

The cover features a central diamond-shaped logo with a grey background and a red border. Below the logo, the background is composed of several overlapping, concentric, semi-circular bands in various shades of grey and beige, creating a layered, architectural effect.

# THE MESSENGER

*Official Publication of the General Convention  
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FEBRUARY  
1987

Understanding  
Swedenborg's  
Initial Vision

## **BETWEEN THE LINES**

My favorite religious magazine, *The Laughing Man*, has this subtitle: "The alternative to scientific materialism and religious provincialism." This sums up nicely what I hope the Swedenborgian Church can offer the world. It should be obvious that we attempt to present a picture of reality transcending the strictly materialistic point of view. The prospect of transcending "religious provincialism" is more challenging.

What is meant by "religious provincialism"? The germane definition in the *American Heritage Dictionary* is, "Limited in perspective; narrow and self-centered." An authentic spiritual movement succumbs to provincialism when it draws a boundary around "the truth," circles the wagons and defends itself from progress and the future. Not wanting to lose its identity, perhaps, and afraid of pollution, dilution and convolution of the truth it seeks to protect and proclaim, the result is all too often a paranoia of new information, new insights, new revelations. Though they may hang on for a long time, such soldiers fade away.

The spirit of inquiry is the freshest breath of air that can ever grace a religious movement. Swedenborg fundamentally honored the spirit of open inquiry in his work and did his best to serve the belief that "now it is permitted to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith." He gave us a treasure trove of insights and revelations with which to carry forth into our own inquiries. To my knowledge, he never said, "Do not add one jot or tittle to what I have written, or change any of these ideas, for my communication of spiritual life is final and complete for all time." How repulsed he would be with such a sentiment!

In his bestselling book, *Megatrends*, futurist John Naisbett foresees two strands of "religion" likely to do well (in terms of numbers) in the remainder of the century. The fundamentalist mentality makes up the first group, whether it crops up in the Roman Catholic Church, authoritarian cults, Bible-belt churches or established mainline churches. An unprecedented period of accelerating change on virtually all fronts, bringing on ever-higher levels of stress, will render "this-is-the-absolute-truth" religions a safe haven for many people. (These groups, of course, will differ intensely with one another.) Together, they represent religious provincialism.

The other strand, the one with the most potential for furthering the spiritual maturity and vision of the culture, will be comprised of movements assimilating and synthesizing new realms of knowledge and experience. They will be reluctant to encase themselves in a creed and eager to apply all that accords with their highest principles. They will not treat new developments in human (and Godly) knowledge with suspicion, but will be quick to spot potential allies.

The Swedenborgian Church is historically rooted in a policy of open inquiry. To the degree that we actually engage in spiritual inquiry with intensity, we will to the very same degree be ready to serve the needs of those searching for higher ground — a ground rising above and beyond that barbed-wire fence posted: religious provincialism.

*James B. Lawrence*



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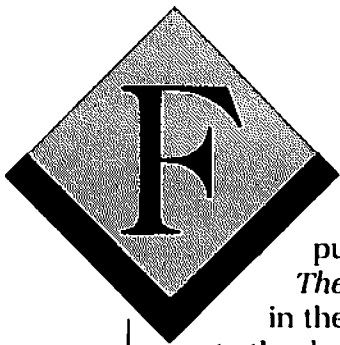
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# Understanding Swedenborg's Initial Vision

Friedemann Horn



For many years now the Swedenborg Publishing House has been adding a publishers' note to the Swedenborg digest, *The Life and Teachings of Swedenborg*, which in the short space allotted, serves as a corrective to the depiction of Swedenborg's calling-vision which Carl Robsahm, a long-time friend and director of the Stockholm bank, recorded approximately ten years after Swedenborg's death.

Robsahm's portrayal is invariably quoted in pertinent descriptions of Swedenborg's life as the only reliable source on his calling into the office of seer. Because Swedenborg himself only described the *content* of his vision, and left us practically nothing regarding the accompanying circumstances, Robsahm's account appears to fill a gap. It appears to fill the gap so well, in fact, that another shorter, much older account, also written by a friend of Swedenborg's, threatens to fall into oblivion: Dr. Gabriel A. Beyer's letter to C.F. Nordenskjöld on March 25, 1776; that is, only four years after Swedenborg's death.

Naturally without the intention of the author, Robsahm's account has abetted criticism of Swedenborg's credibility — a criticism which appears to be constantly lying in ambush, as will be shown in a particularly striking example.

Three factors suggest that Robsahm's depiction of Swedenborg's calling is to be considered plausible: first, Robsahm was on friendly terms with Swedenborg and no doubt wished him well; second, Swedenborg expresses himself in the first person; and third, Robsahm's depiction is not only the most detailed, it is at the same time the most dramatic. Beyer was also a friend

of Swedenborg's — and without a doubt the more important of the two — but his account is limited to three quite undramatic sentences in the third person. Apart from the question of the truth-content of the two accounts, one must concede that Beyer's depiction is the less effective.

Here then is Robsahm's portrayal of the event:

"I was in London dining in the late afternoon in my usual dining quarters in the guest house where I had also reserved myself a room. My thoughts were occupied with the subject matter we had just discussed. I was hungry and ate heartily. Towards the end of my meal I realized that a kind of mist was dispersing over my eyes. The haze got continually thicker and I saw the floor of my room covered with the vilest of

"Such an unexpected fright gave rise to my swift return home. I didn't reveal anything to my householder, but reflected very precisely upon what had befallen me. I couldn't regard it as an accident nor attribute it to a psychic cause. I went home and the following night the same man came once again. He said that he was the Lord God, the Creator of the world and the Savior. He said he had chosen me to expound the spiritual import of the holy scriptures, and he himself would dictate what I should write regarding this theme. In order to convince me thoroughly, the spiritual world was opened to me that very night: heaven, and hell, where I recognized many acquaintances from all walks of life. From that day on I renounced all worldly erudition and



creeping creatures, snakes, toads, and the like. I was astonished at what I saw, being in my senses and in full consciousness. The darkness gained ever new ground, swiftly disappeared, and I saw a man sitting in a corner of my room, who, because I was totally alone, terrified me with his words. He said namely: "Don't eat so much!" Everything darkened again and then suddenly became clear, whereupon I saw myself alone in my room."

As we shall see, Swedenborg himself described this visionary experience in two passages, which shows that Robsahm's memory was essentially, though not in every point, correct. According to Robsahm the purification experience directly followed the calling-vision:

worked only on matters of the spirit — in conformity with what the Lord commanded me to write — so that I was in a wakeful state enabled to see what occurred in the other world, and completely awake, to converse with angels and spirits. (R. L. Tafel, *Documents concerning Em. Swedenborg*, Doc. 5, No. 125.)

As one can see, Robsahm's account consists of two parts: the purification experience during the afternoon meal, and the vision of being called the following night. The two experiences are connected by the "man," who appears to Swedenborg in the restaurant and warns him from eating too much, in order to reveal himself the following night as "the Lord God, the Creator of the world and the Savior."

**Interestingly enough, Swedenborg doesn't mention a "man" in either of the two accounts, although in the more detailed of the two he speaks of "an angel," who cautioned him against "indulging his appetite too much."**

Beyer's report to Nordenskjöld recognizes neither the existence of this "man," nor the purification experience in the London restaurant. It reads straightforward:

"It was by Dr. Rosen that I saw the old man for the first time, and heard from the Assessor's own mouth the story of the revelation of the Lord before the Assessor, who saw him sitting near the bed in a majestic crimson brilliance. I recall asking him how long it took, upon which he answered: "Approximately a quarter of an hour." I then asked him further whether the strong brilliance had hurt his eyes?, which he negated."  
\* (Tafel Documents, Doc. 254, No. 3)

Merely a contrast of the two accounts makes it apparent why Robsahm's account, the livelier and more immediate of the two, has been given preference. Unfortunately it has two disadvantages: it casts a peculiar light — to put it mildly — upon Swedenborg and his calling; it also, in a quite critical aspect — namely, the connection of the two experiences — most certainly mistaken.

Ernst Benz uncritically utilized Robsahm's account in his monograph, "Swedenborg, Natural Scientist and Seer," which appeared in 1948. The Swedenborgian minister in Zurich, Adolph L. Goerwitz, consequently brought Benz's attention to the fact that Swedenborg himself twice recorded the purification experience in the London restaurant, but in neither of the two descriptions is there a word regarding a sequel experience on the following night. This is, however, precisely what one would expect if it was a matter of *continued* experience. What followed the event in the London restaurant would necessarily have been the climax of the whole story. Interestingly enough, Swedenborg doesn't mention a "man" in either of the two accounts, although in the more detailed of the two he speaks of an "angel," who cautioned him against "indulging his appetite too much." In Swedenborg's terminology an angel is unequivocally a being of the other world to which Swedenborg had been given access by the Lord, but under no circumstances "the Lord God" himself, the "Creator of the world and the Savior."

I was at that time very often with Benz, him being my "Doktorvater," and I remember quite well a series of conversations we had regarding Goerwitz's objections, which I raised, to Robsahm's description of the event. Benz didn't understand the doubts for some time. Precisely the connection between the purification experience and the actual vision of being called appeared to him a sign of authenticity. Similar connections were well known among countless authentic, Christian calling-visions, he asserted. Our objection was indeed directed only against the *all too* direct connection between the two events, and above all against the assertion that "the same man" had later revealed himself as the Lord God.

It required some effort to gain Benz's appreciation for our apprehensions, and I still don't believe that he understood fully that Swedenborg's inveterate opponents would plunge with joy upon the identification of the "man" in the dining locality with the creator of the world, in order to place Swedenborg's calling-vision into the realm of the absurd.

For all that, Benz was willing in the concluding remarks of the German translation of Martin Lamm's *Emanuel Swedenborg — Selected Religious Writings*, which he edited at the time, to recognize the objections to Robsahm's account and, if only in passing, conceded that his "prosaic style was not without a slight cast of the ridiculous."

Swedenborg's two handwritten accounts of the event are to be found in his *Spiritual Diary* (No. 397) and in his first Bible commentary, *Adversaria* (Vol. II, No. 1956 f.). Both of the entries are dated "April 1745." The first, here slightly shortened, essentially more detailed account, reads:

"At mid-day meal an angel spoke with me: while eating I shouldn't indulge my appetite too much. As he was with me, there appeared quite clearly a mist, which came forth out of the pores of the body . . . the mist sank to the ground where a carpet emerged, upon which the mist concentrated and transformed itself into small varied worms, which . . . with a sudden thud or explosion, burned. I saw the burning glow of light and heard the explosion, so that I believed my body to be made of worms, which could form itself into an excessive desire to eat; being so far away and so burnt I believed I had been purified by them . . . 1745, April."



A comparison with Robsahm's account yields a series of disparities, which except for the following three, are not of interest:

- ▶ In place of a "man," an "angel" warns Swedenborg from eating too much;
- ▶ The relationship between what Swedenborg saw and the experience of being purified, is more clearly expressed;
- ▶ There is not one word spoken regarding the ostensible continuation of the calling-vision the following evening.

Benz writes the following on the matter:

"In numberless passages Swedenborg makes reference to the vision in London, and dates the beginning of his new life after the vision occurred — but nowhere in his letters or writings does he give an exact description of the event. We can follow the enduring impact of this deeply moving and revolutionary experience into Swedenborg's last years — but on the event itself he is silent . . . According to Robsahm the event consists in the fact that in a guesthouse in London a mysterious man appears to Swedenborg, warns him not to eat too much, then appears again the following evening, manifested as the Lord God."

Benz subsequently refers to the moving account of Swedenborg's vision of Christ . . . recorded in his dream journal, as taking place the night of Easter of the preceding year. (*Dream Journal*, entry from April 5/6 - 6/7, 1744) Benz rightly poses the question why he didn't date the beginning of his new life after the vision of Christ in 1744, which compared, with Robsahm's account of the events in 1745, comes forth as being slightly absurd. Benz then comes to the conclusion that they "entirely contradict the other visions of Swedenborg's" (Benz, *Swedenborg*, 2nd edition, p.208) and are to be rejected on the basis of being incorrect.

Approximately five years later Benz read a paper on "Swedenborg's Visions" before the 'Psychology Club' in Zurich, which had been founded by friends of Jung. The master himself appeared. It is said to have been the last Club speech that he attended. Something worth noting took place:

Benz naturally presented the subject of Swedenborg's calling-vision, and I didn't await anything positive as he again presented Robsahm's account without indicating its problematic nature, as he did in the Swedenborg monograph of 1948. During the subsequent tea pause I overheard pieces of a conversation between Benz and Jung: Swedenborg had too many visions, and that made him distrustful, Jung reckoned. As the session resumed Jung immediately began to speak with regard to Robsahm's account, whose authenticity he didn't doubt after listening to the speech. The whole story reminded him of a conversation with a patient, who said to him one day: "Professor, last night I saw the good Lord!" In answer to the question on how he looked, the patient said: "An exalted face with a long white beard — and checkered pants!" Among simple people at that time, checkered pants were considered the height of elegance. The very same "man" who appeared in the dining quarters and called out to Swedenborg "not to eat too much," then appeared to him the following night and revealed himself as the Lord God is a similarly grotesque "caricature," which, just as in the example of the patient, doesn't permit him to believe in the authenticity of the event. After saying his fill Jung disappeared, without admitting to a discussion.

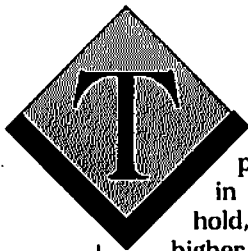
The conversation between Benz and myself the following morning yielded the recognition that he simply didn't recall his corrective remarks from 1949! But now he himself had been witness to the negative impact that can result from an ostensibly close connection between the calling-vision and the purification experience. In the second edition of his Swedenborg monograph (1969) Benz set the matter straight. It would be good if English-language Swedenborg researchers bear that in mind. ♦

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**Robsahm's account of Swedenborg's vision has abetted criticism of Swedenborg's credibility — a criticism which appears to be constantly lying in ambush.**

# Educational and Spiritual Growth

Eugene Taylor



The great American philosopher-psychologist William James, reared in a vigorous Swedenborgian household, collected his thoughts on the higher uses of education in his, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals*. He worked on this volume for some six years, finally publishing it in 1899. Thus, we can be sure that here we have some of his more mature statements on the education of the young.

If I were to choose the one idea that best expresses the theme of this book, it would be found in James's caution to teachers to be patient with the type of student that cuts a poor figure in examinations, for this type of mind may, in the long examination which life sets for us, come out in the end in better shape than the glib and ready reproducer, because its passions are deeper, its purposes more worthy, and its total mental output consequently more important.

You remember, of course, the well-known story of James's student, Gertrude Stein, for it is told on all the walking tours of Harvard Yard. Miss Stein turned in a blank examination with the note scrawled upon it, "Dear Professor James, I'm sorry but I went to the opera last night, and when I returned, I just didn't feel like studying." James returned the blank test a few days later, and on it was written, "Dear Miss Stein, Oh yes, I often feel that way myself. A plus."

There is a sequel to this story not often told, however. When one of the other Radcliffe students saw Miss Stein's grade on the blank test, she was infuriated and accosted James after the class, demanding to know why he had given Gertrude Stein that grade, when she, herself, had sacrificed everything and stayed up studying for three days. James's only comment was, "Well, you got an A plus, too, didn't you?"

James, you will say, gets poor marks for undermining the Hegelian principle upon which our educational system is based; namely, that factual knowledge is all, and that with regard to who knows it, some must pass

while others must fail. On the other hand, James might receive a higher grade for his understanding of how to nourish and protect the growth of the soul, each one requiring a different set of nutrients for its survival. He did once say that there is very little difference between people, but what difference there is, is very important. Herein lies the heart of the matter. Do we educate for test performance because we do not know how to educate for life? Why is it that we place so much emphasis on the Life of the Mind, so that even at our best institutions, we are taught that everything about ourselves is a mere appendage of the head? Is the doctrine of the Supremacy of the Intellect the *summum bonum* of human evolution? Or is it a first step to our future progress, the shape of which we cannot now conceive? What is, we must ask, the essential relation between education and spiritual growth? The only answer our schools seem to be able to give, is that they are *not* presently related, except perhaps accidentally.

On the whole, we emphasize sensory development and socialization from an early age. As our children grow up, we look for the emergence of conceptual and moral structures based probably more on our own definitions of adult logic. We stress reason and analysis in the middle schools, where art class is given equal status to gym or recess. Once in college, we seem to encourage the pursuit of economics, or science and mathematics, much to the neglect of philosophy, writing, and the imaginative arts. In exchange for training more and more students to contribute to an already bloated body of scientific knowledge, have we not sacrificed the development of an intuitive understanding of character information? Even the great Concord sage, Emerson, was sensitive to this distinction. He said that there are basically two kinds of auditors at every lecture, those who take detailed notes, and are able afterwards to say exactly what the speaker's ideas were, versus those who listen with rapt attention, and afterwards, while completely incapable of recounting a single word the



speaker said, are now able to discourse intelligently upon the subject.

Here we have two contrasting definitions of education. Is learning merely a reinforced tendency to respond in a consistently repeatable way to a presented stimulus? Or does real learning involve the love of understanding — the love of doing a thing as an end in and of itself, independent of external determinants? In the one case, we have the large scale accumulation, analysis,

leads to a more accurate knowledge of human nature and to a clearer picture of personal strengths and weaknesses? Where do we learn the proper use of time, in order to turn it into right thought and right action? Where do we get systematic training of our powers of abstraction, reflection, intuition and prophetic vision, imagination, conscience and philanthropy? Where do we go to learn how to cultivate our will power, so as to gain some modicum of control over our passions



*William James (R) and his brother Henry, the novelist, in England, ca. 1901.*

and storage of facts, for use at some later time. In the other, personality is transformed, *at the very moment the knowledge is received.* We take in and retain what we need at that moment to nourish the life of the soul, while in the other case, we merely over-feed the intellect. Is it true that effective living in the real world must give equal credibility to both forms of knowledge? Or is it required that we must make over completely our present cognitive framework in order to comprehend how to educate the spirit?

Where do we go within our educational system, for instance, to learn training in self-denial, the aim of which is self-improvement and enhanced appreciation of the social virtues? Where do we go to learn the cultivation of good physical health, a condition certainly not fostered by the pressures of advanced graduate study? How do we develop self-knowledge, by which I do not mean egotistical self-inspection, but the kind of systematic knowledge of one's self that

and our appetites? Where, in short, do we learn about the unfolding of the whole person? None of these aims directly makes up the agenda of our present educational regime. They are not thought of as compatible with it.

Swedenborg has written that the relation between the natural and the spiritual world is one of discrete, rather than continuous degrees. That is, the mind totally committed to the natural world cannot admit the validity of the spiritual, because they are, in fact, entirely different worlds. The journey from here to there, from the secular to the sacred, is not one of continual and subtle gradations, but rather lies in a radical transformation of the way we perceive the present moment. It is not a physical place, but a state of consciousness, a total change in the very form of our perception. When this change comes over us, we behold the sacred in all things great and small; a process Swedenborg called "the opening of the internal spiritual sense."

We may then be subject to an influx of energy that transforms the way in which we live outwardly. Intuitions, insights, inner imagery, all fuse with our analytic capacities to create a wholly new definition of "The Rational" — namely, the development of mind *in service* of the spirit. Here we may speak of the full spectrum of our capacity to love and understand, harnessed as a way to guide our thoughts, our words, our deeds. The good of this interaction between the spiritual life of the soul and the material destiny of the body



**Eugene Taylor**

Courtesy of Ira Wyman.  
New York Times

is realized in a life of use, Swedenborg said. The question, "In what way do my actions bring me wealth, power, and status?" becomes "In what way can my life be of spiritual value to others?" Only by such internal vision does life appear to us as wholly complete and unitary. Only then do we see the spiritual consequences of our every act. Thus, a life of use is the achievement of the inner visions we have witnessed.

But we are not brought up in a world to believe that any single act of a lone individual can possibly make a difference. Yet, look at Ghandi, who stopped the Hindu-Muslim riots from an English prison cell, although it took the commitment of a fast unto death to do it. Look at Ninoy Aquino, who for a brief time was a member of the Harvard community. Where does one get this spiritual courage to lay down his life, so that others may live in freedom? The individual is indeed capable of great power, depending upon the largeness of the inner dimension from which he or she speaks. It takes only such lives as these to remind us and to open such doors within ourselves. And is this not also the tale of Jesus?

We cannot educate the mind without understanding its relation to the growth of the soul. Intellectual wisdom cannot be achieved without fostering the love and compassion that knows how to put knowledge to useful, aesthetic, and moral purposes. We have scarcely as yet read more than the title page and preface of the great volume of life, and what we do know is nothing in comparison with that which may yet unfold and be applied. Verily, "our knowledge a

drop, our ignorance a sea." In this quest, self-knowledge, scientifically understood, must become an important tool in the educational process.

I was heartened to hear His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales, say he believes that the key to understanding how to bring religious values to bear on character development may lay in the realm of my own discipline, psychology. Although, I must confess that within the American university system I cannot conceive of anything in psychology, oriented as it is toward laboratory investigation and statistical methods, that would help us in the transformation we seek, except perhaps in those borderland areas irreverent toward scientism but focused nonetheless on a science of persons, by which I mean personology, depth-psychology, the psychology of religion or perhaps the inner sciences of India, China, Tibet, or Japan. In this, the Prince of Wales was perhaps thinking more in the even-tempered British vein of psychology as a moral and human science, the abandonment of which Americans somehow think constitutes a law of progress.

In any case, it is clear that the laws which govern the growth and operations of the mind are as definite, and as general in their application, as those which apply to the material universe. The reason we may not see their ready connection is that they are written as if in mirror script, and it takes a particularly inventive and creative part of the mind to read the symbols and make the transliteration — not the consistent, predictable, and rational part of the mind, and not always the mind that is the product of systematic instruction, for in some instances the want of all training of a systematic kind may be the best condition under Providence for producing an entirely original character. Such men and women of genius, who remind us of our great spiritual heritage, it should be the business of education to foster. They are, in fact, William James said in 1903, her proudest product, and he hoped, you will remember, that the output of them would never cease. ◇

*Eugene Taylor delivered this address as part of the Sunday worship service of the Cambridge, Massachusetts Swedenborgian Church on Sept. 7, 1986, in honor of the 350th anniversary of Harvard College. Mr. Taylor is Associate in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and is a foremost scholar on the life and work of William James. Mr. Taylor has lectured frequently upon the Swedenborgian elements in James's thought.*

# Opening Worship By Opening the Bible

Robert H. Kirven

A unique characteristic of Swedenborgian worship services is the way in which they begin. After the musical prelude and (usually) an opening hymn, the first thing the minister or worship leader does is open the Bible on the altar.

That act symbolizes a complex of meanings which are highly significant in the Swedenborgian perspective. For one thing, the fact that the Bible, the Lord's Holy Word, is on the altar in the sanctuary points to the central place given to the Word in the whole business of worship. Conversely, when worship is conducted around a campfire, in a living room, or any place other than a church, opening the Word establishes that where the Bible lies is the altar and the center of attention during the worship service.

While establishing a focus of attention for the worshippers, the opening of the Bible also signifies that that focus is the Lord, as he is present in the act of worship. One of Swedenborg's most frequently reiterated emphases is that the Lord is present to us in his Holy Word, that the aspect of Him which we know as "Divine Truth is present in the literal sense of the Word (the Word as it is printed in our Bible) in its fulness, its holiness, and its power." (*True Christian Religion* 214)

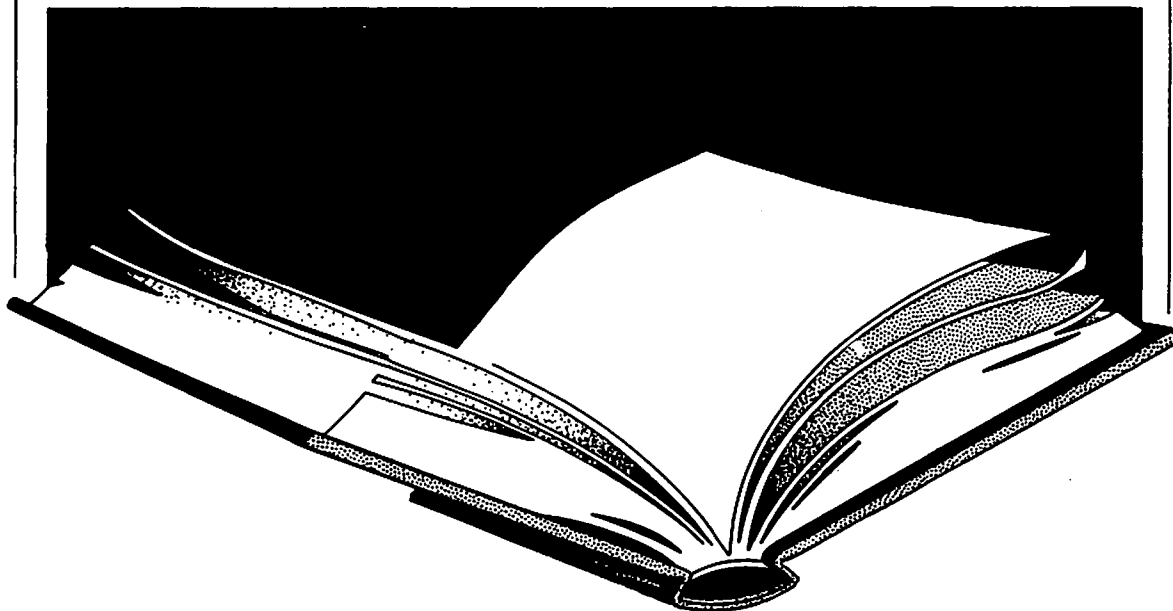
A third symbol inherent in the act of opening the Bible for worship needs to be thought of separately, even though it is closely tied to the first two meanings.

Opening the Bible signifies turning to the Lord, recognizing his presence. The Bible on the altar, open or closed, can be invested with the symbolism of the Lord's presence; but the act of opening it carries the special meaning of his coming to us as we turn to him. Opening the physical book corresponds to our opening our minds and hearts to him, and even though he is always with us, that act makes him present to us in a special way.

Although the opening of the Word occurs most often immediately after the opening hymn, it is equally appropriate preceding the hymn. In the latter case, the singing is clearly the first act of the worship service. The former, more customary, sequence has the psychological advantage of uniting the congregation in a corporate act, which helps to focus their attention on the symbolism of the opening of the Word. It makes the opening hymn almost equally a part of the prelude and a part of the opening of the worship service.

Another benefit of opening the Bible as part of the beginning of worship is the opportunity it provides to close the Bible at the end of worship. The closing of the book symbolizes the way in which we must to some extent turn our attention away from our own worship of the Lord in order to live our lives "as if of ourselves" (in Swedenborg's oft-repeated phrase) in the freedom and rationality we were created to enjoy. It marks the end of a special moment in our lives.

A special case arises when a worship service opens a meeting of a congregation, association, or a session of Convention. Then the Bible is kept open after the liturgy as a symbol that the following activity is in a sense a kind of worship, with a special sense of the Lord's presence and oversight. When the



meeting does not close with another worship service, the minister or worship leader who conducted the opening should see to it that the Bible is closed after the people have left the sanctuary.

### **A Distinctive Swedenborgian Practice**

So far as I know from a relatively varied experience, the practice of opening worship by opening the altar Bible is uniquely Swedenborgian, although the same purpose is served by other symbols in other communions.

In Roman Catholic churches, where the Eucharist of Holy Communion is celebrated in every service of worship, the eucharistic elements are the focal center of worship. The chalice and perhaps a cruet containing the wine, and the paten with the bread or Host, are placed at the center of the altar — or a table in the sanctuary which enables them to be in front of the priest as well as the congregation. In this context, uncovering the Host has the same significance as our opening of the Word.

Most protestant churches follow Martin Luther's emphasis on the Bible as one of the three equally central essentials of the church — we are saved by Faith, through Grace, from the Scriptures — by placing a Bible on the altar; but generally the Bible is kept open. This practice symbolizes the Lord's continual presence with us in His Word, but weakens the significance of the worship experience as a special attitude and relationship to God.

Orthodox liturgy emphasizes the same meaning as the Swedenborgian, but with a symbolism that is, if anything, more vivid. The congregation gathers before an empty altar, and after a prelude, the Word is brought in by priests — or a priest, perhaps assisted by acolytes — bearing the closed Word to the altar while chanting from it.

### **New Situation**

In recent times, the distinctive and meaningful Swedenborgian practice of opening the Bible at the beginning and closing it at the end of worship sometimes has been neglected, perhaps unnecessarily, because of situations which have arisen since the tradition was first established.

Some churches have installed glass doors, or made other arrangements to keep the altar visible from outside the church. In this situation, they keep the altar illuminated, and the Bible open. Some of these churches have kept the tradition even with the new circumstance by closing the Bible about a quarter-

hour before the beginning of the service, so that it can be opened again by the minister at the start of the liturgy.

Increased use of camps and retreat centers, and worship by small groups in homes involve a variety of settings for worship other than conventional churches. In the absence of a formal altar on which to rest the Bible, some worship leaders have ignored the traditional opening, not using a Bible at all except to read from it. This loses not only a distinctive and meaningful tradition, but also a chance to enrich the experience of worship in improvised settings. The Word, opened at the commencement of worship, makes an altar for itself, whether it is placed on a coffee table, a tree stump, or even held in the hand, creating a worship center (and by implication, a dedicated worship space around the center) in any situation whatever.

Also, some new forms of worship depart from the traditional "First Order" in the Book of Worship so far as to dispense with the opening of the Word at the beginning; but the appropriateness of so radical a departure may be questioned. Almost any arrangement in which people gather for worship under almost any circumstances allows for a Bible to be opened and closed at the beginning and end of the service, whatever liturgical form may be followed. This provides a valuable link to the Swedenborgian tradition.

### **Special Services**

Two special services particularly highlight the symbolism of opening and closing the Word at the beginning and end of worship. When a building, or room, is being dedicated as a place of worship — either for long-term use, or as a temporary expedient, as at a retreat — it is appropriate to carry the Word in, to open it on the altar. Conversely, when a church is being closed, or an area that has been used for worship is being returned to its former use, the Bible should be carried from the altar after being closed at the end of the final service.

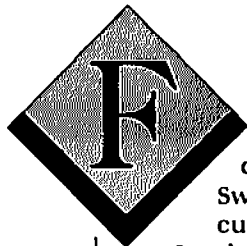
### **Conclusion**

A complex of details makes up every experience. This particular detail — opening the Word of God at the beginning of each worship service — is a significant, distinctive, and adaptable tradition which enriches the Swedenborgian tradition of worship. ♦

*Robert Kirven, is a Professor at the Swedenborg School of Religion, in Newton, Mass. and Chairman of Convention's Department of Communication.*

# Correspondence, Faith and Knowledge Of the Natural World

Malcolm C. Peck



For most of us correspondences are the central focus of Swedenborgian theology. When curious friends inquire about Swedenborgianism and what sets it apart from other denominations, many of us instinctively mention correspondences first. The doctrine of correspondences has both emotional and intellectual appeal. There is emotional appeal in the aesthetically attractive symmetry linking the natural to the spiritual world. In addition, there is intellectual or logical appeal in the doctrine's reflection of Swedenborg's genius and the spirit of reason of his age.

Swedenborg's creative unification of science and religious faith has a special contemporary relevance in light of the creationists' assault on scientific truth in the name of religious belief. It is vital in facing the complexities and ambiguities of today's world to embrace more firmly Swedenborg's affirmation of the unity of the universe and the seamless connection between the natural and supernatural.

The creationists argue that the overwhelming evidence in nature of the ancient origins of the earth and the evolution of its life forms over hundreds of millions of years is merely a façade masking the truth of literalist scriptural interpretations.

This interpretation would, in effect, relegate God to the role of cosmic prankster and place religious faith on the foundation of ignorance.

Given the current intensification of the presumed conflict between science and religion by some practitioners of the Christian faith, it is interesting and a bit ironic that some of the most dramatic discoveries of contemporary science appear to confirm a divine plan for the universe. Swedenborg's legacy — the demonstration that the key to that plan resides in the natural universe — is increasingly and dramatically borne out.

As the depths of the universe are probed, astonishing coincidences in its structure and dynamics are revealed. Indeed, in a new departure some leading cosmologists have suggested that the universe was perfectly designed in a way that could not have come about by chance. Not only on earth did life evolve through an extraordinary conjunction of congenial circumstances — not too warm or cold, with just the right chemicals and levels of energy and exactly the proper amount of stability in the environment — but throughout the whole vast universe the basic balances of forces are precisely those required to enable it to hold together. If there



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were a slight change, one way or the other, in the speed at which the universe expands it would either implode or explode (collapse upon itself or blow apart). If atoms did not adhere to one another exactly as they do the stability of the universe would be undermined or if gravity were a bit stronger, the stars would burn faster and hotter, the sun's hydrogen would most probably have burned away, and life would not have evolved. These cosmic coincidences can be enumerated at great length, including mysterious numerological conjunctions for which no accidental causes can adequately account.

In the life science the most brilliant minds have given expression to the same sense of the miraculous. Dr. Lewis Thomas has

observed this in commenting upon the wonder of a human being's conception. He remarks that the excited announcements of a British baby conceived in a laboratory dish merely obscured the true miracle — that one tiny cell somehow become "the whole trillion-cell massive apparatus for thinking and imagining and, for that matter, being surprised. All that information needed for learning to read and write, playing the piano, arguing before senatorial subcommittees, walking across a street through traffic, or the marvelous human act of putting out one hand and leaning against a tree, is contained in that first cell. All of grammar, all syntax, all arithmetic, all music." He concludes: "No one has the ghost of an idea how this works, and nothing else in life can ever be so puzzling. If anyone does succeed in explaining it, within my lifetime, I will charter a skywriting airplane, maybe a whole fleet of them, and send them aloft to write one great exclamation point after another, around the sky, until all my money runs out."

Loren Eiseley, perhaps the greatest naturalist since Thoreau, a scientist and writer of penetrating vision, has linked "science and the sense of the holy." In one of his essays he writes: "We thought we were on the verge of solving the human story but now we . . . are unsure of our direction save that the trail is longer than we had imagined twenty years ago. Yet still the question haunts us, the numinous, the holy in man's mind." Eiseley concludes by noting the importance of the attitude which we bring to study of both the natural and supernatural worlds, when he says: "One can only assert that in science, as in religion, when one has destroyed human wonder and compassion, one has killed man . . ."

Swedenborg brought those qualities to his investigations of the natural and divine spheres; that is what helps to make him a very contemporary figure, a man who belongs as much to our age as to his own. His insights into correspondences provide a new perspective on faith. Swedenborg demonstrated that religious faith finds its firmest foundation not in an escape from or denial of the world around us, but in its full embrace and in a deeper understanding of it. Our knowledge of the natural world illumines and reaffirms our faith in the divine. The universe around us, from the smallest subatomic particle to the vastest galaxy, is not some enormous cosmic joke. It is a reflection of divine purpose conveying to us a sense of the holy. ♦

*Malcolm C. Peck is currently president of the Washington D.C. Swedenborgian Society.*

## Vigil of Prayer Weekend That's What Friends Are For

*Susan Turley-Moore*

All over the world people of various faiths came together during the first week of September for fifty hours of prayer, hope and healing. The purpose of the Prayer Vigil was to awaken people to the healing power of God's love and to generate support, provide education, and encourage a compassionate response to victims of AIDS, their family and friends.

The originator of the AIDS Vigil of Prayer Weekend is Rev. David Farrell of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Christian Church (UFMCC or MCC) of San Diego. Here are a few excerpts from his letter to churches:

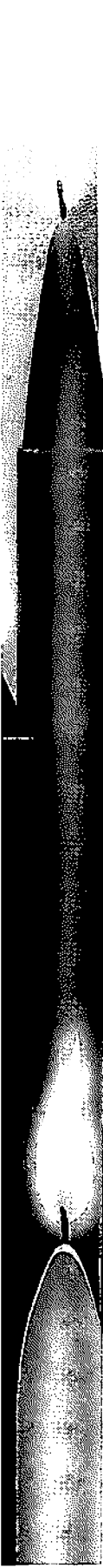
So many issues divide the people of God, but in one thing people of Faith have always been united — our belief in the power of God, through our prayer, to bring healing and hope to the suffering, the ill, the dying and the bereaved.

As pastor of the MCC, a Christian Church with a special outreach in ministry to homosexual men and women, I hear these anguished cries daily, and my heart is close to breaking. If medical estimates are correct, you too are hearing them, or will be soon.

Moses once poured out his heart to God saying . . . "I cannot bear the burden of this people alone" . . . God told him to ask for help. I am asking you for help right now.

I extend to you the hand of fellowship and invite you to join me in calling all God's people, of every faith to unite in prayer against the suffering caused by AIDS. This weekend Vigil is *not* about lifestyles. You are not being asked to condemn or condone anyone's sexual





orientation, political or religious beliefs, or practices. The Vigil of Prayer is about human pain and grief, suffering and loss, with which we can all identify. Please be part of this "Vigil of Prayer" in some way — so much depends on you.

The mother church of UFMCC started by the founder of the denomination, Rev. Troy Perry, sponsored their Vigil of Prayer weekend in L.A. Their church was opened all weekend for prayer, worship, workshops, counseling and fund raising for AIDS research. The constant flame of an altar candle reflected the commitment among the membership to seek truth and to care for one another. I accepted the invitation to participate in the MCC Sunday worship service. The Pastor, Elder Nancy L. Wilson, asked if I would consecrate the communion elements and stand at the altar rail with her to administer the elements and bless all those who came to receive the Lord's Holy Supper.

The Swedenborgian Church here in L.A. supported the vigil and elected to close our church on Sunday so that we could attend the MCC service. It was a beautiful service filled with gifts of prayer, song, scripture, preaching. All who attended left pampered with warm and loving hospitality. One of our members stated that we could learn from this church, when it comes to making visitors feel welcome. Another was struck by the everpresent aura of love and kindness in the church. Still another Swedenborgian commented on what he experienced as the strong love for Jesus expressed by the members of MCC.

We all felt admiration for this church whose members truly know how to worship the Lord and there was no doubt that everyone was touched if not filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Swedenborgian Church also participated in the Vigil by opening our church doors all day on Friday for those who wished to join their Pastor in prayer. Meditative music was played, an offertory was available for AIDS Research, and the AIDS Vigil documentary was shown, followed by discussion and more prayer.

During the vigil I was given a vision of the heavens in prayer. Thousands of people were gathered to hear scripture, beautiful music, words of hope and compassion preached, and many were filled with the Holy Spirit. It

was how I might imagine Pentecost to be! The vision confirmed that neither I nor the MCC church was alone in the weekend of prayer. It was, in fact, made known that this gathering was for the AIDS Vigil. The words were spoken, "Here in heaven we, too, have our fifty hours of hope, healing and prayer for those whose suffering is caused by AIDS." I shared this as a prelude to the Holy Supper at MCC, which was received with great appreciation, rejoicing and gladness. Truly, the Lord is director of all events for healing in his Holy Name.

The Prayer Vigil is a wonderful way for a church to help those who suffer from this terrible disease. It also helps those who are parents, loved ones, friends, neighbors and co-workers of the patient. Prayer is a powerful tool that does affect people. If you or your church are interested in discussing the AIDS issue or sponsoring an AIDS vigil, please contact the UFMCC central office at 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 304, L.A., CA. 90029, (213) 464-5100. They will send you a program packet which includes the documentary film on the Prayer Vigil of 1985, educational materials, sermon ideas, worship resources, news editorials, and suggestions as to how to sponsor the prayer vigil. Truly, this is a non-threatening way for Christians to help those who are sick and isolated. It is also a way for us to explore the various issues surrounding alternative life styles, to develop a Christian response to that which is different. As Pastor Farrell says, "Together, we can create in our communities a climate of compassion and concern for the grief caused by AIDS. Our people will thank us for it, and God will surely bless our ministries for it." ♦

*The Rev. Susan Turley-Moore is a pastoral psychotherapist in addition to her duties as the parish minister of the Los Angeles Swedenborgian Church.*

## **The Upper Room**

### **The Guiding Cloud**

Leon C. Le Van

**Since the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years, it is obvious that much of the time they must have been standing still.**

The progress of Israel from Egypt to Canaan was directed by a cloud. Clouds in the Bible are familiar objects. They are mentioned many times. There was the cloud no bigger than a person's hand in the time of Elijah the Prophet. There was the cloud that overshadowed Peter, James, and John at the Mount of Transfiguration. There was the cloud over Mount Sinai when the Ten Commandments were given to Moses by Jehovah God. We read in the *Book of Revelation*, "Behold, He cometh with clouds." And in *Matthew*, "They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven." Those biblical clouds are God's way of showing that in some special sense we must look to the "clouds" of scripture for guidance in our ways of life.

In the story of *Exodus*, a cloud went before the Israelites and guided them to the shore of Red Sea. But there the way was blocked. Before the fugitives stretched the impassable waters. Behind them came the rampaging army of the Pharaoh. But then the guiding cloud did an extraordinary thing. It left its position before the Israelites and took a position behind them. There, between the Children of Israel and the Egyptian army, the wondrous "cloud" gave light all through the night to the Israelites, but was a "darkness and blindness" to the Egyptians. The cloud that guided the Israelites is the same cloud that guides you and me — the divine truth in the *Word of God*.

After the Israelites had escaped from Egypt and crossed the Red Sea, they wandered in the wilderness for forty years. During all that time the cloud never left them. When it advanced they advanced. When it stopped, they stopped and remained in their tents. Sometimes the cloud stopped for days. Sometimes for weeks or months. But whether it advanced or whether it stood still, the children of Israel advanced or stood still with it.

Now there is comfort in this teaching of standing still and learning the lessons of patience and trust in God. You and I, along with all people, tend to measure our lives by external circumstances. We tend to think if our jobs, our homes, our churches are prospering in the eyes of others, then we are

making progress. Perhaps we are, and we hope we are. But that is not always the divine standard. Our Lord is concerned with our *real* progress (which is spiritual), and he will not compromise it for the sake of our material success or advancements. The question is not, "How are you progressing with your job or your natural enterprises?" The question is, "How are you progressing in your regeneration? How is it with your soul? How much are you rejecting your evils as sins against God? How much are you following the 'clouds' of truth, so that the Lord can replace your self-nature with a new Heavenly nature from him?" We make true progress only as we advance in regeneration, and other apparent progress is only a standing still.

Since the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness forty years, it is obvious that much of the time they must have been standing still. It is only a seven day walk from Egypt to Canaan. An airplane flies it in less than one hour. Why did the Israelites take forty years to go that short distance? They thought they were waiting for the cloud to go forward so that they could go on. But actually the cloud was waiting for them. How exactly like your regeneration and mine! You and I know enough truth to take us "from Egypt to Canaan" in seven days. We could probably recite the truths of salvation in seven days or even seven hours. But when it comes to understanding the truths we know and living them, it takes the best part of forty years.

Sometimes we spend whole years without making any progress at all. We may even go backwards instead of forward. But in all such times the guiding cloud is faithful: it stands before us and waits for us to move forward again. God grant that the truths which He gives so abundantly in the word and the Doctrines explaining the Word may be in us and abide in us, so that (when the clouds stand still) our spiritual labors may not be beyond our strength, and that presently our progress towards the Promised Land may again be steady and sure.

When your guiding cloud stands still, then in the "tent" of your inner life (where God is your only witness) you must wait and you must spiritually work until the obstacle that halted your progress towards Canaan is overcome. The Lord gives strength to put every evil out of every life, and he will do so if you will act as of yourself and call upon him for aid. Then you will advance. Then you will go forward. Then will the Word of God increase in your spirit, and the guiding "cloud" move forward again. ◇

## **Good Vibrations**

*Dorothy Travers-Davies*

Swedenborg wrote, "Speech is nothing but tremulations, like sound in a string." So let us examine some of the sounds we make and how they affect our bodies, physically and mentally, and consequently how they influence the level of wellness.

On one end of the spectrum we moan and cry; we wail and scream with grief. We hum and sing and talk with our individual version of cadence and rhythm. In excitement our voices get higher pitched and often louder, and we have the melodic sound of laughter, tinkling and sometimes very musical. Then we have the explosive guffaw, the yelp of sheer joy and hilarity.

If you remember the third of the nine rules on Tremulations, ("Next to membranes the best media of tremulation are such bodies as are hard and elastic,") you can relate these vibrations to yourself. How often have you heard it said in our 20th century culture, "He has had vibes!"? Is it possible to feel these tremulations from another?

The fourth rule states, "The tremulation of a string will cause a sympathetic vibration of another string; a membrane similarly affects another membrane; that is, if both are tuned in the same key." Swedenborg then goes on to explain that an outside sound will often cause a vibration in a whole musical instrument, as also a whole gallery will vibrate from the sound in the pipe of an organ — that is, if they are in the same key or tune.

From October 17 to the 19th, in Toronto, Canada more than 950 people met and got "tuned in" at the Fourth Annual Conference, Eastern Region, on "The Power of Laughter and Play." O. Carl Simonton, Medical Director of the Cancer Center, Pacific Palisades, California, wrapped up the weekend by stating unequivocally, "Our beliefs, attitudes and emotions are central factors in health and illness." This radiation oncologist has been on the 'leading edge' in treating the emotional components of cancer and co-authored the award-winning book, *Getting Well Again*. This volume teaches two important points: (1) As you are a partner in the onset of the cancer syndrome, you also have to become involved in the treatment; and (2) the use of imagery in a relaxed state can reduce the side effects of treatment as

well as influence cancer growth or regression.

"Laughter and play, having fun, these are essential elements for health and are mandatory, not elective," he stated at the conference. He showed a flow chart developed by Dr. Elmer Green of the Menninger Clinic that illustrates a stressful event and how that event is translated via the nervous system into an increase or decrease of the cancer. "When I am depressed emotionally, I am depressed at the cellular level. When I feel joyous, happy and alive emotionally, I respond by being alive at the cellular level," he explained.

Fit this into Swedenborg's laws realizing that voices reflecting depression are different from voices expressing joy and you have a clue into what we do to ourselves and to those around us by our vibrations.

The fifth rule states, "Tremulations in the air make rings and circles, and are heard on all sides round the center of the motion; that is, if the whole mass is not being moved." If a stone is thrown into the water, it will make rings around about. So also, in the air, a cry or sound is heard on all sides round about.

Now you can see how our sound and body vibrations are picked up and felt as we send them out in circles in the universe as well as how they affect the physical system of the sender. Twenty years ago few people saw what Swedenborg discovered, while still a young man, regarding tremulations. Recently a book was compiled by Steven Lock, a compendium of 1300 articles, entitled *Mind and Immunity*.

Swedenborg, the father of Holistic Health, observed that the little membranes of the body are the strings of the instrument and stated, "We may now be able to understand more clearly wherein the sensory of the ear consists, and how the tremulation is able to distribute its motion over the entire osseous and nervous systems."

So what was the thrust of the Toronto conference? That laughter increases our creativity, flexibility of thinking, our energy and thus increases our desire to live, because it makes life more fun. Simonton explained that, "Laughter is one of the most effective tools for breaking up intense fear because it helps change locked-in emotions." Have you ever been in a movie theatre when laughter broke up fear and tension, when it seemed totally out of place but served a dispersing function?

The Toronto speaker then gave his

**"Laughter is one of the most effective tools for breaking up intense fear, because it helps change locked-in emotions."**

appreciative audience a few 'tricks of the laugh,' so to speak. First, when under strain or depression, force yourself to belly laugh; make a joyful noise! (Does this sound familiar?) This helps refocus energies and thoughts. Second, lighten up and use play for an increase of productivity and creativity. (Maybe that's what Trivial Pursuit is all about?) Third, start making a list by asking other people what is fun to them and what they consider play. (You can quit when you have about 50 replies.) And fourth, shift your value systems, restructure and reframe your activities, including work, into play. Simonton concluded on a note of faith when he said,

"Focus on trusting in ourselves, our universe and our relationship to the universe."

Swedenborg said that life is tremulation, or that whatever is living in us must be expressed by the motions of tremulation. He also explained that as any passion is originated, the blood is more or less under control of the nerves; by the contraction of the nerves the blood is closed off from its finer vessels. And if the blood is obstructed in the membranes, there results a different attuning of the whole nature of the human person, the crown jewel of God's creation.



## Did You Hug Your Bible Today?

*Ivan Franklin*

While reading *Arcana Celestia* 1461 explaining Abram's going down "into Egypt to sojourn," I remembered several sorts of ice cream I bought a long time ago and forgot to taste. I smiled with satisfaction for deeply personal reasons, looking down at the center of my body. But I also saw myself asking a child where the ice cream comes from. "From the freezer in the kitchen!" I got a very truthful answer. An older child would give me another correct answer: "Mom put it there after she brought it from Big Bear." Some foreigner would think that American bears "produce" ice creams — perhaps due to their consumption of honey. The path of Truth would obviously deviate far from reality. American children would like the idea, but they know better: the Big Bear is a huge shop with milk, meats, peppers, onions, etc.

The route of knowledge about the origin of things mostly ends in a shopping center. Who is going to hug a cow for sending us milk; to give a kiss to Dad who earns money for it? Not many are sending a Thank You note to our Big Daddy in heaven for giving us health and Cognitions of how to use it all.

Some of our college students still do not know who Gorbachev is. "A Soviet dancer or a singer?" The honest ones comment: "Why

should I care? He will not buy me an ice cream!" True. The same question may be heard about Abram going into Egypt. Why should I know the story? How would a Swedenborgian use his wisdom heated with kindness and love and explain why the Bible should be read? How would we present this passage appetizingly: "Egypt" signifies the knowledge of cognitions; "to sojourn" signifies to be instructed. If you want to know, come to our Explorations Sessions. But now I just beg you to give yourself a hug with your Bible — opened — between your arms and your bosom. And remember: if you want to buy "Celestial Things" in the Safeway of Heaven, bring the "recipient vessels." Do you know what they are? The Cognitions! You ask correctly: "Where do I get them?" Swedenborg says: "The cognitions must be from the Word." As a bonus I give you these "lotto tickets": "The external person cannot be reduced to correspondence and agreement with the internal except by means of cognitions."

And therefore: "Have you hugged Your Bible Today?" ◆

*The Rev. Dr. Ivan Franklin is a psychiatrist, as well as pastor to the Riverside, California Swedenborgian Church.*

*“Someday, after  
we have mastered  
the winds, the waves,  
the tides and gravity,  
we shall harness for  
God the energies of  
love. Then for the  
second time in the  
history of the world,  
man will have  
discovered fire.”*

Teilhard de Chardin

# Looking Backward: Eighty Years of Change

Alice Spear

*(A review of the autobiography of a loyal Swedenborgian, Earl Pack Marshall)*

From a little town known as Paisley, Scotland, a nucleus of Swedenborgians emigrated to America in the early 1800s. They had been weavers of a fabric made of cashmere wool and silk that was made into what became widely known as Paisley Shawls. Each knew 'the Writings,' having learned and read from books brought to Paisley from Glasgow, Scotland by a New Churchman named William Lawrie Morton. The 'teachings' were a welcome change for them from the grim and restrictive tenets of the previous existing religions.

"My great grandfather," writes Earl Marshall, "was one of these weavers of Paisley cloth, as was his son John, my grandfather, who married Janet Speirs, sister of their employer David Speirs." (The Speirs family became very well known when Janet's nephew, James Speirs, became publisher of the Writings of Swedenborg in London, England.)

"My grandparents, John and Janet's wedding took place in the Swedenborgian church of the New Jerusalem in Paisley, in 1839. Soon after the wedding they embarked on a hazardous sea voyage and a rough trip over land, in the U.S.A., in order to join fellow New Churchmen in Michigan's Lapeer County."

It was not easy for a weaver to become a farmer, but they had help in getting started from friends of their 'faith' and throughout all of their struggles they found strength and solace in their Swedenborgian religion.

Mr. Marshall says that the small group of followers of the writings grew so rapidly and became so famous that by 1848 Swedenborgianism was spoken of as the "State Religion," and one member from the group was elected Chaplain in 1847 to the Michigan State Senate.

Central to Lapeer County was the city of Almont, Michigan. In 1854 the Almont Society of the New Church was formed with John and Janet as two of its founding members. John and fellow New Church members built a Swedenborgian church of

the New Jerusalem near the town of Almont.

While their parents, John and Janet, remained farmers, two of their sons, David and Joseph, ventured into business in a small town just north of Almont. There, in Imlay City, they opened a general merchandise store. Nearby, down the street, there was a dressmaking shop whose owner was a young lady named Minnie Etta Pack. Joseph and Minnie became enamored of each other, married and were the parents of our author, Earl Pack Marshall. A second son, Clare, was born several years later. These two brothers, Earl and Clare, remained close friends all of their lives.

Several more families had migrated from Scotland and settled in the Almont area. All were firm in their Swedenborgian beliefs. So that their children would know of their faith, a summer school was established in Almont led by members and visiting ministers from Detroit or Cleveland. All of the children, including Clare and Earl, had to sleep in tents at the camp. These were pitched in a nearby hay field. Sliding down haystacks was great fun and a novelty for some of them.

Years passed and many events are recorded in Mr. Marshall's autobiography. His loyalty to the Swedenborgian faith isn't mentioned again, however, until after his move to California. He says, "I was present at the cornerstone laying of the Wayfarers Chapel at Portuguese Bend, in July 1949, and until 1964 I served on its Board of Directors."

In detail, Mr. Marshall describes how this oceanside property was acquired and how the Chapel was designed and built by the son of Frank Lloyd Wright on the design principle of a center circle of glass and other unusual glass shapes. (It was known that Swedenborg favored unusual shapes, so there is very little 'square' in the Chapel.) A triangle of glass was used to represent the Trinity, and the center circle indicates Heaven. A clear circular window looks out to the trees from just above the altar. It is dedicated to the memory of Earl and Clare's father, Joseph Marshall.

There was no limit to Earl Marshall's generosity of time and money whenever there was a legitimate need expressed by Southern



California Swedenborgian Churches. His participation and leadership were very much needed and appreciated by the members of the New Church, who were anxious to develop a retirement community for Swedenborgians in Yucaipa, California, a venture which actually never materialized in its entirety.

"This book would not be complete," Mr. Marshall concludes, "if I did not give thanks to God for the part His Divine Providence has played through all of my life, and to my Swedenborgian forefathers who have given me hope that the other world will be my wonderful and happy home forever." ♦

*Alice Spear has been the longtime librarian of the Los Angeles Swedenborg Bookroom.*



## Central Office Memo

*Ethelwyn Worden*

This is written at the beginning of January, and so we are pleased to report the arrival of the 1986 *Convention Journals*, which are available in limited quantity for \$1.00 to interested people. They are sent automatically to all churches, ministers, church and association officers, and board and committee members.

To begin the new year we have held two meetings in snowy Newton: the Convention '87 Planning Committee met for two days on January 7 and 8, and laid out the basic program for this year's meetings at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington. This will be refined between now and April, and the finished product will go to press at the beginning of May. The local committee of Seattle / Washington people is hard at work, and have planned many goodies for us.

On January 14 and 15 the Prototype Cabinet met again, to refine the proposed Convention budget for '87-88 before its presentation to General Council during the midwinter meeting in the Florida Keys (they're going to the Keys in February to sit inside and MEET????!!) February 6-9, immediately prior to the Ministers and

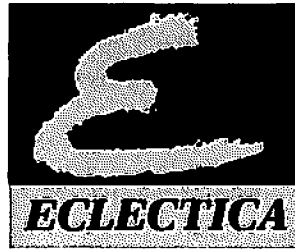
Spouses Institute, which will be held in the same location. The Prototype Cabinet is composed of the chairpeople of current boards of committees, and is developing the function of the Cabinet which will come into existence at the beginning of this year's Convention when the new constitution and bylaws take effect.

Lu (Leona) Freedman, who has been secretary of the Central Office since before it began — really — is retiring this month after having spent almost 19 years working for Convention. As secretary first of Rev. Ernest Martin during his time as Convention president, and then of Roger Paulson, the first Central office director as of 1975, Lu has seen quite a bit of Convention history flow through our office, has visited quite a few of "our" churches and church folk around the world in her travels with Arthur, her handsome husband of many years, has — with her family — led several generations of SSR students and friends through the historic Seder, the Passover dinner, and has kept us up on the latest and funniest jokes. Typical of Lu is that she spent her first day of retirement, January 5, putting in a full day at the office! In fact, she will continue to put in a couple of days a week through the spring in order to pass along those years of knowledge, lore, files location and so on to her successor, Susan Karlson, who joined us on January 6.

Please be sure to send cards, letters, flowers, accolades, hugs or phone calls to Lu — she merits them all. We are lucky she lives only a few blocks away, so we know we will see her often: at the same time, we want to thank her for her wonderful work and let her enjoy the trips she has planned — to Florida this month, and to Australia and the South Pacific in March. We will have a real party for her in April — let us know if you'd like to come or to be part of it in some way.

I'm especially thankful to Lu for many things, not the least of which have been her efforts to train me adequately to fill the director's post. Her address: Mrs. Arthur Freedman, 33 Wesley St., Newton, MA 02158.

As we move into 1987 we will be gearing up for our West Coast Convention (y'all come!) and continuing on many projects. Let us hear from you about your ideas, your local churches and groups, and about things in general. If you are "isolated" Swedenborgians who have not yet received our bi-monthly newsletter, please be kind enough to let us know so we may add you on to that list. All of our churches receive at least one for posting, so we hope you have seen it. Happy New Year, all of us! ♦



## First Tricentennial Project Off Press

On the eve of 1987, the first Swedenborg Tricentennial project came across your editor's desk — a book by Convention's long-time friend and one-time minister, the Rev. Brian Kingslake. Published by the Missionary Society of the Swedenborg New Church and under the imprint of Seminar Books, *A Swedenborg Scrapbook* is an 86 page book, handsomely produced with a full four color trade cover and many black and white illustrations throughout the text. A selected overview of Swedenborg's life is presented. Rev. Kingslake in his introduction explains that he chose aspects of Swedenborg's life which particularly interested him.



In the first half of the book, many of the familiar themes of Swedenborg's life are presented: his parentage, his education, his scientific prowess, his spiritual awakening, his home and gardens. The second half is comprised of a hodge-podge of subjects. One, entitled, "The Pilgrimage," tells of Mr. Kingslake's journey with his wife to Sweden, visiting several of the sites where major events and chapters of Swedenborg's life were transacted.

Other chapter titles are: "Communicating

with Spirits," "The Last Judgment," "The Writings of the New Church," "New Church Day," "Amsterdam Interlude," "Wesley and Swedenborg," and "The Skull," among others. At \$4.50 plus postage, you will receive a well-written and excellently illustrated *Swedenborg Scrapbook*.

On other Swedenborg Tricentennial projects, the wheels are churning rapidly all over the world. Both Convention and the Swedenborg Foundation are planning major exhibits and programs. If you would like to help, please contact the Director of the Central Office: Ethelwyn Worden, 48 Sargent St., Newton, MA 02158.

## Critique from Yesteryear

Louise Woofenden, who has spent hundreds of hours in the past few years arranging and organizing Swedenborgian archival material at the Swedenborg School of Religion library in Newton, Massachusetts, recently came across this interesting nugget from Clarence W. Barron, an energetic member of the Swedenborgian Church. If the name sounds familiar, it is likely because he was the founder of the *Wall Street Journal* and *Barron's Business Review*.

In a letter dated Feb. 2, 1925 and addressed to the Rev. Paul Sperry of the Washington D.C. Swedenborgian Society, Mr. Barron unleashes a rather scathing criticism of the Swedenborgian Church. He writes: "I feel that the weakness of the New Church is right within our own organization. It seems to me we are a decadent church and cannot long support any foreign missionary work unless we can further induce upon our members the reading of the Revelation of the New Age. I believe that the safety of our Church requires members in every local church organization reading the Revelation daily and consecutively.

"The Word of the Lord is a garment of truth that should be taken as a whole and not in shreds and patches as we have it now by both the clergy and the laity.

"I am, therefore, devoting my time and means to promoting so far as I can the missionary work of enlisting readers to Swedenborg from the outside Gentiles. I am satisfied that our own ministers and laity are not consecutive readers as they should be of the *Arcana* and the entire Revelation through Swedenborg."

Later on in the letter, Mr. Barron fires his most potent missile thusly: "We have a worse situation in *The Messenger* than we have with collateral works. I understand the editor of *The Messenger* makes no pretense to

reading and interpreting Swedenborg." And this in 1925 . . .

### **Angels of Swedenborg a Success in Pittsburgh**

Ping Chong's controversial play, *The Angels of Swedenborg* (see May '86 *Messenger*), played to an appreciative artistic community in Pittsburgh during November. Proclaimed from a cover story in a weekly journal covering the arts in the city, *In Pittsburgh*, a favorable review discussed the genesis of the project and some of its aspects. Again, the view of "heaven" presented is more Jungian than Swedenborgian, but Mr. Chong seems to have altered his way of discussing Swedenborg's spiritual crisis. Before, there was much criticism from Swedenborgians that Mr. Chong used the phrase "nervous breakdown," even though Mr. Chong also indicated the creative way he was using that term. In this interview, he says, "At the age of 55, he started having visions. It's almost as if he had to come to a *cul de sac*: through science he was trying to find the spirit, through materialism, secularism; and there's no way you can reach the spirit with that kind of analysis. The analytical approach is only half the truth."

### **One Man Missionary Endeavor**

David St. Amour, a businessman in Montreal, recently acquainted with the God-inspired effort by Swedenborg to raise Christianity to a new level of understanding, has undertaken a prodigious missionary project. His goal of making the religious writings of Swedenborg available to all interested persons in Canada has been handsomely approached through his gift, in cooperation with the Swedenborg Foundation, of more than 27,000 books to "every clergyperson and library" in Canada! Included in the packet are various materials of information. He is planning more outreach projects. Thank you, Mr. St. Amour!

### **Consider a Vacation in the Wilds: Paulhaven**

Recently the following notice of the 1986 session of Paulhaven, a Swedenborgian family camp in Western Canada, came across your editor's desk. I would like to share it with you so that those who have never treated themselves to a Swedenborgian camp experience may "get a whiff" of its flavor.

There is a narrow winding road in Alberta that leads to an adventure called *Paulhaven*. We travelled down that road Sunday, July 20. A week later we travelled back

up. The good-byes had been said. Camp was over. We had had religious experiences; we had a lot of fun and we met old friends and made new ones. A lot can happen in a week.

Marlene Laughlin was in charge of our spiritual food. Her sensitive and casual manner made each worship experience special. She also taught a class and gave help and support to the other teachers who were: Patti Woofenden, Lee Woofenden, Linda Reed, Carol Kirbyson and Lillian Epp. Carol was also our nurse.

Our natural food was taken care of by Clarence Watters, Muriel Bennett, Doreen VanRooijen and Helen Schellenberg. They worked very hard preparing nutritious meals but they were never too busy to share a smile and a kind word.

With souls and bodies fed, our campers were ready for fun. Four hard working people tried to see that everyone had fun. These four people were Eric Sonmor, Dawn Epp, Linda Korsten and Al Kirbyson. They organized a variety of sports and games besides swimming and skit night with a dance later.

We are also grateful to Uncle Paul for coming every day to check our daily chores that needed to be done to keep the physical part of the camp running smoothly.

The campers also did their part to make the camp a success. First of all simply by coming. Second, by working and playing hard, and third, by getting along well with each other and the staff. These very important people were: Gabrielle Bennett, Joanne Couillard, Lisa Epp, Glen Epp, Chris Ferguson, Alastair Hopwood, Kairisty Hopwood, Shane Kirbyson, Holly Kirbyson, Taunya Knox, Lee Anne Latimer, Lisa Melson, Catherine Mazer, Cassidy Ostashek, Francis O'Conner, Shane Phair, Elizabeth Reed, Sandra Reddekopp, Cory Scade, Susan Slough, Jenny Slough, Laurie Slough, Julie Sorensen, Kelly Schellenberg, Adele Scade, Jay Stinson, Tony Watters, Phillip Weetman, Jameson Weetman and one pre-camper, Christian Reed.

The man who holds all these people and activities together is the camp director. This year the position was very ably filled by the Rev. David Sonmor. We want to give him a very special thank you, for without an able director we could not have a camp. We also want to thank him for his very personal devotion to Paulhaven. He also did the preliminary work in setting up the lessons for the week.

Our camp week ended with special

presentations from the lessons from each class. These were done outside. We returned to the chapel for closing. Sunday morning we each dedicated something to the Lord and sang "Morning Has Broken." It was a fitting close of a wonderful week.

Now we begin to think of next year. Camp dates will be July 19-26. If you are

interested in helping at camp please let the committee know. We need 4-5 cooks, 5-6 teachers, 4-5 recreation supervisors including at least one person with lifeguard training, and one person trained in first aid."

Lillian Epp  
Summer Camp Committee  
Box 165, Laird, Sask. S0K 2H0

## OPINION

### The Attractiveness of Reincarnation

Dear Editor,

Let me begin by stating that I am not a thorough-going reincarnationalist. I do not know the ultimate answer to this persistent philosophical problem! It does seem, though, that there is considerable interest in the topic among spiritual seekers and among Swedenborgians. Therefore, I wish to pursue just a bit further the debate in *The Messenger* that begins with George Dole's article in the June 1986 issue.

For me, the main attractions of the eastern theory are two: 1) there is the empirical evidence of thousands of regressions obtained through hypnosis; and 2) there is the philosophical doctrine of justice. As to the first, the popular Swedenborgian writer Gwynne Dresser Mack provides the classic Swedenborgian refutation in her marvelous pamphlet, *ES and ESP*. She suggests that regression material (i.e. testimonies of previous lives given by people under hypnosis) are easily accounted for by the mischievous "possession" of the hypnotized person by evil, or at least ignorant, spirits. Swedenborg is quite complete in his descriptions of spirits who love to wreak havoc with susceptible earthlings.

Initially, I find this to be a pretty compelling rebuttal. My difficulty with it lies in the nature of the regression material as it continues to accumulate. There are now literally thousands upon thousands of documented sessions, and the strange thing is that nearly 100% of those who have the ability to "go under" tell of previous existences.

Contrary to popular myth, tales of being kings, famous people, one of Jesus' disciples, etc., are extremely rare in the now-mountainous files. Nearly always, obscure lives are described. Many times people have researched old birth and death records and other archival material as may exist and have often authenticated the existence of the life in question. Certainly one may respond: "Oh, but these are very clever spirits!" and I'm sure that they are. But something about the nearly total consistency of a huge volume of regression material coupled with the powerful testimonies of how people feel helped by their new revelation leave me in a reflective mood.

Even more problematic for Mrs. Mack's theory is the well-known tendency of a person under hypnosis NOT to allow foreign influences and suggestions. There are almost no clinical grounds for the hypothesis that a person under hypnosis will surrender control of the personality so easily — and she asserts that it happens every single time! Indeed, there is rather more of a clinical basis for this hypothesis: when in a deep and relaxed state, a truer sense of the person is likely to emerge.

As for the concept of justice, Mr. Koke (December *Messenger*) presents the traditional Christian (and Swedenborgian) view admirably in his rejoinder to my original letter. I hope I am not taking liberties when I summarize his position thusly: In our free will we make literally hundreds of thousands of moral and ethical decisions throughout our lives. Slowly, but unmistakably, we create our destiny, resulting either in a life of love or a life of miserable self-love.

The one-life theory has more mystery in it and tries to explain less than the doctrine of reincarnation. Though gross disparities in life

conditions are evident everywhere, the one-life theorist is content to say, "Somehow, in God's great and wise providence, justice is achieved." It doesn't matter if the person dies at the age of ninety days or ninety years. Somehow the physical realm has done its job. Swedenborg even allows that the physical plane can be disposed of altogether (a stillborn, for instance), though that soul will lack a certain solidity acquired through a life in the world.

The doctrine of reincarnation posits a much more complete and thorough role for the physical realm. A task is at hand, and there are no shortcuts. Mr. Koke says that Swedenborg described the physical plane as a state rather than a place. Fine. The physical state is a conditional set of circumstances that exist for providing an environment necessary for the development of human souls up to a certain level. It is like running a marathon, if such a two-dimensional analogy may be excused. Until the finish line is crossed, the person must keep on running the race. They may dawdle; they may take side-trips; they may go backwards—but they will not be allowed to exit the ordeal until they complete the journey. Reincarnation allows no shortcuts through the physical conditional state, as does the one-life theory.

Another reason why some people feel that reincarnation portrays a superior justice stems from the teaching that the circumstances into which one is born are not based on random chance, as they are in one-life theory. The circumstances into which one is born are all relative to that person's spiritual journey. This enables many people to feel that a much greater purpose is inherent in their life situation than the one-life theory, which has us all starting with no experience, and so what possible reason can there be for one "blank" soul to be born into a particular situation? Therefore, why shouldn't the less talented, less intelligent, less cared for be angry at a God who seems to play favorites? In the one-life theory, life is indeed unfair.

On another matter, Mr. Koke makes a very nice point regarding the difficulty in reconciling the wisdom of several life experiences with a newborn infant. I, too, find that tough to swallow. How can spiritual consequences of moral and ethical decisions carry over to the new life, while all the talents, knowledges and basic familiarity with the world get dropped? Of course, reincarnationalists have their answer ready: Only the psychic pattern carries over. Just as you have forgotten nearly all the material of a class you took twenty years ago, so will such

superficial mind-stuff recede to the nether regions in your future incarnations. In certain states of consciousness (hypnosis being one of them), you will be able to retrieve that information from twenty years ago, just as you will be able to recall past lives in certain states of consciousness, also.

I write lengthily upon these matters because I feel it is good for us to stretch our minds and to attempt to really understand the larger picture. It is for that purpose, after all, that Swedenborg wrote *Heaven and Hell* in the first place. I understand that prominent Swedenborgians, such as Sadhu Sundar Singh, Thomas Lake Harris and Wilson Van Dusen have held to some form of the doctrine of reincarnation, and therefore this is another reason why I feel it is good to think sharply and clearly on this matter which is showing tremendous contemporary interest.

**Carothers Witt**  
Ft. Myers, Fla.

### **(Wilson Van Dusen responds: Reincarnation Again)**

I hesitate to speak at all because the topic is too much for a small place. I am presently doing an article on reincarnation for the summer 1987 *Chrysalis*. There are two doctrines of reincarnation. Everyone thinks of the lesser one, that the *individual* returns. This is known to be false to great Hindu/Buddhist scholars because personal identity is fundamentally an illusion (maya). The greater doctrine is that there is, of course, One Life that returns endlessly. Even Swedenborg has no trouble with this greater doctrine (AC 3484). Once you see what the Hindu/Buddhists are really talking about, then it is easy to show it is very much in accord with Swedenborg. I am also convinced that there are powerful experiences of reincarnation, more impressive than hypnotic regression, and that these are examples of events that reflect something of the nature of God. Most are too spiritually good to reflect demons having gotten into one's head. I also respect the related doctrine of karma (you reap what you sow) which, once divested of endless births of the individuals, can be seen as a fundamental and spiritually useful idea. But the greater doctrine is the more difficult to understand because it is essentially talking about God's potentialities, not the individual's. That's why Buddha reviewed his endless reincarnation before he came into full understanding of enlightenment, that really Only God Exists. It is the Lord who returns endlessly everywhere, as both Swedenborg and

Buddha teach. I agree with Swedenborg that the return of the individual to this world is false, but the return of the Lord — well, that is quite another matter. — *Wilson Van Dusen.*)

## Rebuttal to Russell-Lacy

Dear Editor,

I am writing to you in response to your editorial in the October, 1986 issue of *The Messenger*. I am not writing to provide solutions to the major questions and mysteries of life; rather, I am trying to help us get to as many facts and points of view as possible. We all know that before you start to put a puzzle together, it is best to have all the pieces in front of you. In an attempt at clarification then:

1). You write that Swedenborg doesn't directly comment on "the point-in-time beginning of the human life." If we turn to the last paragraph of *Divine Love and Wisdom* (n. 432), we find the title "What human life is from conception." Granted, this paragraph is at least as ambiguous and enigmatic as anything Swedenborg has written; however, it does deal directly with the issue mentioned above. In addition, a brief review of Potts' *Concordance*, along with a little imagination, would reveal numerous instances where this anatomist turned theologian addresses this issue directly.

2). The distinction between potential and actual human life is important, but poorly addressed by Mr. Russell-Lacy. To be more specific:

a. Swedenborg makes it clear that we are more than "bodies with souls." Such a dualistic view is quite unlike Swedenborg. Our soul has formed the body and pervades each part of it; the body is merely the visible side of our consciousness (*DLW* 369; *TCR* 156; see Potts under "Body").

b. To Mr. Russell-Lacy, "it seems clear" that freedom and rationality are not (cannot be!) present in the womb (i.e., before birth). However, he goes right on to say, or imply, that such freedom and rationality are present at the moment of birth. Such a magical transformation is hard to understand. On the other hand, if we look under "Embryo" in Potts., we find Swedenborg consistently refers to "it" as a person (*homo*); on the other hand, even a simple reading of Swedenborg would reveal that true freedom and rationality are not only lacking in new-born infants, but that there are a large number of "adults" who still fall short in these qualities (*AC* 1893).

c. "Mr. Russell-Lacy finds it difficult to fathom a God who would supervise a system whereby the large majority of created souls never receive the opportunity to live in the world — the necessary training ground for solid soul-development."

I, too, find such a God difficult to fathom, which is why Swedenborgianism is so appealing to me! According to my understanding of Swedenborgian theology, life on earth is *not* necessary for "solid soul-development." In fact, it is precisely the Lord who has created and supervises a system whereby *all* individuals are given ample opportunity for authentic development, regardless of the external situation. The fact that we can't always "see" such development does not seem to be grounds to dismiss the possibility. If we turn to "Infant" in Potts, or *Heaven and Hell* 329-345, it becomes more than clear how important/unimportant life on earth is in the context of "the bigger picture." I suppose my real question here is, "At what age, Mr. Russell-Lacy, would you feel comfortable with the death of another human being? At what age would his/her death be beyond the power of God to influence and nurture? How much freedom and rationality must a person have to pass over with a "solidly developed soul?" What happens to the two week old infant, the one or two year old toddler? Do they disappear, phase into a kind of limbo existence, or what?"

3). Regarding the brief comment on reincarnation, I again enlist the writings for support, specifically, *Heaven and Hell* 256, 298. Happily, these paragraphs provide us with an important clue as to how best to approach the issues raised in your editorial. It seems vital that we begin to piece the puzzle together with the right pieces, as well as a majority of them. What are our assumptions about human life; where did we get them; how do we define individuality, selfhood and personality? What does the doctrine of "as if" (that we live as *if* of ourselves, but that this is only and always an appearance, quite different from the reality) do to our assumptions and preconceptions? Who or what is it that is "born"; or "dies"; or endures and survives death?

Space limitations do not allow me to fully spell out the implications of these several passages from the writings. My desire is to put as many passages on the table as possible, if we are going to attempt a consideration of modern bio-ethical issues from a Swedenborgian perspective. I would consider this letter successful if it encourages a few readers to look up these passages and ponder their



deeper implications. I welcome any feedback, either directly or through *The Messenger*, whether of a general or specific nature.

**Robert E. McCluskey**  
Minister, The New Church  
302 Stevens Ave.  
Portland, Maine 04103

## Christ's Incarnation in Our World

Dear Editor,

I was interested in the comments about why the Lord came to our planet. The following passage from the *Arcana Coelestia* expands upon this.

### Excerpt from *Arcana Coelestia* (9350-9356)

"There are many reasons why it pleased the Lord to be born and to assume the Human on our earth, and not on any other, concerning which I have been informed from heaven.

"The principle reason was for the sake of the Word, in that it could be written on our earth, and when written could then be published throughout the whole earth; and once published could be preserved for all posterity; and that thus it might be made manifest even to all in the other life that God had become a human being . . .

"That the Word could be written on our earth, is because the art of writing has existed here from the most ancient time, first on wooden tablets, later on parchment, afterward on paper, and finally it could be published in print. This has been provided by the Lord for the sake of the Word.

"That the Word could afterwards be published throughout this whole earth, is because there is here an intercourse of all nations, both by overland travel and by navigation, to all places on the globe. Therefore, the Word once written could be carried from one nation to another, and could be everywhere taught. That there should be such an intercourse has also been provided by the Lord for the sake of the Word . . .

"That thus it could be made manifest that God has become a human being, is because this is the first and most essential thing for the sake of which the Word was given . . . for no one can believe in, and love a God whom he cannot comprehend under some form. And therefore those who acknowledge the incomprehensible,

in their thought, fall into nature and thus believe in no God. Wherefore it pleased the Lord to be born here, and to make this manifest by the Word, not only in order that it might become known on this globe, but that by this means it might also be made manifest to all in the universe who come into heaven from any earth whatsoever . . . for in heaven there is a communication of all.

**Dorothy Doane**  
Littlerock, Calif.

## Correction

Dear Readers,

It was incorrectly stated on p. 247 of the December '86 *Messenger* that the Rev. Herbert C. Small was the longtime minister at the Boston Church. While the Rev. Small did serve the General Convention for a great many years in several parishes. He was never the minister at the Boston Church on Beacon Hill.

## COMMENCEMENTS

### Baptisms

**Allen**—Sheena Marie Allen, daughter of Carol Ann Allen, was baptized into the Christian faith on October 31st, 1986, at the home of the child's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. David Allen, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, the Rev. David L. Sonmor officiating.

**Schellenberg**—Amy Lynn Schellenberg, daughter of Ken and Laureen Schellenberg, was baptized into the Christian faith on December 14, 1986 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the Rev. David L. Sonmor officiating.

**Turley**—Emily Rose Turley, daughter of the Rev. Kenneth and Laurie Turley, was baptized into the Christian faith on November 23, 1986 at the Elmwood, Massachusetts Swedenborgian Church, the Rev. Eric Allison officiating.

### Marriage

**DuSablon-Watters**—Dawna Elaine DuSablon and Clarence Edward Watters were united in Christian marriage on November 22, 1986 at the Parktown Motor Hotel in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, the Rev. David L. Sonmor officiating.

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***Nothing.***

**Convention '87  
June 27 — July 5  
University of Puget Sound  
Tacoma, Washington**

*Pre-convention gatherings for ministers and their spouses, a two day Healing Conference, a two day Music and Movement Workshop, and solid programs for children from June 27 to July 1. Convention itself from July 1 to 5, with its schedule of meetings and programs, including those for the New Church Youth League and children 6-12, 3-5, and infants to 2-year-olds.*