

Myths, Symbols and Parables

Transcript of Dr Philip W Groves talk.

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This topic that we're looking at is something that touches every one of us. Because in our lives, symbols, parables and myths play a very big role. Have you ever discovered your own myth? What's your own myth in life? We have a myth. We have a belief. A belief deep down inside and we very rarely voice it; we very rarely bring it to the surface. But one should do this from time to time. **We must see the function of myths.** In order to approach what a myth is about; we have this following consideration.

We human beings are the focal points of a tremendous amount of knowledge that relates to the world. Human beings over the centuries have gathered a stupendous amount of data, information, exact scientific measurements, and this knowledge is packed within us. We all have a different share of it, but it's nevertheless packed within us. And from our cerebral cortex, we're able to use this knowledge and look out on the world, and we interpret the world. Our interpretation of the world is very strange, because the world is tangible. It's a material structure. And the primary information that enters us comes through our senses. And it's a worldly set of impressions, and it leaves in the mind this notion that everything is material, and we think in a materialistic way. All of us, without realizing it, are materialists. Well, we have to be. We have to be in order to collect cold hard cash at the end of the week. That's a material substance, very useful. We drive cars that are very material. We eat food that is very material. Sure, the materialistic outlook is very important because that's the way we connect ourselves with the surrounding world. But this gathering of sensory impressions from the physical world, it establishes a very strange kind of psychology in our being. Our psychology is such that we live, think, and breathe in terms of material impressions and material interpretations. Inside our psyche, we have this notion of materialism, that everything is material. That notion colours our thinking, and so this central focus of consciousness that we have, in order to express itself, it does so through this principle of materialism, which was long established in our psyche. In our childhood, we were taught, this is solid, this is soft, this is hot, this is cold, this is gentle and so on. We learn all these material qualities, and that colours everything that we do.

Now when we look at the world we see it's composed of things that are hard or gaseous or liquid. The walls are opaque; we can't see through them. The floor is firm and it supports us. The air is made of all these moving nitrogen and oxygen molecules which bounce off the body and create atmospheric pressure. Everything around us, as far as our senses are concerned, is material.

And here is something very important. What we look at in the material world looks so tangible, it looks so real. But it's not real. It is simply an appearance. All that we see in the world around us is a vast collection of appearances. We look at a wall and we can't tell from the outside whether it's a thick wall or a thin wall. If we go into a strange house, we don't know what's on the other side of the wall. We have only superficial appearances confronting us, whichever way we look. And that constricts us. So, with this principle of materialism that's built into our psychology, and our limited senses which only give us a surface view of things, we are living in a very, very constrictive kind of psychological interpretation of the world in which we live. And what we look at is not reality. Reality stands behind the appearance. The appearance is just the surface view.

Now, early in the 20th century, science hit upon the idea of quantum theory, and the structure of the atom was disclosed for the first time. And the amazing picture that emerged was this; that what we regard as solid matter is really a lot of space. Atoms are made up of a tremendous amount of space; they have particles and energy inside. And here is an example. If you were to take a large ship like the Queen Mary, and you could somehow collect all the nuclei and the electrons and the atoms and really squeeze them together, the whole material mass of the Queen Mary would fit in a thimble. All the rest is space. You see, if you look at an atom; let's take a hydrogen atom that has a proton with a positive charge in the center, and it has this vibrating electron moving around. All the rest is space.

When we look at the world around us, we can't believe that the solid things are really a lot of space, more space than solidity. These are the little solids; the particles that form the nucleus of the atom. And the electrons, when they're released from the atom, they behave like little solid particles. And the rest is an energy field, but it's space. So here we have a contradictory state of affairs. Science says that the solidity of the world is an appearance, which our senses believe. And when we look at things, we're really looking at space, rendered hard by electromagnetic fields and other properties.

Now which picture are we going to believe? The findings of science are dramatic. Science has made so much available to us in the world and we can't say, well, science is barking up the wrong tree. Tremendous experiments are being carried out to demonstrate the spatial nature of matter, that there is so much space. It's just like the space that we find between the sun and the various planets. There's more space than solid matter. And the space between the galaxies, which are separated by thousands of light years, is just unbelievably vast. This apparent emptiness; I say apparent because we don't see things with our physical eyes in between the stars. This apparent emptiness, it makes up the bulk of the universe. So, when we look at things, when we look at our body and realize that it's made up of quadrillions of atoms with an enormous amount of space inside, then we say, well, what are we? And this is a very important question. We have to get a new view of ourselves. So, with our senses, we get the idea that we are solid. With the scientific view, we see ourselves as spatial; we are space made patterns. Now these are two quite different pictures. The interesting part is neither of them make up reality. They're both appearances, but they're not reality itself.

Now there's a third way that we can look at, which helps us out of this dilemma. Our senses simply tell us that chairs are chairs, spades are spades, everything is solid and tangible. Science says, no these are only very intense electromagnetic fields which give the impression of hardness or softness and the world is spatial. But we have an inside. We have an internal being. And intuitively, our internal being knows something about this reality. When it tries to express what it knows about the reality, it falls back on all these materialistic terms, because our words are based on the matter appearing world that we live in. And we can't explain this reality in terms of words, because our words are of materialistic formation. How then can we get to know something about this reality? If somebody has experienced reality and they wish to tell us about it, how are they going to do it? Science can't do it for us, and our senses are misleading us all the time.

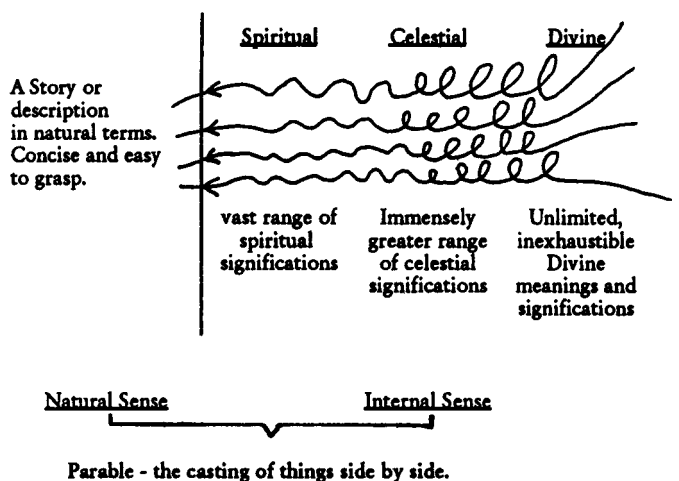
Well, there is a way out. Fortunately, there are devices. So, we find that science can only offer us an abstract picture. Our senses can only offer us a superficial, solid appearing picture. The reality that we seek can be known in an internal way, but to express what we inwardly sense and know requires another mechanism. It requires another device. And that device consists of symbol, myth, and parable. This device is the way in which internal, real things can be expressed indirectly, through words,

through images and patterns, so that the external human mind can grasp certain truths. That's why we must study symbol, we must study myth, we must study parable, we must study correspondences. These are the link to what is invisible to our senses, and yet can become fully visible to our inner spiritual being once it becomes fully awakened. But our outer self, it has to be informed. It has to be prepared for the big regenerative changes that can be brought about in our lives. So it's necessary for us to understand what parables, symbols, and myths are all about. And this is what we're going to look at now.

Now a **parable** is simply a story couched in terms that we can all understand, and it conveys a meaning. But far too many people treat parables as though they were Aesop's Fable. It's a story that has a simple moral. No, a parable is a much greater instrument than that. The word parable comes from two Greek terms: *para* which means beside, next to, or alongside, and *bole*, which means to cast, to throw. So the Greek word parable tells us that things are thrown side by side, they're cast side by side to form a juxtaposition, they're in close contact.

Now we're going to illustrate what this close contact is. We'll see what the things are that are cast side by side. It's important to grasp the word because the word expresses the dynamic process of this device or instrument that will give us insight into reality. Now a parable, as we said before, is couched in simple terms. And we'll look at a couple of parables in a minute. And those terms make up simple little homely stories. But those stories have a tremendous punch in them. Through their correspondential connections with the inner life, they have an endless realm of meaning. An endless realm of meaning. Now that's very hard for us to understand. Especially as we've been brought up in an age where you have neat little dictionary definitions, you look up the definition of the dictionary and you know all about the word. Or you read brief little articles in the *Reader's Digest* and you become an expert on the topic that's been discussed. It's all written in three letter words. They don't even make it exciting by putting in four letter words.

Now, a parable has this structure. We have a simple, easy to understand story. But it has an internal property. And this internal property is vast. This is the vastness of the parable. It has a spiritual component. It has a celestial component. And it has a divine component. And we can symbolically indicate these components as follows. Certain parts of the story will have spiritual significations, they'll have celestial significations, and they'll have divine ramifications. And this goes for all the parts of the story.



Now once we begin to understand that this is how a parable is put together, we can start looking for deeper things in these simple stories. Now notice this. This is the

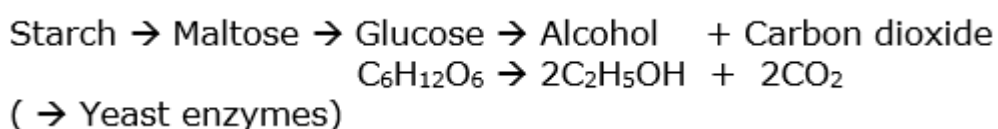
invisible, the internal side of the parable. That's the external side that's couched in words. Here are the two things cast together. They're thrown together. That is the parable. Two things cast together. The outside literal story, the inside endless amount of meaning.

Now, to reach internal meanings, we have to do something to ourselves. The meanings won't automatically unfold just because we decide that God's going to be very good and suddenly bless us with cosmic consciousness or something extraordinary like that. As much as we desire it, it doesn't happen this way. We have to prepare the way inside ourselves, for the coming of new sensitivities, for the coming of new energies. And this process of preparing ourselves is called purification. It's a very deep, ongoing, and life transforming matter. And it's a very serious matter because it not only makes us aware of the inner content of these parables, but it prepares us for another mode of existence altogether. Parables are designed to help us to become connected with another universe, with another life. It's meant to be an instrumental means of initiating growth and processes inside of ourselves.

Now, we shall never exhaust any parable whatsoever because of all these vast, vast significations and meanings. The spiritual meanings are infinitely greater than any morals that we can get out of the told story expressed in words. The celestial meanings are infinitely greater than those and the divine meanings, well, they're absolutely immeasurable. And it means this. If a person dies and they pass into the spiritual world, instead of having literal meanings, they've got all this that they can explore and profit by. If they are celestial beings, think how much more that they can receive and all the endless influx from the Divine. That's what's contained in a parable. It is enormous, it is immense. Parables are not only for planetary dwellers; they're for dwellers in any level of the universe whatsoever.

Now let's consider a very simple parable, which everybody knows so well. When Christ likened the kingdom of heaven to a woman who took leaven and she put it in three measures of meal and left it there till the whole lot was leavened. Christ said the kingdom of heaven is like that. Now what inner contents does this have? We cannot possibly go through all those different levels. We don't have the inner capacity to do so, but we can understand some of the inner levels. We can see new possibilities, new values, new meanings. So, let's have a look at this.

We have meal, which is simply flour, and that is composed of starch. Now, leaven is yeast. So, when this starchy meal is moistened, and living yeast is mixed in with it, and it's allowed to stand, some interesting changes take place. So, we find that enzymes will be released from the yeast. And the enzymes will act upon the starch, will break the starch down into a sugar known as maltose. Other enzymes take over and they break the maltose down into glucose, a simple sugar. And yet other enzymes from the yeast will break the glucose down into alcohol and carbon dioxide.



Oh yes, there's alcohol in bread. If you're a teetotaler you're deceiving yourself. Only minute amounts, because in the baking process the alcohol is evaporated. Actually, several different kinds of alcohols are produced in this fermentation process. But when the yeast or the leaven acts upon the flour, these changes take place. And the important

thing is, the carbon dioxide, when it's heated, it forms those bubbles, those air cavities inside that makes the dough rise, and so we have a nice, light bread.

Now realize this. Because the whole parable is about the kingdom of heaven, every part of the parable, every detail, also relates to heavenly things. Here we're just looking at the process a little more scientifically. But the starch signifies something. The maltose signifies something, so does the glucose, so does the alcohol, so does the carbon dioxide, and so do the enzymes. We begin to see that this parable has extraordinary details and extraordinary ramifications. And our added scientific knowledge helps us to appreciate the fine details. In Christ's day, this parable appealed to people because most people baked their own bread. They understood the process. It was a homely symbol. But as we look at it with greater detail, everything becomes so complex, so detailed. So that's a little bit of homework. Try and figure out some of the correspondence of those things. It's very important to do so.

Now remember, maltose and glucose, they are sweet sugars. And sweetness has to do with the inner delight that we receive. When we experience states of good, love, and we're illuminated by truth there is an inner sweetness. So we start to get ways and means within ourselves of getting behind the story, and into that other part of the parable, its spiritual and divine components. But let's have another look at other aspects of this tale.

Now, there were three measures of meal. Now, three, three represents a state of fullness. That means everything is going to be leavened or fermented. It's not just one part of us that's going to be fermented, because obviously we are the meal. Something has to change us. And it has to be a good sort of a change because Christ did warn people to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. There is another kind of leaven which can contaminate us, but here He is talking about a leavening of us so that we become heavenly, we can enter heavenly states. So the whole of us, the three signifies the whole of us, our thinking center, our feeling center, our acting center. Our celestial part, our spiritual part, our natural part. It all has to be leavened or fermented.

Now this process of fermentation. Fermentation is the act of the enzymes. This corresponds to combat. And it's an internal combat that every one of us go through, if we strive to overcome the usual mechanical, sleeping, and wrongful activities that become embedded in our lives, either accidentally or intentionally. So combat involves a struggle of what we can loosely call the good against the evil aspects of ourselves. Now here we're speaking in very general terms, but we need to understand that there are positive things that are possible for us, and there are many negative things already established within us by mechanical habits.

Now many of these evil or deceptive things are very attractive to us. Let us suppose a person has a lot of theories that encourage all sorts of strange ideas, half baked Oriental ideas, half baked Christian teachings. People get the weirdest notions, and we've seen in some of these cults throughout the world, the sad consequences of people passionately believing those half-truths which were delivered to them. Now we have to examine everything that we believe to see for ourselves whether it is truthful, whether it is reliable, whether it's got the elements and components of good in it. It's useless believing something if we don't understand what it is that we believe. That's why a recent article in the *New Age* about having a thinking New Church is so important. People have to think about what they believe in. Not just gullibly believe it because Swedenborg said it, or even because God said it. We must test, and try, and come to our own understanding of the worthiness, the truthfulness, and the goodness of whatever we accept. So we have to look at theories, we have to look at strange beliefs,

we have to look at even emotional inclinations within ourselves. They may be of a negative nature. But through instruction, through study and contemplation of the words, Swedenborg's writings, etc., we start to initiate in ourselves a more positive approach. We decide to surrender ourselves to Divine guidance, rather than thinking it all out ourselves on the basis of theories. There comes a time when open conflict breaks out. And that is the fermentation. If we align ourselves with the positive, and we receive from the Divine, that help which is always available, is always present, then we can overcome these negative things. When we overcome those negative things, this side of us grows and grows and grows, and that leads to a heavenly state. And that's what the kingdom of heaven is about. It's an elevated, harmonized, blended, loving, charitable, wise, and practical state of usefulness. So we have to go through a sort of fermentation, which is another name for this internal conflict, this internal combat. We have to struggle against these temptations. But when we look at the fine details, and we add additional knowledge, as we've done with the enzymes and so on, we can appreciate how deep, how profound, are the meanings contained in a simple story.

Now here is a parable to think about. This parable does not come from the Bible. We need parables from various sources to exercise our own talent in trying to understand things.

Now remember, Jesus Christ communicated his teachings in the form of parables. We have the statement, and this is from Matthew 13:34.

All this Jesus said to the crowd in parables. Indeed he said nothing to them without a parable. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet. I will open my mouth in parables. I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.

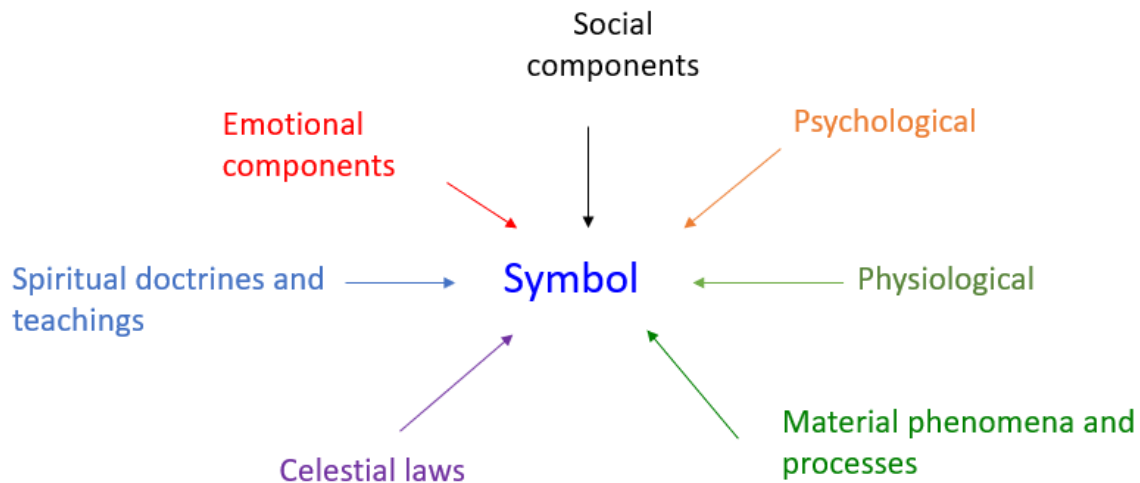
We must understand the inner workings of parables, the nature of parables, and begin to explore their possibilities.

So here is something to test your mettle on. This parable comes from the Quran. It contains parables too. It was a revelation from God. It's an apparently simple parable. But that's only the appearance; behind the appearance, there stands a very big reality.

And God sets forth a parable of two men. One of them, dumb and controlling nothing. [Sounds like Parliament, doesn't it?] And he is a burden to his master. Wherever he sends him, he brings no good. Is he equal with him who enjoins justice and is the one who is on the right path.

It's a very simple parable about two men. One is dumb and he's always doing the wrong thing. But there's another man who is on the right path. We immediately should see two components in ourselves in reference to this parable. We do have a dumb part and there is a wise part in us. We have to see these two men, these two women within us. We have to do something about the dumb one that is in us. It's a very important consideration. You see, parables and all these other spiritual devices are meant to be aids to the way that we work upon ourselves. We can't change unless we study ourselves, unless we introduce a higher leaven into ourselves to ferment our lives and become new beings. New beings, new life, regeneration, rebirth. This is the age old theme that runs through all genuine religion. But it's not a philosophical concept, it's something that concerns us, here and now, in this life. We're given this life to make something of it, to do something with it. We have to be active within ourselves. We have to initiate transformation within ourselves by efforts. Efforts based on understanding.

Now, a symbol is different from a parable. The word symbol means to cast together. In a parable, things were cast side by side, so you have the outer manifestation, and you have all those in-depth, inner processes, powers, and operations. But a symbol is the coming together of many quite different components, into a central synthesis. So you may have psychological, you may have physiological, you may have hard material phenomena and processes. You may have celestial laws. You've got spiritual doctrines and teachings. You've got emotional components, social components, and so on.



Many components coming together in a synthesis makes the symbol. *Sym* – together; *bola* to throw. So things are brought together in a synthesis. And the symbol is the best possible unification that can be made out of a lot of diverse components being brought together.

Now this has to be done by a factor that lies outside of our intelligence. Our intelligence may be very clever for analyzing different things, for solving problems and seeing difficulties. But it does lack a certain in-depth creativity that's essential for our wellbeing. We have within us what is called a mythopoietic process. This mythopoietic process, it generates mythological themes, it generates symbols within us. It's a deep creative intelligence inside us. It lies in the unconscious components of our psyche. We cannot make it work when we want to. No one can artificially synthesize a true symbol. We can make logos, and we can produce signs, and so on. But we don't know how to create a symbol, even though we may give the name 'symbol' to what is produced. Clever artistry can make beautiful patterns and pictures, but they are artificially constructed. A genuine symbol is a spontaneous arising that comes up from the depths of our psyche. Symbols are psychologically important, and many symbols also turn out to be correspondences, or they have correspondential components within them.

Now, what form do symbols take? Myriads of forms. And it sometimes takes us a long time to realize that a thing is a symbol. A symbol may have a geometrical pattern. Well, we have ample evidence around the room that Michael Wright's fine paintings. These are symbols because they arise spontaneously out of his inner being. He doesn't sit down and think out the patterns. They arise. There may be images of the human figure manifesting certain gestures. We have in some of Raphael's paintings, one of them,

'The School of Athens', it's painted in the Vatican. It shows the ancients walking through archways. And the archways themselves are symbols. And in the front you have Plato and Aristotle talking together. Plato has his fingers pointing up. Aristotle has his fingers pointing down. Aristotle is the doctor, the man who studies nature, the whole of his inclinations is towards earthly things. Plato, the idealist, has his fingers raised, he's pointing heavenwards. When Raphael painted that, he was allowing the creative mythopoetic process in him to generate the symbols in just the right way. And those simple gestures, they summarize so much about the mode of thinking for spiritual qualities for those two great minds of the past. So, we look at the human figure. We look at one another. The way we sit, the way we move, the way we move our arms around, the way we speak. Everything is a gesture, it's a symbolic expression of something inside us.

Then we may have architectural forms. Many of these arise partly by design to take into account stresses and strains of domes and ceilings and so on. But some of them were visionary images that arose and they looked good, they looked harmonious. The structure like the Taj Mahal. That's a beautiful Sufi image, in which the great dome represents the soul itself. And then we have the building with its various passageways and the great reflection pool. Do you have a reflection pool inside yourself? Do you reflect upon the great issues of life? You see, that placement of a reflection pool is not just simple decoration. It's an instruction.

We need the volume of the soul to become infilled with spiritual and divine energy. We need to be elevated above the more solid framework of the body, its physiology and its psychology. But we need to be able to reflect upon it all in order to come to understand who and what we are. And then we have lines of trees down the side. We need a garden. The garden illustrates spiritual intelligence. All that we work upon, all that we try to understand within ourselves must be framed within intelligence. We cannot do it just by simple logic. We need to comprehend, we need to understand what we're dealing with.

Now let's take one or two of these symbols from real life situations and see what they represent. Symbols very often occur in our dreams. And the dream I'm going to recite to you now is the dream of a Nobel Prize winner. This man had gone through a long period of egotistic drinking. He was very proud of having won a Nobel Prize, and he was a very clever physicist. At the age of 19, he wrote the critical article on the mathematics of relativity for the Encyclopædia Britannica. A really bright boy. But a lot of it went to his head, and he became a heavy drinker. And he lived in Switzerland. He used to drink heavily with companions and then to always insist on driving them home.

Through the Alps, with a great drop off the road. His friends stopped traveling with him after a while. But he virtually wrecked his family. He lost most of his friends, and so he sought Jungian analysis. Jung, personally, didn't analyze him. It was one of Jung's assistants. And after undertaking the analysis for a few weeks, he began a series of dreams, and he had over a hundred dreams of rich, symbolic content.

Now, this was his situation. He was a man who thought profoundly, in material terms. When he undertook psychotherapy, he was taught that there is an unconscious in every one of us of unknown depths. And he became afraid of this unconscious. He realized that his drinking problem, and his egotism, lay somewhere down here. And it worried him that he would have to face up to it. And then he thought to himself, well, if this difficulty is brought up, what other horror is going to come up as well that I don't suspect? And the feeling was, he wanted to run away from the analysis. And then this dream occurred, quite a simple dream.

He said:

I feel as though I'm rooted at the spot. I have virtually become a tree. I can't move. My feet have been transformed into roots. They're deeply buried in the soil. And then a snake coils itself around me in a perfect circle.

Now interestingly, after this dream, a new sense of calmness and confidence entered into this man; he was able to go through his therapy with reasonable success. Let's have a close look at this. There was the urge to escape. But if he ran away from the therapy, he would never come to grips with himself, and he would never overcome his drinking problem, and his other problems of self-love. There's something in him that said, no, you have to stay. And the dream made it very clear. The dream rooted him to the spot. And so the symbol of the tree with its roots going down into the soil became a very apt symbol of what he as a living individual must do. He mustn't run. He must stand there and take it. He must allow himself to be acted upon. He must allow the sunshine of consciousness to fall upon him. But he's still terrified about what may come up to the surface. But the serpent winds itself around his feet, forming a complete circle. Now that reminds us of uroboros, the serpent swallowing its own tail.

Now here, the serpent lying on the ground in a non-threatening way, it represents subtle. When Christ said to his disciples,

Be ye as subtle as serpents and harmless as doves

He was referring to this kind of serpentine symbolism. To be subtle means to be clever in what you do. Not to make your actions and your deeds obvious to everybody, with the announcement, 'I'm going to do this, I'm going to do that'. One does something quietly inside oneself.

Now the circle, is symbolic of a mandala. Now the word mandala in Sanskrit means a circle, a protective circle. It's a very special image. Now we find that mandalas are made in many parts of the world by Red Indians, by the Tibetans, Indians, and so on. They are circles with sometimes very complex patterns inside. A mandala is constructed by Tibetan priests who, with four or five of them, they decide they'll just construct a mandala and without a drawing to go by, without a preset plan, they all spontaneously start building this pattern and it finishes up with amazing symmetry. This is a collective expression of something.

So, the mandala that appears, this is saying something to the man. You're inside a circle that's giving you some protection. And that area that is enclosed, that is known as a temenos. Now, a temenos is a sacred space. If you like, it is holy ground. Now when that feeling of the sacred and the holy arises in a person, there is an unmistakable sense that here is holy ground. It's sanctified and it's protected. There is a sense of protection. So the man intuitively senses in his dream that there is some sort of higher help coming to him. And as long as he remains still, as long as he accepts the situation, then no matter what is brought up before him – that he has to accept and face up to, and acknowledge – he is protected. He is in this special situation where no harm can come to him, but on the contrary, by facing up to his difficulties and negativities, a great deal of good can come out of it.

Now that's how dream symbols work. They compress so much into a simple image, a simple theme that we could spend hours further exploring meanings and meanings and meanings contained in that alone. Just take one more. The tree bears numerous leaves. The leaves being exposed to sunlight carry out photosynthesis. That builds up sugars, it builds up starches, it builds up reserved energy. It leads to the formation of amino

acids and proteins, adding to the substance of the tree. If a person senses himself or herself as a living tree, and remembers these photosynthetic processes, that's equivalent to holding one's own self out, and asking for divine radiation to fall upon it for illumination, for growth, for forward movement, for development. We must become like a tree in the way that we live in the sense that a tree really does something by spreading its leaves and receiving sunlight. So the more we look at every component of the dream, the more we find it's filled with an enormously rich symbolic content. And that symbolism uncovers positive factors within ourselves, and it shows us how to deal with negative factors. Here, the not running away from the difficult situation is a key process. He didn't run away; as I say, he completed the analysis.

Let's look at another dream symbol.

A certain woman in her early sixties had this quite pleasing dream one night. She dreamt that she and her husband were walking through a park. But all of a sudden, a man with a knife chased them in a most menacing way. And so they ran. Their running became so rapid that they took off and they flew. And they flew right back to the church where they had been married decades before. And then she left her husband at the church and she flew back to her childhood home and found herself to be a small child dressed in lovely, soft children's clothing. That was the dream. A marvellous and a beautiful symbolic representation.

Now let's have a look at the components. The man with the knife. No, not Jack the Ripper. Old Father Time. There's quite a story behind Old Father Time. Derives from an early Greek myth about the Titans who overthrew the gods. One of these titans, he castrated his father with a knife, which was changed into the scythe. So when old Father Time walks around on New Year's Eve with a scythe on his shoulders, men, run for your lives. You never know.

Now they want to escape from this man, so they fly. Now here, flying represents elevation above present difficulties. That's one very important aspect of flying in dreams. If you're earthbound, you can't get away from things. You run and run and run and people are chasing you or trucks are driving down on top of you. But when you're flying, there is a sense of freedom. It's a symbolic indication of overcoming certain limitations, restrictions, and identifications. So the flying takes place. And they go back to the church where they were married. Now that was very important to this woman. Because that was an exceedingly delightful and happy time for her, the day of her wedding. But then she flies on again to the old home, where she becomes a child once again.

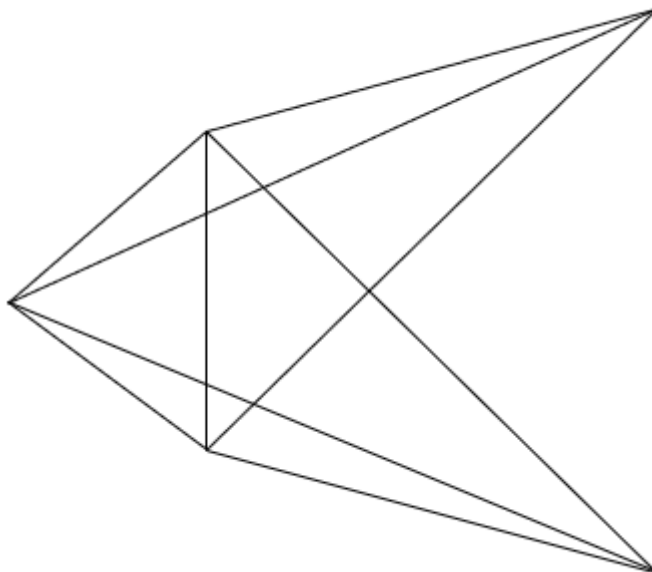
Now the general symbolic sense of the dream is this. She is escaping from time. She wishes to be young again. She can't accept the fact of natural and inevitable aging. This is a wish fulfilling dream. She yearns to be young. So she flies back to the church, which was a long time ago, but there was great happiness there. That's not enough, she wants to be younger still. And in that state of youthful experience, she was cared for, she was fed, she was housed, she had no cares or worries because everybody else handled the burdens. The adults did it. This is a real escape from life. And the dream is symbolically saying, 'All right, it's a nice experience, but don't do it. This is the wrong track to take. Sure, think of past memories and past happinesses and raise them up and build them into your present happinesses and generate that into an impulse to move forward into even greater peace, harmony and happiness'. But that's part of the hidden content of the dream. But our dream symbols tell us what we should avoid, sometimes graphically sharing those things that we should avoid, even though they seem very pleasant. It also indicates sometimes what's going on in our psyche at the present time. People find themselves in a situation where they're chasing trains, they can't quite catch up with

the train. Current anxieties. Not quite making the grade. Not using enough energy. Falling behind in their efforts to cleanse themselves.

There are so many things that dreams tell us about our inner life. We should study our dreams, make a record of them, and look at the psychological symbolism, and then look for the correspondences, which gives us contact with other levels of reality, with higher levels of ourselves.

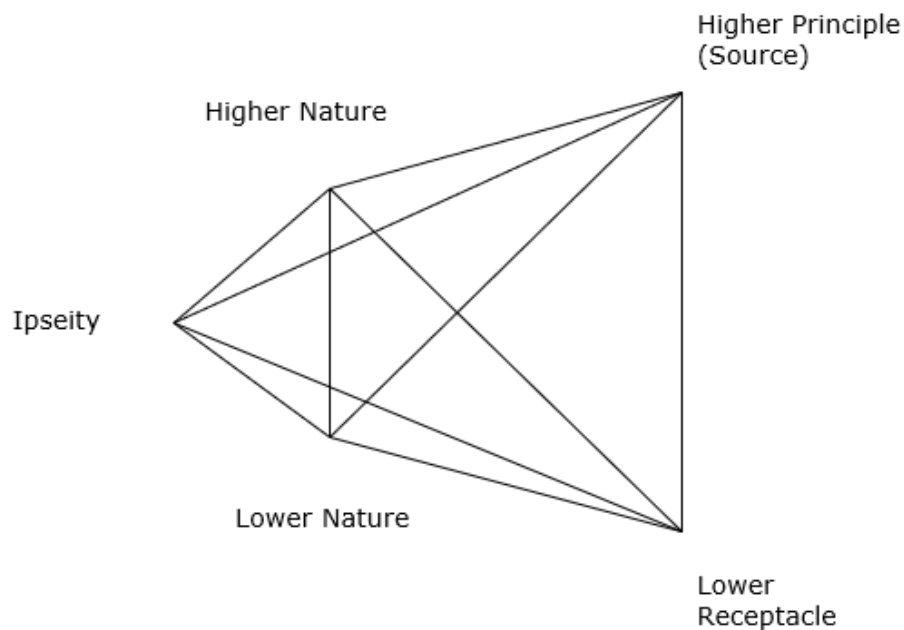
Not all symbols are in the form of dreams or visions. Sometimes, symbols appear amongst groups of people who are working collectively. We mentioned Tibetan lamas a little while ago, who just decide for a certain religious occasion that a beautiful mandala has to be made as an offering to the gods. And so, a sort of group mind begins to work in them, and collectively, the symbolic image unfolds, and each person adds his little part, adding coloured sands here and coloured sands there, and the thing becomes symmetrical.

Now likewise, groups of mystics, groups of people working together throughout the ages, have sometimes collectively produced symbols. Now this happened with a group of people in Europe, not long after the Renaissance. This rebirth of learning, this great burst of spirituality, art, culture that spread into the Western world was quite a phenomenon, and we're still reaping the benefits of that spiritual drive of the Renaissance itself. But small groups of people, working together, found that they were spontaneously generating symbols. One of the symbols that came out of these European groups is this one.



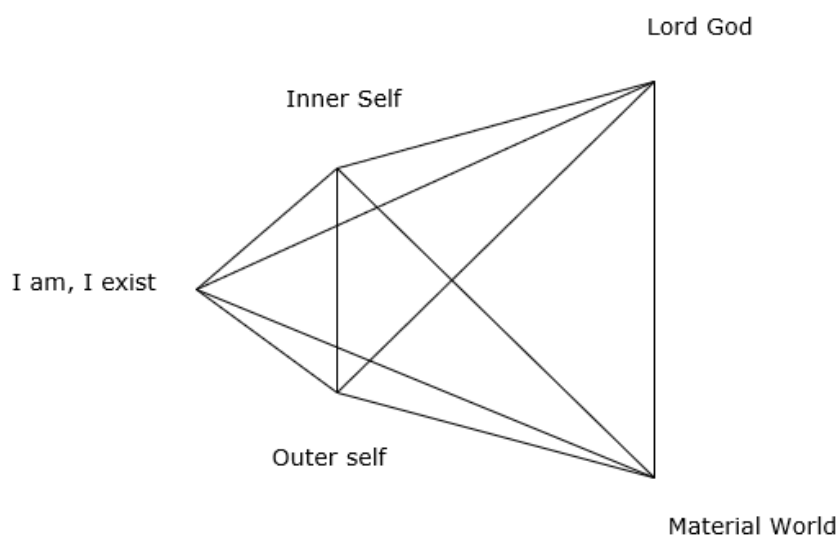
Now, when we look at it, we don't get very much out of it. Swedenborg encountered this symbol because it occurs in parts of the writings of a certain, Dr. John Fludd, who was a famous Rosicrucian esoteric scholar. And Swedenborg became very excited about it. He even wrote a few letters mentioning Fludd's name and how he'd studied Fludd's works and his geometry, his spiritual mathematics. That aroused the young Swedenborg when he was in his early days in England. Now, just what Swedenborg made of it, we don't know. He didn't write any further comments about this particular symbol. But this symbol was meant to summarize knowledge of ourselves. It becomes meaningful when we label it. And the labelling that came out of the minds of these people ran along these particular lines.

That this represents the higher principle or, if you like, the source. And this represented the lower receptacle. Here we have higher nature. And here we have lower nature. And finally, the ipseity. What a thing is in itself.



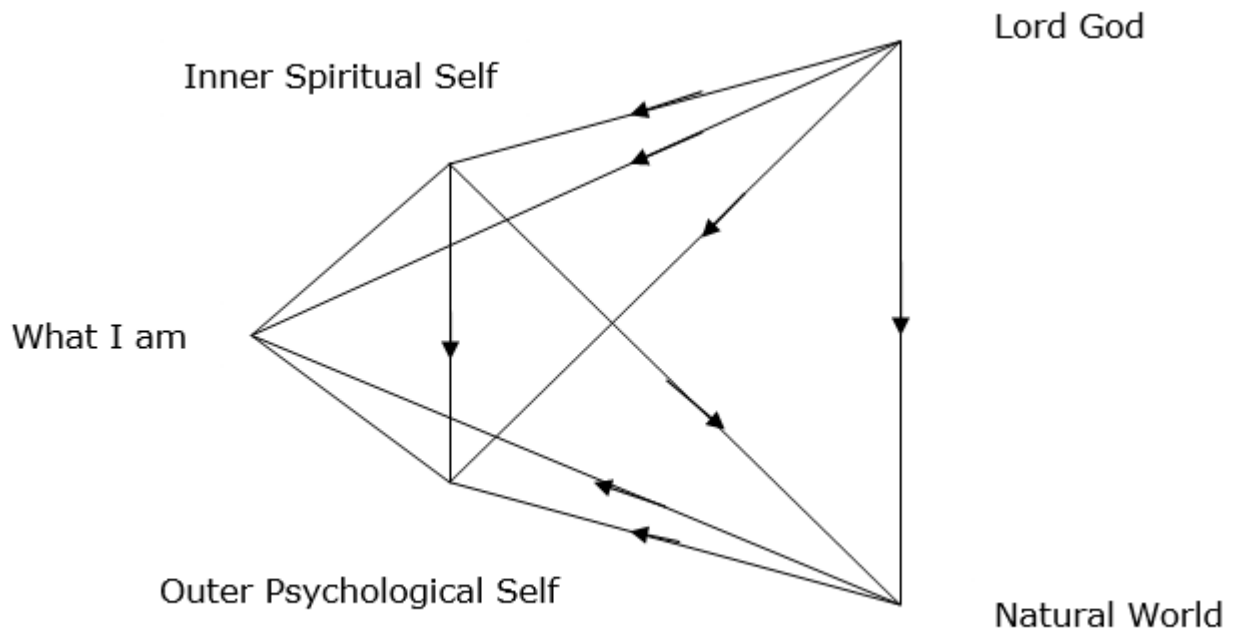
Now we have to make something of this. This is a spontaneous mythological symbol that came out of not just one mind, but out of a collection of minds trying to synthesize knowledge, trying to come to an understanding of the world and the spirituality that stands behind the world.

Now, we can make this clearer to ourselves by adding further labels. Let us call that the Lord God. Let's call this the material world. This will be the inner self. This will be the outer self. And the ipseity will be the feeling that I am, that I exist. Now it starts to make some sense altogether.



And the symbol is interesting because it links higher with lower. It links the vast universe with us as living beings.

Now a symbol becomes meaningful when we see flowing energies and forces within it. A static symbol like that doesn't tell us very much. But from this creative source, divine energies pass into the individual, giving the individual life. Without the divine action there is no life. The Divine acts upon, generates, and organizes, and brings into total harmony the physical universe, the whole visible creation. The Divine also acts caringly and lovingly upon our outer self, endeavoring gently to reframe it, to sensitize it to inner things. And our own inner self, it also, when it's aroused and is activated, it too gently tries to reform the outer self.



Now this is a very interesting thing. And the whole thing becomes meaningful when we place ourselves emotionally in the midst of this. The symbol tells us that we must participate in its indications. Sure, people think about the Lord God. People think about their duties in the world. They think about the inner self, the outer self, and how am I going to cope with everything. But when we put ourselves into the middle of all this dynamic nature, and we actually feel this influx, when we feel the stirrings of creation, when we feel the soft influence of our inner self and the reaction of our outer self, we begin to see that this thing called I has this enormous background behind it. Now the trick is, to simultaneously experience all those things together. That's hard. People pray and so they concentrate on God for a while, or they'll study the physical world because they have to. If they're gardeners, they've got to look to the soil, the plants and so on. They may be very concerned with their outer self because there are worries and problems and there is sickness and so on. Philosophically and through meditation, they'll give a bit of attention to that. And of course, that's number one. That receives attention ninety-nine percent of the time. But it's always a one thing at a time situation. The symbol itself is a total structure. And it's telling us, be all of these things simultaneously. Then you will live. That's a challenge, but it's worth trying.

Now, here is an approach. Let's start off here and work back this way. Let us say that I am here now. Now, we try to do this in a non-egotistic way. We just say 'Look, the fact is I'm alive here, I'm in this particular spot, and at this moment I'm going to try and discover something about myself'. Now, through the higher part of myself, I can sense, perceive, rejoice in, and give thanks to the Lord God for having given me life and

existence and the opportunity to change, to grow, and to be transformed. At the same time, we can look through the eyes of our outer self towards the material creation and rejoice in its nature. It is filled with correspondences. It's filled with biological and physical wonder. It's a wonderful world. It's an amazing world. We have to sense both things at once. And then they can be interwoven because the higher always acts upon the lower, to try and raise the lower into a spiritualized state. Now by working upon ourselves that way, we can make fresh inroads into our psyche, into our spiritual being. You see, we have to do something. And the symbol itself, it indicates what is possible. We can go about things in a systematic way. Instead of sitting down and saying, well, what must I do next? What words do I have to address God with on this occasion? If we have a systematic approach, these are the guidelines. It tells us how to act, how to interact with things, how to interact with ourselves. That's the beauty of symbol.

Myths are different again. The individual has dreams that are filled with symbols. The human race has vast dreams, and those are myths. Myths are the dreams of mankind in the collective. Dreams, uh, of the individual, they're filled with symbols; they correspond to each other. Myths are very great dreams, filled with meaning.

Now the word myth is usually regarded as a sort of a story, a fable, a fiction of some kind. But the word myth in the original Greek, it means word, speech, just as logos also means word. A myth, if it has genuine correspondences, if it has a systematic structure, it's a kind of communication, it's a kind of a symbolic word given to us, to ponder. For many people, myths are the only things they have by way of a spiritual or religious teaching. Some cultures, like the Australian Aborigines, they have no written language. There are many small tribes over the world like this. They don't have a written language. And so their word is a spoken word. And when it contains these mythological and correspondential and symbolic components, it's the source of a great psychological teaching. It's a source from which people draw inspiration, and they draw insights about themselves as well.

Joseph Campbell made a great study of myths throughout his life. He wrote a lot of books. There has been a TV series, which some of you undoubtedly are aware of. And he drew attention to the importance of myths in human life. There is a mythogenic process within us, which generates both the symbols of the dream and mythological themes. That's why you were given the challenge. What is your own personal myth? There is something in you which makes your myth. And it's worth searching for.

Now we're going to look at a myth that comes from the Australian Aboriginal. And this is from the centre of Australia. And the myth is quite interesting because it's a creation myth. And there are several names of it which are widespread throughout the continent. Now, we are told that there was the Great Spirit, who contained life, love, the power of creativity, and that was female. But, and this is quite interesting, she employed an aspect of herself. Not another being, but an aspect of herself, which was male. And this was called Baiame. There's no difference between them. It's not as though it's him and her. They're both the one. That was the potential for creation. That's like the infinite, endless Jehovah God, which Swedenborg writes about. The male aspect takes this potentiality and it works with it. It is the energy of creation, becoming channelled into finite manifestations and expressions. Proceeding from Baiame, there is another aspect of this creative life. This was called Punjel. Now, Punjel is a lesser form of Baiame, and Baiame is the active component of this great creative process. Now, the myth goes like this.

But before even the beginning of things, there was total darkness, and there was utter cold. Now, Baiame was given the task of generating a universe. So working in total

darkness, He fashioned things, but nobody could see them clearly. Even Punjel, who was an aspect of this great livingness, could not clearly see what Baiaame was making. Now and again he could make out certain forms, but it was rather vague. He could see giant animals moving about, he could see them struggling for supremacy and their fight for food as they too groped through this total darkness. That was all he could see. But the cold was a very disturbing thing. So Baiaame said to Punjel, you must build a woodpile. It must be an immense woodpile. So, Punjel spent the equivalent of thousands of years building up this enormous woodpile. We're not told how the wood got there, where it came from. But that's part of the myth. It skips over stupid little physical details. It's dealing with spiritual processes. And that's why these usual little problems that we raise in our clever logic; we say, well, where did it come from, and so on. This is a spiritual story.

Now, the idea was, eventually, that woodpile would be ignited to generate heat. And Punjel said, there is so much darkness, there is so much cold, when is the heat going to come? When is fire going to appear in the world? And Baiaame said, the fire has to come from the earth. But not yet, I haven't finished fashioning things. So, Punjel went about the process of building up this enormous wood pile. And then one day, he noticed – or I should say one eternal night, because it's still darkness – he noticed that emu and the Eaglehawk were struggling over a carcass. Some animal had died, and so they were both struggling over this carcass. All of a sudden Emu grabs it and takes off. Eaglehawk follows and starts pulling the tails out of the Emu. But Emu ran so fast that Eaglehawk couldn't catch up. So he stopped chasing the Emu and retraced his steps. In doing so, he stumbled across the Emu nest with its eggs. So with one of his claws he picked up the egg, looked at it very intently in the dimness, and he threw it with all of his might into the sky. The egg landed on the wood pile and out came the fire, and its wonderful warmth filled the whole universe, and its light illuminated everything. Now, this is an important point.

Punjel looked into this illuminated world, and he was overjoyed with the splendor of creation. He didn't realize that Baiaame had done so much in making a beautiful world, filled with colours, with plants, with tiny animals and creatures, all being done in the darkness, which he couldn't see through, even though he had divine qualities. His astonishment was incredible. And so the whole of creation rejoiced in this warmth, and in this illumination. But gradually, the woodpile burnt down, until there were only glowing embers, and the darkness returned, and it started to get cold. And so Punjel said to Baiaame, 'This is terrible. The woodpile has now virtually gone. We have only coldness returning, and we have darkness returning. What are we going to do?'

And here's another important point. Baiaame said, 'The return of the cold and the return of the darkness is going to be a reminding factor for human beings on Earth. To make them realize that there was this state of total darkness and utter cold in the beginning of things. They must realize that and compare it with the light and the warmth they have enjoyed.' And Punjel said, 'Well what will these people do when the darkness comes?' And Baiaame said, 'They will enter into a state of sleep.' And Punjel said, 'Well what is sleep?' because sleep is unknown to these Divine Dreamtime figures. And so Baiaame explained that it was a state of being half alive; which the eyes are closed. And He said, 'In that sleep, people and animals will be refreshed and invigorated.' 'But how will the fire return?' And Baiaame said, 'Your job, in the long night, is to keep collecting wood and to build up a woodpile. And I will light it each day. And I'll light it by hanging something in the sky and it will be shining. It will be giving warmth and people will call it the sun.' But Punjel was still puzzled and he said, 'Well, if people are in this half alive stage and their eyes are closed, how they wake up? If their eyes are closed, they won't see the light.' And so Baiaame said, 'You have to find something that will awaken them.'

And so Punjel searched high and low for some factor that would arouse people. And then on one occasion he heard Kookaburra laughing. This loud peal of laughter going through the air and he thought, 'That's it! The Kookaburra will arouse all things because it's hurting my ears as he laughs even now.' And so that became the arrangement. Each day, Baiame lit the wood pile, and the sun appeared, and to awaken animals and humans out of their sleep, Kookaburra laughed, and that brought all things to life again.

Now it's a very involved myth, and those people who have studied correspondences should be able to see at least a dozen outstanding factors in that. Fire, for example, lights, darkness. These things stand out. We're not going to try to explain the whole myth, but we'll show you some of the salient points. You can remember that myth quite easily, and you can work out some of the details yourself, because we must make our own personal contribution. It's one thing to hear things explained. In esoteric schools in the East, when you undergo training, you're only given a few fragments. The rest you have to discover through a lot of effort. It arouses functions within yourself. You begin to see how to understand things. That's very important. It's only by making an effort, by completing stories, infilling the details, that we grow. Because this language of correspondence, of myth and symbol, it's a universal language. It's the language of our spirit. It's the language that we use when we enter the spiritual world. Swedenborg, especially in his *Spiritual Diary*, gives many instances of this spiritual language. And he found that sometimes when he was speaking with celestial beings, that he himself was falling into the speech of parable. It was happening almost automatically, because he found that was the only way to communicate all that he felt, all that he knew, and all that he understood to these angelic beings. So we have to become familiar with this language now. Mainly for the sake of drawing out of it, its hidden, infinite, inexhaustible depths for our own enlightenment.

Alright, now let's briefly look at one or two features here. Now there are psychological components, and there are spiritual and celestial components. The darkness, at one level, does represent the unconscious mind. And all of us have this unknown, unilluminated part to ourselves, and out of it there emerge all sorts of things, good and bad. The darkness also represents spiritual sleep. And that's the sleep of mankind. A person is said to be asleep when he has no awareness whatsoever of spiritual realities. That's the sleeping state. The world is filled with sleeping people. Oh, they may give lip service to God. And lip service to a religious service. But that's nothing. When people become conscious of the presence of spiritual reality, then they wake up. So the darkness represents a state of spiritual sleep. And the utter cold represents absence of love and of that marvellous love in action process, charity. The spiritual and free giving of oneself in endeavours, in delightful sharings, in communicating to others what delights you and helps you most of all. So the darkness and the cold are conditions prior to our awakening.

Now the woodpile that is built up. The wood is the potential for good. And it corresponds to good. The egg that was thrown by the bird, and the two birds, they have an interesting symbolism. The Emu can't fly. But it can run very quickly. But it's an earthbound bird. And birds relate to mental processes, thought processes within us. The earthbound bird that can't fly represents our concepts, our thoughts, notions and ideas which are at a down to earth level. But the eagle which can fly; that represents concepts which can be elevated above the surface of the earth. They can have a greater reach, an outreach towards things holy, sacred, divine.

Now we notice that the bird, uh, rather the, uh, eagle is chasing the emu. But the emu is at home on the ground and so it escapes. But this more gifted bird returns. And it takes the egg, and it casts the egg upon the woodpile. Now the egg, first of all, indicates

newness of soul. It represents the birth of good and truth in one's consciousness. The egg is full of potential. So when bird, which has an elevated nature, throws it heavenwards, it's not aiming at the woodpile, it doesn't see the woodpile. But this is an outreach, it's an effort to reach and attain another level. The egg is thrown, and all that potential striking the wood, that creates the fire. And of course the fire is love in action. It's love that warms, that brings this power of life and creativity and new consciousness into a person. Its light illuminates. And so the darkness is broken, that sleep state, that hypnosis that grips so many people is lifted from them almost magically and people begin to see what this world is about. They see themselves in a wondrous world filled with patterns and forms which are pure correspondences. But then that magical state of lovingness and warmth begins to fade. And there is a return to the cold and the dark. And as Baime said, this is a reminding factor. In life, we move up into elevated states and we move down, lest we think that that is the normal state and we become mechanically attuned to it in such a way that we treat it in an ordinary fashion. And so we have to be plunged into some difficulties again. Then we appreciate it; what was there? And we yearn to return to it. And so there's going to be an oscillation like this. And Swedenborg describes even celestial beings, occasionally becoming filled with egotistic states, falling into a lower state, and then they yearn for what they've lost. It has to be this way, otherwise we become monotonously involved in something even that's wonderfully delightful and we accept it mechanically. We make no use of it. So we have to be subjected to these factors of being reminded.

Now, the Kookaburra whose laughter aroused all things into wakefulness. It sounds exactly the same as cock crowing which is mentioned several times in the New Testament. It's a very important representation because it is awakening to this greater life. It's awakening to the fact that good and truth and the application of these things to ourselves brings forth new energy, new being, a new connectedness with everything that's worthy, everything that's noble, that's true, that's holy, that's progressive and creative. We find that there are many parallels between this myth and parts of Genesis – not all of it of course – but there is a similarity there. And so we see that this particular myth is a kind of a spoken word that does have a lot of significations. We've only looked at a few of them. The rest you must add to, those small details. Why the tail feathers of the emu? What do they represent? So there are all sorts of fascinating things. Why was the whole of creation in this myth developed in the darkness; so that even when Punjel, who himself was an aspect of the divine saw it, he was amazed. So this is telling us something. And it's telling us this too, that in the depths of our own unconscious, creative processes are sometimes set in action by the Divine.

Problems are solved in our unconscious by an intelligence greater than our own. It's in the unconscious depths of our being that our body is physiologically regulated to try and maintain health. If your blood pressure goes up, there are resolving factors, there are hormones that are released that will cause involuntary muscles in the blood vessels to relax and bring the blood pressure down. We don't think it out. It's done in an unconscious way by a deeper wisdom working within us. That's why we need to study physiology, we need to study the body, we need to study the physiology of other living things like plants as well. Then we see these laws at work, that there is a mighty intelligence buried behind the appearance of things. But it's their dynamic reality which enables them to live, which enables them to express cosmic laws. We need to look at these things in detail because out of these insights we appreciate how the Divine works so closely to us. It's within us.

Now here's a different kind of a myth. This one comes from the Eskimos in Alaska. Now it was said that there was a race of these spiritual, shining people. And these were immortal beings. And they never had anything to do with mortal humans at all. And the

interesting part about these shining people was this. They had half closed eyes, and they never slept. Sleep was totally unknown to them. Now that is a blessed state. It's very nice to reach that level where we don't have to spend half the night fooling around in bed; tossing, turning, getting up for drinks of water and so on. It's a colossal waste when you think of it you know. These shining people on one occasion came across a human child just wandering around by itself, and so they adopted it. And they cared for it, and they fed it. But then they noticed that this child tended to go off to sleep. And this frightened these people because they didn't know what sleep was. It wasn't in their mode of existence whatsoever. So when the child began to drop off to sleep, they became very alarmed. They spoke to it and they shook it, and they kept it awake. But the child kept on wanting to drop off to sleep. And this worried these shining people because they really felt that death was coming upon the child. And eventually death did come upon the child through fatigue.

Now this is telling us something enormously important. So these are spiritual beings, and with the human side, exhaustion led to death. This is an exceptionally subtle myth. You can, by thinking about it and pondering, get quite a lot out of it. But this is really referring to different grades of cosmic energy. Just as a racing car needs special fuels, some racing cars would run only on methyl benzene and strange exotic mixtures of aniline and nitric acid and liquid oxygen and so on. Then you've got diesel oil as a fuel. Coal is another fuel. Wood is another fuel. There are various kinds of fuels for the different kinds of energies that are needed with different bits of machinery.

Now that's exactly true for us. We have within us several levels. We do have a celestial realm, we have a spiritual, and we have a natural realm within us. But they don't all run on the same petrol, as it were. Ultrafine energies from God for the celestial. Somewhat denser and coarser energies for the spiritual and quite heavy energies for the natural. Now the heavier the energies become, the more quickly they become depleted. You see, one form of energy we take into ourselves is in the form of food. Well, it's not as though we have a meal at the beginning of life and the energy lasts us throughout our 70, 80 or 90 years. We very, very quickly run out of that coarse energy and so we have to keep feeding at reasonably regular intervals. With spiritual energy, there isn't that same sort of problem. Sure, feeding takes place, but it's a spiritual feeding. With the celestials, that's a state of no sleep. Because they're involved in the activity which incessantly comes from the Divine. And that's the ultimate blessed state. Because there is no running short of energy. Now, clearly this is a description of the celestial part of us, which never sleeps. It never sleeps when the body goes to sleep. It sometimes inspires, with the aid of spiritual beings, dreams which help to inform us and give running reports on our psychological status quo.

But there is a part of us with these half-closed eyes, and that's an interesting concept. Because Swedenborg once had a wonderful dream vision experience which he described in the *Spiritual Diary*. He saw the Lord sitting and gazing into infinity. And he noticed that the Lord had, as it were, half closed eyes, and he seemed to be half asleep within himself. But he was contemplating the nature of the whole, the operation of creation. And he saw the Lord looking at a particular man, with these, as it were, half-closed eyes. He was summing up all the qualities and properties of the man he was beholding. That represents something that's so important. It's an internal looking state. It's not that dopey half asleep state that we all get into so often. It's an intentional state of half closing the eyes, so that part of the outer world is blocked out, but the inner world is opened up, and there is this inlooking, and from the inlooking, the totality of things can be discerned. The reality can be seen. You see, even that description points to a process, an attitude within ourselves. We must learn to look within, because when we look within, we're looking towards a higher level.

Now, this human child in us, this is the undeveloped part of us. We do tend to live in the basement of our being. If we think of ourselves as a house with a basement, first storey, second storey, then that gives a pretty fair indication of how we function. We live in the basement of our being. We need this sleep. We feed upon coarse energies and we think that's the only kind of energy that will keep us going. We think that the air we breathe is the only kind of respiration we can have. We think of all these coarse impressions coming from the world around us are the only kind of impressions we can get. We don't realize there is a stairway that leads to higher levels. The higher levels, they don't fully understand the peculiar identifications that our outer self has with the material world. This higher part is puzzled by the stupidity, the infancy, the childlike state. And so in this myth, this childlike, undeveloped state, all it knows is coarse energy and these regular cycles of sleep and a little bit of wakefulness, which is really a waking sleep. As the French psychologists in various universities now call it, it's a waking daze. Even some of the psychologists are beginning to realize this much vaunted wakefulness in daily life is really a dazed state. It's not full consciousness.

So this works with coarse energy. This higher part of us works with fine energy. Its these fine energies that are referred to as fine gold, loving states. We have to open ourselves and sensitize ourselves to these energies. If those finer energies can begin to operate in the higher parts of ourselves, then the lower part will be helped. But if those parts aren't fed and activated and admitted into our lives, we remain stuck in the basement. And all we can see is the earth around us. There is no direct light. There is no consciousness. So the myth is telling us, in a sense, that there is a tragedy. If this works without understanding that, this will die, without there being any gain. If we try to live exclusively at this level, we shall never know the higher levels of our own inner possibilities.

The myth is telling us that somehow a sort of mutual reconciliation must take place between the higher parts of ourselves and the lower parts of ourselves, so as there will not be this unfortunate death of potentially useful things. Because we are constructed in such a way that we stand between the highest parts of reality and the ultimates of creation. All this down here is passive. The Divine is totally active. And we in life, we humans, we should be feeding upon this influx, and then using that influx to express ourselves constructively, usefully, creatively. We must draw out of the ultimates of life the finest and the richest experiences. We must render the quantities and the substances of the physical world into qualitative values and essences, and meanings and insights. And these things we can recycle and return to the Divine. We are created to do that. In several places Swedenborg says that not only human beings but it's the cerebral cortex in the brain of human beings and the spinal cord with which the cortex is connected which does this two way activity which conjoins heaven with earth. And we are the instruments for doing it. So we need these fine energies to enable the upper part of us to be alive and to be functionally operative. We also need the heavier energies that come in from the outer world which we can learn to upgrade and refine, to sublimate.

Sublimation or refinement does take place in the world. There are many examples of it. If you take ordinary carbon and subject to pressure and temperature, that carbon is eventually crystallised and becomes diamond. And when you cut it, it reflects and refracts the light in a marvelous way. It's the hardest of all substances. When you take silicon dioxide, or sand, and it's passed into mineral solution, and gradually seeps through the rocks, finds pockets, and accumulates. Absolutely minute little spheres of it form. You need the electron microscope to see these spheres. But when that's dug up, and light falls upon it, you have the play of colour. And that's opal. Opal is a refined form of ordinary beach sand, the same as the diamond is a refined or sublimated form

of carbon. It's taking place in nature. This is a parable in nature. Something happens in nature so that we can see it and ponder it, reflect upon it, and say, 'well, what corresponding thing takes place in me?' If non-living things like this can be transformed into beautiful and much desired objects, think how the crude expressions, experiences, that we go through, how they can be refined, rendered psychological, rendered spiritual, and then they're given to God as an offering of the best that we've drawn out of the world. That's a real sacrifice, because when we draw knowledges, wisdoms, qualities, values, and truths into us, that becomes our personal delight. And what greater sacrifice can there be, to offer up your personal delight as a gift to God? You're willing to let go of your highest delight. That's a sacrifice. That's a giving of yourself.

Now interestingly, there are myths and legends that deal with that. If you search through the literature, you'll discover this. Mythology is a huge field. For many people with no written language, as we said, it is their word, it's their spoken word. And it helps to keep their societies organized, well structured, brings value into their lives. Many parts of myths are rendered into dance, and into song. Even songs or music can be symbolic. Certain combinations of chords and notes can be just as symbolic as a diagram, as the human figure, or as archways, like cloisters where you have all these arches. That sort of architecture came out of the spiritual experience of certain architects. See, many of the early architects and builders, they formed themselves into secret societies. And they had certain secrets. They knew the mathematics of construction. They knew how to generate curves and arches and pointed windows along the Gothic lines and so on. But they never let anybody outside their craft know their secrets. But they also had a psychological teaching, with spiritual overtones. There were secrets, and so they gradually organized themselves into Masonic groups, and then you have Masonic lodges, and Swedenborg became very interested in Masonic groups when he was a young man. He became very involved. I'm not saying he was a Mason, but he became very involved in the study of these Rosicrucians, and the various esoteric movements that were in Europe at the time. Because he knew there were interesting concepts to look at. So when you have symbols like this, these arches, that represents elevated states of consciousness. We all have these flashes of something beautiful and delightful. And they do become linked together and generates a new level within ourselves. Becomes the baseline for further psychological and spiritual development. Everything that we look at in the world should remind us of things that we can do to ourselves. As I say, certain dancers, certain musical patterns, they tell us something.

If we attune ourselves to the language of symbol, of myth, of parable and correspondence, then we can read the instructions built into the world by a high and mighty intelligence, the divine intelligence. It's constantly trying to educate us to become the fullness that we ought to be. We have to function on all three levels. We need to feed upon the appropriate energies or fuels. We mustn't be like that little child in the myth who just wants to keep falling asleep when he is in the midst of fully wakeful, shining souls. The struggle against psychological sleep is a very important one. Swedenborg said that most of mankind is asleep; they're sleepwalkers. Let's strive to wake up. Thank you very much.

Dr Philip W Groves, *Myths, Symbols and Parables*, 17/9/1993 ☸