



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As this year (and Millennium) draw to a close and we look back over the last twelve months, there seems to have been a major shift in the relationships of people towards each other.

It is impossible to see with the clarity of history just a single year which is still in the throes of unfolding but it feels as if people are taking time to reappraise their lives and aims with more consciousness.

Sydney has had the Olympic Games which has had an influence in many ways. The relative short period of completion was like a party. There was an atmosphere of acceptance of others, reconciliation in the hearts of many towards the black/white communities and an appreciation of the qualities of each other. The Paralympics heightened this regard for the disabilities of others in a way that no march could have achieved.

There is no need for Government to make apologies to the Aborigine. The people themselves have expressed their heartfelt sorrow for the past and present injustices. Redress begins in the heart and it appears to have already begun.

Even those who did not have their heart in the Games at first, found themselves softening towards the warmth of the occasion. A new national consciousness emerged and there seemed to be a realisation that one doesn't need to look to governments and authorities for inspiration as a higher power but to look to each other and the Divine which surpasses the individual. People commented on the work of volunteers and their unconditional affection for the role they took in welcoming the visitors to this country. It was inspirational. A true Christian, being of use.

The end of the year when one tidies up the loose ends at work and at home is a completion. Businesses might have a Christmas party and some time off. Invariably families start this time with break-ups at school, shopping for gifts and food and so on. At least a couple of weeks before Christmas, businesses have come to a virtual standstill. The house is cleaned top to bottom. It's not planned. It just happens.

On the other hand it is also a beginning. Christmas is a time when friends are contacted perhaps with the idea of coming together or just by exchange of cards. A feeling of love and compassion towards others is sparked and childhood expectations are renewed. There are of course people who do not have anybody with whom to share this festive time and the vacuum of loneliness is greater still.

As we share in this wonderful event that Christmas represents we also think of those who have no one with whom to share their loneliness.

Have a happy and holy Christmas,

Agape,

John Brogan

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

THE POWER OF MYTH

The focus of this edition of the Candela is centered around the myth of Theseus and Ariadne and how we can benefit from it. One of the uses of myth when re-enacted is to redirect psychic energies towards integration. For example, Aboriginal people play out a myth as part of connecting to the Dreamtime and bring about beneficial changes within themselves. This also happens in our dreaming. Here is an example based on a lecture on Dreaming given by **Dr Philip Groves** at Nature Care in 1990.

In this case we have 19 year old man, who suffered from very severe nervousness, anxiety and almost total ineptitude in his place of work. He was always away from work, always feeling sick, always having to go to doctors. He would have these bouts in which he would tremble and shake and feel that the world was going to collapse upon him.

He had a certain recurrent dream. Dreamt he was in a car going up hill when the engine conks out and the car runs back wards.

He would awaken out of this dream shaking and feeling in a very bad state. For several days after that recurring dream he would be in a very bad state. He would be confined to bed, filled with phobias, anxieties and states of terror.

He received some psychotherapy. After about three months, he began to show signs of improvement when this very dramatic dream occurred.

He dreamt that in the backyard of his home, there was a Minotaur. A Minotaur is a mythical creature half bull and half man and feeds on human flesh. This terrifying monster came out and rushed at him. And quite suddenly, there appeared a beautiful young lady with a cape, just like a matador and she used the cape and diverted the rush of the bull so that both were saved. The bull disappeared and then came back a few minutes later and made a very frenzied attack upon both of them. The dreamer himself seized the cape from the young lady and successfully warded off the attacks the Minotaur. The dream ended.

The man's emotional anxieties cleared up from that point. With only a little secondary psychotherapy in the months that followed he was restored to total health. The dream was the big factor.

The Minotaur is an unconscious archetype. It represents fear, danger and aggression from many of his buried forces.

The young lady who came to his rescue is his Anima - (female component in male psyche. Animus is the male component in female psyche) These are very important functional components of our being. In our ordinary make up we are a number of different psychological components and nothing is joined together. All of these parts jangle together against each other as there is no cooperation between them. We need to fuse with the opposite polarity of our sex within ourselves.

The Anima is a much more stable structure. It has nothing to do with one's sense of 'I'. It sees more clearly. It sees how to defend the whole psyche against these unconscious threats coming up from the collective unconscious.

So she joins forces with him, and she shows how it is possible to deal with all these forces. He then takes the cape, and he has now seen what is possible to do. And in doing it himself he changed all his relationships within his own psyche. He changes as an entire being. His 'I' undergoes a big transformation.

This is so different from his earlier dream where everything is out of control. He is now in control. The initial psychotherapy showed what was possible. Below the surface he had initiated processes that helped to bring about huge changes within his psyche. What is possible for one is possible for all.

The Myth of Theseus and Ariadne

On the first of September 2000, people came together at The Swedenborg Centre in North Ryde, Sydney, to participate in a Psychodrama centered around this myth. It was a delightful evening, celebrating the first day of spring, based on the ancient myth of Theseus and Ariadne, involving a Labyrinth, created by curtain screens, leading eventually towards the lair where the Minotaur lay ready to devour all comers, with terrifying noises.

The evening was opened by John Brogan who introduced those present to the meaning and purpose of myth, after which his wife Louise retold the myth itself, and then Julian Duckworth offered some insights into it. A short period of attunement led to individuals following the maze, taking part in several helpful and relevant experiences en route, and finally to the point of needing to feel and face the fear of the Minotaur and to kill it with a 'sword'. Several people commented how frightening this was for them to achieve. There was an important quiet meditative period afterwards to reflect on one's experiences and be open to new meanings of what stands behind the myth. People then shared their experience of the evening followed by a supper which had a Greek flavour. It was highly appreciated and enjoyed by everyone who came along.

As so much was gained by those present it was decided to share the material with others via the Candela.

THE HERO'S JOURNEY

John Brogan

When we stand in the presence of a Myth we stand before a noble temple. The myth represents the innermost spiritual beliefs of the culture and as such is a sacred domain. The myth, like all sacred writings, uses picturesque stories which, to the uninitiated, conceal the inner meaning of the myth.

Two things are needed for the interpretation of the myth: Correspondences and a rational doctrine. Without correspondences Mythology will never open up its buried treasures. Correspondences are merely the keys; within the labyrinthine passages and chambers where unguided imagination may easily go astray, a guide is needed.

The guide is a systematic theology. The religion of the ancients is in accord with the insights given us by Swedenborg. They embody the same Divine truths, the same lessons of moral and spiritual good, and leading the mind to the worship of the same and only supreme God.

Tonight we will tread the path of the hero who needs Divine help to accomplish an impossible task. The passage is dark and difficult to find and we need much courage to follow the labyrinth to the centre. There we must face our adversary and slay it. What is my adversary, my monster?

Tonight it looks like a Minotaur, a bull-headed satan who devours young people.

When I have overcome my nemesis, I must find the way back. My clue to this is to follow my guide, my divine guide, for to slay my monster and die is the act of the martyr. Swedenborg, you will remember, was guided by an angel sent from the Lord on his journeys in both the heavens and hell.

Further more, we have not even to risk the adventure alone, for the heroes of all time have gone before us. Joseph Campbell said:

The labyrinth is thoroughly known. We have only to follow the thread of the hero path and where we thought to slay another we shall slay ourselves. Where we had thought to travel outward we will come to the centre of our own existence. And where we had thought to be alone we will be with all the world. .

The hero is someone who does a deed which is superhuman. There are two types of deeds. One is the physical deed, in which the hero performs a courageous act in battle or saves a life. The other kind is the spiritual deed in which the hero learns to experience the supernormal range of human spiritual life and then comes back with a message. It is usually a cycle, a going and a returning

A revelation of the Lord to mankind has existed in all ages, for without Revelation from Him the human race could have no conjunction with Him. Let the ball of twine, the clue, represent your Divine guide. Stay with it all the time and don't let go. Your guide will bring you back from dark places.

The study of the life of mankind is the study of the various degrees and qualities of the reception of the Lord by mankind during its successive ages. Mythology especially affords such a study because it treats of nothing but the Religion of the ancients veiled in numerous diverse forms, all of which are so many different paths.

These paths are like a labyrinth. If we wander as innocents along the paths without a guide, the myth will be like a fanciful fairy tale of shadow and light, through dark and ancient forests in which strange and hideous animals roam; through pleasant fields filled with lofty temples, pyramids and cities, and regions inhabited by monsters in caves.

Without a heavenly guide no man can, unharmed, pass through this labyrinth and slay the monster.

THESEUS AND THE MINOTAUR ~ THE MYTH

Theseus was the son of Aegeus, the king of Athens. His mother was Aethra. It is told how, as a child, his true identity was kept from him until he was old enough and strong enough to roll away a large stone under which a pair of sandals and a sword had been deliberately placed by his father the king. Theseus achieved this in due course, girded the sandals and the sword and set off for Athens to meet his father the king. Aegeus had meanwhile married the sorceress Medea who persuaded the elderly king that this visitor was a dangerous spy and should be killed. A poisoned cup was put at Theseus' place at the table. Theseus sat down and drew his sword, seemingly to cut his meat, but really to reveal his true identity to his father. On seeing the sword, Aegeus dashed the cup to the ground and clasped his son to him, and drove the treacherous Medea out of the city.

All of Athens welcomed Theseus as the son of king Aegeus and as prince and heir. The first act of Theseus was to kill the fifty sons of Pallas, the brother of Aegeus. These sons had hoped to take power in Athens and they were enraged at the arrival of Theseus. In order not to antagonise the people of Athens at this major slaughter for his self-preservation, Theseus set out on a quest for the good of all: he captured the bull of Marathon which had ravaged the countryside, drove him through the streets of Athens as a spectacle, and finally sacrificed him at the altar of Apollo.

Just at this time, King Minos of Crete sent messengers to demand the tribute due to him every nine years. The reason was that Androgeos, the son of Minos, had been treacherously murdered in Attica. In revenge, Minos had waged war against Athens and the gods themselves had laid the country waste with drought and plagues. Then the oracle of Apollo proclaimed that the anger of the gods and the suffering of the people of Athens would end if they placated Minos and obtained his forgiveness. Athens had then pleaded with King Minos and got peace on condition that every nine years they send a tribute of seven youths and seven maidens to Crete.

It was said that Minos took the youths and maidens and locked them in his famous labyrinth, where they died of hunger and thirst or were killed by the Minotaur, a terrible monster, part man and part bull.

So now, when the time had come for the third tribute, the parents of unmarried sons and daughters, faced with such a possible fate, began to murmur against Aegeus, the cause of the disaster, who did not have to share in their suffering, and who had a bastard son to be heir to the throne. Theseus was pained at their grief. He rose to his feet and declared that he himself would go, without being chosen by lot. Everyone was full of admiration for such noble selflessness, even while his father entreated him not to go and leave Athens without an heir. Theseus was resolved and reassured his father

that he had no intention of dying, nor of leaving the youths and maidens to their fate, but he would slay the Minotaur. The ship was made ready, and, in addition to the normal black sails of mourning, the king ordered white sails to be added which were to be hoisted if Theseus returned safely. If not, the black sails were to be raised to announce disaster from afar.

Theseus took the youths and maidens to the temple of Apollo, offered the prayer, and boarded the ship for Crete. The oracle had advised him to choose the goddess of love as his patron on this quest. Theseus did not understand this counsel but he offered Aphrodite the sacrifice, and in time, the meaning became clear to him. When he landed in Crete he was brought before King Minos who had come down to the harbour to count the victims. Minos took off his own golden signet ring and flung it into the sea with the taunt, "Prove yourself and retrieve this ring!" Theseus immediately dived and was borne down to the depths by dolphins to where the Nereids held the ring and gave it to him along with Aphrodite's crown. Theseus surfaced bearing both aloft. As he came ashore his beauty as he stood there in the bloom of heroic youth attracted the gaze of the lovely princess Ariadne. Meeting him in secret later, she confessed her love for him and handed him a ball of golden thread, one end of which he was to fasten to the entrance of the labyrinth and then unroll the ball as he went forward through the bewildering maze to meet the Minotaur. She also gave him a magic sword with which to kill the monster.

King Minos had all his victims taken to the labyrinth into which they entered. Theseus attached the end of the golden thread to the entrance. Guided by the monster's distant bellowing, Theseus followed the children into the dark maze, reaching them just as the terrifying creature was about to slaughter them. He grappled with the beast and slew it with the sword before leading the children out of the Labyrinth by retracing his steps and following the golden thread to where Ariadne was waiting. She was the lovely and unexpected prize Theseus had won for his task. At her advice, he gashed the keels of the Cretan ships so that her father could not pursue them in their flight.

Thinking himself secure with his success and prize, they stopped at the island of Dia – later called Naxos – where Dionysius appeared to Theseus in a dream and declared that Ariadne was his own bride decreed by Fate and that he would afflict Theseus unless he renounced his beloved. Theseus had been brought up to honour the gods, and now he deferred to Dionysius and left the sorrowing Ariadne on the island where from in time she was spirited away and became invisible.

Theseus and his friends were so saddened at losing Ariadne that they forgot to change the black sail to a white one. King Aegeus watched from the shores of Athens, saw the black sail, and believed his son was dead. Filled with unbearable grief and weary of life, he threw himself into the waters below. And in memory of him, they called those waters the Aegean Sea.

MEANINGS AND INSIGHTS

Julian Duckworth

It is not the purpose of a myth to teach or explain but rather to tell a story, and in the telling to let the listener enjoy and feel the story and maybe find some personal link and meaning. In that way, myths are best left alone, and seen as sacred ground. Yet every myth contains themes that all of us share and we discover insights into our deepest being, our experiences of life around us and our life within us, with all its hopes and fears. So let us revisit this ancient story of Theseus and the Minotaur, before we walk through it for ourselves, so that we might touch a meaning here and there and see the link with ourselves.

Theseus, the central figure and the hero of the piece is a king's son but like so many king's sons, he is unaware of his true identity until the time is right for him to learn it. In every one of us there is this highest consciousness, this noble ideal for which we exist and were born, and yet we do not understand or comprehend our life's purpose and destiny for many years, but search and grope and quest as to who we are and may be. Theseus' own name links him with another origin – his name, Theseus, is from the Greek word for God 'theos' which is in our word theology, and more surprisingly in enthusiasm, or en theos, in God. For Theseus, like virtually all heroes, is a direct descendant of the gods, reminding us that our highest consciousness and ideal in life is to see divinity and the god within us all. But Theseus is also a man: a handsome, human, heroic, virile specimen of manhood, whose beauty will captivate all maidens and in particular a king's daughter who falls in love with him at first sight, for love loves wisdom and sees its beauty and form and desires it, as Ariadne desires Theseus, and promises him, her help if he will take her for his bride.

Ariadne is the daughter of King Minos who rules supreme in his kingdom, the ego-assertion of self-importance and power over others. Minos has a stepson, a half-brother of Ariadne, the Minotaur, half-bull and half-man, a deformed monster conceived from a union between Pasiphae, Ariadne's mother and the white bull. This Minotaur demands to be fed, for natural desires and depravity is ultimately insatiable; its appetite is always for more until it has consumed entirely. And its demand is for our spiritual purity, our innocence, our youth, our virginity, our basic inner perfection which it loathes and must devour. And the Minotaur is in the deepest recesses, the parts that we do not see and know nothing of, except that we hear its distant bellowing and rage and know that some day we must confront this dark aspect of our soul and destroy

it before it destroys us and there are no youths or virgins left.

The confrontation between good and evil, consciousness and ego, heaven and hell, spirit and matter, life and death will come when Theseus, god-man seeks to destroy the hidden Minotaur. We will need to journey within and further within, and enter the labyrinthine twists of our own psyche, and get lost many times on the way and wonder if this quest is worthwhile and if we shall return alive and ever see the light of day again. The labyrinth ever turns inwards upon itself and becomes more complex the further we progress within it. It is madness, mental agony and mind-bending to take this quest upon ourselves and seek to penetrate the darkness of human existence.

But there is light because there is love as a golden chord, a winding thread which accompanies us on our journey and which will be the means of bringing us back to daylight and sanity. For love, this highest power of which we are ever capable, love has this immediacy, this perpetual presence, assurance, life-openingness and dark-penetratingness. Love is safety. Love is a guarantee that we cannot get it wrong unless we forsake love itself.

And from out of the labyrinth, following the golden cord of love's guarantee, re-emerges the hero, Theseus, our highest consciousness, now victor and winner of the lovely Ariadne. And they set sail for home, for union, for ultimate happiness. But Ariadne, this love in our life, is not ours, and she is claimed by a god for his bride, and left on an island as Theseus travels on towards home. Love is a fleeting presence for us, not a permanent possession. Love comes and does its work in us and then must be set free, given over, unheld. And this paradox of freedom in love and love's own freedom is a hard lesson that mystifies and weighs us down, so that we forget the brightness of a white sail heralding the return of a victor and leave unthinkingly the black sail of defeat and emptiness, which kills our father king. Theseus is truly heroic and a victor in the battle between good and evil yet he ends alone. For that is where we find ourselves when we have tried every dependency, addiction, quick fix or remedy for our humanity. For he who stands alone is not alone but possesses everything. He who risks the labyrinth understands beyond the labyrinth and owns his life in its entirety. Theseus – Theos – Godness.



What can I do to slay the Minotaur within myself?

In asking this question helpful advice is given by Peter Rhodes in his book 'Aim'. Here is an excerpt from chapter 2 'It is not you'.

"We know that some people put the feeling of their life in their body and they are called Hedonists. If it feels good, they say it is good. If it tastes good they claim it is good. They say, "When I die it is all over and I'm gone." Of course that is not true. But his feeling of life is in himself so he is *self* centered. He thinks, "If it's not good for me, it is not good for anyone." But we know that you have to draw up outside of thinking that you are your body. And a thing called reflection demands that you do something even harder than that, which is to draw up so that you no longer think your thoughts are your own, nor are your feelings your own. Your thoughts and feelings flow into you. They flow into the self and you can see them in the exterior man. Each of us is capable of dividing himself or herself. We can come up and draw our attention or put what Gurdjieff calls our "feeling of I" or feeling of life, into our interior man. And that is what reflection is - keeping the feeling in the interior man while you observe what your exterior man is perceiving.

So you can see a thought come in, a negative thought like, "I wonder why my wife is doing that? She makes me so mad." Now if you are there in the self, identified with it, you think, "she's making me mad," but if you can step *up* with effort and attention you can see the hells coming in. You can't regenerate automatically, you need to use some effort and attention on yourself. The hell called Hate is coming in and it is going to divide you and your wife. You can see that it uses a thing called Falsity, which is that "she is making me angry." So you can watch this come into the exterior man, but this is not you. You do not own it.

My aim is to teach Self-observation so that you do not identify with your negative emotions. The Writings indicate one use of reflection is to not attribute evil to oneself. Self-observation is simply that. To observe the self and not identify with those things coming into it. 'It is not you. You have dirty thoughts, they come in, you have angry thoughts which come in, but they are not you. Get back into the interior man. Swedenborg first mentioned in the introduction to The Word Explained what he refers to as "double thought." He was with the good spirits as to his interior man, watching the bad spirits with his exterior man. He was looking at them. His exterior man, his body and thoughts were under their control but he was in his interior man watching them, knowing that "They are not me."

Now why would you want to do that - to separate from the thoughts and feelings of your external man? The reason you want to separate is because as long as you are in this exterior man you don't see his nature. Evil will convince you that falsity is truth and that evil is good. I will give you an example from the past.

There I was sitting down reading the newspaper. The kids were playing around and making a lot of noise. I have this devil called Impatience and when he entered me I turned around and yelled, "Will you be quiet?! You make me so angry! Now get in that room! Didn't I tell you to be quiet a hundred times before?"

I sat down again and told myself, "They need that discipline. It's good for them! They need to learn more respect for adults." I thought my state was good. I was in it so how could I see it as bad? I couldn't.

So another day I was again in that state, but I had also been trying to practice the task I am going to give you, and when that impatience entered, just as I turned around to do the usual yelling at the kids, the task helped me realize that good spirits were with them. The kids were having a good time playing together. So what if they were a little noisy? (Maybe there were loud good spirits with them!) My hells were just about to blame them of evil and send them to their room for *my hell*. When I could see that, and what was entering me, I no longer thought it was good for my children. I thought it was horrible. It was what Gurdjieff speaks of as the "terror of the situation." Until you have seen the terror of the situation, you have not divided yourself.

Swedenborg says you must come to "loathe the self". Over and over again in the Spiritual Diary he comments and says, "I was horrified at the nature of my external man." And it *is* horrible! But the beautiful part is, *IT* is not me. I am capable of being in my interior man, where the Lord can come in, and rather than punishing my children I can learn to let heavenly loves flow through to them. It is beautiful that one does not have to live with this exterior man all one's life. I don't have to be impatient! I don't have to be embarrassed! I don't have to be shy! It's shy. Gurdjieff makes all students stop saying "I" as in "I am angry," or, "I am shy." He has you say "*It* is angry," or "*It* is embarrassed," so you don't identify it with yourself. Once you draw back into observation you start to do something significant; you start to take away your affection and your protection from the exterior man. You no longer have to justify his behaviour. You no longer have to make 'IT' seem good. You can see 'IT' for what 'IT' is. 'IT' is terrible. There is nothing in the self that is nice. 'IT' only wants to destroy you and others. It is vitally important to awaken and observe this reality. And remember, the self that you observe in the exterior man (as you draw back into your interior man) is not you. 'IT' is not the real you. Truly, we must separate from our negative self.

This separation is what Gurdjieff calls "dividing yourself." Swedenborg also stresses this. He says that a person cannot regenerate (i.e. grow spiritually) unless he begins to realize that the thoughts and feelings that flow into him are not him.

These evil spirits around me, say depression, or boredom, anger, frustration, or impatience *are not me*. Each of them feels like me and it sure seems to be me, but it is not me. It is from the hells. And you have to stop attributing them to yourself in order to regenerate. 'IT' is not you! The way Gurdjieff says it is that you must stop identifying with the thoughts and the feelings

and the actions of the exterior man in order to transform. Swedenborg has told us that from the Lord in the Writings. The doctrine of reflection teaches that you *can* start to feel that "this is not me."

You can reflect from your interior man and see that your exterior man is receiving these evils. When we do this we can choose to just see them for what they are, and not allow our propriums to be activated by them.

"There is nothing from without a man that entering into him can defile him, but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile him." (Mark 7:15)

Quotations from Swedenborg

...everyone who does not read the Word under the Lord's auspices reads it under the auspices of his own intelligence, they are like one entering a labyrinth without a guide or a cord, and the farther he goes in the more he loses sight of the way out. A man who reads the Word not under the Lord's auspices but under the auspices of his own intelligence, thinks himself a lynx and better sighted than Argus; and yet he inwardly sees not a shred of truth, but only what is false; and under self-persuasion this falsity seems to him like a polar star towards which he directs all the sails of his thought; and then he no more sees truths than a mole does, or if he sees them he bends them to favour his phantasies, and so perverts and falsifies the holy things of the Word.

True Christian Religion 165

It is believed by many that the soul is life, and thus, that a man, because he lives from the soul, lives from his own life, thus from himself, and therefore not by an influx of life from God; but these cannot help tying a sort of Gordian knot of fallacies, and entangling in it all the judgments of their mind, whence are mere insanities in spiritual things; or constructing a labyrinth, from which the mind can never, by any thread of reason, retrace its way and extricate itself; they also actually let themselves down as it were in caverns under the earth, where they dwell in eternal darkness.

Interactions between Soul and Body 11

For from himself man constantly acts against order, while the Lord acts constantly according to order; for man, from the nature derived from his parents, is in the love of self and the love of the world, and consequently perceives from a feeling of delight everything belonging to those loves as good; nevertheless, those loves as ends must be removed; and this is done by the Lord in infinite ways, that appear like a labyrinth even before the angels of the third heaven.

Apocalypse Explained 1153

SECRETARY'S REPORT

New Members

We welcome to the SAA:

Mr Michael Willmott (Sydney NSW)

Mr Ken Hanrahan (Tylden, VIC)

Mr Phillip Martin (Hilldale, NSW)

Swedenborg Quotation from the Secretary.

'If man believed, as is the truth, that all good and truth originate from the Lord, and all evil and falsity from evil spirits, he would not appropriate good to himself and account it meritorious, nor would he appropriate evil to himself and account himself responsible for it.'

Divine Providence 320.

Michael Chester, Secretary.

GROUP'S NEWS

North Ryde:

In October Dr Mollie Peglar presented the talk 'The Orderly Cellular Universe' which looked at the orderly life within a cell. This microcosm was presented within an overview of the different levels within the Universe. The talk also looked at what happens when disorder arose when a cell was invaded by bacteria or viruses. Mollie drew our

attention to various correspondences throughout the lecture.

Julian Duckworth presented 'Good and Evil - the endless battleground' at our November meeting. In the talk he presented the characteristics of Good and Evil and summarized the view of various religions on Good and Evil.

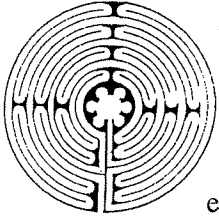
Both talks were videoed. The video and accompanying notes can be borrowed from The Swedenborg Centre.

Melbourne:

In July our speaker was John Teed and his topic 'How God has spoken to men and women through the ages', and dealt with revelation including the ancient Word.

In August Les Sheppard traced the spirituality of the Old Testament from Genesis to Judges and identified the mystical thread that runs through these books and shows how God works progressively in our lives.

In September there was a general discussion on 'Reincarnation'. Chris introduced the topic, and each person was encouraged to share their experience and understanding of the topic. The evening enabled everyone present to understand a little better the broad subject and learn from each other.



Labyrinth: a maze; a complicated, perplexing arrangement

The original labyrinth was the creation of the mythical Greek inventor Daedalus. Built to contain the Minotaur - a monster that was half man and half bull-it was a masterpiece of confusion. So twisted and convoluted were its intricate passageways that, once inside, it was impossible to retrace one's steps to the entrance. This ingenious prison proved to be equally escape-proof for the man-eating Minotaur and the young Athenians whom Minos sacrificed to it. Trapped in the maze, these innocent victims ran up and down its passageways, searching in vain for the way out, until they inevitably encountered the hungry beast and were devoured.

This was the state of affairs on Crete when the great hero Theseus arrived. When he and other young Athenians were left inside the labyrinth, their deaths seemed assured. Theseus, however, had received a ball of thread from Minos's daughter, and by attaching it to the door and unraveling the skein as he penetrated the maze, he was able to sneak up on and slay the monster, then retrace his steps to freedom.

Thereafter, the term *labyrinth* began to be applied to anything of great intricacy or complexity-literally in such structures as the inner ear (in which we sometimes develop the *disease labyrinthitis*) and figuratively, as in the "labyrinth of human thought". The adjective *labyrinthine* is also applied to anything of great intricacy and complexity, in which it is easy to become lost.

Source : 'From Achilles' Heel to Zeus's Shield' by Dale Corey Dibley.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

For Group activities, contact your nearest Group Convenor

- Sydney region (Michael Chester on (02) 9913 2421); - Melbourne (Chris Skinner on (03) 9435 8599);

It would be good to see additional viable Groups established in new areas. If you can help contact Michael Chester.

Planning is in process for determining the programmes of meetings during 2001. Once these have been finalised, schedules will be sent to all members and made more widely available. If you have any suggestions of speakers or events, please do pass these on to your Group Convenor or directly to the Secretary if not specifically related to Melbourne or Sydney.

The 313th Swedenborg Birthday meeting at The Swedenborg Centre in North Ryde will be addressed by **Dr. Jane Williams-Hogan**, a Swedenborgian Scholar from USA. She will be in Sydney for an International Conference on *Religion, Literature and The Arts* in early February at which she will be presenting a paper on Swedenborg. The date of our Meeting has still to be finalised in conjunction with Dr. Williams-Hogan's travel arrangements.

WHY A SWEDENBORG ASSOCIATION?

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

Having functioning Branches for considering subjects of common interest.

Providing information on topical subjects drawing on Swedenborg's own contributions to stimulate wider interest.

Doing anything else possible to keep Swedenborg's writings before the community.

WHY JOIN?

To share with others what has been of help to you in your quest for truth.

Pursuing areas of interest in Swedenborg through ready access of books and possibly events.

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For membership details, contact the Hon. Secretary - details on first page