

EDITORIAL REMARKS

In This Issue

This is a special issue of *The New Philosophy*, long overdue. One of the charter purposes of the Swedenborg Scientific Association is to encourage scholarship in Swedenborg's scientific and philosophical works. The idea is to take his ideas and move them forward into a science of the future. For Swedenborg, science was a powerful new method for getting at natural truths. But unlike many of his contemporaries, for whom naturalism was the new order of the day, he acknowledged that the cause of all natural things was the Creator of all. A scientific method based on this premise is rightly called theistic science, and the efforts of people who follow this method appear in this issue.

BREAKING the SHELL

Connecting the Spiritual Cascade
to the Physical with New Church Science

On October 12, 2019, at the Bryn Athyn College of the New Church in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, the Swedenborg Scientific Association in conjunction with the Theistic Science Group presented a symposium showcasing the work of five scientists, each of whom is striving to apply these same theistic principles in their thinking and in work they do. Their symposium presentations comprise this issue of *The New Philosophy*. Here is what to expect:

Computer scientist Ron Horvath introduces the symposium, putting theistic science in a New Church perspective. He makes the case for good science based on the premise of spiritual-natural causation—just as Emanuel Swedenborg demonstrated for us 250 years ago.

Rev. Dr. Reuben Bell makes the case for using Swedenborg's theistic scientific method in the science of our day. By harnessing good science with rational spiritual principles (what Swedenborg called the "two foundations of truth"), he says that a powerful method results, that can penetrate to the causal beginnings of all scientific disciplines.

Rev. Andy Heilman presents a practical and doctrinal argument for doing “New Church Science,” that moves from revealed spiritual principles to the objective manifestation of these in modern science. He maintains that the spiritual reality of natural thing is more “real” than the natural thing itself.

Using a comprehensive model of protein chemistry as a backdrop, Dr. Steve Smith describes several “puzzles” in physics and biology that can only be understood from a spiritual-natural perspective.

Dr. Ian Thompson descends into the quantum world, to propose a mechanism for spiritual influx into the physical realm, at the level of what Swedenborg called the spiritual-natural nexus. He approaches this ultimate level of reality by use of quantum physics methodology, showing the power of theistic science at work.

To view the videos from the Symposium and access the handouts, see
<http://swedenborg-philosophy.org/theistic-science-symposium/>

BREAKING the SHELL AGENDA

- 9:00 Dr. Reuben Bell: Welcome from SSA (host)
- 9:05 Ron Horvath: introduction to who and what is the TSG, and what are we doing here?
- 9:25 Dr. Reuben Bell—Tendency Towards the Human Form
- 10:30 Andy Heilman— Introduction to discrete degrees in New Church Science
- 11:00 Ian Thompson, Ph.D.— Enneads of spiritual and physical sub-degrees
- 11:30 Heilman and Thompson—Q & A
- 1:15 Dr. Stephen Smith— Puzzles and Fine-Tuning in Physics and Biology
- 2:00 Ian Thompson, Ph.D.— A mechanism for spiritual influx into the physical (the nexus)
- 3:15 Panel Discussion moderated by Dan Synnestvedt, Ph.D.
- 4:30 Ron Horvath— Summary remarks—Where are we going from here? Not just an intellectual experience; a call to action in research and observations of spirit acting into nature according to the principles talked about today.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION: GOOD NEWS FOR BOTH

Michael Gladish¹

In 2011, Dr. Ian Thompson (PhD), a nuclear physicist in California, published a book titled *Starting Science From God*. In it he proposed rational scientific theories capable of explaining many of the mysteries of modern science based on the operation of God in the orderly steps and stages of creation. It was the beginning of a new era of study we now call “theistic science.”

Now this work has been complemented by another book just published by the Swedenborg Scientific Association, titled, *Intelligent Default*, by the Rev. Dr. Reuben Bell (DO, PhD). In this new work, Bell makes the case for Swedenborg’s theistic science in relation to “the problem of organic form.” As he says, it’s not a question of whether God created and maintains the world, it’s a question of HOW, and he answers that question in excruciating scientific and philosophical detail.

Both of these books were featured at a conference held at Bryn Athyn College, Bryn Athyn, PA, on Saturday, October 12th, 2019. Several other high-level scholars joined the authors in addressing a very privileged audience of over 50 men and women on everything from influx and correspondences to molecular biology and quantum physics, showing, again, in detail, HOW God works in the natural world.

In response to a question during a panel discussion, the speakers all said that their work was not an attempt to prove the existence of God to the atheists among us; but it was and IS a humble attempt to provide answers to many of the questions that science simply can’t answer, without recourse to certain illogical assumptions, or axioms, as, for example, that the world was created out of nothing, or that incredibly complex life forms arise and continue to exist “by chance.”

The concept of intelligent “default,” in particular marries the principle of orderly spiritual influence with the seemingly random distribution of physical matter such that life flows in when the forms are ready to receive it, and that they are made ready through an aggregating process embodying

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the love and wisdom of God in every sub-atomic, quantum detail! This is not “creationism,” nor is it pure Darwinian evolution, but a whole new approach to the mysteries of how the world works based on the revelation for the New Church.

It is deep stuff, and as one who attended the conference (and labored to understand the books) all I can say is that it is incredibly interesting and convincing—if you have the patience for it. It is also incredibly inspiring, and useful not only for confirming one’s belief in God but also for answering the unanswered questions of science—in the language itself of science!