



Endings and Beginnings By Lillian King

The beginning of a new life necessitates shedding old unfortunate habits that led to misfortune in the outer world and subsequent disruption to inner life. Swedenborg documented his own change of direction, which did happen to be in his middle years, and led to his wonderful writings which are such an aid to others setting out on their individual paths to true spiritual freedom and peace.

It is a blank page that we write on in order to finish our story - uncharted territory. Exploration of our nature and life events is like the days of sailing the world to find new countries. We do not know when or how it will turn out, but must have faith that it will. Physical death is the end of our preparatory work, and the beginning of the real life into eternity.

Swedenborg's words and terms

Charity

In common usage this word generally means relief of material want. Swedenborg uses it to mean a spirit of caring, of disinterested service, a heartfelt delight in doing good to one's neighbour without any thought of recompense. In modern translations the word kindness is used instead.

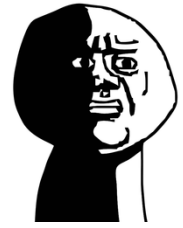


Spiritual world

A term referring in general to the other world or abode of persons after death. Not to be confused with the World of Spirits, Swedenborg's name for the first state one enters after death, midway between heaven and hell.

Evil

Evil, regarded in itself is severance from good or disordered good, disunion from God and opposition to the Lord and heaven. Thus evil in a person is hell within that person.



Glorification

This is the process by which the Lord Jesus Christ gradually put off the merely human things of all planes of his being and made them divine. Also used to mean the establishment of a divine consciousness in the Lord's mind, so that he became life itself.

+++++

Correspondences

Each issue we will look at the correspondence of something in the world with its spiritual counterpart, as explained by Swedenborg.

CUPS

A 'cup' seems a detailed example of a correspondence but it is a very basic one, describing our situation. We receive life; we are infilled every moment by Divine Influx. Our 'cup' is whatever is in us that can contain this flow. It is our physical body which forms the glove for our individuality; it is our mind which can learn, retain, recall, deduce, connect and store away; it is our will which can long, yearn, feel, aspire, ache, love and cherish; and deepest of all, it is our spirit which keeps us in touch with divinity, sacredness, eternity and awe.



Our part in this is not just being a cup under the teapot, nor the view that many things are just storms in a teacup. It is being wide, open and upward enough to catch what comes in! Every flower is a kind of cup (buttercup!) as it opens and follows the sun all day to bask in receiving and reflecting back out what it is given.

Is your cup half full or half empty? Hopefully you feel it is amazingly full - that your cup runneth over. You are a unique individual person, and whatever the deeper oneness of the human race might be, there you are! It's about being the best you can possibly be with everything that you have, in the mould in which God the potter has deliberately made you.

So, receive, be full, and at times, spill out into the world and people around you, to give yourself in ways that you will never know.