecdotes this may be exaggerated, but it contains a grain of truth. And still today the wisdom, meant by Solomon, is found spiritually much more in our villages, than in our highly intellectual city life. In the vision of art, as it is called, i.e. in the immediate soul-searching of the artist, we are faced with a similar phenomenon. And when we read of Adam that, looking at the various animals, he gave each one its own name, then no one thinks of zoological study, which would have been done in paradise, but we all understand by this that Adam still possessed the instinctive capacity to directly understand each animal in its nature. Every animal knows its enemy. The young mouse, which has never seen a cat kill a mouse, flees into its den, scared at the first sight of a cat, and it is no different with the swallow versus the sparrow hawk. Even in the bold guessing, and in the ancient oracles, in the so-called mind-reading, and in the premonition of approaching storm among the savages we find a whole series of phenomena that are analogous to these. All point to an immediate knowledge of things at first sight and through direct! vision. But among us this is diminishing. We humans on earth can only get a first grip on things through instinctive knowledge. And if we want to penetrate further into the knowledge of things, then this instinctive knowledge wears off, and we see ourselves obliged to walk the difficult and often painful path of learned study through constant dissection, comparison and combination. What a swallow, ant or beaver does automatically, an architect must first learn by trial and error: building a house.

In the same way, we must never compare the knowledge and scholarship available to our King at God's right hand with our knowledge and scholarship and much less with our way of acquiring knowledge. In the state of glorification his human knowledge is, now entirely apart from his divine omnipotence, a once perfect, an immediate, a direct knowledge of persons, things and situations. And where similar immediate knowledge is already the part of all the saved, as 1 Cor. XIII: 8 expresses it, this knowledge has been raised to the highest level of perfection with our King, and has also been raised to the highest level again. How far this knowledge extends, and within what limits it is bounded by distances, we do not know; just as little as we know how far this knowledge extends among the angels and among the saved. For us, in our earthly beginnings, the limitation of distance is a very painful one. We are often unaware of what is happening right next door to our door, to our neighbors. Every wall that separates room from room closes off our perception. Only in clairvoyance, and now most recently in the radiance of radium, do we know of phenomena that enable us to see through walls and at distances; and so, it may be noted that for us this limitation by distance is far less of a problem than for previous generations. We have now reached the point that in the evening of each day we can take cognizance of events that took place all over the world on the previous day. And it can certainly be assumed that in the state of Glory this limitation of our knowledge due to distance will also disappear to a very large extent. Already we read of Jesus in his

We already read of Jesus in his earthly appearance that he said to Nathanael: "When you called Philip, and were under the fig tree, I saw you. Nor would there be any conceivable communion of saints among the blessed, who will one day form a multitude of millions and millions, if their intercourse were bound by this limitation. We must therefore imagine that for our King in the state of glory, these boundaries will also disappear to a significant degree. And if an angel already has knowledge of people and places here on earth, which is shown by the fact that they were sent to certain people and places and knew how to find them, - then the question must at least be asked whether our King, through the gift of his human nature, does not already have a much higher knowledge of our earthly situations than we usually imagine.

We will be careful not to delve any deeper into this than has been revealed to us. The knowledge and understanding, which human nature is capable of in the state of glory, remains a mystery to us here on earth. We are too ignorant to form a clear idea of it. All we can do is to pay attention to the phenomena of a similar nature

that we observe in nature, and relate to them what Scripture reveals to us in this regard, for example, in 1 Cor. XIII. But it should not be forgotten that another Apostle says in the same way that believers have the anointing of the Holy One, and therefore know all things (1 John 2:19). And on the basis of these data we may and can come to no other conclusion than that the knowledge and learning of the saved, and to a much greater extent the knowledge and learning of the Son of Man in his state of glorification, is different from our earthly knowledge, is obtained in a different way, and far exceeds all our knowledge. An earthly king, in his palace, sees nothing of his people, but must first be made aware of their condition by all kinds of reports from his officials, it is certain that our King, at God's right hand, has no need of all these intermediaries, but himself immediately and directly perceives the whole situation of his Kingdom. Nor does he need intermediaries to come into contact with the angelic world. That world, too, he knows and sees through with immediate vision. And the same naturally applies to the world of demons. Our King is not waiting for reports that will tell him what is going on in the satanic world and what is being prepared. He also penetrates that demonic world, sees it through and knows it through direct observation. In the state of glory, all secrecy disappears here as well.

Now the same thing that applies to the knowledge of the Son of Man in his state of royal majesty also applies to his power and might. In this respect, too, we see already at his earthly appearance that the power which resides in him exceeds the ordinary power and capability of man in the state of his humiliation. Power went out from him to heal, we read. And Jesus knew this when such power emanated from him, for when the bleeding woman was healed, unnoticed by the multitude, Jesus himself testified that power had emanated from him. The power we possess varies greatly among us. In the case of the animal trainer, we even see a power come to light that is completely alien to most of us. The personal strength of each individual also varies greatly. There are those who, with their single glance, can restrain and completely overpower another. There are those who know how to fascinate in the most literal sense of the word. In the heathen period of their history, whole peoples also showed a resilience and a strength to act, which later faded and finally died away. Just think of what our people also experienced in the period of its highest prosperity in the 16th and 17th and compare this with the despondency and the powerlessness of the same people in the 18th and the first half of the 19th century. It may even be pointed out, how the strength and power of the adult man, in the vagueness of his life, far exceeds the strength of the child and

the old man. It should even be noted how in the same man, in perilous moments, such strength sometimes comes out that we say he has surpassed himself. This is a slumbering force that suddenly arises in a given moment and surprises everyone, including himself. But this already shows that the strength and power that can emanate from our human nature can hardly be measured by a fixed yardstick; it is in the nature of things that the glorified power must also in this respect far exceed man in the state of humiliation, since in the state of glory almost everything falls away that binds and hinders us here on earth. Just as the child is inferior to the adult man, so also in that respect the adult man on earth will be inferior to the glorified man, when he will shine in the body of glory with a sanctified spirit.

But there is more. Just as we gather our knowledge through all kinds of intermediate links, so our earthly situation compels us to exert our strength and power over nature and over our fellow men through all kinds of intermediate links. A worldly King does not rule his country and people with his own hand, but through all kinds of intermediaries whom he appoints for this purpose, through his officials, his police, his warriors and his bureaucrats. And when it comes to our strength and power over nature, it is no different. Miraculously and surprisingly our strength and power over nature have risen, and there is almost nothing that mankind recoils from in his struggle with nature. His dominion over nature has become almost gigantic in comparison with before, and since there is nothing to indicate that this process has come to a halt yet, and it is rather to be expected that our dominion over nature will still increase, and in the next few centuries reach a hitherto unknown height, it is clear that the dominion over nature, which was given to man in the seed of his creation, knows almost no limits, even though it is certain that there are such limits. But however far man's power over nature has progressed, the exercise of that power is and remains bound up with intermediate links. It is the whole army of coarser and finer instruments that we employ, by which we ensure our control over nature. It is through these instruments of a coarser and finer nature that we make the power itself of nature subservient to us, in order, through it, to subject nature to our will. Without an instrument, without an intermediate link, naked with his physical strength facing nature, man is and remains powerless. When shipwrecked on a flat sea, without a rudder, without an oar and without a compass, the most skillful sea captain is helpless and at the mercy of the sea. Without a locomotive for the train, or without rails on the road, the cleverest conductor cannot get his train moving. All power, therefore, depends on these tools, these intermediate links; and without these auxiliary means every attempt to

exert power is thwarted. Even the farmer can do nothing in his field without plough and spade, and without teeth and rein the best rider falls off his horse. There may still be direct exertion of force with the animal trainer and with those who mesmerize or hypnotize others, but for the rest we see ourselves, in all exertion of force without intermediate links, without tools and without all kinds of other resources, limited to that little we can push with our foot and lift or twist with our hand; the most unhelpful method of exertion of force.

If now, in the state of glory, the intermediate links in this field also disappear, so that the force that emanates from the glorified man is directly and immediately directed to the object chosen by him, then it becomes obvious how here, too, his exertion of force is increased. What the heroes of antiquity in their miraculous heroism, the animal trainer, and the biologist have only a faint after-effects now, then becomes the rule and is raised to its highest perfection. The image of God in mankind will then first shine forth fully in him. Always in his final and therefore limited circle, he will nevertheless control nature for his share, only by his willpower, and nature in the kingdom of glory will no longer struggle against man, but be pliable under his scepter. Now transpose this to our King and you will understand how this King actually rules and reigns and carries out his will. Then you no longer have the image of a glorified King, who sits at God's right hand, lost in thought and in earthly confinement, waiting for things to come, but of a Potentate of Potentates, of a King of kings, who, equipped with immediate knowledge and understanding of his kingdom, not only issues his command to be carried out by his subjects, but also acts himself, acts with power, and brings about what pleases him. He is then not merely a Savior from the curse, who makes his offering to the Father on behalf of his redeemed and who, furthermore, watches how the struggle between the good and the evil spirits develops in the course of time, but a King who has power and exercises power, who sees it all, examines it all, directs, guides and controls it all, and at any given moment, wherever it is necessary, asserts his power and carries it through as irresistibly as it is immediately. That all this only comes to its completion through the background of His divine nature remains, of course, indisputable. We will also deal with this intentionally. The only thing that had to be avoided was the idea that the entire Royal Regiment of the Christ should be explained almost exclusively in terms of His divine qualities, and that the human nature of the Son of Man remained bound to our earthly limitations even in the state of glory, so that we had to imagine that our King on the throne was ours as far as His human existence was concerned,

according to the standard of our earthly life. If this were so, nothing would have been granted to Christ, nothing would have been given to him, and there would be no question of elevation, because as the Son of God he possesses all his divine qualities of his own accord. The Mediator, the Son of Man, would only be an incidental element in him, from which no power emanated, and it would be to the Son of God, to the second person in the Trinity, separated from his humanity, that we should turn with our prayers. In the glorified King both natures would stand apart from each other, and the human existence of our King would, as far as his Royal Regiment is concerned, have lost almost all meaning for us.

We can only escape this misconception if we clearly see the very great difference between our human existence here on earth and our human existence as it will be given to us one day in the Kingdom of Glory, when we will be resurrected in the glorified body. How this will be is still a mystery. Beloved, writes the Apostle, it has not yet been revealed what we will be. But this we know; when he shall be revealed, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Our King now sits already in the glorified body. His is already the full glory, which awaits us only at the consummation of the ages. And not only this, but in so far as there will be any difference of talent among the saved in the state of glory, our King is clothed with the supreme glory, and his knowledge and ability are the perfect revelation of the Image and Likeness of God, after which mankind was created. Thus, it is that in Christ we have not only the Prophet who gave us his Word, and not only the High Priest who lives to pray for us, but also our King, who lives for us in glory and majesty, who not only through angels and his servants and subjects on earth, but also himself, directly and instantaneously, demonstrates his power and strength and exercises his royal regiment, without any creature power being able to stop him in his dominion.