



Candela

Newsletter of the
Swedenborg Association of Australia Ltd.

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Issue 19

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Life is busy. We hear this comment each day and we experience a sense of relief at the end of the day when we can put our feet up and rest. There can be a sense of the day's work being incomplete and many things are left undone. We make out a list of things to do tomorrow, but tomorrow night there are still things outstanding and so it goes on. At the end of each day we clean up as much as we can and that's that.

Corresponding to the day's work is Life itself. We work on ourselves spiritually throughout life and then comes the end of our mortal 'day'. How much do we get done? As the tree falls, so it lies. Swedenborg makes it clear that our last day is at hand when we die. This is our day of judgement. There is no tomorrow to complete our spiritual work. Its no good making out a list of things we will do in the spiritual world. This existence is the time to do, to be of use, to grow a conscious soul in this mortal life.

A book is being launched posthumously (July 10th) titled *The Process of Transition* by Dr. Philip Groves. Dr Groves shares with the reader the last months of his life, his visions and experiences. The work was dictated to Shirley and is a wonderful window to the transition of the scientist to the mystic, from wisdom to love. His daily work is coming to an end and the things of higher life are in the act of becoming. The book, though small, is of the "letting go" process. All life's little lists of 'things to do' are relegated to the bin. They are of no further importance. When the day is at end, the essence is all that's left. All else is stripped away.

Much is said of the difficulty of reading Swedenborg's Writings at first and many no doubt fall by the wayside. This is a pity because the beauty of life is contained in them. In reading sacred works we are slipping in and out of the need to understand on the one hand and the beauty in the message on the other.

Knowledge and affections are at two different levels. We would do well to place more importance on our affections for nature, people, art, poetry, architecture, and the things around us than stuff ourselves full of knowledges. Knowledge is important, don't get me wrong, but when we die, all knowledge dies with us and only our understanding is left. What stands under us is 'us'.

To only read the Word and not live it, is a cop out. We must take full responsibility for our life. Through Beauty we come to know Truth and through Truth, Wisdom and through Wisdom, Love. The whole, taken together, gives Meaning. And what is life without meaning?

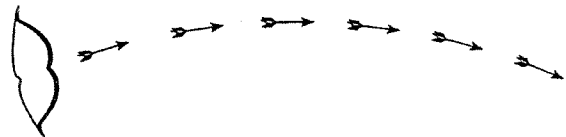
Agape,

John Brogan

TIME AND CHANGE

by Stephen D. Cole

Imagine a film of an arrow in flight, travelling from bow to target. Picture looking at the film frame by frame. No one frame by itself actually shows the arrow in motion. The pictures are a series of stills, which, if shown in rapid enough succession, give the illusion of motion. This film can be used to illustrate one of Zeno's paradoxes of motion, the paradox of the arrow. Zeno, a third-century B.C. Greek philosopher and founder of Stoicism, observed that at any instant in time the flying arrow is at rest. At what "time", then, does the arrow move from one point to another?



"What a silly question to ask", one might say. "The answer is obvious", people have suggested over the centuries. But the answers suggested have been different and various. No one has managed to lay the question completely to rest. Indeed, quantum physics has added fuel to the fire.

The term "quantum leap" has come very much into everyday speech. Commonly those who use the expression take it to mean a great jump forward. In reality, it refers to the smallest jump of which physicists can conceive, the jump of an electron from one orbital of an atom to another. What makes the jump a "quantum leap" is not the distance covered, but the fact that the jump is discontinuous; that is, the electron goes from the one place to the other without any time between.

One might want to be more careful and say simply that the theorems of quantum physics do not account for the electron in between. There has, however, been increasing experimental evidence over the last decade that the strange model suggested by quantum physics is, in some sense, a more accurate description of reality than is a more traditional, common sense view.

Now even if the electron does make its jump without ever being in between, it still does not make the transition instantaneously. This smallest of all jumps takes the smallest unit of measurable time, technically called a "jiffy". Tiny jumps of electrons over tiny stretches of time add up to what we perceive as motion.

Above, we called Zeno's conception of the flight of the arrow a paradox. There is good reason to suppose, however, that Zeno himself did not see it as a paradox, but rather as evidence that all motion and thus all change is illusion.

Can we get help from the works of Swedenborg in sorting out the puzzles of time and motion? Repeatedly Swedenborg writes that "sustaining is perpetual creating" (e.g., *Apocalypse Explained* 1215:3, *Divine Providence* 3:2, *True Christian Religion* 46:3).

Could we not ten say that motion consists in God ceasing to create something in one place and then shortly thereafter beginning to create it in another place close by? This model accounts for the quantum leap and provides a solution for Zeno's problem.

For many people, invoking God's "interference" at every instant in every created thing seems excessive. Yet in the *Divine Providence* Swedenborg writes that a Divine government in universal matters, without being at the same time in every least singular matter, is really no government at all (201).

Some are still inclined to think of providence in deist terms: at creation God designed the universe very cleverly. All God had to do was set it running and all eventualities are taken care of "automatically." This, however, brings us back to the problem of time.

Most physicists now picture time not as something that has always existed but rather as something that came into existence with the big bang. This is quite consistent with the idea in *True Christian Religion* 31 that time came into existence along with space in the act of creation. The physicist Paul Davies draws a fascinating conclusion from the idea that God did not act in time to create: "If God is outside time, then He cannot belong to this causal chain at all. Instead, He is above the chain, sustaining it at every link." (*God and the New Physics*, p.45).

Picturing God standing apart from time acting into time may dispose us toward another picture invoked by physicists, that of time as a fourth dimension, translatable, at least in terms of a model, into an additional spatial dimension at right angles to the other three. To make this more comprehensible, let us go back to the film of the arrow. The pictures of the arrow are actually a two-dimensional representation of space. If we were to take the film and cut out all the two-dimensional pictures and stack them up, we would move back up to three dimensions. The third dimension now, however, would not be the one that we know, it would be a representation of the arrow through time. The arrow would now be a diagonal smear connecting the bow to the target.

Seeing time in this way, we can think of the passage of time as the transition of our consciousness along the smear of the arrow. In the natural world, we are aware of one slice at a time. What is really moving through time? Is it the arrow, or is it our consciousness?

The situation is a little like sitting in an eastbound train at a station, looking at a westbound train stopped on the other track. We may perceive the other train beginning to pull out of the station, then realize that it is really our own train that has begun to move. It gives us a new perspective on time if instead of thinking of the world and its events rushing past us, we think of our consciousness travelling through a four-dimensional world.

This relationship between time and consciousness can also be seen in thinking about the "arrow of time". Why does the film of life run forward and not backward? Again, this may seem like a silly question, but it's a little like what St. Augustine said about time: "When nobody asks what it is,

I know, but when asked to explain it, I can't". (*Confessions* XI.17).

One way of defining time's arrow, of distinguishing past from future, is to look into our minds. We remember the past; we do not remember the future. The past is where we have been on our journey, the future is where we are going, and the present is where we are now. To be conscious is to be aware of now. Insofar as our minds are concerned with the past and the future, our consciousness becomes confined. Swedenborg writes in the *Arcana Caelestia*:

The more interior and more perfect the angels are, the less do they care for past things, and the less do they think of things to come; and also from this comes their happiness. They say that the Lord gives them every moment what to think, and this with blessedness and happiness; and that they are thus free from cares and anxieties. (*Arcana Caelestia* 2493)

The more that one succeeds in living in the present, the happier one is. Feelings of wistfulness or guilt about the past crowd us on one side. Fears or illusory hopes about the future crowd us on the other. The consciousness of the present gets squeezed between them. If we succumb to the pressure, we live more and more mechanically, less and less consciously. If we resist, if we embrace the present, our consciousness and sense of freedom grow; the present swells and presses back the encroaching past and g'future.

Does this mean living only for the present moment? Living in the present does not mean living for the present. Those who live life to the fullest direct themselves to long-range, or even external goals, but the begin today; they start right now.

(reprinted from *LOGOS* the Newsletter of the Swedenborg Foundation, Spring 1993 edition)

The value of Time

To realise the value of one year:
Ask a student who has failed a final exam.

To realise the value of one month:
Ask a mother who has given birth to a premature baby.

To realise the value of one week:
Ask an editor of a weekly newspaper.

To realise the value of one hour:
Ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.

To realise the value of one minute:
Ask the person who has missed the train, bus or plane.

To realise the value of one second:
Ask the person who has survived an accident.

To realise the value of one millisecond:
Ask the person who has won a silver medal at the Olympics.

Time waits for no one;
treasure every moment!

(Origin unknown)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In the last Questions and Answers we looked at why it is unlikely that rehabilitation programmes, such as we have for inmates of goals, exist in hell. To those familiar with the teachings in Swedenborg's theological writings, it may have seemed surprising that I concentrated on God's nature in attempting to answer the question we had before us, rather than talk about Swedenborg's well known statements regarding the inability of the spirits in hell to undergo the sort of changes that are the aim of such programmes.

Swedenborg stated that anyone who, having died in this life and comes to make his or her home in hell, will be there to eternity. Many Swedenborgians have great difficulty accepting this as being true. To them it seems inconsistent with Swedenborg's picture of God as all-wise, all-powerful, and all-loving and all-merciful. It is the idea of eternity - infinite time - which is the thing that troubles us. So here, I suggest, we have a look at the topic of time.

A helpful way of thinking about God and his relationship to his creation is to think of the relationship that an author has with the world that he creates in his imagination. This is an idea that writer, and Christian apologist, C. S. Lewis, suggests in his book "Mere Christianity". It is very good in helping us to understand how God can be outside the time of the natural world - the time that we find so demanding and inexorable, and which we often become so concerned over.

In his book, Lewis asks us to imagine him in the process of writing a novel. At some point in creating his story he writes, "Mary laid down her work, next moment came a knock at the door!" For Mary, who lives in the imaginary world of Lewis' novel, there is no interval between putting down her work and hearing the knock. But Lewis says he may have spent 3 hours between writing the first part of the sentence and the second part. The whole time he may have spent thinking about Mary and her world, carefully deciding the best thing to next happen. But when you come to read the story there is no hint of this 3 hour gap.

Lewis, for Mary, is something like God is for us. God is outside the time that we experience in this world, and we have little real idea of how much "time" God spends in thinking about us and our well-being.

Lewis also explains that because God is outside the time in the world he creates, if thousands of people pray to him at 10.30 tonight, God isn't restricted to hearing just one prayer and missing all the thousands of others. He can recreate the time, 10.30, as many times as he needs to be able to hear all the prayers addressed to him. He does this all in his own time, of which he has an infinite supply.

This might help us to see that time, something about which we can become so concerned, is not such a tyrannical thing when viewed from a more spiritual point of view.

And Swedenborg explains that in the spiritual world we are loosened from encumbrances that are necessary at this early stage of existence. This life is a preparatory stage for our real life - the afterlife. Here, in this life, we are subjected to all sorts of restrictions and limitations to ensure we don't do too much damage during this inexperienced, learning stage of life. It's like a young fellow who enters a trade. At first he isn't allowed to attempt the tasks given to a master

tradesman. First he has to go through an apprenticeship. Only once he has come out of his time can be permitted to take full charge of his trade.

Likewise, we aren't given full rein in life until we finish our preparatory stage. And one of the things which is then freed up is time. Swedenborg tells us that space is experienced differently in the spiritual world. We can immediately alter our location by simply wishing to be with someone who is not physically with us. There's no reason to expect that time won't be similarly flexible.

We don't have to die to get some idea of what this will be like. We get a foretaste of what we can expect when we become engrossed in some activity. We lose all sense of time and this experience we find to be rather special. And we know "how time flies when we are having fun."

It's quite possible that this accelerated experience of time applies to those in hell as well as those in heaven. Swedenborg maintains that the evil spirits, as well as the good ones, are allowed to fully experience a timelessness which makes our notions of eternity (infinite time) irrelevant there. Considering that such a lack of understanding on our part is quite possible, it's probably wise to reserve judgement on the matter until we ourselves enter the spiritual world - something all Swedenborgians agree will happen in time.

Wayne Kasmar

A thank you to Michael Chester for providing us with some more questions to contemplate.

Here they are, and do put pen to paper if you feel you have something useful to contribute in response.

What practical advice does Swedenborg provide on developing inner peace and promoting peace in the world, thereby reducing the likelihood of the sort of events that have been happening in Kosovo?

In the film 'What dreams may come' starring Robin Williams and Annabella Sciorra, we see the main character, Chris, after the body dies, finding himself in a paradise created from a love of art developed whilst on earth. Much of the landscape is still fluid with wet paint. Would Swedenborg's experiences confirm that the images we see in the spiritual world are somehow generated from our loves? If yes, what would be an example of an everyday experience that would correspond to this reality? In other words, how do our inner attitudes affect the way we see the world around us?

Books Available

The books mentioned in the President's Message, *The Process of Transition*, and the Secretary's Report, *Swedenborg's Mighty Contribution to the Welfare of the Soul*, both by Dr. Philip Groves are available from The Swedenborg Centre. *The Process of Transition* costs \$15 and *Swedenborg's Mighty Contribution to the Welfare of the Soul* is \$20 (both less 20% for members).

The Swedenborg Centre is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. and on the first and fourth Saturdays of the month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. or other times by arrangement (phone 9888 1066)

Quotation to Contemplate

"But it should be realized that in general there are two kinds of state - a state involving and one involving truth. The former is called a state of being (esse), but the latter a state of manifestation (existere), for being is the essential characteristic of good, and the manifestation of this is the essential characteristic of truth. Space corresponds to a state of being, time to a state of manifestation. From this it may be seen that when a person reads this statement 'and it happened at that time', the angels present with him cannot perceive these words at all in the way that the reader does. Similarly with every other statement, for whatever has been written in the Word is such that among angels it is converted into a corresponding meaning which cannot at all be seen in the sense of the letter; for that which is worldly belonging to the sense of the letter is converted into that which is spiritual belonging to the internal sense."

Arcana Caelestia 4814³

SECRETARY'S REPORT

New Members:

We welcome Yvonne Rochka (Elanora Heights NSW), Marion van den Driesschen (Church Point NSW), Rev Trevor Moffat (Lathlain WA), John Lutz (Denistone NSW), Bronwyn Kretz (Artarmon NSW), and Kenneth Slater (Wauchope NSW) to the SAA.

Group News:

The following meetings were held at North Ryde in recent months. About 7 people turned up to the April meeting where Peter Black, Ruth Duckworth and Michael Chester shared some of their appreciation of Swedenborg's insights. In May we had the exhibition of 'The 99 Beautiful names of the Divine' with talks given by Aurora Scarlett and Roshanak Vahdani. About 40 people attended this wonderful night. A video of the evening was recorded together with the artwork. In June we had a well attended meeting where a past lecture of Dr Groves was read out by Lynne Heir, Michael Chester and Alex Craigen. The lecture was on 'Myths, Symbols and Parables' taken from Dr Grove's book *Swedenborg's Mighty Contribution to the Welfare of the Soul*.

The 1999 Celebration of Spring will focus on **The Waters of Life**. A warm invitation is sent to all those wishing to express the Spirit of Spring through Art. The Art Exhibition is open to all levels of skill and experience. The purpose of the Art Exhibition is to encourage individuals to artistically express the experiences that come when the Spirit of Spring enters people's lives. Two of the artists performing on opening night are the Violinist Glenn Murray and Donna Sife who will be our story-teller.

The Melbourne Group continues to meet monthly (usually every fourth Friday) to hear and discuss a talk from a guest speaker or their Convenor Chris Skinner. Julian Duckworth spoke in February on the topic 'Diary of a Mystic'. The meeting was well attended with 21 present. In March Gordon Dobbs spoke on various forms of meditation and

Chris Skinner spoke on practical spirituality. The meeting was well attended with 25 present. In April a workshop type approach was used as an experiment with the topic being Conscience. Some material was provided to people before hand for them to consider. Chris Skinner spoke for about 15 minutes to introduce the topic and then participants sat in a circle and discussed aspects, opinions and views and everyone contributed to the extent that they felt comfortable. 21 or so were present which was a good response and everyone was positive about the meeting and were looking forward to a similar approach in the future. In May the speaker was Rev John Teed and his subject was 'Why are we here'. 19 attended for this session. John spoke for about 35 minutes and then the meeting was opened up for questions. The June topic was 'The Three Kingdoms' and Chris Skinner spoke on the relationship and correspondence of the Animal Vegetable and Mineral Kingdoms to the way our mind works and we finished the evening with the film Images of Knowing. 15 attended.

Concluding quotation from the Secretary.

"The celestial man is such that he does not base his actions on his own desires but on what pleases the Lord; this is his desire. In this way he enjoys inward peace and happiness, here expressed by 'being carried up over the high places of the earth'. At the same time he enjoys outward contentment and joy, meant by 'being fed with the heritage of Jacob'."

Arcana Caelestia 85

Michael Chester

SOME OF THE 99 BEAUTIFUL NAMES OF THE DIVINE

AR-RA'UF
The Compassionate;
The Full of Pity

MĀLIK AL-MULK
The Owner of Sovereignty

AL-HĀDĪ
The Guide

AL-BĀQĪ
The Everlasting;
The Enduring

AL-MUGHNĪ
The Enricher

AL-MĀNĪC
The Withholder;
The Preventer

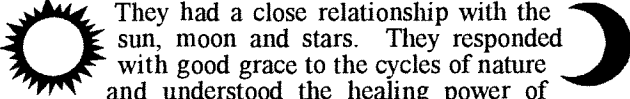
LIVING IN TWO WORLDS

Introducing the Universal Science of Correspondences

The Key to Ancient Wisdom

Introduction

Those who study ancient sacred literature are usually impressed with the integrity of the people who left us such a remarkable heritage of their wisdom. They comprehended the unity of the universe and their own place in it.

 They had a close relationship with the sun, moon and stars. They responded with good grace to the cycles of nature and understood the healing power of plants. They appreciated the distinctive characteristics of animals, and often assumed their names so as to embody their strength, cunning and grace.

This living relationship with the world around them is the theme of all ancient myths, religious rituals, and Egyptian hieroglyphs; it is also enshrined in Eastern mandalas, Aztec sculptures and sacred texts.



Do we live in a different world today, or are we simply not guided to recognise the signs all around us? Are we too rationalistic to believe that the outer world in some ways corresponds to the inner character within it?

Two worlds

If the inner world of our desires and imagination is driven by selfishness and the profit motive alone, the outer world will eventually become polluted, impoverished in many parts, and out of bounds to the majority.

If the inner level, however, is motivated by love and respect for others - who are seen as fellow creatures - the outer world will be at peace and will be pure and free for all to enjoy.



The evidence of this can be recognised in our families, the cleanliness of our streets, and the state of the rain forests and the seas. What exists in the inner world will eventually manifest itself in the outer, which will become its reflection.

From this we can begin to see how the two distinct levels are related, and how all creative energy flows from the inner to the outer, according to the theosophical dictum, "As above, so below". But how wonderful it is to discover that we have this awesome creative energy within us.

Every human being, even if unaware of it, lives on two levels. There is that invisible part which is the real core of our personality where feelings are felt, love burns with Divine energy, ideas are formed and examined. This is the inner Self.

The other level is the external, visible and tangible part in which the spirit is expressing its desires and realising its purposes.

Correspondences in human life

 The spoken word corresponds to the thought which germinated it. A genuine smile corresponds to the happiness and the lightness of freedom which gave it conception and birth. We could go through every human expression on the face, every gesture of the hand, and 

discover the mystery which occurs whenever we take some action. The two worlds of our consciousness are bridged, and we do not know how! But an explanation is now available.

The creative energy within us which wells up from completely hidden depths has the power to change and act upon the physical body - first upon the brain, then nerves and finally muscles. It happens through the law of correspondences. It enables us to see the causes behind the actions we so often take for granted.



A key to ancient wisdom

An understanding of the law of correspondences also opens up a vast insight into ancient sacred literature, and into nature all around us, because there we can begin to see the mind and the purposes of the Creator. The laws of the natural world which science helps us to understand can become a guide to our own spiritual conception, birth, education and fruitfulness. It also reveals the inevitable decay and laying aside of the outer layers, so that the spirit, mature and enlightened, may be raised to a higher level of consciousness.

Even a simple grasp of the flow of creative energy which the knowledge of correspondences reveals opens a new understanding of ancient myths, and above all, of the Bible. These works were carefully composed, or inspired, so as to contain the spiritual symbolism or correspondences; that is, to teach us that the life of the mind can be retold in simple earth-images. Here we are dealing with something far more profound than some contrived code. We are delving into the very causes of everything around us and within us.

The parables of Jesus

The Gospels tell us that whenever Jesus spoke, he always spoke in parables. It is easy to mistake these for simple similes, or anecdotal examples. But they are based on the law of correspondences which shows that all things in creation are related to the originating love of the Creator. Here is one of the simplest and best-known parables:

 *A sower went to sow his seed, some fell along a path and were trodden down. Some fell on rocky ground, grew for a while, but withered away for lack of moisture. Some fell among thorns where they were choked. Some fell in good soil and produced a rich harvest.* 

There is not a great deal to be gained from the story as it stands, but when the disciples of Jesus asked him what was its real meaning, he explained that it was about the way the human mind reacts to the truth, the spiritual seed. Some truth is not received at all; some is accepted with shallow enthusiasm which soon evaporates; some is accepted for a while, but worldly cares and wealth push it out and choke it; but some truth is received into life and it begins to bear a harvest of goodness.

The parables of Jesus are more than a narrator's story to get attention. The seeds of truth really behave in that way when they enter our minds and memories. This is an illustration of living principles and laws as they operate in our mind. A person whose life is cluttered up with worldly thoughts and values is, in a sense, a ground full of weeds. Why else do we talk about 'cultivating' the mind?

Text from a leaflet issued by The Swedenborg Lending Library and Enquiry Centre, Sydney.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

For Group activities, contact your nearest Group Convenor

- Sydney region (Michael Chester on (02) 9913 2421);
- Melbourne (Chris Skinner on 9435 8599);
- Perth - new Convenor is required for this Group.

It would be good to see additional viable Groups established in new areas. If you can help contact Michael Chester on (02) 9913 2421.

FORTHCOMING SAA PUBLIC MEETINGS

SYDNEY Normally Fourth Friday Evening of each month at The Swedenborg Centre, 1 Avon Road, North Ryde at 7.45 p.m.

23rd July

Stories Relating to the Psyche with David Russell

Saturday, 14th August at 2 pm

Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 4th September

Celebration of Spring - 'The Water of Life'

24th September

Poetry and Art Evening

with artists from the Celebration of Spring

22nd October

Sacred Architecture with John Brogan

26th November

Devotional Readings by members
(byo reading - no charge)

MELBOURNE Normally Fourth Friday Evening of each month at New Church Hall, 426 High Street Road, Mt. Waverley at 8 p.m.

23rd July

A Swedenborgian Approach to Use - the application of the Bible to our life and how this can help. (Workshop format.)

27th August

Guilt and Forgiveness and how these issues affect our spiritual development.

24th September

The Mandala with Georgina Gode of the Theosophical Society.

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- Promoting Emanuel Swedenborg as a scientist, philosopher and religious visionary, by means of his inspired writings, through meetings, lectures, and other functions
- Making available information on topical subjects drawing on Swedenborg's own contribution to stimulate interest and discussion
- Establishing, operating and supporting branches around Australia
- Providing material for the purpose of maintaining local libraries

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- + Joining together as a group with other members living in close proximity.
- + A Swedenborgian based book, tape or video is sent to each financial member each year.

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