

Candela



Newsletter of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc
Organisational Details are provided on the next page

SEPTEMBER 2011

ISSUE 65

Issue Theme ~ Sacred text ~ God speaking to us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings dear explorer,

This issue provides a chance to reflect on reading sacred texts. I always had an inward sense of the importance of dreams, fairy tales and sacred literature. As a child I had a lively imagination and was a vivid dreamer. Comprehending the material was puzzling. How to find what it means?

When travelling abroad as a youth, I had four dreams on successive nights involving various forms of transport. The first three nights had



me catch a different form of public transport each time. I planned to catch a boat, then a train, later a plane. Each night the vehicle of choice took off just before I could board it. The fourth day I decided to finish my holiday and return home. The dream that followed had me catch all three trips

in a single dream. The dream symbolism here was obvious to me offering me an awareness

of my unconscious anxiety over my decision about returning home. Dreams are never judgemental, just awareness-raising. Unfortunately, the imagery is not always so easy to interpret, meaning often being left field. Sacred literature, dreams and the like seem to require us to look beyond external literal interpretations.

I find word origins of sacred writings to be a good starting point, e.g. the Greek word often translated as 'repent' is *metanoia* (μετάνοια), from *meta* (change, beyond, outside of) and *nous* (mind). Often rendered as 'changing one's mind,' I prefer: 'to go beyond the present thinking'.

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

Next Issue – December 2011

Theme : " Gifts "

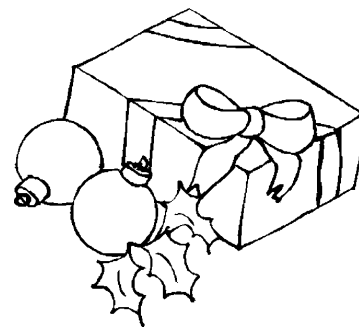
The greatest gift we have ever been given was when God was born as a little baby in the world that he had made. We feel the joy of this each Christmas, and we give each other gifts as a way of marking this cosmic event and showing people we love that we appreciate them.

All of us love giving and getting gifts. We would love you to write something for our Christmas issue, an article, a poem or maybe share a reading or a memory.

Have you ever received a gift that really touched your heart?

The deadline is the 20th November 2011

Email to rduckworth@optusnet.com.au or by post to the registered office.





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Trying to interpret fairy tales I have found good practice in exploring representational language. A useful rule of thumb has been to keep looking for alternatives until a harmonious interpretation presents itself which can explain most or all story elements and resolve discrepancies. Like a jigsaw puzzle in which even one misplaced piece can cause rejection of the remaining pieces, until a different configuration is found into which all pieces fit snugly. No wonder Carl Jung focused always back on the content of the dream itself, cautious of wandering from a deeper message by settling for an explanation too easily.

How to interpret, for example, the tale of *Rumplestiltskin*? Is it a literal, factual story about real straw, gold and royalty? Is it whimsical nonsense, mere entertainment to help a child pass the time? Does it relate a historical event? (A popular interpretation for the Mahabharata epic). Does it highlight some moral or ethic, a "thou shalt not..." warning about a taboo, rape, abduction, child abuse,

disobedience? Or does it describe psychological dynamics of the mind from a time before our modern psychological language was invented? Could it be a story about stages of spiritual growth, important spiritual values and the perils of resisting spiritual growth?

Fortunately, the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg can provide a valuable starting point. His science of correspondences is one of the most valuable keys in making sense of such material. Here is Swedenborg's explanation of correspondences:

"... all things of nature and of the human body and every single detail in them, correspond to spiritual

things. Until now, however, it has not been known what correspondence is, although in the most ancient times this was very well known; for the science of correspondences was then the science of sciences, and was so universal that all the writings and books were written by means of correspondences."

"... The hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, and also the fabulous stories of highest antiquity, were nothing but correspondences. ..."

Let's take two correspondences as clues to attempt to interpret a few aspects of the (incomplete) *Rumplestiltskin* tale:

Straw corresponds to facts ... because facts, compared with rational ideas, are coarse and lacking in order.

Gold corresponds to good (good is found when love is given expression and is therefore of the highest value).

With these two main keys we can read the story as one of a helpless daughter (innocent affections) being faced with a seemingly impossible task (a challenge) of turning a room full of straw (mind full of disordered raw facts) into gold (the highest good). A big transformation, requiring much work (spinning wheel – wheels advance things to another place, into a new state) and requiring sacrifice (giving up things we grew attached to). Rumplestiltskin (a power which knows what to do, coming from an unknown source) arrives at the eleventh hour at which the preparedness to work and to give up our attachments is greatest. This leads to her ability to marry (join good to truth) the king (the highest truth). When the source of the





help is eventually named (made conscious), its unconscious influence and power over the situation is destroyed. The overall idea: the need to willingly give up our attachment to things of non-enduring value and work relentlessly to transform what is base, raw and outer in us, while inviting and participating with help from beyond to achieve a state of conscious spiritual harmony and union between what is good and true in us.

Imagining that we can figure it all out by ourselves can lead us into a false sense of pride in the apparent magnitude of our own power, a power which is in fact given to us from the Divine. The danger is that we will fall Icarus-like from such a sky. Our sense of independence can close us to seeking Divine input. Even the inner meaning of things is provided from above, therefore our role is not so much one of invention but of receptivity, attunement, gratitude, discovery of what is benevolently shared with us. When we act as-of-self, we invite, actively participate with and acknowledge Divine input.

Swedenborg describes how appearances of things in the spirit world are correspondences of the states of spirits. Sacred literature is written in correspondences and so describes the spiritual rather than the natural world. This is why the language of scripture (also dreams, etc) seems so left field. Knowing something of both worlds makes it easier to understand the Bible's meaning.

Happy pondering.

Joe Vandermeer



"... the Bible has an inner, spiritual meaning for angels and an outer, material-level meaning for people on earth. That is why our connection to heaven happens through the Bible."

++++
A conversation between Oprah and Eckhart when they were discussing Chapter 2 of his book '*A New Earth*'. It indicates that as a person regenerates they are able to perceive deeper meanings in the Bible.

OPRAH WINFREY: You talk about the illusion of ownership. You say, "The ego tends to equate having with Being ... and

lives through comparison." And you used a quote from the Bible that Jesus said. "'Blessed are the poor in spirit,' Jesus said, 'for theirs will be the kingdom of heaven.' What does poor in spirit mean? No inner baggage, no identifications." I never knew that's what "poor in spirit" means. How did you come to that interpretation of what "poor in spirit" means?

ECKHART TOLLE: There was a time, after I went through this inner shift, this must be three years later, I was visiting my mother and she had the New Testament on her shelf. I picked it up, and I started reading. I could suddenly see the truth that was hiding there, and that in many cases, the conventional interpretation was the superficial one of what Jesus had said. And that was one of the things that I immediately saw when you said "poor in spirit," I realized it had to do with not carrying stuff inside so that your spirit is very light, it has no burden. And so there are many things, at that time, I read and I suddenly saw, "Oh, he was talking about awakening and about living in that free state of consciousness." It's wonderful, suddenly to be able to read it and suddenly it all makes sense, which before hadn't made sense.

Thank you to Michael Chester for finding this conversation.

Secretary's Report

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Martine Negro

Lez Fabian

Honor Tremain

By the time you receive this *Candela* the Annual General Meeting will be almost upon us and I urge as many of you as possible to attend, whether members or not. The talk should prove very interesting and stimulating, the business meeting will be quite short and there's bound to be something delicious on the supper table. Of course, the tyranny of distance prevents many members from attending, but please support your Association by sending greetings and nominating a proxy. Also please think if you, yourself, could serve on the Committee or may be able to nominate another member you feel could make a beneficial contribution.

I hope I will see you then,

Alexis Jarvis

Hon. Secretary



THE LAST JUDGEMENT BEFORE THIS ONE

By Charlie Canning

Written for his niece Sofia, about speaking and listening to God

Once upon a time there was a man named Emanuel Swedenborg from Sweden, of all places. Emanuel was a fortunate child: He was born in Sweden. Imagine the confusion if he had been born in Norway or Denmark.



Emanuel was a precocious youth. In other words, he understood adult things as a child. When you are young, this is thought to be a good thing because growing up is a sack

prizes are for those who finish first, second, or third. But at a certain age, precocity loses its charm and you have to rely on other skills to carry you over the line.

Fortunately, young Swedenborg had a lot of skills. He was good at music and good at maths. Emanuel liked to study and was very curious about the physical world – especially astronomy and mining. Swedenborg spent a lot of time gazing up at the heavens and down into the earth: Where did we come from? What was the world made of? Where were we going?

Emanuel asked these questions of women and men, but no one could give him the answers that he sought. So he asked God. And when Emanuel began talking to God, he developed the greatest of all his skills: he learned to listen. He looked up at the stars and listened. He stared down into the earth and listened. And when Swedenborg did these things with a quiet heart, God told him things that He would not reveal to another.

These days, many people are talking about the end of the world. The world was supposed to end in 2000 and then again in 2009. Why, just last week we were told that the world was going to end on May 21, 2011. It was the same in Swedenborg's day. People were always talking about the Second Coming and the Last Judgment – the day that Jesus Christ would return to earth and take all of the good souls to heaven.

But Swedenborg knew better. The Final Judgment had already taken place. The year was 1757. Swedenborg knew this because he was there.

It was a great conclave of all the spirits of the world, good and bad. There were angels and devils and demons and sprites, goblins, fairies and ghouls. In fact, there was as much variety on that day in 1757 as there had been on Noah's Ark. The only difference was that in 1757 all of the spirits were there and not just two of every kind. Emanuel sat and he watched.

The presiding spirit was Jesus Christ. Christ didn't have to yell – He didn't even have to raise His voice. All He had to do was think. Jesus' thoughts travelled like lightning bolts and there was nothing for anyone to say. All the spirits – even the bad ones like Lucifer – readily understood. They accepted the thought of Christ. But it really didn't matter to Jesus whether the evil spirits accepted what He thought or not. This was the way that it was going to be: It was either going to be Jesus' way or the highway. And since both roads led back to Him anyway, it didn't matter to Christ one way or the other.

Before the day of the Last Judgment in 1757, evil had gotten the upper hand. Things were out of balance. Good no longer had a chance to triumph over evil. But in 1757, Jesus Christ restored the balance. In an instant, He divided all of the spirits right down the line so that there was a perfect equilibrium between good and bad.

From 1757 onwards, things have been so perfectly balanced in the world that anyone, at any time, at any place, can affect the



outcome. This is still true today. Things are now so equal that even the thought of one girl is enough to tip the scales.

And that is why that when I see you standing there, watching and listening, I know what it is that you are about to do.



A LOVE STORY SACRED TEXT AS DIVINE REVELATION

By David Millar

I have talked to certain spirits about the Word - that in the Lord's Divine Providence, it has been necessary for some revelation to be given; for such revelation, or the Word, is a general vessel that receives spiritual and celestial things, and in so doing joins heaven and earth together. Indeed without that revelation the two would have been set apart from each other, and the human race would have perished. I have referred as well to the fact that it was necessary for heavenly truths to exist somewhere from which man might receive instruction seeing that man was born for heavenly things and after his life in the body ought to come among those in heaven. For the truths of faith are the laws of order within the kingdom in which he is to live for ever. **Emanuel Swedenborg; Arcana Coelestia #1775**

The recorded spiritual history of human kind found in the writings of Swedenborg is really a love story. It's a story about the love God has for the human race and the rejection and acceptance of this love by human beings and the resulting effects, a state of heaven for those who consciously and freely receive the Lord's love into their lives and a state of hell for those who reject it. That's not to say that heaven and hell should be thought of in terms of a reward and punishment that God metes out to those who love Him back or not, far from it. Heaven and hell are simply the resulting effects of the operation of spiritual laws. When the presence of the Lord's love is consciously affirmed in a person's life through their willingness to live in the light of what truths teach, heaven is the result, but where truths are rejected and what is false is affirmed in support of a self centred existence then hell is the consequence. Eternal happiness or heaven can't be present in a life that is self centred because heaven by definition is the opposite of this being a life centred on the Lord and others.

The Lord desires nothing but our happiness, for this is the nature of love and, because the Lord is Love Itself His focus never departs

from ensuring that this possibility always remains open for every person. The essential element for the delights of love to become real for us is that the love is something shared. It is the shared nature of love that makes it a heavenly experience. So it's not enough that God loves us, for if we want to experience heavenly states of joy and peace in our life the laws of love mean that we have to love Him back. Swedenborg tells us that you can't love what you don't know, and because of this the Lord is continually in the process of revealing Himself to human beings and providing the means by which we can come to know God and so learn what it means to love the Lord and our neighbour.

If we are to come to know God and what it means to love Him then the Lord has to provide the means by which that can end can be achieved. It's a spiritual law that in and of itself the human mind is incapable of penetrating into spiritual realities. Therefore help is needed by which we can be elevated into higher things. That help is provide by



divine revelation in the form of knowledge related to spiritual divine realities and while there are different mediums by which the Lord reveals Himself to human consciousness the most effective form of revelation available to human

beings is that of the written word, particularly that of the Sacred Scriptures and the works that make up the Heavenly Doctrines as revealed to Swedenborg by the Lord as he read the Word.

The teachings given to Swedenborg show that the Lord's revealing of Himself over the course of the spiritual history of the human race has been a progressive unfolding of divine truth in forms accommodated to the manifold variety of human states of mind. The Heavenly Doctrines divide the spiritual history of the human race into 5 general ages and describe how the Lord made His presence known amongst the peoples of those ages. The ages are referred to as *churches* with each *church age* dominated by.....*continued on page 8*



YOUR POETRY

Hide and Seek

Kids play hide and seek.
It boosts their exploring minds
and sharpens up their senses,
but it's never been unique
to younger human kind,
and thrives in other dimensions.

Man plays hide and seek
under his blanket of doubt,
to keep good god at bay,
but given an ounce of cheek,
we can throw the old blanket out
and find God good today.

God plays hide and seek.
He's like a cryptic clue
written on empty air,
and yet when love can speak,
we learn a thing or two
and find God everywhere.

James Baillie
Maldon, 16th February 2010

article, taken as sacred
truth pulsed into being
later becomes integral et religio
in abundance, to many Uses
yet of itself, parchment
dust redust
robust renewal only through translations
scribes from Adamic, Noetic, Mosaic, Christian
dispensationsuntil now –
Ours, fifth, final, ultimate
concurrent with Christ's second coming
crescendo into simplicity, resolutionary measure
Word, Writings
taken together
are faith builders with charity in motion
nowadays – social currents
demand truth
as Uses demand sacred standpoints
chorusing within billions of us.

Michael Harting
Sydney, 10th July 2011

The Spiritual Way

Meek but not weak
Trusting but not gullible
Faithful and fearless
Loving and truthful
Simple but not stupid
Affectionate without lust
Diligent but not restless
Attached yet apart.
Love the ultimate cohesive
both within and without.

Lillian King
Sydney, 2011

Imagine the best

I try to imagine what it will be like
to be in heaven, away from the secular crowd,
at home with the source of life. With a bit of luck
at times my reach is true and I'm allowed
a glimpse. A glimpse is everything to me.
It fills up all the parts I'd thought were hollow,
and lets me be the way I ought to be,
in tune with the best as though there's no tomorrow.
I've risen above the hundred pains already
by following answers prayer always brings.
So am I religious? No. Not on your nelly.
You can do a lot better than dogma and hymns.
Imagine heaven, the best of the best of things.
In spite of else to do, I do it readily.

James Baillie
Maldon, 15th June 2011



Sacred texts on birds



Our soul has escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowlers ~ Bible ~

And Etana delivered the eagle from the serpent. In gratitude it carried him to Ishtar's throne to obtain the plant of birth ~ Mesopotamian mythology ~

Birds signify man's thoughts and each species something in particular ~ Swedenborg ~

Like birds flying about, so will the Lord of Hosts defend Jerusalem ~ Bible ~

Do you not see how Allah is praised? The very birds praise Him as they wing their flight ~ Quran ~

In the Zohar the bosom of God is called the "Bird's Nest" ~ Jewish Cabala ~

Spiritual man as to his progression in Spiritual things is like a flying bird of Paradise ~ Swedenborg ~

Hiranyagarbha, the god-like bird, sits upon the tree of life ~ Hindu mythology ~

All the powers of God are winged, being always eager and striving for the highest path which leads to the Father ~ Philo ~

The swan glides on the black waters of the river of Tuoni, lord of the dead ~ Kalevala, Finnish folk epic ~

Just as few birds can escape from a net, few Souls can fly into the freedom of heaven ~ Buddhist Dhammapada ~

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

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Providing information on topical subjects by drawing on Swedenborg's contributions.

Ensuring Swedenborg's writings are kept before the community's awareness.

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Cont. from page 5. a particular mental state or quality of mind that determined the form that the revelation they were capable of receiving took. Each form of revelation constituted a Word for the peoples of a given age and so as we look at the various forms of divine revelation we can come to appreciate that the term "the Word" as it relates to people on earth has a broader definition than that of what we understand by a written text. What we have in the written texts that make up the Word with us today incorporates or embodies or enfolds all that has gone before and in this sense is the most complete form of divine revelation available.



Every age has had access to the Lord through His provision of a revelation of Himself and that revelation is always a revelation of goodness in a form that people can perceive or comprehend. Goodness or love is made visible to human perception in truths that give it a form that can be detected and experienced as something real. In the first church age, called the Most Ancient Church, the goodness that flowed into the souls of people from the Lord became something real through exciting feelings of joy and delight when it came into contact with what was being stimulated in their senses through their contact with the objects of the material world around them. In the case of this people the world around them was their Word on the material plane of existence. Their internal mental structures were such that the inflow of the Lord's life found in these people's perceptive faculties vessels that could reflect back into consciousness a true felt sense of celestial and divine realities. These vessels were formed from the objects of the world as they were perceived in the minds of people. So we read of that people, that while they saw the objects of the world around them they didn't perceive

them as material objects like we do but that they immediately perceived the heavenly reality to which the objects corresponded. It's an important point to keep in mind that this people's consciousness of what is good and true operated on the basis that what felt good was acknowledged to be true.

In the revelation for the New Church given to Swedenborg it states that the Divine alone has life in Itself and that all living finite forms are recipients of life from the Lord. Human beings are created in such a way as to receive this life and experience it as if it were something that originated from themselves. This deeply felt sense that life is one's own is what makes the reciprocation of love possible for finite beings. To the degree that this truth is recognised and acknowledged as a truth a person is in the order of life with the Lord at their centre. However if the feeling of life originating in oneself is believed to be true then an inversion of order takes place in the inner structures of a person's life where *self* begins to become the centre and the Lord, who is no longer recognised as the source of life is pushed out to the periphery. It is then that the door is opened for lower delights associated with self love to rise in intensity and delight and so usurp the loves of heaven which diminish in intensity to the degree that self-love forms the centre of one's life. While this describes the basis for the fall of every church age it was especially so for the people of the Most Ancient Church who operated on the basis of what felt good was true. The thing to realise with this state of consciousness was that this principle was all powerful, so much so that it appears they didn't possess any ability to reflect on it or question it. This ability for reflection would only emerge in the next spiritual age called the Ancient Church.

The Ancient Church coincided with a major change in the structure of the human mind, which is described in the Heavenly Doctrines as nothing short of a miraculous intervention on the part of the Lord. The issue that this intervention addressed was the loss of perception of what was good and true. Without this, human beings had no way of being able to recognise and acknowledge the Lord and so the ability to love the Lord was lost. Those of the Ancient Church were however provided under providence with knowledge of spiritual realities that was collected by the last of the Most Ancient Church peoples before all perception of good and truth was lost. It appears that a remnant

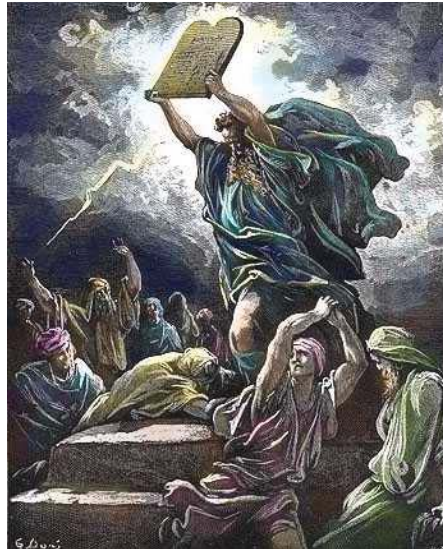


of the end of the first age had awakened within them a love for recording knowledge for instruction of others in spiritual realities. That recorded information could be used to instruct the human mind via an external medium as to what the various objects and things in the material world corresponded to spiritually. The shift that occurred was that spiritual knowledge was able to be imparted via the external senses in a codified form into the intellectual faculty. Once stored in the memory peoples understanding of what is good and true could be built up and the understanding of this was able to serve as the basis for determining whether what felt good actually was good. With the previous age what felt good was true, whereas in the Ancient Church what felt good was only good if it aligned with what truths taught otherwise it was held suspect. This ability is centred in the intellect and is called conscience. Through the exercise of conscience people were given the ability to go against what felt good and the delights and pleasures they experienced. This meant that they could do what truth taught despite how it felt, and that they could hold to true principles despite how things appeared. They could now once again acknowledge that the Lord was the source of life despite the appearance that life was their own and so were able to consciously love the Lord through their commitment to living from what truths teach.

The knowledge of spiritual and divine realities from this age and through every other spiritual age to the present time as traced in the Writings has found its way into written texts. Swedenborg speaks of an ancient word that is lost to us, but remnants of it can still be found in the Biblical text, particularly in the first 11 chapters of Genesis, with the book of Job and the Song of Solomon also being examples of books of the Ancient Word. The leading characteristic of the texts from this Ancient Church age are that they are not based on actual historical events but tend to be written in a style that gives the appearance of history but whose primary function is communicate knowledge of inner psycho-spiritual realities which was where the focus and interest of these Ancient peoples were when this church was at its height. Their delight was in seeing inner spiritual meanings within the literal text for which their

knowledge of what each thing mentioned in it corresponded to in the spiritual world was used. So, just as the Most Ancient Church peoples could read nature in a way that made celestial realities real and present, so too the Ancient peoples after them would read the words of their sacred texts and through an understanding of correspondences have spiritual realities brought closer to them. This was not to last, for as with the Most Ancients so the Ancients succumbed to the lower delights of self-love and began to turn genuine spiritual knowledge and its practise into the practise of magic which was used to oppress and dominate people.

The Lord foreseeing this raised up the Hebrew and Israelitish churches so that as the Ancient peoples plunged into the darkness of human sacrifice and gross forms of idolatrous worship something would remain on earth that could maintain a connection with heavenly influences. The principle form that that connection took was a mere shadow as to



what had been available previously, with spiritual connections now having to be reduced to systems of ritual and blind obedience to divine injunctions in fear of severe consequences for the slightest disobedience. The instructions as to the divine forms and functions that were to make up the Jewish religion were given by the Lord through miraculous means involving direct contact via the physical senses. Whether it was the voice of Jehovah heard by

Moses or another of the prophets, a vision, the appearing of an angel, or miraculous interventions in the natural order of things, all that was required under providence to maintain a sense of the divine with the human race was recorded in the form of a written text. This progressive revelation of the Lord in a textual form took further shape in the Jewish Church and is present today as the Hebrew Bible or Christian Old Testament.

The next church age to make its advent was the Christian Church. This age had its beginnings in the incarnation of the Word on earth in the form of a human being in the person of Jesus Christ. Early on in this church age it was the memory of the physical presence of the divine in Jesus Christ and the first hand experience of those who had direct



contact with Him that nurtured and sustained a sense of the divine among people and supported their spiritual life. And as with every other divine revelation to the human senses these experiences too become codified in the form of a written text which remains with us today as the Gospels and the Apocalypse. Again we see the hand of the Lord providing a point of contact with Himself as Jesus Christ for the generations that were to follow through preserving the presence of that revelation in the text of the New Testament.

When we look at the history of Christian Church's take on the relationship between the Old and the New Testaments it isn't without some tension. Here we have a body of divine revelation in their respective texts which, when held along side of each other, give conflicting visions as to the nature of God. This played a part in the creation of teachings that divided God up into different persons as an attempt to make sense of the image of God presented in Jehovah of the Old Testament who is aloof, distant and has little tolerance for the failings of human beings alongside of the image of God presented in Jesus who is a being full of love and compassion who is close and is seen as one who is able to empathise with human weaknesses. This split in the way the Lord was perceived in each Testament was mirrored in the Christian Church's theological attempts to reconcile it, leaving it with a horrendous picture of a God whose anger could only be placated by an extreme act of violence involving the sacrifice of His own son. The historical record shows that as self-love gained ascendancy in the Christian Church age those who sought to exercise power over others found in the image of a God of vengeance a justification for the perpetration of horrendous evils on any individual, nation or religion that is seen to pose a threat to their worldly ambitions.

That self-love as a dominant force has been able to reassert itself in the things of religion down through the ages reflects the infirm nature of the revelation on which it was originally built. This is not to say that there is any deficiency in the Lord, for the deficiency lies in the nature of human beings to which the revelation has to be accommodated. But it is clear that direct perception as possessed by those in the Most Ancient Church, knowledge of the science of correspondences and possession of conscience as with those in the Ancient Church, the demonstrations of

miraculous power on a daily basis on which the Jewish Church was founded, as well as the physical incarnation of God in the person of Jesus Christ were unable to be a sustaining power for good and so we find that there was yet one more chapter to be written in this love story of the progressive revelation of the Lord in textual form. That chapter is what we understand by the Lord's Second Advent made through Emanuel Swedenborg as he engaged with the text of the Word as found in the Old and New Testament Scriptures.



The revelation that the Lord brought into the world through his servant Emanuel Swedenborg has initiated a new church age that surpasses every previous church age. This revelation is understood as superior in the sense that it is able to present a clearer understanding or more genuine image of the nature of God and divine revelation. And because its truths are drawn from and so found within previous revelations it is able to provide genuine truths through which previous revelations can be viewed and seen to be consistent in their presentation of the Lord and His love for the salvation of the human race. Again as with all previous revelations the experiences of contact of the Lord within human experience were set down in the form of a written text that make up what we have in the Heavenly Doctrines.

It is believed that a person could be more enlightened and wiser, if he had direct revelation by talking with spirits and angels, but the reverse is true. Enlightenment by means of the Word follows an internal path, but enlightenment by means of direct revelation follows an external path. Emanuel Swedenborg; De Verbo #13

It would seem that while divine revelation down through the ages is initially given in the form of direct experience, its power to effect an inner transformation in the human mind is greatly increase when those experiences become rendered into a written textual form.

Continued on back page



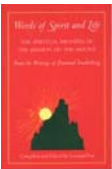
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WHAT'S HAPPENING?



For Group activities, contact your nearest Group Convenor

- Brisbane (Ian Arnold on (07) 33690054)
- Gold Coast (Kevin Attwater on (07) 55452401 and Jack Benson on (07) 55454115);
- Melbourne (Chris Skinner on (03) 94320322; email: cskinner9@optusnet.com.au);
- Sydney region (Michael Chester on (02) 98881066; email: michael@swedenborg.com.au)

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

Our website is updated regularly. Go to meetings on www.swedenborg.com.au for more details.

Please let us know if you would like to be informed via email.

Brisbane: New Church Hall, 21 Agars Street, Rosalie.

Melbourne: New Church Hall, 426 High Street Road, Mount Waverley. Last Fridays commencing 8pm.

30th September ~ *Near Death Experiences*. Speaker: **Joe Vandermeer**

28th October ~ *Spirituality and Heredity*. Speaker: **Dr Elena Nefedova**

25th November~ *Conversations with God and Swedenborg*. Speaker: **Martin Pennington**

Sydney: Swedenborg Centre, 1 Avon Road, North Ryde commencing 7.45pm.

23rd September ~ *The heart has reasons that reason knows not of*.

A look into the emotions of human spiritual life. Speaker: **Julian Duckworth**

28th October ~ *A sustainable life is a beautiful life*. Speaker: **John Brogan**

25th November~ *Swedenborg and the creation of the human mind and soul*. Speaker: **Kirk Holst**

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Continued from page 10..... What is it about the Word as Sacred text that positions it as the most an effective medium to bring about the Lord's desire for the salvation of the human race? Divine revelation in the form of text has the wonderful quality of being able to convey knowledge and information about the Lord while leaving a person in complete freedom to assess its truths for themselves. Sacred texts better than other mediums throw the responsibility back on us as to our willingness to engage with them, and offer a response in the light of what we find there. So for me it's no surprise that on the material plane of existence we find sacred texts written in the form of human languages as the chosen medium through which the Lord accommodates and so reveals Himself. The Heavenly Doctrines declare in many places that the Word (the context is clearly referring to the texts of divine revelation for the New Church) is the Lord and because revelation as

text best honours human freedom in spiritual matters and requires the use of our rationality if we are to approach it and work with it, it honours those elements that make a human being human. To approach the Word and its truths freely with a view to applying them to life joins us to the Lord, and in this way we are made one and love is made real.

*...Sacred Scripture is like a mirror, in which [a person] sees God, everyone in [their] own fashion. This mirror is composed of the truths which [they] learn from the Word and absorbs by living [their] life in accordance with them. A first conclusion from this is that **the Sacred Scripture is the fullness of God**.* Emanuel Swedenborg; True Christian Religion #6[2]

David Millar is the Director of Spiritual Training for The Australian New Church College
<http://www.newchurch.org.au/college/>

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The style of the Word is such that there is holiness in every sentence, and in every word, and in some places in even the very letters. This is why the Word conjoins man with the Lord, and opens heaven.

True wisdom is seeing what is beneficial to your eternal life, and managing your life according to that. You do this when you not only know these things and grasp them with your understanding, but also will and do them.