

Candela



Newsletter of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc.

Organisational Details are provided on the next page

March 2021

ISSUE 103

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

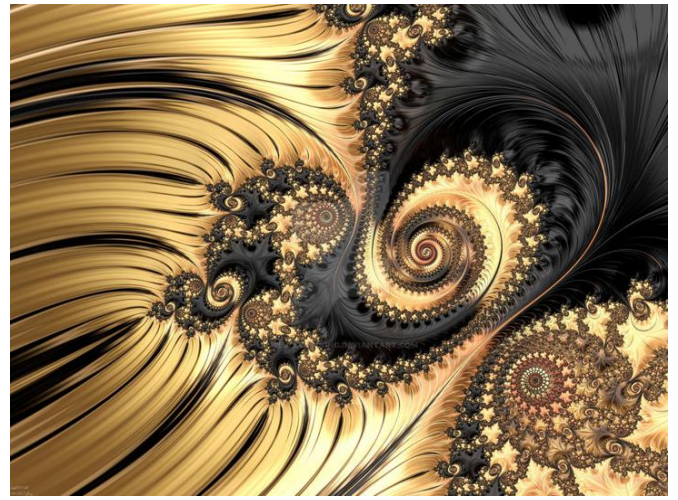
Black and Gold seems to be a popular and recurring colour duo. Here's just some examples: Black and Gold is a budget brand name of an Australian supermarket. Coming here from Britain I wondered if it was related to a similar el cheapo brand name over there



but apparently not. Black and Gold is also a 2008 song of Sam Sparro with amazingly interesting lyrics where he wrestles with visual appearance and emotional reality and the existence of God. The song title refers to the black night sky in which

gold stars are studded. And another Black and Gold is a brand name of some very smart clothing by a world-famous producer who shall remain anonymous. I couldn't afford them.

I once heard a Swedenborgian minister describe the process of regeneration as a gradual one, adding that so often religion – especially the heavy versions – emphasise a sudden conversion, decision, commitment, life-change called 'salvation'. He said that while there may well be moments of sudden new awareness and realisation and sudden feelings of joy and peace, we shouldn't bypass the gradual



process of personal regeneration and fall for some quick-fix! "It's unrealistic," he claimed.

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Please note: The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of each contributor and do not necessarily reflect any particular position of the S.A.A. or its committee.

Next Issue –June 2021

Our next issue will be in June, so if you would like to write something please get it to me by, **15th May 2021**

Email to ruth@duckworth.me or post to the registered office.

Ruth



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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, call (02) 9416 2812 or browse <https://swedenborg.com.au/contact/>

* * continued from page 1 * *

And he illustrated all this with an interesting square with tassels hanging off every side which he held in his hand and showed us. The square was black, the long tassels were black on two adjacent sides and gold on the other two. (Like the picture but much longer tassels...)



Then he pulled just one black tassel slowly and a line of gold appeared on the black square. Then he pulled another black tassel from the adjoining side and a second line of gold

appeared at right angles to the first. He kept going and spoke above his leisurely tugs revealing more gold lines, helping us see that personal decisions and wiser words and actions are daily affairs for us. He said that Swedenborg really emphasises self-examining, self-observation, catching the thought, daily repentance, and building up a practice of abstaining from our habitual

lower natures (Swedenborg puts it graphically as "Shunning evils as sins against God.")

Like all illustrations and many explanations, while they work very well, they can be short of the whole truth reality. We do not end up with a beautiful sparkling gold square at the end of regeneration, because the truth is that regeneration is an eternally continuing process. We can have end-of-regeneration states which feel great, but then another area in our mosaic presents and needs to be addressed.

So perhaps imagine that the square needs to be a cylinder. The tassels need to be loops. The gold will be there but may at some point revert to black to be brought to gold a second time. But I believe that behind the scenes of black and gold there is a development of real abiding growth where we, unknown to ourselves, can actually be purer and surer in our soul which only the Lord God knows the state and quality of. It is, you see, essential that we do not know anything about that for reasons which I'll let you ponder on.

My all-time favourite passage from Swedenborg is the Contents page in the Doctrine of Life. Sections like the following are listed (based on the Ten Commandments): "So far as anyone shuns all kinds of theft as sins against God, the more they come to love sincerity."

Go well with everything,

Julian

Welcome to our new members

Welcome to our association.

Teresa Melody (Port Macquarie NSW)
Claudette Vaughan (Lewisham NSW)

We hope you enjoy being a member, receiving emails and can join in some of our on-line activities.



A Fly's Diary

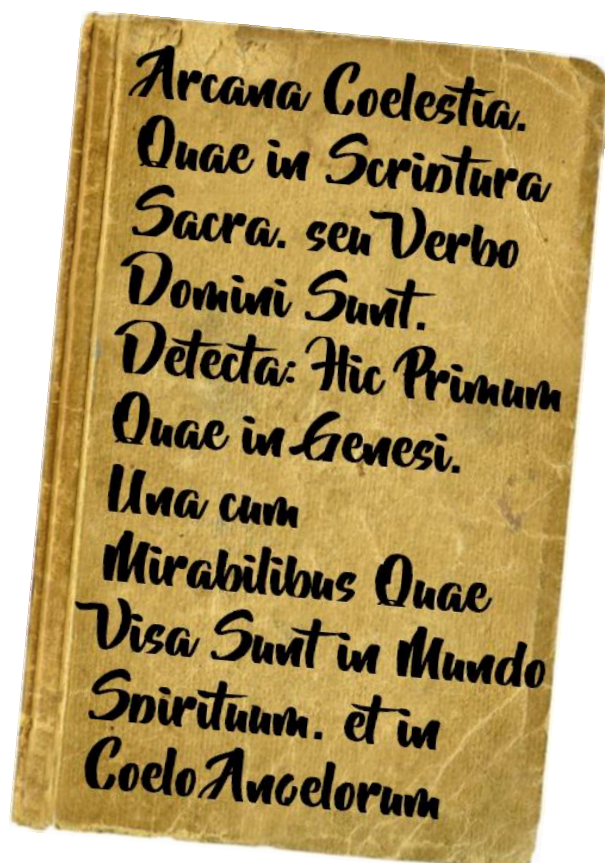
Recently, a fly on the wall of the Swedenborg Centre wrote this overheard conversation in his diary.

It all began one recent afternoon with a discussion about the meaning of the word *arcana*, which these days is normally understood to mean "secrets or mysteries".



The word *arcana* originates from the Latin *arca* "chest, box, place for safe-keeping," and that word derives further back from the Proto-Indo-European root word **ark-* meaning "to hold, contain, guard" from which we also get *ark*, as in the Ark of the Covenant or Noah's Ark, as well as the Latin *arca* meaning "large box, chest".

Swedenborg used the title *Arcana Coelestia* (or Secrets of Heaven) for his major work that reveals the inner meaning of the bible books Genesis and Exodus (an inner meaning which was until then previously barely known, undiscovered, concealed). *Arcana Coelestia* is actually an abbreviation. In Swedenborg's day, long book titles were frequently used, and his was:



... which means: **"A Disclosure of Secrets of Heaven Contained in Sacred Scripture, or the Word of the Lord; Here First Those in Genesis, Together with Amazing Things Seen in the World of Spirits and in the Heaven of Angels"**.

Wow, am I glad it has been abbreviated since then. Anyhow, back to Arks and the time of Noah.

The Bible begins with stories that appear to be histories about the world and about certain people who lived in the past. Yet we learn from Swedenborg that the events, places and people each represent aspects of the spiritual journey to our personal inner realms, and that this journey is available to every one of us. Even the geographical places and events play their role as representative aspects of that universal drama.

We are also told that the individuals who are mentioned up to a certain point in the Old Testament are not single individuals but represent a group of people who once lived and who now form a part of this drama. Groups of people who each expressed a certain attitude towards each other and towards God. This explains why some of them, for example Methuselah, appear to live for hundreds of years, because it means

that they (not just he) dominated during a phase of the spiritual drama for a certain time, perhaps lasting several or even several hundred generations each. Each group is often referred to in esoteric traditions as either a 'School',



or a 'Church', or even a 'Cultus' (a system or variety of spiritual worship involving a certain quality of relationship to God, to other people, and the world, and having a certain approach to spiritual practice and understanding). I will use the terms church and school and cultus interchangeably to mean the same thing from here on.

The sequence of characters in the bible, the number of years they lived, and the events in which they were involved are all 'correspondence' of a spiritual meaning that is still relevant to spiritual growth today, and these story elements are not intended to be understood as a literal history. See for example, Swedenborg's *Secrets of Heaven* # 1145 in which he tells us that the symbolism of the births of Noah's sons refer to teachings and types of worship that developed among the ancient people of that time (people represented in a general way under the name 'Noah'). Swedenborg further explains that a superficial or literal understanding of these births would be the generation of one person from another, yet when understood on an inner level, everything in their story focuses on heavenly and spiritual elements and form a timeless teaching about spiritual degeneration and regeneration.

Only when we reach the story of a spiritual reformer called Eber (from which the people first called the 'Hebrews' derive their origin) do we find the bible begins employing actual historical individuals. And yet, even his life and the lives of other historical figures after him are still (miraculously) references to correspondential aspects designed to instruct us about our own inner life.

But between Noah and Eber we have several 'generations' of 'people' (i.e. several schools) used as characters in this spiritual drama about every person's spiritual life. The descendants of Noah become caught up in the story of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9).

Now follows some paraphrased material from a wonderful series of teaching books called *The Dole Notes* by Anita Dole (volume 1, page 181 onwards).



"Adam" is referred to as the "Most Ancient Church", the earliest form of a wonderfully spiritual life by those people on the earth. After the decline of the school of Adam followed a second one called Noah, which is referred to as the "Ancient Church," who became very wise from their study of the Ancient Word (The Word is their teaching source provided from higher life). They were much wiser than we are today, but gradually they began to be proud

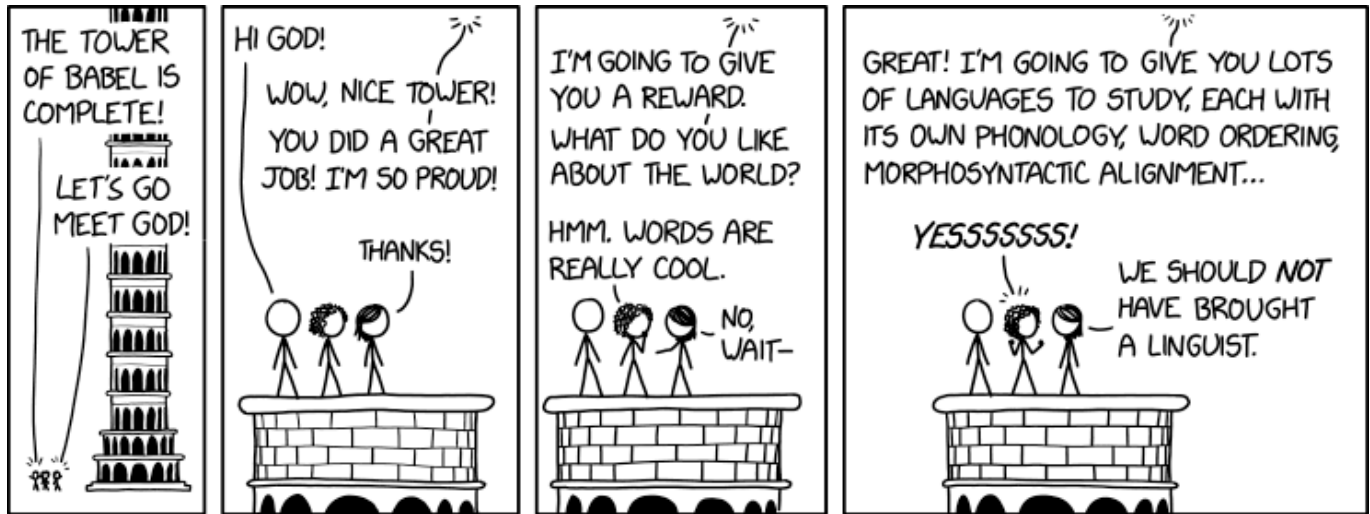
of their wisdom, as learned people sometimes are, so proud that they forgot that God was actually the source of all their best knowledge and that none of it was really the product of their own minds. So they, like what had happened to the Most Ancients, separated what they understood and what they practiced by straying further and further from a close focus on God and from practicing true goodness toward others.



The story of the Tower of Babel is the description of the end of this second church. Spiritually its people came to live in a low valley - a low, worldly plane of thought - and built their lives according to their own selfish ideas - the brick and slime - instead of with the stone of truths from the Lord cemented together by mortar - charity in the heart. This was because their object was to make a name for themselves. **When people are seeking only their own advantage, they cannot live together in harmony or work effectively together.**



Each one speaks his own language and they do not understand each other. They have to go their separate ways.



We know that the earliest historical records find people actually scattered over the surface of the earth, practicing many forms of idolatry, many of them at war with each other, and many in savage states. This is not the original state of people, as some historians assume. It is the condition which followed the breaking up of the Ancient Church. Mythology tells us of the Golden and Silver Ages before recorded history, and most peoples have such traditions, handed down by word of mouth through the centuries. This knowledge is contained in the first seven chapters of the bible in wonderful symbolic accounts of the two great civilizations which had risen, flourished, and died before written records began.

When the Ancient School broke up and were scattered all over the earth, some of its knowledges were handed down by tradition and appear in the Greek and Roman myths and in the hieroglyphics of Egypt and the magic in parts of Asia. But the Lord God was no longer the central focus in them.

Many historians make the mistake of assuming that the state of people at the beginning of history was but a step in a constant upward development of civilization. So they believe that people started as godless wild beasts. But instead of this, the state of the world at the opening of recorded history was the end of a great civilization, the second great civilization since the beginning. Mythology, with its golden and silver ages, is really much nearer the truth than the modern naturalistic interpretation of history. The Greek and Roman myths are full of true correspondences, and the hieroglyphics of Egypt, as well as the magic they practiced as also later in various other parts of the world, are based on the knowledges of correspondence handed down by tradition among the scattered remnants of the Ancient Church. All the pagan religions of the world have their roots in the Ancient Church. This is why in all of them there is enough genuine truth to form the basis of a good life, so that those who choose to believe in God and to live in love towards their neighbour may reach heaven.

statue of the spiritual ages



Gold

Silver

Brass

Iron

Iron & Clay



A person in the business world who believes that "the first duty of each of us is to look after ourselves" has definite principles upon which they carry on their business; they make these up with the best of their understanding so that they may succeed. They might decide not to lie or steal or cheat because they can see that "honesty is the best policy," but their principles have nothing to hold them together except self-interest, and as soon as they are convinced that some other practice would serve them better, the structure that they have made falls to pieces, like the house founded on the sand: their "slime" has melted away. Every life that is built from the motive of self-love is a tower of Babel.

The Lord God took away from them the understanding of the spiritual meaning of material things, so that they could no longer pervert and profane the valuable spiritual things which are contained within all external effects. The Word says that the Lord God "did there confound the language of all the earth." That is, when the internal harmony which came from dependence on the Lord was destroyed through self-conceit, all the varieties of thought and worship, which had been like the harmonious colours of the rainbow, became sources of discord and division. So the people of the Ancient Church were divided and scattered, each group following its own form of worship from tradition instead of from any understanding of its spiritual significance.

This, we are told, was the origin of all the forms of idolatry in which the nations were found at the dawn of recorded history. Nature worship, ancestor worship, polytheism, idol worship (instead of being the beginnings of spirituality and religion - as prevailing modern theories of history often assert) are the degenerate remains of the beautiful correspondential worship of the people of the Silver Age, the Ancient Church. Mythology is a poor survivor of true correspondential accounts of the early peoples. Hieroglyphic writing has its basis in correspondence. The accounts of the flood found in the traditions of certain nations are corruptions of the original account in the Ancient Word which Moses copied from that Word for us (such as from the written record of the people referred to as Enoch who gathered together the perceptive knowledge of the earliest schools and out of it constructed teachings which formed their sacred teachings or Word). A very clear illustration of the building of a Tower of Babel is the "natural history" concept of the development of religion, which is made up by people from their knowledge of existing historical remains without any belief in Divine revelation or in spiritual causes. A knowledge of the spiritual meaning of the story of the Tower of Babel with reference to the Ancient Church should protect the minds of better spiritually informed people from infection by this "natural history" concept and its conclusions. Modern scholarship is so bound up with this concept that in examining its findings it is almost impossible to separate fact from imagination. When one starts with the premise that the bible is merely the product of people's minds, one's conclusions are unsound, no matter how painstaking and conscientious the research. It makes a vital difference whether we approach the bible as God's Word to people or as people's "ascending search for God." The latter study builds a Tower of Babel. The former can build a new church or school out of each of us.



(Alas, at that point in the conversation the fly flew off...)





Mission to Mars

By Julian Duckworth

The planet Mars is about the most sci-fi laundered place away from our Earth. In twentieth-century pulp fiction and silent movies, Mars and Martians were the mainstream aliens that bold intergalactic adventurers encountered. The reason is that of all the other planets in our solar system, it is Mars which conceivably may have had life in some form at some ancient point in mega-time. Some reckon that about 3.5 billion years ago, Mars might well have been more like Earth is now, and possibly hospitable to intelligent life.

Here is a bit of information about a current NASA probe to Mars (look up Mars rover 2020 or 2021 on Wikipedia or YouTube):

“Right now, at the time of writing, a mission to Mars has landed and sent very detailed photos back to earth. **Mars 2020** is a Mars rover mission by NASA's Mars Exploration Program that includes the rover ‘Perseverance’ and the small robotic helicopter ‘Ingenuity’. Mars 2020 was launched from

Earth on an Atlas V launch vehicle at 11:50:00 UTC on 30 July 2020, and confirmation of touch down in Jezero crater on Mars was received at 20:55 UTC on 18 February 2021. As of 25 February 2021, Perseverance has been on Mars for 7 sols (7 total days; 7 days). Perseverance will investigate an astro-biologically relevant ancient environment on Mars and investigate its surface geological processes and history, including the assessment of its past habitability, the possibility of past life on Mars, and the potential for preservation of biosignatures within accessible geological materials.”



Swedenborg described spirits he met who came from other planets in our solar system, from our moon, and from various earths in the starry heaven. He described these in three of his books, at considerable length: ‘Spiritual Diary’, ‘Arcana Caelestia’ and a short stand-alone work, ‘Earths in the Universe’ (now often called ‘Worlds in Space’ or ‘Other Planets’).

We can ask why Swedenborg got into this, but that’s another story. For now, we are going to take a general look at Swedenborg’s descriptions of spirits from Mars. The main thing for us to realise while we’re reading about these spirits is that it isn’t primarily factual – that may be or may

not be – but Swedenborg is talking about spiritual life and experiences more universally, beyond what we seem to have here among human beings on Earth.

In what follows, quotes (sometimes slightly altered or shortened) are in red, and any brief commentary isn’t. Here’s how the Mars section in ‘Other Planets’ opens:

“The spirits from Mars are among the best of all spirits from the planets in our solar system. Most of them are of a heavenly nature, not very different from the people who constituted the earliest church on our own planet. When I was shown images of their qualities, they were represented by a face in heaven, and a body in the world of spirits, and in the case of the ones who were angels, by a face turned to the Lord and a body in heaven.”

Notice how these representations parallel Swedenborg’s ideas we find elsewhere such as in Heaven and Hell. He



goes on to say that spirits from one planet are kept apart (distinct?) from the spirits of another planet because they are each from some particular area in the universal human (Grand Man) and so they are in different states.

Then he reports that spirits from Mars came to him and joined his left temple. They breathed a speech to him but at first he couldn't understand it; it was very gentle, the gentlest he had ever felt, like the softest of breezes. When it moved and came into his brain he was able to understand it and respond. He says that communication by spirits from Mars isn't dependent on sound but is almost silent, and goes more deeply. It is more complete, richer in imageries, more like that of actual spirits and angels. Their breathing starts from the lower chest and moves to the navel and chest, accompanied by imperceptible breath flow going to the mouth.

"I have been told that spirits from Mars – in the universal human – are about the connection between the understanding and the will and so to *thoughts that arise from a feeling*; and the best of them relate to *the feeling behind the thoughts*. This is why their facial expressions are one with their thinking and they are incapable of pretending otherwise."



Again, notice the parallel to other Swedenborg concepts of the marriage union of good and truth, love and wisdom, will and understanding, faith and charity, and so on. He goes on here to describe how some spirits from our Earth tried to be in the same place as spirits from Mars and became insane because spirits from Earth focus their attention on the world and themselves, while spirits from Mars focus their attention away from themselves, on others, on heaven and their neighbour.

"Angelic spirits from Mars told me about the way they live; they don't have any

government there but live in separate communities made up of people with a similar disposition. This similarity is recognised immediately from faces and speech and they are rarely mistaken, and they instantly become close friends. If any spirit begins to have dark thoughts and even intend evil they are exiled. As far as possible some spirits try to get these people to come into their right mind but if this isn't possible they leave them alone."

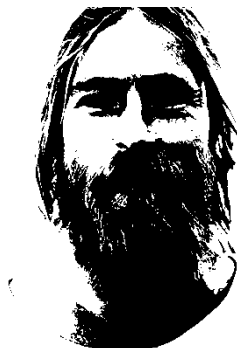
What seems to be being said here is that each spirit knows their own mind, intention and emotion so that government becomes unnecessary. There's a spiritual maturity. Notice too that dark thoughts and evil intentions can enter these spirits, just as they can enter human minds. This seems to suggest that every angel and spirit becomes aware that there is not perfect goodness in them but only in God and a watch on their states is always required.

"They make sure that there is no craving for control or excessive wealth but live content with what they each have and the esteem they are given for being fair-minded and loving. As to how they see the Divine, they adore and revere the Lord and say that only the Lord is God and rules heaven and the universe. They also told me that there is nothing but what is foul and hellish merely in themselves and all good comes from the Lord. They added that they themselves are actually devils but the Lord lifts them out of hell and constantly keeps them out."

All heavenly spirits of all kinds acknowledge and worship the Lord who is God of everything. It is from that view that heavenly spirits see themselves as foul or as devils as a relative deduction if they were not to acknowledge the Lord. Without the Lord, as we too can realise, they realise they would become driven by their self-will and their own natural urges and desires.



Here's a beautiful scene..."On one occasion when someone mentioned the Lord by name I saw spirits humble themselves so deeply and profoundly as to defy description. In that state they felt that left to themselves they are in hell and utterly unworthy to look towards the Lord because he is holiness itself. Because of this, they were no longer in possession of themselves, staying down on their knees, full of reflections, until the Lord lifted them up and brought them out of hell, so to speak. When they come out of a humble state like this they are filled with goodness and love and feel joy in their hearts."



That is so powerful it would be a pity to comment on it, but I'd suggest a few minutes reflection on it. The last description given about spirits from Mars is a description of their overall appearance.

"I was shown what an inhabitant of that planet looks like – what I saw, though, was not an actual inhabitant but a likeness of one. His face was like the faces of inhabitants of our planet, but the lower part was black. This was not because of a beard, since he did not have one, but from a blackness where a beard would be. This blackness also extended to just below the ears on both sides. The upper part of the face looked tanned, like the faces of inhabitants on our planet that are not pale. They said that on their planet they eat fruit from trees, and especially a kind of round fruit that grows out of their soil; they also eat vegetables. They wear clothes they make from the fibres of the bark of particular trees that can be woven and also glued together with a kind of adhesive that they have. They told me that they know how to make flammable liquids so that they have light in the evenings and at night."

One important point in this description of the face is that it obviously looks similar to the faces that we are aware of here. Elsewhere, Swedenborg emphatically dismisses the idea that spirits – or indeed

inhabitants of other planets in the universe – have very different forms in which they exist. This is because the "human form" is the template of the Divine itself and is the whole representation of heaven.

It is interesting that in this description, Swedenborg says he did not see a spirit from Mars close up but a likeness of one. It seems clear that an accommodation was made to Swedenborg's earthly perception. The lower blackness of the face might sound like 5 o'clock shadow but it seems that it was in the pigment of the skin. The other comment is that the upper part of the face looked tanned, seeming to suggest either the awareness in spirits from Mars of the Lord's light, like sunlight, which tans the upper, and at the same time, an awareness of a darker aspect appearing if the spirit does not adore and revere the Lord. But this is my own deduction of course.

At the end of the accounts of spirits from Mars, Swedenborg gives a spiritual experience of a flaming object which adhered to a hand, first the back of the hand, then the palm and then it moved round the hand. This object then became a bird, a flying bird which later became a bird of stone.

Swedenborg says that this vision is representatively to do with the spirits of Mars and quite a lot of explanation is given about this. If you want, take a look at Arcana Caelestia 7620-7622 and 7742-7750 or Earths in the Universe (Other Planets) 94-96 for the full account.

What I have given about Mars is fairly similar in style (but not in content of course) to what Swedenborg says about the other planets and the moon and the starry earths in heaven. Each 'has inhabitants' whose spiritual condition and state is different from all others, and from their particular state comes their appearance and their lifestyle.



Review of a talk by John Haller on Swedenborg and his influence.

By Michael Chester

I recently listened to a talk by John Haller on his interest in Swedenborg and Swedenborgianism that was very illuminating.

I was delighted to learn from John's story, of how he became interested in Swedenborg, many interesting strands that included such gifted people as Henry James Sr., Ralph Waldo Emerson and the philosopher and psychologist William James, who were all drawn to Swedenborg's ideas and utilised them in ways that helped make the world a better place.



His interest in Swedenborg stemmed from his interest in the history of alternative and complementary medicine and the fact that nearly all the alternative schools of healing profess a belief in vitalism—meaning that the energy or force which creates and sustains life comes from outside the material universe. Swedenborg identified this energy source as divine influx or God's love. In his cosmology it was the divine influx that filled the cosmos and it was this divine spirit or influx that endowed matter with life. He provided a spiritual understanding of how medicine worked.

Another part of this interesting talk was the inspiration behind his 2017 book *'Distant Voices: Sketches of a Swedenborgian World View'*. This is how John described it:

"What if I could identify a dozen or so gifted individuals from both Great Britain and from the United States who were in some

fashion responsible for the spread of his ideas. Moreover what if I could identify individuals who like Swedenborg help change the world intellectually, artistically, and even materially....my purpose was to find individuals who were intent on liberating humankind from its self-love. To be precise I was looking for people who harboured a reformer's bias based on Swedenborg's doctrine of uses by contributing to the greater good."

I've been interested in the power of ideas for a long time, and so was delighted to hear John's clear and illuminating account of the flow of ideas in Swedenborg's Writings to influential people that helped promote the greater good in society.

His 40 minutes presentation is followed by a question and answer session. The title of the talk is 'My Discovery of Swedenborg and How My Books Came About'

It is available on YouTube at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zg48rt_YlZg

Everyone's life flows into them solely from the Lord who is Life itself. This life flows in and permeates throughout the whole of heaven and even through hell, and into every individual being. It does this in an amazing order and in ways we can't begin to understand.

But while the Lord's life flows in, it is received by everyone according to their nature; good and truth are received as good and truth by those in good, but the same things are received as evil and falsity by those in evil, and become evil and falsity in them.

So as to know that there is this influx, I was allowed to feel and detect it coming in to me many times. Even so, I know many people will still claim that they will and think from themselves, and have life from themselves, when really nothing is less true.

Arcana Caelestia 2888



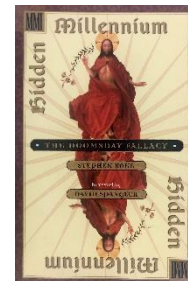
Quarterly Book Discounts

Candela readers who order the following titles during the next quarter will receive the discounts listed below, **while stocks last**. Complete the Order Form below and send to the Swedenborg Centre or phone on 02 9416 2812 and mention this page.

Hidden Millenium by **Stephen Koke**

143 pages, paperback **at 50% off – now only \$10 plus postage**

This book reviews the other side of the seemingly cataclysmic times we fear when we see changes take place that appear to be leading to be an end to life as we know it, even sometimes to the end of the world as we know it. But against that lies the promise and power of the human spirit, an invitation to change and align with the sacredness of life and creation, with a future that lies at the edge of our imagination and hope. A wonderfully apt book for these times of social change, political upheaval, grappling with fake claims of truth, and Covid impacts. Dire, last-judgement prophecies are starkly contrasted to the symbolic interpretation offered by Swedenborg through which we see the Last Judgement as hopeful, not fearful.



Spiritual Unity of East and West by **Ursula Groll**

127 pages, paperback **at over 20% off – now only \$10 plus postage**

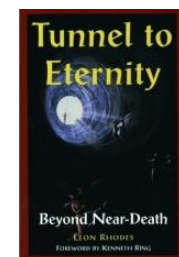
Living harmoniously in a multi-faith world is a very real and important modern challenge. Ursula Groll shows the possibility of a universal spirituality which can be embraced by looking at the background history of religions, by drawing from scriptures other than Christian, and using the work of Emanuel Swedenborg as a guide. "For readers seeking to understand what religion most truly is and how variously it has been interpreted and expressed in human history." - Rev. Stephanie Dowrick, Writer & Interfaith Minister, Sydney, Australia.



Tunnel to Eternity by **Leon Rhodes**

107 pages, paperback **at over 20% off – now only \$10 plus postage**

Rhodes draws fascinating parallels between Near Death Experiences (NDEs) and the spiritual world that Emanuel Swedenborg describes fully and painstakingly. These parallels offer insights into the transition from this life to the next. From the experience of dying to awakening to tunnels, bright lights, unfamiliar realms, life reviews, and different levels of consciousness, Leon Rhodes takes the reader on an adventure into the unknown based on his lecturing and writing about NDEs for over twenty years.



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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

If you are not yet a member of the Swedenborg Association of Australia you might like to consider it. Feel free to contact the Centre for further **info on how you can become an SAA member** as a way to support this valuable work. Check the website at www.swedenborg.com.au (click "Contact" in the top menu) which contains more details on benefits, and a membership application form which contains the current membership rates.

Details of **group events** which are either held online or physically at various locations around Australia are advertised on the website at www.swedenborg.com.au home page, plus on the events page which also lists location and contact info of your nearest group convener and Zoom links for joining online events. Our new website is continually being updated with new study material and latest news and information. One of the new online events is a weekly Swedenborg reading and reflection group on Thursday mornings beginning in March. See the website above for details.

Quotables

"If there is a purpose behind creation, then we who may be created in that purpose have an urgent need to discover it." - New Church Life

"My theology, briefly, is that the universe was dictated but not signed." - Christopher Morley

"If I were to begin life again, I should want it as it was. I would just open my eyes a little more." - Jules Renard

"Absence of proof of God's existence is not proof that God does not exist. The fact that we can't prove or disprove is no proof that it exists, but it is a knock-down proof that if God exists, there's no way that God is going to fit into a laboratory experiment." - Huston Smith

"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." - Fred Rogers

"You have a right not to be negative." - Maurice Nicoll

"The central conception of a person in the Gospels is that they are an unfinished creation capable of reaching a higher level by a definite evolution which must begin by their own effort." - Maurice Nicoll

"Far better to live your own path imperfectly than to live another's perfectly." - Bhagavad Gita

"It is not what you look at that matters, it is what you see." - Henry David Thoreau

"A life spent making mistakes is not only more honorable, but more useful than a life spent doing nothing." - George Bernard Shaw

"If you believe you can, or, if you believe you can't, you're probably right." - Henry Ford

"What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

"A craftsman pulled a reed from the reedbed, cut holes in it, and called it a human being. Since then, it's been wailing a tender agony of parting, never mentioning the skill that gave it life as a flute" - Rumi

"For self realization you need to take a step, a step backwards." - Swami Chidananda Tirtha

"Some people look for a beautiful place, others make a place beautiful." - Hazrat Inayat Khan

