



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*I*t is a beautiful fancy to think the angels are interested in us. We are free to think as we please and it is pleasant to imagine the feeling we have of a 'guardian angel' looking after us.

There are many events in our lives where we weave meaningful solutions to the otherwise inexplicable. Santa Claus suits the purpose very well for many years in our early lives because goodwill is spread by such a concept. Santa moves at night by

some form of pollution-free motion and enters our house by the only available opening - a chimney. Attendant on this myth are Christmas trees, snow, stars and wrapped presents, beautiful carols and a spirit of exhilarating love.



Attendant also is a change in our spirits. We tend to be more courteous as Christmas approaches. We think of others as we write a card that has been selected with great care and wrap a present that has special meaning to the person whose name is hand-written on the card, with perhaps some words of love. We smile more and are more tolerant. Since we can suppose anything, it is just as well to suppose things as pleasant as possible. I like to think of my invisible angel audience as friendly spirits, who smile and clap when I do some deed of love and worth. It is much better than self-satisfaction.

I am more inclined to have some kind words for the ticket collector, the parking attendant. I empathise with the hardship faced by nurses and others who are working through the holiday period and feel their loss in not being with family and friends during this festive time. Then there are those who are destitute of money, food and friends and their distress seems all the more poignant.

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Two copies of this Newsletter are being sent to members as usual, the second for giving away.

Of course, it is really not enough to only have loving thoughts for a few weeks every year so what is it that raises our spirits at Christmas?

I'm not sure I have an answer that will resonate with everyone but my personal feeling is Christmas is like a switch and everyone gets switched on at the same time. Kind thoughts are catching and we can feel safe at Christmas to express love without crossing 'boundaries'. The boss of a large impersonal company can exchange a friendly word with a junior employee and may even invite a junior executive to his house for dinner. Opposing Government members exchange cordial comments as they embark on their holidays. The switch puts a spring in everyone's step; the shopping mall is swinging to joyous music, familiar to the point of nausea but catching in its familiarity.

Then there's the birth of our Lord - a birth of new beginnings, a new way of knowing the Divine. I feel the angel on my shoulder rejoicing.

Joy to you, Agape,

John Brogan





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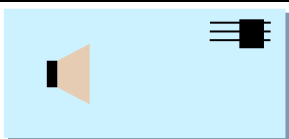
Executive Manager/Public Officer
Neville Jarvis

Please Note: The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of each contributor and do not necessarily reflect any particular position of the Swedenborg Association of Australia or its Committee.

Membership of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc. is open to anyone who wishes to pursue an interest in Swedenborg, the man, his science and his spiritual teachings.

For details on how to join, please refer to page 12.

e-News



2007 will see the commencement of a regular

Electronic Newsletter

containing details of activities, new products, special offers and more. Whilst we do have some email addresses, we are unable to use them for sending such material without express permission.

If you are interested in receiving this material, please read and complete the enclosed notice.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

My goodness - is it really 'that' time of year again? Often, I hear people say how stressful Christmas time is. I understand that can be the case, however, I just love Christmas!! I love the holiday atmosphere, I love decorating the house, I love giving presents and not only that, I love shopping for those presents!

Most of all, I love the opportunity to reconnect with the unconditional Love flowing to us from the Divine – the Gift of gifts; For unto us a Child is Born, unto us a Child is Given. I feel that connection when I stop the rushing, stop the worrying if this will be the right gift, the right food – stop, and remember the deep, true message of Christmas. Love one another; love the Lord.

And a big welcome to our new and 're-newing' members:

Ralf Gerdes (NSW)
Thomas Sunman (WA) and
Joe Vandermeer (NSW)

Sadly, though, I have to report the passing into the spiritual world of Ron Merish and Allan Uren, a founding member of the SAA. Both were keen supporters.

Business Items:

Group meetings for 2006 have now concluded, with all locations putting on varied and worthwhile events. Convenors are currently planning things for 2007 so watch the programmes for further details. Even if you live away from where the Groups meet, you can often be part of them by obtaining an audio or video/DVD recording. Do take advantage of this service.

... and now, enjoy the December *Candela* and may your Christmas and Summer holidays be filled with Love, Light and Laughter. Until next issue!

Your Secretary, *Louise*

PS. I would like to add a note that the last meeting for the year in Sydney was such a delight. We *Visited Paradise* and all enjoyed an evening of meditation, creativity and sharing Christmas fare. Ruth, Julian, John and I so enjoyed putting the evening together, so sharing our vision of Paradise with others was the icing on the cake!



Following Your Star

by Neville Jarvis

Are you conscious of a spiritual destiny as you journey along your life's path?

For most of us, we are indeed fortunate if we sense something of it even though we cannot identify what it might be. Yet with this intuitive feeling will come the desire to make the best of every circumstance we face and to look for good outcomes when difficulties arise.

Whether or not we realise it, we are all born to carry out a particular beneficial role in the eternal spiritual cosmos which only we can fulfill. It will be our choice if we decide not to pursue it but even though no one else can take on that specific function, the Lord will fill the void through others having similar ones which, when combined, approximate it. Thus the continuing perfection of heaven is maintained through the growing number of souls there and the variety of uses they perform.

At this time each year, we are asked to reflect on a little-known group of men who undertook a journey, one which would be life-changing for them and also hold enormous spiritual ramifications for the rest of humanity. (*Time for some quite background music as you read on*). Imagine living millenia ago, somewhere in the orient, east of the River Euphrates in today's Syria. You are a nomad, making a living from pastoral work and trading. At night, you sit round the camp fire listening to and perhaps telling stories from a by-gone age, some being ancient prophecies that at a future time, a Messiah would come into the world. The night sky is a fascination, being able to look at the arrangement and movement of celestial bodies as a way of interpreting and explaining the spiritual cause of earthly events. Magic and divination are part of your tools of trade also. While simple and at times holding many hardships, it is an interesting life to lead.

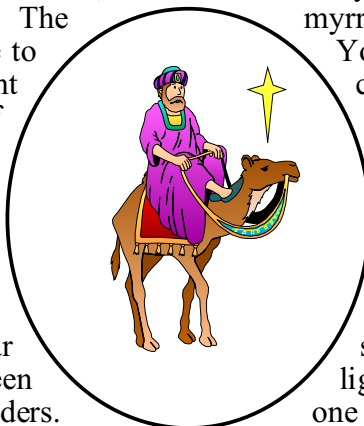
Then, one night, a very bright star suddenly appears, one which you not seen before nor have any of the tribe's elders. What does this mean? Someone sitting in your group recalls an oracle in an ancient text by Balaam, a divinator and fellow countryman himself from a bygone age, that "*a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel*" (Numbers 24:17). Was **this** that star - the sign that the Messiah was to be born as predicted? What should

your response be? Of course, the birth-place would be in a palace in Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, but that was a long and arduous journey of 500 miles or more. But to miss out on witnessing the occasion! That was something which you couldn't contemplate. So you join others and hurriedly gather essential belongings before saying a fond farewell to kinsfolk. Will you see them again? Oh, and visiting the infant Messiah - a King and a Saviour - requires gifts; an easy choice knowing other prophecies.

You eventually reach Jerusalem. Strangely all is quiet. No celebrations going on over the birth of the Messiah. Yet the news of your arrival in the city travels fast with many people very curious. While wondering what to do and whether to simply return home, a message arrives from King Herod himself inviting you to his palace. Your wish to see the infant King of Israel was to finally happen! But the audience with Herod was brief. He poses just one question: When did the star appear? Many days ago now but you hadn't seen it since. Herod then instructs you to travel on to Bethlehem for this is where the Jewish scriptures predict the birth will take place. So you remount your camel but on leaving the city gates, you look up and again see that bright star which now becomes a leading light for the next leg of your journey. It eventually stops over a house and with awe and wonder, you enter the place to find the Christ-child with his parents and reverently offer the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

You feel an honour and a duty has been completed with many people becoming aware of the birth of the saviour. You have a long, deep sleep that night but awake recalling a dream telling you to take a different route home, avoiding Jerusalem altogether. Strange. Why not go back and break the news to Herod and everyone living there; but such a warning must not be dismissed lightly. And the journey home is a quick one with so much to talk about.

A wondrous story; a breath-taking event but you and I live many generations on at a time when major events are instant news, science can mostly explain any unusual happenings and little weight is given to prophecy and mysticism. Can this recounting of a journey at a much earlier time be of real value for us today?





It can if we see it, not as a 'one-off' event, but as part of our experience in everyday life. Our spiritual journey does not just happen; it has a beginning from the Lord, that divine love at the centre of our soul providing us with all the spiritual nourishment we need ~ the wise men lived 'in the east' where the sun first rises. We are taught by others and from our own enquiry, that there is a deeper purpose to our lives (even though we might be unable to articulate what it is) ~ the reading and interpretation of the night sky by those early peoples. Then, a mental star appears in our life telling us the Lord can make use of us here and now ~ the bright star as related to the Balaam oracle. Are we going to ignore it or treat it as a sign that we need to change our life's direction in some small or large way, an opportunity to step out of the ordinary and do something which will be of help and benefit to others and our community? For the spiritually minded, there is only one option. To examine our lives and call on truth we have already acquired which will show us where to seek the power and strength needed ~ in Jerusalem, corresponding to the centre of spiritual knowledge and practice.

Growing spiritually is never easy, and the goals we set often go unrewarded ~ the long journey with many turns and then the cold, unwelcoming Jerusalem. We remain unsure about the purpose and value of our new direction but just as those overwhelming feelings of discouragement and failure surface, we realise this part of our journey is unfinished and the pathway of love and wisdom becomes illuminated for us ~ the star reappears but this time leads directly to the Messiah. It is then, acknowledging we can achieve nothing without Him, that we come into direct connection with the Lord in our life by bringing genuine kindness, discernment and usefulness into everything we do ~ the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh offered to the Christ-child.

We can now continue to build our lives on this sure foundation by seeking more truth on which to base a conscience that looks to the good in, and for, others ~ the wise men not being ensnared into the evil desires of Herod. And we are stirred by a renewed endeavour to serve our saviour in whichever future direction we are led, the next rung on the spiral of life, in the future ~ returning home to tell their families the good news.

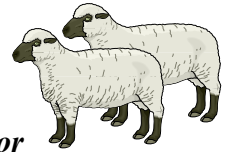
Every item in the story is important if we think about them as being about our inner lives.

Neville Jarvis is the Executive Manager of the SAA and the Swedenborg Centre, North Ryde.

References: Numbers 24: 17; Matthew 2; Spiritual Diary 1364; True Christian Religion 406; Arcana Caelestia 1675/3249/9293; Divine Providence 27/57

Correspondence Column

~ Part 4



*Taking a look through the Mirror of Correspondence at **LAMBS**, animals we will all reflect on in the Christmas story.*

Little lambs by the score are by now trotting around after their mothers and gambolling in our fields and meadows. What a perfect picture of innocence they make - for that is what they correspond to - that which is young, tender, playful, vulnerable, trusting, dependent, lovable through and through! As part of God's new creation, still so close to Him, they channel a beautiful aspect of His Life so purely and positively.

"Behold, the Lamb of God"

In the person of Jesus Christ many central correspondences are united and manifested. Whilst revealing the caring, leading 'Shepherd' quality of the Divine, He is also to be seen as the archetypal 'Lamb'. In His trust and dependence on the Father within, in His willingness to be led by Him - even through pain and crucifixion, He portrays for us an outward vulnerability which cloaks such great inner strength of character - such great power of love!

So the beautiful, tender image of the lamb is a correspondence not of spiritual weakness and helplessness - but of a great inner strength that trusts in God, and is loving and forgiving, and willing to suffer for others if need be.

"The holy city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp." Rev. 21:23

In the language of correspondences, the lamb which is of God has the Divine Strength and Power that come from purity of heart and inner motive. The power of the Lamb frees one to be true to one's self - open to receive and enjoy life's beautiful loving experiences and, at the same time, able to release in the spirit of forgiveness those injustices and retaliations also encountered on our journey through life.

"Lambs denote states of innocence by which they who are in them are defended from evil, for all in heaven are defended by the Lord by means of states of innocence."

Swedenborg Arcana Caelestia 3519

Written by Rev. Dr. Michael Stanley for the newsletter of the Swedenborg Movement (UK).



GROUP'S NEWS

Brisbane:

In spite of it being a searingly hot day and the fact that the meeting had had to be postponed for a week, the last of our 2006 meetings was held on November 29th with 7 people attending. Again it is to be commented on, that 4 of these people travelled over an hour to be present! I write as the speaker, also, at the meeting, my topic being: **"LOVE: defined, quantified and better understood"**. A good, informal, atmosphere prevailed and several people asked questions along the way, for clarification, and further exploration.

It is amazing how all-pervasive love is; how much has been written about it; how passionately it can be avowed; what sacrifices have been made on behalf of it. And yet, as Swedenborg was given to write of it, right at the beginning of his 1763 book *Angelic Wisdom concerning the Divine Love and Wisdom* that no one really knows what it is. This, in fact, was our starting point. Two other quotations from Swedenborg were highlighted during the course of the talk, one from **True Christian Religion** paragraph 43, where it reads *The essence of love is loving others than oneself; wishing to be one with them; and devoting oneself to their happiness*. And the other, the magnificent statement in **Divine Love and Wisdom** paragraph 47, *Love consists of having what belongs to oneself belong to someone else; feeling another person's joy as joy in oneself - that is loving*. We looked at the nature of Divine Love as being the background and context against which, and from which, we can so much the better understand the Christmas event; the birth at Bethlehem. As well, we - each of us - is created a receptacle of Divine Love flowing in and we affirmed the need for regeneration to remove the blocks and whatever distorts that flow in and through us, to others.

It was a lively, energised meeting, rounded off by further chat over refreshments afterwards.

Ian Arnold



Melbourne:

We have had a varied program over the last three months. In September **David Miller** from the Existentialist Society stepped into the breach due to the scheduled speaker Geoff Forster being unavailable due to serious illness. David spoke on ***The influence of Zoroaster on Judaism, Christianity and Islam***. David provided a very interesting take on the teachings of Zoroaster and how they influenced the major religions and their teachings. It was informative to consider how this ancient figure contributed to theology in the past.

As has been the practice in recent years in October we had a forum of speakers from other faith traditions looking at the topic ***Give six major principles that contribute to the spiritual journey***. We had a Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim speaker who all provided a concise and informative summary of the major teachings that influenced their life. It was surprising in one sense, but not in another, that each presentation was very similar showing that the embedded wisdom in each path is the same given that the source of wisdom and truth is the one God.

Our final meeting for the year was held in early December as the venue was not available on the usual meeting night. This took the form of a break-up meeting and contributions from everyone provided for a lovely supper at the end of the night. The DVD ***Shining Soul*** was shown. This traces the life of Helen Keller and the influence Swedenborg's teachings had on her life and the struggles she overcame with the help of her constant companion Anne Sullivan. The film was enjoyed by everyone present.

Chris Skinner



North Ryde, Sydney:

In September, **Kirk Holst** gave an illuminating talk on ***Health and Vitality***. Through his interest in health matters and wide reading he presented a wholistic view of looking at our illnesses. He began with two ways of looking at our health. The first was to see ourselves as conductors of the life-force and any resistances we place inside our psyche that reduces the flow results in illnesses. The life force is flowing through us and if we have no resistance we're vibrant. Our immunity system is strong. The second view was to see ourselves connected with the whole of Life.

We are a body of humanity; 6 billion of us create one human body and we are one cell in that body. If we can accept that, then if one cell gets sick we are starting to feel it. Health is not a personal thing. It is like we are linked into the whole of humanity. If part of humanity is suffering we are going to suffer. He introduced the work of Greg Neville who has linked our thoughts and concerns with particular illnesses. He provided two examples and also illustrated the principle through his own health problems. He also places our health in connection with the cycles/ages of mankind. He says *Each subsequent age has less life force in the one before*. And he sees us as coming to the end of one cycle that has gone on for thousands of years and moving into the beginning a new cycle.

This is a wonderful talk for those wishing to see how our psyche is related to our body. And he stresses



the importance of a belief system to carry one through the turbulences of life. For Kirk, Swedenborg's writings provide the framework for his belief system, giving hope and leading to happiness.

In October **Neville Jarvis** gave a talk on **Developing Spiritual Maturity**. His presentation looked at the three stages for gaining spiritual maturity ~ Repentance; Reformation; and Regeneration. It covered a very vital process for us and what follows is a very brief summary.

Repentance – truly sorry.

1. Examine our motives. To find our faults we can ask "What would we do if no consequences would arise in doing it?" That is, nobody would find out. If we sense we would have done it even though we know it to be wrong in the circumstances, this is a fault that needs addressing. For example, not returning something we've borrowed knowing the lender has forgotten.
2. Make a change to not act on selfish motives.
3. Recognise we cannot do this through our own willpower. Only the Lord can help us gain a fresh start.

Reformation.

Revaluation of our discernment of spiritual truth and extending our knowledge of it. Truth can tell us what to do. It is the blueprint for reform. Rule of thumb – are our actions in accord with what we believe God would want us to do in that situation.

Regeneration.

Motivation – source for everything we do. Regeneration is a new motivation that is developing deep within us. The spiritual truth we have learnt and the goal we now have in view become transforming factors in establishing new loves in our motivation. Regeneration arises from a purification of the loves which motivate us, so that our loves are heaven centred.

Neville concluded his presentation on this process of transforming from a natural to a spiritual person by using the analogy of the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly, which Dr Philip Groves highlights in *Swedenborg's Mighty Contribution*.

There was a clear message that repentance leads to happiness. The presentation was interspersed with a few questions that the audience discussed. For example *Is it always the best policy to simply follow your conscience?* I liked one person's response - work with what you know to be true. For those wishing to undergo the huge change of regeneration, this was a timely reminder of key aspects of the journey.

And in November we had something completely different. Julian and Ruth Duckworth and John and Louise Brogan organized a hands-on creative evening called **Visiting Paradise**. It began with Julian

describing the creative process and then taking us on a guided meditation. We were then invited to make things to go on a lovely sculptured base – a heavenly garden complete with cascading water. It was a wonderful way to come together and delight in how each of us contributed to the heavenly garden. This was followed by some poetry reading with one of them being:

One Vast Garden

I find one vast garden spread out all over the universe.

All plants, all human beings, all higher mind bodies are about in this garden in various ways, each has his own uniqueness and beauty.

Their presence and variety give me great delight. Every one of you adds with his special feature to the glory of the garden.

Sri Ananandamayi Ma

Elizabeth Bryce said it was a wonderful evening which echoes the sentiments of all who participated in the evening.

Kirk's and Neville's talks are on DVD which are available through the Swedenborg Centre.

Michael Chester

BEQUEST

It is with delight, but with a sense of humility, that the SAA Committee advises its members of the receipt of a Bequest from the estate of the late F.A. (Bill) Hall. Bill and his wife Isabel, who passed into the spiritual world a few years earlier, were Foundation members of the SAA and keen supporters of its aims and activities over the years. It was their joint wish to provide for the needs of the SAA by means of this bequest.

The bequest came with no requirements and the Committee will shortly be deciding on the uses to which the \$10,000 should be put. The SAA needs the means to promote an awareness of Swedenborg in the wider community and disseminate his spiritual writings at the least possible cost. Such bequests become very important in this work.

The Committee urges all members to consider taking this step too; nominating a specific project if wished. A helpful information leaflet may be obtained from the registered office.

John Brogan, President



PROFILE -

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER

Joe Vandermeer

I have been studying the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg with great interest for nearly two decades. My original enthusiasm was kindled under the kind and generous guidance of Dr Philip Groves and I have since been deeply affected by the power of the spiritual realities Swedenborg presents. I am amazed at the profound and often subtle influences his works have had on various individuals and the renewal movements they have inspired in recent history.



The spiritual principles Swedenborg conveys have much in common with several other traditions that have also had an enormous influence on my life.

These include the practical teachings offered by *The Fourth Way* as transmitted through G.I. Gurdjieff and his students, as well as similar teachings from other sources of esoteric Christianity and modern psychology.

I am always interested in furthering my insight into Swedenborg's works and am passionate about finding new applications of these spiritual ideas, both in my personal life and for the benefit of our contemporary and future spiritual neighbours.

Having previously enjoyed being an active part of the Swedenborg Association of Australia, I am pleased to return after a number of years and hope to work closely with like-minded people to serve the organisation and benefit its members. I earn my bread and butter by working in the field of Information Technology and when not working I thoroughly enjoy taking photographs of anything and everything. I am fortunate to live in the beautiful bushy surroundings of Berowra with my wife Danielle and son Damian.

GOD

submitted

by

Ken Cross
(Qld)

*I spent so much time looking for you but could not find you
I did not know where you were
I gazed at the infinite, but could not find you
I tried to find you in religions and temples but could not do so
I searched for you through priests and pastors
but you were not there either
I thought to myself "Do you really exist?"
I wasn't pleased with the search but went on
I felt lonely, desperate and disillusioned
I disbelieved
In disbelieving, I offended, in offending I stumbled
In stumbling I fell
In falling I felt weak
Weak I sought help
In help I found friends
With friends I found affection
In affection I saw Love being born
With Love I saw a new world and in this new world I decided to live
What I got I decided to give
In giving I received a lot and in receiving I felt happy
Being happy I found peace
By being in peace I saw that you were inside of me
Without looking for you I had found you at last
You do not need to bring GOD from outside in
You need to bring GOD from inside out.*



Jesus, the man as he might have been known

by **Graeme Wilson**, an SAA member in Melbourne

who wrote this article as part of his Theology Studies at the Yarra Theological Union (Catholic)

When we speak of the 'historical Jesus', is it the 'real' Jesus we are hoping to discover? If so, it will inevitably be a fruitless task.

Jesus, the principal earthly figure in the gospels, left behind no personal written records, and he receives no mention in other strictly contemporary writings either. What published information we have about him was not recorded until several decades after his death. For a start, that means the historical search is somewhat conjectural, and based on secondary sources. He may have been a skilled orator and teacher, but he was not a writer. However, we are sure of one thing. He did exist!

But there is a more fundamental issue at stake here. All writing is done for a particular purpose; it is the product of the writer's mind, and so is influenced by any biases and pre-suppositions of the author. If we care to reflect upon it, it is clear that the statement applies even to the humble grocery shopping list.

At a more significant level it can be affirmed that so-called 'history' always has a particular slant and emphasis, dependant upon the historian's personal viewpoint, and also on his purpose in making the statements. No writer is unbiased, and there is no doubt, for instance, that Josephus did not have the same purposes as 'Mark', the evangelist gospel writer.

The most prolific source of information about Jesus is found in the gospels, but these were all written for the purpose of instructing and encouraging the faithful group of followers who eventually formed the early Christian church. They tell us a great deal about Jesus the teacher and his life-instruction course, but they reveal precious little about Jesus, the human being and his close family relationships - and nothing about his amorous life or sexual preferences.

The mind of a person can never be fully known, even by intimate friends; so it is not altogether surprising to read that the family and neighbours in Nazareth who knew Jesus as a youngster were all amazed when he acted and spoke with such astounding authority. The fact of the matter is that we do not fully understand ourselves, and it is only God 'who knows the secrets of our hearts'.

Writers such as Crossan, Borg and Meier have to approach their tasks by an analysis of available literature from various viewpoints, and of information derived from other sources, but at best it is an outsider's view of Jesus that is the result of their efforts. We do not even know if Jesus was married, or had children of his own, or perhaps had leanings towards homosexuality. Such information is essential for building up a picture of Jesus, the man, if that is the purpose of the investigation.

But of course, that is not so. We are interested in the public face of Jesus, the man who demonstrated and taught with authority about the nature of the 'kingdom of God',

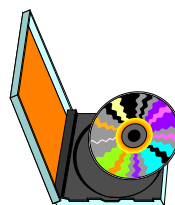
who was indeed the Messiah promised to the Jews, though not at all as anticipated by that Palestinian community. The people of his time had forgotten about the 'suffering servant' of the prophet Isaiah, and so found it almost impossible to comprehend the 'messianic secret'; though eventually the small Christian community would come to be known as 'the people of the way' - the way of the cross.

I seem to have wandered, but make my final point that if the Jesus of the New Testament seems to be presented inconsistently by the writers of the four gospels, it must be remembered that the narrative is not primarily about Jesus. The gospels are proclamations for differing audiences about the Kingdom and the reign of God, and it is Jesus who points the way for us and demonstrates it supremely by his exegetic journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, a journey he anticipated, and from which he did not deviate. He is the supreme exemplar, for those times, and for our own.

Ref. R. Crotty, *The Jesus question: The historical search.* (Blackburn: Harper Collins Religious, 1996)

The End of an Era?

Not quite but the days of the audio cassette tape are numbered! And so are those of video tapes.



CDs/ DVDs /MP3s and the like are fast taking their place. The Swedenborg Centre has risen to the challenge by undertaking a major project to convert audio and video recordings it has of events in Australia to these modern formats.

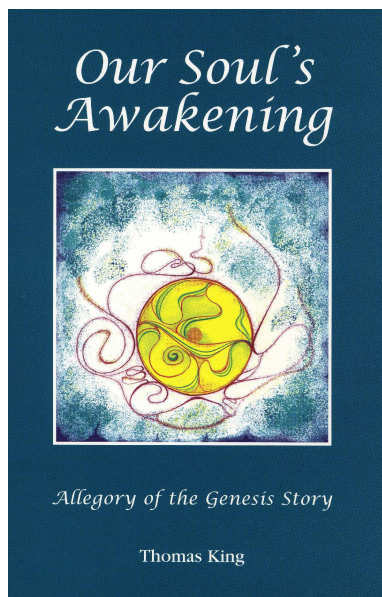
Most people today have their own CD and DVD players and the new formats have a ready market. Once made, reproduction is straightforward, high-speed duplicating equipment being obtained for the purpose.

MP3 versions of the audio recordings will be particularly useful. Normal CDs can only contain 80 minutes of material whereas in MP3 format, approximately six hours can be included. This CD version can be played on modern CD players, DVD players, computers or downloaded to your personal MP3 player.

A listing of currently available CDs and DVDs is being distributed with this newsletter. Further copies can be obtained from the Swedenborg Centre.



Announcing the imminent publishing of



Our Soul's Awakening:

Allegory of the Genesis Story

by

Thomas A. King

186 pages, paperback

Swedenborg Centre, Sydney

Originally published in 1927 under the title of *Allegories of Genesis*, this is a complete revision of the text to make it more appealing and relevant to today's readers. Material has been added for relating the biblical text psychospiritually and to personal experience, as well as sections for placing the early chapters of Genesis into the wider framework of the Bible and explaining Swedenborg's Science of Correspondences.

It is anticipated that this book will have appeal to those wanting to find a deeper understanding to the early biblical chapters which have been embroiled in controversy for far too long. The inner meanings given in Swedenborg's teachings do just that. Yet, even those familiar with Swedenborg's spiritual writings should gain much at a personal level from reading it too. Cover and internal illustrations are by Liz Coggins.

RRP will be \$20.00

Pre-publication orders at the discounted price of \$14.00 can be made on the Form on Page 11.
(Copies will be posted immediately after the launch on February 2nd 2007)

Candela - 2007

Our theme for the March issue will be:

Community

The importance of friends and relationships immediately spring to mind. The role of maintaining our own needs with an approach showing selflessness. But how can we be useful citizens within our communities and help bridge gaps between disparate groups? And what about those spiritual communities with which we are in touch all the time? Plenty of food for thought.

Why not let the subject roam around in your mind and heart over the next two months and commit your thoughts and feelings to paper for submission.

To be a lively Newsletter, your contributions are needed. Copy deadline will be 2nd March. Again we suggest possibilities:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ✓ an article of up to 1,000 words | ✓ a poem, etc. |
| ✓ art work in the form of line drawings | ✓ a question to which you would like an answer |

June theme: *"Fear"*

September theme: *Spiritual Growth & Maturity*



*We see largely with the mind
 and only partially with the eyes*

The discoveries of **Dr William Bates** (1860-1931), an ophthalmologist, has helped me appreciate much more the Swedenborg Association's fridge magnet quote from Swedenborg *thought from the eye closes the understanding but . . . thought from the understanding opens the eye.*

His work led him to declare: *We see largely with the mind and only partially with the eyes.*

Here is a brief overview of his investigations into vision.

Through his extensive research into the functioning of the eyes, he developed a revolutionary approach to the improvement of vision. Dr Bates used an instrument called the retinoscope, with which he could observe minute changes in the surface curvature of the eyes and thus determine the nature and degree of a patient's vision problems. With this, he observed how eyes behave - that is, how their shape changes - when they are seeing well, and how they behave when they see poorly. Over many years, he observed the eyes of hundreds of his patients in every variety of activity, emotional state and physical condition. He noted how their eyes changed when they were doing work they enjoyed or work they disliked; in situations of fatigue, anxiety or confusion; when they were concentrated, excited, stimulated or relaxed.

Dr Bates observed how the clarity of vision changes, in the same person, from good to bad and back again, depending upon that person's physical and emotional state. He observed the simple fact that vision is not a static condition but one which changes constantly; you have probably noticed that your own vision is better at some times, worse at others. Dr Bates was the first ophthalmologist to make a scientific study of this phenomenon. His studies show how vision defects can be created and/or worsened by the stress of daily-life situations. He also proved that these problems can be corrected by conscious and correct visual behaviour.

Dr Meir Schneider and Maureen Larkin, *The Handbook of Self-Healing* p187

What impressed me was his observation that one's vision corresponds to one's psychological states. If you are in a good psychological state your vision is clearer. If you are in a bad psychological state your vision is poorer. His discoveries led him to say *We see largely with the mind and only partially with the eyes.* When I read this, a connection was made in my awareness to how Swedenborg expressed this truth in his own way and my appreciation of him soared to new heights.

You may also be interested to know Dr Bates formulated a theory about vision health, wrote the book *Perfect Sight Without Glasses* and developed what is now known as the Bates Method of eye exercises. These exercises produced remarkable results for many of the people who used them. Many didn't need to wear eyeglasses any longer.

Michael Chester, SAA Member and convenor of the North Ryde Group.

Following on from the September 2006 issue, Marriage Recipe has been received

Recipe for a Happy Marriage

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 cup consideration | 1 reasonable budget, a generous dash of cooperation |
| 1 cup courtesy | 3 teaspoons pure extract of "I'm sorry" |
| 2 cupfuls flattery carefully concealed | 1 cup contentment |
| 1 gallon faith and trust in each other | 1 cup each confidence and encouragement |
| 2 cupfuls praise | 1 large or several small hobbies |
| 1 small pinch of in-laws | 1 cup blindness to the other's faults |

Flavour with frequent portions of recreation and a dash of happy memories. Stir well and remove any specks of jealousy, temper or criticism. Sweeten well with generous portions of love and keep warm with a steady flame of devotion. Never serve with cold shoulder.

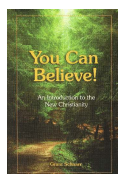


Books for the Quarter

If you order the following titles in the January to March 2007 Quarter, you will receive approx. 25% off the retail price.

(see the discounted price and postage on the form below)

Complete the Order Form (you can copy it) and return it to the Swedenborg Centre or telephone on 02 9888 1066 and mention this notice



You Can Believe! by Grant Schnarr

RRP \$20.00

93 pages, paper.

Does God love and care for each individual? Should the Bible be interpreted literally? Why are we here? The author uses these and other questions to examine the underlying reasons which prevent people from truly believing. The value and relevance of the teachings in Swedenborg's spiritual writings are the basis for the answers provided. A refreshing, timely and profound read.



Till Death Us Do Part by G. Roland Smith

RRP \$3.00

14 pages, paper (Envelope booklet size)

Much lies beyond our experience, such as life after death. With special emphasis on partnerships and marriages, this interesting booklet looks at the afterlife from traditional viewpoints and provides insights from Swedenborg's spiritual experiences.



The Life of the Spirit by Eugene Taylor

RRP \$5.00

38 pages, paper

Formerly the William James lecturer on the Varieties of Religious Experience at Harvard Divinity, this small book contains six talks he gave to Swedenborgian groups during the 1980's. Subjects covered are "Hope of the Great Community"; "Parable of the Fourth Wise Man"; "Education and Spiritual Growth"; "Truth and Reality"; "Genesis and Resurrection"; and "The Problem of Evil".

ORDER FORM ~ Send to: SWEDENBORG CENTRE, 1 Avon Road, NORTH RYDE, NSW 2113

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<i>Till Death Us Do Part</i>	\$0.50	\$2.00		\$
<i>The Life of the Spirit</i>	\$1.00	\$3.00		\$
<i>Our Soul's Awakening</i> (See Page 9)	\$ 3.00	\$14.00		\$
Total Payable by Cheque/Money Order/Credit Card #				\$

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

For Group activities, contact your nearest Group Convenor

- Brisbane (Ian Arnold on (07) 3369 0054; email: iaarnold@ozemail.com.au)
- Gold Coast (Kevin Attwater on (07) 5545 2401 and Jack Benson on (07) 5545 4115);
- Melbourne (Chris Skinner on (03) 9432 0322; email: cskinner9@optusnet.com.au);
- Perth (Trevor Moffat on (08) 9470 9775; email: trevorm@ic-net.com.au;)
- Sydney region (Michael Chester on (02) 9913 2421; email: mchester@accsoft.com.au);



It would be good to establish Groups in other areas. If you can help, please contact Michael Chester.

Details of programmes will be advised by leaflet as soon as they are known. Our website is updated when new information comes available - www.swedenborg.com.au

Brisbane: New Church Hall, 21 Agars Street, Rosalie. **2007 Programme** being determined

Melbourne: New Church Hall, 426 High Street Road, Mount Waverley. Usually last Fridays commencing 8pm. **2007 programme** being determined

Perth: Petros Lifeskills Bookshop, 281 Albany Highway, Victoria Park. **2007 programme** being determined

Sydney: Adyar Book Shop, Clarence St., Thursday 18th January 6 to 7.15pm

2007 *Angles on Angels: A talk by Julian Duckworth*

Swedenborg Centre, 1 Avon Road, North Ryde. Usually 4th Fridays commencing 7.45pm.

2nd February ~ Book Launch *Our Soul's Awakening* with talk by **Stephen Leeder**

23rd February ~ *Science & Spirituality*. Speaker: **Dr. Alex Reichel**, World Care Centre

23rd March ~ *The Game of Life*. Speaker: **John Brogan**

WHY A SWEDENBORG ASSOCIATION?

To promote Emanuel Swedenborg, the man and his message, throughout Australia by personal contact, meetings, etc.

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