

MORNING STAR VOICE

MARCH 2010

“I AM THE ROOT AND OFFSPRING OF DAVID, AND THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR” REV. 22:16

HOPE

THE LORD HAS CREATED us to go to heaven. He made us so that He could bless us with happiness forever and ever. It is a wonderful truth, isn't it? It is a happy truth. Life here on earth seems completely different when we come to realize that we are here so that we might be prepared for a life of eternal happiness.

Why is it, then, that we often find ourselves far from happy? Why is it that life here on earth can seem so hard, so difficult, and at times so sad? It is a fundamental question, a question that goes to the very heart of our understanding the Lord's nature. In fact there are those people who argue against the existence of God by saying that *if* there were a God. He would not allow all the sadness and all the suffering that we see in the world around us. Because it is such a fundamental question, the Heavenly Doctrine treats in great detail of the reasons why the Lord, a God of Love, must at times permit evil and suffering. These reasons have to do with human freedom. People can never come to true happiness unless they are

free, and so the Lord must allow people freedom, even though they so often abuse that freedom by bringing misery to themselves and to others. So it is that the Lord at times allows people to suffer. He allows them to experience hardship. Sometimes He allows them to experience total and utter despair. He allows these things, but He does not will them. Never, ever, does the Lord want people to suffer. The Lord loves people. He created them for happiness. Though it is not always easy to grasp this, the

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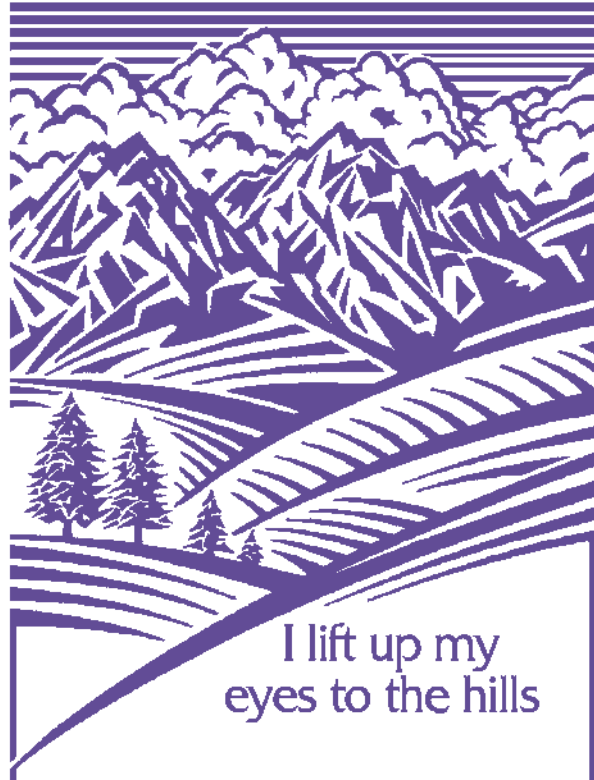
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Lord grieves when we suffer. When we weep, the Lord is with us in our tears. So it is that the Lord does all that He can to alleviate our suffering. And to the degree in which it will not interfere with our freedom, the Lord reaches down to comfort us. He comforts us by giving us hope. Through hope He also strengthens us, and leads us onward, towards the things of everlasting happiness.

Life in this world has sometimes been called a vale of tears. In a very real way life is a vale, a valley. If we compare heaven to the mountains, then we are not yet in the mountains. We are far beneath, in the valley, where we can at times suffer hard things. Indeed, the Word itself, in the 23rd Psalm, speaks of us walking through a valley, walking through "the valley of the shadow of death" (Ps. 23:4).

One of the greatest temptations that we can face as we walk through the valley, as we go about our everyday life, is to forget that it is a valley. A valley is a valley because it is surrounded by mountains. If we forget about those mountains, if we forget that there is a heaven, and if we should start to feel and to think that life in this world is all that there is, then it is that life can seem very depressing indeed. We would have every reason to feel desperate, to despair, if all there was to life was slowly growing old, becoming frail, and then turning back into dust under the ground. We need to be reminded of the mountains. Recall the words of the 23rd Psalm: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" (*ibid.*). The Lord is with us as we walk along the path of life. He comforts us. And



He gives us hope by reminding us of the mountains, by reminding us of heaven, and by reminding us that He is all the time leading us towards everlasting happiness.

Hope is very, very important. There is, in the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians, a well-known and much loved passage about the nature of love. At the end of the passage, Paul writes, "And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13:13). This is a passage that the Writings themselves quote to confirm that one cannot have faith without also having love (TCR 722).

Now we know how fundamentally important love is. Love, the Writings say, is the very life of a human being (DLW 1). Besides love, though, we also need faith and hope: "faith, hope, love, these three. "Love is fundamental,

because if we do not love the Lord enough to do what He tells us, then we are not even walking the path to heaven. To follow the Lord, though, also requires faith. At its very heart, faith is trust (TCR 344). To have faith in the Lord is to trust that if we follow Him, He will save us. We need both love and trust if we are to follow the Lord throughout the course of our lives here on earth. But we also need hope. Trust is really a matter of the will, of the heart (cf. AC 6578). It is a willingness to place ourselves, place our lives, in the hands of the Lord. Hope, on the other hand, has to do with our understanding of things (*ibid.*). To



have hope is to have a vision! It is to see that there are mountains around the valley of everyday life. And it is to see that one day, in the future, we can make our homes, our everlasting homes, high up in those mountains.

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

This year the Swedenborg Society, in London, England, is celebrating its 200th anniversary.

Take a look at the website of this organization, one that has been translating and publishing the works of Swedenborg for two entire centuries.

Go to <http://www.swedenborg.org.uk>



MARCH 2010 CALENDAR



- Sat. Mar 6 2:00pm Joint Council meeting with Regional Pastor. Church building.
- Sun. Mar 7 11:00am Church Service.
Open Congregational meeting with Regional Pastor
Pot Luck
- Mon. Mar 8 6:30pm Swedenborg-Atlanta event in Marietta/Smyrna.
DP 60-69. Presented by Cedric Lumsden.
- Fri. Mar 12 8:00pm Reading Discussion Group. Meeting via Skype.
Doctrine of the Lord 37-45.. See pastor for contact details.
- Sun. Mar 14 11:00am Church Service. CLOCKS CHANGE.
Pastor's Council.
- Sun. Mar 21 11:00am Church Service.
Potluck and doctrinal discussion. Subject: *Conscience: A Workshop. Part 3*
- Fri. Mar 26 8:00pm Reading Discussion by Phone.
CL 501-522 Contact pastor for phone-in details.
- Sun. Mar 28 11:00am Church Service. Palm Sunday. Palm Procession
Outreach committee.

Go to www.morningstarchapel.org/calendar.html to get the latest calendar information. Information on Swedenborg-Atlanta events can be found at www.swedenborg-atlanta.org.

March

2010

Morning Star Chapel




Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>FEBRUARY</p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6</p> <p>7 8 9 10 11 12 13</p> <p>14 15 16 17 18 19 20</p> <p>21 22 23 24 25 26 27</p> <p>28</p>	1	2	3	4	5 Regional Pastor visiting	6 Regional Pastor visiting 02:00pm-04:00pm Joint Council
7 Regional Pastor visiting 11:00am Service. Open meeting. Potluck	8 06:30pm Swedenborg- Atlanta at Vittles	9	10	11	12 08:00pm Reading Group. Via Skype	13
14  Daylight Time Begins 11:00am Service 12:30pm Pastor's Council	15	16	17  St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20  12:31pm Spring Begins
21 11:00am Service 12:30pm Pot Luck/Doct Discussion	22	23	24	25	26 08:00pm Reading Discussion by Phone	27
28 Palm Sunday 11:00am Palm Sunday Service 12:30pm Outreach	29	30	31			<p>APRIL</p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>1 2 3</p> <p>4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p> <p>11 12 13 14 15 16 17</p> <p>18 19 20 21 22 23 24</p> <p>25 26 27 28 29 30</p>

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BOARD MEMBERS:

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Wayne Wadsworth—Vice chairman
Eli Echols — Secretary
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Keith Roloson — Assistant

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Pen Robinson — Mail Collector
Henry Wadsworth —
Electronics Advisor

DIRECTIONS TO OUR CHURCH

From downtown Atlanta, take GA 400 north to exit #11, (Windward Parkway). At the bottom of the exit ramp make a left on Windward Parkway. Proceed through the sets of traffic lights, and cross Hwy. 9 (Alpharetta Hwy). Continue on the new extension of Windward past the Kroger. This new extension to Windward bends gently into Cogburn Rd. Take Cogburn about 1.5 miles to the traffic light on Bethany Bend. Make a left on Bethany Bend. Our church, *Morning Star Chapel*, is the second property on the right. The address is 2780 Bethany Bend.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

JESUS CHRIST (THE LORD) is our one loving God in perfect Human form. Within Him there is a trinity of soul (Father), mind and body (Son) and influence (Holy Spirit).

His Word (the Bible) is a parable with a spiritual meaning throughout.

Faith and charity cannot be separated. The life of religion is to do what is good.

Life continues immediately after death. In the other world what we are really like inside ourselves becomes evident.

Marriage is holy. All joy, happiness, and delight from the Lord are gathered into the love of marriage. A husband and wife who truly love each other and approach the Lord in their marriage will live together as married partners after death. True love really is forever.

The Second Coming of the Lord is not a coming in person but in the Word. The Lord has come again by revealing the internal sense of His Word for His New Church. The Lord used a servant (Emanuel Swedenborg) to reveal these deeper things, just as he used servants to write down the Old and New Testaments.

Our **Lord God Jesus Christ** is the Ruler of Heaven and Earth.