

# The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH  
OCTOBER 1982

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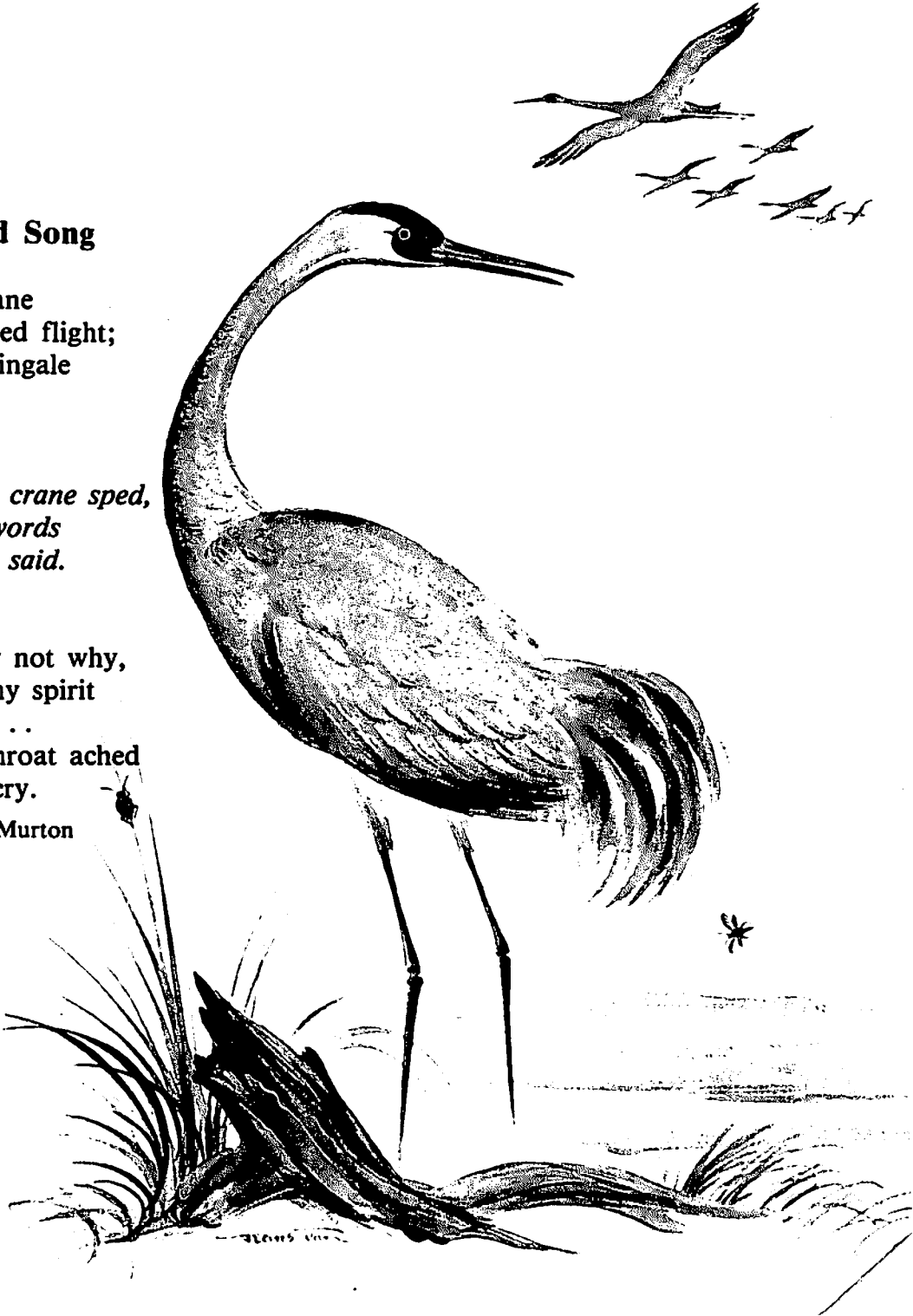
## Of Flight and Song

I watched a crane  
In its long-legged flight;  
I heard a nightingale  
Weep at night.

*I do not know  
Where the wild crane sped,  
Nor what the words  
The nightingale said.*

I only know,  
Though I know not why,  
The wings of my spirit  
Strained to fly . . .  
And my own throat ached  
With a muted cry.

Jessie W. Murton



## BUSCAGLIA ON LOVE

There is a lot of mental junk food and pabulum on television, but the discerning viewer can also find a considerable number of programs that are stimulating, mind-expanding and just plain fun to watch. This week we had the privilege of watching five hour-long lectures by Leo Buscaglia, author of the best-seller *Love*, on Public Broadcasting System Ch. 17, Buffalo. Every five or six weeks Buscaglia is featured on PBS; check your local listing. (Incidentally, if you are a devotee of political satire, don't miss Mark Russell, America's #1 satirist today, also on PBS.)

It is impossible to capture Buscaglia's incredibly lively, spontaneous spirit on paper; the man literally explodes with love and caring and sharing. He is convinced that love is the ultimate reality, and that our main purpose on this earth is to grow in love. Everything else is secondary. These are a few of Buscaglia's observations on love, life and time.

Think of what you are and who you are and all the fantastic potential of you. All of life is directed toward the process of becoming, of growing, of seeing, of feeling, of really living. There's no time to be bored.

You are different from every other human being in the whole world. Discover and glory in your own uniqueness.

The loving person recognizes and assumes responsibility for his own life. He doesn't expect other people to make him happy; he finds happiness within himself.

Being a good, loving human being is the greatest thing you can be. Don't try to be perfect, but be the best you that you possibly can be.

The loving person sees the world as a beautiful, magical, wonderful place; every day is filled with promise and surprises, if we can but see them.

Nothing ever stays the same. Change is inevitable, and when it is directed in love and for the well-being of oneself and other people, then change is always good.

Love needs freedom. We cannot force others into our way; we can only encourage them to find their unique way. Everyone growing in love will find their own path.

If you love someone, you will look at that person carefully. You will not take them for granted; you will express your affection for

them; you will want to share and enjoy life on all levels with them, and you will do this NOW. Tomorrow may be too late.

Responsible love has endless facets: it creates joy . . . it needs expression . . . it wants to share and unite . . . it is accepting and understanding . . . it is always changing and learning . . . it reaches out and embraces all people . . . the more we give it away, the more we have . . . love fully lives the present moment.

The most human thing we have to do in life is to learn to speak our honest convictions and feelings and live with the consequences.

Life is the most precious gift we have from God, don't waste it.

Through books, public lectures and classroom presentations Buscaglia reaches hundreds of thousands of people every year. He is a great exponent of the gospel of love; there are many others who, through example and words, are pioneering the same path of Light. And there are those who lament that the New Church is not growing!

P. Z.

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# Swedenborg's Psychology: Breath Control, Dream Interpretation, And The Trance-Reverie

(Part 1 of 3 Parts)

(A public lecture delivered by Eugene Taylor at the Swedenborg Library, Boston, Massachusetts, April 14, 1982.)

The religious psychology of Emanuel Swedenborg is much like a projective ink-blot, in that each person may derive from it something unique and valuable for their own use. The measure of its universality may, in fact, lie in this wide diversity of personal application. Broadly speaking, however, there are three kinds of people who are influenced by Swedenborgian ideas.

First, are the New Church men and women interested in Swedenborg's interpretation of religious experience as transmitted through the Christian denomination known as the Church of the New Jerusalem. They have an organized system of churches, congregations, and practicing ministers and study Swedenborg as Christian devotional practice.

Second, is a long tradition of educated intellectuals, who are interested in the philosophical and religious teaching of Emanuel Swedenborg, but not necessarily from the standpoint of Christian devotional practice. They have tended to be individuals interested in constructing their own unique understanding of ultimate reality and may or may not have ties to institutional religion. Such personalities include Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry James Sr., and Helen Keller. This group has historically fostered much creative dialogue regarding the appropriate interpretation of Swedenborgian ideas.

This brings me to a third group of persons influenced by Swedenborgian ideas, and they are the people who do not know it. There can be no doubt that Swedenborgian ideas played a seminal role in the development of a uniquely American literary aesthetic in the nineteenth century around Emerson and the Concord Transcendentalists. Such specific sources of influence, however, have been absorbed into the anonymous flow of culture from then until now. The tree bears the fruits of these ideas, which we are free to enjoy, but we ourselves are ignorant of who planted the seeds. I say this with tongue in cheek, since a well-known example in American folk-lore was Johnny Appleseed, who, of course, was John Chapman, and who, on his walking tours of the

American wilderness, distributed bound chapters of Swedenborg's works. Another example is the influence of Sampson Reed's *Growth Of The Mind* on Ralph Waldo Emerson's first book, *Nature*. Another is Henry James Sr's interpretation of Swedenborg and the effect his work had on his son, William James, and William's close friend, Charles Sanders Peirce, who had been adopted into the James family, as something of a spiritual son, in the mid-1860's. Peirce first proposed the idea of pragmatism, which, through James, became a major international movement in philosophy and influenced a variety of disciplines. This is what I mean by specific ideas entering into the anonymous flow of the *zeitgeist*—the flow of cultural consciousness from then until now that all of us benefit from, although we do not know the source.

I mention these three types of persons influenced by Swedenborg's works simply to indicate that I count myself as a member of the second group, in creative dialogue with Swedenborg's devoted followers, while interpreting at the same time, some of the archival sources that show the influence of his ideas on Twentieth Century American culture.

I am especially interested in the dialogue between psychology and religion. My interest is in the formation of a language of inner experience and in historical systems in the classical psychologies of Asia, as well as in the history of American psychology, particularly systems that describe techniques of personal discipline which may lead to the ultimate transformation of personality in a religious and spiritual sense.

The essence of Swedenborg's psychology, in my opinion, was his practice of spiritual discipline. Discipline for its own sake is a form of authoritarian control, but when exercised over another for the sake of growth, and when administered with loving intent, we may properly speak of discipline in a moral sense, such as when a parent exercises guidelines over a child. But there is a certain time in life, Swedenborg once said, when the education of a man is left to himself, which I take to mean that

by the exercise of self-discipline one's own life, as well as that of others, is improved. One's discipline is not for self-centered ends, but for the sake of others, yet, it is regulated solely by one's self. It is this element of improvement that gives discipline a religious quality—in other words, self-denial for a higher social aim, which is also asceticism practiced for purposes of looking within. In this sense, we may properly speak of spiritual discipline, and this, I maintain, was the essential element in Swedenborg's practice.

In my opinion, he had three principal methods; control of breathing, which he began practicing early in his life; the interpretation of his dreams, which he took up in mid-life, as a scientific tool to look within; and cultivation of the trance-reverie, which in its profoundest religious sense was a sophisticated variant of well-known techniques of meditation. He, himself, referred to the trance-reverie as a state of "passive potency".

### BREATH CONTROL

Swedenborg's biographers tell us that as a boy he began to develop systematic breathing exercises, which we assume were of his own design and he would practice regularly during morning and evening prayers. While he has much to say on the spiritual nature and function of respiration in his writings, biographically, the one most significant fact that is communicated to us concerns his suspension of breathing. I interpret this to mean not forced cessation of breathing, which produces strain, but rather a state of rapt absorption, where breathing has temporarily stopped without the person being aware of it. This is so because decreased physical activity in a meditative state calls for lower oxygen consumption. On the other hand, systematic exercises can also be practiced that oxygenate the tissues and cleanse the system of carbon dioxide, thereby allowing the suspension of breathing because the system does not lack oxygen. In the one case less oxygen is needed, as in breathing patterns witnessed during ordinary sleep, while in the other, the system is fully oxygenated, as in moments of quiet, alert stillness. Both are healthy and not morbid physiological conditions. Theoretically, the technical literature suggests that these two methods precipitate different types of meditative experiences, one rather full of mental contents, while the other tends toward an emptiness of mental activity.

In the Sankhya-yoga tradition in India, for instance, there is a system of breathing exercises

for developing one-pointed concentration called *pranayama*. The classical texts speak of varying the length of the in-breath or the out-breath, as well as a state of suspended breath, which is achieved after the cessation of intensive breathing practice. Even though details of Swedenborg's breathing system are lacking, it may be inferred from the kinds of inner experiences that he described, that his periods of suspended breathing were of this advanced type. This is further inferred from his pre-theological writings, which show he made major contributions in the field of anatomy and physiology. His knowledge of the body was acute and he knew that breathing is partly under voluntary control and partly under involuntary control. Hence, it is a doorway from the central nervous system into the autonomic nervous system.

Normally, we do not have conscious control over the autonomic nervous system. Breathing, however, is one way to establish communication between the two nervous systems. One does not command the heart rate to slow down or speed up, one does not demand that the glands secrete, or the stomach digest, or the intestines eliminate. In order for us to communicate with these dimensions of our nervous system we have to adopt a different kind of language—we do not command, but rather we must ask, hope, wish, even believe, that it will happen and then forget that we asked. A minute later we realize that the desired effect has been achieved. At the Menninger Foundation, where extensive biofeedback work is carried on, they call this passive volition. It is the giving up of wilful control, yet maintaining an active awareness. It is an understanding of the role of creative forgetfulness in the learning process, where we learn the value of the incubation period. You send out the seed and then you just have to wait until it sprouts. Breathing shows these autonomic characteristics, but with the added fact that we can also bring it directly and immediately under conscious control. Thus, it is a well-known doorway into deeper autonomic spheres. Swedenborg understood this, for when he turned from scientific and medical subjects to religious themes, he went to great lengths to describe the lines connecting the spiritual world to all the organs and tissues of the body. He said there was an exact correspondence between things in the natural world with things in the spiritual world.

So, as a result of his breathing, Swedenborg developed powers of intensive concentration. He applied these powers to the mastery of

scientific subjects the first half of his life, then he turned these powers inward and for the remaining forty years proceeded to witness the unfolding of inner spiritual events. His first period was intensively intellectual, while in his second phase he learned to appreciate his emotions. Yet, he understood the balance between intellect and emotion as the proper way to achieve objectivity. In the inner sphere he developed an attitude of objective looking, where you simply think with your mind and assume that your emotions do not pollute what it is that you are looking at. He developed a non-judgemental inner looking that was not clouded by preconceived ideas nor confused with feelings, although ideas and feelings were there as useful aids in the process. Ideas and feelings were not denied, they were just not confused with what was being observed. This was, Swedenborg felt, the real objective spirit of scientific inquiry.

So, he began to look at the nature of the body in a completely different way, and as I said, he drew some analogies between the correspondence of the body in the natural world and the mind in the spiritual world. He said that the capacities of the will and understanding at the level of the mind, which are intangible things that we cannot measure, have a correlation with physical organ activity, which is tangible and can be measured. The will corresponds to the heart and the understanding corresponds to the lungs. He searched through science for the soul and when he did not find it he turned within and what he found there was an inner correspondence with outward objects. Therefore, he equated breathing with an influx

of spiritual energy. Breathing is an external function, while influx of the spirit is internal. It was as if, as I breathe in deeply with my lungs and draw in air from the physical, at the same time, corresponding to this activity, I am being filled with the spirit of Divinity within myself. So, he said such interesting things as, (and I am paraphrasing him now), "You think it is you that is breathing, but it is not. This is just your confusion. You wander around thinking that you're homeless, and unconnected. This is not so. It is the Universe breathing through you."

Over the years of his own practice, Swedenborg obviously learned that controlled breathing precipitates a relaxed, focused, and intensive state of concentration. The idea is that by doing so, one unlocks reservoirs of energy in the subconscious.

One cannot go to meet this experience unprepared, however, because there are great dangers that attend self-exploration without the adequate controls that an experienced teacher can give. Otherwise one can fall into the abyss of psychoses, or become captivated by an archetype from the collective reservoir, as Jung once put it, or perhaps retreat from inner exploration altogether, because of some fright or unresolved and tangled experience. But in speaking of personal discipline, it is probably fair to say that Swedenborg was not alone. In fact, if we are to take his claims seriously, he was conversant for years with numerous disembodied souls. He believed that he was protected by Divinity and that God's angels were his guides.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## ETERNITY—THE DEATH OF DEATH

*(Part II)*

*by Friedemann Horn  
Zurich, Switzerland*

What kind of a content can we give to the idea of eternal life, which begins here and now and finds its completion "on the other side", that is beyond the threshold of death?

It cannot be denied that the New Testament really says very little on this subject. Let us cast our minds back to what was said earlier regarding the early expectation of the disciples and the infant church. Everybody hoped to experience the establishment of the Kingdom of

God in the flesh. They hardly believed in the possibility of dying beforehand. And even if that should happen, they were convinced that at the Second Coming of the Lord to establish his Kingdom they would be immediately raised from the dead to take part in his Kingdom. But time passed, and more and more men died without being "caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air", as Paul hoped at the Second Coming.

As a result various ideas gradually developed regarding the life after death, which however could in any case be only an interim condition. I will resist the temptation to give an historical survey regarding the so-called conceptions of the life beyond, which were supposed to fill the time between the death of the individual and the physical Second Coming of the Lord for the raising of the dead, the Last Judgment and the establishment of the Kingdom of God, an idea which has still not been abandoned. Instead I will enunciate a principle on this question.

Jesus obviously assumes as a fact that there is already—and always has been—a “plane of being”, a “world”, in which people live after death as resurrected either to eternal life or to judgment. Lazarus and the rich glutton appear after their departure from this world as complete men. Although they have left the physical body behind they have lost nothing essential. Both are fully conscious and have the use of their senses. The glutton suffers from the “flame”, he is thirsty, he can hear and see, he argues with “Father Abraham”.

Even in this life we occasionally find that our ideas are more real and living than our bodily sensations. Those who have returned after undergoing the experience of clinical death—and they are many—have all stated, independently of each other, that what they experienced in those moments was of an incomparable *intensity*.

I am not surprised at this, for if we are conscious as spiritual beings beyond the grave it must be so. I said earlier that the Greek word “pneuma” is practically the same as “a spirit”, but is also used with reference to the Holy Spirit, that is to God. “God is Spirit”. Anyone who, like the Seer of the Apocalypse, is “in the spirit” (Revelation 1, 10) is already here and now, although he has not yet put off the physical body, in a condition of power over his existence, of which other people cannot have any idea. It was said of Moses that when he appeared before the people after his dialogue with God, he had to hide his face because the ordinary people could not bear the supernatural light which came from it (Exodus 34, 29 - 35).

We can get quite a good idea of this from certain unusual dreams, which may be more intense than our waking experiences. However, the great visions of the prophets and seers of the Old and New Testaments are even more profound. The experience of the Divine so overpowered these men that in spite of all internal resistance they gave up their previous life completely and entered into the service of

God. Hallucinations, that is illusions of the senses, such as are experienced in intoxication or in mental illness, remarkably never have this effect. If therefore someone maintains he has had a vision and a commission from God, but goes on living as formerly, he should not be believed.

It is correct that that plane of being which we enter by the death of the body has been called “The Spiritual World”. If anyone objects, however, that it is not real enough for him, all we can say to him is that by this statement he simply indicates that he has no idea of the reality of spirit. Even Paul, whose attitudes regarding the time of the resurrection require correction, nevertheless knew that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 15, 50). And he declared with unsurpassable accuracy: “It is sown a physical body and is raised up a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body” (verse 44). The reading of the whole of the 15th Chapter of Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians is recommended.

“The worthy seer of our times”, as Goethe described Emanuel Swedenborg in the ‘Strassburger Gelehrten Anzeigen’, has written much in his numerous books which throws light on the essence and nature of the spiritual world. One of these works bears the title *Heaven and Hell, From Things Heard And Seen*, and has been printed in many translations and in repeated new editions up to the present day.

Unfortunately the majority of people imagine “spirits” as a kind of ghost or spectre with vague outlines or shapes. Spirits are however just as “real”, even more real than we are. Strictly speaking, we ourselves, apart from our physical bodies, are nothing but spirits. Thus our physical body is actually only a copy, or in other words a vessel and tool of our spiritual one. One could almost say that our material body is a kind of space suit which we, that is our spiritual personality, require in order to live in this space-time world. Actually our brain is, as the brain research scientist Sir John Eccles, who was awarded the Nobel prize, expressed it recently, “the computer which was made available to us for life in this earthly world, which provides the link between its user and the space-time world.” The Greeks were right in saying that it is the spirit which builds the body, but that is also biblical. God created the world by means of his Word: “God spoke and it came to pass . . .” “God is Spirit” “In the beginning was the Word (logos).” It is the logos which creates everything. Therefore what is spirit is more powerful in its being and effect than what is material or physical.

One of the numerous points of agreement between the statements of those who have experienced clinical death and then recovered with those of the great Christian seers—apart from Swedenborg I should like to refer here to Sadhu Sundar Singh—is just this “objectivity” and “intensity” of the spiritual world. Another is the moving descriptions of the arrival into the other world, where the newcomers are received by kind angelic beings, whom they often identify as relatives or friends who have predeceased them. We heard that Lazarus was carried by angels to Abraham’s bosom, that is to happiness. Swedenborg reports a great deal in amplification of this from his visionary experiences.

In conclusion I should like to deal with a further point, though one of decisive importance: How shall we occupy ourselves for eternity? Let us remember once more the hymn quoted at the beginning of this lecture: “For ever and ever is too long: to joke about it is quite wrong”.

The traditional Christian conceptions of the life beyond have fallen long ago into disrepute, simply because they amounted to unlimited boredom. Mark Twain caricatured the eternal praying, singing and praising of God in heaven, compared with which life in hell is actually deserving of the description.

It is no wonder that many people today are looking around outside traditional Christianity for ideas of life after death, and that books such as the Tibetan or the Egyptian “Books of the Dead” are having a surprising comeback. As the great psychologist of the subconscious C. G. Jung found, man needs a “myth of death”.

“It is however a very important interest of the aging person to familiarize himself with this possibility (i.e. that of death). He is pestered by the constant pressing question as to what it involves, and he feels he must answer it. For this purpose he ought to have a myth of death, as “reason” shows him nothing but the dark grave towards which he was moving. The myth however might give him other images for contemplation, more helpful and enriching images of life in the land of the dead.” (Jung: *Memories, Dreams and Thoughts*, 1962, p. 309).

Many leading theologians over the last half century were unwilling to accept this, because they were plagued by the consciousness of how many unfortunates in the birth pangs of the industrial age had been put off by the consolation of the proletarian masses by the

prospect of a better future hereafter, instead of fighting for their rights. Now they believe that the church should no longer offer men any consolation in respect of the hereafter, but only interest itself in the improvement of social conditions. As if these two aims were mutually exclusive! Every Christian who knows his Bible knows Jesus’ parable of the judgment, Matthew 25, 31 - 46. This clearly shows that the Kingdom of Heaven is only given to those who had accepted the poor and suffering here and now. Jesus says: “What you have done to one of the least of my brothers, that you have done to me.” Where then is the alleged contradiction between social involvement and the Christian faith in the afterlife?

C. J. Jung warns Christians against “decking themselves out with alien feathers” in relation to their religious conceptions. That is quite unnecessary, as far as the doctrine of death and resurrection is concerned. Apart from the decisive teachings of Jesus on this subject, we have in Swedenborg’s *Heaven and Hell* our own “Christian Book of the Dead”, which describes not only the transitional phase immediately after death, in the same way as the Tibetan “Book of the Dead”, nowadays so popular, but also the more important phases of life after death. In the heaven described therein there is no boredom nor any crippling impression of endless time. The reason is very simple and enlightening: The inhabitants of heaven are actually also children of God in that they share the love which God shows to them in the form of active love to their fellow creatures, by performing ‘uses’. In this way they not only serve the welfare of the whole, but also enjoy personally the greatest joy and deepest satisfaction—“eternal blessedness”.

We all know the saying of Jesus with which Swedenborg prefixed several of his works as his maxim: “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness, and all these things (that is the good things necessary for life) will be added unto you”? What is meant by the justice of the Kingdom of God, or—as Paul has it—by “the Justice which is valid in God’s sight”? Here also the answer is very simple and enlightening: To act from love to God and one’s fellow creatures! Those who in the here and now have adopted this as the guideline of their willing, thinking and acting, have heaven within them and enter heaven after death. There, however, as soon as they have with the help of God and the angels put off the “earthly residues painful to bear” (Goethe)—and this happens in the “World of Spirits”, which they first enter after death—they certainly go to that place where

they can perform that use or make that contribution to the welfare of the whole which best fits in with their talents. Their development, which now begins and is almost unlimited in its scope, corresponds to an ever more complete usefulness, and thus an ascent to ever higher "spheres".

Swedenborg has a great deal to say on the basis of what was shown to him regarding the "profession" and activities of the angels, which precludes any question of boredom. If it is not only understood quite literally, but as an indication of the almost unlimited evolution of men after the earthly life, it may help very much to give wings to faith and to form the earthly life in its image.

A feeble idea of the development possibilities after death is given by Swedenborg's assertion that the angels of the lower heavenly kingdom are a thousand times superior to people on earth, and they again are exceeded by the angels of the second or middle kingdom of the heavens, and the same applies to the relationship between the inhabitants of the further highest heaven and those of the second, so that

there is a multi-fold superiority of the angels of the highest heaven compared with people on earth. This gives us a slight indication of the developmental possibilities which await us after the death of the body, which far exceed our imagination.

Christian seers such as Emanuel Swedenborg or Sundar Singh, with their descriptions of life beyond the barrier of death, have met a legitimate need of men and women for comprehensible, adequate concepts of that life. Both bear witness to having been enlightened on the subject by the Lord of the Church and are above the suspicion of having dabbled in "spiritualism", that is, of having tried by their own power to penetrate the secrets behind the curtain. Swedenborg has in most cases not been taken seriously by Christians. Now a great demand for acceptable answers to these important questions has arisen; the time for the inclusion of his grandiose report on his experiences into Christian thinking regarding "last things" should no longer be far away.

*Translated from the German by  
Alfred Heron, Manchester, England.*

## ALLIANCE OF NEW CHURCH WOMEN

The distance was great, the time was short, however, for the 1982 Annual Meeting of the Alliance of New Church Women held in the Concert Hall at UCI, Irvine, California on Saturday morning. There was no planned breakfast due to circumstances beyond our control. Carole Rienstra led all in the worship service—"Living the Life". Bertha Berran took care of the Registration Book and the log shows 67 members and one guest present. It was extremely helpful to have Doris Tafel, our Treasurer, present. She reported that our Mite Box reached the best figure yet—\$1600.52 was donated to Camp Paulhaven in Western Canada. Many thanks to all who contributed and to Marge Ball, our enthusiastic chairperson.

Other donations have been made to the *Messenger*, Urbana College Library and to four Camps. A new tie tac was designed and 15 at \$3.50 were sold at Convention. In all 250 women's pins at \$4.00 and 100 men's pins at \$3.50 have been sold. Orders for all three can be filled by Doris Tafel. Corinne Tafel gave a glowing report on the Georgetown, Guyana group and their application to become a New Church Alliance was unanimously accepted. Welcome to all in that group from all of us.

Marilyn Turley presented our theme for a project this next year which was heartily received—"Strength of New Church Women". Thanks, Marilyn and we await further news on our thoughts. Doris Tafel's report on Church Women United was so very interesting—we would like to hear more.

Thanks to Jean Gilchrist, about 25 special greeting cards were signed and mailed to absentee Alliance friends.

At the post-Convention Board meeting plans were made for assistance with travel expenses, increase in membership dues, early appeal letter from Doris, maybe a change in one of our By-Laws, money making schemes, and just plain "reaching out".

Watch the *Messenger* for special articles as well as Perry Martin's "Feminine Connections". Many thanks to Elinor Johnson in contacting all Alliances and getting new names and addresses. If your Alliance did not get a report in please send it to our new Secretary, Margaret Kraus, and keep her informed of change in your officers—especially the secretary. We want to reach out to all Alliances and we need this information. Thank you.

The newly elected officers are:

President—Mrs. Donald (Mareta), Saul, Newport Beach, Ca.

(cont'd on page 196)

## The Peace Page

# THE NUCLEAR STANDOFF

## THE IRRATIONALITY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

*Mr. Kennan, former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, is a diplomatic historian and professor at Princeton's Institute for Advanced Studies. This article is adapted from an address he delivered after receiving the Albert Einstein Peace Prize.*

Adequate words are lacking to express the full seriousness of the United States' present situation. It is not just that we are, for the moment, on a collision course politically with the Soviet Union, and that the process of rational communication between the two governments seems to have broken down completely; it is also—and even more importantly—the fact that the ultimate sanction behind the conflicting policies of these two governments is a type and volume of weaponry which can not possibly be used without utter disaster for us all.

For more than 30 years wise and farseeing people have been warning us about the futility of any war fought with nuclear weapons and about the dangers involved in their cultivation. Every President from Dwight D. Eisenhower to Jimmy Carter has tried to remind us that there could be no such thing as victory in a war fought with such weapons. So have a great many other eminent persons.

So much has already been said. What is to be gained by reiteration? What good would it now do? Look at the record: Over all these years the competition in the development of nuclear weaponry has proceeded steadily, relentlessly, without the faintest regard for all these warning voices. We have gone on piling weapon upon weapon, missile upon missile, new levels of destructiveness upon old ones.

We have done this helplessly, almost involuntarily: like the victims of some sort of hypnotism, like men in a dream, like lemmings heading for the sea, like the children of Hamelin marching blindly along behind their Pied Piper. And the result is that today we have achieved—we and the Russians together—in the creation of these devices and their means of delivery, levels of redundancy of such grotesque dimensions as to defy rational understanding.

I know of no better way to describe it. But actually, the word redundancy is too mild. It

implies that there could be levels of these weapons that would not be redundant. Personally, I doubt that there could. I question whether these devices are really weapons at all. A true weapon is at best something with which you endeavour to affect the behavior of another society by influencing the minds, the calculations, the intentions, of the men who control it; it is not something with which you destroy indiscriminately the lives, the substance, the hopes, the culture, the civilization, of another people.

What a confession of intellectual poverty it would be—what a bankruptcy of intelligent statesmanship—if we had to admit that such blind, senseless acts of destruction were the best use we could make of what we have come to view as the leading elements of our military strength! To my mind, the nuclear bomb is the most useless weapon ever invented. It can be employed to no rational purpose. It is not even an effective defense against itself. It is only something with which, in a moment of petulance or panic, you commit such fearful acts of destruction as no sane person would ever wish to have upon his conscience.

### The need for deterrence

There are those who will agree, with a sigh, to much of this, but who will point to the need for something called deterrence. This is, of course, a concept which attributes to others—to others who, like ourselves, were born of women, walk on two legs, and love their children, to human beings, in short—the most fiendish and inhuman of tendencies. But all right: Accepting for the sake of argument the profound iniquity of these adversaries, no one could deny, I think, that the present Soviet and American arsenals, presenting over a million times the destructive power of the Hiroshima bomb, are simply fantastically redundant to the purpose in question. If the same relative proportions were to be preserved, something well less than 20% of these stocks would surely suffice for the most sanguine concepts of

deterrence, whether as between the two nuclear superpowers or with relation to any of those other governments that have been so ill-advised as to enter upon the nuclear path.

Whatever their suspicions of each other, there can be no excuse on the part of the United States or the Soviet Union for holding, poised against each other and poised in a sense against the whole Northern Hemisphere, quantities of these weapons so vastly in excess of any rational and demonstrable requirements.

How have we got ourselves into this dangerous mess?

Let us not confuse the question by blaming it all on our Soviet adversaries. They have, of course, their share of the blame, and not least in their cavalier dismissal of the Baruch Plan (which would have established international supervision of atomic development) so many years ago. They, too, have made their mistakes; and I should be the last to deny it. But we must remember that it has been we Americans who, at almost every step on the road, have taken the lead in the development of this sort of weaponry. It was we who first produced and tested such a device; we who were the first to raise its destructiveness to a new level with the hydrogen bomb; we who introduced the multiple warhead; we who have declined every proposal for the renunciation of the principle of "first use"; and we alone, so help us God, who have used the weapon in anger against others, and against tens of thousands of helpless noncombatants at that.

I know that reasons were offered for some of these things. I know that others might have taken this sort of a lead, had we not done so. But let us not, in the face of this record, so lose ourselves in self-righteousness and hypocrisy as to forget our own measure of complicity in creating the situation we face today.

What is it then, if not our own will, and if not the supposed wickedness of our opponents, that has brought us to this pass?

The answer, I think, is clear. It is primarily the inner momentum, the independent momentum of the weapons race itself—the compulsions that arise and take charge of great powers when they enter upon a competition with each other in the building up of major armaments of any sort.

We have to break out of the circle. We have no other choice.

How are we to do it?

### **SALT negotiations**

I must confess that I see no possibility of doing this by means of discussions along the

lines of the negotiations that have been in progress, off and on, over this past decade, under the acronym of SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty). I regret, to be sure, that the most recent SALT agreement has not been ratified. I regret it, because if the benefits to be expected from that agreement were slight, its disadvantages were even slighter; and it has a symbolic value which should not have been so lightly sacrificed. But I have no illusion that negotiations on the SALT pattern—negotiations, that is, in which each side is obsessed with the chimera of relative advantage and strives only to retain a maximum of the weaponry for itself while putting its opponent to the maximum disadvantage—I have no illusion that such negotiations could ever be adequate to get us out of this hole. They are not a way of escape from the weapons; the whole concept of relative advantage is illusory. The danger lies not in the possibility that someone else might have more missiles and warheads than we do, but in the very existence of these unconscionable quantities of highly poisonous explosives, and their existence, above all, in hands as weak and shaky and undependable as those of ourselves or our adversaries or any other mere human beings.

### **WHAT WAY OUT?**

I can see no way out of this dilemma other than by a bold and sweeping departure—a departure that would cut surgically through the exaggerated anxieties, the self-engendered nightmares, and the sophisticated mathematics of destruction—in which we have all been entangled over these recent years—and would permit us to move, with courage and decision, to the heart of the problem.

President Ronald Reagan recently said, and I think very wisely, that he would "negotiate as long as necessary to reduce the numbers of nuclear weapons to a point where neither side threatens the survival of the other." But I wonder whether the negotiations would really have to be at such great length. What I would like to see the President do, after due consultation with Congress, would be to propose to the Soviet government an immediate across-the-board reduction by 50% of the nuclear arsenals now being maintained by the two superpowers—a reduction affecting in equal measure all forms of the weapon, strategic, medium range and tactical, as well as all means of their delivery.

All this would be implemented at once and without further wrangling among the experts, and would be subject to such national means of

verification as now lie at the disposal of the two powers. Whether the balance of reduction would be precisely even—whether it could be construed to favor statistically one side or the other—would not be the question. Once we start thinking that way, we would be back on the same old fateful track that has brought us where we are today.

Whatever the precise results of such a reduction, there would still be plenty of overkill left—so much so that if this first operation were successful, I would then like to see a second one put in hand to rid us of at least two thirds of what would be left.

Now I have, of course, no idea of the scientific aspects of such an operation; but I can imagine that serious problems might be presented by the task of removing, and disposing safely of, the radioactive contents of the many thousands of warheads that would have to be dismantled. Should this be the case, I would like to see the President couple his appeal for a 50% reduction with the proposal that there be established a joint Soviet-American scientific committee, under the chairmanship of a distinguished neutral figure, to study jointly and in all humility the problem not only of the safe disposal of these wastes, but also the question of how they could be utilized in such a way as to make a positive contribution to human life, either in two countries themselves or—perhaps preferably—elsewhere. In such a joint scientific venture we might both atone for some of our past follies and lay the foundation for a more constructive relationship.

It will be said that this proposal, whatever its merits, deals with only a part of the problem. This is perfectly true. Behind it there would still lurk the serious political differences that now divide us from the Soviet government. Behind it would still lie the problems recently treated, and still to be treated, in the SALT forum. Behind it would still lie the great question of the acceptability of war itself, any war, even a conventional one, as a means of solving problems among great industrial powers in this age of high technology.

What I have suggested is, of course, only a beginning. But a beginning has to be made somewhere; and if it has to be made, it is best that it be made where the dangers are the greatest, and their necessity the least. If a step of this nature could be successfully taken, people might find the heart to tackle with greater confidence and determination the many problems that would still remain.

### Possibility of risks

It will be argued that there would be risks involved. Possibly so. I do not deny the possibility. But if there are, so what? Is it possible to conceive of any dangers greater than those that lie at the end of the collision course on which we are now embarked? And if not, why choose the greater—why choose, in fact, the greatest—of all risks, in the hope of avoiding the lesser ones?

We are confronted with two courses. At the end of the one lies hope—faint hope, if you will—uncertain hope, hope surrounded with dangers, if you insist. At the end of the other lies, so far as I am able to see, no hope at all. Can there be—in the light of our duty not just to ourselves (for we are all going to die sooner or later) but of our duty to our own kind, our duty to the continuity of the generations, our duty to the great experiment of civilized life on this rare and rich and marvelous planet—can there be, in the light of these claims on our loyalty, any question as to which course we should adopt?

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Los Angeles Times*

## WORTH WATCHING

The following religious television programs are currently scheduled on the following dates and networks. Consult your local TV listing for regional channels and broadcast times. If these programs are not shown in your area, a call or letter to your local station might bring positive results.

**CBS "For Our Times"** Network feed time: 10:30—11:00 a.m. EST

**October 24**—A program on the different facets of the current television ministry of Catholic and Protestant churches and Jewish synagogues.

**November 7**—The first of a three-part documentary series on Religion and Sexuality. Continued on November 14 and 21.

**November 28**—A program on the Bible.

**NBC RELIGIOUS SPECIALS** Network feed time: 5:00—6:00 p.m. EST

**November 21**—A documentary exploring prison rehabilitative practices and methods with a focus on spiritual rehabilitation and prison ministries.

**December 5**—Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu, outspoken critic of policies of the South African government and under restriction by the government, is the focus of this documentary, filmed in South Africa.

**ALLIANCE OF NEW CHURCH WOMEN**

(cont'd from page 192)

1st Vice President—Mrs. Douglas (Jean) Gilchrist, Edmonton, Canada.

2nd Vice President—Mrs. Ivan (Eva) Franklin, San Diego, Ca.

Secretary—Mrs. Lee (Margaret) Kraus, Kingman, Kan.

Treasurer—Mrs. Robert W. (Doris) Tafel, Drexel Hill, Pa.

Mite Box Chairperson—Mrs. Cassius (Marge) Ball, Ventura, Ca.

Religious Chairperson—Mrs. David (Carole) Rienstra, Fryeburg, Me.

Round Robin—Mrs. Forrest W. (Katherine) Swiger, Valley Grove, W. Va.

Publication Editor—Mrs. Ernest (Perry) Martin, Rancho Palos Verdes, Ca.

Nominating Committee: Henrietta Zehner (1983), Carole Rienstra (1984), Martha Mason (1985), Polly Baxter (1986), Marian Mull (1987).

All interested in Round Robin group, please contact Katherine Swiger and note her new address is: R.R. 1, Box 131, Valley Grove, W. Va., 26060.

Thanks, also, to Annella Smith as Nominating Committee Chairperson and to all the staff for all of your assistance.

We look forward to a good meeting in Cincinnati—be sure to come!

Mareta P. Saul,  
President.

***Letters to the Editor:*****CREATIVE EVOLUTION**

Dear Editor:

The controversy between creationism and evolutionism seems to dissolve when we take a broad look at the way mother nature creates all living forms on earth today. Every organic form, as we know it, "evolves" from a single fertilized ovum. Have we any reason to believe that this law of nature has not been in force since earliest times? It seems obvious to me that no human being in the world today was "created" out of nothing, by divine fiat, on some Thursday afternoon at 2:37 p.m.

This evolutionary procedure for the creation of natural life seems to apply also to the spiritual realm. Was not the kingdom of heaven itself compared to a grain of mustard seed?

I believe in nature and I believe also in God. If I believe that God creates everything by an

"evolutionary" technique, then where is my conflict between creation and evolution? It goeth "poof".

Arthur W. Browne,  
Poughkeepsie, New York

**BOOKS AVAILABLE**

Dear Paul:

In the St. Petersburg church we have 35 new (unopened) copies of "VOICES FROM THE OPEN DOOR" by Margaret Scott Houts. We received five hundred copies of this volume several years ago from the publisher at the direction of Mrs. Jessie Fish Watson, who brought out the 1972 edition. Of those 500 volumes only the present 35 remain.

We would like to receive suggestions from anywhere in Convention on what could be the best use for these remaining volumes.

Rev. Leon C. Le Van  
P.O. Box 12771  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33733

**WORTH READING TWICE**

Dear Paul:

By now you are in the midst of that much-looked-forward-to Sabbatical, and I'm happy for you. Time is such a great gift.

I am writing to you also in response to the article by a Scandinavian Seeker. I thoroughly enjoy reading the *Messenger*, by the way, and keep wondering about an underlying dichotomy that I see there.

Is it possible that a further separation in the Swedenborgian Church (because that is exactly what it is) is immanent? It may come as a sudden shift. The focus of the camera of time will keep clarifying the incompatibility of constraining one-directedness and the reality of what-exists-in-the-whole, until the new picture won't be superimposed on the old one any more.

It is sad, because those who won't fit any more, will still love all their friends and treasure the experiences of church, camp and study group; and the parting of the ways won't be understood.

Ella Baker  
Madison Heights, Michigan

## 1988 Swedenborg Tercentenary Commemorative Stamp

Dear Friends:

In celebration of Emanuel Swedenborg's Tercentenary, the Swedenborg Foundation is spearheading a drive to petition the United States Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp for the occasion. We cannot do it alone and therefore we are soliciting your letters requesting this to be sent to the United Postal Service asking that our request be granted.

The address of the addressee is as follows:

Mr. Belmont Faires, Chairman  
Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee  
U.S. Postal Service  
Washington, DC 20265

or

Mr. Gordon L. Morison,  
Assist. Postmaster General  
U.S. Postal Service  
Washington, DC 20260

In addition to these individuals, it is also necessary to solicit the assistance of your local representative to Congress, to make your request known to these two Postal Agencies.

Particular emphasis should be made in the letters to Swedenborg's many contributions to science, psychology, anatomy, etc. rather than religion, per se, because of the wider appeal for the public. The more letters received by these, the better. We have until 1988 to attempt this massive campaign, but if there is a body of preliminary requests, it will make it easier to accomplish.

If you wish you may also send copies of the letters to the Foundation, or the letter addressed to the above persons, and we will ship them to the agencies involved. Anyone who wishes also to volunteer to help in this matter would be welcome. The more people hear of Swedenborg and his accomplishments, the better. No effort is too small, even the size of a postage stamp.

The Swedenborg Foundation  
139 East 23rd St.  
New York, N.Y. 10010

## *Films Available in England and Australia*

The Swedenborg Foundation has just announced that two very popular films are now available on a free-loan basis in England and Australia: **SWEDENBORG—THE MAN WHO HAD TO KNOW** and **HELEN KELLER—THE LIGHT OF FAITH**. These films may be obtained by groups, churches, schools, clubs, universities, etc. They may be borrowed by contacting the following companies:

### **AUSTRALIA:**

Mr. Peter Wilson  
Managing Director  
Business Films Pty., Ltd.  
424 St. Kilda Road  
Melbourne, Victoria 3004  
Australia

### **ENGLAND:**

Mr. Allen Hilton  
Sponsor Services Mgr.  
Guild Sound and Vision, Ltd.  
Woodston House  
Oundle Road  
Peterborough PE2 9PZ  
England

**SWEDENBORG: THE MAN WHO HAD TO KNOW** is a 30 minute docu-drama about the life and times of Emanuel Swedenborg. It is narrated by Eddie Albert and features Lillian Gish.

**HELEN KELLER—THE LIGHT OF FAITH** explores the personal philosophy of Miss Keller and was produced by the CBS Television Network. This film is also 30 minutes and is narrated by Douglas Edwards. It includes an interview with our Board Member Dr. Alice Skinner and a memorial service conducted in Miss Keller's honor by the Rev. Clayton Priestnal—another member of our Board.

## THANK YOU

The following people have sent in contributions for the *Messenger* since our last mailing, and we are deeply grateful for these financial gifts and the supportive letters. Frances Boyle, Ohio; Esther Perry, California; Arthur Wagner, Georgia; Leon Rhodes, Pennsylvania; Dorothy Young, Massachusetts; Deborah Mabbott, Washington; Emily Bundy, Oregon; P. A. Hutchinson, North Carolina; and Ola-Mae Wheaton, Maine.

## FROM CHURCH RECORDS

### BAPTISMS

**GRAMS**—Tobin Joseph, son of Harold and Laura Grams was baptized at the Fryeburg New Church Assembly, Fryeburg, Maine, August 18, 1982, Rev. Dr. William R. Woofenden officiating.

**WOOFENDEN**—Michael Ross, son of Ross and Carole Woofenden was baptized August 15, 1982, at the Fryeburg New Church, Fryeburg, Maine, Rev. Dr. William R. Woofenden officiating.

**WOOFENDEN**—Myrrh Ellen, daughter of Trevor and Lynn Woofenden was baptized on August 15, 1982, at the New Church in Fryeburg, Maine, Rev. Dr. William R. Woofenden officiating.

**WALLACE**—Suzanne Wallace was received into membership of the San Francisco Society by the sacrament of adult baptism on June 27, 1982, the Rev. Edwin Capon officiating.

### CONFIRMATION

**FRECHETTE**—Fay Roberts-Frechette was confirmed into the faith of the New Church in Boston, Mass., on Sunday, June 13, 1982, Rev. Harold C. Cranch officiating.

### MARRIAGE

**VAN HORN—GAGE**—Richard Thomas Van Horn and Rebecca Elaine Gage were married in the Church of the Open Word, St. Louis, on August 14, 1982, the Rev. Gudmund Boelsen officiating.

### DEATHS

**GLANDERS**—Dale Walter, (63), a member of the LaPorte Society, passed into the higher life on August 13, 1982. The resurrection service was held at the Haverstock Funeral Chapel in LaPorte, Indiana, August 17, Rev. Eric Allison officiating.

**BONNEY**—Katherine (White) Bonney, Brockton, Mass., 95 years of age, June 15, 1982, after several weeks in the hospital. Rev. Wilfred G. Rice officiated at the funeral service.

## GWYNNE MACK RESPONDS

Dear Paul:

I am unhappy about the implication in the September *Messenger's* editorial, that I had suggested "associating ourselves with the *National Enquirer*". Also, that we "would do ourselves much good" was certainly not my focus—since doing ourselves good is not the purpose of teaching others.

Perhaps the use of the word "augment" (which means "to make greater, enlarge, extend") might be interpreted by some to indicate "associating" or somehow building ourselves up. But my whole idea was that we in the New Church who, (as said in the editorial), "don't need proof—it's true", *should be concerned with and able to do much better* than what has been done so far "with limited success" (quoted from editorial) to teach the human race how and why "it's true".

This in no way implies "associating ourselves with the *National Enquirer*" but does challenge us to do much better than we have thus far done—or than doctors and scientists are now doing.

They do not have all the facts, nor do they have understanding of the spiritual level of reality which is supposed to characterize the New Church.

Question: How fully does this *understanding* actually characterize *us* at this day? Why should we be content with only "limited success"?

Gwynne Dresser Mack

### How to know you're growing older

Everything hurts and what doesn't hurt doesn't work.

The gleam in your eyes is from the sun hitting your bifocals.

You feel like after the night before, and there hasn't been a night before.

You get winded playing chess.

You decide to procrastinate but then never get around to it.

You know all the answers, but nobody asks the questions.

You sit in a rocking chair and can't make it go.

Your knees buckle but your belt won't.

You're startled the first time you are addressed as old-timer.

Your back goes out more than you do.

Your pacemaker makes the garage door go up when you watch a pretty girl go by.

Your children begin to look middle-aged.

## THE UPPER ROOM

Leon C. Le Van

# THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON

(Part 1)

In the Midianite War near Mt. Gilead, the Biblical hero Gideon told his faithful 300 followers: "When I blow the trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets on every side of the (Midianite) camp and shout, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

It is sometimes said that all life is a battle. While good and evil exist, and while truth and falsity exist, some manner of conflict is inevitable. Jesus said: "Think ye that I came to bring peace upon earth? I tell you nay. I came not to bring peace but a sword."

The "sword of the spirit" represents the fighting power of truth. Of the Lord himself it is said in the *Book of Revelation*: "Out of His mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword." St. Paul's great chapter on the Christian warrior lists the "sword of the spirit," the "breastplate of faith," the "helmet of salvation"—and, indeed, he tells us to put on the "whole armor of God."

Before we look for spiritual meanings in Gideon's famous battle-cry, let us note the circumstances that led to the encounter. Gideon is listed by Paul as one of the "heroes of the faith." For seven years the Midianite hordes from beyond the Jordan River had come into the Land of Canaan and stolen the harvests of the trembling Israelites. Those Israelites who dared to thresh their grain at all did so in constant fear that the marauders might spring upon them at any moment.

Gideon's mind was deeply troubled as he threshed his wheat in a hidden winepress. Israel had become a population of fugitives and hide-aways. They lived, so to speak, "under-ground." No miracle came to help them.

It was perhaps with such painful thoughts that Gideon was engrossed when the Angel of Jehovah appeared. "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor," was the Angel's greeting. But Gideon was not convinced. He knew the conquering Midianites were everywhere. He knew that Israel had no army to confront the foe.

"Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then has all this befallen us, and where are all

the miracles which our fathers told us of saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord has cast us off, and delivered us into the hand of Midian. And the Angel looked upon him and said: Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hands of the Midianites. Have not I sent thee?"

Gideon protested his helplessness. "My family is the poorest in Manasseh," he said to the Angel, "and I am the least in my family." But the Angel told him to throw down the altar of Baal in his city that night and hew down the idolatrous grove surrounding it. Still fearful, Gideon did as he was told. With ten men to help him he threw down Baal's altar that night, and cut down the grove, and built an altar to Jehovah.

In the morning when the deed became known, the outraged townsmen gathered to avenge themselves on the destroyer of Baal's altar. But Gideon's father, who was among them argued: "If Baal is a God let him avenge himself because someone has thrown down his altar." That view prevailed. Its simple logic could not be denied, and Gideon's first battle was won.

True, it was not a battle against the Midianites, but against the enemy within. Here was the real cause of Israel's distress, and here Gideon's first blow had to fall. As the new leader labored all that night to break down Baal's altar, we may well believe the spirit of the Lord filled him with courage for his next great task. That task could be nothing less than to drive the whole Midianite army out of Israel with only 300 men.

God does not make spiritual heroes (or any other kind of heroes) by magic. Courage and faith must be built into life. They are not implanted by turning away from our responsibilities. They must be established by victories over our own evils and sins. Gideon had known fear and dismay. He like all Israel had been hiding from the Midianite invaders for seven years. But now the time had come to face the foe.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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# CONTENTS

<b>Buscaglia on Love</b>	<b>Paul Zacharias</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>Swedenborg's Psychology</b>	<b>Eugene Taylor</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Eternity—The Death of Death</b>	<b>Friedemann Horn</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>Alliance of New Church Women</b>	<b>Mareta Saul</b>	<b>192</b>
<b>The Nuclear Standoff</b>	<b>George Kennan</b>	<b>193</b>
<b>Letters to the Editor</b>		<b>196</b>
<b>1988 Swedenborg Commemorative Stamp</b>		<b>197</b>
<b>From Church Records</b>		<b>198</b>
<b>The Upper Room</b>	<b>Leon C. LeVan</b>	<b>199</b>