

## **SOME ROADS IN THE WORLD OF SPIRITS**

By Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss

Now what happens to the people who are going to hell? Do they see the roads to heaven? Usually they don't. An evil person doesn't see the roads to heaven because he does not want to.

Sometimes evil people want to go to heaven. They think they are wonderful, and when they get into the spiritual world they demand to go to heaven because, they say, they have been so good on earth. For example, a person who cheated others out of lots of money on earth may also have given just a little of that money to poor people. When he gets into the other world this person doesn't remember that he has cheated people, because he doesn't want to remember. The person does remember that he gave some money to poor people. He thinks he's good and says he deserves to go to heaven.

If he wants to, then sometimes the person is allowed to see a road leading to heaven. But he is warned that people who are not good suffer in heaven. They find it hard to breathe the wonderful air, because they are not kind and good like the angels are. But this person might say to himself, "That's all right for bad people, but I am good. I will feel at home in heaven. They will probably make me a prince up there." He follows the road to heaven and finds a village or a town there. The angels come out to welcome the person, because they always try to make people happy. But when they look at him, they will see that he is a cheat, who loves to lie and get things from other people by lying. They will be sad and will tell him that he does not belong with them.

At the same time, this person will find it hard to breathe the air of heaven, for this air is full of the Lord's love and truth, and this person does not love the Lord. He will seem to be strangled and feel terrible and will throw himself downward toward the world of spirits again. You see, this person did not belong in heaven, for he loved to cheat and loved money more than he loved people. The angels aren't that way at all, are they?

FROM THE WORD:

"O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23).

"Direct my steps by Your word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me" (Psalm 119:133).

“The way that leads to heaven and the way that leads to hell were once represented to me. There was a broad way tending toward the left or the north, and many spirits were seen going in it; but at a distance a large stone was seen where the broad way came to an end. From that stone two ways branched off, one to the left and one in the opposite direction to the right. The way that went to the left was narrow or straitened, leading through the west to the south, and thus into the light of heaven; the way that went to the right was broad and spacious, leading obliquely downward toward hell. All at first seemed to be going the same way until they came to the large stone at the head of the two ways. When they reached that point they divided; the good turned to the left and entered the straitened way that leads to heaven; while the evil, not seeing the stone at the fork of the ways fell upon it and were hurt; and when they rose they ran on in the broad way to the right which went toward hell” (*Heaven and Hell* 534).

From *Life Is Forever: An Introduction to the Spiritual World for Children* by Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss, published by the General Church of the New Jerusalem, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, 1984.