

Some quotations from the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg:

‘And I will redeem you with an outstretched arm’ means leading out of hell by Divine power. This is clear from the meaning of ‘redeeming’ as leading out of hell (for the use of the word ‘redemption’ in connection with servitude, evil, and death, from which people are released, so that they are released from hell, and for the Lord’s being called the Redeemer in respect of His Divine Human ... and from the meaning of ‘an outstretched arm’ as Divine. For ‘arm’ means power ... but the reason why ‘an out-stretched arm’ means almighty or Divine power is that in heaven when an arm is seen outstretched it represents power from the Divine. When it is not outstretched however but bent, power in an ordinary sense is meant. This now explains why in the Word the expressions ‘outstretched arm’ and ‘strong hand’ are used many times to mean Divine power....

Arcana Coelestia #7205

To be ‘rich and increased with goods’ here signifies nothing else than fully to know and understand such things as are of the Church and heaven, which are called spiritual and theological, because here [the Word] treats of those things. Spiritual riches and plenty are nothing else. Those whose belief is derived from themselves and not from the Lord through the Word, also believe themselves to know and understand all things. This is because their spiritual mind has been closed and only the natural mind opened, and without spiritual light this mind does not see otherwise. That by ‘riches’ and ‘wealth’ in the Word are signified spiritual riches and wealth, which are cognitions of good and truth, is plain... [as in] ‘God has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent empty away (Luke i 53).’

Apocalypse Revealed #206

There are places in the Word which say of Jehovah, that is, the Lord, that He remembers or does not remember. When either is said of Him the meaning is that whatever takes place then, whether preservation or deliverance, is done out of mercy. The same applies to places saying that He sees, hears, or knows, or does not see, hear, or know; His pity or failure to pity are meant there. Such things are said of Him on account of His being likened to a human being and on account of what seems to happen. For when a person turns away from the Lord, as is the case when he does anything bad, it seems to that person, since the Lord is now behind his back, as though the Lord fails to see him, does not hear or know him, indeed fails to remember him, when in fact the failure is in the person. It is because of this appearance therefore that in the Word such things are said of the Lord. The situation is completely different however when a person turns towards the Lord, as is the case when he does what is right.... Anyone may recognize that the Lord cannot really be said to remember or call to mind, because in Him things that are past and those that are future are eternal, that is, they are ever present from eternity to eternity. [2] The fact that ‘remembering’, when attributed to the Lord, means having compassion, and so preserving or delivering out of mercy, is clear ... : In Luke, _God has accepted His servant Israel, so that He remembered His mercy ... to perform mercy to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant. Luke 1:54, 72.)

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SUNDAY MORNING FORUM
BIBLE STUDY & SWEDENBORGIAN IDEAS
ADVENT 4: The Song of Mary

Having reverently accepted her role to be the one through whom the Christ child would be born, Mary visits Elizabeth her kinswoman and receives further confirmation about the child to be born in her of the Holy Spirit. Her beautiful song is one of praise for the Lord's goodness in coming into the world to redeem and save humankind, showing "strength with His arm."

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But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting. Therefore He shall give them up, Until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; Then the remnant of His brethren Shall return to the children of Israel. And He shall stand and feed His flock In the strength of the Lord, In the majesty of the name of the Lord His God; And they shall abide, For now He shall be great To the ends of the earth; And this One shall be peace.

Micah 5:2-5a

Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.

And Mary said: My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him From generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of His mercy, As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed forever. And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

Luke 1:39-56