



abundance and plenty. In December the Saturnalia festival was a time of role-reversals, gift-giving and revelry. Saturn is linked with the passing of the old year and the coming in of the new year.

A re-read of Virgil's quote, with all this now in mind, brings a string of statements all of a tremendously positive and optimistic quality – the coming of the age of the reign of the Prince of Peace so to speak. What I personally get from Virgil's quote – which I equally get from the Christmas story itself – is a sense of our lives having purpose and making progress towards a state of completeness and fulfillment in being. This is not something that happens automatically because we have reached the top of the stairs – it involves dealing with our egos, life's challenges and our personal choices – which Swedenborg describes as the work of regeneration. We need to face up to that, but I think we also need to see the vision of the ideal towards which, hopefully, we determine to go.

"Now comes the last age by the song of the Cumaen sybil; the great order of the ages is born anew; now the Virgin returns, now the reign of Saturn comes again; now a new child is sent down from heaven above." (Virgil – Publius Vergilius Maro – 70 BC to 19 BC)

**Julian Duckworth**

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## **A spiritual star shines by heavenly power**

*By Michael Chester*

I enjoyed listening to 'The Search for Meaning' with Caroline Jones back in the 1990s. One of the people she interviewed was Nick Carroll, a surfing champion, who described some of his peak experiences:

*You get moments where your whole body, soul and mind are just concentrated on doing something in the surf. You have to just get up, trust your instinct and fall into the wave. It's during seconds like that that you seem to just totally disappear, you as a being don't really exist at that moment. It's hard to express, you throw yourself into the moment so heavily that you're actually inside the surfboard and what it's doing.*

*You're inside the landscape around you and the ocean as its surging. You get totally inside the moment and it's so intense that time disappears, everything disappears. You disappear, you're not thinking of you, Nick Carroll, or whoever. It's way beyond that.*



*If you're going to make a very big wave, you have to be totally unified with everything that's happening. You have to know absolutely everything about what the board's doing, what's happening with the wave, where the water is on the wave, how fast the water's moving up the face of the wave, what's happening with the wind, where there might be a couple of people in the way. And I don't think you can know about all that if you choose to take the form of thinking that we do in our everyday lives. Your brain just can't handle it, it has to throw stuff away to fit it all in. And so it throws away the useless stuff, the ego, the 'I'm Nick Carroll, I've got fears, worries, doubts etc' - all very useless stuff. Maybe in the moment of having to know everything all at once you burst through the barriers of trying to put things in order.*

**Nick Carroll in *The Search for Meaning Collection*.**

It seems to me that his love of surfing provided the basis of an inner door to open into another world. A explanation for me is that Nick received an inpouring of Divine Influx and had a taste of the harmony of heaven. He shone by means of heavenly power.

Many people have had touches of higher consciousness, of being in the flow, and a sense of oneness. Swedenborg who experienced a tremendous inpouring of Divine Influx encourages us with a message of hope by pointing out that when our hearts are open to receive pure affection from the Lord, and our minds enjoy the clear perception which pure affection brings, we are in heavenly sunshine.