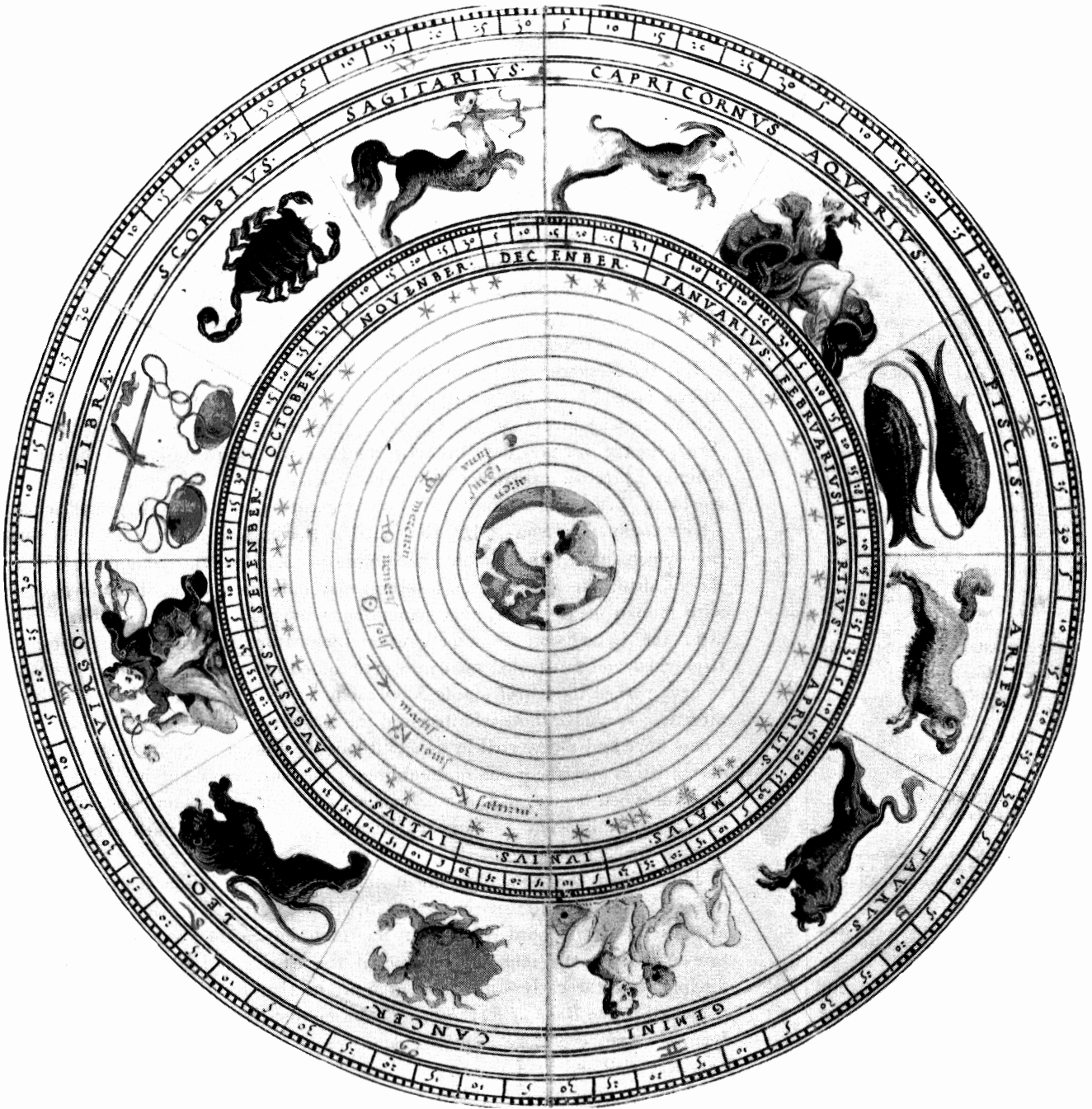


NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER



THE ZODIAC in M. 460 (Portalan Atlas) Reproduced by permission of The Pierpont Morgan Library

THE YEAR OF GROWTH and of ancient calendars began at the Spring.

The seasons are accepted as four.

Longest day and shortest night — June 21,

Longest night and shortest day — December 22,

Easter is a moveable feast dependent on the Vernal Equinox, the full moon, and the sun, Michaelmas, the rich full harvest of September.



Easter and Change

APRIL 15, 1963

NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

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OFFICERS OF CONVENTION

Rev. Richard H. Tafel, President, 200 Chestnut Ave., Narberth, Pa.; Stewart E. Poole, Vice-President, 3201 Fordham Rd., Wilmington, Delaware; Horace B. Blackmer, Recording Secretary, 3 Joy Street, Boston 8, Mass.; Chester T. Cook, Treasurer, 79 Milk Street, Boston 9, Mass.; Forster W. Freeman, Jr., Counsel, 511 Alpine Ter. Ridgewood, N. J.

EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Phillip M. Alden, Mrs. Ernest O. Martin, Rev. David J. Garrett, Rev. Clayton S. Priestnal, Rev. Richard H. Tafel, Robert G. Lawson, Mrs. Tomas Spiers.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Gwynne Dresser Mack, Leslie Marshall, Ernest O. Martin, Clayton S. Priestnal, Richard H. Tafel, Paul Zacharias.

Editor

Bjorn Johannson

Associate Editor

Carol Lawson

Address all editorial correspondence and manuscripts to the Editor, New-Church Messenger, 4001 Brotherton Rd., Cincinnati 9, Ohio.

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APRIL 15, 1963

ESSENTIAL FAITH OF THE NEWCHURCH

There is one God, and He is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Saving faith is to believe in Him and keep the Commandments of His Word.

The Word is Divine and contains a spiritual or inner meaning which reveals the way of regeneration.

Evil should be shunned as sin against God.

Human life is unbroken and continuous, and the world of the spirit is real and near.

EDITORIAL

Who Liveth Forever?

WERE A DRAMA to be written about the foundation of Christianity as this is portrayed in the New Testament, we can imagine that it would be in three acts. The first would deal with the Incarnation and subsequent ministry of the Lord. The second would center around the Crucifixion, and the last with the triumphant Resurrection. These three are linked together. No cogent story of the rise of Christianity is possible without these three.

In the Easter season our attention is directed in particular to the Resurrection. Without this event all that has preceded would be in vain, and would mean no more than a tragic story of an idealistic prophet who struggled bravely and nobly, but met with complete defeat.

But the Resurrection meant that the Lord had risen from the tomb and is alive forevermore. "Lo, I am with you alway . . ." (*Mt.* 28:20). Therefore the Resurrection became pivotal in the Gospel portrayal of the Lord's ministry upon earth. True, for the disciples their life with the Lord would always have been an unforgettable and precious experience, but it alone would not have sent them into a hostile world to "teach all nations . . . Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (*Mt.* 28: 19, 20). It was their experience of the Resurrection which infilled them with the courage to carry out this commission. Whatever theory about the Resurrection a person may hold, he cannot, if somewhat familiar with human history, deny that something momentous happened within a few days after the Crucifixion — something so momentous that it turned a few cowed, frightened and frustrated men into determined evangelists, who may truly be said to have turned the world upside down; who turned the stream of history into a new direction, and gave those who received the message of the Risen and Glorified Christ a new hope and a new goal in life. Without the Resurrection there would have been no Christian movement and no founding of the Christian Church. This is made plain by Paul when he says, "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain . . . And if Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (*I Cor.* 15:14, 17).

Throughout the New Testament the Resurrection is the central fact. This is equally true of the life of the early Christian Church. The Resurrection, not only in the sense of the Lord rising from the tomb, but in the assurance that He is alive forevermore, is the foundation stone of the Christian faith. It was that for the disciples and the early Christians; it must be that for the Christian of today. As expressed in the *Book of Revelation*, "I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore" (1:18). And again: ". . . who lived for ever and ever." (See *Rev.* 4:9 and 5:14.)

How, we may ask, were the disciples made aware that the Lord is alive forevermore and was ever with them after He had, to use the words of *Luke* (24:51), "parted from them"? They knew Him as the Holy Spirit. They recalled His promise that the Father would send them the Comforter, "Even the spirit of truth"; and then to make clear to them that He Himself was that Comforter, He added, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." (See *Jn.* 14:16-18.)

In the New Testament the terms *Holy Ghost* and the *Spirit* of Christ are used interchangeably. (See *Acts* 16:6, 7.) Paul in *Romans* 8:9, 10 shows that he means the Spirit of Christ when he speaks of the Spirit of God and the indwelling Christ.

Nineteen centuries have shown the power of the living Lord, the Risen and Glorified Humanity. Where men have had the faith to really try this power, it has made for life. It has rescued men out of despair and hopelessness; has broken the bonds of their self-love, greed, and pettiness; has lifted them up into concern and compassion for others. It has produced love, trust, and good will in human hearts. It has given to those who have had enough faith a vision of brotherhood, of a world free from the curse of poverty, hate, and war.

Dialogue on Easter and Change:

I Cord

LESS important
Than the cord of life that brought us here,
And no one can remember;
The stem had held tenaciously
This bunch of grapes
Until fulfillment.

The fibres had twisted and were thinned,
Unyielding beyond brown death.
It gave feeding into clustered riches of the vine.

Yet cord of higher life, restrained,
Fed by cry of mankind's need,
By song of moon and star,

Is longer than a season's pull.
Does Time await a century to bring a leader
Singly, to the men of earth?

II
I AGREE; but how,
and when,
and what
comes next?

III
WE NEED strength, not bravado
For our Earth-day is old.
We stand tall, for we know
When our Earth-day is told,
HE knows height, and the depth,
and the length of our strength
as we go.

IV Problem for Each

DO YOU call your year a circle?
Better think of it as spiral,
Outflung
To ramify life-doorways,
Too often spaced by pain's sharp gong.

Begin again to sing again
With strength anew for me, for you:
Springtime!
Each Easter should bring to us
Full sounding, life-renewing Song.

Do you call your life a circle?
Rather spiral that is compound!
A figure 8, a lemniscate,
Time, Song and Man: harmonious;
Man, we find, is the most profound.

— MELROSE PITMAN

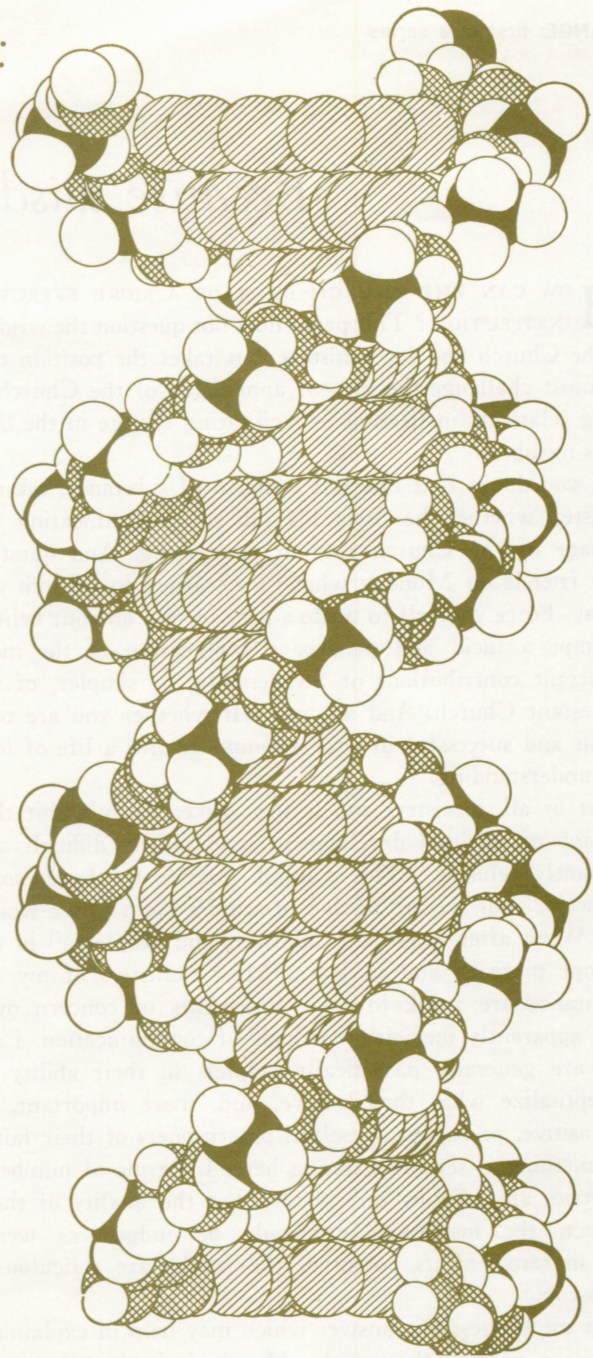
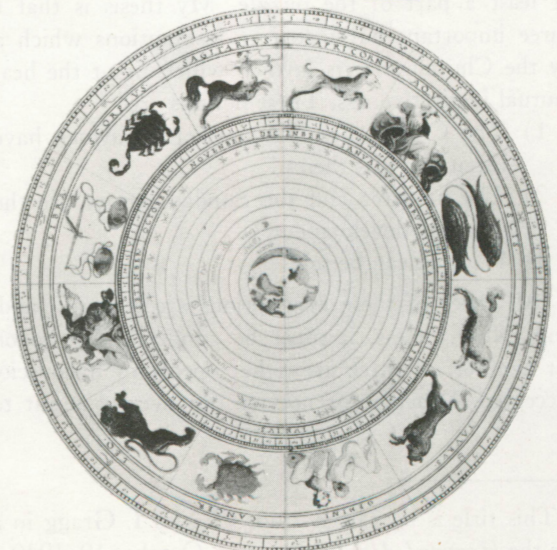


Diagram of the chromosomes' DNA molecule



Because wisdom cannot be told¹

HOW CAN THE CHURCH BE MADE A MORE EFFECTIVE INSTITUTION? This paper does not question the wisdom of the Church and its ministers, but takes the position that we must challenge the present approaches of the Church as being relatively ineffectual in facilitating change in the lives of its members.

If you doubt that this is a problem of substance, ask any minister whether he finds his job of communicating the message of the Church easy or frustrating. And question your friends on Monday what they learned in Church yesterday. Force yourself to write a page or two on your beliefs. Attempt a lucid and persuasive explanation of the more important contributions of Swedenborg, or simpler, of the Protestant Church. And ask yourself whether you are consistent and successful in your attempts to live a life of love and understanding.

Let us all, ministers and laymen alike, freely admit that this job of spiritual development is extremely difficult and constantly elusive. The Church seems to have some "answers," but we are unable to acquire them as we would like. Week after week both ministers and people fail in the attempt to teach and to learn. Most ministers of my acquaintance are frank in their statements of concern over their apparently inefficient methods of communication. Laymen are generally pathetically helpless in their ability to conceptualize what they believe, and, more important, to be sensitive, perceptive, unselfish practitioners of their faith.

Something is seriously wrong here. In terms of numbers, Churches are hanging on; in terms of the quality of their product, the institution can only be judged as weak. And in terms of its potential, the results are ridiculously microscopic.

Let me suggest one answer which may help in explaining at least a part of the puzzle. My thesis is that there are three important but incorrect assumptions which are made by the Church and its laymen which lie at the heart of our mutual ineffectiveness. These notions are:

- 1) The Church has "the answer." Laymen have only to listen and it is theirs.
- 2) The minister and the Sunday service are the keys to spiritual development.
- 3) Wisdom can be told.

All three of these assumptions are incorrect and misleading. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that to one degree or another all three are either openly or unconsciously well accepted. Whether or not we can overtly admit to holding

these beliefs, we generally behave in such a way as to personally attest to their validity.

The consequences are unfortunate. *The net result* is that we relate to the Church and it to us as a small child relates to a learned scholar. There is an upward respect and a downward concern, but whatever influence passes between the two is small.

These three assumptions are invalidated by our experience. Take the first one, for example. The Church does not have "the answer." Do its ministers lead perfect and exemplary lives? Is "the answer" for you the same as for me? Is there agreement between churches, even between Swedenborgians, as to what "the answer" is? Is any basic philosophy not subject to interpretation, clarification, argument? To be useful does it not have to be made our own, on an individual, personally acquired basis? So why do we keep acting as if the Church has some sort of magic answer?

The second assertion falls even more quickly. We do seem to assume that the minister and the Sunday service are the key elements of our regeneration. He is the expert, and on Sunday mornings we have a chance to listen and acquire some of his expertise. We apparently believe that if we get to Church and pay attention carefully we will improve and grow. We will see the light.

This is humbug, of course. Can anyone else improve my character? Do I accomplish significant change by subjecting myself to a sermon and the peaceful church atmosphere? Is a 75-minute treatment once a week sufficient exposure to somehow absorb enough wisdom to carry me through to next week? How much does the weekly treatment really improve me? What does improve me, anyway?

The third statement — that wisdom can be told — also runs counter to our experience. We know that by merely listening we learn little and retain less, yet we keep expecting to make progress passively. The statement is further demolished by research into the process of learning. How do we acquire judgment, understanding, control, wisdom? Are these abilities transmitted by telling? If Socrates gave me a lecture would I then be a wise man? After twenty lectures?

The acquisition of wisdom and knowledge is, unfortunately, not so easy. We have learned that the process requires personal involvement and participation; it is hard work. We must talk, think, write, argue, challenge and be challenged. We cannot accomplish learning passively. Effective learning results in actual changes in behavior. We are significantly different if learning has been accomplished. But we learn by doing at a much faster rate than by listening. If we cannot speak or write our new knowledge, if we cannot practice our new skills, they are not ours. And little or no education has been accomplished.

¹This title is borrowed from Charles I. Gragg in an article in the *Harvard Alumni Bulletin*, October 19, 1940.

Let me suggest that we substitute some different fundamental notions which better match our experience and which might be more useful to ministers and laymen.

- 1) The Church is an educational institution. To be effective it must improve its educational concepts, techniques and procedures.
- 2) The Church and its ministers cannot teach. Instead, laymen must learn. The Church and its ministers can help facilitate our learning, but they cannot do it for us.
- 3) To improve our rate of personal development and regeneration we must want to do it enough to invest work and time and personal involvement in the process. Since no one can do it for us, we must accept the responsibility.

I am pessimistic that these changes in the self-education process can come about within the present conventional framework of the churches' Sunday sermon approach. The very nature of this educational method is to say, in effect, "Well, Reverend, I've gotten myself here. Speak your words, say your prayers, and I'll hope to go home a better man." The essence of our present approach is to leave our responsibility for self development in the hands of the Church and the minister. "Tell us your wisdom."

The Church must quit itself of this role. It must behave with the understanding that the process is an educational one, and the student must do the work. Like a great university or a top-flight teacher it can inspire the student and facilitate his learning with questions, a free atmosphere for exploration of difficult problems, and a searching and demanding logic and discipline that is not satisfied with easy answers. But it must not continue to gravitate into the tempting role of the expert.

My opinion is that the Church, its laymen and its ministers must learn soon how to acquire and transmit wisdom far better than is now accomplished by present ancient procedures. Much is being written about experiments now being conducted with small groups as a basis for achieving growth through discussion and personal involvement. This approach seems to offer many opportunities. In turn it poses its own problems, not the least of which are the difficulty of skillfully leading these groups and the frustrations and challenges involved in surviving their first year. If the editors will permit, I shall pursue this subject further in next month's issue of the MESSENGER.

—WICKHAM SKINNER

The foolishness of Easter ?

by David J. Garrett

IF THERE IS ONE TIME in the Christian year that is foolishness, it is the week before Easter. The story of a hero is not meant to conclude with a cross. The hero conquers his foes, wins the people to his side, and everyone lives happily ever after.

Not so the Gethsemane and Calvary story. Jesus walked deliberately and consciously to his death. He knew he would be betrayed and that the person who would betray him was a friend. He knew the authorities would have no use for him. That his friends and the crowd would shrink away and leave him utterly defenseless.

It is a senseless story to a world that expects a reasonable answer for everything. To a culture vaccinated from childhood up in the belief that confidence and determination ensure success. To a people so safely anchored in time-tested habits that every eventuality is anticipated and efficiently dispatched. It is a story whose sharpness sometimes escapes the Church. The Church is for many a purveyor of soothing, ready-made solutions, a haven from the ugly and a resting place from life's struggles. The Church, we are told, is concerned with the soul, not the world. Let the State take care of the social order. Let the Law correct injustice.

Yes, for many, the committed and the uncommitted, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday are enigmas. Not that we haven't listened to the gospel's words. We have listened to them many times. But being so familiar, we do not hear them. Belonging to an affluent, security-hugging society, sitting snugly in fortress Mother Church, or believing there to be a rational answer for every question, can we hear what the words of the Gospel say?

By the standards that give Western civilization neat and compact meaning, the prophet Isaiah's words about the suffering Messiah are wholly irrational: "He had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised, and we esteemed him not . . ."

A failure at thirty three! That is what Jesus was in terms of our contemporary values. What did it profit him to champion a cause, to fight evil, to be concerned about the oppressed. He was naive politically. He said the wrong things at the wrong times. He did not know how to sell himself or his ideas. He did not get in with the right people. He said to his Church: "You are wrong. You are concerned with yourselves. You exercise no responsibility for your communities or the world." He defied the whole entrenched system of the "religious club." And what did it profit him? What did he get out of it? All he got for his off-beat ideas was a cross.

Yes, the Gethsemane and Calvary story are foolishness. Foolishness by all the standards we use everyday for ourselves. Let's face it. We would be crazy to live as Jesus lived.

But wait a minute! Could it be . . . is there the remotest chance . . . ? Could it be that this foolishness of the gospel is saying something important to us? That instead of Jesus being mixed up, it is the other way around? We are the ones who are mixed up! Wasn't Jesus showing us that the ways of God are contrary to the will of man? That the world being what it is, the righteous will be persecuted. That everyone who obeys God will have a cross. *Didn't he say that?* Are not Gethsemane and Calvary saying that if you love God and his righteousness, rather than yourself and the praise of men, you will lose your life and everything

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you have counted as important? You, too, will be figuratively crucified. *Didn't he say that?*

But Jesus did not stop there. He went on. He said in bearing your cross you will be given the kingdom of heaven. In losing your life you will find what life really is. Life's meaning is not to be sought in a rational explanation but in a paradox.

Foolishness! Bunk! If this is the meaning of the gospel, God's truth confounds the wise and upsets every reasonable expectation of what life should be. But now that I think of it, that's exactly what Jesus said it would do.

The Swedenborg Student

CONDUCTED BY THE REV. LOUIS A. DOLE

FOR THE SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION

ARCANA CLASS — May, 1963

VOLUME X, 8371 - 8500

May 1—7	8371—8407
8—14	8408—8435
15—21	8436—8475
22—31	8476—8500

OUR READING for this month is the important story of the giving of the manna. The Israelites had left Marah and Elim and had set out on their journey through the wilderness toward Sinai. Fleeing from Egypt they had crossed the Red Sea, which represents the first temptation to be drawn back into worldly living. The second temptation, as we have seen, was the finding of the water at Marah bitter, a temptation as to truth. Now we have the third temptation, a temptation as to good. They found themselves hungry and discouraged. This is a picture of the state into which everyone comes who makes his escape from bondage to natural desires. Their journey was not to be a short journey, as the people hoped, and we are studying just the first steps which lead to a heavenly life. The very first step, of course, is the acknowledgment of the Lord as God and the resolve to learn and do His will.

The temporary rest at Elim is over, and now in the wilderness hunger overtakes them, and they murmur against Moses and Aaron. When worldly desires and pleasures are taken away, there is the demand for something to take their place. Heavenly life is not to be devoid of pleasures, but they cannot be given all at once. A new will has to be formed in the understanding. In the Scripture story hunger represents the lack of goodness. Goodness comes only from the Lord; it is the manna from heaven. We cannot supply it for ourselves.

But before the manna quail were given in the evening. The evening represents a state of spiritual obscurity, and the quail denote natural pleasures. We are told that the "delight of the pleasures of the body and lower mind" is not taken away from the regenerate, but comes to serve as a means instead of as an end, and is of a new spiritual origin. Natural delights and pleasures are, in their place, necessary. There are continual changes of state with us here and with the angels in heaven. We should note that angels have their mornings and evenings, times when their spiritual affections are active and times when they are let down into the enjoyment of their natural affections. There is a reason for this: that faith and charity are to be implanted in the natural, and the natural must be brought into a state of accommodation, that the spiritual may reach down into it and become ultimated.

The manna — spiritual good — is given in the morning state. One of the lessons of the giving of the manna is that it is step by step, day by day, little by little that we progress

in spiritual life. And in the words "Let no one leave of it till the morning" the lesson of trust in the Divine providence over our lives is brought out. It takes time for the inner man to grow, and when he is in the wilderness state, the rejected desires crave their former gratifications. The Lord will sustain us from day to day in this wilderness state with the bread from above. Those who eat only the bread of worldly pleasure will hunger again. Such pleasures always come to an end. The land of peace is beyond the desert.

The fact that when men gathered more than they needed for the day what was left over "bred worms and stank" teaches us that dependence upon our own judgment in spiritual things results in falsity and evil. Note the statement in number 8432: "The good which flows in from the Lord is not given as much as men desire, but as much as they can receive, whereas evil is allowed as much as they desire." But the Lord provided on the sixth day an additional portion of manna for the seventh, because the sabbath represents the state of peace and rest which comes from conjunction with the Lord when all thought of self-merit is put away. In number 8455 we learn what peace is and how it is to be attained, and we should note the statement that "All evil, especially self-confidence, takes away a state of peace." Number 8495 says of the sabbath that "in the supreme sense it represented the union of the Divine with the Divine Human in the Lord; and in the relative sense the conjunction of the Divine Human of the Lord with the human race."

Notes

8371-8394. Note how the interchapter readings on the inhabitants of Jupiter and on the Doctrine of Charity illustrate the lesson of the chapter.

8398. "Sinai" in contrast to "Sin" denotes the state after regeneration, the state of goodness in which truth is.

8414. Note here Swedenborg's translation of verse 4, which is a literal rendering of the Hebrew: "They shall gather the word of a day in its day." Compare this with the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread." The law is that we should go to the Word daily for the bread of life. The Lord is the bread of life which the manna represents.

8420. The use of correspondence in our common speech is here said to come from "the influx of the spiritual world into the ideas of thought, and thus into words."

8439. "Influx from the Divine passes first into the perception which is of the understanding, thence into the will, and next into act."

8443. The spiritual sense which men can apprehend is such as it is in the lowest or natural heaven.

8456. How the truth of faith is born.

8462. "What is it?" Man before regeneration does not believe that there is any good which is not from the love of self and the world; yet heavenly life and joy begin only when these loves are rejected.

8478. Read this number carefully. It tells us that those who have care for the morrow are those who are discontented with their lot, who do not trust in the Divine but in themselves, and who have regard for only worldly and earthly things.

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— EDITED BY MARIAN KIRVEN

Ye olde Publications Chairman is sorry that she did not get busy and get this page to you sooner. Her only excuse is procrastination and other things seeming more important. However, because it did not go to the publishers before Swedenborg's birthday she had, at that time, a wonderful visit with Jill Kingslake which led to our being blessed with the following article from her.

DIFFERENT VALUES

AFTER LIVING for twelve years in South Africa, we feel that we know the black people fairly well; well enough, at any rate, to know that they are different from us. People are constantly asking us: "Are they intelligent? Are they lazy? Can they understand the doctrines?" and so on. And as we struggle to be explicit in our answers we realize more and more clearly that there is a difference between black and white, and that the difference is one of values. It is what we value, what we really admire and want, that we eventually get and become. A great many people in the western civilizations today are not altogether happy about what they are getting and becoming; and yet they cannot see any way of changing their direction. Of course, when one discusses the characteristics of any nation or people one must remember that generalizations are only general evaluations and that the exception proves the rule. That being admitted, I nevertheless believe that we may learn much that could be of direct application to our own lives, from a consideration of the different values of the African.

What Swedenborg says of the African — that he is celestial rather than spiritual — explains so many of the differences. The African is usually not interested in abstract thought; though he habitually thinks and expresses his love allegorically. A common expression of gratitude is: "May all your ewes bear twins." He is not inventive or scientific by nature; he would not be interested in the endless gadgets of America — there is even an electronic brain to choose a suitable Christmas present! The African would probably not give the present: and yet both he and his friend would be happier than the gift-laden westerner. Money, on which our western civilization is based, is of very little significance to the African; he is forced to consider it when he moves into an urban life, but only for the purpose of obtaining immediate necessities; he does not value it as a possession, to be increased and stored. And so he often exasperates us by appearing to be wildly wasteful or improvident. He lives in the present, and is not interested in budgeting or planning for the future. A superintendent minister was annoyed when a certain congregation was unprepared for his visit on June 1st. "I wrote to you that I would come," he said. "Yes, we expected you to come in June," they agreed. "But this is June." "Is it? It wasn't June yesterday!" They are strangely lacking in the curiosity and restless questioning of the west: more interested in spirits than in physics. The modern American with his passion for statistics would be aghast at the vagueness of their time, place and measurement! The spiritual world is much more real to them than the natural. And this is where they are such a challenge to the western Christian. We are obsessed with the "packaging" of things, not only our foodstuffs, but ourselves as well. The African has beautiful manners, and can receive you with royal graciousness, even if he is in rags. Their dignity, and the respect afforded to them, depends upon an inner quality and not the outer trappings of "success". They accept the prospect of death with what appears to some

white people to be an appalling indifference. Our civilization will go to any lengths to preserve life at all costs: the machinery of injections, drugs, artificial lungs, kidneys, and transistor-hearts — we wonder where it will all end. The transition from life to death is not of such paramount importance to the African: and we wonder ruefully whether it *ought* to be to us, if we are Christians. In their religion they are natural ritualists: they worship, as they live, with a wonderfully integrated personality. Even if their services lack planning, they never lack reverence, a natural and inner reality; their children are not hushed and reproof and removed from the service of worship, but laid to sleep on a blanket when they are tired. They feel "at home" with God. Their strict observance of protocol depends on reverence for age, not wealth or brains. Their self-discipline amazes us. How many of us could live up to what one of my student nurses said in an essay on discipline: "We should train ourselves not to feel hungry unless it is convenient to eat"?

Many white people condemn the black people as lazy, having no ambition to better themselves, no initiative, no desire for progress. This lack of understanding arises when we take it for granted that they have the same values as we have; and they haven't. They may work hard to earn money when they want to purchase a specific article; but they do not feel the urge to work harder and harder to earn more and more, once that particular need is supplied. When they see the necessity to do a certain task they are certainly not lazy! But they also see the value of sitting in the sun, talking, or just living. They are singularly lacking in the acquisitive instinct; whereas we even go out of our way to "collect" all sorts of queer things. The net result of their way of life is contentment. In Johannesburg, at the end of the day, the white workers who travel in comparative comfort, look tired and harassed, while at the over-crowded native bus stops the black people are either laughing rowdily or lying on the pavement fast asleep! The rising discontent in Africa is largely the result of white people imposing their values on a hitherto contented people.

But life in an expanding western civilization such as America is so different. Have the African values any relevance? The tribesman in a simple form of tribal life adapts himself to his environment; we, on the other hand, are struggling to adapt our environment to ourselves. Here is the core of our problem. The natural selfhood of man is greedy and competitive. Our way of life leads to an endless internecine struggle. The more advantages we have, the more we seem to worry; we even feel it *right* to worry (not always about ourselves: we worry about our neighbor also) — no wonder the African cannot understand our Christianity! And if your reaction is to say: "Well, I don't worry!" do you not, in fact, worry about the great numbers of those who do worry? — the suicides, alcoholics, drug addicts, criminals of all sorts, broken marriages, sick people who are really sick of life?

We speak of our freedom: freedom from poverty, disease, ignorance. But who in America is free? Oh yes! we have the more obvious freedoms — freedom to worship, freedom of the Press, freedom of employment, freedom of speech, and so on. But are we not all caught up in an endless chain reaction, imposed by the monster tyranny of our civilization? We are squeezed inexorably into certain channels by the insidious pressure of advertising. But if this advertising is slackened, the rate of purchases will drop, production will

New Church Theological School
48 Quincy St.
Cambridge 38, Mass.

be lessened, and unemployment will follow. We are all "taking in each other's washing," and dare not stop.

There are three types of protest against this "rat race". Russian Communism has shown itself to be a failure, as it speedily reverts to the abuses of the individualistic imperialism that it set out to destroy. Then there are various experiments in communal life, such as the kibbutzim, or communal settlements in Israel; where no money passes but each adult member must contribute eight hours work each day, and draws all the necessities of life in return. And finally, the specifically religious form of community living, as seen in the monastic way of life, where small bodies of men remove themselves from competitive compulsions, living either a completely enclosed life, or contributing some form of service by teaching, nursing, or producing some commodity for the outside world. These small communities will never provide scope for the outstanding individual, the scientist or the inventor. And, although we may not like some of the things that the scientist has given us, I doubt whether we can ever revert to the Eden-like existence where nuclear fission is unknown.

The future of man seems to be the ever increasing role of the individual in society. There is no individual in the tribal form of life — at least, only the witch doctor or medicine man: the common type of man was content to have only the individuality of the tribe, or family. Christianity from the very beginning laid stress on the value of the individual soul. But our modern civilization seems to be insidiously undermining the value of the individual. All our advertisement is subtly designed to make us conform. "Almost everybody reads . . ." a certain newspaper. The implication is that we must read it too. Not only must we conform, but we must also "progress", or in other words, outdo our neighbors in material possessions. "Magnificence until recently only available to the very rich and to royalty, can now be yours". This was an advertisement for a funeral casket! Our education, too, is turning out efficiently standardized products. Perhaps we should have done better to follow the advice of William Morris who said that no schools were necessary; one need only teach a child to read and then turn it loose!

What can we do about it? Are there any values of the African way of life that we can adopt? So many of us today feel a kind of nostalgic homesickness for the values of the infancy of our race. How can we acquire some of the joy and contentment of a simple people? It is interesting to note that in Swedenborg's Rules of Life emphasis is laid on being content with our lot. Should we not give more thought to assessing not only our possessions, but also our activities, and standards of living? Are we drifting towards the worship of a plurality of gods — health, hygiene, education and comfort — just as pagan as Venus, Mars and Ceres? Swedenborg tells us that we must progress from the innocence of ignorance to the innocence of wisdom. It is time that we took stock of our values; and asserted a real freedom of choice, standing out against the pressures of this civilization of ours. This, above all, is the sphere of the Church: to bring the values of the spirit into the things of the flesh, in a new way, in this New Age.

—JILL KINGSLAKE

CONVENTION IN FLORIDA

FOR THE FIRST TIME in history the annual meeting of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem will take place in Florida. The invitation which was extended by the Southeast Association, marks the extent of the growth of the church in the southeastern states, particularly Florida.

The meetings, including those of the Council of Ministers, will be held at the completely air-conditioned Americana Hotel, Bal Harbour, Fla., situated next to the ocean on Highway A1A at the northern end of Miami Beach.

The Americana is geared to be a self-contained, convention community with facilities for every type and kind of meeting, and with every requirement for an enjoyable vacation, too. This modern, deluxe hotel is located in a residential community only minutes from Miami and Miami Beach by car or bus. In addition to ocean bathing, there are two large swimming pools in beautifully landscaped surroundings. The accommodations are as fine as can be found anywhere. To make it possible for you to include your vacation with your attendance at Convention, the hotel has made its special low rates available to all who wish to take advantage of them for one week before and one week after our Convention sessions.

DATES General Convention Public Sessions, Thursday, July 4 to Sunday, July 7.

Council of Ministers meetings, Monday, July 1 to Wednesday, July 3.

RATES: TWO TO A ROOM \$9.00 per day. This special rate for everyone includes room at \$5.50 per person, two to a room, plus \$3.50 per person for breakfast and evening dinner. There is a wide selection of entrees. This is the Modified American Plan.

The only alternative, room at \$5.50 with equivalent meals a la carte at \$8.00 would cost \$13.50 per day per person. There are no eating places nearby other than a drug store counter.

It is therefore strongly recommended that everyone take advantage of this special rate made available to our Convention!

SINGLE OCCUPANCY \$12.50 per person, including \$9.00 for room and \$3.50 for breakfast and dinner as noted above.

MORE THAN TWO PERSONS TO ROOM Where more than two persons over 12 years old wish to room together, the rates are \$9.00 each for the first two persons; \$7.50 for each additional person, including meals on the Modified American Plan as noted above.

CHILDREN UNDER TWELVE YEARS FREE Up to two children under twelve years of age may share room with parents at no extra charge.

Cots will be provided. Meals, of course, are \$3.50 extra per day per child on the Modified American Plan as noted above.

PARKING: Self-parking near hotel, 50c per day. Valet parking, 75c per day.

If you plan to attend this national Convention in beautiful Miami and wish reservations at the Americana, please fill out the form below and mail:

NAME

Address

Number in party.....Ages of children

Date of arrival at the Americana

Date of departure from the Americana

ADDRESS: AMERICANA HOTEL, Reservation Dept., Bal Harbour 54, Florida.
State that you are coming to the General Convention of the New Jerusalem, (Swedenborgian).