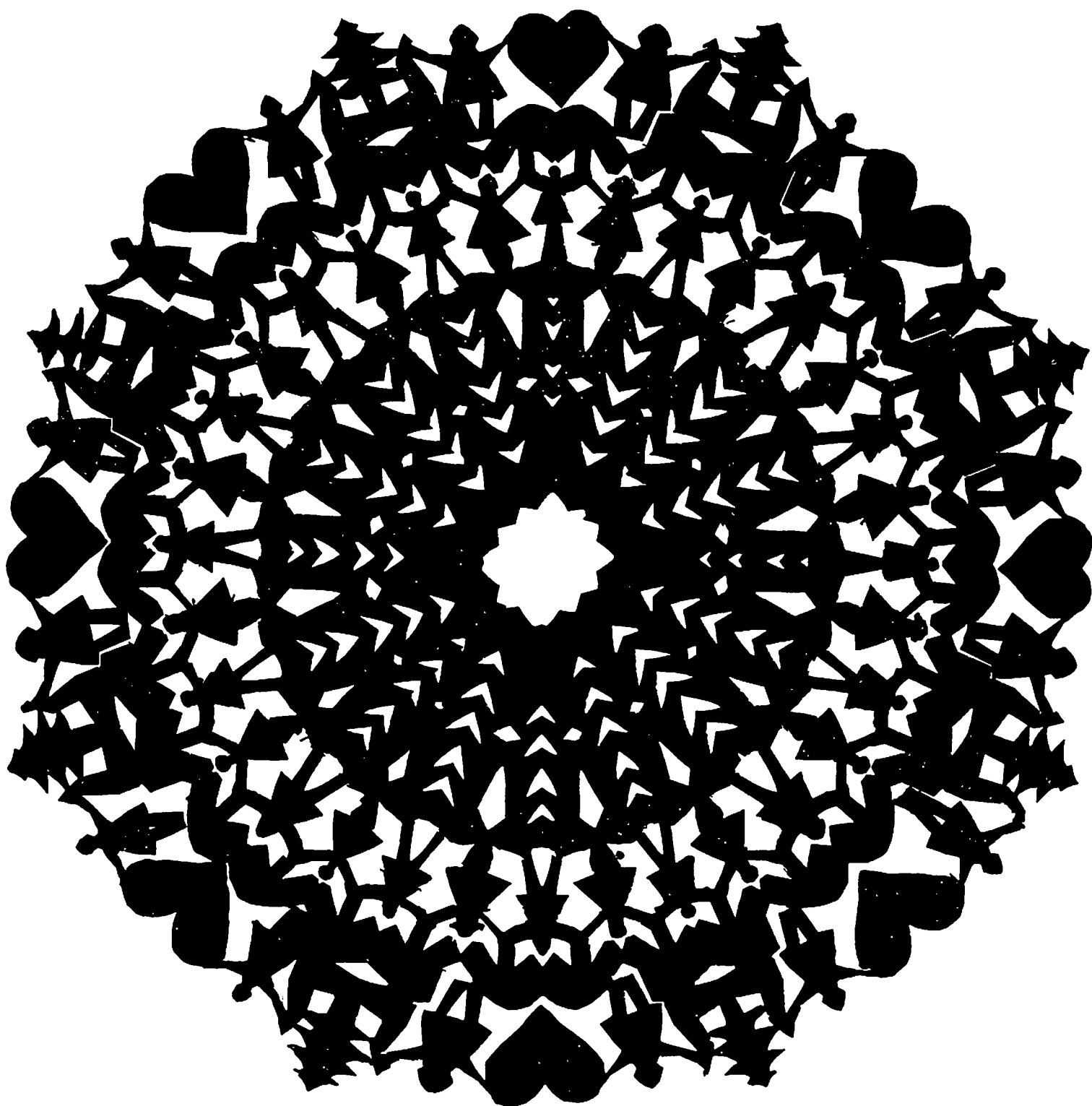


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# The Messenger

February 1990



## From the Editor

# Moving Toward the Light

By the time this issue reaches you, the February 15 deadline for mailing in your subscription renewal cards will have passed. If any of you forgot to send one in and you do wish to remain on the mailing list, let us know right away so that your *Messengers* will continue to arrive uninterrupted. Your mail-in forms are in the November, December and January issues.

We have thus far received a wonderful outpouring of good wishes, support, and generous contributions. Thank you for the warm notes

and expressions of appreciation. Contributors will be gratefully acknowledged in a later issue.

You have been seeing guest editorials in this spot for the past several months, and I plan to continue inviting guest commentary on various subjects throughout the year, in the interest of maintaining a balance so the *The Messenger* is as representative as possible of all our readers' interests, viewpoints, and concerns.

Regarding our February issue, February is generally

associated in our minds with Valentine's Day, a symbol of romantic love. Nothing turned up in the mailbox that had to do with male-female relationships and spirituality; what did appear were articles on other aspects of love—at-onement, loving the inner child, and Marilyn Baldauf's provocative piece exploring the Eve within, freedom, "creative disobedience," and the strengthening of our relationships, with self and God. (And of course when we strengthen those relationships, how much more fulfilling, precious, honest, all our relationships are.)

A current image of this that comes to mind is a woman I met at a seminar several months ago who was bald. Yes, bald. She walked through the large dining room, tall, graceful, a wonderful serenity about her that communicated itself clear across the room. I examined my initial shock at seeing a bald woman. Well-known actors have made male baldness fashionable for years, but females bereft of their "crowning glory" rushed to cover their naked heads with wigs.

I wanted to go over to her table and tell her now much I

admired her courage, and I wanted to get to know her, but a shyness overcame me and I was three days getting to it. Then I had the opportunity to sit in quiet conversation with her, and was astonished once again at the living proof that beauty is an inner state and needs no embellishment.

We talked about choices, and freedom, and the pain and frustration leading to her final casting off of her last wig. It had been expensive; it was the wrong color, it didn't fit right. I hold in my mind's eye her gentle and humorous description of pulling it off in the car and pitching it into the back seat. Then her description of the lovely feeling of the wind on her head. "If for some reason my hair were to grow back, I would keep it very short—I wouldn't want to lose that feeling of freedom." And her willingness to risk, to be exposed, to be vulnerable, had resulted in the concrete rewards of knowing and loving herself better, and obviously enlarged her capacity to love God and the rest of us more. I felt bathed in her peace and strength.

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## The Messenger

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### Deadline for material:

Six weeks before the first day of the month of issue.

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY,

# EVE

Marilyn Baldauf

I'm sitting at the kitchen table gazing at a photo of myself at three months old: a definite gleam in my dark eyes, laughing, health and happiness itself. My thoughts wander to a Genesis picture I painted a couple of years ago at a seminar. I chose a very large piece of paper; the Tree of Life grew easily, was soon off the page, vibrating with green and brown life. It was passionate about everything: music, people, foreign lands, nature, art, laughter, poetry, God. I see all of this in the eyes of my infant self. In the back of my mind a song plays over and over, "We've got to get ourselves back to the Garden . . ." In the photo I see myself in the midst of that garden. I feel embraced, comforted, eager, confident.

Yet even at three months, something has already been lost, and so much more of paradise was to be obscured by years of wound, pain and fear. I feel the Tree of Knowledge, dwarfed by my overgrown Tree of Life, holds the key to my return.

Do we choose to undertake this journey back? No, it is thrust upon us by the conflicts and pain of living . . . and by an ancient alienation or lack of wholeness, which some seem to feel more acutely than others. Some, in fact, will do anything to re-experience the dimly-recalled sense of belonging. We never entirely forget the ancient Garden, our original oneness with God and with all things. We have, as Wordsworth put it, "Intimations of Im-

mortality," and toward that glimmer our lives are unconsciously, and sometimes consciously, directed.

What has all this to do with Adam and Eve, the serpent and the Garden of Eden? As our inheritance from the Judeo-Christian culture into which we were born, the story holds a deep mythological truth about the search for consciousness and how to find genuine meaning in everyday life.

As we begin to examine the myth, it is important to note that Genesis 1:27, prior to the Garden story, states:

So God created man in his own image, in the image  
of God created He him; *male and female* created he them.

It sounds as if the Lord created both males and females at the same time—*both* in his image, the word "man" here being the generic term for "human-kind." But "male and female created he them" can be interpreted in yet another way. Let us suppose that God was also speaking of the male and female within every human being.

Later we are told that Yahweh planted a garden eastward in Eden; and

there he put the man whom he had formed from dust. The female mentioned previously is not explicitly referred to here, but let us suppose that she is still present as an inner feminine part of "man." Next we learn of the Tree of Life, the Tree of Knowledge, and the conflict. Why would the Lord God, if he truly wanted obedient, God-fearing children, create such a conflict? Surely every parent knows that forbidden fruit takes on a new allure.

Next, God "causes a deep sleep to fall upon Adam" and brings forth Eve as his helpmate. Symbolically, then, God causes Adam to go unconscious while he makes conscious the inner feminine. Then the serpent appears to the woman and informs her thusly:

Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in

the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened,

and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

How, then, can we blame Eve for her response? How would we feel about Eve if she had passed up this op-

(continued on next page)



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***Eve... might  
actually represent  
a more con-  
scious inner  
part of the un-  
conscious  
Adam.***

portunity? And yes, it was a kind of death, as the Lord had warned. For over and over again, the death of innocence and ignorance precedes the birth of consciousness.

Eve receives her information about potential wisdom from the serpent. In the ancient goddess religions, ultimately exterminated by the patriarchal Hebrew and Christian religions, the snake and the tree were associated with earthly wisdom, prophecy and instinct.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps in communing with the serpent, Eve is in touch with an ancient, dark, repressed, feminine side of God which has some wisdom to offer—for a price. Therefore, Eve, traditionally viewed as a weak inferior, might actually represent a more conscious inner part of the unconscious inner Adam.

The knowledge of good and evil which is gained costs archetypal man and woman the comfort of paradise. But having once tasted consciousness, we, the inheritors of this original legacy, must continue "to till the ground from which we came," plucking, when we dare, from the Tree of Knowledge. And is it possible, too, that Eve's curse of painful childbirth is the pain of our ongoing struggle to give birth to our conscious selves? To inch our way back laboriously to the Tree of Life as we recover our own lost knowledge? Each situation of choice, then, becomes an opportunity to take another bite out of the archetypal apple, to remove one more layer of mask or shell, to take another step forward on the way back to the Garden, eyes open. And so the Tree of Knowledge grows within us. When we deny the impulse to choose for consciousness, we remain passive, dependent, "good" little children, expecting the

Lord God to provide for us. But how often, in our very rational world, do we trust Eve's voice and "risk a fuller fruit"?<sup>2</sup>

What does God want? He gives us mixed messages in the Garden myth. First he gives us "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air,

and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." He then places Man in a deep sleep and draws forth a feminine side. He creates a serpent to tempt Eve. He throws the offenders out of the garden and guards it forever with a deadly weapon, a flaming sword which turns every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life. But he also places Cherubim, which carry a positive, helpful image. Perhaps like all parents, God both wants us to

remain in the nest of paradise and also to go forth, stand on our own feet, make our own choices, separate from Him, and then return god-like to the Garden with our reclaimed knowledge of good and evil in a new partnership with Him. This suggests that the masculine God to whom we have given so much childish obedience and devotion for 3000 years might really be wanting something quite different from us. God must be lonely for true human cooperation in the evolution. But His ambivalence, His Yes/No, His Do/Don't is a challenging Cry which each of us, whether or not we consciously choose

to eat of the fruit, feels within us. And it is our inner Eve who can respond.

Another memory awakens. At the same time I was invited to paint my Trees I was also asked to recall my first experience of "creative disobedience."

"Creative disobedience." What a powerful expression. To think of the mythological Eve, risking the wrath of Jahweh on an irrational feeling, for wisdom, to "be like God..." What

courage she models, not just for women, but for all of us who are our own jailers, who want freedom from everything within us that keeps us from realizing our fullest fruit. EVE, from the Hebrew *Charab*, means LIVING, and she was truly alive in that courageous moment.

Jesus of Nazareth seemed to be in touch with his own Tree of Knowledge. He was an extraordinary, exemplary, highly conscious human being who was

attempting, in an extremely dangerous political environment, to call us all to eat the fruit and begin our return to the Garden: "Whosoever seeks to gain his life shall lose it; Whosoever seeks to lose his life shall be preserved." The synoptic gospels detail Jesus' acts of creative disobedience. When, for example, the Pharisees, strict keepers of the status quo, chastise him for working on the sabbath, Jesus responds that "the son of man is lord of the sabbath." When Jesus shares a meal with outcasts and sinners, and the Pharisees are once again aghast, Jesus says, "I have come not to call the righteous, but sinners."

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♥  
*"Eve,"  
 from the  
 Hebrew,  
 "Chavah,"  
 means Living.*  
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Would the Pharisees have allowed the Eve within them to heed the serpent's call to intentional, "creative sin"? Likely not. And, in a particularly moving scene, Jesus tells Mary Magdalene, often known as the sinner woman, that her sins are forgiven, for she loveth much. All of these are the acts of a daring human being who somehow knew that the artificial lines between right and wrong, this striving for an elusive perfection, this attempt to stay in blind obedience to the patriarchal God, were all anti-Life in its deepest sense. So the sacrifice of his life was to bring to all of us what he knew of the way back to the Garden.

What then, would it mean for each of us to follow Jesus' example, to allow Eve to emerge within us, to commune with the serpent, to risk a fuller fruit, to seek to lose our lives in a daring attempt to return consciously to the Garden? Some examples come to mind. It means I must try to find out what it is I honestly feel in each existential moment, and then decide whether or not to act upon those feelings, to contain them, or to seek to transform them within myself. Is my anger toward my neighbor a self-righteous evil on my part, or is there something that he/she really needs to hear? Am I being too nice? What egocentric self-image lies behind my generosity? Do I treat others as objects? What do my dreams say? It might mean I will have to speak out against a popular idea. It might mean saying no to a party, for the Way back to the Tree of Life requires much solitude; or perhaps I will have to work against an egocentric tendency to isolate myself. Perhaps I must deliberately abandon a compulsion which has brought me wealth, attention, pity, security, or even fame. I might have to say I am sorry to someone I was sure for fif-

teen years had wronged me. Perhaps I will have to go unnoticed, be labeled "weird," or make some enemies. I might have to start to speak the truth. The more I choose to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, the more my eyes will be opened to good and evil—not just yours, but mine as well. Then I can no longer remain innocent in paradise, expecting God to save me and take care of me, do it for me. But the price is high: I must seek to lose my life, to give up my walls, so painstakingly built.

And what might it mean for the Godhead if more of us chose to do the Serpent's bidding? Might it help create a more balanced duality—a truly holy marriage of the light and bright masculine God and the dark feminine Goddess? Isn't this what our world most needs—the return of the Feminine to her rightful place—within the Godhead, in the world, within each of us? A look around shows us that the masculine values alone, which have prevailed for 3000 years, have served to separate us further.

Why bother? Why not stay in the bliss of ignorance, safe behind our walls of automatic defense? What would it mean to reach the Tree of Life and "live forever"? Is this a literal statement or yet another metaphor? Perhaps one doesn't find out unless one is brave enough to defeat all the inner and outer

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*The price is  
 high:  
 I must seek  
 to lose my  
 life.*  
 ♥

obstacles and arrive back in the Garden . . . "few be they who find it." In the meantime, however, the process of conscious choice has very tangible fruits of its own. I might discover when I act from my true feelings that colors are brighter, that real love is growing between

me and another, that I can feel compassion where previously I was cold, that I can find peace and joy in the simple act of brushing my dog or taking a walk. I might unearth a talent which I had buried away in my fear. I might discover that striving is replaced by effortlessness and deeper breath. I might develop a new self-respect. I might find

that I have come to know God in a more personal way, as a kind of co-creator in the evolution of things. I might well remember all that I knew when I was three months old. Are these not "god-like" qualities? Yes, and truly, truly human. Happy Birthday, Eve!

♥  
*The process of  
 conscious  
 choice has very  
 tangible fruits.*  
 ♥

#### Acknowledgements:

1. Merlin Stone. *When God Was a Woman*. 1976. Harcourt Brace.
2. Elizabeth Boyden Howes and Sheila Moon. *The Choicemaker*. 1973. The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, IL.

*Marilyn Baldauf lives in Belmont, California and teaches English at Mountain View High School, south of San Francisco.*

# Convention 1990

**P**lan your summer now to include the 1990 convention in Alberta, Canada! The convention will open the evening of Wednesday, June 27 and close with lunch Sunday, July 1, (Canada Day). Ministers and spouses will arrive for their meetings Saturday, June 23, with the first meeting Sunday, June 24 at 9:00 AM.

This year's convention, hosted by the Western Canada Conference, will be held on the very modern campus of Olds College on Route 2, about 65 miles north of Calgary. The campus is flat—it's in Canada's Great Plains—with all buildings close together and easily accessible at tangents from the dorm where we will be staying; the two-story dorm building has an elevator. There is well-planned access for the handicapped. We will be housed and fed in one building which is right between the two others we will be using for meetings and minicourses; it's easy walking for everyone.

Olds College is a well-known agricultural school with top-quality programs, a cheerful staff, working herds of cattle and hogs, horses, and greenhouses full of lovely hybrids. The college is located about 80 miles from Drumheller, a leading dinosaur excavation site in the Alberta badlands, and about 90 miles from the Columbia Icefields via the scenic Thompson Highway. The town of Olds is about 2-1/2 hours' drive south of Edmonton with its incredibly huge mall and one hour north of Calgary, where the world-famous Calgary Stampede will take place from July 6 through 15.

So—plan your vacation to include convention week in lovely Alberta, and stay tuned for more news!

## The Family Connection

### Bible Study Notes

Complete six-volume sets of the *Bible Study Notes*, by Anita S. Dole, are still available for purchase. These volumes connect Bible stories with a person's regeneration process and explore many correspondences in depth. Lesson notes are divided by age groups, ranging from primary to adult. The lessons can be a valuable resource for individuals and homes as well as churches and Sunday schools. The cost for six volumes is \$40.50 plus shipping. They can be ordered through The Swedenborg Library, 79 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116 (phone: 617-262-5918).

### Family Assistance Funding for Children Attending Convention

Some funds are available to help with costs of children attending Convention. If you need additional assistance beyond what a local church or association can provide, and have not received this assistance twice before for the same child or children, you are eligible to apply. By May 21, please submit names and ages of children for whom you are applying, and please indicate for how many days and nights the children will be attending. Please submit this information to: Rev. Dr. Ted Klein, Children's and Family Ministry, 273 Perham Street, West Roxbury, MA 02132 (617-325-1214).

### Five Smooth Stones

It was announced in the January issue of *The Messenger* that *Five Smooth Stones* has resumed publication, with subscriptions for individuals \$4.00/year for four issues. However, it should be noted that there are special rates for Sunday schools. To subscribe, contact Betty Hill, 115 Graham Street, Saginaw, MI 48602.

(Editor's Note: The following article is the first in a series Rev. Dr. Stanley is writing on some of the more important matters raised by *A Course in Miracles*, in the hope that they will help to increase interest in the Course among New Church readers.)

# At-Onement

## The Relationship Between *A Course in Miracles* and the Spiritual Philosophy of Swedenborg

Michael Stanley

I wonder what sort of wonders spring to your mind when you hear the word, 'miracle'? Or what you might expect to find in a book with the strange title, *A Course in Miracles*, and which begins, "There is no order of difficulty in miracles"? Readers familiar with Swedenborg's usual use of the term 'miracle' to describe the special acts of Divine intervention recorded in the Word, may feel such a book is likely to be alien to the spirit of Swedenborg's philosophy of *inner* transformation, rather than *outer* wonder working. A first glance into the book may also give an impression that it diverges from Swedenborg on such key topics as the Trinity, perception, and the nature of fallen mankind, as indeed was my own reaction on discovering the Course in 1983, though I *was* moved by its style and atmosphere.

However, I had learnt from previous experience not to dismiss works of a spiritual nature on a first reading, and on persevering with the Course I realized that not only did it harmonize with Swedenborg's teaching, but it also helped to deepen my own understanding of what Swedenborg's books reveal. Because Divine Truth is essentially infinite and beyond man's finite comprehension, different spiritual philosophies expressing it in different ways often interact in our minds to lead us beyond words to a deeper insight into the Truth which is beyond direct expression.

I would like to share with you something of the 'at-onement' (a central concept in the Course) that I have found between it and Swedenborg—two spiritual philosophies written in such different styles over two

centuries apart.

Unlike Swedenborg's essentially structured approach to the nature of God and man, the Fall and redemption, the Course follows a more Zen-like approach to Christian enlightenments. It endeavours to shake us out of an illusory experience of life to an inner experience of what it more truly is. So, for example, it focuses not on the Christ of history or theology, but of inner awareness. In place of an objective theology, or a vision of what Christ is like, we are offered an experience of 'Christ vision'—to see through the eyes of the Christ within, rather than of the *proprium* or ego which is trapped in the illusions of space and time. Rather than attempting to look *at* the Truth, the Course endeavours to help us see *from* Truth, which is described in Swedenborg's terms as the 'truth of good', or truth which comes from being in the state of good or harmony with the Divine. In rather bare terms Swedenborg states how different

this form of truth is from the earlier inferior truth that is learned and which looks toward what is good. This reason alone is sufficient, I believe, to account for why the Course seems so different.

Like Swedenborg, though with this different approach, the Course shows up the falsity of traditional theology when it ceased to base itself squarely on the two great commandments. However, its style of presenting its teaching is more reminiscent of the

personally addressed discourses in John's gospel, whilst also drawing frequently on the material of Jesus' 'sermons' in Matthew's gospel. But it is with regard to the ego and Fall of man (Swe-

denborg's '*proprium*') that I find the Course particularly enlightening, helping us to see through many illusions to which we normally succumb in our everyday experience of life. Swedenborg also lists several key illusions of the *proprium*, but those in the Course seem to get closer to the heart of where we keep going wrong in so many subtle ways, day in, day out. Because of our difficulty in maintaining a non-illusory view, the Course returns again and again in ever varied ways to make us more aware of the illusions and provides helpful texts and affirmations to help release us from subjection to their subtle influence.

Overall the Course endeavours to make the eternal truth a reality within our experience—that the Kingdom of God is within us. In this I believe it succeeds remarkably well and provides a most stimulating and helpful psychospiritual complement to the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Church.

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A Course in Miracles group meets regularly at New Church College. It began more than six years ago, led by Barbara, who is now my wife. All its members attend the evening discussion groups at the College. They find the Course of great practical help and very related to our Bible Study, Doctrinal classes and spiritual growth work.

Rev. Dr. Michael W. Stanley, M.Sc., Ph.D., is currently Principal of the New Church College (Swedenborgian) in Manchester, England, where, in addition to teaching, he leads groups in the development of spiritual understanding, awareness and potentials. He also lectures publicly on the importance of Swedenborg's teachings for gaining a true spiritual understanding of the New Age phenomenon. Emanuel Swedenborg, *Essential Readings (Crucible, 1989)* edited and introduced by Dr. Stanley, is now available from the Swedenborg Foundation. Requests for book, video and cassette list and lecture subjects and synopses may be sent to: New Church College, 25 Radcliffe New Road, Radcliffe, Manchester, M26 9LS. Telephone 061-766 2521.

♥  
***The Course  
endeavours  
to shake us  
out of an  
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experience  
of life.***  
♥

## Growing Pains

# The Bottom Line

Eric Allison

When asking the question "what's the bottom line?" we are really asking "how much does it cost?" If our churches are to grow there is indeed a price that we must pay. We cannot be like the man who said that he earnestly wanted the world to be a better place, he just didn't want anything to be different.

We all know the parable of the talents told by Jesus in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. This is a good place to begin because we can find ourselves, our church, and our world in the story. We are the servants. The Lord, the church, and causes devoted to helping others are represented in the story as the master who gave the talents. We need to ask ourselves honestly "which servant am I?"

The Lord tells us that two of the servants returned their talents with interest and were rewarded. The servant who received the least buried his talent. The master said, "Cast the useless servant into the outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth there." The story is told to tell us about the "useless servant." He was the one who wanted to keep things exactly as they were. Is the Lord telling us that there can be no religion without adventure? Yes! "*Religion dies when the hope of high adventure is repressed.*"<sup>1</sup> Is he telling us that there is no use for a closed mind? Yes! But, there is even more meat to this story which gives us a much greater challenge.

I have always disliked this parable because I felt sorry for the poor servant

thrown into the outer darkness. However, search as I might there is no way to sugar-coat this story. It is the Lord who is doing the "casting into the outer darkness." Swedenborg explains (Apocalypse Explained 675c.18): *It is taken away from him who has acquired nothing of intelligence and given to him who has much because when a person after death becomes a spirit he carries with him all things, and every single thing he has drawn from the word and from the doctrine of the church . . . those who misuse the truths and goods of heaven and the church have these goods and truths taken away from them and given to those who have many since these do not misuse them but perform uses.*

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***Is the Lord  
telling us  
that there  
can be no  
religion  
without  
adventure?***

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So, this parable is a rather blunt picture of life as it is. God gives us different talents and resources. We are not equal. However, it is not so much what we are given as it is how we use what we have that matters. God does not expect us to do things beyond our abilities. The Lord demands that we use to the fullest extent what we have been given to strengthen the good in the world.

A popular quotation from the writings states, "It is not as difficult to

live the life that leads to heaven as many believe." I have always interpreted this to mean you get a very big E for effort. Genuinely trying is as important as succeeding. The servant who is punished does not even try. The servant did not lose his talent—he simply did nothing with it. The condemnation

of him is because he would not RISK using it for the good of others. The apparent divine law is this: If a person has a talent and puts that talent to use s/he is increasingly able to put it to greater use. The reverse is also true. If we don't use it, we lose it.

How is the parable of the talents applicable to you and your congregation, or what can you do to be one of the servants who were rewarded? It is not by accident that the "talents" the Lord spoke of were amounts of money. The talents are specifically a reference to time, talent, and money given in service to God. Do you know what percentage of your time and money is given to your local church and or charities? Take the time to figure out exactly what is the percentage that you give. How much should you give? The Word tells us to tithe. Tithing to God has a history which begins with Jacob. Genesis 28:22 "and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that Thou givest me I will give the tenth to Thee." While there is much in the Word which tells us to tithe, finding a Swedenborgian who tithes is a rare experience. Our church puts such a premium on personal freedom that financial accountability has always been a very private matter. Perhaps, like me, you have always considered tithing to be a fundamentalistic aberration and dismissed it without a second thought because it just seemed like too much money to give. Some might argue that there must be an internal sense to the term *tithing*. Yes, there is an internal sense to tithing but it does not get us off the ten percent hook. In A.E. 675c.18, again, Swedenborg writes: *the tenth part "signifies everything . . . it is from this that "tenth and tithings" derived their origin, and these signified that everything was holy and blessed*



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***If we don't use  
it, we lose it.***

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*when the tenth part of the threshing-floor and of the wine press, or of the corn and wine was given to the Levites." . . . of these it is thus written in the word . . . "Tithing thou shalt tithe all the increase of thy seed that is brought forth in the field year by year. (Deuteronomy 14.22)*

Somehow I always managed to ignore that spiritual directive. Even though I had read in church growth material about the importance of tithing I ignored the evidence because it simply was not the way Swedenborgians think. I have stopped ignoring the obvious. Sustained church growth is directly related to how much money is given to the church. In plain English it is "putting your money where your mouth is." I used to count the time I put in at the church which was over forty hours per week as part of my tithe. I don't anymore. The Word is clearly telling us that the ten percent of our income we give is above the time we give. I know that there are those who are on fixed incomes and can't give ten percent. That is O.K., however that is the exception, not the rule.

While I had always considered myself to be a generous giver I had never given ten percent. In my prayers one day it became clear to me that I could give up some material aspects of my life style. It was time to make the choice between God and Mammon. I cut out a few of life's frills and increased my giving to just above ten percent. I included as part of my tithe what I give to environmental groups and other charities. The amazing result was that I was given some spiritual frills that have made my life much richer.

Imagine how your church would change if everyone in the congregation gave one tenth of her or his annual in-

come! When that kind of personal investment is made it is inevitable that

the congregation will grow in number. It is no coincidence that there is a direct relationship between a growing church and the amount of annual contributions. It seems to be one of God's laws that we have not yet learned to follow. The fact is that the level of giving in many of our churches is pathetic. About 20 of our churches receive support from the augmentation fund and have for years. Most of our self-supporting congregations are in reality operating not from current contributions but from funds given by the ancestors of the membership. It does not take a clairvoyant to see that such a condition is indeed spiritually and administratively a worst-case scenario for a church.

Throughout the years I have often heard people speak about Convention as if it owed something to them. How would such an attitude fit into the parable of the talents? It is very unusual for one of our churches to even give back the talent it was given, let alone return it with interest. If we do not have a fundamental change in our attitude toward giving our little denomination most certainly will face extinction. In other denominations it is common for a local church to support itself entirely and give an annual contribution to its main office as well as tithe as a church to a mission or local cause. A common axiom often heard at church growth seminars states, "There is no record of any church in North America ever having sustained

growth if it has been dependent upon outside financial assistance for more than three years."

I know that these are strong words. They are meant to be. Our church is in a financial and spiritual crisis. There are some of you who give time and talent well beyond the call of duty. There are many others who give little. Convention will again this year run \$200,000 into the red. Our treasurer John Perry tells us that at this rate we will essentially be broke in five years.

Spiritually we are not broke. I believe that divine providence is present and active in our current situation. Like an alcoholic we have hit bottom. I be-

lieve that from here on out things will get better as each of us takes on a greater responsibility for supporting the church and for supporting the causes which are the greater work of the church in the world. Good things have already begun to happen. As every person increases her or his spiritual and financial commitment we will take a step out of the hole we have dug for ourselves and the talents we carry

out will multiply and grow beyond what we have imagined. What is the price of growth? As much change and commitment as it takes to be good servants of the Master. That is the cost and that is the bottom line.

<sup>1</sup> Alfred North Whitehead

*Rev. Eric Allison is Convention's Pastoral Ministries consultant on church growth.*

♥

***I was given  
some spiritual  
frills  
that made my  
life richer.***

♥

# Quantum Healing



***Body, mind  
and spirit  
must all be  
consciously  
involved.***



*Eric Zacharias*

In the course of recent activities at Camp Mennoscah we listened to a tape brought by Galen Unruh, based on Dr. Depak Chopra's book, *Quantum Healing*.

This title is somewhat puzzling—the message an intriguing one. Dr. Chopra is a physician practicing medicine in the U.S. and he also has in his background the practice of medicine as developed in India. The main thrust of his presentation is that in the healing process, whatever the illness may be, body mind and spirit must all be CONSCIOUSLY involved.

Indeed, for Dr. Chopra the body, mind and spirit are inseparable. Together, they make one entity. All three function as ONE even as the entire universe is one pulsating energy system.

Let me try to elaborate. The human body is made up of millions of cells. Each cell has its physical structure and each cell has its role in the functioning of the physical body. It is also something more. Each cell is conscious of the other cells—it feels joy or sadness or anger or it may be at peace with itself and all other cells. We think not only with our minds but with every cell within the body.

This might be likened to the smallest of sunbeams. The light of the sun holds within it all the brilliant colors of the most magnificent rainbow. If we were successful in capturing the tiniest of sunbeams and there came along a tiny shower, this would also reveal to us all the colors of the rainbow, each melding beautifully into one another. In

the same way every small cell of the human body holds within it everything that we are as a human being.

It is this concept that leads Dr. Chopra to say, for instance, that when we are happy, we are happy not only with the heart and mind but with every cell of the

body. Every cell is sent the message. There's more!

Dr. Chopra is convinced that every cell in your body has the gift of memory. It remembers good times, good health, and bad times, too. A small child who experiences rejection from parents and who may be constantly reminded that he is a disappointment sends repeated messages not only to the cells of his brain but to every cell of his body that he is not worth much.

One of the interesting features of all this is that Dr. Chopra's conception of the human body fits well with the view that is growing in acceptance. We must begin thinking in a global framework and even beyond this if man is to have a future. This principle applies also to the human body.

Does all of this not bring to mind that concept of the Grand Man offered us in the teachings of our church? From what has been said above, we have the doctor telling us that every cell of the body, every organ, is both physically and spiritually connected with every other cell and organ through the use that is being served.

The teachings of the church take this one step further. This is a pattern that is copied from that which exists in the spiritual world and, indeed, that the flow of life initiates from the Lord God and flows freely through the Grand Man of that kingdom and proceeds on its way ultimating itself in the tiniest life forms here.

Thus, heaven and earth function as one GRAND energy system bonded by the love and providential care of the Lord. "The universal angelic Heaven together with the Church on earth, before the Lord, is as One Man whose internal is constituted of the angelic Heaven, and its external of the Church."



***We think  
with every cell  
in the body.***



*(Editor's Note: Quantum Healing has its roots in the rediscovery of Ayur-Veda, India's ancient tradition of natural medicine that lays claim to being the oldest medicine on earth, predating the Chinese and Greek traditions by thousands of years. Dr. Chopra points out that Ayur-Veda's insights into the mind-body connection prove compat-*

*ible with the newest discoveries in modern physics. Citing principles from both disciplines, he describes the powers of healing that have led to remarkable or even miraculous cures in every culture, but have yet to be incorporated into modern medicine. When they are, he feels, the medicine of the future will emerge.)*

*Rev. Eric J. Zacharias is pastor at Pretty Prairie church, Kansas. His article is reprinted from The Plains Banner, November 1989.*

## Resources

# Love Your Planet

## Selective Buying Can Make a Difference



Now there's a guide for shoppers who want to know which cookie companies are owned by cigarette manufacturers, and which soap makers test their products on animals.

It's "Shopping for a Better World" by the New York City-based Council on Economic Priorities. The group rates companies according to their performance in 10 categories of social responsibility. Among the categories are: how much the company gives to charity, whether it enhances its own community (partially based on its record of labor disputes and litigation); and whether it has a business presence in South Africa.

You may not agree with all of the group's priorities, but you can pick and choose among the categories that you do care about; there are ratings for each company in each category. Believe it, this kind of selective buying can get a company's attention when there are numbers of us exercising our options based on better-informed choices.

Those interested in receiving a copy of the guide can do so by sending \$4.95 plus \$1 for postage to: Shopping for a Better World, Council on Economic Priorities, 30 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

### Pesticide Dangers

The National Resources Defense Council, a private environmental group with offices in several cities, has released a report showing that young

children, who customarily consume far more apple juice and fruit than do adults, are at greater risk of developing health problems from pesticide residues.

The environmental Protection Agency has virtually ignored the impact of pesticides on children because the legal limits of these substances are regulated by the EPA using information based on adult males.

Alar (daminozide) is such a pesticide. Although apple growers recently agreed to stop spraying their product with the substance, independent laboratories have found unacceptably high levels of residue in supposedly Alar-free apple products and apple juice.

As a result of the NRDC study, concerned people have joined together in a group called Mothers and Others for Pesticide Limits. The group's objective is to ensure that pesticide-and fungicide-free food is available to consumers.

The problem is not simply Alar. About 60 known carcinogens (cancer-producing drugs) and about 250 untested chemicals are now being used to treat fruit and vegetables. This is unacceptable because, although adults may be able to detoxify pesticide-treated food, children are more susceptible to its harmful, long-term consequences.

Mothers and Others, a subsidiary of NRDC, urge the following solutions:

- ♥ Congress must require the EPA to revise its legal limits on pesticide exposure.

- ♥ Those pesticides that pose serious health risks should immediately be banned.
- ♥ The Food and Drug Administration must improve its methods for detecting pesticide residues.
- ♥ Consumers must insist that farmers switch to low-(or no) pesticide farming to reduce the presence of carcinogens in the country's food supply.

To achieve these goals, Mothers and Others recommend that consumers:

- ♥ Insist on (certified) organically grown produce.
- ♥ Wash fruit and vegetables carefully to remove residues. (However, this is not always practical or successful, because many pesticides enter the product itself.)
- ♥ Write to government and elected officials to press for reform.

You can join Mothers and Others for Pesticide Limits by contributing \$15. The organization has published a book, *For Our Kids' Sake*, that addresses the pesticide problem in readable and understandable terms. It is available for \$7.95 (prepaid) by writing Mothers and Others, PO Box 96641G, Washington, D.C. 20090.

The issue of pesticide residue affects us all. We are entitled to pesticide-free food in our markets. National organizations, such as Mothers and Others, can bring about reform through consumer pressure, if they receive our support.

# Royal Oak Women's Alliance

## *Serving Church and Community*

No one in the Royal Oak (Detroit) Alliance can remember when or why the Detroit women first started meeting. Our records only go back to 1943 and our church celebrated its 150th anniversary in 1989.

During the years of the second World War, the Alliance was very active, meeting two and three times a month. One meeting was social and the others were work meetings for the Red Cross. The ladies made a lot of children's clothing for the war effort. The social meetings were card parties and luncheons.

In the fifties a new women's group was formed by the younger women in the Detroit church. This group, called The Tuesday Guild, was made up of women who found it difficult to attend the regular daytime alliance meetings because they either worked or had young children at home. The group met one Tuesday evening each month. The Tuesday Guild's activities included putting on banquets and bazaars as well as receptions for weddings held in the church. This group lasted until the early 70s when many of the women moved away. Those of us who were left then joined with the other Alliance group.

Today, this group consists of nine members (more or less) who meet once a month beginning in October of the church year, and ending in May. Meetings are held in our members' homes at 12 noon (for lunch) with the hostess furnishing dessert and beverages and the rest of us "brown bagging" our sandwiches or salads. After lunch our minister, Steve Pults, gives a short talk on various religious topics of current interest, with a discussion usually following. After lunch and the talk, our pastor makes a quick exit back to his office and the rest of us carry on our monthly business meeting with lively repartee.

Our officers for 1989-90 are Barbara Penabaker, president and card lady; Cynthia James, secretary; and Jo Locke, treasurer. Our meeting topics include planning menus for upcoming church luncheons, finding volunteers and bringing various food items. There are several projects that we sponsor or contribute to, such as the National Alliance and our Teen Outreach programs. We usually have a bake sale during the church year and use the profits for worthy causes. In the past we have contributed to World Vision, sponsoring a child. We participate in the CROP Walk and the Shelter Programs in Royal Oak.

Occasionally a "mini suitcase sale" is conducted with the proceeds sometimes going to our local Alliance and other times to our A-Mart at Almont Summer School. The donated merchandise contained in these suitcases is sold.

Our Women's Alliance, as always, welcomes new members and visitors. We hope to continue to serve our church and community for many more years.

*Submitted by Dean Trombly,  
past president of Royal Oak  
Women's Alliance.*

## To The Women's Alliance

### Greetings

### From Your President

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you. I have met many of you the past few years at Convention, but there are many of you out there who do not know who I am.



My name is Barbara Penabaker and I am a life-long member of the Detroit church. Both my parents were from the church and my Swedenborgian roots go back several generations. One of my ancestors helped to establish the Almont New Church Assembly.

I have been very active in all of the church organizations in Michigan, serving on boards and as an officer, including president of the Royal Oak Swedenborgian Church, the Almont New Church Assembly and the Michigan Association. Presently I am the president of both the Royal Oak and the Almont Alliances. I am also business manager of the Almont Summer School.

One of my goals as president of the national Alliance is to see more communication between the various alliance groups in Convention. One way we can achieve this goal is to have the Alliances continue to send their articles to *The Messenger*, telling about themselves.

Another way I would like to see the groups communicate is by having a Women's Alliance table at convention. On this table we could display projects and pictures of activities our women are working on during the year. Our mite box chair, Carol Rienstra, asked us to bring examples of our group's mite boxes to next year's convention. These mite boxes could be displayed on this table.

Anyone who would like to communicate with me can write to me at:

3447 Pall Dr.  
Warren, MI 48092  
or call (313) 751-1163

Articles for *The Messenger* can be sent to publication chair, Val Brugler at:  
1611 Cameron Road  
Almont, MI 48003

# Nurturing Ourselves

## A Retreat for Women



*Val Brugler*

Betsy Ledingham and Rev. Deborah Winter led a great retreat for women at the Almont New Church Assembly and Retreat Center in Almont, Michigan, November 3, 4 and 5, 1989. The theme for the weekend was Nurturing Ourselves and the focus was on taking the time to rediscover our inner child and to give her a safe haven where she can live and we can visit her.

For those of you who did not attend the retreat and are a little lost as to what an "inner child" is, let me remind you. Your inner child was conceived and born a long time ago and grew up to be who you are right now. She was the one who discovered spiders and butterflies, matches, light sockets, and hot stoves, and that getting lost in department stores was no fun. She was the one who drew pretty pictures and felt good about herself when she was praised. She was the one who embarrassed her parents when she asked Aunt Mildred why she was fat and had a mustache. She was also the one who was told she had to keep her knees together when she wore a dress and yes, she had to wear a dress and no, it did not make more sense to wear pants in the first place because "you're not a boy." She is the one who kind of got lost in the nos and shoulds.

She was more spontaneous and relaxed about the things she thought and felt. She saw the world in a brighter light. She generally felt better about

**Almont 1989 Women's Retreat. (From top left, clockwise) Kim Kearns, Jennifer Knaack, B.J. Neuenfeldt, Val Brugler, Val Lau, Betsy Ledingham, Bev Titus, Rev. Deborah Winter, Pat Basu, Fran Lau, Karen Cowen, Linda Blosser, Renae Billings.**

herself than you feel about yourself and believed it when she was told that she was a child of God. Between then and

now, she has gotten hurt a lot and has forgotten and denied some of her freedom. Because that freedom and spontaneity sometimes got her into trouble she started to wear heavy armor all the time just to be prepared. She may not need that armor anymore. That child that you were is still as real as she was. She may be living in an old musty attic, covered with dust and cobwebs or in a memory that contains the most pain she has ever felt, which is why we had a retreat and decided to give her some elbow room in a garden paradise and give her present persona a thrill. Just to look into her beaming innocent face gives our life new purpose. To feel through her feelings lifts burdens we no longer need to carry around.

The retreat enabled us to feel good. We used our childlike imaginations to create soft cuddly winged creatures who live in lush, colorful gardens, who make cute funny sounds and do good things for others, and others like them just the way they are. We shared memories and fabricated new and improved endings for painful ones. Mostly we took the opportunity to feel good. Thank you, Deborah and Betsy and all the other fourteen participants. Like the bird kite that I made, the weekend left more glitter than time could ever sweep away.



# MEN'S WEEKEND RETREAT

*at Swedemborg House, Deland, Florida*

**"Journey to Wholeness"**  
*led by Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson*

*with Joseph Campbell, Robert Bly, and Swedenborg as resources, we will use experiential exercises with meditation, mythology, fairy tales, story-telling and drumming to empower ourselves, share and grow.*

**Friday, March 9, 7:30 pm—Sunday, March 11, 10 am**

\$50 fee includes lodging and meals

**For more information, contact Rev. Thorhallsson at  
(914) 734-7378**

Transportation provided from Daytona and Orlando airports

## Opinion

### Is Death Penalty Effective Deterrent?

Dear Editor,

Carl Yenetchi's letter to the Editor about the death penalty in the November 1989 *Messenger* did not face the questions Nan Paget raised in her letter in the July/August issue. Mr. Yenetchi says "I do not believe that the taking of a life can in any way compensate a victim's family." I agree. But Ms. Paget's letter was not about compensation; it was about deterrence—preventing other murders of innocent victims.

There are two questions to be asked before we can make a decision about the death penalty: 1) Does it deter further murders? And if it does, then 2) Is it the *best* deterrent—i.e. does it deter more murders than any other punishment?

If the answer to both of these questions is yes, then those who oppose the death penalty are, indeed, valuing the lives of murderers more than the lives of victims. If the study by Isaac Erlich (which Ms. Paget refers to) is correct,

then for every execution blocked by opponents of the death penalty, seven to eight people will be murdered. This could not be called "valuing the lives of victims."

But if the answer to either or both of these questions is no, there can be no excuse for the death penalty.

We need to look into the issue until we find answers to these questions. I would like to see the study Ms. Paget refers to, and any other studies on either side of the debate.

If there is a legitimate use for the death penalty, then it should be limited to the worst crimes, such as serial killings, where there is no doubt of the criminal's guilt.

The article, "The Non-Avenging Angel of Death Row" in the same issue as Mr. Yenetchi's letter is based on a currently popular notion: that a criminal's upbringing is responsible for his "antisocial" behavior.

Certainly our upbringing does

deeply affect our later life. Yet there are many thousands of people who grow up in terrible, abusive circumstances and do not become rapists and murderers.

To say that all of our destructive actions are merely a result of our upbringing is to reduce human beings to the level of behavioristically determined animals. By denying that anyone could *choose* to be a murderer, we deny human free will, which is central to the beliefs of our church. If people cannot choose both good *and* evil, free will has no meaning.

We can't judge whether any particular murderer is a spiritual murderer or not. To claim that all murderers are actually decent people who only need to be loved and understood is to make just such a spiritual judgment.

The purpose of civil law is not to make spiritual judgments. It is to preserve order in earthly society so that ordinary people can live peaceful, productive lives without fear for their lives and

## Commencements

### Baptism

**Bandy**—Lindsay Marie Bandy, daughter of Larry and Kim Bandy of Pawnee Rock, was baptized into the Christian faith November 26, 1989, at the New Jerusalem Church, Pawnee Rock, Kansas, the Rev. John Bennett officiating.

**Hill**—Guy Hill and sons: Justin Lee and Catlin Dan, were baptized into the Christian faith October 22, 1989, at the Church of the Holy City, Edmonton, the Rev. Henry Korsten officiating. The two boys are grandchildren of Philip and Astrid Watson.

**Lawson**—Christopher Carroll Lawson was baptized into the Christian faith November 25, 1988, at West Farm, Gravel Hill, Virginia, the Rev. Ernest Martin officiating.

**Meyer**—Scott Robert Mitchel Meyer, grandson of Jim and Eleanor Spencer of St. Albert, Alta., Canada, was baptized into the Christian faith December 10, 1989, at the Church of the Holy City, the Rev. Henry Korsten officiating.

the lives of their families.

If the death penalty is the most effective way to preserve and protect this peace in society from certain types of violent criminals, it should be retained. If not, it should be abolished.

Lee Woofenden  
Guemes Island, Washington

Dear Editor,

A big Thank You for printing our request for information about Abraham Lincoln (November *Messenger*). Not only did we receive extensive information from Mrs. Louise Woofenden and SSR but also from many church members across the country! We sincerely appreciate all the responses not just for the material on Lincoln but even more for the effort of thought for another church member however remote or far away!

Our very best to you and all the church during this especially bright time of growing Peace and Freedom in the world.

Mary and David Carper  
Brookings, Oregon

### Deaths

**Bright**—Lawrence L. Bright entered the spiritual world December 19, 1989. Resurrection services were conducted December 22 at Pawnee Rock Church, Pawnee Rock, Kansas, the Rev. John Bennett officiating.

**Pavey**—Miriam Pavey entered the spiritual world December 6, 1989. Resurrection services were conducted at Agudas Israel Synagogue, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, the Rabbi Jeffery Gale officiating. (See box, this page.)

**Richardt**—Mary Ruth Richardt (age 69) entered the spiritual world December 1, 1989. Resurrection services were conducted December 4 at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, the Rev. David L. Sonmor officiating. Mary joined the Saskatoon Study Group four years ago. She died of cancer.

**Walker**—Lewis A. Walker entered the spiritual world December 1, 1989. Resurrection services were conducted December 3 at Wood Funeral Home, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. James F. Lawrence officiating. Lewis was the husband of Beverly Walker who served two terms as Chair of the Fryeburg New Church Trustees. He was a local carpenter who did work at the church and the renovation work at the parsonage. He will be greatly missed by all of us.

**Whittaker**—Michael Henry Whittaker (age 39) entered the spiritual world December 7, 1989. Resurrection services were conducted at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, the Rev. David L. Sonmor officiating. (See box, this page.)

### Change of Address

**Munger**—Mrs. R.C. Munger, 1705 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

**T**he January issue of *The Messenger* had already gone to press when I received the following note from Rev. David Sonmor, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: *The dangers of winter travel in western Canada were brought close to home on Sunday, December 3, when two of our church members were killed and one seriously injured in a car accident when returning to Saskatoon from our service in Rosthern. We ran into an unseasonable rain, the highway became a sheet of ice and their car skidded into oncoming traffic. Michael Whittaker and Miriam Pavey were killed, and the driver, Betty Pratchler, is still in the hospital recovering from chest injuries. It has been quite a shock for our little group here in Saskatoon.*

*Michael Whittaker was a musician and composer of children's songs. He had joined our Saskatoon group this past fall. Miriam was president of the newly re-organized Saskatoon Swedenborgian Society. She and her husband, Rabbi Roger Pavey, were part of our staff at Paulhaven Summer Camp this past July. She leaves two sons, Jonathan (age 14) and Danny (age 12).*

*Miriam Pavey's reminiscence of her time spent at Paulhaven last summer appeared on page 6 of The Messenger, January 1990, titled "A Place Out of Time and Space." Our prayers are with their families and congregations.*

## Ask Swedenborg!

by George Dole

**Q:** *How does Swedenborgian theology help reconcile science, carried to its ultimate, with the idea of a personal God?*

**A:** The reconciliation of science and religion was a matter of primary concern to Swedenborg himself, and his published works show a significant progression.

From an essentially mechanistic approach in the 1734 *Principia*, he moved to the exploration of the human body as the soul's home in the 1740 *Economy*, and by 1744 was ready to admit that he could not find the soul by purely scientific (that is, strictly empirical) methods. By the time he started publishing *Arcana*

*Coelestia* in 1749, he was convinced that matter was simply the final or ultimate effect of the one essential substance, love.

The science that began with the Enlightenment and has claimed the field to the present assumes as a fundamental premise that causes are to be found only in the past. Darwin, for example, in his *Origin of Species*, noted that thirty-four previous scholars believed in "the modification of species," and objected to one

in particular because he invoked "a principle of finality"—that is, that he assumed that there was a purpose to the development. Swedenborg does not deny the kind of causality that science rests on, but he insists that it provides only a very partial answer. When he says that nature in and of itself is dead (*cf. Arcana Coelestia* 1409, 1628), he is saying that it has no intrinsic life; and this means that it has no intrinsic love or purpose.

He would, I believe, respond to Darwin by asking on what grounds he ruled out purpose. Science may choose to do so, but in doing so it radically limits its field of inquiry. "If you gather *everything* that is known . . . and explore in some elevation of spirit what is common to *everything*, you can only conclude

that it is love and wisdom" (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 28, italics mine). Almost by definition, science cannot explain how purpose evolves from matter.

Currently, David Bohm in the field of science and Huston Smith in philosophy raise similar objections to the impersonality of science, and quantum physics in particular finds strict mechanism inadequate.

♥  
*Nature,  
in and of itself...  
has no intrinsic  
love  
or purpose.*  
♥

## ☞ Keep Your Messengers Coming!

If you haven't already sent your renewal notice, why not take time now to write your name and address on the form in your November, December or January issues, and mail it in.

Or,

just paste your return address label on a piece of paper, let us know you wish to continue receiving

*The Messenger*, and we'll be sure to keep you on the mailing list.

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