

New Church LIFE

A monthly magazine devoted to the teachings
revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg

In this issue:

Weeping at the Sound of an Angel Voice
A Sermon by Donald L. Rose

Loving the Lord
By Daniel W. Heinrichs

Nunc Licet
By Arthur Greisiger

A Review of There is an Answer

February 2009



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REVEALED THROUGH EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

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Notes on This Issue

Our sermon comes from well known Rev. Donald L. Rose considering the Lord's voice in our lives. The human voice has a powerful effect, dramatically illustrated.

Our main article returns Loving the Lord to our pages, by Rev. Daniel W. Heinrichs, from 1975 when it first appeared. We may be surprised by our ways to love Him. Were you at the Ohio Assembly in 1974?

I introduce you to Nunc Licet, a snip from his yet to be performed play set in Swedenborg's time, by our New Church playwright, Arthur Greisiger. It is entirely fictional, but uses period settings and invented characters to discuss New Church ideas. I hope you find it stimulating! Check out www.imagemindag.blogspot.com

Our Book Review is of Candace Frazee's "There is An Answer," based on the years she has produced Swedenborg Information Los Angeles (S.I.L.A) that many of you receive and support.

The Rev. Donald L. Rose, one of our veterans, was inaugurated in 1957 and ordained as Pastor in 1963. His first call in 1957 was to be the minister of Hurstville Society, Sydney, visiting Auckland New Zealand. In 1963 he was called to be Pastor at Michael Church, London, also visiting Paris and the Hague, until 1972 when he became Pastor of the Pittsburgh Society. In 1980 Don accepted the Editorship of New Church Life, and in 1981 he moved to Bryn Athyn to be also the Assistant to the Pastor there. From 1982 he served General Church and Academy uses, returning in 1986 to be Assistant, continuing as New Church Life Editor until 2005, a total of 25 years. Don is still active as Assistant to the Pastor, and lives with his wife Noelene (Miller) in Bryn Athyn, PA.



WEEPING AT THE SOUND OF AN ANGEL VOICE

A SERMON BY REV. DONALD L. ROSE

Today if you will hear His voice: Do not harden your hearts. (Psalm 95:7, 8)

There was a certain hard-hearted spirit with whom an angel spoke. At length he was so affected by what was said, that he shed tears, saying that he had never wept before, but he could not refrain, for it was love speaking. (Heaven and Hell 238)

How are you affected when someone speaks to you? It all depends, doesn't it? Obviously it depends what the person says - and I will suggest in a moment what the angel said that made that hard-hearted man cry. Yes, it depends what is said, but an important aspect is the tone in which it is said. A phrase like, "I am glad to see you," affects us so differently when said in a tone that tells us it is really meant. The tone does not just hit the ears; it goes to the heart.

That saying about the man who wept is in the context of the teaching that angelic speech is choice and delightful, affecting "not only the ears." It goes deeper than that.

Besides the content and the tone when someone speaks to you there is also the matter of context. If there is something going on between you and the person who speaks, the speech can affect you differently. What if it is a person who has treated you badly or a person whom you have treated badly?

Think of the context when King Saul heard the voice of David and "wept", as we read in our lesson from 1 Samuel chapter 24. David had fought bravely on Saul's behalf and had always showed loyalty. David even played the harp to help

Saul's peace of mind when evil spirits troubled him.

The context includes Saul's deliberate attempts to kill David, his attempt to pin him to the wall with a javelin, even as he ministered with music (1 Samuel 19:9. 10). (There is a kind of music in the speech of angels which makes them so pleasant to hear and which reaches deeply into one's affections.)

When in the darkness of a cave David cut off part of Saul's garment to prove that he would not harm him even when he easily could have done so. Saul was actually on a mission to kill David. When Saul emerged from that cave he heard a voice and turned to see David holding up the piece of the garment. And then David made a pleading speech showing he would never harm the Lord's anointed. And that ruthless king, that hard-hearted Saul said, "Is that your voice, David, my son?" And he wept aloud.

Saul was hard of heart; he was plagued with suspicion about the motives of others. He was blind and deaf to good intentions in others, imagining instead that others intended him harm.

The Lord's intentions for us are completely merciful, and such is also the affection in His voice. "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your heart." Notice the "if." There is a passage in the Writings which says the Lord is "continually speaking" to us (*Arcana Coelestia* 904). We may think of this teaching together with the Lord's in His glorified human saying, "Behold I stand at the door...If anyone hears My voice" (Revelation 3:20). It may be helpful to compare this to the speaking of a mother speaking to a baby. Think of the angel women in heaven who love all children with a motherly tenderness (*Heaven and Hell* 332). If a mother talks to a baby, what does she say? Does she impart information to the baby? Does she outline to the baby a course of action?

No. Is she not saying, "I am here. I love you. You are safe. I will care for you"? *Arcana Coelestia* 904 emphasizes the same

kind of presence of the Lord: “I am with you.” And it says that everything good and true inspired by angels is from the Lord, “thus the Lord is continually speaking.”

A good thing inspired into us is hope. The angels try to keep us in hope, and we are told that “one who suffers himself to be cheered by hope, stands fast in the affirmative” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2338). There is an “if” in this teaching. “If he allows himself to be cheered by hope.”

When we stand fast in such an affirmative, the Lord’s voice is strong for us. “The voice of the Lord is over the water...The voice of the Lord is powerful. The voice of the Lord is full of majesty” (Psalm 29:3-5). This is the Lord continually speaking to us. We may also compare this to the teaching about prayer as speech with God, and the answer to prayer. The answer, rather than instruction, may be discerned as “hope, comfort and a certain inward joy” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2535).

Let us return to the account of a certain hard-hearted spirit who said that he had never wept. What makes some people notably hard-hearted? Among your classmates in high school were there not some pretty tough people? Sometimes when you find out what kind of childhood they had, you stop asking why they are so tough and start wondering how they managed to be so normal. There are cases in which the causes of a person’s feelings go back beyond what the person can remember. Sibling rivalry is a case in point, and also a feeling of not being loved and maybe a lot of anger resulting from that.

The man who wept at the voice of an angel, although we do not know his name, was a real person. His is a true story. A fraction of it is used in the book *Heaven and Hell* to illustrate the affecting power of angelic speech. It is also used in another context in the *Arcana Coelestia*, where the point illustrated is that when a baby dies, the baby does not remain a baby as some have supposed. Not only did Swedenborg get information on

that, he witnessed it. And so we read, “I have not only been informed by angels that such is the case, but I have also spoken with a certain one who had died when an infant, and yet then appeared as an adult. The same also spoke with his brother who had died in adult age, and this from so much mutual brotherly love, that his brother could not refrain from tears, saying that it was love itself that was speaking” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2304).

From that passage we learn two intriguing things. First, that angel who spoke had died in infancy, and secondly, he was actually the baby brother of that hard-hearted man!

Can we picture a vicious circle in the household of those two brothers? The older brother resented his infant sibling, and things got worse and worse. He must have been a defiant and angry youth, and this made it hard for his parents to be loving towards him. And since the parents were not expressing love, he became more defiant - and of course even harder to love. But the baby was loved. Perhaps the older boy thought of himself as someone deprived of love, and that the cause was that baby. And was the problem solved when the little brother died? It may have become even worse. Perhaps the grieving of the parents for the lost brother angered the older brother at some level of his thinking.

Even in death - so it may have felt - that little intruder was taking away from his older brother. We do not know how long it was between the deaths of those brothers, but we know they met again. And when the older brother knew in the other life that he was in the presence of his younger sibling, the feelings must have flooded back. And if those feelings could be articulated in words they might be something like: “You took everything, all the love. How I would like to take it all back from you!” And the answer, although so gentle, must have had the power of thunder in the emotions of the older brother. You see, an angel, and particularly an angel who died in infancy, has the characteristic

of sincerely wanting to give all that he has. It really is their nature to want “to give the other everything and to retain nothing” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6478).

Picture the angel saying to his own brother, “You want to take it all? Well, I want to give it. Take it; take all of it.”

This incident is mentioned in the *Spiritual Diary* where it is said that the angel brother spoke “from the prompting of mutual and fraternal love” (*Spiritual Diary* 3545). Another passage is obscure in some respects but so revealing in others. It seems that at that emotional scene the parents were present, the mother and the father. It says that these parents “previously had been unable to love him on account of actualities which he had contracted”, but at this moment they loved him tenderly.

The word “actualities” is used about people who really get into grim things. They don’t just think about evils; they do them. One can well imagine that this young man had been street tough, probably into some crime. Swedenborg related that some make life quite difficult for themselves when they have “relaxed all restraints upon their lusts and have deliberately indulged them” (*Life* 97). This is the passage that ends by saying, “With others this combat is not severe; let them even once in a week, or twice in a month, resist the evils they are inclined to, and they will perceive a change.” It is severe. It is hard for some people growing up.

The young man had been tough and hard of heart. His environment had been such that he hardly showed his feelings at all. He said that he had not wept before (*Heaven and Hell* 238). In the *Diary* passage we are told that “He spoke...from controversy with a brother in infancy, he said that he would take away everything....He would take away the love of parents” (*Spiritual Diary* 3146.)

Swedenborg then relates a scene full of emotion, a scene he witnessed at close hand. “And now I perceive (his) brother who,

though he died in infancy, is now a man, insinuating that he was willing to give him all that was his, and then (showed) a tender love, whereby the other was so affected in opposition to (his) actuality, that he shed tears” (*Spiritual Diary* 3146).

When we read of an extreme case of a hard heart that was softened, we may think of ways in which our hearts have been hard. “Today if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.” Hearing the voice of God is truly hearing love itself, and this can affect us if we allow it. Humbling ourselves in prayer, we are told, puts away the things that hinder influx and harden our hearts. In humble acknowledgment there is “a softening of the heart” (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 335). It is as if we approach the altar of worship and hear the saying of the Sermon on the Mount. “If you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift before the altar and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:23, 24).

And day by day, if we are willing, the Lord will change us, and we will hear His voice saying, “I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you: I will remove from you your heart of stone and will give you a heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:26).
Amen

Lessons: 1 Samuel 24:1-20; John 10:27-30; *Heaven and Hell* 236-239

A brand new website has been launched by the General Church in Canada featuring all our Canadian groups and congregations. There is also an extensive and interesting summary of the doctrines including some frequently asked questions and even a chart comparing the New Church with traditional Christianity. Check out www.newchurch.ca and bookmark it to refer to your Canadian friends.

LOVING THE LORD

BY REV. DANIEL W. HEINRICHS¹

When the Lord was asked which is the first of all the commandments, He answered: “Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment” (Mark 12:30). Nothing could be plainer or more emphatic than this assertion. The Lord said of this commandment and its corollary, that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves: “There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:31). “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:40). In respect to this last statement that “on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”, the Writings inform us that it means that “the Word in the internal sense treats of nothing else than love to the Lord and love toward the neighbor” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3427:2, 3445 et alia). They state emphatically: “In itself the Word is nothing but the doctrine of love to the Lord and of charity toward the neighbor” (*Arcana Coelestia* 7262, cf. 922:2).

We may say then that the whole Word when considered as to its essence teaches one thing: love to the Lord. This is the first and foremost and inmost teaching of the whole Word - the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Writings.

We would also note that in each of the places where this commandment occurs it is stated that we must love the Lord with *all* our heart, *all* our soul, *all* our mind, and with *all* our strength. We are not to just love Him, but love Him with *all* our being. We are to love Him above and beyond anyone and anything. And this is where the problem arises.

We learn this commandment when we are little children, and we teach it to our children when they are little, and rightly so.

And because little children are then in the sphere of celestial angels, who are above all others in love to the Lord, they respond affirmatively to this commandment. As little children we want to love Him with *all* our heart, soul, mind and strength. But as the years begin to pass, every time we hear or repeat this commandment we feel more and more guilty. We know that we don't love the Lord more than anything or anyone. In states of reflection we realize that we love our parents more than we love the Lord, maybe even a favorite uncle or aunt, and perhaps our close friends.

There are many times when we ask ourselves: Do we really love the Lord at all? How can we love Him more than any one? We don't even see Him. We see our parents. We feel the warmth of their embrace; we see their love of us in their eyes; we see their hurt when we do wrong; we see their compassion when we are hurt; we experience their forgiveness; we are thrilled by their courage and strength; we are awed by their goodness. These are things we see and feel; they have depth and meaning to us. But we only read about and hear about the Lord.

As little children the mere thought of losing our parents brings on almost unbearable feelings of desolation and emptiness. We must honestly admit, when we reflect, that we do not feel that way about the Lord. We would like to, but we don't. We would like to because He tells us that we are to love Him above all else, but no matter how we try, we cannot; and so our feelings of guilt grow, or else we reluctantly come to the conclusion that the Lord is asking of us something that is impossible. This commandment - the first of all the commandments, the one on which all else depends - becomes unreal to us.

Does the Lord ask the impossible of us? Obviously He cannot, for that would be neither loving, merciful or wise. The difficulty involved in this problem is one of understanding. In so far as this is a problem to us, we do not properly understand the

meaning of the commandment. We do not properly understand what love is, and what is meant by *loving the Lord*. Nor do we properly understand the Lord Whom we are to love in this total manner.

In considering this subject, one of the first things we must realize is that the Lord is infinite and we are finite. We can, therefore, never know the Lord as He is in Himself. We can only know Him as He reveals Himself to us. We begin life with no knowledge whatsoever, but with the capacity to grow in knowledge to eternity. Thus our knowledge concerning the Lord grows progressively. And since a person can only love what he knows, it follows that our love to the Lord can and should develop progressively. It is, therefore, impossible for a child, a youth or a young adult to obey this commandment in its full sense.

We read in *Apocalypse Explained*: “All who are in love to the Lord from the Lord are in the third or inmost heaven; and they are such as have truths written in the life” (*Op. cit.* 827). And again: “They who are in goods of life from celestial affection are in love to the Lord” (*Op. cit.* 445:2). It is clear from these two teachings that only celestial angels are in full compliance with this commandment.

How many men on earth are in goods of life from celestial affection and have truths written in the life? Since only those who are in advanced stages of regeneration - who are in communion with angels of the celestial heaven - can be in a life according to this commandment, we may wonder why it is stated in the way it is, for the fact is that throughout most of our lives we cannot fully comply with this commandment. Yet it could not be stated otherwise. This commandment is a statement of the *ultimate end* of human life - the end to which we should be looking and striving throughout our lives. In other words, the Lord is telling men in this commandment that the end and

purpose in life is fulfilled when men love Him with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. We can be in the intention and effort to live according to this commandment. And it should be comforting to know that the Lord accepts the intention for the fact.

But does this mean that we cannot love the Lord until we reach an advanced state of regeneration? While it is true that we cannot love Him in fullness until we reach the celestial state, we can nevertheless love the Lord at all times in our lives.

The Writings define love to the Lord in many different ways, and as we examine these definitions we will see that we can love the Lord as a child, in our youth and as adults. We read: “By ‘*loving the Lord*’ is meant to love to do His commandments” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 556). Again: “To love the Lord is to live according to His commandments” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10829; See also 10787; *Apocalypse Explained* 433:2, 707; *Apocalypse Revealed* 903). “He who believes he loves the Lord, and does not live according to His commandments, is very much mistaken, for to live according to the Lord’s commandments is to love Him. These commandments are truths which are from the Lord, thus in which the Lord is; and therefore in so far as they are loved, that is, in so far as men live according to them from love, so far the Lord is loved” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10578:3). “The Lord Himself taught this clearly and powerfully when He was in the world, saying: “If ye love Me, keep My commandments....He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me....He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings” (John 14:14:15, 21, 24).

Here is a very practical, down-to-earth way in which we can love the Lord from day to day, beginning in childhood and continuing throughout life. But to the natural mind it is not very appealing. Our natural man would like to experience a warm personal relationship rather than a life of obedience to

commandments. But, we are told: “Loving the Lord as a person, and not loving uses, is *loving the Lord* from oneself, which is not loving” (*Divine Love* xiii, added emphasis). “An evil man as well as a good man can love the Lord as a person, and the neighbor likewise can be loved as to the person....Therefore the spiritual-natural man concludes that to love the Lord is to love that which is from Him” (*Divine Wisdom* xi). “In heaven by loving the Lord is not meant loving Him in respect of His person, but loving the good which is from Him, and loving good is willing good and doing it from love” (*Heaven and Hell* 15). The love of the Lord as a person does not conjoin man with heaven (*Apocalypse Explained* 1099:3; cf. 973:2).

These teachings show us that the feelings of guilt and inadequacy that we may have in relation to love to the Lord, arise from a mistaken and false idea of what *loving the Lord* is. Indeed, we see from these teachings that the love which we would like to feel is in fact not really love to the Lord - not the kind of love that the Lord desires of us for our sakes. What we are thinking of is more of an external emotion than a spiritual love. Evil men as well as good men are capable of feeling the former, but not the latter.

Another oft repeated and well known teaching is that the Lord is the Word, as stated in the opening verses of the Gospel of John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ” (John 1:1; cf. *Lord* 9). To love the Lord, therefore, is to love the Word. The keeping of this commandment as it relates to children involves teaching them the stories of the Word in a sphere of affection. It also involves treating the books in which the Word is contained with reverence and respect. These things, of course, apply to youths and adults as well, but in addition, it involves for them their regularly reading and meditating on the Word of God. We would recall here the statement made earlier - that we can only love what we know. If we are going to love the Word we must know it. We can

know it somewhat by hearing teaching from it, in services of worship and in classes. But, if we are really going to know the Word we must read it for ourselves and this regularly. We would also note that we call it the “Word of God” and the “Word of the Lord” because it contains the Lord’s words. In reality it is the Lord speaking to man. By giving us a written Word, the Lord has provided us with a means of being in daily communication with Him. As we read the Word in this spirit, the Lord can communicate to us His wisdom and His love.

We are told: “To believe in the Lord is to imbue one’s understanding with the truths of faith; and...to love the Lord is to imbue one’s will with the goods of love; and ... this cannot be done except by learning truths from the Word, by willing them, and by doing them” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10645:2). “To live according to Divine truths from the Word is to love the Lord” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10551:2; cf. *Heaven and Hell* 225e; *Apocalypse Explained* 831). “Men should know that the good going forth from the Lord is a likeness of Himself because He is in it, and that those who make good and truth the principles of their life by intention and action become likenesses of Him and are conjoined to Him” (*Heaven and Hell* 16). Again we read: “In that [third] heaven love to the Lord is willing and doing Divine truth, for Divine truth is the Lord in heaven” (*Heaven and Hell* 271, cf. 278).

The truth that *loving the Lord* is loving the truths of the Word and living them is further emphasized in this teaching from the *Divine Providence*: “To love the Lord above all things consists solely in doing no evil to the Word for the reason that the Lord is the Word, or to the holy things of the church for the reason that the Lord is in the holy things of the church, or to the soul of any one for the reason that everyone’s soul is in the Lord’s hand. Those who shun these evils as monstrous sins love the Lord above all things” (*Op cit.* 94).

These teachings make *loving the Lord* a practical matter of life.

The regular reading of the Word, reflecting on the truths we learn from it with a view to applying them to our daily lives—these are things we are able to do. And yet we know that there are many in the Church who do not do them on a regular daily basis. This should be a matter of deep concern to us. To the extent that this is the case, the first and great commandment - the one upon which all else depends - is not being observed.

What is the cause of this lack of daily reading of the Word and reflection upon it? There are probably many causes - too many to enumerate and explore now, but we would suggest that there is one principal cause. There are numerous passages in the Writings which make it very plain that innocence is a prerequisite to love to the Lord and all spiritual development. As we study these passages it appears that a lack of innocence is the probable cause of the problem. We read: “The good of innocence is the only thing that receives the Lord, because without the good of innocence, love to the Lord is not possible, nor charity toward the neighbor, nor faith that has life in it, nor in general any good in which is the Divine” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10131; cf. 5236:2; *Apocalypse Explained* 780:6, 828:2). To be in innocence is to acknowledge not with the mouth but with the heart that *all* good is from the Lord, that all truth, all intelligence and wisdom are from Him alone; and that man *of himself*, that is, apart from the Lord, inclines toward nothing but evil. “When man is in this confession and belief from the heart, the Lord flows in with good and truth and insinuates into him a heavenly proprium” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3994).

“The ascription of all things to the Lord opens the interiors of the man toward heaven...from which comes conjunction with the Divine, influx thence, and enlightenment” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10227:2). To the extent that man attributes all things

to himself and to the natural world or natural causes, the love of self becomes the center and soul of his life. On the other hand, to the extent that he attributes all things to the Lord, love to the Lord becomes the center and soul of his life (See *Divine Providence* 199e). These passages make it very clear that the instilling and preservation of innocence should be one of our primary concerns. We must do all in our power to see that the children entrusted to our care are protected against the loss of innocence, and we should develop it in ourselves. For to the extent that we ascribe all that is good to the Lord, to that extent do we have a desire to be led by Him, and to that extent will we go to the Word so that He may teach and lead us. And obviously, ascribing *all* things to the Lord makes one with loving Him with *all* our heart, soul, mind and strength.

The Writings also define *loving the Lord* in terms of loving uses. We read: “Heavenly love is loving uses for the sake of uses, or goods for the sake of goods, which are done by a man for the church, his country, human society, and a fellow citizen; for this is loving God and the neighbor since all uses and all goods are from God and are the neighbor who is to be loved” (*Heaven and Hell* 557). Therefore, “to love the Lord and the neighbor means in general to perform uses” (*Heaven and Hell* 112).

Now of course we know that there are many people who perform uses who do not even acknowledge the Lord. Certainly they are not *loving the Lord* by performing uses. The passages we quoted emphasize that uses must be loved and done for their own sake. When they are done for the sake of self or reward they actually destroy the delight of good which flows in from the Lord (*Arcana Coelestia* 3816). Is there any way in which we can know whether the uses we perform are for their own sake or from self for the sake of reward? The Writings say:

“Let [man] know that he is performing uses for the sake of

uses in the measure in which he flees from evils; for so far as he flees from evils he performs uses not for himself, but from the Lord....This has been said to show that although man does not sensibly perceive whether the uses which he performs are for the sake of use or for the sake of self...still he can know it by this, whether or not he considers evils to be sins. If he regards them as sins, and for *that reason* abstains from doing them, the uses which he does are spiritual” (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 426, italics added).

The passage goes on to explain that when a man persists in this course he eventually has an aversion for evil and a sensible perception of delight in the uses themselves. And so we are told in a passage which beautifully ties the two great commandments into one: “Loving the Lord is performing uses *from Him*, and loving the neighbor is performing uses *to Him*” (*Divine Love* xiii, italics added).

Here again we have a very practical definition of love to the Lord - one that we can apply to our lives. We can all shun evils as sins, and perform uses to the neighbor with the acknowledgment that our power and ability to do good is from the Lord with us, and that the good which we do is from Him through us.

In another passage, love to the Lord is defined thus:

Heavenly love consists in loving what is good, honest and just, because it is good, honest and just, and doing them from love; and those who have this love have a life of goodness, honesty and justice, which is heavenly life. Those who love these things for their own sake, and who do them or live them, love the Lord above all things, because they are from Him. (Heaven and Hell 481)

Further on in this same passage it is emphasized that these

must be loved for their own sake. These virtues can be acquired and lived for the sake of honor, reputation and gain, in which case they are perverted in us interiorly, though externally they may appear the same.

There are then, many ways in which we can love the Lord. Or we can say, there are many ways in which love to the Lord expresses itself. We can learn His commandments and obey them. We can learn truths from His Word daily and reflect upon their meaning and application to life, and then so apply them. *From the Word* we can learn what evil is, and flee from it in intention, thought and deed. We can learn from the Lord in His Word who our neighbor is and how he is to be loved. Then we can perform uses to the neighbor in each degree with prudence and discretion, at the same time shunning all thought of merit or reward. We can strive to love and cherish honesty, virtue and justice for their own sake. We can cherish the holy things of the church and protect them from abuse and profanation in our lives. We can promote the eternal well-being of our fellow men. All of these are of love to the Lord.

Certainly, there is a difference between this concept of love to the Lord and the kind of love that we feel for those persons with whom we enjoy a deep personal and mutual relationship. Perhaps, in our natural states, it seems that this love that we have been describing in its various aspects is not as great or satisfying.

We may still feel somewhat frustrated by the thought that *loving the Lord* in this manner is supposed to be loving Him with all our being. But we must realize that our relationship with the Lord is one of a finite being with an Infinite Being, of man with his God. It cannot be like that of man with man.

I will conclude this address with a passage which I think puts this whole matter in perspective and offers us encouragement to keep on striving toward this Divinely commanded end. We read:

“A man who is in the love of self and of the world perceives while he lives in the body a sense of delight from these loves and also in the particular pleasures derived from these loves. But a man who is in love to God and in love towards the neighbor does not perceive, while he lives in the body, any distinct sense of delight from these loves or from the good affections derived from them, but only a blessedness that is hardly perceptible, because it is hidden away in his interiors and veiled by the exteriors pertaining to the body and dulled by the cares of the world. But after death these states are entirely changed....The obscure delight and almost imperceptible blessedness of those who had been, while in the world, in love to God and in love to the neighbor are then turned into the delight of heaven, and become in every way perceived and felt, for the blessedness that lay hidden and unrecognized in their interiors while they lived in the world is then revealed and brought forth into evident sensation” (*Heaven and Hell* 401).

¹ Delivered at the Ohio District Assembly, September 21, 1974. Re-printed from *New Church Life*, January 1975.

The Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents

This massive collection of material by and relating to Swedenborg, first printed in 1963, also called the “Green Books,” has been scanned and is available on line. See January 2009 *New Church Life* for the history of this giant undertaking.

An invaluable research tool, you can search it for information on the web. There are two websites to access:

www.brynathyn.edu/academics/swedenborg-library

www2.brynathyn.edu/Library/

For help, contact Marvin B. Clymer, the Digital Collection Manager, Swedenborg Library. Marvin.Clymer@brynathyn.edu

NUNC LICET

A STAGE PLAY WRITTEN BY ARTHUR GREISIGER

Selections from Act II. (Omissions marked by) **The time period is the AGE OF REASON (circa 1771).** A number of people have been invited to a spring-time social gathering to debate the current philosophical ideas concerning the nature of God. One invited guest is Emanuel Swedenborg.

Swedenborg (warmly) A perfectly delightful meal Sir John, one that I am sure would befit the most respected Prince in Heaven.

Sir John Surely the delight is mine...

Swedenborg Thank you for inviting me... [signals John on ahead of him] I have to admit... the occasions are all too rare... when I can enjoy the warm company of a congenial gathering of friends.

William (contemptuously, almost under his breath) Heh, I find it incredible that anyone could seriously proclaim they had visited Heaven and hell!

Thomas (projecting as he exits] It is a rather outrageous statement. But then again, I enjoy things that are outrageous!

Nicholas (qualifying to Thomas as he passes) It might be possible. I'm not supporting what he says; I don't know...Revolution never comes without casualties.Baron Swedenborg! [shaking his hand] I must thank you for your observations at dinner... I do feel better about that.

Swedenborg (pleasantly) I'm glad I could help

Lord Eevanwald Earlier, The Baron here... was talking about Immanuel Kant... [turning to the Baron] You said Kant is confused by Mr. Swedenborg.

Swedenborg (matter-of-factly) Yes, so I hear.

Lord Eevanwald (inquisitively) Do you know Kant?

Swedenborg (securely) Oh yes.

Sir John (incredibly) Kant is confused?

The Baron Herr Kant is not able to reconcile Mr. Swedenborg's previous and quite outstanding work, with his "current position."

Swedenborg (uneasy, chuckling) Oh yes...well...we have corresponded a bit, and I know that he does...struggle with the things I have written.

Sir John (embarrassed) I cannot say that I have read much of Kant's work.

Lord Eevanwald (abrupt and skeptical) Neither can I, but... I don't think he is alone.

Sir John (surprised) Oh... how is that?

Sir John (slightly indignant) Yes Baron?

The Baron (candidly apologetic) Well... if I may be perfectly frank? It seems to be a big question... particularly with Herr Kant as to whether Mr. Swedenborg here is...uh...a visionary prophet...or...please, I hope you will understand me sir... an insane man?

Swedenborg (slightly indignant but matter-of-factly) All I can say is: The world is in great darkness. Many people are not willing to see spiritual truth. In truth... many people are not able to.

Nicholas Not able to?

Swedenborg (concerned, saddened) It is sad to realize this is true! Many people have blocked themselves from spiritual influx.

Nicholas (inquisitive) Spiritual Influx? What, pray tell, is that?

Swedenborg Spiritual awareness...It is something that a person who is willing receives when they have become prepared.
[there is a pause] I would add that it is the predecessor to Understanding and Love.

Lord Eevanwald (irate) It is convenient how you avoid the

question of insanity.

Swedenborg (surrendering) What would you have me say?

The Baron (apologetically) I have no opinion on the matter, I...

I only know what I have heard from Herr Kant.

Enter **Thomas**: Ah, here they are...Baron Swedenborg,

[shakes hands] I was delighted by your report on the mining

activities of Sweden. But surely you must know...we are

infinitely more curious about your visions of Heaven.....

Swedenborg (cautiously) I would be delighted to go into

greater detail sir. However, I fear the atmosphere is a bit

tense...I certainly would not want to risk causing further

agitation.

William (mocking) I could have told you that...Eevanwald! If

the atmosphere is tense, it's because there's a lack of sanity

around here!

Sir John You are creating... difficulties... William!

William (indignant, challenging, retreating) What?! ME!

Thomas (tauntingly) Yes you.

William (looking around at the disapproving looks; to Thomas)

Well that's your opinion.

Swedenborg [standing he gently offers William a seat on the

couch]. I would be most delighted...if perchance...the words

I speak might bring comfort or benefit... to any of you.

William (baffled) Why would you be delighted if I gained

something from you?

Swedenborg (lovingly, surprised) Surely it is our purpose to

give of ourselves to one another. If I could give to you

something that would be of eternal benefit to your soul, what

a delight that truly would be!

William (mocking) You make the presumption Sir...that there is

a soul and that it is eternal.

Swedenborg (emphatic) Of course I do! For most of my life I

have searched... through all the known sciences...

The Baron (suddenly awaking) Oh YES! Zis reminds me! Herr Kant... has told me much about your efforts.... but I still do not understand... why...?

Swedenborg (amazed, emphatic) Why? Many men have debated the issue...some ideas have been...quite reasonable, most, however, are simply absurd. As for me...I could not make a judgment without first being certain that what I was to say would be correct.

Lord Eevanwald (impatient) What are you talking about?

Swedenborg The Quest for the seat of the soul.

William What a waste of time! I'll tell you where the seat of the soul is. [pats his behind]

Christine (craftily) Isn't the source of our intelligence in our soul, William...?

Swedenborg (sadly) Assuredly, you may feel that way, if you so choose, Sir. However, I can only advise you that it is not, as you say... "a waste of time!" I have spoken with many who have thought likewise...and it is sad to say...they are now...in hell.

The Baron (uncertain, baffled) Un you know zis?

Swedenborg (cautious, confidentially) As I said... I have spoken with them.

Lord Eevanwald (amazed) So you *are* saying that you have spoken with people in hell?

Swedenborg (calmly) Yes. Spirits from hell, in the Spiritual World. Those who, while living in the natural world, have chosen from their own volition to behave in a hellish fashion, go to Hell and are referred to as infernal spirits. Some are referred to as demons, some are devils.

William (satirically) Are we expected to take this seriously?

Sir John (irritated) William! Look! I did not call this gathering to have my other guests continually assaulted by you, so stop it! I especially do not want you to pressure Assessor

Swedenborg into defending his position.

William (angered but stifled) Defending his position, are you listening to him?

Sir John (irritated) I invited the Assessor to a congenial gathering... so we might learn from his experience..... I think you owe us an apology.

William (backing off) All right! It's your gathering John, I'm sorry.

The Baron (refocusing the conversation) Und have you found it Sir...ze seat...of ze soul?

Swedenborg I have found the answer to my questions. In fact, the Lord has shown me many wonderful things.

Thomas (confused) The Lord?

Swedenborg (clarifying, direct) Yes, the Lord, God, who having taken on the human form was Jesus Christ, the One God of Heaven and Earth, the Creator and the Giver of Life.

Nicholas (stunned) You speak of Jesus and God as one and the same?

[General murmur, questioning what has never been officially stated by the church]

Swedenborg (confident) Certainly! It is the truth.

Nicholas (unconvinced and disturbed) How can you say such a thing?

Swedenborg (confident) He has so often shown us in His Word the Truth and Goodness of His Divine Human and so many other truths that confirm what I have just said.

Nicholas (confused) What??

Swedenborg (unhesitatingly confident) The Lord God, the Creator chose to be born into His creation...to become human, fully manifest in the outermost natural form of His creation- the temporal human form. He did this so that He could dwell among men.

Nicholas (questioning) AH, so you're saying God was born as Jesus? I've heard that before, but I don't see how it's possible for a... the... for God to be the all knowing creator of the world, who supposedly maintains control over all things... and yet He is supposed to have also become human... you know... in this form of Jesus... and still be in control of everything, it sounds impossible to me.

Sir John (emphatic, impatient) Nothing is impossible for God. That is the very basis, the foundation of Christianity!

Nicholas (embarrassed, apologetic) Yeh, well, if that's the case then, I'm not very knowledgeable about Christianity; it doesn't make a lot of sense to me.

Christine (surprised) No?

Nicholas I never really... had time, I guess.

Christine Do you have time now?

Nicholas *Now?!*

Thomas (breaking out of a trance) Explain to me this idea about the temporal human form?

Swedenborg (carefully explaining) Yes, yes - the Infinite Divine, God from Eternity...descended to the natural level of creation the aspect of the created universe which has the greatest degree of density. It is here that we dwell when we are alive in the material and it is here that he also took on the temporal human form.

Thomas (confused, not getting it) Oh! (pause) Why?

Swedenborg To bring about the eternal salvation of mankind.

Thomas (somewhat crass) Hum... yes but...

Swedenborg (methodic) It was necessary for the Divine to come into the darkness and confusion of human misunderstanding, to dwell among men and be a beacon, a light to show the way... to become the fully Divine Human.

William (interjecting) These sick ideas of Christianity are repulsive!

Thomas (confused) This is a bit more than I can comprehend just now.

William (interjecting) They're more than just repulsive... they're nauseating!!

Lord Eevanwald (irritated, poignant) We're not interested in your complaints, so why don't you just shut your mouth!

The Baron (uncertain) Vat does dis mean... fully... Divine... Human?

Swedenborg (struggling to make it simple) Oh...(sigh) let me see... it means...a human form, the body of Christ, was prepared by The Divine...to receive the fullness of Its infinite Love and Wisdom. As we are told in the Word- "In Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily." In other words... His soul WAS the Eternal God.

The Baron (stupefied, confused) Oh... But why? Why would God need to become human? I heard what you said before but it is unclear why do you say that mankind was in darkness and misunderstanding?

Swedenborg (cautious yet eager) Because mankind could no longer resist the power of evil, the hells had taken away man's free will even to the point of invading the lower heavens. By doing this the hells were able to mislead angels and men into falsifying the truth, creating confusion and misunderstanding. When truth is falsified, what is of the light becomes the darkness of evil. God became man to combat the hells on the natural level bringing them under control once and for all and restoring the balance of creation.

Editorial

WHAT HAPPENED IN 1688?

What was happening in the world the year that Swedenborg was born? That year, 1688, was the year of the Great and Glorious Revolution in England, when James II was deposed. James I, who in 1603 assumed the throne after the death of Queen Elizabeth I, declared the Divine Right of Kings, i.e. “Rex est Lex.” The King is the Law and he himself is above the law. Kings ruled by rights. Now all the Stuarts from James I to Charles II were Protestants. James’ I son, Charles I, came to the throne in 1625, and took the Divine Right of Kings to heart, overplaying his hand and thus provoking Civil War in England (1642-1645, and again 1648-1649), which Charles lost. He was tried and beheaded in 1649, after which Cromwell established the Commonwealth – a democratic form of government way ahead of the American Revolution, free of the “baubles” of the orb and scepter, symbols of unlimited royal power. The Commonwealth lasted until the death of Cromwell (1658). Then Charles II, the oldest son of Charles I, was restored to the throne in 1660, beginning a sumptuous era of classic decadence. Pepys’ diary from this time tells of conditions back then, including the Great Fire of London in 1666. But all these kings had nonetheless been Presbyterian, then Church of England Protestants. Now James II, the second son of the beheaded Charles I, reverted to Roman Catholicism!

Hence the reaction against him, the Glorious Revolution of 1688, removed and exiled James II, and returned power to the Protestants, under the head of William III of Orange, come over from Holland for that purpose. The benign reign of William and Mary began, but not before the Bill of Rights in 1689 permanently restricted royal power. To this day, this Bill has the same effect on England’s governmental structure as the similar

Constitution and Bill of Rights on the American one.

Interestingly, when Swedenborg was ennobled and took his seat in the House of Nobles in 1720, newly crowned King Frederick I and Charles' XII daughter Queen Ulrika Leonora — Swedenborg's co-eval, born and baptized on the same days, just stone-throws apart — established a quadri-cameral form of government, i.e. one house each of Priests, Nobles, Burghers and Farmers. This launched Sweden's own "Era of Freedom." This democratic freedom was a marvelous respite from Charles XII's one man rule and ravaging wars which had ruined Sweden's economy. It lasted through Adolf Frederick's reign, beginning in 1751, with his German wife, Lovisa Ulrika, the sister of Frederick the Great of Prussia. But it did not run as smoothly!

While the Seven Year War (1756–1763) was raging all through Europe, the French-Indian wars were raging in America and the War in India as well. All of Europe was pitted in alliances against itself and all through the world. One could call it the first world war! It was an anxious time, and Swedenborg was active in the house of Nobles during this time, even while writing the Heavenly Doctrines. Swedenborg was involved in smoothing out the governmental activities, focusing on preserving the excellent system of Government at that time.

In a Memorial to the diet, Swedenborg stressed the danger of "unlimited monarchy" as happened for example to the Stuarts in England! It had happened before in Sweden too, with Queen Christina (1626 to 1689) when she became enamored with Catholicism. He did not need to mention Charles' XII absolutism, of painful memory. But he compared "absolute power" to turning to an "idol...obeying his will and worshipping whatever proceeds from his mouth." Thus he spoke for the preservation of the precious national freedom, which was lacking in, say, Prussia! (Swedenborg Epic pl. 299)

In an earlier Memorial to the Diet, Swedenborg tried to reverse Sweden's fortunes of war in the Seven Year War, where the Swedes were overextended, and the Premier, a good friend Count von Höpken, had resigned over the debacle. Swedenborg's assertion was to restore him to power, since he stood for that same freedom (Epic, p. 298).

He also perhaps prevented Queen Ulrika's plot to restore "unlimited monarchy" in the famous "Queen's Secret" episode in 1761. Swedenborg accepted the Queen's challenge to repeat her secret conversation with her just deceased brother Vilhelm – a go-between with Frederick the Great to restore autocracy to Sweden. Hearing her own secret repeated word for word, made her stagger. So perhaps ended *her* attempts. She had already been publicly reprimanded in 1756, when ten men were hung for the same conspiracy.

Sweden's Era of Freedom incorporated most of Swedenborg's political career and his Board of Mines career, and all of his call to be the scribe for the Writings, the Word of Heavenly Doctrine constituting the Second advent. It ended in 1773 when Gustavus III returned Sweden to the dreaded "unlimited monarchy."

So the birth of democracy is one thread. What else happened in 1688? It was the time of ocean explorations. Dampier, a crewmember of a pirate ship, *Cygnets*, had set foot on Australia for the first time, in 1688. The ship was beached on the coast of North West Australia. After fleeing unfriendly aborigines, Dampier with several other crewmen was marooned on the Nicobar islands. They made their escape in a crowded native canoe, to Sumatra where he became a gunner. Finally returning to London in 1691, his journals *A New Voyage round the World* in 1697 becomes a best seller. Swedenborg owned a 1715 edition of it in French.

And St. Paul's Cathedral, Sir Wren's masterpiece, was

opened in 1688, but work continued until the final stone was laid in 1710. Swedenborg was there, seeing it “finished in all its parts” (Epic p.21).

Swedenborg owned several other “travelogues,” Wheler, Herbert, etc., which make clear that he knew pretty much all world-geography that was possible to know at that time. His *Principia* in 1734 had a world map inserted, with only south-eastern Australia unlined as “unknown territory.” Captain Cook filled in that blank even as Swedenborg observed the June 19th event in heaven, in 1770. Another travelogue by Diereville was about Arcadia, now Martha’s Vineyard, and its role in Queen Anne’s war (1702-1713), an era which bracketed young Svedberg’s student days at Uppsala. The beaten French were allowed to continue in Arcadia after 1713, but they were completely ousted by the English after the Seven Year War ending in 1763. This was the year all those wars ended with Peace Treatises, and also when *Divine Love and Wisdom*, the *Four Doctrines* and *Continuation of the Last Judgment* were published in Amsterdam. This was followed by *Divine Providence* in 1764, in which the Lord revealed how Providence operates in warfare: through the councils of war of commanders in the field, especially through what are called “the fortunes of war” when unexpected events change the outcome. These are outward aspects of providential interventions.

1758 AND THE EARTHS IN THE UNIVERSE.

The Last Judgment of 1757 had occurred in the midst of essentially the “first world war,” a literal fulfillment of the circumstances of the “Last Day!” The following year, 1758, five books of the Writings were published. One of them was the *Earths in the Universe*. This has had a meteoric existence. It instantly became a focus for looking at the universe as inhabited. In fact, young Svedberg while still a mining engineer,

said there is no limit to flight, even to the moon. Life on the planets was popular at that time. *De Telluribus*, however, was the only book claiming life on other planets through the proof of speaking with inhabitants, *after death!* And that is a crucial point: Swedenborg talked with *spirits who had been inhabitants*, never with inhabitants themselves. No one can even see their own planet once they are in the spiritual world (*Earths in the Universe* 47). A couple of times Swedenborg saw planetary surface conditions through the eyes of spirits who were in direct contact with their own inhabitants – but those planets were in other solar systems! There *could be* no comparison between revelation and science. Spirits, categorically, are in the World of Spirits, between heaven and hell, and except for infants and the aged, only spirits ever attend man, never angels or devils directly (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 140, *Heaven and Hell* 600). In fact, we live long enough on earth to have a “change of spirits” like changing of the guard, at least three times during our life (*Heaven and Hell* 295). Spirits stay a shorter time in that world than we live here, so our attendants move on, and others take their place. When we die, we meet up with those who have died from “ten to twenty years ago” (*Spiritual Experiences* 5361). So logically, our attendant spirits are a half to one generation our seniors. Now, Swedenborg hardly ever mentions meeting angels from other planets, but spirits or angelic spirits, thus those who were still in their own World of Spirits. For “spirits of every earth are near their earth” (*Earths in the Universe* 47).

For long held as the secret insight on life in our solar system, up to the mid 1950’s, *De Telluribus*, now also titled “Worlds in Space,” was still regarded as one key for spreading the New Church to millions of people in the decades to come. The argument was that once travel to the other planets, especially to the moon, becomes possible, they will “see for

themselves” everything Swedenborg had described, and the whole world will be at our feet!

As you know, as the 1970’s and 80’s progressed with space probes and lunar landings, the enthusiasm turned to dismay. *Nothing* of what was described in this work was verified, except some generals, such as the lack of atmosphere on the moon. And today, the Mars rovers, *Discovery* and *Spirit* have logged an unexpected 5 years of data of a vast barren landscape that, yes, once showed the effect of water, - or was it sulphuric acid? There was once ground-water. There are rills of sand showing the effect of seas.

So the theories on how to reconcile the evidence from the spiritual world, with what science has discovered, have muted the voices proclaiming the *Earths in the Universe* as a ground-breaker for the New Church. Now we mostly “leave people in freedom” by not proclaiming anything about *De Telluribus* too loudly.

However, there is no need to fear. No, not that everything will be proved true within the next decade, or all the phenomena will suddenly turn up around the other side of those planets, or on one of its moons instead. No, the two sets of evidence don’t even touch each other. On the one hand, Swedenborg spoke to “spirits” from various planets, most of them identified with the planets of our own solar system, but five or six other planets from somewhere else in the universe. And on the evidence of Mercurian spirits - whose use is such that they are allowed to roam the spiritual universe - there are more than 100,000 inhabited planets (*Earths in the Universe*, or *De Telluribus* 26). Maybe *they* are the UFO originators! Anyhow, given the almost incomprehensible vastness of the universe, this figure generally coincides with modern scientists’ estimation based on *probability* alone. And radar observatories are scanning the skies for logical signals, called LGMs, from “Little Green Men.” So

no disagreement there.

Furthermore, one main truth of *De Telluribus* is that the Grand Man of heaven is vast. Since the end of creation is a heaven from the human race, our tiny planet Earth or *Tellus* would be ludicrously inadequate to fill all of that Grand Man of uses. By contrast, there are so many uses or functions to perform in heaven, that hundreds of thousands of human races could never fill them all, to eternity! (*Earths in the Universe* 126). *De Telluribus* even explains why we can't see all those planets around suns in the universe: "The reason that these do not appear to our eyes, is their being at such an immense distance, and having only the light of their star, which cannot be reflected again as far as here" (*Earths in the Universe* 126). Their weak light does not reach our planet, not even with Hubble!

Secondly, *De Telluribus* reveals that all angelic spirits from all planets worship the same Lord God as came on earth on our planet. The reason the Lord was actually born only on our planet, is because not only do we have the written Word (*Earths in the Universe* 113), but also because here externals verify internals as nowhere else in the universe. Thus all the inhabitants from our planet *Tellus* can promulgate *en masse* that *their* God whom *they* worship, was born as Man on *our* planet: "Hence it pleased the Lord to be born on this earth, and to make this manifest by the Word, that it might not only be known on this globe, but also might be made manifest thereby to spirits and angels even from other earths" (*Earths in the Universe* 118). "When the spirits and angels from those earths are informed by the spirits and angels of our earth that God is actually Man, they receive that Word, acknowledge it, and rejoice that it is so" (*Earths in the Universe* 121).

Can you design a Christmas Card to convey this idea?

What is perhaps even more astonishing is, that although we don't know what exactly the Lord looked like while on earth, the

image of Him, as “He was on our earth,” when shown to spirits from Jupiter and Mercury, they fell on their faces announcing that “this is the God of the universe who appeared to them on their own planets” (*Earths in the Universe* 40, 65, 141). Still other spirits humbled themselves before the Lord so profoundly, that they would not rise again until “the Lord lifted them up” (*Earths in the Universe* 91). We gather from this that the Lord God of the universe looked remarkably similar to the actual appearance of Jesus when He was on *our* earth. That makes us wonder about what a “normal” human figure looks like. Perhaps it was the resurrected image of Christ that was seen, i.e. the way the Lord was seen by the disciples after the Resurrection. Would His features be adored across the universe? Apparently so, — even to other human races whose bodily proportions differ from ours.

Thirdly, each planet serves a distinct use in the Grand Man, which is given for each planet discussed. Each use has a unique contribution to the Grand Man. Our use on the planet *Tellus* or Earth, has “relation to the natural and external sense, which sense is the ultimate wherein the interiors of life close, and rest as on their common basis” (*Earths in the Universe* 122), thus turning our ideas to “the world and to self” (*Earths in the Universe* 89).

All the other planets’ uses are listed for us: Mercury: “the memory of things abstracted from terrestrial and merely material objects” (# 10); Venus: “the memory of things material, agreeing with the memory of things immaterial” (# 107); Mars: “what is mediate between the intellectual and the voluntary faculties, thus to thought from affection” (#88), or in contrast to us, an “idea turned from self to heaven and to the neighbor” (# 89); Jupiter: “the imaginative of thought” (# 64); Saturn: “the middle sense between the spiritual and the natural man” (# 102); and the Moon: alone of all the uses refers to a bodily part instead, namely the “ensiform or zyphoid cartilage, the fulcrum of the abdominal muscles.” They “terrify the spirits who wish to

do them evil, put them to flight, and go with security wherever they want” (#111). We may translate this last use into a function, i.e. security by scaring away evil-doers. These uses of spirits from the planets met by Swedenborg in the World of Spirits are all upwardly oriented. They all still have God appear to them. Only our Earth’s use is downwardly oriented: “resting as on a common basis.” And the Lord was born only here.

Now the final fact qualifying this entire work, *De Telluribus* or *Earths in the Universe*, is that all records of meeting with spirits and angels from other planets occurred prior to 1757, prior to the Last Judgment performed during that whole year. Every observation, without exception, was written prior to 1757. The book itself was indeed published in 1758, but consists of extracts from the *Arcana Coelestia*, the last volume of which came out in 1756. All the references in the *Spiritual Experiences* on this subject also occur prior to 1757. And the Last Judgment always takes place — in the World of Spirits! (*Arcana Coelestia* 2121). The Last Judgment is effected neither “...upon those in hell, nor upon those in heaven...nor upon any man yet living” here on earth. That leaves only the World of Spirits which is between heaven and hell. This is where all people arrive after death, where “all are together from different ages” (*Last Judgment* 9, *Continuation of the Last Judgment* 3), “where the good and evil are mixed together,” but by coming gradually “into their own life...they are separated into their true nature” (*Last Judgment* 32). All those to be judged are thus in “false heavens” in the World of Spirits. It is on *these* that the last judgment is always executed: “Still the last Judgment is not effected upon those in the world of spirits, but solely upon those who had made to themselves the likeness of a heaven in the world of spirits” (*Last Judgment* 69).

Since all the spirits from other planets were *spirits*, they were by definition in the World of Spirits. But each World of

Spirits is “near their planet.” That is why Swedenborg had to undergo “changes of states” (*Earths in the Universe* 125, 158, 164, 168) in order to meet them in their own “place” in the spiritual world. Thus changes of state after death equal space travel here on earth. Here we use rockets; there they use changes of state. Swedenborg sometimes had to undergo a change of state for “ten or twelve” hours to meet up with some of these inter-planetary spirits. That indicates how different they were from our nature, and how communication with them is under the Divine Providence of the Lord.

Prior to the 1757 Judgment, spirits had been gathering in the World of Spirits for centuries. Because I. all meetings with other spirits in the universe took place prior to our 1757 Last Judgment, and II. they took place in the Worlds of Spirits of the respective earths visited, and because III. the Last Judgment on our earth took place in our World of Spirits; therefore all such meetings are qualified by the rules which govern the World of Spirits. These rules are that after resuscitation, everyone arrives there by the third day after death, and then passes through three stages of development: the first stage in the World of Spirits is a return to externals most similar to the ones experienced in the world. The spirit forgets he has died, and returns to be with others in a similar level of normal life. This lasts for about 2 years of earth-lapsed time. The Second Stage is when internals appear. This takes the longest, with each spirit fluctuating between internals and externals. It can take up to 30 years of lapsed earth time. For example, if you arrive later, they are no longer there. The exception, of course, is married partners who await reunion. Nothing can prevent such desired reunions. But at the end of this second stage, spirits “come into their true nature.” The mixed evil and good spirits are then separated. The evil spirits out of sheer anger at no longer being able to harm any good spirits, then cast themselves into hell. They need no preparation for hell, but just rush headlong, spared only from

sinking deeper into hell than their capacity for evil and falsity by the withholding action of the Divine Love of the Lord. And the good spirits, now angelic spirits, then enter the third stage, applying only to them: preparation for heaven.

Now the spirits from the planets Swedenborg met could have been in their respective worlds of spirits for millennia! The reason is that they have not had a “fall of mankind” as we have had on our planet. That could also explain why so few angels were “met.” By contrast, here on earth there have been, first of all, a “fall of mankind” with the judgment of Noah’s Flood, which together with the Tower of Babel, were prehistoric judgments. Then followed local judgments on Sodom and Gomorrah, on Pharaoh’s army, on Jericho, and on Babylon. The next General Judgment was at the time of the Crucifixion, and the final one was in 1757. But other planets have not known such general calamities, even though evil exists on some planets. Thus lacking last judgments, they also had not had an Advent. Hence the use of our planet includes teaching all other human races that, of all the more than 100,000 planets that exist in the universe, the Lord God of all human races was indeed born on our planet! When the “angels and spirits” of other planets hear this, “they rejoice that it is so” (*Earths in the Universe*121).

Finally, we consider the fact that all the recollections regarding the spirits from other planets, i.e. their appearance, dress, habitations, and forms of life, are qualified by the *appearances* in the spiritual world. For even in the World of Spirits, everything gradually becomes correspondential, i.e. they take on the form of the use each planet performs. Since all the human races of other planets have distinct uses in the Grand Man, everything about their physical appearance, dress, culture etc. reflects that use! All the things mentioned about them, corresponds to their use. Skin-tight blue clothing, for example,

would thus correspond to the use of that spirit in the Grand Man of heaven. How they recollect their earthly conditions can in no way be contradicted by scientists' space probe findings. For example, the rovers on Mars, *Discovery* and *Spirit* today send pictures of a desert Martian surface. This barren view in no way contradicts the *Earths in the Universe* record of the spirits from Mars, because the two sets of evidence do not overlap. A report of one's earthly conditions after death cannot be challenged by a scientific picture of those same conditions, any more than your memory of Rome can be contradicted by someone else's pictures of where you have been. The memory is always on a different level from the picture. Thus there are no contradictions between, say, the Apollo missions to the moon, and the *Earths in the Universe* record. Nothing natural can contradict anything spiritual. Sensory evidence cannot deny matters of faith. "The desire to probe into mysteries of faith by means of sensory evidence and factual knowledge was not only the cause of the downfall of the Most Ancient Church...it is also the cause of the downfall of every Church. For that desire leads not only to falsities but also to evils of life" (*Arcana Coelestia* 127). No one must use space probes to doubt the spiritual evidence of *De Telluribus*, since the two sets of evidence are not on the same level. That applies forever. We need never worry about what science discovers.

We therefore can rest assured that all the spirits who were met after death, by changes of states, in the Worlds of Spirits near their own planets, did in fact come from actually inhabited planets in the universe, even from ones which cannot be seen from earth, because of their "immense distance" from us. We can also neatly turn the tables on anyone who mocks the *Earths in the Universe* by saying: "Congratulations! I never would have thought that you, a scientist, would accept the *fact of life after death!* For all of Swedenborg's observations of other planets

took place *after death*, in the spirit-world. Wow, I didn't know you accepted the spirit-world. Since you reject the *evidence* of planetary conditions from spirits from other planets, you thereby accept the *validity* of the afterlife as the source of the information! That is tantamount to fantastic. Will you be joining us every Sunday?"

BOOK REVIEW

There is An Answer: Living in the Post-Apocalyptic World, by Candace Frazee. Bunny House Books, Pasadena, California. 2008.

Available through Candace Frazee, \$30 plus \$5 s/h U.S., Canada, Mexico, \$10 s/h International. Write to 1933 Jefferson Drive, Pasadena, CA 91104.

Candace Frazee has been writing a monthly newsletter about "Emanuel Swedenborg" called S.I.L.A., Swedenborg Information Los Angeles, now for 20 years. This book is a celebration of this contribution, by selecting from all these newsletters. This was a blurb about Swedenborg: "You know the Swedish 18th century scientist that spoke to angels! Never heard of Swedenborg (1688- 1772)? You're not alone. For 20 years, she has been helping others to understand Swedenborg. People from as far as Australia, Japan, and Kenya write to Candace with difficult questions about life and death."¹

Candace has filled this entertaining and informative volume with a whole string of photos of meetings with noteworthy people, both New Church, business friends and TV producers. She was interviewed on NBC News in Atlanta in 1996, when the Mayor of Atlanta proclaimed July 2 to 6, 1996, to be "Angel Festival Days" (p. 376).

Candace also is well known for hosting the annual Angel Festival in Los Angeles, now in its 15th year, and is in the Guinness Book of Records for “most bunny items in the world.”

The paperback 377-page book is full of pictures and illustrations, and reads like a glossary of straight information on everything linked to Swedenborg or the New Church. It has a colorful front cover, with the bottom half a cartoon of Candace with a magnifying glass looking at a book. There are 10 chapters, from “Meet God’s Ghostwriter” through “Angels, Cults”, down to “Real Dead People Swedenborg Visited,” and “Who’s Who in Swedenborgianism.” This last chapter begins with ten pages listing all the well known people who have “owned Swedenborg’s books, used his doctrines, been members of the New Church, or written about him,” etc. Did you know Hector Berlioz is among them? A shorter list tells us who “plagiarized Swedenborg, used him to their own advantage, borrowed terminology without giving credit, or even twisted his words, or attacked him!” There is a space for you to list more names you may know of.

On p. 222 and 223 are pictures of Candace’s wedding to Steve in 1994, with Rev. John Odhner as one of the officiating ministers. One picture has Steve’s buddies forming an arch of bicycle wheels! Steve is an aficionado of racing bicycles, having invented and patented several revolutionary bicycle parts. The pictures come with an answer to a question about marriages in heaven!

Other pictures are very informative, such as Sumerian and Mesopotamian stone reliefs of winged humans. There are 10,000 year old cave paintings of humans with halos. Candace explains the ancient knowledge of the meaning of wings, and that “people’s understanding of angels waned so far that most think angels are separate beings with halos and wings!” (p. 171)

You may pick and choose your “answers” to questions you have not even thought of, spending hours of reading in this delightful publication. Candace thanks all her “consultants”

crammed into one Acknowledgments page in front. Her Bibliography also reads like a Who's Who in the New Church, all on its own. A short index directs you to topics you may not think of yourself. She consults experts for veracity, and I myself think she deserves a medal for spreading news of Swedenborg further and wider than most.

¹: <http://www.theangelfestival.com>

Communications

A Reply to “Men and Women in the Ministry” (October 2008, pp 431-34) & “A Response to Men and Women in the Ministry” (November 2008, pp 513-14)

In the October and December 2008 issues of *New Church Life*, Rev Olaf Hauptmann and Julie Conaron expressed their different insights on the matter of women serving in the priesthood of the New Church. Both of them presented their views and considerations sincerely, based on different perceptions of the teachings of the New Revelation. This passage from *Apocalypse Revealed* 398 has a bearing on the subject:

“Ecclesia enim est interna et externa, interna apud Clericos, externa apud Laicos, seu interna apud illos qui interius studuerunt doctrinalibus ejus, et confirmaverunt illa ex Verbo, et externa apud illos qui non ita.” “...for the church is internal and external; internal with the clergy, and external with the laity; or internal with those who have studied its doctrinals interiorly, and have confirmed them from the Word, and external with those who have not” (Whitehead translation).

It is obvious from this passage that “clergy” in this context refers to all who have studied the doctrinal things of the Church interiorly and confirmed them from the Word, regardless of whether male or female, and whether ordained priest or lay person. Likewise, “laity” includes all who have not studied interiorly, regardless of gender and whether priest or lay person. The Latin of *Apocalypse Revealed* 398 is inclusive, and all are termed “clergy” if they have studied the doctrinals of the Church interiorly and confirmed from the Word, and termed “laity” if they have not done so. The sole determining factor is the manner in which they have studied and confirmed.

The later (Coulson) translation is noteworthy, and is rendered, in part, as follows: “...internal with the ‘clergy’, external with the ‘laity’”

By placing the terms “clergy” and “laity” in inverted commas, the passage can be taken to mean “internal with the so-called clergy who have studied the doctrinal things of the Church interiorly, and external with the so-called laity who have not done so.” Perhaps this translator was attempting to circumvent the gender issue and/or the inclusion of non-ordained people in the clergy. However, this translation is not true to the Latin.

Regarding the matter of women in the New Church priesthood, I only wish to draw attention to this intriguing passage but do not want to draw any conclusions from a single passage. There are other passages that reflect a different view.

Yours sincerely,
Heulwen Ridgway,
Canberra, Australia.