

# NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

Emanuel Swedenborg's Garden House

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## SWEDENBORG a great layman

an issue in honor of Emanuel Swedenborg's birthday, January 29, 1688

Jan 15, 1964



# NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

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## 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.

## what the prophet sees

**S**WEDENBORG has been rightly called a prophet — not a prophet who foresaw the future and described it, but rather one who saw what the future ought to be, and what it could be. This kind of prophecy bulks large in the messages of the Old Testament prophets. No prophecy which essays to describe the future is certain and infallible in matters that relate to human life. To believe that is to believe that the path of humanity is pre-determined, and that belief robs man of free will.

The prophet is like the man who stands on a high mountain and, with a telescope pressed to his eye, watches the scene below. He may see two cars moving towards each other on a narrow road near a bend close to the foot of the mountain. Neither driver is aware of the other, because the mountain obscures the view. The man on the mountain top, however, sees both, and sees the danger in which they are. Nevertheless, he does not predict a head-on collision, except in case both cars continue to move ahead, each driver unaware of the other. He knows there is always a possibility of the drivers being warned. He glimpses a few short stretches in the road wide enough for two cars to pass each other, and he knows that by a fortunate chance the cars may meet at just such a stretch. What is more, he does whatever he can to signal the drivers about the danger. The drivers may not see his signals, or they may not believe them. But the man on the mountain has done what he can to help those below who are blindly headed for possible disaster.

Many of the prophecies of the Old Testament are prophecies of doom, but always they are a doom predicated upon certain conditions. When Jonah went to Nineveh apparently he felt that his job was only to tell the people of that city about their impending doom. But God had planned otherwise. When Nineveh repented the doom was averted, much to the displeasure of Jonah. In Isaiah there are prophecies of desolation, but more important are the visions that Isaiah saw of the coming of Christ's kingdom; the visions of the end of hatred; of the lion and the lamb lying down together; of nations beating their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. These were visions of the world as it ought to be and as it could be. Swedenborg also saw a vision of the New Jerusalem come to earth, of truth triumphant, of love infilling the hearts of men.

But he does not tell us when, in historical time, these things shall be. That will depend on how slow or how fast mankind will open its mind and heart to receive the inflow of God.

## the ministry of the laity

**T**he priesthood of all believers has long been a widely accepted tenet of most Protestant churches. Technical training as a theologian is not necessary to reach God or to lead others to Him. In fact, some very effective evangelism has been done among the unchurched and among those who could look back only upon years of a mis-spent life by those who had once been in the same category. The dedicated layman, who has touched the hem of the Lord's garment and thereby found salvation, forgiveness and healing, can often convey the message of the Gospels more effectively than can the carefully trained savant.

There are many things in the church other than that of preaching the Word, and these are by most churches entrusted to laymen. Without the help of these laymen church work could not be carried on.

But most effective in the ministry of the laity is the way in which each one by his life in the everyday secular world proclaims the Gospel. A single life lived in obedience to the Sermon on the Mount witnesses far more eloquently to the truth and power of the Gospel than a hundred sermons. The distinction so often made between the sacred and the secular is false. There are not two separate compartments of life. The sacred should infuse every aspect of the secular. Unless the "thou shalt not's" of the Commandments are operative in daily life, they are null and void. Unless the law of love is manifested in the occupational activity of the believer, it is but sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. In this lies the pre-eminence of priesthood of all believers.



# SWEDENBORG

## a great layman

**T**O SPEAK OF EMANUEL SWEDENBORG as a layman may seem at first a paradox when we think of the New Church he hoped would manifest itself on earth. In his vision of the New Church Swedenborg himself did not differentiate between clergy and layman: in that company were to be gathered only those who dwelt in the spirit and in whom charity dwelt. And we must not in our anthropomorphism look upon God as a supreme pontiff who keeps us clearly separated into clergy and laymen. No, in the long course of history God has called upon all of his children to carry out His purposes. Like the prophets of the Old Testament, and the Carpenter of Nazareth, it was the sensitive mind and obedient servant of the Lord, not necessarily a scribe or priest, who, responding to God's will, directed his talents and energies to fulfill His missions.

When we speak of the layman, therefore, we must not use the term as though it referred to that unselect host in whom truth and great wisdom can not reside, who lack capacity to comprehend or communicate truth to those in the fellowship. We must not think of the layman as the man who carries on the financial business of the church, organizing the other laymen of the congregation into committees to carry out the perfunctory business of the church, (though these are his responsibilities, too) but as one from whom great depths of spiritual insight can come.

Even so, did Swedenborg, with his vision of the New Church seek to save man's spirit from the dogmatism and pietism that had all but submerged it? Not that at the outset, he consciously set himself the task of reforming the church of his day, but in his quest for truth, whether through scientific inquiry or through his quest into spiritual realities, he was willing to go wherever his investigations should lead him.

When Swedenborg began his studies at Upsala in 1699, it was still possible for a man to master one subject or discipline, that is, to know all there was to be known on a particular subject. Then with maturity and with a sure intellectual grasp the scholar would seek to interpret with perceptive deduction the fundamental truths of philosophy. He worked with confidence in a tradition of intellectual curiosity and creative imagination that in the 17th century was the familiar pattern of the university scholar.

Swedenborg was among the last of the great scholars, men who grew out of that earlier tradition of the Renaissance Man, whose minds were charged with that vital scientific spirit which first quickened the Florentine in the 15th century. This vast intellectual energy had made itself manifest through the following centuries in the probing thoughts

of such diverse minds as Erasmus and Copernicus, and it was this tradition in which Swedenborg was steeped. Also by the late 17th century, the great philosopher Rene Descartes had established for the western intellect, the theory of a new method of acquiring knowledge, namely through observation and experiment, and the study of science was intensified and its scope broadened by this new method. The university was still patterned, however, after the medieval university and was still divided into four faculties: theology, law, medicine, and philosophy, the latter including also science and mathematics.

So it was natural for a young man like Swedenborg, studying in the faculty of philosophy to have his interests centered not only in philosophical inquiry, but also upon the "new" science with its investigations of the physical nature and structure of the universe through the new scientific method. With his mind reaching ever farther into various branches of science, he pressed on into the studies of anatomy and physiology, dealing with such little known subjects as the heart and blood, the brain and the human soul. Of greatest importance to him now were his inquiries which he hoped would affirm for him the nature of the soul of man. It has taken us two more centuries to discover the same truths through research and experimental observation that Swedenborg had arrived at through intuition namely that there is a creative spirit behind that which has so often seemed merely a mechanistic universe.

In our own day once again some scientists are not satisfied to limit their inquiries to their scientific investigations. Their findings concerning physical structure and order lead them into penetrating reflections upon the nature of man, and the philosophical and ethical implications of their own scientific discoveries. Dr. Rene Dubos, noted microbiologist, discusses these very implications in his book, "The Dreams of Reason". He states, "Science does not progress only by inductive, analytical knowledge. The imaginative speculations of the mind come first, the verification and analytical breakdown come only later." Also, "Many great experimenters in all fields of science have described how their ideas were determined in large part by unanalytical visionary perceptions."

Dr. Dubos was chosen to speak before scientists at the Brookhaven National Laboratory, where studies are devoted to nuclear physics and the biological effects of radiation. He was to present his views on science as a part of the social structure and of the humanistic tradition. It was to Assisi in Italy that he went to prepare the lectures, and mentioning



this fact in his introductory remarks to the group, he commented, in part, "I shall have nothing more to say about Francis of Assisi, but what I have said is sufficient to warn the reader that I find it difficult to dissociate science from the rest of human experience. . . . (that it) may help him to understand the mood in which this book has been written." The lectures were later organized into the above-mentioned book.

Another man of science, Loren Eiseley, an anthropologist who has extended his investigations of man's evolution into a study of the nature of man has expressed himself in the same reverent terms concerning the spirit of man.

As Visiting Professor of the Philosophy of Science at the University of Cincinnati in 1959, Dr. Eiseley delivered a series of lectures in which he discussed "the role of science as its own evolution permeates and controls the thought of men through the centuries." These eloquent essays upon man's relationship to his natural world and his attempts to discover the forces and laws that govern it have been made available in a small book under the title "The Firmament of Time," valuable both for its literary quality and its scientific and historical themes.

In considering the values of a science-conscious age, he comments, "Progress secularized, progress which pursues only the next invention, progress which pulls thought out of the mind and replaces it with idle slogans, is not progress at all. It is a beckoning mirage in a desert over which stagger the generations of men. Because man, each individual man among us, possesses his own soul and by that light must live or perish, there is no way by which Utopias — or the lost Garden itself — can be brought out of the future and presented to man. Neither can he go forward to such a destiny. Since in the world of time every man lives but one life, it is in himself that he must search for the secret of the Garden. With the fading of religious emphasis and the growth of the torrent, modern man is confused. The tumult without has obscured those voices that still cry desperately to man from somewhere within his consciousness."

Perhaps, in our scientific age, Swedenborgian writings and the New Church can have a new and deeper meaning, not by a watering down of its beliefs to serve the moral and social demands upon the Church today, but by returning to the uncompromising mood of the works themselves. In Swedenborg's lifetime a noted German churchman, Frederick Oettinger, at first enthusiastic about Swedenborg's works, but later intimidated by the authorities, denouncing the works and questioning their truth, urged Swedenborg to write his own defense by writing a history of his life in which he should explain how he had rejected the role of a philosopher to become a revelator. It should be recalled that to this Swedenborg replied, "The cause of this has been that the spiritual things which are being revealed at the present day may be taught and understood naturally and rationally; for spiritual truths have a correspondence with natural truths, because in these they terminate and upon these they rest. That there is a correspondence of all spiritual things with all things of man, as well as with all things of the earth, may be seen in the works on "Heaven and Hell," nos. 87 to 102, and nos. 103 to

115. For this reason I was introduced by the Lord first into the natural sciences and thus prepared; and indeed from the year 1710 to 1744, when heaven was opened to me. Everyone also is led by means of natural things to spiritual things; for man is born natural, by education he is made moral, and afterward, through regeneration by the Lord, he becomes spiritual."

In our age as scientists probe outer space and discover more and more truths about the structure and nature of our universe, perhaps these laymen, in this same Swedenborgian spirit, can discover deeper insights into the nature of God, Creator of the universe, and man's role and purpose in the great scheme. Might it not be further asked that in the spirit of God's revelation to man, if man be but responsive to God's will further and penetrating revelations may yet come? God's purposes may well be best served through a secular but dedicated laity leading man closer to His Presence.

Ours has been a secular culture since the Age of Faith (Medieval Age) and our scientists, the new men of prophecy, may well lead us to a second Age of Faith, one which will not ignore natural truths as did that earlier age, in which tragically there was no tolerance for the inquiry into the natural and physical aspects of the universe. Through complete freedom of inquiry the secular man of science, unlike the scientists at the end of the Age of Reason who eschewed any proximity to the man of religion, has now by his own intuition grasped with deep awe and reverence the immutable design of the vast universe. It is now incumbent upon the Church to welcome this free inquiry into the universal laws governing man and his universe without fear that such inquiry will irreparably weaken the fundamental truths of religion and damage the foundations of faith. God's truths can never be fully encompassed by theological dogma or scientific inquiry alone.

With the Swedenborgian clergy today strained for lack of manpower, moving from church to church, it is the small

#### LIVING MEMORIALS TO DEPARTED LOVED ONES

May be established by adding to announcements and obituary notices a request that memorials be mailed to the:

**SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION**  
Incorporated  
150 Fifth Avenue

New York, New York 10011

Acknowledgment of each such memorial will be made to the sender, and an engraved card recording the memorial will be sent to the surviving family.

Such memorials are utilized by the Foundation to develop a wider public interest in Swedenborg's writings.



group of dedicated Swedenborgians upon whom much of the burden has fallen to continue the work of the New Church. Sometimes without a minister, and in some instances even without a church building, (Indianapolis) a loyal and dedicated handful of New-Church followers have continued to meet together to perpetuate those principles and ideals of the Swedenborgian faith and philosophy in which they were nurtured. With lay leaders at times conducting the services, and providing that cohesive force that holds the little congregations together, the role of the layman today is readily apparent. With the reduced ranks in all of the New-Church congregations, there is a new role for each layman, (even as Swedenborg found his to be in examining the doctrines and practices of the church of his day) to re-examine the New-Church teachings for himself, seeking out its weaknesses and also its relevance to life in our own day.

It was through his comprehensive writings — the "Arcana Coelestia," the "Apocalypse Revealed," "The Worship and Love of God" and the "True Christian Religion" that Swedenborg brought new meaning to the Church, and converts to a new religion. He was led through his mystical and intellectual probings to a new revelation of the Divine Being. As modern day Swedenborgians perhaps the task of the clergy and the laymen alike should be to revise and simplify the Writings, restating them in less rhetorical language, or reinterpreting the mysticism for our own day. In our cynical, materialistic age, it is very difficult for the youthful mind to accept the Swedenborgian mysticism and visionary concepts of heaven. For a generation not used to reading for pleasure, or even for enlightenment for that matter, the intellectual and humanistic aspects of Swedenborgian philosophy have a difficult appeal.

The task as laymen might be to reinterpret the philosophy or to broaden it and adapt it to the modern way of life. Certainly it is the task of the New Church, as has happened in all the broad division of the Christian Church, Episcopalians in convention in Canada, Lutherans in assembly in Finland, to reexamine the doctrines and beliefs, as the Ecumenical Council of the Roman Church is doing even now.

The seriousness of the crisis that demands an inward look at existing and historical positions taken by the various church bodies is dramatically reflected in the February 5, 1962 issue of "Christianity and Crisis." Paul Lehmann in a discussion with Will Herberg has this to say in viewing what is basically a post-Christian era. "This is a phrase we now hear on every hand. I suppose it has been given theological currency by Dietrich Bonhoeffer more than by anybody else, particularly in such trenchant phrases as "die Mundigkeit der Welt" (the world's coming of age) and "ein religionloses Christentum" (a Christianity that is not religious). What this means is that our outlook goes a long way back. We are coming now into the fruitage of the break up of the "Corpus Christianum," of that integration of man's cultural life which it took a thousand years to build and has taken about another thousand to undo. The breakup of the "Corpus Christianum" has been displaced by a many-sided pluralism: social, political, religious and also a cultural pluralism that is compounded of images and habits of thought no longer effectively shaped by Christianity."

If the question that arises is whether the Church itself can face the crisis of a Christian "minority," then it must be further asked, how a small church such as the Swedenborgian, can survive through the following decades. Unquestioned faith and courage must hold the laymen and clergy steadfast in the days to come. In the Autumn 1962 issue of "Dialog" (a liberal Lutheran publication), Martin E. Marty says almost wistfully, "Admittedly, the eight hundred million (?) members of his (Jesus) little flock face more complicated odds in a world that feels it has given Christianity its chance institutionally and now brings small expectation or even violent rejection to attempts at mission or renewal."

However Dr. Marty goes on more positively to suggest, "Perhaps, regarding secularity positively and seeing it from the aspect of a suffering and glorifying God, from the view of the Lordship of Christ, Christians can look to something new. Maybe we do not yet know, culturally, what the plan or plot should be. On Bishop Usher's time scale, Christendom was a long age; to see it passing is disquieting. On the kind of time scale we are accustomed to using today, it represents but a moment of human history, a snap of the finger of cosmic history; it was a good moment (many of us may say). We may rejoice in its happening, learn from its effects, relish its artifacts and monuments and pray to use our present occasions as fruitfully as did the fathers."

If the crisis of our times seemed not too clear, possibly blurred by its own excesses and duration, it did suddenly loom with terrifying reality on November 22. Who could doubt this after witnessing the tragic succession of events that moved with the inevitable fatefulness of a Sophoclean drama on a vast stage? The brutality and violence of those crimes shocked an entire world, even in those corners of the earth where bloodshed and violence are familiar companions. Many a man wondered whether our hatreds, and our excesses, and our indifferences to violence had not brought us close to the day of doom.

It was indeed the hand of God warning mankind that he was on the brink of his own self destruction. If this unhappy martyrdom was not to have been in vain, this moment of horror must mark a turning point in both national life and personal life. It must tear down the walls separating men so that they might learn again that one is one's brother's keeper and that what happened that day is everyone's guilt. Men did indeed look deep within their souls and realized their fragile mortality. This now leaves the world more than ever ready for spiritual rebirth.

There seems to be no denying that a search after rebirth is taking place in our day, for on every Christian tongue now sounds the call of ecumenicity. One can well ponder what the fate of such a small church as the New Church might be. If the answer to the apparent challenge of survival should be too many Swedenborgian ventures into the financial and other large burdens of the community church, the result may be that the New Church will lose its battle of survival, swallowed up in the anonymous, sprawling vastness of suburbia. There are so many large denominations better suited to the fundamentalist views so generally preponderant in those areas, or at least concerned with the dilutions of social gospel. These are a people largely unfettered



by and unsympathetic with any profound theological concepts such as appear in the writings of Swedenborg and his followers.

Consider the intellectual resources of the Swedenborgians, conceptions deep with meaning, views of man's relationship to God that the literal minded might have great difficulty in understanding. We must remember that few of us today are practiced in the art of conceptual thinking. This then is not to be considered in any way a matter of spiritual pride (or snobbery), it is simply an unusual religious inheritance of remarkable scope.

Examine a matter of spirit in this light, "... that spirit is itself a living organism, endowed really, for instance, with those powers of sensation which eye and ear only exercise from it. Thought, love, insight, and purpose, in this view, have substance, or the activity of a substantial organism. They make the spirit. They are the man himself. He is a spirit and a body. . . . The this-world consciousness is called the 'external man' . . . the mind which one has for the world other than that of nature 'the internal man'". ("An Outline of New-Church Teaching" by William F. Wunsch, p. 10).

Also witness the Neo-Platonic references in Swedenborg's own writing, "The Word is the Divine Truth proceeding from the Lord, which in its origin is Divine, and in its progress through the heavens, in the inmost heaven is celestial, in the second or middle is spiritual, in the first or lowest is spiritual natural, and in the world is natural and worldly, such as it is in the sense of the letter which is for man. Hence it is evident that this latter sense, which is the last in order, contains in it the spiritual and celestial senses, and inmost the Divine itself." ("Arcana Coelestia" 9407).

Or consider one more example from Swedenborg's hand, "A Divine Trinity in one Person is to be understood as soul, body, and proceeding activity, together constituting one essence, for the one is from the other, and therefore the one belongs to the other. In this sense there is a trinity in each man, which taken together constitutes one person, to wit, the soul, the body, and the activity that goes forth. But in man this trinity is finite, because man is only an organ of life; whereas in the Lord the Trinity is infinite and thus Divine, because the Lord is life itself even in respect to the Human, as He Himself teaches in John v. 26; xiv. 6; and elsewhere." (Q.3).

Can this be couched in the simplicity of literalistic interpretation, or be dropped for the sake of convenience? This

#### **"TALKING WITH GOD"**

■ The Trade Edition of the above titled book on prayer and spiritual healing, published by Arthur James Ltd., London, has been sold out, but a new edition will be brought out after Christmas. A copy of it can be obtained at the price of \$1.50 from  
The Massachusetts New-Church Union  
3 Joy Street, Boston 8, Mass.  
and  
The New-Church Press  
79 Orange Street, Brooklyn 1, N. Y.

spiritual erudition runs through the whole of Swedenborgian teaching. This impressive intellectual heritage has drawn to the New Church such men and women of letters as Emerson, Henry James, Sr., and Helen Keller, and should be preserved at all costs. Such a strenuous effort to preserve intact the best of Swedenborgian concepts, suggests that over the following decades the New Church might best remain small in members, but large and articulate in matters of spiritual and intellectual import.

It could justly be said that the other Christian churches need the Swedenborgians as a constant reminder, a dramatic symbol of their own past failures in days that saw religion increasingly institutionalized when the New Church sought hard to provide the stimulus of Swedenborg's own religious "enlightenment." It is no accident that the New-Church Convention and a number of its congregations have endowments to help through these years of rising costs and limited membership, for a grateful upper middle class of the late 19th century and early 20th century contributed sizable financial bequests. These now stand as a "trust" to be wisely used by Swedenborgians of today. Those members of another day, a laity often learned and at least cultivated, found little comfort in faiths often spiritually deadened by fundamentalist piety or legalistic theology and who yet could not turn to the liberal sects. These Swedenborgians demanded a faith that was liturgically and theologically rewarding and also one which would not reject the best of the classical humanism that had come out of the Renaissance.

The ecumenical movement arose because the Christian community deeply desired a wealth of spiritual and intellectual imagery and belief which has much in common with that body of teaching historically contained in the writings of the Swedenborgians. With patience a time will soon come when an ever increasing number of men and women will be naturally attracted to the New Church. This is the basis of a plea for a strong, dedicated laymen's movement to aid the clergy in holding the New Church steadfast in this interim. In the meantime the church should not be overly committed in those matters that are not of absolute importance, such as overly ambitious church plants or other related material symbols. These are vain considerations that the church cannot at present afford.

It is therefore incumbent upon the New Church to recognize its limitations and its strengths; and that its greatest hope lies in the men and women of sensibility and earnestness, steeped in love for spiritual matters of the profoundest order. This will be the future cornerstone upon which the church can stand.

It is this uniqueness of purpose that should distinguish the New Church, in its search after a *modus vivendi* in a world of institutional bigness. The Swedenborgians can then in all confidence join in the ecumenical movement, confident that their contribution will be respected and even welcomed. The New Church might even prove to be the spiritual catalyst causing it to have a weight of responsibility in world church councils far outstripping its numerical wealth.

—CAROLINE AND FRIDTJOF SCHRODER



# 1 ONE SMALL CHURCH

where every member is a minister

CALL TO COMMITMENT by Elizabeth O'Connor, Harper and Row, New York, \$3.50.

**W**HAT IS A CHURCH? A white frame building with a tall spire, nestled in the New England hills? A gray Gothic structure arching over the city? A chapel of glass and green looking out to the Pacific?

Swedenborg writes: "The church is in man, and not outside of him; and the church at large consists of the men who have the church in them." A church is where a man meets with his fellowmen and finds God; where every member is a minister to every other member and together they reach their hands out to those who have not found a place for God in their lives.

There is a church in Washington, D. C. whose seventy members meet for prayer and worship and study. Then they go out. They go to the Potter's House on Columbia Road where they offer coffee and pastry and a listening ear to the seeker who would never find their brownstone "headquarters" on Massachusetts Avenue. Patrons have a chance to view the works of local artists, hear poetry readings and drama. If they ask where the coffee house got its name, they are told how Jeremiah saw a potter fashion spoiled clay into a vessel which was good. God can do the same with those who place themselves in his hands.

The members of this church go out to a retreat center on a Maryland farm. This farm, called Dayspring, "was to be a place where the lives of everybody who touched it could become more deeply rooted in the life of God. Here wounds would be exposed and healed by Christ's love, here we would work and play and pray together, here the loved and the unloved would be equally welcome." There was real doubt whether the small membership could make a down payment on the farm. They were already tithing, but they took extra jobs, sacrificed legitimate expenditures, and arranged for long-term loans. The Easter

offering that year, which it had been agreed would go toward the purchase of the farm, came to \$9,000.

The members of this church went out to establish a workshop where "artists and apprentices and students could move deeper into the life of the Christian Community." They have gone out to build a renewal center where the emotionally ill could find healing. They seek to reach out into Christian business enterprises. The congregation is "deeply aware of the spiritual law that he who gives his life finds his life, and that this was true corporately as well as individually. The organization, like the individual, which waits until it is established with its own needs provided and its own future secured before beginning a program of giving, knows a death within that dims its sight of the kingdom of God."

This church began with a minister and his wife and her sister. It began with the idea that church membership presupposes total commitment to God. Those who would become members must study, take part in a mission group and work with a spiritual adviser. "He must have opportunity in a community of acceptance and love to see himself, to let go his false saviours that he may come to know the real Saviour." Members pledge to meet God daily in a set time of prayer and Scripture reading, to grow in love for all people, to worship weekly, to be a contributing member of one of the mission groups, to give proportionately beginning with a tithe, and to ask the help of the membership if they fail in these "expressions of devotion."

A church like this must be willing to risk, willing to fail, willing to listen for God's will in everything they do. The Swedenborgian loudly proclaims that all religion relates to life and the life of religion is to do good. He will find a challenge and vision in the story of the Church of the Saviour by Elizabeth O'Connor in CALL TO COMMITMENT.



# WHY? WHY? WHY?

Swedenborg's teachings help us to understand the Lord's providence in times of crisis

**S**HOCK . . . DISBELIEF . . . bewilderment . . . grief . . . were shared by all Americans as the news of the President's death came to us on Friday afternoon. Some of you learned of the tragedy as you worked in your offices or studied at school. Others were told as you shopped or sat waiting for dentist or doctor. Others were in buses, taxis, or automobiles. And still others received the flash in your homes, from radio and television, or from distraught neighbors. The news seemed incredible. We waited for word that the report was a dreadful mistake.

Even as details came in hour after hour, it seemed like a nightmare. After midnight sleep came fitfully. Perhaps when we awakened in the morning everything would be all right.

But morning reports brought only further confirmation of the tragedy. The body of the President lay in the East Room of the White House and government dignitaries arrived all day long to pay their respects. Across the street in Lafayette Park people stood silently in the rain, staring at the procession of cars loading and unloading. When asked why she had come there, one woman said that she could not accept the fact that the President was gone until she could see for herself the mourners at the White House.

When an elderly friend or relative dies, we are usually prepared. The death is often preceded by weeks or months of sickness. We grieve at our loss, and yet realize that our loved one has lived a full life, and that his time had come.

The sudden death of a child or a person in the prime of life leaves us stunned. It offends our sense of justice. Our President had so much to live for, so much to give. He was so full of life that it seemed inconceivable that it could be snuffed out in an instant.

We know that there is life beyond death, but must the transition be made so soon? There is so much that needs to be done on this earthly plane of existence. We need the contribution of every able and dedicated man and woman. "Heaven can wait," we cry out.

Following our memorial service on Friday evening, two visitors asked: "Do you have any theological explanation or justification for this tragedy?" . . . After the initial shock and numbness wear off, our minds cry out, "Why?" "Why?" "Why?"

On Tuesday evening, April 23, Bill Moore, white, age 35, Baltimore postman, was killed on an isolated section of

U. S. highway 11 in Alabama. He was walking from Chattanooga to Jackson to deliver a letter to Governor Barnett asking him to soften his stand against civil rights. . . . Why did he die?

Medgar Evers, black, age 37, husband, father of three children, Mississippi field secretary for the NAACP was ambushed in the driveway of his home in Jackson, early in the morning of June 12. The bullet which ended his life came from an Eddystone rifle equipped with a telescopic sight . . . Why did he die?

On November 22, John F. Kennedy, 46 years old husband, father, and president, was shot and killed . . . Why?

On the same day, J. D. Tippit, 38, Dallas patrolman, father of three children, was killed as he attempted to question a young fanatic named Lee Oswald . . . Why?

What explanation can we offer? Can it be that these four men died as punishment for their sins? Yesterday a man walked back and forth in front of the White House carrying a sign reading: "I warned J. F. K. Now God has cursed him." Within minutes the man was hustled away, to protect him from an angry crowd.

A typical reaction when we suffer calamities or serious illness is to cry out, "What have I done that God should treat me so?" We have the notion that we are rewarded for our righteousness and punished for our misconduct. Every man gets his just desserts.

An even more common explanation for tragedies is the pious phrase, "It's God's will." This is supposed to be the expression of deep faith. President Lyndon Johnson, in a television address to the American people yesterday, proclaiming Monday as a national day of mourning, asked us "to bow down in submission to the will of Almighty God." If we believe in a God who is all-knowing and all-powerful, must we conclude that everything that happens is His will?

A third explanation, which is quite similar to the second, is to ascribe the tragedies to Fate. The ancient Greeks would have put the responsibility in the laps of the gods. The irreligious might throw up their hands and speak of blind chance.

Somehow these so-called explanations are not very satisfying. To speak of the cold-blooded murder of four young men as the punishment of God is blasphemy. A God of love is incapable of hatred, wrath, or punishment. A God who teaches us to forgive again and again and again, 70 times 7,



is patient, merciful, and infinitely forgiving. He came not to condemn, but to save.

To speak of calamities as the will of God is even more repulsive. In His love God wills no evil or suffering. He wills or desires the salvation of all men, and works for their eternal happiness.

To talk about fate explains nothing, and to ascribe tragic events to blind chance is to ignore the orderly nature of the universe.

But what explanations can a Christian offer that are more reasonable or comforting? Harry Emerson Fosdick, in helping us to understand suffering and death, lists four causes:

- 1) the law-abiding nature of the universe and the operation of natural law
- 2) human ignorance and the progressive nature of human life
- 3) operation of our freedom to choose
- 4) the togetherness and interdependence of human beings

These four causes offer an explanation for suffering that is both reasonable and consistent with our belief in a loving God. This same basic explanation is set forth in the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg and especially in his book on Divine Providence.

He states that one of the fundamental laws of divine providence is that man should act from freedom in accordance with reason. God will not violate our freedom and make us automats. He respects the freedom of the evil and the just, and permits us to follow the dictates of our heart and mind. He continually guides and directs us, and leads us away from evil and toward good, but He will not force us to follow His will.

Many of our thoughts, feelings, and actions will be contrary to His will. To safeguard our freedom, He permits this to happen. In the teachings of our church we make a real distinction between will and permission. God's will or desire is that we constantly do good. He permits us to do evil—to hate, to hurt, and even to kill.

Swedenborg writes: "Without permissions man cannot be led from evil by the Lord, and thus be reformed and saved. For unless evils were allowed to break out, man would not see them, therefore would not acknowledge them, and thus could not be induced to resist them. Evils cannot be repressed, therefore, by any act of providence; if they were, they would remain shut in, and like a disease such as cancer and gangrene, would spread and consume everything vital in man."

You may have heard of people who are insensitive to pain and whose lives are in jeopardy because they can suffer internal injuries or other afflictions and be unaware of them and take no remedial steps. A headache, fever, rash, or stomach pains are signs that there is something wrong within, and a notice to us that we must take action to correct the disorder. In 1955 the country was shocked to learn that Senator Lyndon B. Johnson had suffered a severe heart attack. Why did this have to happen to such a promising man? Rather than cursing God for striking him down, Johnson spent his convalescence in looking at life anew. It taught him in a dramatic way that he must change some of his attitudes toward life and give up the hectic pace he was living.

Because God "permitted" the attack to take place, Johnson was able to recognize his inner state of anxiety, tension, and distorted sense of values and to make the necessary changes and adjustments that restored him to health of mind and body and qualified him for a life of increased service to his country and his God. Now he is President of the United States.

God respects our freedom and will not force us to follow in His path. He permits evils to occur, and yet works with us to help bring good out of the evil. He will not act contrary to His laws, suspending the law of gravity to aid a righteous man or deflecting the bullet of an assassin. We are on this earth to grow in mind, body, and spirit, and we are responsible for our fellowmen. In our complex civilization human beings are interdependent. One madman like Adolf Hitler can terrorize a world. One assassin, like John Wilkes Booth, or the killer of John F. Kennedy, can throw an entire nation into grief.

By the same token a whole nation can benefit from the contribution of a single man devoted to his country and determined to use his powers for a noble cause. To take such a stand, and to pledge ourselves to be honest, fearless, and uncompromising, will often mean danger. A man volunteering for a government post or any public office is subject to pressures of all kinds—defamation of character, verbal and physical assault, and even death.

Each of us must be ready to meet the challenge of the segregationist, the anarchist, the corrupt politician, the hate monger, and the murderer. And if we take a stand against evil, injustice, bigotry, and prejudice, we must be ready to face the consequences. The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. was asked Friday night how he felt about the President's death. Dr. King has been stabbed, imprisoned, beaten, and constantly threatened. He has grown somewhat philosophic about it now and said: "If you feel strongly enough about a cause, as I do, you must be ready to withstand threats and abuse, and be ready to die if necessary."

Bill Moore, alive, was an ignored "oddball" in his native home of Binghamton because he crusaded for causes and worked only to make a living. Dead he became the "man who cared", and America stood still and honored him.

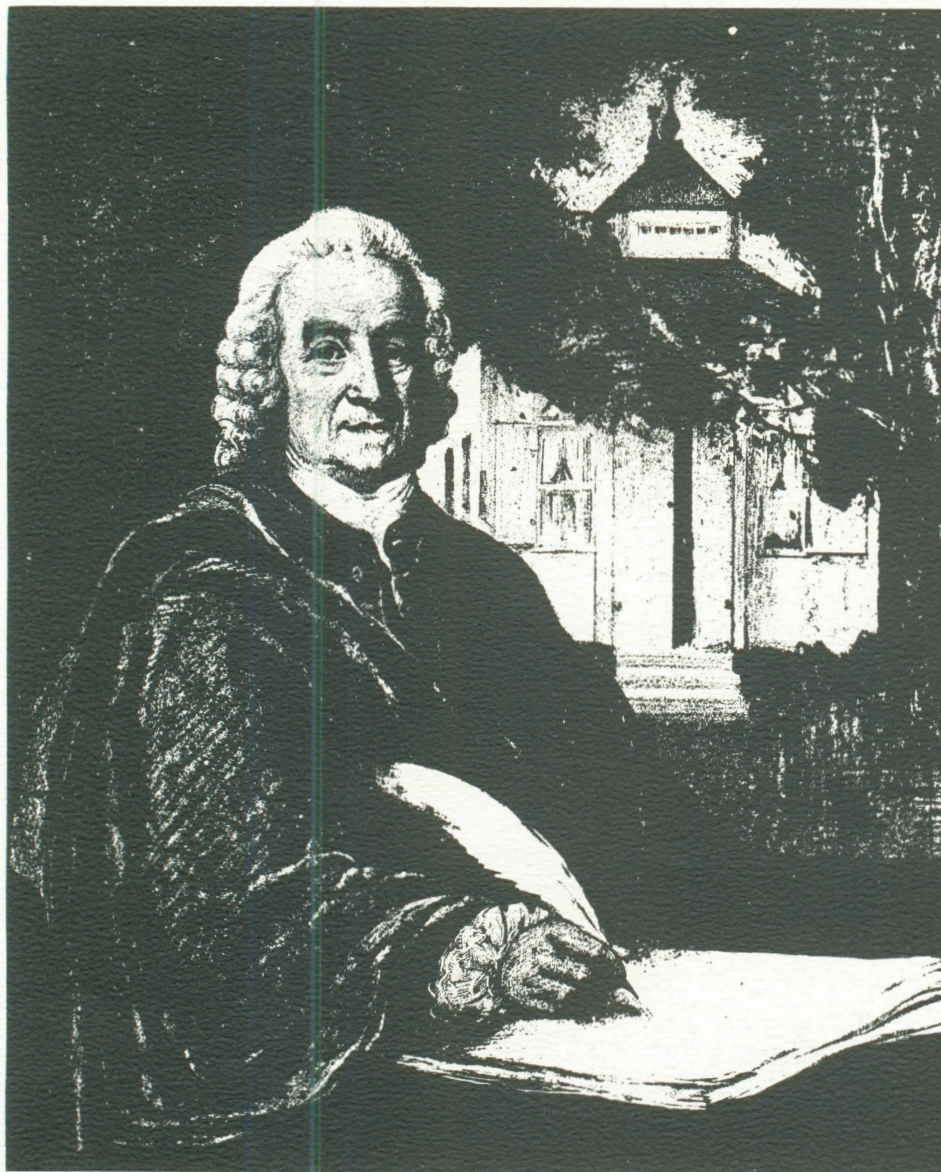
Medgar Evers, alive, was another dedicated civil rights worker, calmly carrying out a dangerous assignment in the South. Dead, he became a symbol of the victory of civil rights and signaled the end of segregation.

By any standard the deaths of Moore, Evers, Tippit, and Kennedy were premature and untimely, and the nation is poorer for their passing. John Donne wrote: "No man is an island, entire of itself. . . . Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

Let us pray that we may be strengthened by the courage and example of these men, and be ready to spend our lives in a cause that goes beyond our own comfort, welfare, and prosperity.

One hundred years ago at Gettysburg, Abraham Lincoln said: "It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion."





Emanuel Swedenborg's Garden House

"I'm a pavilion which men pass by,  
I stood in Stockholm in my master's yard.  
His angels filled me with their harmonies,  
And spiritual values flourished in my care.  
A mighty man of research, prophet, sage,  
He used my simple shelter as a home.  
Here he beheld the glory of the heavens:  
And here was built a New Jerusalem.  
For the spirit now fled, I was a shell;  
Now I stand forsaken in my grief.  
Yet harp and cymbal filled me, when  
God came to visit with our Swedenborg."

—HJALMAR GULLBERG

(Translated from; the Swedish)

### Emanuel Swedenborg's Garden House

**A** MOST THRILLING LETTER has come from our minister in Stockholm, the Rev. Jack Hardstedt. The New Church has always had hard going in its homeland, due to the existence of the Swedish State Church. "Free churches" have had difficulty even in advertising, but recently many such restrictions have eased. Mr. Hardstedt now writes, in deep gratitude to the Lord, "The Swedish State Television had a notable program on Emanuel Swedenborg, heralded by an extensive and five article (illustrated) in the Radio-Television Weekly (Horde Ni? Did You Hear?). My time for the TV interview was the best possible—Sunday at Divine Service time—and all the Stockholm dailies gave

much praise for my exposition. A stream of correspondence and articles in different newspapers followed, of course, and I say this to the glory of the Lord."

As though this were not enough good news for one letter, he continues:

"Half an hour ago the director of Skansen, a National Sanctuary here in Stockholm, phoned me and said that, as a result of a widening interest in Emanuel Swedenborg especially on the part of Anglo-saxon (U.S.A.) tourists, and renewed interest in him following the television and newspaper campaign, they have decided to move Swedenborg's Summerhouse at Skansen from the almost forgotten place it now stands to a foremost and by every visitor noted place, The Rosegarden. There the Seer's

summerhouse will stand, all carefully restored by noted and skilful antiquarians. The house has to be removed with utter care, not a board or nail to be removed. But it will cost 20,000 kronor (\$4000), and the Skansen is now wholly supported by free-will offerings and entrance tickets. Director Nygren wondered if we were willing to do something for this cause, since all travelling Swedenborgians want to see this house, and because most of them have been astonished that such an antiquity and such a piece of remembrance of that great man has been placed in an unnoticed corner and is not better cared for.

—RICHARD H. TAFEL  
President of Convention



# The nature of Swedenborg's revelation

by Louis A. Dole

THE WORD "REVELATION" is an inclusive term. It is commonly understood to refer 1) to something that is revealed by God to man, e.g. the Sacred Scriptures, or 2) anything made known to a person which he did not know before.

Let us begin with a fundamental fact. Man is a recipient; all his affections and thoughts inflow from the spiritual world, his good affections and thoughts from the heavens and his evil affections and thoughts from the hells. All created things in the three kingdoms — animal, vegetable, and mineral — are but recipients. The difference between man and animals is that man can choose what he will make his own, while animals automatically react to influx. We read in "Conversation with Angels" 9: "There is nothing in man except the faculty of receiving," in "Arcana Coelestia" 3742, "Angels, spirits, and men are only recipients of life," and in "Arcana Coelestia" 2875<sup>2</sup>, "Affection is the receiving agent itself. To receive anything against the affection is to receive it against the life, therefore the truth of doctrine cannot be received except by the affection of it; and such as is the affection, such is the reception," and further, "What flows in is received according to the state" (Arcana Coelestia 1940<sup>2</sup>). These quotations set limits to what can be revealed. "Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy one of Israel." When the Lord was present in the flesh, men saw His form, heard His voice, and listened to his words. Some received His message with delight; others rejected it altogether.

It has been noted that "revelation" is a very broad term. It manifests itself on different levels and takes many forms. For example, take these two statements: 1) The Word is a Divine revelation from God to man; 2) The Doctrines were revealed to Emanuel Swedenborg not by any angel, but by the Lord when he was reading the Word. Now suppose we cast these two statements into the form of a syllogism. A syllogism consists of a major premise and a minor premise, from which premises a conclusion is drawn.

The Word is a Divine revelation.

The Writings are a Divine revelation.

∴ The Writings are The Word.

This is a conclusion that has actually been drawn. Is it valid? No, it is not valid. We could prove that black is white by this method, e.g.:

Black is a color.

White is a color.

∴ Black is white.

In order that a valid conclusion may be drawn, one of the

premises must be particular and the other general. In this case both premises are of the same type and so no valid affirmative conclusion can be drawn from them. That is the error of those who have made the writings of Swedenborg a third Testament. There are different levels of truth, and all truths of every level are from the Lord. So if reasoning were carried out on this basis, we should have to say that all truths are the Word. Swedenborg himself makes a clear distinction between his writings and the Word, stating by name which books are the Word of God.

We are told that no one can know from himself anything about spiritual things, about heaven and hell, about immortality and life after death, and still less about the Lord. In "Arcana Coelestia 10318" we read, "Without a revelation from the Divine, man cannot know anything about eternal life, nor indeed anything about God, and still less about love to Him and faith in Him." Of himself man could not even conceive the idea of God. "Who by searching can find out God?" These things can come only through revelation.

Two terms, "inspiration" and "enlightenment," are involved in any discussion of "revelation." These also have their types or degrees. We read, "Paul did speak from inspiration, not such as that from which the prophets spoke, to whom the several words were dictated but his inspiration was that he received an influx according to those things that were with him, which inspiration is totally different; nor has it conjunction with heaven by means of correspondences" (Arcana Coelestia 6062e). So we are informed that there are different levels of inspiration.

Let us first consider "revelation" in its primary meaning: the Lord's revelation of Himself to man, the giving of His Word through the prophets. They heard a voice, saw a vision, dreamed a dream. Messages were given them from the Urim and Thummim and from the ark of the testimony, or an angel filled with the Divine presence spoke to them, but they had no understanding of what was really meant. This inspiration had to do with the will; the understanding was not touched. It was the same with the Evangelists through whom the Gospels and Revelation were given. They had no real understanding of the inner meaning of the Word which was given through them. Of them it is written, "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John xiv, 25, 26). Even with the help given by the Writings we understand very little of what is in the



Scriptures. In this way the Scriptures were given. "The prophets through whom the Word was written, wrote as the spirit from the Divine dictated; the very words which they wrote were uttered in their ears" (Arcana Coelestia 7055<sup>3</sup>). Swedenborg was given to experience such dictation by living voice, but he was not allowed to record it, as he writes: "I was not allowed to insert anything whatever that was dictated by them viva voce." (Adversaria 3/337e). Also he was permitted the experience of having his hand guided in writing.

Now let us turn for a moment to the history of revelation. "There have been several churches on our globe one after another. There was the Most Ancient, that was before the flood; there was the Ancient, that was after the flood; then the Hebrew; then the Israelitish; after this the Christian; and now the New Church is beginning. Inmost Divine truths were revealed to those who were of the Most Ancient Church; more external truths were revealed to those of the Ancient Church; and most external or ultimate Divine truths to the Hebrew Church, and afterwards to the Israelitish, with which Church all Divine truth finally perished, for at last there was nothing in the Word that had not been adulterated. But after the end of the Israelitish Church interior Divine truths were revealed by the Lord for the Christian Church; and now still more interior truths for the Church that is to come. These interior truths are such as are in the internal or spiritual sense of the Word. All this makes clear that there has been a progression of Divine truth from inmosts to ultimates, thus from wisdom to mere ignorance; and that now there is a progression of it from ultimates to interiors, thus from ignorance again to wisdom," (Apocalypse Explained 948<sup>3</sup>).

With the Most Ancient Church revelation was immediate and direct — the Word was written in their hearts. They did not have to learn truths by study. They, however, did need to receive instruction, which was necessary to advancement, but they knew on hearing it whether it was truth or not. Revelation to them was not by a written Word. Because the wills of these people became perverted nothing but what is evil and false finally could flow into them; so a new Church of a different type had to be formed, in which truth could be revealed to the understanding. To this — the Ancient Church — written Word was given, through which the Lord revealed Himself to men. When this Word was perverted, a new Word was given. The Most Ancient Church was established by a revelation, and every succeeding Church was established by a new revelation, the Israelitish Church by the Hebrew Scriptures, the Christian Church by the Gospels and Revelation, and the New Church by the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, which are the key to the understanding of the Word.

Swedenborg was religious from his early childhood, and as a young man, the thought of God was always before him. And in his manhood his discoveries and achievements were for the purpose of benefiting mankind and not for his own glory. He expected that the knowledge of the soul could be deducted from a knowledge of the laws of nature and so established upon a sure foundation of natural fact. He was in part right in this expectation. Revelation must flow down from above and be confirmed from below. All of Sweden-

borg's preparation was needed to qualify him for the work of his later years. He says, "I was introduced by the Lord into the natural sciences, and thus prepared, and indeed from the year 1710—1744 when heaven was opened to me." And he said that this was the purpose: "That the spiritual things which are being revealed at the present day — may be taught and understood naturally and rationally; for spiritual truths have a correspondence with natural truths, because in these they terminate, and upon these they rest." And he goes on to say, "The Lord has granted me besides to love truths in a spiritual manner — that is, to love them, not for the sake of honor, nor for the sake of gain, but for the sake of the truths themselves, for he who loves truth for the sake of truth, sees them from the Lord, because the Lord is the Way and the Truth" ("De Anima"—quoted from Benjamin Worcester's "Life of Swedenborg," pp. 171, 172).

Swedenborg was not in a state like that of the prophets to whom the Word was dictated. His spiritual senses were opened, and he had visions, as did the prophets, but he was at the same time in a condition of full wakefulness, thus in a wholly rational state of mind. He was prepared in the natural sciences, and had the knowledge needed before he was called to be a revelator. Facts were not dictated to his mind. He recorded things heard and seen, and his interpretation of the spiritual sense of the Word was from enlightenment by the Lord as he read the Word. In "True Christian Religion 214" we find the following: "The celestial and spiritual senses of the Word without the natural sense are not the Word, for they are like spirit and life without a body, and they are like a palace without a foundation."

The Lord reveals Himself to us only through His Word. The Writings are for the purpose of making the real message of the Lord in His Word available to us. There is no longer any immediate revelation. Nor is there any valid information attainable through spirit communications. Immediate revelation is not given today. The reason is that it would be received only according to man's own states, and so would offer no instruction, but would only confirm one in his own affections and thoughts. The Writings put it this way: "Every man is in a society of spirits as to his affections and thoughts thence, in which he is at one with them, wherefore spirits speaking with man speak from his affections, and according to them" "De Verbo XIII" And again, "Moreover, no leave is given to any spirit or even angel to instruct any man on this earth in Divine truths, but the Lord Himself teaches everyone through the Word, and teaches him so far as the man receives good from the Lord in the will, and this the man receives so far as he shuns evils as sins" "De Verbo XIII".

The importance of the revelation given through Swedenborg is that the Bible was about to be discarded, and as the Lord speaks to man only through His Word, conjunction with Him would have been broken. For knowledge of God and of spiritual things we are wholly dependent upon the Word.

We are told that "There is a universal influx into the souls of men, that there is a God, and that He is one." But this does not take the form of knowledge. So it does not imply conscious knowledge but a predisposition toward the truth when it is outwardly revealed. True Christian Religion 11



puts it in another way: "The faith of God enters man through a prior way, which is from the soul, into the higher parts of the understanding, but knowledges concerning God enter through a posterior way, because they are imbibed from the revealed Word through the understanding, through the senses of the body . . ." Again in *Arcana Coelestia* 10290<sup>2</sup>, "The Lord speaks with the man of the Church in no other way than through the Word, for He then enlightens man, so that he may see truth, and also gives him perception to perceive that it is so; but this is effected according to the quality of the desire for truth with the man, and the desire for truth with a man is according to his love of it. They who love truth for the sake of truth are in enlightenment, and they who love truth for the sake of good are in perception."

The mind is in darkness if there is no knowledge of or belief in spiritual truths. And so far as anyone is in the love of self and of the world, his mind is not opened upwards, but is closed to the perception of spiritual truth. Whenever the latter is made known to him by revelation, he is predisposed to doubt and deny it; for there is no place for it in his heart.

In *Arcana Coelestia* 2568<sup>4</sup> we find this statement: "There are therefore two principles; one of which leads to all folly and insanity, and the other to all intelligence and wisdom. The former is to deny all things, or to say in the heart that we cannot believe them until we are convinced by what we can apprehend, or perceive by the senses; this is the principle that leads to all folly and insanity, and is to be called the negative principle. The other principle is to affirm the things which are of doctrine from the Word, or to think and believe within ourselves that they are true because the Lord has said them: this is the principle that leads to all intelligence and wisdom, and is called the affirmative principle. The more they who think from the negative principle consult things rational, the more they consult memory knowledges, and the more they consult things philosophical, the more they cast and precipitate themselves into darkness, until at last they deny all things. The causes of this are, that on one can apprehend higher things from lower ones, that is spiritual and celestial things, still less Divine things from lower ones." We should note that Swedenborg was introduced into the heavens before he was permitted to explore the hells.

The Word is given in such a form that it will not compel belief, and Swedenborg does not ask that his writings be accepted on his authority, but only as they are seen to agree with the Word. Our first duty, then, in regard to his writings is to make this test — whether they are in accord with the Word or not. Everyone is free to accept those writings or to reject them.

In the "Spiritual Diary" 2955 Swedenborg tells us how his writings would be received by men: "Now while in the street and talking with spirits, it was given me to perceive that there are five kinds of reception: First, (those) who wholly reject, who are in another persuasion, and who are enemies of the faith. These reject; for it cannot be received by them, since it (can) not penetrate their minds. Another class, who receive these things as scientifics, and are delighted with them as scientifics, and as curious things. A third class, which receives intellectually, so that they receive with suf-

ficient alacrity, but still remain (in respect to) life as before. A fourth class (receives) persuasively, so that it penetrates to the improvement of their lives; they recur to these in certain states, and makes use of them. A fifth class, who receive with joy, and are confirmed" (1748, August 27).

And in "*Arcana Coelestia*" 10330<sup>3</sup> he tells us: "But be it known that influx and enlightenment take place according to the capability of reception on the part of man, and the capability of reception is according to the love of what is good and true; and therefore those are raised who are in love of what is good and true for the sake of what is good and true as ends." Those not in the love of what is good and true cannot be enlightened from heaven. "From all this it can be seen why it is that so many heresies arise in the world, namely, because leaders and guides have looked to themselves and have had their own glory as their end, and accordingly the things of the Lord and of heaven as means to this end."

The New Church is founded, however, on the belief that the Lord through the writings of Swedenborg has given the world a new revelation of the truth that is in the Word. Those who reject the Writings cannot be of the New Church, and no minister who does not believe in them should remain in its ministry. This revelation, given for the New Church, is necessary for the man of the new age and is the only reason for the existence of the New Church as a separate organization. Everyone is free to accept or to reject this revelation. But if he decides to reject it, he does not belong in the New Church and certainly has no right to go out before the world as a minister of the New Church. To do this is not intellectually honest.

The necessity of revelation, how it has come to us down the ages, and the Divine Providence in keeping the way open is summarized in "*Arcana Coelestia*" 10355<sup>5-6</sup>: "But when not even natural good remained with the man of the church, the Lord came into the world and reduced into order all things in the heavens and in the hells, to the end that man may receive influx from Him out of heaven and be enlightened; and that the hells should not be able to hinder, and infuse thick darkness. Then a fourth church began, which is called the Christian Church. In this church their information about heavenly things, or about those of eternal life, is effected solely by means of the Word. Thereby man has influx and enlightenment, for the Word has been written by means of mere correspondences, and by means of mere representatives, which signify heavenly things. Into these come the angels of heaven, when the man of the church reads the Word; consequently there is effected through the Word the conjunction of heaven with the church, or of the angels of heaven with the men of the church, but only with those therein who are in the good of love and charity. But inasmuch as the man of this church also has extinguished this good, therefore neither can he be informed by any influx, and by enlightenment therefrom, except about a few truths, which however do not cohere with good. Therefore these times are what are called Iron, for 'iron' denotes truth in the ultimates of order. But when truth is of such a quality, it is then such as is described in Daniel: 'In that thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves by means of the seed of man;



but they shall not cohere the one with the other, even as iron is not mingled with clay' (ii,43). From this it can be seen in what manner revelations have succeeded one another from the most ancient ages to the present time; and that at this day revelation is given solely through the Word, and genuine revelation solely with those who are in the love of truth for the sake of truth, and not with those who are in the love of truth for the sake of honors and profits as ends. For, if you will believe it, the Lord is the Word itself, because the Word is Divine truth, and Divine truth is the Lord in heaven, because it is from the Lord. Wherefore they who love Divine truth for the sake of Divine truth, love the Lord; and with those who love the Lord heaven flows in and enlightens them. Whereas they who love Divine truth for the sake of honors and profit as ends, turn themselves away from the Lord to themselves and to the world, for which reason there can be no influx and enlightenment. Moreover as these, when dwelling on the sense of the letter, keep the mind fixed on themselves and their own reputation and glory, they apply this sense to such things as favor their own loves."

The New Church should cherish the truths which have been given to it and for it, remembering that "without truths there can be no theology, and where this is not, neither is there the Church" ("Brief Exposition" 619)

### you told again the tale

**M**Y OWN largess? Merely for the East wind;  
Small and narrowed talent;  
Oh let it be wind-gone;  
Drop it beyond, from this my flippant thumb,  
And shrug it neatly into apartness.

But you! You said a no, and told this tale:  
Wrapped his single talent  
Against an austere lord,  
And buried it? But coming of the lord,  
Napkin and one talent were not enough.

You said we each have gift that we received;  
A story we had known  
That some have more, some less.  
Who dares to shrug his talent flippantly?  
For life, you said, must make of each of us  
A ruler over self to serve his lord.

—MELROSE PITMAN

### faith, sui generis

**M**EN ARE NOT required to believe in elves  
nor to place their faith in the promises  
of the loquacious dead. Rather,  
it is that seeing dawn arise, we understand  
that the ancient spirit of childhood  
is once more thundering from its bed of songs.

—JACK MATTHEWS

### MINISTER NEEDED IN LOS ANGELES

The Los Angeles Society is presently without a minister and is welcoming inquiries from New-Church ministers.

There is an active core of members and a large potential of interested persons in the Los Angeles area who are looking to a new minister for leadership in service and growth.

If you plan to be in the area or if you would like to make arrangements to come for a service and meet the members, please write or telephone the president of the Society:

Mr. Merle F. Lundberg  
1702 McWood Street  
West Covina, California  
Telephone: 213-332-5702

### PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

**DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS** when I was away from home, and had the opportunity to meet very many New-Church people, I was very impressed with the interest in prayer and Prayer Groups. At Convention in Miami, the ministers' wives met every day in a Prayer Fellowship, and we had much discussion on how to further this work in our churches. At Almont New-Church Assembly I was asked to give a lecture on prayer, and to lead two classes each day (for different age groups of young children) in learning to pray. At the Leadership Education Institute at Bass Lake, Wisconsin, not so much time was given to this subject, but several students have asked for a course on prayer next year.

In all countries, and in all denominations of the church, there is a renewed awareness of the power of prayer, and of its connection with healing of body, mind and spirit. This week I am attending the Eighth International Conference on Spiritual Healing at St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, where a great number of clergy are speaking, and doctors, nurses and psychiatrists are participating. Let us all continue to study and learn all we can about Prayer: remembering that the best way to learn about Prayer is to pray. There is a weight of pressing need in the world about us; and all the spiritual resources of the New Age to relieve it. "Ask, and ye shall receive."

—JILL KINGSLAKE



# The Swedenborg Student

CONDUCTED BY THE REV. LOUIS A. DOLE  
FOR THE SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION

## ARCANA CLASS—February 1964

### Volume XI, 9212—9273

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22—29	9260—9273

THE LATTER PART of Exodus is concerned with the Levitical laws, and our reading here is of very practical interest. The laws for this month include the pledging of a garment, cursing God or a prince of the people, giving the first fruits to the Lord, taking up a false report, an ox or an ass going astray, keeping from the word of a lie, an enemy's ox, taking a bribe, and sowing one's land.

The law concerning the pledge of a garment teaches us that truths taken away through the fallacies of the senses must be restored before the sun goes down—while there is still some light left. This is particularly applicable to our dealing with our young people when, in college, they begin to question and doubt the truths that they have learned in childhood. Their questions and doubts should be met promptly and adequately.

The next law—concerning cursing God and execrating a prince of the people—follows logically. Truths Divine are not to be blasphemed, because God is Divine Truth. A prince of the people signifies a primary doctrine of the church. "Truth Divine is the Word and the doctrine of the church is the truth thence derived." "The very first thing with the man of the church is to believe the Word." "But with those who are in the evils of the love of self and the world, the chief thing is not to believe the Word."

The law concerning the offering of the first fruits, the first born, and the firstlings of the flocks tells us that we must be continually in thankful acknowledgment that all truth and good are from the Lord and that nothing good and true is from self.

The laws "Thou shalt not take up a report of emptiness," "Put not thy

hand with the wicked to be a witness of violence," and "Thou shalt not be after many to do evils" are laws of regeneration, informing us that man must first be instructed as to what is evil and false and what is good and true, and must shun what is evil and false. Then good and truth can be implanted in him. Finally through obedience to the laws of the Word, which are the laws of order, he is brought into love to the Lord and to the neighbor.

Number 9253, in explanation of the words "And thou shalt not reverence a poor man in his cause," teaches us that we should show no favor to the falsities in those who are in ignorance of truth. Those who are in good will respond to instruction.

And the law following concerning an enemy's ox or ass instructs us about our relation to those of other dispensations. We should note that in connection with this explanation Swedenborg makes the specific statement that a new church is about to be established, and that it cannot be established among those who have had the truths of faith and have perverted them and confirmed themselves against truth; it must be established with those outside of the church, called the Gentiles. He says, "From this also it can be seen why a new church is always set up among the Gentiles who are outside of the church" (9256<sup>5</sup>).

"Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of the needy in his cause" and "Keep thee far from the word of a lie" instruct us concerning the nature of falsity from evil and what our attitude should be toward those in such states. We should be zealous to help those in ignorance, and we should separate ourselves from falsity which is from evil.

"Thou shalt not take a present" is a law relating to self-advantage. Here the word "present" is interpreted to mean wealth, dignity, reputation, "or anything else which flatters the natural man." Self-advantage is the opposite of love to the Lord and to the neighbor, and perverts judgment.

"And six years thou shalt sow thy land and gather the produce thereof." This law relates to the period of our

instruction in the truths and goods of faith. We are to seek instruction and to apply what we know to life, but we must be careful not to appropriate good and truth to ourselves; otherwise the truth that we know becomes "dead and finally deadly."

The interchapter reading on the spir-its of the moon is of special interest at this time, when people are taking pot shots at the moon without a "by your leave." It is one of the sections in which Swedenborg describes the actual appearance of the people on another earth. We should also note that Swedenborg was quite aware that the moon has not an encompassing atmosphere such as our earth has, and that he explains how the physical make-up of these people is adapted to this condition. The great British scientist Sir James Jeans has pointed out that we should not think that the particular conditions of our earth are essential to the existence of men, and that man is not man because he breathes air and drinks water. Man's body is adapted by the Lord to the conditions in which he is to live—not the other way round. In number 9237 Swedenborg says flatly, "Where there is an earth, there is man."

### Notes

9212. Note this clear warning against mixing the internal truths of the New Church with the external truths of the Old.

9213<sup>6</sup>. "One should not bind or incite another to confirm one's own truths." Some of the current techniques for producing group agreement are a direct violation of this injunction and are quite contrary to the whole spirit of the New Church, which recognizes freedom of choice and rationality as the distinguishing characteristics of man.

9216<sup>3</sup>. The church among the human race is the necessary ultimate for the preservation of the three heavens.

9264. This gives us a clear statement concerning the sin against the Holy Spirit.

### cheery hindsight

Why, you funny blooming plant,  
You need sunshine, now, today.  
Do not think I brag nor rant,  
I know sunshine years away.  
Should it rain, a shady hour,  
And you open sparingly,  
Perfumes hover, little flower,  
In my sunny memory.

— MELROSE PITMAN



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#### MEMORIAL

**WUNSCH** — Edward Frank Wunsch, Grosse Point, Mich, died there July 14, 1963, after a long illness a few days before he would have become 79 years of age. He was born July 25, 1884 in Detroit, the second son of Henry and Elisabeth (Maul) Wunsch. He attended the Detroit public schools, and in 1906 was graduated from the Law Department of the University of Michigan. After years in the practice of law Mr. Wunsch engaged increasingly in real estate interests, himself owning a succession of homes, homes marked by happy hospitality to relatives and friends. He married Marion Andrews of Chicago, March 29, 1909; Mrs. Wunsch departed this life, Dec. 31, 1961. Both had grown up in the New Church, and until advanced years and increased distance from the Detroit church, were active members of the

Detroit Society. As a young man Edward had served in the National Sunday School Association and in the Young People's League, and in recent years as a trustee of Urbana College. He was a trusted adviser to his clients, a devoted husband and a father who sacrificed himself unstintingly for his children.

Final services for Edward were conducted July 17 by the Rev. Bertram de Heus Atwood at the Grosse Pointe Memorial Church and interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery, Detroit. Mr. Wunsch leaves three sons, Edward S. Wunsch, Dr. Richard E. Wunsch, Ellis A. Wunsch; a daughter, Mrs. Albert Thomas; fifteen grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, a brother and two sisters.

—W. F. W.

#### MEMORIAL

**CHAUNCEY GILES HUBBELL**

(1870-1963)

**HUBBELL**—For Chauncey Giles Hubbell, a long, useful earthly life came to its close on July 9, 1963, and a new and freer life was soon to begin. Born in New York City, November 16, 1870, he received his baptism there by the Rev. Chauncey C. Giles, taking on the name of this esteemed and widely known New-Church minister.

He spent four years at Harvard, graduating in 1893. These years, and this training developed his natural interest in clear and careful thought. He was ordained nearly 66 years ago on Oct. 16, 1897, and served the Waltham, Mass., Society for 12 years; then for a time, the New Church in Portland, Me., and later for a shorter period the Cleveland, Ohio, Society.

His clear, spiritual, and informative sermons were much appreciated by those in his New-Church audiences. Later, his careful and painstaking services to Massachusetts in the Registry of Motor Vehicles were remembered on his retirement from this use. His many pencilled notes on his extensive reading of the writings of the New Church, showed that he respected the results of close,

systematic thinking on the great, underlying subjects of religion and Bible teaching.

His love for his church, led him at times, to the thought of an attractive new building for our Theological School in Cambridge. He felt that such a new structure, due to its location, design, and well planned courses in a new theology—, would in time, attract some of the many students in Cambridge bringing to them the enlightening truths of the Second Coming. His interest in the School was, in part, the result of his teaching experience there. For a time he led classes in Greek, Latin, and Correspondences, and some of us who were students under his guidance, remember his clear and careful teaching.

In his later years, after his retirement from active service to his church and to his state, he derived great satisfaction and uplift from his daily reading from the Word, and from the doctrines of his church. This reading, and his reflections upon it brought him an inner calm and peace. It helped him immeasurably as he passed through his declining years.

Once, not long ago, but without a note of complaint, he said that he would be glad when he could again take up active service for his church. Now this time for him has come, and we rejoice with him that he can enter upon new and higher uses for his loved church, uses that grow and expand to endless time. Mr. Hubbell left two sons, three daughters, ten grandchildren and twenty eight great grandchildren. His wife passed into the spiritual world in October 1937.

—WARREN GODDARD

—EVERETT K. BRAY

**VANDERGRIFT** — Mrs. Florence M. Vandergrift passed into the spiritual world, Dec. 2, 1963. She has been a life-long member of the Wilmington New-Church Society. Her interment was in Lancaster, Pa.

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