

ANIMALS

OF THE

BIBLE

BY JOHN WORCESTER



CORRESPONDENCES  
OF  
THE BIBLE  
  
THE ANIMALS

BY  
JOHN WORCESTER

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## CORRESPONDENCES

The natural objects of the world about us are images, or manifestations to bodily sense, of the spiritual things in human minds. If it were not so, we should have no distinct ideas of spiritual things, and no means of describing them, or of learning about them. When we speak of affections, we call them warm, pure, fresh, sweet, strong, or the opposites, which expressions are the names of natural qualities; but we perceive them to be, in a spiritual sense, the appropriate names of corresponding spiritual qualities. So of thoughts, we say that they are lofty, comprehensive, luminous, or the reverse; of the rational mind, that it sees, perceives, listens—that it is clear-sighted, active, sensitive; and, indeed, there is hardly a word used to describe mental objects or phenomena which is not primarily descriptive of natural objects and phenomena. As applied to spiritual things, these words are used figuratively, and contain little parables by which spiritual qualities are brought out to our apprehension, and illustrated.

As men who are made for a never-ending life in a spiritual world, we might see at a glance that this must be so, for this natural life is designed as a preparation for the spiritual life. If natural things bore no relation to spiritual, a life spent among them would have no relation to the eternal spiritual life. That they may perfectly serve their purpose of introduction to spiritual things, all natural objects must be natural forms and representatives of spiritual. To deny this, or to believe it to be only partly or imperfectly true, is to believe that this world is not at all, or only imperfectly, adapted to prepare men for the spiritual world.

If, indeed, it is, as it must be, perfectly adapted to this purpose, we shall cooperate with Him who designed it, by obtaining definite knowledge of natural things, and giving careful attention to their spiritual correlatives; for thus the spiritual mind will be opened and trained to distinct, clear, spiritual perceptions.

This is the province of the study of correspondences. The study is boundless as science itself. Every branch of science, with all the particulars of it, is a physical emblem of deeper things than itself; and, if interiorly opened, it presents to our view a corresponding branch of spiritual science, with its particulars. This is beyond our present



purpose, which is principally to unfold the symbols of the Holy Scriptures; but in finding the spiritual sense of these we shall obtain the clue to many other correspondences.

Common speech testifies to a general recognition of relationship between animals and human feelings. The names of gentle, innocent animals are bestowed as terms of endearment upon persons to whom they are appropriate; and the names of unclean or ferocious animals are used to describe the corresponding feelings and actions of men.

And these terms are employed with somewhat careful discrimination of their meanings. "Dove" and "Chick," as applied to children, present ideas of quite different kinds of innocence; nor should we be in any danger of confounding the meaning of "Puppy" and "Tiger" as applied to men.

The characteristics of animals are more simple and more easily recognized than those of men; for individual men include the qualities of many animals. Men also can choose among their animal qualities what they will cherish, and what repress, and they are responsible for their choice; but animals cannot essentially change their natures, though the manifestations of them may

be considerably modified by training or circumstances.

Careful observation easily detects the affection which is the life of an animal, even under the veil of hypocrisy which some animals know how to assume; the rest of our study consists in detecting the similar affection in human beings, and of this the animal is the embodiment or correspondence. In this manner we will study first the correspondence of Sheep and Lambs, and then that of other animals used in sacrifices.

## SHEEP

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of sheep is that which the Lord describes in John. Speaking of the shepherd, He says:

The sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice; and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers. (John 10:3-5)

The Lord spoke of Himself and His Church, in language and imagery that were familiar to His disciples. The shepherds of the East give a name to each member of their flocks, which the sheep soon learn, and to which they instantly respond.

In the dry season many shepherds with their flocks meet at regular times around the wells. The flocks mingle at the troughs, drinking. But when all are satisfied, the shepherds move off in different directions, calling their sheep, which immediately follow, everyone its own shepherd, with scarcely the possibility of a mistake. In

regard to their drinking, it is worthy of notice that sheep need very little water. When the herbage is juicy, and especially when the morning dew is abundant, sheep want no other water for weeks together. But when fed upon hay, or in the hot season in Eastern countries, when the herbage is dry, they need frequent watering.

It is not uncommon in our country for single lambs to receive names and be petted, when they become models of trustful obedience toward their master, but remain timid towards a stranger.

Our sheep, however, rarely have a shepherd's care, being confined by walls and fences. Instead of a shepherd, they attach themselves to one of their own number, who acts as their leader, and whom they follow as trustfully as they would their master. With neither shepherd nor leader, they are distracted, and scatter in every direction.

It is a peculiarity of sheep that while they are so easily *led* by one whom they know, they are *driven* with difficulty. They huddle together as if frightened, and the more they are pressed, the more frightened they seem; but if the leaders start forward, the flock follows.

Another noteworthy trait is their memory of kindness. They never forget a little present of salt or grain, or a kind act of protection from

danger; every benefit they repay with affection, confidently expecting renewals of it. Sheep are remarkable also for their mutual affection. They love to feed with their heads close together, two or three of them frequently keeping their heads so close as to seem like parts of one animal. The sudden start of a single member of a flock affects the whole, as if they were connected by nerves of mutual affection. When accidentally separated from its companions, the cries of a sheep or lamb, as it runs anxiously about, are piteous.

Affection for their shepherd is stronger than their mutual love. Him they will follow away from their friends, and, I believe, even from their young. Their affection for their young, also, is stronger than their love for one another. The sounds of affection which a mother sheep makes over her little lamb are of the tenderest kind. A human mother can hardly express more tender feeling.

Another characteristic of sheep is *patience*. When a sheep is caught by the shearer, at first there is a short struggle, until she finds that she is firmly held and cannot get away. Then she gives up entirely. Even if she is hurt, she shows neither resentment nor resistance; she is, in the hands of the shearer, perfectly resigned and patient.

Upon the wool of sheep we depend for warm clothing more than upon all other materials together. Fine, soft, long, with a useful faculty for matting or felting into a compact texture, it grows thick and heavy, and is retained by the sheep until it is a great burden to herself, evidently for the use of man.

All that she is, the sheep gives in our service: her wool, her milk, her skin, her flesh, and even her bones and entrails; not a particle is useless. As is the case also with goats and cows, it is not what she *does* that we value, but what she *is*. And she is continually busy in making herself valuable, and multiplying herself or increasing her own growth for the benefit of others.

Lambs have always been regarded as emblems of Innocence; and, indeed, their active, pretty sports and gambols are nothing but sports of innocence. But the innocence of which they are forms is not the dead harmlessness of a log, nor the slow helplessness of a snail; it is helpless and dependent indeed, but it has great need and strong desire for help; and its necessity and dependence are equaled by its trustful love for him who supplies its wants.

An innocence closely resembling that of lambs we find in little children. Active dependence and loving trust are as evident in them as

in lambs. Even a lamb-like fright at the call of a stranger is conspicuous in children when they first learn to distinguish their parents from other persons; and also a helpless terror when *driven* by harsh parents or nurses. And, again, their resignation and patience in time of sickness, or in the care of parents who are firm as well as kind, are as marked as the same qualities in sheep and lambs. Among mature men and women in active life we do not see much of childlike innocence. But when, through misfortune, sickness, and the discouragement of the natural desires and efforts, they become sensible of their helplessness and dependence, if they are wise they turn from self to the Lord, and then receive a perception of His loving care which produces in them grateful content with trust in His Providence, and a willingness to be led wholly by Him.

These characteristics exist naturally and externally in children, but internally and spiritually in men who thus love the Lord. The Lord says that all must become like little children before they can enter the kingdom of Heaven; and those who are preparing for Heaven He calls His sheep and His lambs. To them He is parents and shepherd. He is parents, because they who are in this state have laid aside in some degree their own life, and manifestly are living from a

new life that He gives. He is shepherd, because they perceive His guidance in the walks of every day, and find, in following Him, wisdom and uses and delights which give satisfaction and expansion to their souls.

These affections love the Lord more than all things else; they leave all that belongs to them and seems pleasant to them, if they hear Him call; they trust in Him through every trial, content to feel His care protecting them, fearful only when He is absent; they are frankly innocent, because their whole heart is open to the Lord, and cannot help rejoicing in His Presence. They are not cumbered about much serving; for what need is there, when they see all wants supplied by the Lord? Their own love for Him, which is to them the highest good, they will increase and multiply and communicate to others in every way they can.

Love of every kind, from the delight there is in it, has a desire to multiply itself and a perception of the means of increase. It has also affection for cherishing the truth which it perceives, until it brings forth new states of love and delight, which it rejoices over and perfects with truth of its own life.

These affections are male and female. The affection for multiplying the love, with percep-



tion of the truth by which it may be multiplied, is male; and the affection for cherishing this truth and the new delights which it produces, is female.<sup>1</sup>

In the Scriptures, where animals of various kinds are often mentioned, always with exact knowledge of their correspondence, these interior qualities are carefully distinguished: Lambs are always used as representatives of innocent delight in loving the Lord; Rams are mentioned as forms of perception of truth from love to the Lord, by which that love may be multiplied; and ewes as representatives of that gentlest mutual love by which the beginnings of love to the Lord are cherished and sustained.

The wool of sheep, which is the clothing in which we see them, is the outward expression of love to the Lord and mutual love, consisting of trustful and charitable thoughts, and of continuous, kindly reverent manners. In a cold, selfish atmosphere, if we think selfish things, or merely intellectual truth, the cold will penetrate, and discourage and dissipate neighborly affection; but if we persist in thinking, speaking, and acting in the forms of innocence and charity, our

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1. Lambs: celestial innocence. Sheep: mutual love. Rams, truth of celestial love. *Arcana Coelestia* #3994.

life, thus clothed and protected, may be preserved unharmed.

In the Jewish Church the burnt offerings and sacrifices were most frequently of lambs. There was no true knowledge of the Lord with them, and consequently no true worship of Him. But their offerings and sacrifices were representatives of true worship. They never felt the Lord's Love, but the fire on their altar was a representative of it. They had no innocent delight in loving the Lord and receiving His Love; but they had lambs which represented this delight; and the offering of lambs upon the fire of the altar represented the union of the Lord's Love with innocent love for Him, in man.

It was this meaning, and this was all, that the Lord and the angels loved in the Jewish offerings.

Because there was not in the world, at the close of the Jewish Church, any of the celestial love that is represented by lambs, lest all knowledge of the Divine Love should cease, and the possibility of heavenly life from it should perish forever, it was necessary for the Lord to form for Himself a Divine Humanity by which His Love should be received with perfect innocence, and manifested to men. The inmost principle of that Humanity was Divine Human Love for the Love

of God; and when that Human Love prevailed through the whole of His Human nature, it was glorified by union with the Divine Love; and in Him the meaning of the burnt offering of a lamb upon the fire of the altar was perfectly fulfilled.

## GOATS

Goats are in many respects similar to sheep. They are of about the same size, perhaps a little larger; and, like sheep, they have horns and divided hoofs; they ruminates, they are generally inoffensive and playful; and they give milk, wool, and their flesh and their skins to the uses of man.

They differ from sheep in being capricious, often mischievous, curious, and meddlesome; they are loud and peremptory in their cries; their wool is short, and concealed by long hairs; they love more rocky and precipitous feeding grounds, and browse freely upon the bark and twigs of trees.

Little kids have so much of the nature of lambs that they were accepted as sacrifices in their stead; but they are less gentle and affectionate, more impatient and peremptory in calling, and are full of curiosity, approaching, smelling, and nibbling every new object that falls in their way.

There is a similar difference in the disposition of infants.

One can hardly read Swedenborg's description of infants without being reminded of the innocence of kids and of lambs respectively. He says:

Infants differ in their genius; some being of the genius by which the spiritual angels are distinguished, and some of the genius by which the celestial angels are distinguished. The infants who are of the celestial genius appear on the right in heaven, and those who are of the spiritual genius on the left. . . . The distinction between them is very obvious. Those who are of the celestial genius think, speak, and act with more softness, than those of the spiritual genius, so that scarcely anything appears but something of a flowing character derived from the love of good directed to the Lord, and towards other little children.

Those of the spiritual genius, on the other hand, do not think, speak, and act with such softness; but something of a fluttering and vibratory character, so to speak, manifests itself in everything that they say and do. It also is apparent from the indignation which they exhibit; and by other signs. (*Heaven and Hell* #333, 339)

The difference between the celestial and the spiritual genius that Swedenborg speaks of is as the

difference between love and wisdom. Those who are in celestial innocence love the Lord for His Love; those who are in spiritual innocence love the Lord for His Wisdom. This difference is quite plainly manifested by the difference in the clothing of sheep and goats. Love for the goodness of the Lord, with the mutual love springing from it, manifests itself in manners, looks, and acts which can hardly be separated from one another and examined singly, but are almost continuous. But love for the wisdom of the Lord, with the charity which arises from it, is a love for distinct truths, and presents itself in manners and acts each of which presents a distinct thought. Goodness is one and continuous; truth is manifold and separable.

That kids represent spiritual innocence is plain from their inquiring restlessness, compared with the quiet content of lambs. This innocence is received naturally by infants of the kind just described; it is received interiorly and spiritually by those who love wisdom, when, having learned that their own intelligence is delusive and foolish, they are led and taught by the Lord alone.

The love of wisdom, even the love of being taught by the Lord, is sadly liable to perversion. If it retains its innocence, it holds the truth rever-

ently, and serves it humbly, delighting to introduce others to the ennobling service. It may, however, too easily make truth the servant and self the master, using truth to glorify self, and introducing others, not to the service of truth, but to the service of self as the possessor of truth.

The love of truth for truth's sake, and the affection for leading to truth, is represented by he-goats in a good sense; and the love of cherishing the affection for truth and showing the goodness of it in life, is represented by she-goats.<sup>1</sup> But the love of exalting self by means of the truth, and of taking to self the honor and regard that belong to the truth, is figured in the wantonness and mischievousness of goats.

The goats on the left hand had learned truth from the Lord, but they had not lived it. They had gloried in it, and demanded honor and service on account of it; and the very truth they had condemned them (*Apocalypse Explained* #817).

Upon the head of a goat were laid all the sins of the congregation of Israel, and he bore them away into the wilderness, a representative of the people taught by the mouth of the Lord, yet

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1. Kids: spiritual innocence. She-goats: charity or the good of truth. He-goats: the love of truth for truth's sake or for the sake of self. *Arcana Coelestia* #4169, 3519, 3995.

despising others, and finally rejecting the Lord Himself because He would not use His Divine power to exalt them above all other nations upon the earth (*Apocalypse Explained* #817).



## OXEN

A leading characteristic of the Ox family is that they are submissive to authority, and easily *driven*. They do not follow their master's call like sheep and goats; but to the word of command and to the goad they are obedient.

This submission to authority they show among themselves. Among a herd of cows feeding, the strongest goes where she chooses, and the others stand aside. If a new cow comes to them, the others gather round, not to hurt her, but to try their strength with her. If she can push the strongest, she is obeyed by them all. If not, she tries her strength with them, one by one, finds her place, makes way for the stronger, and drives out of her path the weaker.

There is, however, no malice in their contests, which are purely trials of strength. The victors do not pursue the conquered. That they yield is sufficient. The animals are usually mild and gentle, innocent in a rough way, and, when young, very playful; "to skip like a calf" is an expressive scriptural phrase.

They have strong affection for one another, feeding always near together, even when they have a wide range of pasture; and, if several herds are in the same pasture, the cattle that live together and are acquainted stay together in the field. If a cow by chance is separated, she runs about, lowing, until she finds her friends.

They are easily contented. With a moderate supply of food, and room for exercise, they eat until they are satisfied, and then lie down, models of tranquil enjoyment.

Cows are remarkable among animals for attachment to their young. If the calf is carried away in sight of its mother, the cow will leave home, friends, and food, and follow as long as she can walk.

The abundance of the milk which they pour out for their offspring is, perhaps, a consequence and a manifestation of this maternal affection. Their milk is of so great a quantity that it affords the main supply of that kind of food for man.

Another important quality in cattle is their capacity for labor. Oxen are large and strong, and will move very heavy loads slowly. They are also patient of difficulties. A succession of obstacles, as in rough plowing, which would exhaust the patience of a horse, and make him restive or unwilling to pull at all, have no such

effect upon the ox; he will pull again and again at the word of command, the hundredth time just as patiently as the first.

We find an external parallel to these qualities in childhood,<sup>1</sup> during the time when the love of acquiring knowledge is the ruling principle—that is, between the ages of seven and fourteen. At this period the feeling of dependence, which is a characteristic of infancy, is wearing away; but obedience is strong—obedience to command and to rules.

Children of this age are very much under control of the strongest will. A group of school children behave, when a new companion comes among them, just as the cattle do. They approach cautiously, the stronger ones more confidently, and, if they are rude, they soon engage him in trials of physical strength; if of better character, they test his skill and zeal for their favorite pursuits. He soon finds his place, and is respected and treated accordingly. Though fond of rough play, such children are usually guiltless of intentional harm; and their sympathy with those who are oppressed and in trouble is always ready. It is a rare child who is not willing to pour out his

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #2179, 2180, 2566; *Apocalypse Revealed* #242.

own stores generously to assist the weak, and to relieve those who are suffering.

Their good will also is patient and persevering. If it does not succeed in accomplishing its object in one way, it tries another and again another, working patiently as long as it has strength.

The heavy loads of the mind are stores of facts and knowledge in the memory, which children carry easily, but only a little way—not yet being able to bring remote things together.

These good qualities of childhood generally disappear in youth, and are succeeded by faculties less kindly, less patient, but of greater intellectual activity.

But as men advance in regeneration, knowing well their own difficulties in doing well, they may again become patient of the faults of others, patient too in overcoming their own natural habits of thought and misplaced facts, which, like stumps and stones, cumber the ground, and also in helping others to do the same, and to prepare their minds for better thoughts and uses.

The sincere friendliness of those who are trying together to live a good life in obedience to known truth, is rightly represented by a kind and patient *ox*. The affection for learning all the ways of useful life and work—an affection

which is innocent and glad—is represented by a calf; and the love of encouraging such affections in others, by neighborly communication of the ways in which we enjoy living, is represented by a milk cow.<sup>1</sup> The milk itself is the truth; the butter is the kindness; the sugar the pleasantness; and the curd is the love of work in it. A mother who is a willing worker, patient, helpful, and contented, desires to train her child to similar helpfulness; she accordingly teaches the child what is useful and practicable, and with her teaching imparts also her kindness, her love of work, and her pleasure in it. The child interested in learning the mother's ways is spiritually a calf, and grows by the milk of the mother's teaching. So, too, a person coming into a society engaged in useful work, or entering upon a new occupation, desires to know how to help; he needs friendly instruction, such as is represented by milk; his desire for it is spiritually a calf, which learns eagerly, and gambols with delight in his growing powers.

When a society has little regard for spiritual life, and is engaged in doing, not what will minister to the lasting good of its members and the community, but what is expressively called

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #2184; *Apocalypse Revealed* #2420.

“having a good time,” that is, in obtaining the greatest present pleasure, the desire to be initiated into its knowledge and enjoyments is also represented by a calf, but in a perverted sense. This was the desire of the Israelites, who, while Moses was receiving the Law for them from Jehovah, impatient at the slow fulfillment of the Divine promises, gathered riotously in heathen sports and feasts about a golden calf, which represented the affection which they chose to serve.<sup>1</sup>

It was said of the Lord representatively, by the prophet Isaiah, “Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good”; and by butter is meant the kindness and goodness which the Lord in His boyhood would perceive in the instructions of the Word, and by honey the natural pleasantness of learning from it. By this the Lord learned to distinguish good from evil.

Burnt offerings of calves, bullocks, and heifers were frequent among the ceremonies of the Jewish Church; and by them were represented the continual perception and acknowledgment by spiritual men that the good things represented

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1. *Apocalypse Revealed* #242.

by these animals are in the Lord, and from Him alone in man.

The Lord received such things in Divine purity and fullness from His Divinity into His Humanity; and by such reception His Humanity was perfected. In the history of Abraham we have, in the spiritual sense, an account of the growth and spiritual progress of the Lord in His childhood and youth. And therefore it was that when the angels appeared to Abraham, by which was represented the Lord's interior perception of the Divinity within Him, Abraham presented to them butter and milk and the calf which he had dressed; and in that prophetic act was foretold by the Lord the growth in His own Humanity of natural goodness and truth and the affection for them.

In comparing the ox family with sheep and goats, it is worthy of notice that, as they feed naturally, the kine prefer the ranker grasses of the valleys and over hillsides, but the sheep and goats climb the mountains, preferring the sweeter though scantier grasses of their less accessible nooks and slopes. These correspond to truths concerning a state of spiritual elevation, or nearness to the Lord; and the coarser food to truth of good natural life.

All these animals naturally have horns and divided hoofs, and chew the cud; and because of their divided hoofs and ruminating habit they were by the Levitical Law clean for food and fit for sacrifices. Their horns represent the truth by which good loves defend themselves, and which they desire others to obey. They are truths of experience which grow from their own life, and which they are ready to maintain as fixed and certain.

Hoofs are of similar material, formed to take hold of the ground and support the animal as it stands, walks, or runs. They represent the hold we have from our own experience upon facts and natural truth. If we desire to do good to another, we must *be sure of our footing* as we approach; there must be common facts and natural principles which we can stand upon; if these fail, we are brought to a stand; or if we have been hurt by them, or are morbidly sensitive to them, we advance lamely.

A solid hoof, as of a horse or ass, desires only to know what it is sound and right; this it strikes with a blow and bounds on. A divided hoof is itself more tender; it presses more lightly and carefully, and feels each step in two ways, considering not only whether its ground is true, but whether it is good also. This is characteristic of



the steps of the good loves represented by sheep, goats, and kine.

The rumination of these animals represents the meditation of such affections upon truth learned, for the sake of giving it. Merely to eat and swallow is to understand and receive; further rumination is from love for good life. Because the natural good will which oxen represent may be turned either to good or to evil, Swedenborg calls them animals of a “mediate kind,” and speaks of seeing them in the World of Spirits, but not in Heaven, nor in Hell.<sup>1</sup>

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1. *Apocalypse Explained* #1200.

## THE “UNICORN”

There is one other animal mentioned in the Scriptures which should be noticed here; and that is the “Unicorn.” The name “unicorn” is a translator’s mistake. The Bible says that the animal has “horns,” not one horn (Deuteronomy 33:17, Hebrew); and further, that it was fit for sacrifice (Isaiah 34:7)—consequently having divided hoofs and chewing the cud; that it was an animal of great size and strength, but too wild to plough or harrow (Job 39:9–12). In two places also it is used as a poetic parallel to a bullock or calf: “His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of an unicorn” (Deuteronomy 33:17); “He maketh them also to skip like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn” (Psalm 29:6).

These facts seem entirely to justify the unanimous conclusion of modern Bible scholars that the animal belonged to the ox family, and probably to that branch of it which was formerly common in northern Europe under the name of Auerochs, or yore ox (ancient ox), abbreviated

by the Romans to Urus; which is said still to exist in the Caucasus mountains; whose form is sculptured upon the monuments of Nimroud as a wild animal of the chase; whose bones, six and a half feet in height and twelve in length, with bony horn cores more than three feet long, are found in Switzerland; and whose teeth Tristram asserts that he found in Palestine.<sup>1</sup>

If all this is to be trusted, as I think it is, we are prepared to see that the "Reem" represents the vehement power of a love for merely external good things, not subordinated to spiritual love, to urge and insist upon its principles, whether true or false.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Tristram's *Natural History of the Bible*; Art. "Unicorn"; *Bible Dictionary*; and Wood's *Bible Animals*.

2. *Apocalypse Explained* #316; *Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture* #18.

## ANIMALS USED FOR TRANSPORTATION

The general distinction as to uses between the class of animals used for food and sacrifices—sheep, goats, and cattle—and those which labor in carrying burdens, is that the former give their own substance, their milk and wool, their skins and flesh, for beneficent purposes; but the latter give their power of action.

There is a similar distinction between the mental faculties to which they correspond. If we share with one another our love for the Lord and for the neighbor, showing mutual sympathy and kindness, and communicating helpful knowledge of good ways of life, in the effort to communicate ourselves to others we exercise the affections represented by sheep, goats, and kine. But if there be a subject which we wish to understand, and we set our minds to work upon it, in the delight of understanding we are exercising the intellectual faculties represented by the animals which serve for transportation.

There are many varieties of mental activity in persons of different qualities and at different

stages of life. Some are slow and plodding, and others quick and frisky; some are minute, others broad and comprehensive; some are uncertain, unexpectedly shying and starting, and requiring constant watching to make any progress, and others are strong, steady, and well sustained. Some, again, are set and obstinate, utterly unwilling and mentally unable to vary their gait, and almost equally averse to changing their direction; while others are free and generous, yielding easily and gracefully to the varying emotions of the will and demands of the occasion. In these characteristics of the mental powers we cannot fail to see in a general view the likeness of our traveling animals; and the likeness becomes more distinct as we examine more closely the working of our minds. Observe, for instance, the tendency of the mind to run in familiar channels, how disposed it is to think over and say over the things it has thought and said before; and when we have started it in pursuit of some remote object, see how it takes advantage of every relaxation of the reins to turn back towards home, and go over the easy, familiar ways of thought. Notice how freely and confidently it steps where it is sure of its facts, and its own experiences are abundant to sustain it; and again, how lamely it moves where its experi-

ence is deficient, or it is morbidly sensitive to the facts of the case.

Literature and common speech show that this likeness is not unfamiliar. The ancient Greeks—who made the top of their highest mountain, Olympus, the home of the gods, established the abode of Heavenly wisdom upon the lower mountain, Heliconæum, and that of the wisdom of men upon Parnassus—described the flights of the understanding, in its effort to attain spiritual truth, as a winged horse called Pegasus, who, as he swiftly ascended the slopes of Heliconæum, burst open with a stroke of his hoof the fountain of the Muses; by which they understood the birth of the sciences from the influence of spiritual intelligence upon natural knowledge.<sup>1</sup> We moderns preserve the figure of the winged horse as descriptive of a poet's power of seeing the real life of events through their outward forms. More familiarly yet, we speak of a man of magnificent ideas as riding a high-stepping horse; and, with too much impatience, we call an obstinate man, who is impenetrable by new ideas, an ass or a donkey.

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #4966, 7729, 2762; *Conjugal Love* #182; *White Horse*.

## THE HORSE AND THE ASS

In our more particular examination of mental characteristics, we will begin with those figured in the ass, attending first to the nature of the animal. Tristram says of him:

When we read of the ass in Holy Scripture we must not picture to ourselves the stunted, degraded, spiritless, and ill-used creature which we too often meet with in northern countries, where the ass has degenerated both in size and spirit from the powerful and nimble animal of the East. The ass is less capable of enduring cold than the horse, and has often degenerated as it has advanced northwards.

In Syria, it has almost as much care bestowed on it as the horse; it is groomed and well fed, always obtaining its share of barley with its equine companions; great attention is paid to the cultivation of the breed, and the finest and tallest he-asses are carefully selected. . . . They have often great vivacity, and exhibit both ingenuity and humor, sometimes decidedly mischievous. One of our asses which had been severely beaten for misconduct by a member of our party, never

forgot the circumstance, but, while ready to sniff and caress any of the others, would stand demurely whenever his old enemy was near, as if unconscious of his presence, until he was within reach of his heels, when a sharp sudden kick, with a look of more than ordinary asinine stolidity, was the certain result. The Eastern ass will accomplish quite as long a day's journey as the horse or the camel; though its speed is not so great, it will maintain an easy trot and canter for hours without flagging, and always gains on the horse up the hills or on the broken ground.

Other writers unanimously testify to the superiority of the asses of Egypt and Palestine over those with which we are acquainted. Yet I suppose that even the best asses will justify Hamerton's discriminating criticism:

The deficiency of the ass may be expressed in a single word; it is deficiency of delicacy. You can guide a good horse as delicately as a sailing boat; when the skillful driver has an inch to spare he is perfectly at his ease, and he can twist in and out amongst the throng of vehicles when a momentary display of self-will in the animal would be the cause of an immediate accident. The ass appears to be incapable of any delicate discipline of this kind. He may be strong, swift, courageous, entirely free from any serious vice; but he is always in a greater or less degree unmanageable. When he is really vicious, that is another



matter. There is no end to his inventions, for he is quite as intelligent as the horse, and a thousand times more indifferent to man's opinion or man's punishment. I have seen a donkey feign death so perfectly as to take in everybody but his master, who had been too often a spectator of that little comedy." (*Chapters on Animals*)

This waywardness is very strongly marked in asses as we commonly know them; they stop when they please, and go when they please; their own whims they will follow, no matter at what inconvenience to their rider, with a headstrong assurance that they know what is best; and only the most patient coaxing, or blows which seem really cruel, will affect their resolution.

In contrast with this somewhat slow, minute, and self-willed character—that we may see both natures more distinctly by comparison—the *horses* of the Arabs, which are probably as far superior to ours for riding purposes as are the asses, seem to be almost perfect embodiments of their masters' love of going. A well-bred Arab mare is off like the wind, as the tension of her master's body and the tightening grasp of the knees betoken his desire, her delicate ears straining to catch every sound, and her sensitive skin every lightest touch, of command. A touch upon the neck guides her, the relaxation of her rider's

body slackens her speed almost as if she were his own organs of locomotion. And the same responsiveness to the human will is in a great degree characteristic of all good horses.

To complete the contrast, it should be added that the speed of horses is, as a whole, considerably superior, though they are not so able to pick their way carefully over stony paths and hill-sides. Horses also require a somewhat more generous diet of good grass and grain, and would starve on the coarse shrubs and thistles which asses eat with pleasure, and sometimes in preference to better fare.

Man, as a rider, represents the human will with its power to choose good or evil, and to compel the reasoning, thinking mind to support it in the ways of its choice.

A generous horse, in the good sense, represents a mind that delights in thinking the truth which the spiritual will desires. It bounds lightly over natural truths, using them as supports to its flight, but giving its first attention to the spiritual love which it bears. An ass, picking its way more carefully among the stones, heeding its rider less and the objects about it more, represents in a good sense the right understanding of natural things.

The horse represents, Swedenborg says,<sup>1</sup> the *intellect*—the power of seeing the inner truth of things, or of understanding spiritual wisdom. The ass represents the power of understanding particulars of knowledge. Of this power of understanding, which the ass represents, there are several kinds. There is a love that takes pleasure in mere quickness of comprehension, sharpness of criticism, and agility in argumentation. It is selfish, solitary, morose, combative. This is the wild ass man, Ishmael, of whom it is said, “His hand shall be against every man, and every man’s hand against him.” Of the wild ass, Tris-tram writes:

I saw a wild ass in the oasis of Souf, which had been snared when a colt; but though it had been kept three years in confinement, it was as intractable as when first caught, biting and kicking furiously at everyone who approached it, and never enduring a saddle on its back. In appearance and color it could not have been distinguished from one of the finest specimens of the tame ass.

But though so closely resembling the tame ass in appearance and physical ability, it is of a differ-

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1. *Apocalypse Explained* #2761; also the treatise on *The White Horse*. On horses in the spiritual world, see *Apocalypse Explained* #364.

ent species. The tame ass, even when allowed to run wild for many generations, is subdued again as quickly as a wild horse;<sup>1</sup> but the wild ass proper is absolutely unwilling to be of service. In this he represents the power of understanding solely for the selfish pleasure in the exercise, never for the sake of use. It is a faculty which cannot take interior views and see things in spiritual light, but still can exercise its wits naturally and remorselessly upon spiritual subjects.

A much nobler understanding is that which, with similar quickness of wit, considers also the goodness and usefulness of the subjects of its thought, and is unwilling to use its powers to the injury of that goodness. This faculty increases in gentleness and nobleness with its willingness to serve. Yet, as the ass never adopts the rider's will for his own, but preserves his individuality, and needs some watchful coercion to make his ways serviceable, so the understanding of this kind never becomes an intelligent perception of spiritual wisdom which perfectly serves spiritual love, but always finds its pleasure in the understanding of the particulars of knowledge presented to it, and unless compelled to its work, it

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1. *Bible Animals.*

magnifies one or another, and continually strays from the main purpose.

Judges in olden time rode upon she-asses because their business was to hear and attend to all the practical questions brought to them, and to advise and decide from a right understanding of the goodness and truth in them. Their sons rode upon young asses, which represent the truths themselves which the judges taught, in which their sons were instructed.<sup>1</sup> In the Song of Deborah, she thus addresses the judges of Israel: “Speak, ye that ride on white asses, ye that sit in judgment and walk by the way” (Judges 5:10). “Jair, the Gileadite, judged Israel twenty and two years; and he had thirty sons that rode upon thirty ass colts” (Judges 10:3, 4).

It was predicted of the Lord that He would come to Zion “sitting upon an ass and a colt the foal of an ass”; because He came then, not to reveal spiritual truth, but to teach what was really good and right in natural life. When He literally fulfilled the prediction, and came to Jerusalem upon the ass, He wept over the city, saying, “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes.” He went

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #2781.

into the temple, and drove out them that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and said, "It is written, My house shall be called of all nations a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." And these are just such things as a noble judge of Israel, not now revealing spiritual truth, but teaching genuine natural goodness and truth, should do and teach.

But when the coming of the Lord to open the Scriptures, to reveal the inner life of all things, and to give intelligence in spiritual truth, is predicted, the form of representation is changed. John says, "I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He that sat upon him is called faithful and true, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and upon His head were many crowns; and He had a name written which no one knew but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and His name is called, The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven followed Him upon white horses clothed in linen white and clean; and He had upon His vesture and upon His thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords" (Revelation 19:11-16). Thus the Lord is represented as to His Divine intelligence concerning the heaven of

angels and the spiritual life of men; and upon those who now receive and follow Him He bestows spiritual intelligence in the interior things of the Word, and the truth which angels think and live, which is represented by white horses upon which they ride.<sup>1</sup>

One other representation we are now prepared to enjoy, which is that when the Lord was born into the world, He was first laid in a manger.

In the manger, asses and horses find their food. In the best sense, asses represent the understanding of what is good and right in practical affairs, and horses intelligence in spiritual things, and this understanding and intelligence are nourished by instruction in truth from the Word. But the truth of the Word is from the Lord and is the Lord; and He first comes consciously to us when we, loving the rightness or the spiritual beauty of the truth of the Word, perceive that it is Himself—His own thought with His life in it. To everyone's consciousness He first lies in the manger.

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1. Citations above; also *Apocalypse Revealed* #611.

## THE MULE

Another kind of understanding intermediate between these two is the understanding of natural truth in the light of spiritual intelligence. The animal which represents this understanding is the mule, the offspring of the ass and the mare.

Mr. Wood remarks:

It is a very strange circumstance that the offspring of these two animals should be, for some purposes, far superior to either of the parents, a well-bred mule having the lightness, sure-footedness, and hardy endurance of the ass, together with the increased size and muscular development of the horse. Thus it is peculiarly adapted either for the saddle or for the conveyance of burdens over a rough or desert country

He adds:

The mules that are most generally serviceable are bred from the male ass and the mare, those which have the horse as the father and the ass as the mother being small and comparatively valueless.

The reason of this seems to be that this smaller mule has the spirit and desires of the horse with only the faculties of the ass, and must corre-



spond to a mental state in which spiritual intelligence can exercise itself only through a knowledge of natural truth—seeing this, however, I should suppose, more intelligently, and using it more generously in the service of the spiritual man. The larger mule would have the more moderate ambition of the ass with the larger abilities of the horse, and would correspond to natural truth as considered by the faculties of spiritual intelligence, and thus to a rational and more comprehensive understanding of natural things in their relation to one another and to spiritual things. It was on account of this somewhat nobler understanding of natural things which the mule represented that kings formerly rode upon mules, as judges upon asses; and that Solomon was mounted upon David's mule was equivalent to placing him upon the judgment seat of the kingdom.

The mule is, however, in moral quality still an ass. Mr. Wood continues his description thus:

That the mule was as obstinate and contentious an animal in Palestine as it is in Europe, is evident from the fact that the Eastern mules of the present day are quite as troublesome as their European brethren. They are very apt to shy at anything or nothing at all; they bite fiercely, and every now and then they indulge in a violent kicking fit, flinging up their heels with wonderful

force and rapidity, and turning round on their forefeet so quickly that it is hardly possible to approach them. There is scarcely a traveler in the Holy Land who has not some story to tell about the mule and its perverse disposition.

Probably everyone feels in his own mind the difference as to gentleness and charity between a rational understanding of natural things, though it be with a view to their spiritual relations, and an intelligent delight in spiritual truth for the sake of the life of Heaven. There is the same difference between the temper of both ass and mule and that of a good horse.

## THE CAMEL

Another animal most important for transportation under certain circumstances is the camel. An excellent account of him is given by Mr. Wood, from which I will quote at some length, because we have so little personal acquaintance with the animal, though the mental character which he symbolizes is much more familiar. I will premise that the camel is fitted for its desert life especially by its power of storing nourishment in its hump and water in one of its stomachs, so that for several days at a time it can journey comfortably with small supplies of both. Mr. Wood continues:

The food of the camel is very simple, being, in fact, anything that it can get. As it proceeds on its journey, it manages to browse as it goes along, bending its long neck to the ground, and cropping the scanty herbage without a pause. Camels have been known to travel for twenty successive days, passing over some eight hundred miles of ground, without receiving any food except that which they gathered for themselves by the way.

The favorite food of the camel is a shrub called the ghada, growing to six feet or so in height, and forming a feathery tuft of innumerable little green twigs, very slender and flexible. It is so fond of this shrub that a camel can scarcely ever pass a bush without turning aside to crop it; and even though it be beaten severely for its misconduct, it will repeat the process at the next shrub that comes in sight. It also feeds abundantly on the thorn bushes which grow so plentifully in that part of the world; and though the thorns are an inch or two in length, very strong, and as sharp as needles, the hard, horny palate of the animal enables it to devour them with perfect ease.

This is the manner of feeding; however, only in crossing the desert and when more nourishing food cannot be had. At other times it is well fed, and it is essential to a successful journey that at the start it be in good flesh, with a full, firm hump of fat.

These advantages would be useless without another—i.e., the foot. The mixed stones and sand of the desert would ruin the feet of almost any animal, and it is necessary that the camel should be furnished with a foot that cannot be split by heat like the hoof of a horse, that is broad enough to prevent the creature from sinking into the sand, and is tough enough to withstand the action of the rough and burning soil. Such a foot

does the camel possess. It consists of two long toes resting upon a hard elastic cushion with a tough and horny sole. . . . Owing to the division of the toes, it spreads as the weight comes upon it, and thus gives a firm footing on loose ground. . . . In consequence of this structure, the camel sinks less deeply into the ground than any other animal. . . . It is popularly thought that hills are impracticable to the camel, but it is able to climb even rocky ground from which a horse would recoil.

The ordinary camels are large and clumsy; but in the eyes of an Arab a good deloul, or dromedary, "is one of the finest sights in the world."

The limbs of the deloul are long and wiry, having not an ounce of superfluous fat upon them, the shoulders are very broad, and the hump, though firm and hard, is very small. . . . Instead of plodding along at the rate of three miles an hour, which is the average speed of the common camel, the deloul can cover, if lightly loaded, nine or ten miles an hour, and go on at the same pace for a wonderful time, its long legs swinging and its body swaying as if it were but an animated machine. Delouls have been reported to have journeyed for nearly fifty hours without a single stop for rest, during which time the animals must have traversed nearly five hundred miles. Such examples must, however, be exceptional, implying, as they do, an amount of endur-

ance on the part of the rider equal to that of the animal, and even a journey of half that distance is scarcely possible to ordinary men on delouls.

The stern gravity of the camel's character is most strikingly shown by its young, of which it is said that it is not one whit more playful than its parents.

Unlike almost all other animals, the camel seems to have no idea of play, and even the young camel of a month or two old follows its mother with the same steady, regular pace which she herself maintains.

The camels know their master well, some of them being more affectionate than others. But they are liable to fits of strange fury, in which case even their own masters are not safe from them. They are also of a revengeful nature, and have an unpleasant faculty of treasuring up an injury until they can find a time of repaying it."

Several instances are related by travelers of the cruel murder of their masters by camels in revenge for harsh treatment, after days of delay.

Still, it is not a clever animal. If its master should fall off its back, it never dreams of stopping, as a well-trained horse would do, but proceeds at the same plodding pace, leaving his master to catch it if he can. Should it turn out of the way to crop some green thorn bush, it would go on in the same direction, never thinking of turning back into the right road unless directed by its rider.

Should the camel stray, “it is a thousand to one that he will never find his way back to his accustomed home or pasture, and the first man who picks him up will have no particular shyness to get over; . . . the losing of his old master and of his former cameline companions gives him no regret, and occasions no endeavor to find them again.”

The camel never makes way for anyone, its instinct leading it to plod onward in its direct course. Through innate stupidity, according to Mr. Palgrave, it goes straight forwards in the direction to which its head happens to be pointed, and is too foolish even to think of stopping unless it hears the signal for halt.

It is no kindly charity that is thus described, nor gentle spiritual affection for truth. It is a stern mind, comprehensive in its grasp of natural principles, un pitying and unwearying in its application of them. It is a mind that applies general principles regardless of their particular consequences.<sup>1</sup> It is the faculty which trains youth for physical contests through hardship and severe discipline. It is the reformer who would cut off abuses by sweeping laws heedless of the injuries which they must also inflict. It is John the Baptist, who came, as his name implies, to cut off

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #2781, 3048 end.

the abuses of life into which the Jews had fallen, and compel them to straight, honest, upright ways in which the Lord could come to them. A fearless rebuker of king, soldiers, Pharisees, and common people alike, he was clothed in camel's hair, he lived in the wilderness, and braved the death which his own righteous severity provoked.

The camel lives in the desert because the camel-mind cares not to produce, but to destroy the growth of abuses; it thrives upon hard, negative prohibitions, where others would starve for want of pleasant, kindly words and acts. He chews the cud, because such a mind meditates upon and generalizes all its knowledge. He does not divide the hoof because it does not consider the kindness and usefulness of its steps; it cares only for their rightfulness. The breadth of the foot is its power of generalizing the facts upon which it depends. His water stomach is its ample memory of cleansing truth; his hump the memory of the good results of discipline and reform.



## THE ELEPHANT

Elephants are sometimes employed to carry burdens, not for great distances, but when great force is required, or great sagacity under trying circumstances. Perhaps no other animal, not even a dog, is so quick in comprehending a difficult situation, and so ready in removing the difficulties.

This quickness of perception seems to arise from an underlying love and sense of justice, which is sensitive to injustice and false pretenses, and therefore quick to perceive the real state of a case.

The following characteristic anecdotes illustrate these qualities in the elephant. The first is quoted by Mr. Wood from Sir Emerson Tennent's work on Ceylon:

One evening, while riding in the vicinity of Kandy, . . . my horse evinced some excitement at a noise which approached us in the thick jungle, and which consisted of a repetition of the ejaculation, *urmph! urmph!* in a hoarse and dissatisfied tone. A turn in the forest explained the

mystery, by bringing me face to face with a tame elephant, unaccompanied by any attendant. He was laboring painfully to carry a heavy beam of timber, which he balanced across his tusks, but the pathway being narrow, he was forced to bend his head to one side to permit it to pass endways; and the exertion and inconvenience combined led him to utter the dissatisfied sounds which disturbed the composure of my horse.

On seeing us halt, the elephant raised his head, reconnoitered us for a moment, then flung down the timber, and forced himself backwards among the brushwood, so as to leave a passage, of which he expected us to avail ourselves. My horse still hesitated; the elephant observed, and impatiently thrust himself still deeper into the jungle, repeating his cry of *urmph!* but in a voice evidently meant to encourage us to come on. Still the horse trembled; and, anxious to observe the instinct of the two sagacious creatures, I forbore any interference. Again the elephant wedged himself farther in amongst the trees, and waited impatiently for us to pass him; and after the horse had done so, tremblingly and timidly, I saw the wise creature stoop and take up his heavy burden; turn and balance it on his tusks, and resume his route, hoarsely snorting, as before, his discontented remonstrance.

The sense of injustice and sagacity in exposing sham are conspicuous in the next two anecdotes:

A gentleman in India had a favorite elephant, and was wont always to be present at the time his keeper was feeding him. Business, however, demanded his absence for many weeks, and he gave the charge of feeding him to his servant. This man, however, was greedy and avaricious, and gave the poor animal only half the food to which he had been accustomed, so that he became very lean, and by the time his owner returned, looked as if ready to drop down. The faithless servant declared he could not imagine what was the reason of the animal's falling away, as he had been well fed. At the next feeding time, however, his master was present, and a full portion, of course, was placed before the animal, who, dividing it into two portions, ate one eagerly, and, after first touching the other with his trunk, pointed to the servant in such a manner that the gentleman at once guessed the cause of his favorite's appearance.

Another elephant which was growing unaccountably thin was visited by its owner near the close of a meal. Its keeper protesting that it received full supplies, and that there was no known cause for the emaciation, the elephant seized him, and shook out from the folds of his garments the pilfered grain which he was carrying away.

Even when guilty of a sham himself, he shows a remarkable consciousness of the fact that it is a sham. An elephant in Ceylon:

... was employed in laying stones under the supervision of an overseer. Whenever he completed one course, he signaled to the overseer, who came and inspected his work; and after ascertaining that the task was properly performed, gave the signal to lay another course. On one occasion the elephant placed himself against a portion of the wall, and refused to move from the spot when the overseer came to the part of the wall which his body concealed. The overseer, however, insisted on the animal's moving aside, and the elephant seeing that his ruse had failed, immediately set hard to work at pulling down the wall which he had just built, and which was defective in the spot which he had been attempting to conceal from the inspector's eye.

The following story illustrates the sensibility of elephants both to injury and to kindness:

An elephant refused to pass over a slight bridge which had been erected in a theatre, deeming it unsafe. There stood the animal, with downcast eyes and flapping ears, meekly submitting to blow after blow from a sharp iron goad, which his keeper was driving ferociously into the fleshy part of his neck, at the root of the ear. The floor on which he stood was converted into a pool of blood. One of the proprietors, impatient at what

he regarded as senseless obstinacy, kept urging the driver to proceed to still severer extremities, when Charles Young, who was a great lover of animals, expostulated with him, went up to the poor, patient sufferer, and patted and caressed him; and when the driver was about to wield his instrument again with even greater vigor, he caught him by the wrist as in a vice, and stayed his hand from further violence. While an angry altercation was going on between Young and the man of color, who was the driver, Captain Hay, of the *Ashel*, who had brought over "Chung" in his ship, and had petted him greatly on the voyage, came in and begged to know what was the matter. Before a word of explanation could be given, the much wronged creature spoke for himself; for, as soon as he perceived the entrance of his patron, he waddled up to him, and, with a look of gentle appeal, caught hold of his hand with his proboscis, plunged it into his bleeding wound, and then thrust it before his eyes. . . . The hearts of the hardest present were sensibly touched by what they saw, and among them that of the gentleman who had been so energetic in promoting its harsh treatment. It was under a far better impulse that he ran out into the street, purchased a few apples at a stall, and offered them to him. Chung eyed him askance, took them, threw them beneath his feet, and when he had crushed them to pulp, spurned them from him. Young,

who had gone into Covent Garden on the same errand, . . . shortly after returned, and also held out to him some fruit, when, to the astonishment of the bystanders, the elephant ate every morsel, and after he had done so, twined his trunk with studied gentleness around Young's waist.

Very many anecdotes are related of elephants, and they all seem more or less to illustrate and confirm the idea that a sense of natural justice is their essential characteristic. An apparent exception exists in the willingness with which the domesticated females aid in the capture of wild males; but even this may come from their appreciation of the kindness which they themselves have received, and their notion that the captive males will appreciate it after they are accustomed to it. The first feeling of the males, when they discover that they are bound, is one of fierce resentment at the apparent treachery; but it would be satisfactory to know if they forgive it, when kindness makes their captivity pleasant to them.

The most striking peculiarities of the elephant's form—the trunk and the tusks—appear to sustain this view of his character. The nose, by its sense of smell, detects the essential quality of a thing, and ferrets out a deception which the eye would never discover. This is the peculiar talent

of those in the province of the nose in the other world; whence Swedenborg says that the nose corresponds to perception. But in the elephant it is the nose that is developed into the trunk. Its sense of smell is keen, probably residing chiefly in the highest part of the cavity, as in other animals, and its extension becomes the means of examining and taking up every article of food and drink, and conveying it to the mouth. Such a development of the nose can hardly fail to represent a corresponding development of the perception of fairness or of shams.

The elephant is not mentioned in the Bible; but Solomon “made a great throne of *ivory*, and overlaid it with the best gold” (1 Kings 10:18). Ivory also was brought by the ships of Tharshish (1 Kings 10:22), and was among the treasures of the king of Tyre (Ezekiel 27:6, 15). And ivory is from the tusks of elephants, and has the same signification.

The tusks, which are used to uproot small trees, to break off the branches, and strip off the bark, as well as for weapons of offense and defense, are enormous developments of teeth. And teeth, which are stationed as guards at the entrance to the mouth, have for their common function to break open and expose the interior quality of every morsel of food that seeks

entrance to the body. Their correspondence is with the kind of truth by which such exploration is effected. The tusks of the elephant, with their peculiar development and use, correspond to truth of natural justice by which all external appearances are stripped off, and hidden motives and actions are brought to light; and their ivory, in its perfect elasticity, its whiteness and hardness, is a representative of knowledge of what is perfectly fair, sincere, and just, which is the means of compelling justice—the suitable material for the throne of Solomon.

The love of justice is probably the strongest and most vehement of our natural feelings, as the elephant is the largest and strongest of the land animals. This affection is easily chafed and irritated; and when its resentment is thoroughly aroused, it is the most furious and vehement of all affections. And we are told that, in perfect parallelism with this, the elephant, unwieldy as he is, is so liable to chafing of the skin, and tenderness of the feet, that with the best of care he can be used only about four days in the week; and that occasionally an elephant, in a chronic state of ill humor and exasperation—in which condition he is called a “rogue elephant”—breaks loose from all restraint, and roams the woods and the fields, venting his indignation



everywhere, dreaded and shunned both by his former companions and by his more recent masters.

Swedenborg mentions elephants, together with horses, asses, camels, lions, and some other animals, among the animals seen by him, not in Heaven nor in Hell, but in the World of Spirits, where the interior quality of all is explored, and where the separation of the good from the evil is effected.<sup>1</sup>

Certainly the mental faculty which they represent is here especially useful. It is also in harmony with the nature of this faculty, that elephants are among the very few animals that have been trained to efficient service in war.

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1. *Apocalypse Explained* #1200.

## ANTELOPES AND DEER

Several species of antelopes and deer are mentioned in the Bible under various names, which in our version are often mistranslated. Some of the species are not satisfactorily determined; but there seems to be no doubt that “hart” and “hind” are names rightly applied to the male and the female of true deer, perhaps of several species, and that the “wild roe” of our translation is the gazelle, one of the most familiar and graceful of antelopes. We will confine ourselves to these as types; and from these others will readily be distinguished when they are accurately known.

Of antelopes, in general, Mr. Wood writes:

Resembling the deer in many respects, they are easily to be distinguished from those animals by the character of the horns, which are hollow at the base, set upon a solid core like those of the oxen, and are permanently retained throughout the life of the animal. Indeed, the antelopes are allied very closely to the sheep and goats, and, in some instances, are very goat-like in external form. In all cases the antelopes are light and ele-

gant of body, their limbs are gracefully slender, and are furnished with small cloven hoofs. The tail is never of any great length, and in some species is very short. The horns, set above the eyebrows, are either simply conical, or are bent so as to resemble the two horns of the ancient lyre. (*Natural History*, "Antelopes")

The gazelles of Palestine, Tristram thus describes from his own observation:

It is not so much because it yields savory meat as from its swiftness, grace, beauty, and gentleness that the gazelle is best known. . . . It is by far the most abundant of all the large game in Palestine; indeed it is the only wild animal of the chase which an ordinary traveler has any chance of seeing. Small herds of gazelle are to be found in every part of the country, and in the south they congregate in herds of near a hundred together. One such herd I met with at the southern end of the Jebel Usdum, or salt mountain, south of the Dead Sea, where they had congregated to drink of the only sweet spring within several miles, Ain Beida. Though generally considered an animal of the desert and the plains, the gazelle appears at home everywhere. It shares the rocks of Engedi with the wild goats; it dashes over the wide expanse of the desert beyond Beersheba; it canters in single file under the monastery of Marsaba. We found it in the glades of Carmel, and it often springs from its leafy covert on the back of

Tabor, and screens itself under the thorn bushes of Gennesaret. Among the gray hills of Galilee it is still 'the roe upon the mountains of Bether,' and I have seen a little troop of gazelle feeding on the Mount of Olives, close to Jerusalem itself.

While, in the open glades of the south, it is the wildest of game, and can only be approached, unless by chance, at its accustomed drinking places, and that before the dawn of morning, in the glades of Galilee it is very easily surprised, and trusts to the concealment of its covert for safety. I have repeatedly startled the gazelle from a brake only a few yards in front of me; and once, when ensconced out of sight in a storax bush, I watched a pair of gazelle with their kid which the dam was suckling. Ever and anon both the soft-eyed parents would gambol with it as though fawns themselves.

In Gilead, in the forest districts especially, . . . the ariel gazelle is extremely numerous, and in riding among the oaks we were continually putting up small troops. It is, if possible, a more beautiful creature than the common gazelle, of which it is now considered only a local variety."

Of the ariel, Mr. Wood writes:

So exquisitely graceful are its movements, and with such light activity does it traverse the ground, that it seems almost to set at defiance the laws of gravitation, and, like the fabled Camilla, to be able to tread the grass without bending a

single green blade. When it is alarmed, and runs with its fullest speed, it lays its head back, so that the nose projects forward, while the horns lie almost as far back as the shoulders, and then skims over the ground with such marvelous celerity that it seems rather to fly than to run, and cannot be overtaken even by the powerful, long-legged, and long-bodied greyhounds which are employed in the chase by the native hunters.

Some of the general characteristics of antelopes appear more clearly from the descriptions of several kinds. Of the springbok, a South African antelope, it is said:

The springbok is a marvelously timid animal, and will never cross a road if it can avoid the necessity. When it is forced to do so, it often compromises the difficulty by leaping over the spot which has been tainted by the foot of man. (Wood's *Natural History*)

The pallah, another South African antelope:

. . . has a curious habit of walking away when alarmed, in the quietest and most silent manner imaginable, lifting up its feet high from the ground, lest it should haply strike its foot against a dry twig and give an alarm to its hidden foe. Pallahs have also a custom of walking in single file, each following the steps of its leader with a blind confidence.

The Indian antelope, or sasin:

... is a wonderfully swift animal, and quite despises such impotent foes as dogs and men, fearing only the falcon. . . . At each bound the sasin will cover twenty-five or thirty feet of ground, and will rise even ten or eleven feet from the earth, so that it can well afford to despise the dogs. . . . It is a most wary animal, not only setting sentinels to keep a vigilant watch, as is the case with so many animals, but actually detaching pickets in every direction, to a distance of several hundred yards from the main body of the herd.

Of the rhoodebok, Mr. Wood quotes from Capt. Drayson:

It is very amusing to watch the habits of this wary buck when it scents danger in the bush. Its movements become most cautious; lifting its legs with high but very slow action, it appears to be walking on tiptoe among the briers and underwood, its ears moving in all directions, and its nose pointed upwind, or towards the suspected locality. If it hears a sudden snapping of a branch, or any other suspicious sound, it stands still like a statue, the foot which is elevated remains so, and the animal scarce shows a sign of life for near a minute. It then moves slowly onwards with the same cautious step, hoping thus to escape detection.

The chamois of Switzerland are, perhaps, as shy of man as any antelopes. Of some that were

domesticated as far as possible, it is related that they were "particularly inquisitive and curious, prying into everything"; and, what is probably in a greater or less degree characteristic of the family, "they would never suffer themselves to be touched; a finger not having yet reached them. They would admit of the hand being softly brought near their persons, but, immediately as it arrived within an inch of their head or body, they would vault, suddenly and lightly, from the professed contamination."

Most of these characteristics are common to antelopes and deer. "There is scarcely any animal," Mr. Wood says, "so watchful as the female deer. It is comparatively easy to deceive the stag who leads the herd, but to evade the eyes and ears of the hinds is a very different business, and taxes all the resources of a practiced hunter" (*Natural History*). The desire to escape observation shows itself almost as soon as the fawn is born. "Mr. St. John relates that he once saw a very young red deer, not more than an hour old, standing by its mother, and receiving her caresses. As soon as the watchful parent caught sight of the stranger, she raised her forefoot, and administered a gentle tap to her offspring, which immediately laid itself flat upon the ground, and crouched close to the earth, as if endeavoring to

delude the supposed enemy into an idea that it was nothing more than a block of stone.”

Both antelopes and deer chew the cud and divide the hoof. They therefore were among the animals permitted for food, and correspond to some sort of kind and pleasant affections, not stimulating to the understanding merely, but encouraging to the heart. These affections are akin to the mutual love, charity, and helpfulness represented by sheep, goats, and oxen; but they love their own sweet will, and choose to show their graceful gentleness only in their own way, in entire freedom. The animals live in the forests and uncultivated plains, which represent the natural mind either unsubdued or in a state of rest. The Lord said to His disciples, “Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile”; and the desert or uncultivated place represents the state of rest. The animals, therefore, are forms of impulses, gentle, kindly, attractive, and freedom-loving, made natural either by inheritance or by habit. The most graceful and attractive of them come and go almost like the thoughts, nearly intangible because of their shyness. Others are more sober and substantial; but none bend themselves to the steady work of life.

Such affections from inheritance abound in youth of both sexes, and produce light, graceful,



shy manners in girls, polite, courteous behavior in young men, and the pleasant, quick-witted gambols of both—innocent and entertaining, but utterly averse to labor or method. They are distinguished from the wild-ass affections that belong to the same age, in that they are not rude, critical, and contemptuous of others, but are gentle and affectionate, and desirous of pleasing.

Such affection made natural from a spiritual origin is thus described: In the lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan, he says, “The gazelle of Israel is slain upon thy high places; how are the mighty fallen! . . . How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been to me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women” (2 Samuel 1:19, 25, 26).

It seems to be Jonathan who is called the gazelle of Israel; for the same expression, “slain upon thine high places,” is applied to him only. And his representation must be natural delight in the protection of the Lord, through the truth. Saul represents the natural reason to which the kingdom of the mind is first entrusted, and which is dethroned because it decides for itself instead of patiently discerning and obeying the

truth from the Lord. Yet from this understanding, even through its disappointments, is begotten the truth that wisdom of life is from the Lord alone, and a happy trustfulness in having it so. This is represented by the light-hearted, generous Jonathan, whose very name means "the gift of Jehovah." But not to Jonathan was the kingdom given; for not his was the patient application of the truth to life, which was represented by David. "He stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle." He knew that in doing this he was giving him the kingdom; and he meant it, and asked nothing for himself but that David should be kind to his children (1 Samuel 20:15).

With characteristic solitariness and trustfulness, attended only by his armor bearer, he attacked a strong garrison of the Philistines, saying, "It may be that the Lord will work for us; for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few" (1 Samuel 14:6). And afterwards, when he innocently brought upon himself his father's curse by tasting of the forbidden honey as he passed, so attractive was his generous chivalry to the people, that they rescued him from death, and took upon themselves the curse. There was dutifulness also with his romantic

affection; for when his beloved friend was persecuted and fled, Jonathan turned faithfully back to his father, and for him fought valiantly, and with him laid down his life upon Mt. Gilboa.

The same Hebrew word that means a “gazelle” is often translated “beauty,” and sometimes “glory”; probably because the gazelle was so marked a type of beauty. In these cases it represents the gracefulness of affections that have become easy and natural.

But natural good affection is not always from the Lord, sometimes being insincere and interiorly selfish; and such affection is meant by the chased gazelle (or roe) in Isaiah. “Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of its place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger. And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up” (Isaiah 13:13, 14), speaking of the judgment, in which merely external and hypocritical forms of goodness will be dispersed.

The horns of antelopes are permanent, and are composed of fibrous, hairy horn, like those of our domestic animals. They represent the knowledge which these affections possess of the delightfulness and propriety of their free

impulses, which they use in self-defense, and sometimes in friendly rivalry.

The horns of deer are very different in form and material; the animals are generally somewhat larger in size, inhabit more northerly homes, and possess more variable tempers; some of them also, as the reindeer, are so far domesticated as to be of service to owners who will follow them in their necessary migrations. Their horns are thus described by Mr. Wood:

The horns of deer belong only to the male animals, are composed of solid, bony substances, and are shed and renewed annually during the life of the animal. The process by which the horns are developed, die, and are shed, is a very curious one. . . . In the beginning of the month of March the stag is lurking in the sequestered spots of his forest home, harmless as his mate and as timorous. Soon a pair of prominences make their appearance on his forehead, covered with a velvety skin. In a few days these little prominences have attained some length, and give the first indication of their true form. Grasp one of these in the hand, and it will be found burning hot to the touch; for the blood runs fiercely through the velvety skin, depositing at every touch a minute portion of bony matter. More and more rapidly grow the horns, the carotid arteries enlarging in order to supply a sufficiency of nourishment, and in the

short period of ten weeks the enormous mass of bony matter has been completed. Such a process is almost, if not entirely, without a parallel in the history of the animal kingdom. When the horns have reached their due development, the bony rings at their bases, through which the arteries pass, begin to thicken, and by gradually filling up the holes, compress the blood vessels, and ultimately obliterate them. The velvet now having no more nourishment, loses its vitality, and is soon rubbed off in shreds against tree trunks, branches, or any inanimate objects. The horns fall off in February, and in a very short time begin to be renewed. These ornaments are very variable at the different periods of the animal's life, the age of the stag being well indicated by the number of "tines" upon his horns. (*Natural History* "Deer")

Of the moose, or elk, he writes:

It is as wary as any of the deer tribe, being alarmed by the slightest sound or the faintest scent that gives warning of an enemy. . . . Generally the elk avoids the presence of man, but in some seasons of the year he becomes seized with a violent excitement that finds vent in fighting with every living creature that may cross his path. His weapons are his horn and forefeet, the latter being used with such terrible effect that a single blow is sufficient to slay a wolf on the spot. (*Natural History*)

The reindeer in its wild state is a migratory animal, making annual journeys from the woods to the hills, and back again, according to the season. . . . Even in the domesticated state, the reindeer is obliged to continue its migrations, so that the owners of the tame herds are perforce obliged to become partakers in the annual pilgrimages. (*Natural History*)

The wapiti, or Carolina stag, lives in herds of variable numbers, some herds containing only ten or twenty members, while others are found numbering three or four hundred. These herds are always under the command of one old and experienced buck, who exercises the strictest discipline over his subjects, and exacts implicit and instantaneous obedience. When he halts, the whole herd suddenly stops; and when he moves on, the herd follows his example. . . . This position of dignity is not easily assumed, and is always won by dint of sheer strength and courage, the post being held against all competitors at the point of the horn. The combats that take place between the males are of a singularly fierce character, and often end in the death of the weaker competitor. An instance is known where a pair of these animals have perished, . . . their horns having been inextricably locked together. (*Natural History*)

Of the Virginian deer, or carjacou:

The male is a most pugnacious animal, and engages in deadly contests with those of his own sex. . . . In these conflicts one of the combatants is not infrequently killed on the spot, and there are many instances of the death of both parties in consequence of the horns interlocking within each other, and so binding the two opponents in a common fate. To find these locked horns is not a very uncommon occurrence, and in one instance three pair of horns were found thus entangled together, the skulls and skeletons lying as proofs of the deadly nature of the strife. It is in October and November that the buck becomes so combative, and in a very few weeks he has lost all his sleek condition, shed his horns, and retired to the welcome shelter of the forest. (*Natural History*)

In the parting blessing which Jacob pronounced upon his sons, he said, "Naphtali is a hind let loose, speaking words of elegance." Naphtali signifies strugglings, or, spiritually, temptations. And, as Swedenborg remarks, "Liberation from a state of temptations is compared to a hind let loose, because the hind is a forest animal, loving liberty more than others, to which the natural also is similar, for this loves to be in the delight of its affections, hence, in freedom, for what is of affection is free" (*Arcana Coelestia* #6413). He also says that these words describe "the state after temptation as to the spontaneous eloquence

which results from perception” (*Arcana Coelestia* #9413, 3929).

Perhaps the gentle, free affections which deer represent differ from those signified by antelopes in this, that their gentleness, freedom, and beauty are the result of trials and temptations. The periodically irritable, contentious, moody states of deer are likenesses of states of temptation, which are followed by times of humility and shyness, and then by new confidence, happiness, and freedom, the right to which is defended by branching antlers, not of truth perceived and known concerning itself, like the horns of antelopes, but of the very substance of its bones, from the facts of its own life, to which every new round of experience adds a new array.

These at length become the means by which it contends for superiority and precedence, and then in conscious weakness it lays them down, and retires in mortification.

The fleet and confident steps of affection that has become free and natural are thus described in the Word: “He maketh my feet like hinds’, and setteth me upon my high places” (Psalm 18:34). “The Lord Jehovih is my strength; He maketh my feet like hinds’, and maketh me to walk upon my high places” (Habakkuk 3:19).



Again, it is written concerning the effect of the coming of the Lord, "Then shall the lame man leap as a hart" (Isaiah 35:6), referring to those who from ignorance or from lack of good love find the way of good life painful and difficult, but, as it were, leap with confident strength and pleasure when good love from the Lord becomes natural to them.

And once more we read, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God" (Psalm 42:2), where the feverish desire of the soul in time of temptation, for cooling and consoling truth, is compared to the thirst of the hart, which in the dry season must make long journeys to the lessening streams.

## THE LION

Buffon gives us a description of the lion, which, if somewhat enthusiastic, contains so genuine an appreciation of his good qualities that we cannot afford to lose it. He says:

History tells us of lions attached to triumphal cars, of lions conducted to war or led to the chase, and which, faithful to their master, employed their strength and courage only against their enemies. It is certain that the lion, taken young and brought up among domestic animals, easily accustoms himself to live and even to play innocently with them; that he is gentle towards his masters, and even caressing, especially, while young; and that, if his natural ferocity reappears sometimes, he rarely turns it against those who have done him good. As his movements are very impetuous, and his appetites very vehement, we must not suppose that the impressions of education can always balance them. There is danger in allowing him to suffer too long from hunger, or in tormenting him without purpose. Not only is he irritated at ill treatment, but he remembers it, and seems to meditate vengeance, as he also pre-

serves the grateful memory of benefits. I could cite a great number of facts, in which I confess that I have found some exaggeration, but which, nevertheless, are sufficiently well founded to prove at least, taken together, that his anger is noble, his courage magnanimous, his nature impressible. He has been seen often to disdain small enemies, to despise their insults, and to pardon their offensive liberties. He has been seen, led into captivity, to be wearied with his condition without becoming irritable, to assume, on the contrary, gentle habits, to obey his master, to caress the hand that feeds it, sometimes to give life to the animals that had been thrown to him for prey, and, as if attached to them by his generous act, to continue afterwards the same protection to them, to live peaceably with them, give them a part of his subsistence, sometimes even allow them to carry it off altogether, and rather suffer hunger than lose the fruit of his first kind deed.

It can also be said that the lion is not cruel, since he is so only from necessity; that he destroys only as much as he consumes; and that as soon as he is fed he is entirely peaceful; while the tiger, the wolf, and so many animals of inferior kinds, such as the fox, the martin, the polecat, the ferret, etc. put to death for the mere pleasure of killing, and in their many massacres

seem rather to wish to satisfy their rage than their hunger.

Buffon also remarks upon the perfect symmetry of the lion, his form being the most perfect expression of effective power and the nobleness of his species—not akin to any other species, nor running into them by imperceptible degrees. He speaks of the strong odor of the lion; of his roar, which resembles thunder; of his short, reiterated, terrible cries of anger, in uttering which “he beats his sides with his tail, beats the ground with it, he erects his mane, moves the skin of his face, stirs his great eyebrows, shows threatening teeth, and puts out a tongue armed with points so hard that it is sufficient to flay the skin, and cut into the flesh, without the help of either teeth or nails.”

A French officer in Africa gives the following account of African lions:

The panther tears and mutilates the body, even after all life has fled, but does not devour it. In general he kills for the pleasure of killing, and even when attacking a flock or herd he vents his savage fury on many before deciding to eat one. The lion, on the contrary, springs upon his victim and at once devours it, or, dragging it to a preferred dining spot, quietly makes his repast, nor thinks of troubling the rest of the flock until renewed appetite leads him to satisfy hunger in

the same way. If during the repast he sees a man approach, and is not ravenous, he gets up and walks away slowly—one may say *solemnly*; or sometimes not even deigning this, he raises his majestic head, looks at the intruder, and by a half-friendly growl, warns him that he will not stand being troubled when at dinner. A pedestrian finding himself in this position does well to withdraw slowly, for, should he become frightened and run, the lion is quite capable of feeling a desire to overtake him, and in that case will. Even in that case, if the man has presence of mind sufficient to understand the danger, and do the only thing remaining to be done, he may still escape safe and sound; for the lion seems oftentimes actuated by a half-playful, friendly sentiment, and so he does not lose his respect for man—seldom troubles him. Oftentimes he joins and passes the pedestrian, and when at a good distance, crouches across his path, watching his approach. If the man has the unfortunate idea of turning to run away, he is lost; but if he comes on quietly, neither faster nor slower than his usual pace, looking his enemy steadily in the face, and showing no signs of fear, he has every chance to escape. The lion will growl, wag his tail in rather a terrifying way, but, allowing the man to pass before him, get up, and, as though admitting to himself that he had honestly lost the game, go quietly back to his lair.

A lion rarely attacks women, and I once witnessed a scene which will go further than the longest explanation toward illustrating this. It was a hot, sultry day in July. I was returning from a little expedition on the frontiers of Tunis, and as I had some matters to settle with tribes in the environs of *la Calle*, I left my troops to return to Constantine, and, followed only by two *spahis*, turned my steps toward *la Calle*. Having started just before day, we arrived about four o'clock in the afternoon at the ford of the little river *de la Mafrag*. Our horses, as well as we ourselves, were sadly in want of food and drink, and we stopped to refresh ourselves at a little inn kept by a European, and situated on a low mound two or three hundred yards from the ford. Whilst waiting for my frugal repast I unbuckled my sword, laid by my pistols, and, stretched out comfortably in the shade, idly watched a band of Arab women washing clothes in the river. All at once I was startled by cries proceeding from the opposite side of a sand heap bordering the river, and half a dozen women came rushing into the midst of their peaceable companions, dragging them into the shallow water, and behind them a magnificent lion, his tail proudly in air, and his great, brown eyes looking caressingly from one to the other. Paying no attention to their retreat into the river, he followed them there, rubbing himself up against them, not seeming to mind in the least

their cries or terrified gesticulations, and when he had had enough of it, he took a long drink of the running water, and, turning, majestically walked away into the mountains from whence he had come.

I will recall another souvenir of this same expedition which will prove to you the harmless nature of an unattacked lion.

One day, after a rather serious skirmish against the revolted tribes, I led my two battalions of infantry to a little river situated two miles from the fort where we were stationed, in order to allow them to bathe and clean their arms. As a measure of prudence I allowed but half the men to disarm and enter the river at a time, the remaining battalion being on the *qui vive*, ready for defense. As there was no need for haste, I allowed the men what time they liked for bathing and cleaning, and night, which falls so suddenly in Africa, surprised us on our return at a few moments' march from the fort. I was suddenly alarmed by the report of a gun, whose sound, being very different from any in use amongst the Arabs, spoke plainly of having been fired by one of my own men, and I at once brought my column to a halt, and galloped off in the direction from whence the single report had come. At a short distance I met a soldier recently arrived in Africa, who had been detained behind his comrades, and who in hastening up, hoping to arrive

before the doors were closed for the night, excused himself timidly for being late and having fired at last at a troublesome calf or cow, which had barred his passage and seemed determined to keep him from joining his regiment. He assured me he had done all he could to get rid of him, pushing him with the butt end of his gun, etc., but to no purpose, and at last had been obliged to fire at him so close that he had rolled instantly dead at his feet. Suspecting the truth, I reassured the man, and, as night was completely upon us, rejoined my troops and entered the fort. On the following morning I dispatched the culprit with a dozen men to bring back the murdered animal, and let me decide whether a calf was to be paid for, or a reward to be given to the slayer of a lion; and, as I had rightly imagined, the latter proved to be the case, and our unconscious hero received from the government sixty francs reward for the finest lion killed that year.

From Mr. Wood, we gather some further interesting details:

A full-grown lion can not only knock down and kill, but can carry away in its mouth an ordinary ox; and one of these terrible animals has been known to pick up a heifer in its mouth, and to leap over a wide ditch, still carrying its burden.

The lion seems to be a very incarnation of strength; and, even when dead, gives as vivid an



idea of concentrated power as when it was living. And when the skin is stripped from the body, the tremendous muscular development never fails to create a sensation of awe. The muscles of the limbs, themselves so hard as to blunt the keen edged knives employed by a dissector, are enveloped in their glittering sheaths, playing upon each other like well-oiled machinery, and terminating in tendons seemingly strong as steel, and nearly as impervious to the knife. Not until the skin is removed can anyone form conception of the enormously powerful muscles of the neck, which enable the lion to lift the weighty prey which it kills, and convey it to a place of safety.

Although usually unwilling to attack an armed man, it is one of the most courageous animals in existence when it is driven to fight, and if its anger is excited it cares little for the number of its foes, or the weapons with which they are armed. Even the dreaded firearms lose their terrors to an angry lion; while a lioness, who fears for the safety of her young, is simply the most terrible animal in existence.

The roar of the lion is another of the characteristics for which it is celebrated. There is no beast that can produce a sound that could for a moment be mistaken for the roar of the lion. The lion has a habit of stooping his head towards the ground when he roars, so that the terrible sound rolls along like thunder, and reverberates in many an

echo in the far distance. Owing to this curious habit the roar can be heard at a very great distance, but its locality is rendered uncertain, and it is often difficult to be quite sure whether the lion is to the right or the left of the hearer. (*Bible Animals*)

It is this peculiarity of the roar that makes it helpful in catching prey; for at the fearful sound all animals are frightened, and, not distinguishing the direction of it, especially if it be near, they run towards every quarter, even into the jaws of the waiting lion himself.<sup>1</sup>

As we see the lion thus portrayed, we are struck with admiration at his noble courage—amounting in his native condition to absolute fearlessness—at the intense earnestness of his affections, as expressed, by his voice of thunder, and shown by the fury of the lioness in defending her young; and at his almost irresistible power.

As animals are forms of human affections, the lion represents the most ardent, the most powerful, and the most courageous of them all. Exactly what this affection is appears plainly in the Apocalypse.

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1. *Natural History.*

At the time immediately preceding the Last Judgment, the World of Spirits and the Church on earth were possessed by men who professed to believe in the Lord and to be His elect, who taught doctrines, and confirmed them from the Word and by much reasoning, which permitted them to continue in selfish and wicked lives even in the name of religion, and who by these means so obscured the truth concerning the spiritual states of men that it was impossible to know them. The universal obscurity of this truth was prophetically represented to John by the “book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals.” The grief of all who loved the Lord, because of this confusion, was represented by John’s weeping “because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.” And it is added, “One of the elders saith unto me, Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain. . . . And he came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne” (Revelation 5). The Lion here, who is also the Lamb, represents the power and courage

of the Lord in His Divine Humanity to teach the absolute truth of human life, despite the fierce opposition of Scribes and Pharisees, and all their ecclesiastical successors.<sup>1</sup>

The zeal of the Lord to save men from evil and falsity is further represented in the Apocalypse by a mighty angel who came down from heaven, “clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; . . . and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and cried with a loud voice as when a lion roareth.”

Thus the lion, in relation to the Lord, is an image of the absolute fearlessness and invincible strength with which He stands by us, to teach the truth and to protect us from evil. We have only to trust Him, and we must be safe.

But as the Lord’s love for men is the most powerful influence operating upon them, when they receive it and respond to it, it becomes in them their most intense affection. “The lion hath roared; who will not fear? The Lord Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy?” describes the effect of the Divine Love inspiring affection

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1. *Apocalypse Revealed* #265.

and clear perception of truth in the men who receive that Love.

By the tribe of Judah were represented those who are in love to the Lord. And in the blessing of Judah by his father Israel, the strength and repose of this love is described by the words, "He bowed himself, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall stir him up?" The sense of the Lord's love in them gives them also a sense of irresistible power. As Swedenborg says, "They who are in celestial good," which is the good of love to the Lord from the Lord, "never fight, but are safe by good; for where they come the evil flee away, for the evil cannot endure their presence; these are they who are signified by an old lion" (*Arcana Coelestia* #6369).

So in the passage, "The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their food from God," Swedenborg says, by the lions are meant the angels of heaven; and by their roaring after their prey, is described the desire of the angels in states of obscurity for renewed love and wisdom from the Lord; by "the sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dwellings," is meant their return into a heavenly state of tranquility and peace.<sup>1</sup>

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1. *Apocalypse Explained* #278.

The angels are called young lions, and the Lord a Lion; and yet I suppose that no beast of prey appears in the heavens; but it may appear *from* the heavens in the world of spirits; for it is as a Protector from evil that the Lord is thus represented.<sup>1</sup> The obscurity of the angels, in which, like young lions, they seek their food from God, is caused by the encroachments of their own proprium; and when they recognize it, and look to the Lord for deliverance, they feel His power in them like that of a lion; and He gives them the ardent desire for good as of young lions.

As a fierce and terrible lion the Lord appears to the wicked, because their loves are like fierce animals, and He who opposes them seems to them like themselves, only more fierce and powerful. Yet the Lion of the Lord's presence must be noble and magnanimous, and their lions fierce and relentless. Not from the Lord's zeal to save and protect do their lions spring; but from their own lust of claiming to themselves, and ruling over all things. It is an intense and self-confident love of dominion, which tolerates no rival, when excited fears no danger, and crushes everyone who will not submit to its control, preferring death itself to divided authority.

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #6441–43.

## THE BEAR

Buffon states that the black bear, which is our American species, lives altogether upon fruits, vegetables, and roots, never eating flesh; and that he is altogether mild and harmless.

Our New England farmers would modify this statement, so far as concerns the autumn season, and the mother with cubs. During the summer, the bears live in the woods, as Buffon says, shunning the abodes of man, and escaping from him so shyly that it is difficult for hunters to find them at all. At this season they feed upon the leaves and tender twigs of trees, upon roots, ants which they lap greedily out of the ant hills, the larva of beetles, which they dig out of decaying stumps and logs, and very largely upon berries, of which they are extremely fond. But when berries fail, in the autumn, the bears come down to the orchards and corn fields, not infrequently making havoc among the sheep also. Then they are frequently seen, and are easily taken in traps. At all seasons, if one comes suddenly upon a mother with cubs, he will find her fierce, brave,

and dangerous. "A bear bereaved of her whelps" is a Scripture symbol for desperate courage.

The brown bear of Europe and Asia, Buffon describes as a fiercer animal, who attacks rather than avoids man, though finding his food and his home among the mountains and in the forests. He proceeds:

The bear is not only wild, but solitary. He shuns all society by instinct. He removes from places to which men have access. He finds himself at his ease only in the places which still belong to Nature. An old cave among inaccessible rocks, a hollow formed by time in the trunk of an old tree, in the midst of a thick forest, serves him for a home. He retires thither alone, passes a part of the winter there without provisions, without going out from it for several weeks. . . .

The mother takes the greatest care of her little ones. She makes for them a bed of moss and leaves in the bottom of her cave, and nourishes them with milk until they can go out with her. She brings forth in winter, and her little ones begin to follow her in the spring. The male and the female never live together. They have their separate retreats, and often far apart. . . .

The bear has good powers of sight, of hearing, and of touch; although his eye is very small compared with the size of his body, his ears are short, his skin thick, and his hair plentifully tufted. He



has an excellent sense of smell, perhaps more exquisite than any other animal.

The same naturalist describes the anatomical structure of the bear, but the only point which we can notice is that instead of walking upon the toes, like most other quadrupeds, the bear lays his whole foot upon the ground, so that what is commonly called the "hock joint" becomes in him the heel. Mr. Wood writes:

As is the case with many animals, the Syrian bear changes its color as it grows older. When a cub, it is of a darkish brown, which becomes a light brown as it approaches maturity. But, when it has attained its full growth, it becomes cream colored, and each succeeding year seems to lighten its coat, so that a very old bear is nearly as white as its relative of the Arctic regions. (*Bible Animals*)

The bear is one of the omnivorous animals, and is able to feed on vegetable as well as animal substances, preferring the former when they can be found. There is nothing that the bear likes better than strawberries and similar fruits, among which it will revel throughout the whole fruit season, daintily picking the ripest berries, and becoming wonderfully fat by the constant banquet. Sometimes, when the fruits fail, it makes incursions among the cultivated grounds, and is noted for the ravages which it makes among the chickpeas. But during the colder months in the

year the bear changes its diet, and becomes carnivorous. Sometimes it contents itself with the various wild animals which it can secure, but sometimes it descends to the lower plains, and seizes upon the goats and sheep in their pastures. . . . As the bear is not swift of foot, but rather clumsy in its movements, it cannot hope to take the nimbler animals in open chase. It prefers to lie in wait for them in the bushes, and to strike them down with a sudden blow of its paw, a terrible weapon, which it can wield as effectively as a lion uses its claws.

After speaking of the motherly instincts of most animals, he says:

Most terrible is the wrath of a creature which possesses, as is the case of the bear, the strongest maternal affections, added to great size, tremendous weapons, and gigantic strength. . . . When the bear fights, it delivers rapid strokes with its armed paw, tearing away everything that it strikes. A blow from a bear's paw has been several times known to strip the entire skin, together with the hair, from a man's head, and, when fighting with dogs, to tear its enemies open as if each claw were a chisel. (*Bible Animals*)

An anecdote, which seems to me highly characteristic, is related of a pet bear attached to a British regiment. The bear:

. . . was promoted to the office of sentinel over the property contained in a baggage wagon.

Unfortunately, the poor animal's sense of justice was so acute that it executed its responsible office with too much zeal. On one occasion a soldier had gone to the wagon, with the intention of robbing it of some of the property contained therein, and quietly inserted his arm under the coverings. His intended depredation was, however, soon checked by the teeth of the watchful bear, which bit his arm with such severity that the limb was rendered useless for the rest of the man's life. Some little time after this occurrence, a child belonging to the regiment made a similar attempt upon the wagon, and was killed by the bear in its anxiety to fulfill the trust that had been committed to its charge" (*Natural History*).

In consequence of its too severe and literal faithfulness, the poor beast had to be shot.

In addition to these accounts, it should be mentioned that the bear, when taken young and kindly treated, becomes quite tame, and is teachable; that he is playful, enjoys rough fun—young bears taking great pleasure in tumbling one another over in the snow—and is extravagantly fond of honey, which he eats eagerly, comb, young bees, and all, caring little for the stings of the old ones (*Natural History*).

The human affection which corresponds to this description is a more or less vehement love of literalness. It is an affection that loves to carry

out a command to the letter with a grim, humorous enjoyment in seeing it hit in unexpected ways. It loves to buffet with precepts and texts, admitting of no explanation that does not exactly coincide with the letter. Though rough and surly, as well as humorous, it may do good service to truth and right by insisting upon full compliance with literal truth; or, on the other hand, because of its want of intelligence concerning spiritual things, it may insist ferociously upon the literal fulfillment of precepts which it does not understand, even to the destruction of much good, gentle life.

For example, there have been many who in a good spirit have insisted upon a literal and exact observance of the commandments in regard to the Sabbath and false speaking, refusing to permit any work on the Sabbath, however useful, and requiring the plainest speaking of truth, no matter how inappropriate. They quote the severest texts concerning those who do otherwise, and strike formidable blows with them. In proper places they may thus do good service. I have heard, also, the texts with regard to the destruction of the world, and a final last day, used to crush every hope of continued happy life in the spiritual world after death. Numerous like instances will occur to everyone familiar with

theological discussions about faith, baptism, creation, redemption, and other subjects.<sup>1</sup>

An astonishing degree of strength and vehemence flows into such literal discussions, which, when known, one is not inclined to rouse carelessly. But the people who love the fallacies thus defended are usually silent, retiring, and solitary, shy of spiritual truth, especially when it explains the Scriptures. At this they take angry alarm, and quickly become furious, as if in defense of their life. Their dogmas strengthened with texts, they brandish furiously, like claw-armed paws, and strike blows which are certainly formidable. In states of inactivity they keep those dogmas constantly in mind, thinking them over and over unintelligently, as bears suck their paws.

That bears lay the whole of their great foot on the ground, and dig in the ground for much of their food, represents a clinging to external things; their extravagant fondness for honey corresponds to love for the pleasantness of natural knowledge. Swedenborg says:

By a bear are signified those who read the Word, and do not understand it, whereby they involve themselves in fallacies. That these are signified

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1. See an enumeration of many such fallacies, signified by the feet of the bear, in *Apocalypse Explained* #781.

by bears was clear to me from the bears which I saw in the spiritual world, and from such [spirits] there as were clad in bearskins, who had all read the Word indeed, but without seeing any doctrinal truth in it; also who had confirmed the *appearances* of truth therein, and thus were involved in fallacies. In that world there appear bears that are hurtful, and bears that are harmless, and some that are white; but they are distinguished by their heads, those which are harmless have heads like calves or sheep.” (*Apocalypse Revealed* #573; also *Conjugal Love* #78)

Those with heads like calves would represent the power of literal truth from innocent desire to know what is useful; and those with sheep’s heads represent the power of such truth governed by mutual love. In *Apocalypse Explained* he says:

That a bear signifies power from the natural sense of the Word, as well with the upright as the wicked, may appear from the following passages: “When Elisha went up to Bethel, as he was going in the way, there came little children out of the city and mocked him, and said to him, Go up, thou bald head! go up, thou bald head! And he looked back upon them, and saw them, and cursed them in the name of Jehovah; and there came two she-bears out of the wood, and tare in pieces forty-two children of them” (2 Kings 2:23, 24). . . . That this was not done by

Elisha from immoderate anger and without just cause, may be evident from this consideration, that he could not be so cruel to little children for only saying, Go up, thou bald head. It was indeed a reproach against the prophet, but not a sufficient cause for them to be torn in pieces by bears. But this took place because Elisha represented the Lord as to the Word, thus the Word which is from the Lord; by bald head was signified the Word deprived of its natural sense, which is the sense of the letter; by the bears out of the wood is signified the power derived from the natural and literal sense of the Word, as was said above; and by those children were signified those who blaspheme the Word on account of its literal sense being such as it is. (*Apocalypse Explained* #781)

Their destruction, therefore, represents the loss of spiritual life in those who despise the letter of the Word; and their condemnation by the letter itself.

David, keeping his father's flock, slew the lion and the bear that attacked the flock, and gave this to Saul as proof that he should be able to overcome the Philistine. And it was so, because the lion was a representative of the love of rule by interior falsities, and the bear of a similar love acting through literal fallacies; and the Philistine represents those who teach faith and

not goodness, and seek power through both means.

Turning from these evil things, it is pleasant to read that when the Lord's kingdom shall be established upon the earth, "The cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together"; which signifies that the power of the literal sense of the Word will not be abused selfishly, but will be used wholly in companionship with neighborly kindness. It is also said that "The lion shall eat straw like the ox"; meaning that the love of rule will no longer destroy spiritual life by its dreadful falsities, but will love and protect the innocent thought and life of mutual helpfulness.



## THE WOLF

Buffon remarks the external resemblance between the wolf and the dog; but points out the great differences in their characters, and their mutual antipathy. He says further:

Even the wild dog has not a fierce nature; he is easily tamed, attaches himself, and remains faithful to his master. The wolf, taken young, becomes tame, but not in the least attached. Nature is stronger than education. He recovers, with age, his ferocious character, and returns as soon as he can to his wild state. Dogs, even the roughest, seek the company of other animals; they are led naturally to follow and accompany them; and it is by instinct only, not by education, that they know how to guard the flocks. The wolf, on the contrary, is the enemy of all society; he does not even keep company with those of his own species. When many of them are seen together, it is not a peaceful company; it is a warlike band, which is formed noisily, with frightful howls, and which indicates a plan to attack some large animal like a stag, an ox, or to get rid of some formidable mastiff. As soon as their mili-

tary expedition is over they separate and return in silence to their solitude. . . .

The wolf has great strength, especially in the forward parts of the body, in the muscles of the neck and jaw. He carries a sheep in his mouth without letting it touch the ground, and at the same time runs faster than the shepherds, so that only the dogs can overtake him and make him release his prey. He bites cruelly, and always with the more madness the less he is resisted; for he is cautious with animals who can defend themselves. . . .

The wolf, though ferocious, is timid. When he falls into a snare, he is frightened so greatly and so long that he may be killed without defending himself, or taken captive without resistance. One can put a collar on him, chain him, muzzle him, and afterwards lead him wherever he chooses, without his daring to show the least sign of anger or even of discontent. The wolf has very good senses—eyes, ears, and especially smell. He often scents further than he can see. The odor of carnage attracts him more than a league; he scents living animals from afar, and even chases them a long time before he brings them within sight. . . .

I have brought up and fed several at home. While they are young, that is to say, in their first and second years, they are tolerably docile, and even fawning, and if they are well fed they will

not attack poultry nor other animals. But at eighteen months or two years, they return to their natural disposition, and must be chained to prevent their running away and doing mischief. I had one which, brought up in entire liberty in the poultry yard with the hens for eighteen or nineteen months, had never attacked them; but, for a first trial, he killed them all in one night, without eating any; another, which, having broken his chain at about the age of two years, ran away after having killed a dog with which it was familiar.

With really sagacious discrimination of evil from good, if also with some extravagance, Buffon sums up the character of the wolf thus:

There is nothing good in this animal but his skin; of this are made coarse furs which are warm and durable. His flesh is so bad that it repels all animals. Only a wolf will voluntarily eat wolf. . . . Disagreeable in every respect, with mean air, savage look, frightful voice, insupportable odor, perverse nature, ferocious manners, he is odious; noxious while living, useless after death.

In the *Bible Animals*, Mr. Wood gives some additional particulars of interest:

Individually, the wolf is rather a timid animal. It will avoid a man rather than meet him. It prefers to steal upon its prey, and take it unawares, rather than to seize it openly and boldly. It is ever suspicious of treachery, and is always imagining that a trap is laid for it. Even the shallow device of a

few yards of rope trailing from any object, or a strip of cloth fluttering in the breeze, is quite sufficient to keep the wolf at bay for a considerable time. This fact is well known to hunters, who are accustomed to secure the body of a slain deer by simply tying a strip of cloth to its horn. If taken in a trap of any kind, or even if it fancies itself in an enclosure from which it can find no egress, it loses all courage, and will submit to be killed without offering the least resistance. It will occasionally endeavor to effect its escape by feigning death, and has more than once been known to succeed in this device.

But collectively, the wolf is one of the most dangerous animals that can be found. Herding together in droves, when pressed by hunger, the wolves will openly hunt prey, performing this task as perfectly as a pack of trained hounds. Full of wiles themselves, they are craftily wise in anticipating the wiles of the animals which they pursue; and, even in full chase, while the body of the pack is following on the footsteps of the flying animal, one or two are detached on the flanks, so as to cut it off if it should attempt to escape by doubling on its pursuers.

There is no animal which a herd of wolves will not attack, and very few which they will not ultimately secure. Strength avails nothing against the numbers of these savage foes, which give no moment of rest, but incessantly assail their antag-

onist, dashing by instinct at those parts of the body which can be least protected, and lacerating with their peculiar short, snapping bite. Should several of their number be killed or disabled, it makes no difference to the wolves, except that a minute or two are wasted in devouring their slain or wounded brethren, and they only return to the attack the more excited by the taste of blood. Swiftmess of foot avails nothing against the tireless perseverance of the wolves, who press on in their peculiar, long, slinging gallop, and in the end are sure to tire out the swifter footed but less enduring animal that flees before them. The stately buffalo is conquered by the ceaseless assaults of the wolves; the bear has been forced to succumb to them, and the fleet-footed stag finds his swift limbs powerless to escape the pursuing band, and his branching horns unable to resist their furious onset when once they overtake him.

Who are spiritually wolves the Lord Himself shows quite plainly in the words, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:15, 16). That is, they are those who, in regard to things of the Church, teach not the ways of the Lord and of good life, but doctrines that make

people depend upon them, and contribute to their greatness. Swedenborg says of them:

They are those who teach falsities as if they were truths, and who in appearance live morally, but who, when they are left to themselves, think of nothing but themselves and the world, and study to deprive others of their truths. (*Apocalypse Explained* #195)

For all genuine truths of religion lead to the Lord; but falsities are invented to lead to men and to excuse evil. Therefore those in the churches who devise laws and doctrines which they declare to be necessary to salvation, but which do not lead men to the Lord and the Word, but make them dependent on *them*, are ravening wolves.<sup>1</sup> The ecclesiastical history of the papal hierarchy, and especially of the Society of Jesuits, which has been its chief instrument of persecution and oppression, bears on every page accounts of the wiles and cruelties of spiritual wolves, usually wearing in their approaches the raiment of sheep. The perseverance and persistence of their attacks on those who had property or power, their combinations and mutual support in their attacks, the relentlessness and destructive fury with which they turn upon one of their

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1. *The Last Judgment* #58, 59.

own order who fails to support them, are as freely portrayed in the history of that Church government as in the natural history of wolves themselves.

Wolfishness appears in the history of other branches of the Church, though less conspicuously; it is not uncommon also in secular affairs, especially in military or business combinations for the purpose of plunder. It is a selfishness that is greedy of every kind of advantage, especially from those who are trustful and unsuspecting. Sly and treacherous itself, it suspects treachery everywhere. It combines with others only in pursuing some common advantage; and is as ready to profit by their downfall as by that of their prey.

In the Word wolves are generally mentioned as the special enemies of sheep and lambs, in which sense they represent those leaders of the Church who turn to themselves, for their own advantage, the innocent dependent affections that belong to the Lord alone.

In the prophecies of the establishment of the Lord's kingdom, it is said, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb" (Isaiah 11:6). "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together" (Isaiah 65:25). By which is not meant that wolves will change their nature either naturally or spiritually; but that the

presence of the Lord will be so strongly felt that there will be no power to turn away from Him those who love Him.<sup>1</sup>

At the time of the Lord's teaching, the leaders of the Jewish Church, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, devouring widows' houses, and for a pretense making long prayers, had turned all things of their religion to their own selfish service, as has since been done in Christian Rome. The Lord, therefore, said to the apostles whom He sent forth, "Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves" (Luke 10:3). He also likened those who taught the truth only when it conduced to their worldly prosperity, forsaking their charge or their truthful teaching at the menace of selfish leaders, to "hirelings," who flee when they see the wolf coming.

The Lord was the good Shepherd, and gave His life for the sheep. He fearlessly taught the truth which led the people away from their former leaders to the Divine Spirit in Himself. The Pharisees declared that He cast out devils by Beelzebub. To them He was only a fiercer wolf than themselves. Because of this appearance of the Lord and of those who teach from Him in resisting the selfishness of wolfish men, in the

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1. *Apocalypse Explained* #780.



prophetic blessing which Jacob pronounced upon his sons, he said of Benjamin, who represents such explanation of spiritual truth as leads to an interior knowledge of the Lord, “Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil” (Genesis 49:27).<sup>1</sup>

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #6441.

## THE LEOPARD

Of the leopard we read in the *Bible Animals*:

Its color is tawny, variegated with rich black spots, and it is a fierce and voracious animal, almost equally dreaded by man and beast. . . .

To deer and antelopes it is a terrible enemy; and, in spite of their active limbs, seldom fails in obtaining its prey. Swift as is the leopard, and wonderful its spring, it has not the enduring speed of the deer or antelope. . . . Instinctively knowing its inferiority in the race, the leopard supplies by cunning the want of enduring speed.

It conceals itself in some spot whence it can see far around without being seen, and thence surveys the country. A tree is the usual spot selected for this purpose, and the leopard, after climbing the trunk by means of its curved talons, settles itself in the fork of the branches, so that its body is hidden by the boughs, and only its head is shown between them. With such scrupulous care does it conceal itself, that none but a practiced hunter can discover it, while anyone who is unaccustomed to the woods cannot see the animal even when the tree is pointed out to him.

As soon as the leopard sees the deer feeding at a distance, he slips down the tree, and stealthily glides off in their direction. He has many difficulties to overcome, because the deer are among the most watchful of animals, and if the leopard were to approach to the windward, they would scent him while he was yet a mile away from them. If he were to show himself but for one moment in the open ground, he would be seen, and if he were but to shake a branch or snap a dry twig, he would be heard. So he is obliged to approach them against the wind, to keep himself under cover, and yet to glide so carefully along that the heavy foliage of the underwood shall not be shaken, and the dry sticks and leaves, which strew the ground, shall not be broken. He has also to escape the observation of certain birds and beasts which inhabit the woods, and which would certainly set up their alarm cry as soon as they saw him, and so give warning to the wary deer, which can perfectly understand a cry of alarm, from whatever animal it may happen to proceed.

Still, he proceeds steadily on his course, gliding from one covert to another, and often expending several hours before he can proceed for a mile. By degrees he contrives to come tolerably close to them, and generally manages to conceal himself in some spot towards which the deer are gradually feeding their way. As soon as

they are near enough he collects himself for a spring, just as a cat does when she leaps on a bird, and dashes towards the deer in a series of mighty bounds. For a moment or two they are startled and paralyzed with fear at the sudden appearance of their enemy, and thus give him time to get among them. Singling out some particular animal, he leaps upon it, strikes it down with one blow of his paw, and then, couching on the fallen animal, he tears open its throat, and laps the flowing blood. . . .

As an instance of the cunning which seems innate in the leopard, I may mention that whenever it takes up its abode near a village, it does not meddle with the flocks and herds of its neighbors, but prefers to go to some other village at a distance for food, thus remaining unsuspected almost at the very doors of the houses.

In general, it does not willingly attack mankind, and at all events seems rather to fear the presence of a full-grown man. But when wounded or irritated, all sense of fear is lost in an overpowering rush of fury, and it then becomes as terrible a foe as the lion himself. It is not so large nor so strong, but it is more agile and quicker in its movements; and when it is seized with one of these paroxysms of anger, the eye can scarcely follow it as it darts here and there, striking with lightning rapidity, and dashing at any foe within reach. Its whole shape seems to be

transformed, and absolutely to swell with anger; its eyes flash with fiery luster, its ears are thrown back on the head, and it continually utters alternate snarls and yells of rage. It is hardly possible to recognize the graceful, lithe, glossy creature, whose walk is so noiseless, and whose every movement is so easy, in the furious, passion-swollen animal that flies at every foe with blind fury, and pours out sounds so fierce and menacing that few men, however well armed, will care to face it.

As is the case with most of the cat tribe, the leopard is an excellent climber, and can ascend trees and traverse their boughs without the least difficulty. It is so fond of trees, that it is seldom to be seen except in a well-wooded district. Its favorite residence is a forest where there is plenty of underwood, at least six or seven feet in height, among which trees are sparingly interspersed. When crouched in this cover it is practically invisible, even though its body may be within arm's length of a passenger. The spotted body harmonizes so perfectly with the broken lights and deep shadows of the foliage, that even a practiced hunter will not enter a covert in search of a leopard unless he is accompanied by dogs. The instinct which teaches the leopard to choose such localities is truly wonderful, and may be compared with that of the tiger, which cares little for underwood, but haunts the grass

jungles, where the long, narrow blades harmonize with the stripes which decorate its body.

In regard to the passage, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6), Mr. Wood remarks:

Herein the Prophet speaks as from accurate knowledge of the habits of the three predaceous animals. The wolf, as a rule, devastates the sheepfolds; the leopard will steal upon and carry off the straggling goat or kid, because it can follow them upon the precipices where no wolf would dare to tread; while the lion, being the strongest and most daring of the three, attacks the herds, and carries away to its lair the oxen which neither leopard nor wolf could move.

One other observation by Captain Drayson is worthy to be quoted; in speaking of a leopard that had been caught in a trap, he says:

I visited him the morning after his capture, and was received with the most villainous grins and looks. He could not endure being stared at, and tried every plan to hide his eyes so that he need not see his persecutor. When every other plan failed, he would pretend to be looking at some distant object, as though he did not notice his enemy close to him. When I gazed steadily at him, he could not keep up this acting for longer than a minute, when he would suddenly turn and

rush at me, until he dashed himself against the bars, and found that he was powerless to revenge himself. (Wood's *Natural History*)

The fierce lust of appropriating to oneself, which is thus represented, does not obtain its ends by vehement strength which crushes opposition, like a spiritual lion, nor by open, clumsy, forcible literalness, like a bear, nor yet by combined attack, as does the wolf; but by deceitful appearances and sudden attack of quick reasonings.

The leopard loves to see, but not to be seen. He wishes to appear to be only the natural lights and shadows of the forest, and not an animal at all, until its prey is within certain reach. By the mingled play of light and shadow, the beauty of the light appears by contrast; and so, in the mind, the beauty of spiritual light appears by contrast with obscurity. But the black spots which the leopard scatters in his sunshine are not the chance obscurities of ignorance, but maliciously interspersed falsities, which yet pass with its victims for mere obscurity—for things not well explained and distinctly seen, but still innocent—they are also made inconspicuous by the brightness of the truth connected with it. It is the purpose of the leopard that no animal should appear to be under the spotted skin, that is, spiritually, that not a trace of evil desire should be

suspected under those falsities, until its end is gained. Nothing could enrage it more than to be distinctly seen.

That such deceivers appear in society we know. In regard to their work in the Church, Swedenborg says:

A leopard signifies reasonings which are discordant, and yet appear to be true, because a leopard is distinguished by its skin being variegated with spots, from which variegation it appears not unbeautiful; but whereas it is a fierce and insidious animal, and above all others swift to seize its prey, and whereas they also are such who are skilful in reasoning expertly to confirm the dogma concerning the separation of faith from good works, and this by reasonings from the natural man, which, notwithstanding their discordance with truths, they make to appear as if they cohered therewith, therefore, 'the Beast' [which signified such reasonings] appeared as to its body like a leopard. . . . But this shall be illustrated by an example: Who may not be brought to believe that faith alone is the one only means of salvation, when it is grounded in the argument that man cannot of himself do good which is good in itself? For it appears to everyone at first sight as a necessary consequence, and thus as cohering with truth; and in this case it is not perceived to be reasoning from the natural man confirming the separation of faith from good works



[and really springing from the lust of doing evil], while the person who is persuaded by this reasoning begins to think that he has no need to attend to his life, because he has faith. (*Apocalypse Explained* #780)

Such falsities appearing as truth in obscurity, are the means of deception to such lusts, and they can no more give them up than a leopard can change his spots; which is meant by the words, “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good who have been taught to do evil” (Jeremiah 13:23).

The multiplication and destructiveness of such deceitful lusts at the end of the Church is thus described: “The lion out of the forest has smitten the great ones of Jerusalem, the wolf of the plains shall devastate them; the leopard is watching against their cities; everyone who goes out shall be torn in pieces” (Jeremiah 5:6).

And, on the other hand, the perfect safety of innocent desire for truth, in the light of the Lord’s Presence, at His Coming, is signified by “The leopard shall lie down with the kid” (Isaiah 11:6).<sup>1</sup>

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1. See also *Apocalypse Revealed* #572, *Conjugal Love* #78, 79.

## THE DOG

The dogs of Oriental towns are so unlike their more fortunate European relatives, that they can hardly be recognized as belonging to the same species. In those lands the traveler finds that there is none of the wonderful variety which so distinguishes the dog of Europe. . . .

As he traverses the streets, he finds that all the dogs are alike, and that all are gaunt, hungry, half starved, savage, and cowardly, more like wolves than dogs, and quite as ready as wolves to attack when they fancy they can do so with safety. They prowl about the streets in great numbers, living, as they best can, on any scraps of food that they may happen to find. They have no particular masters, and no particular homes. Charitable persons will sometimes feed them, but will never make companions of them, feeling that the very contact of a dog would be a pollution. They are certainly useful animals, because they act as scavengers, and will eat almost any animal substance that comes in their way. (*Bible Animals*)

The author of "A Month in Constantinople" thus describes his first night:

The whole city rang with one vast riot. Down below me, at Tophané—over about Stamboul—far away at Scutari—the whole sixty thousand dogs that are said to overrun Constantinople appeared engaged in the most active extermination of each other, without a moment's cessation. The yelping, howling, barking, growling, and snarling were all merged into one uniform and continuous even sound, as the noise of frogs becomes when heard at a distance. For hours there was no lull. I went to sleep, and woke again, and still, with my windows open, I heard the same tumult going on; nor was it until day-break that anything like tranquility was restored.

Yet several writers agree that these savage curs are still dogs in that essential characteristic—the desire to attach themselves to a master. Mr. Tristram encamped, with his party, outside the walls of Jerusalem, near a Turkish guard house. He writes:

So near the soldiers, we could sleep in security, and had no occasion to be on the watch against pilferers during the daytime. Indeed, the guard house provided us unasked with an invaluable and vigilant sentry, who was never relieved, nor ever quitted the post of duty. The poor Turkish conscript, like every other soldier in the world, is fond of pets, and in front of the grim turret that served for a guard house was a collection of old orange boxes and crates, thickly peopled by a

garrison of dogs of low degree, whose attachment to the spot was certainly not purchased by the loaves and fishes which fell to their lot. One of the party must indeed have had hard times, for she had a family of no less than five dependent on her exertions and on the superfluities of the sentries' mess. With a sagacity almost more than canine, the poor gaunt creature had scarcely seen our tents pitched before she came over with all her litter, and deposited them in front of our tent. At once she scanned the features of every member of our encampment, and introduced herself to our notice. During the week of our stay, she never quitted her post, nor attempted any depredations on the kitchen tent, which might have led to her banishment. Night and day she proved a faithful and vigilant sentry, permitting no stranger, human or canine, European or Oriental, to approach the tents without permission, but keeping on the most familiar terms with ourselves and our servants. On the morning of our departure, no sooner had she seen our camp struck than she conveyed her puppies back to their old quarters in the orange box, and no entreaties or bribes could induce her to accompany us. On three subsequent visits to Jerusalem, this same dog acted in a similar way, though no longer embarrassed by family cares, and would on no account permit any strange dog, nor even

her companions at the guard house, to approach within the tent ropes. (*Land of Israel* p. 175, 176)

It would be easy to fill volumes with anecdotes of the traits of dogs. There are innumerable accounts of the zeal and sagacity of Newfoundland dogs in rescuing lives from the water; of a similar instinct in the dogs of St. Bernard for finding and protecting travelers lost in the snow; of the peculiar ability and faithfulness displayed by shepherd dogs in guiding and protecting the sheep; of drovers' dogs which will conduct their flock or herd long distances alone, and will even drive them through other flocks or herds without allowing an individual to stray, or a single stranger to mingle with their own;<sup>1</sup> and not a few instances are recorded of dogs whose attachment to their masters was so great that when these died, the dogs also refused the means of life. It is superfluous to describe at great length qualities that are so well known to all; it only remains for us to generalize them, and point out the essential characteristics in them all.

Mr. Wood's observations on this point are of interest. He says:

The leading characteristic of a dog's nature is that he must have a master, or at all events a mis-

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1. *Natural History.*

tress; and just in proportion as he is free from human control, does he become less dog-like and more wolf-like. In fact, familiar intercourse with mankind is an essential part of a dog's true character, and the animal seems to be so well aware of this fact, that he will always contrive to find a master of some sort, and will endure a life of cruel treatment at the hands of a brutal owner rather than have no master at all. (*Bible Animals*)

Hamerton, also, with some facetiousness and extravagance, but with very clear insight into natural character, says:

Thousands of dogs, whole generations of them, have known man in no other character than that of a merciless commander, punishing the slightest error without pity, yet bestowing no reward. There are countries where the dogs are never fed, where they are left to pick up a bare existence amongst the vilest refuse, and where they walk like gaunt images of famine, living skeletons, gnawing dry sticks in the wintry moonlight, doing Nature's scavenger work like rats. Yet in every one of these miserable creatures beats the noble canine heart—that heart whose depths of devotion have never yet been sounded to the bottom; that heart which forgets all our cruelty, but not the smallest evidence of our kindness. If these poor animals had not been made to love us, what excellent reasons they would have had for hating us! Their love has not been developed by

care and culture, like the nourishing ears of wheat; but it rises like warm, natural springs, where man has done nothing either to obtain them or to deserve them. . . .

We know ourselves to be such lamentably imperfect characters, that we long for an affection altogether ignorant of our faults. Heaven has accorded this to us in the uncritical canine attachment. Women love in us their own exalted ideals, and to live up to the ideal standard is sometimes rather more than we are altogether able to manage; children in their teens find out how clumsy and ignorant we are, and do not quite unreservedly respect us; but our dogs adore us without a suspicion of our shortcomings. (*Chapters on Animals*)

It is said that every dog is an aristocrat, because rich men's dogs cannot endure beggars and their rags, and are civil only to well-dressed visitors. But the truth is that, from sympathy for his master, the dog always sees humanity very much from his master's point of view. The poor man's dog does not dislike the poor. I may go much farther than this, and venture to assert that a dog who has lived with you for years will make the same distinction between your visitors that you make yourself inwardly, notwithstanding the apparent uniformity of your outward politeness. My dog is very civil to people I like, but he is

savage to those I dislike, whatever the tailor may have done to lend them external charms. (Ibid.)

Whatever we may think of the nobleness of the character thus described, there is no doubting the truth that the dog is an embodiment of personal affection, indiscriminating, devoted. There is, indeed, a difference in the quality of dogs; some of them learn good things easily, and are reluctant to do harm; and others can with difficulty be restrained from cruelty. But where they attach themselves they worship good and evil indifferently; and all love wanton uncleanness. The affection of which they are representatives loves the faults with the virtues, often with a special fondness for selfish peculiarities of thought and temper. It is an affection which makes one complacent with himself as he is, but is not at all encouraging to improvement.

In the Scriptures dogs are usually spoken of as vile; but in their best sense are used as representatives of kindly, natural affection, which is indiscriminate because ignorant of truth, yet sometimes is desirous of instruction. The dogs that licked the sores of Lazarus, lying at the rich man's gate, have such a meaning. Swedenborg interprets the rich man as meaning the learned among the Jews, who were rich in knowledge of the Word; the poor man, as the simple among



them who looked up to the learned for instruction, as Lazarus desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; and the dogs doing their best in their poor way to help him, as those out of the church who had more kindness than those within it, though they did not know good from evil.<sup>1</sup>

Also when the Syrophenician woman besought the Lord to cast out the devil from her daughter, He replied, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs"; to which she answered, in her humility, "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table" (Matthew 15), thus turning the representative to its good sense, by acknowledging that they were in evil, but expressing a desire to be helped and instructed.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, in a sense not bad, Swedenborg says that dogs signify "the lowest in the Church, who prate much of such things as are of the Church, but understand little" (*Arcana Coelestia* #7784); in which sense it seems to be used in the passage, "That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same" (Psalm 68:24). Such persons may be very faithful to the things they have been taught, very

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #9231.

2. See also *Apocalypse Explained* #455.

watchful and suspicious of everything that does not exactly agree with it, even of familiar things dressed in different clothes.<sup>1</sup>

Ignoble dogs, because of their greediness and quarrelsomeness, and their unclean and wanton ways, represent those whose personal attachment is simply for the sake of indulgence of appetite and for sensual enjoyment. Of these Swedenborg says:

By dogs in general are signified those who are in all kinds of lusts and indulge them, particularly they who are in pleasures merely corporeal, especially the pleasures of eating and drinking, in which alone they take delight. (*Apocalypse Revealed* #952)

In this sense it is said, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs"; for holy things ought not to be used for self-indulgence. And in the Revelation we read, in the same meaning, "Without are dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers" (Revelation 22:15). From such appetites readily springs the desire to destroy the purer truth which restrains them; and such desire is meant by dogs in the passage, "They compassed me about like dogs; deliver my darling from the power of the dog" (Psalm 22:17, 21).

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1. That there are good dogs, see *Spiritual Diary* #4853.

## THE FOX AND THE JACKAL

The Hebrew word used in the Bible for fox:

. . . . undoubtedly includes the jackal as well. Indeed, in most of the passages where it occurs, the jackal, rather than the fox, is intended. . . . The two animals are commonly confounded, or spoken of together, by the natives of Syria, though they are perfectly aware of their distinctness. . . .

The character and habits of the eastern fox in no way differ from those so well known in other countries; but, from necessity probably, they are less exclusively carnivorous than in England. . . . The fondness of the fox for grapes is well known in the East; but not less so that of the jackal, which, going in packs, often commits great devastation in the vineyards. . . . One great difference between the jackal and the fox is that the former hunts in packs, while the latter prowls singly for his prey, which he takes by stratagem. (Tristram, in *Natural History of the Bible*)

The crafty, pilfering, cruel nature of the fox is made familiar by a thousand anecdotes to be

found in every library. Mr. Wood gives the following account of his odor:

A very powerful scent is poured forth from the fox in consequence of some glands which are placed near the root of the tail, and furnish the odorous secretion. . . . It is by this scent that the hounds are able to follow the footsteps of a flying fox, and to run it down by their superior speed and endurance. The fox, indeed, seems to be aware that its pursuers are guided in their chase by this odor, and puts in practice every expedient that its fertile brain can produce in order to break the continuity of the scent, or to overpower it by the presence of other odors, which are more powerful, though not more agreeable. A hunted fox will make the most extraordinary leaps in order to break the line of scent, and throw the hounds on a false track. It will run for a considerable distance in a straight line, return upon its own track, and then make a powerful spring to one side, so as to induce the dogs to run forward while it quietly steals away. It will take every opportunity of perfuming, or rather of scenting, itself with any odorous substance with which it can meet, in the hope of making the hounds believe that they have mistaken their quarry. In fine, there are a thousand wiles which this crafty animal employs, and which are related by everyone who has watched a fox or hunted it. (*Natural History*)

The jackal is an essentially nocturnal and gregarious animal. During the whole of the day the jackals lie concealed in their holes or hiding places, which are usually cavities in the rocks, in tombs or among ruins. At nightfall they issue from their dens, and form themselves into packs, often consisting of several hundred individuals, and prowl about in search of food. Carrion of various kinds forms their chief subsistence, and they perform in the country much the same task as is fulfilled by the dogs in the cities. If any animal should be killed, or even severely wounded, the jackals are sure to find it out and to devour it before the daybreak. (*Bible Animals*)

The audacity of the jackal is as notable as his cunning. He will wait at the very door, biding his time patiently until it is opened and he may slink in through the aperture. Pigs, lambs, kids, and poultry fall victims to his insatiate appetite, and he has been known to steal the sleeping puppies from the side of their mother without detection. . . . Always ready to take advantage of every favorable opportunity, the jackal is a sad parasite, and hangs upon the skirts of the larger carnivores as they roam the country for prey, in the hope of securing some share of the creatures which they destroy or wound. . . . When the tiger has killed some large animal, such as a buffalo, which he cannot consume at one time, the jackals collect round the carcass at a respectful distance,

and wait patiently until the tiger moves off and they can venture to approach. As soon as the tiger moves away, the jackals rush from all directions, carousing upon the slaughtered buffalo, and each anxious to eat as much as it can contain in the shortest time. (*Natural History*)

The common perception of men sees in the fox an emblem of craftiness, especially in getting possession of property. In Oriental stories, the jackal holds a similar place, as the representative of cunning and quick command of resources. In the fables of the East, animals are often put for human attributes, and are represented as speaking and carrying on the plot of the story with a sort of human intelligence. And among them the jackal is always the one to contrive plans, and to extricate the party from difficulties.

But foxes and jackals are night animals; therefore the intelligence which they represent does not love spiritual light, but the light of the world, which by itself is spiritual obscurity. They are also cruel beasts of prey; which indicates that they represent selfish affections, which would prey upon others, and not do them good. They seem to be embodiments of sly, selfish artifice in obtaining property. Human foxes love tricky ways, and chuckle over the proceeds of some

sharp maneuver, loving them more than any amount of honest gains.

The difference between the fox and the jackal seems to be that the jackal is more social, usually living in the neighborhood of others, and preying upon slain or wounded and feeble animals in company, while the fox is more solitary, more suspicious, more secret.

The men who herd together for plunder, taking advantage of troubled times, of the conflicts of greater men, and of everyone's weakness or necessity, are jackals; but the slyer man, who lays his own plans in silence, trusts no one, and believes that he can outwit them all, is a fox.

Mean thieves they all are; and I think there is an odor of meanness about them which is readily perceived, and which they cannot get rid of; but which the possessors try to obscure by an air of familiarity with worse wickedness which they assume to have met; thus, as it were, covering their own with a stronger scent. In every large community there must be many bone-strewn holes of foxes and jackals, which honest people seldom see until they fall into trouble.

Speaking spiritually, this enjoyment of one's own tricky prudence, as a means of getting the better of others, is the opposite of a modest love of spiritual intelligence as a means of doing

good.<sup>1</sup> It is not pleasant to think of a perverted meaning to so good a fruit as grapes; but as wine can be used to produce drunkenness, so can grapes as food for foxes. In their right use they correspond to the pleasant truth of neighborly life, such as true charity loves; but foxes' grapes are a knowledge of men and of the ways of life, as a means of getting selfish advantages.

That pride in their own prudence such as foxes represent was common among the Jews, but that the truth of charity had no place in them, is meant by the Lord's saying, "Foxes have holes, . . . but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head."

The Lord also called Herod a fox; no doubt describing with perfect truth his essential character.

The foxes with which Samson avenged himself upon the Philistines for taking his wife and giving her to his companion were probably jackals. Three hundred of them Samson caught, "and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails. And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing

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1. *Divine Providence* #311; *True Christian Religion* 134.



corn, with the vineyards and olives.” Samson, as a Nazarite, represents the literal sense of the Word in power to expose and subdue evil. The Philistines represent those who allow themselves all pleasant evils of life, believing that they are saved by their faith. The Philistine bride of Samson represents a pretended affection for the genuine truth of the Word; her being given to another signifies that their pretended affection for truth is, after all, only for the means of confirming their falsity and excusing their evil; and Samson prophetically showed them that the natural consequence of their duplicity was the kindling of evil fires by which every good and true thing among them would be destroyed.

In a like sense David says, “Those that seek my soul to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth. They shall fall by the sword; they shall be a portion for jackals” (Psalm 63:9, 10); referring literally to the clearing of a battlefield by the jackals; and spiritually to the utter destruction of those who hate the Lord and His truth, by their own perverse and deceitful reasonings.

## SWINE

An unwise effort, as it seems to me, is made by some indiscriminate admirers of Nature, to lay all that is unclean in the habits of the hog to the interference of man. They say that in the wild state he is cleaner, and lives upon nuts and roots, and therefore is not repulsive. Still, the facts remain that, even wild, he does love to wallow in filth and mire, and that, as we know him, nothing that has a particle of nutriment in it is too filthy for him to eat. I will not dwell upon his disagreeable character, as in a general way it is sufficiently familiar to everybody. The domestic hog is a form of the greedy love of appropriating every good thing to oneself, and, secondarily, of defiling what cannot be appropriated. It is not a love of delicacies, and of refined self-indulgence; but of greedy, indiscriminate appropriation and possession, for no possible use.

The love may apply itself to food, or to riches, or to knowledge, or anything else that is good; its essence is the same in all its different forms.

Swedenborg says that swine correspond to sordid avarice. And he explains that:

The lust of gain and avarice has in it that it not only wishes to possess the whole world, but also, for the sake of gain, to plunder everyone, yea, to kill, and it likewise would kill for a trifle, if the laws did not prevent it. And, moreover, in the gold and silver which such a man possesses, he regards himself as the greatest in power, however otherwise he may appear to do in external form. Hence it is evident that in avarice there is not only the love of the world, but also self-love, and, indeed, the most filthy self-love. For, with the sordidly avaricious, elation of mind, or pride, is not so conspicuous outwardly, for this sometimes does not care about wealth for the sake of show; neither is it that kind of self-love which usually is connected with pleasures; for they have little concern about the body and its food and clothing; but it is a love altogether earthly, having nothing for its end but money, in which it believes itself, not in act but in ability, above all. Hence it may be evident that in avarice there is a love of self the lowest and the vilest of all; wherefore in the other life the avaricious appear to themselves to be among swine; and they are, beyond all others, contrary to all good whatever. (*Arcana Coelestia* #4751)

The love of wealth for the sake of power has been a not uncommon form of avarice among

the Jews, who have made its greedy, cruel, selfish nature well known to all readers. Another form of their avarice will be mentioned hereafter. For the reason that swine correspond to their national evil, to eat swine's flesh was a form of transgression which their backsliding was very liable to take, and it is mentioned throughout the Bible as a not uncommon, though abominable, sin.

The filth in which swine love to wallow, and to trample good things, indicates their secondary correspondence with a lust of defiling goodness and truth. Therefore Swedenborg also says that swine correspond to "filthy loves such as are in the hells of adulterers" (*Apocalypse Explained* #1044).

## THE WILD BOAR

The wild boar is, in some respects, so different from his domesticated brother, that he requires separate attention.

Woods and reed beds are always the habitations of the wild boar, . . . which seems to prefer the reed bed to the wood, probably because it can find plenty of mud, in which it wallows, after the fashion of its kind. There is no doubt whatever that the "Beast of the Reeds" (Psalm 68:30) is simply a poetical phrase for the wild boar.

If there should be any cultivated ground in the neighborhood, the boar is sure to sally out, and do enormous damage to the crops. It is perhaps more dreaded in the vineyards than in any other ground, as it not only devours the grapes, but tears down and destroys the vines, trampling them underfoot, and destroying a hundredfold as much as it eats. . . . We can well imagine the damage that would be done to a vineyard even by the domesticated swine, but the wild boar is infinitely more destructive. It is of very great size, often resembling a donkey rather than a boar, and is swift and active beyond conception. The wild

boar is scarcely recognizable as the very near relation of the domestic species. It runs with such speed that a high-bred horse finds some difficulty in overtaking it, while an indifferent steed would be left hopelessly behind. Even on level ground the hunter has hard work to overtake it; and if it can get upon broken or hilly ground, no horse can catch it. The wild boar can leap to a considerable distance, and can wheel and turn when at full speed, with an agility that makes it a singularly dangerous foe. Indeed, the inhabitants of countries where the wild boar flourishes would as soon face a lion as one of these animals, the stroke of whose razor-like tusks is made with lightning swiftness, and which is sufficient to rip up a horse, and cut a dog nearly asunder. (*Bible Animals*)

When striking with these weapons, the boar does not seem to make any great exertion of strength, but gives a kind of wriggle with his snout as he passes his victim. In India, it is not uncommon for an infuriate wild boar to pursue some unfortunate native, to overtake him as he flies, and, putting his snout between the poor man's legs, to cut right and left with an almost imperceptible effort, and to pass on his course, leaving the wounded man helpless on the ground. (*Natural History*)

The fleetness and nimbleness of the wild boar suggest much more active mental qualities than

those of the domestic hog. His weapons of destruction, the tusks, by which he tears up vines and shrubs, and strips the bark from trees, are enormously developed; and with them his love of destroying, which now becomes the most prominent characteristic; though the greedy love of possession and the love of defilement are still there.

He is a representative of a quick, vigorous mind, wholly sensual, which believes itself to know everything that is worth knowing, and slashes right and left at all good things which it does not want to use.

Such are especially those who stick in philosophical terms, from which they believe themselves to be intellectually all-powerful. They attack and tear in pieces the terms in which interior truth is stated, without in the least comprehending the truth; as boars tear the bark from the vines.

Certain spirits who hated this philosophical destructiveness attacked Swedenborg because he also used some philosophical terms, such as subject and predicate, and likened him to a wild boar. He explained that he used the terms only as exact expressions of spiritual thought; and continued:

The abuse is that philosophers remain in terms, and dispute concerning them without coming to agreement. Hence all idea of the real thing perishes, and man's understanding is so limited that afterwards it knows nothing but terms. Therefore when they wish to comprehend things with their terms, they collect nothing but such terms, and thus obscure the real thing, so that they can understand nothing at all; thus they darken their natural light. For on this account an unlearned man has much more extensive ideas, and sees [more clearly] what is true, than a philosopher. Such a one remains in the mud like a pig. Such a pig was represented to me as a wild boar, and he becomes a wild beast in the woods; for he wanders like a wild beast among truths, which he tears in pieces and destroys. (*Spiritual Diary* #1604)

In the Psalms, the Church is described as to spiritual truth as a vine brought out of Egypt, and planted; and of such spiritual enemies as have been described, it is said, "The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it" (Psalm 80:13).



## MICE

The other form of Jewish avarice which has been referred to (under “Swine”) is that represented by mice.<sup>1</sup> It is a love of pilfering and hoarding, not so much for the sake of greatness and power, as for the sake of an indolent and luxurious life. There is in it an utter want of trust in Providence, which is replaced by trust in one’s own acquisitions. There is also an aversion to productive industry, and a disposition to beg and steal and hoard. I think we feel the same sort of shudder at the idea of petty thieves around as we do at mice and rats.

This sort of avarice applies as well to knowledge as to property, and an idle love of reading for the sake of possessing much knowledge is represented by mice.<sup>2</sup>

Also the love of sly indulgence of appetite, which we should be ashamed to have exposed; and, again, the pilfering of affection from others

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #938.

2. *Spiritual Diary* #385.

by sly insinuations and flattery are forms of the avarice represented by mice.

Because this avarice is a common Jewish vice, therefore it is said of them, "They that sanctify themselves . . . eating swine's flesh and the abomination and the mouse, shall be consumed together" (Isaiah 66:17).

When the Ark of the Testimony was taken by the Philistines, and carried down to their country, wherever it went it caused plagues of emerods and mice. The Philistines represent those who believe themselves saved by their faith, and freed from the obligation to attend to their lives. The presence of the Ark represents the power of the truth of the Word to show their real quality. And the mice are the sly habits of self-indulgence, thus exposed.

## FROGS

Frogs are cold, slimy creatures, who, when they are young, live in the water, and resemble ugly, useless little fishes. As they mature they learn to breathe air, but still live mostly in the water, coming to the surface to breathe and croak. In early spring, which is their breeding season, they croak almost incessantly, and are vile. They correspond to affections which grow up in an atmosphere of merely natural thought, which they do not love for any useful purpose, and when they mature, think about spiritual things only to deny and slander them. They deny the Divine Providence, they deny that there is a heaven or a hell, and talk croakingly about getting all the good you can out of life as it goes.<sup>1</sup>

It was one of the plagues of Egypt that their river “brought forth frogs upon their land and in the chambers of their kings” (Psalm 105:30). By those plagues were represented the evils that come upon those who are wholly natural; and

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #7352.

one of them is the swarming of such falsities as frogs represent.

John saw “out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs” (Revelation 16:13). The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet are they who teach the doctrine of faith alone. These talk merely naturally, denying spiritual truth; not, indeed, the particulars mentioned above, but these—that our Lord is God with us; that heavenly life is to live from His good Love; that He conquered the hells, and now holds them subdued for those and in those who hate evil, and look to Him to save them. These essential truths they deny, and reason discontentedly against them, from their love of being let alone in their natural pleasures.

## APES

Mimicry is the familiar characteristic of monkeys and apes, even to the great gorillas, of whom it is said that “they watch the actions of men, and imitate them as nearly as possible. Like the ivory hunters, they pick up the fallen tusks of elephants, but not knowing where to deposit them, they carry their burdens about until they themselves drop, and even die from fatigue” (*Natural History*). Their very forms are burlesque imitations of human forms.

“Monkey tricks” and mimicry are well-known human attributes, and the love of these is the monkey in us.

In regard to spiritual things, there is a deeper kind of monkey character. Man becomes truly man, in the image and likeness of God, by learning from God, and living what he learns. But man is an ape, and no man, when he assumes the forms and the words of Christian worship in prayer and preaching and profession, but does not know the Lord in his heart nor love Him nor

live from Him; in which case he is only a grotesque, perverse counterfeit of a man.<sup>1</sup>

The apes which Solomon imported, with gold and silver, ivory and peacocks, were representatives of externals of worship, or of humanity, which with the Israelites were without internals.<sup>2</sup>

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1. *Apocalypse Revealed* #839.

2. *Apocalypse Explained* #514.

## SERPENTS

The first characteristic of serpents is that their whole body is foot. It lies upon the ground, and is their instrument of progression.

They throw themselves rapidly forward by coils of their body; but they have also a remarkable power of gliding along without coils, and without any other perceptible means of locomotion. This movement is dependent on:

... the mobility of the ribs, which are pushed forward in succession, and drawn back again, so as to catch against any inequality of the ground. This power is increased by the structure of the scales. Those of the upper part of the body, which are not used for locomotion, are shaped something like the scales of a fish; but those of the lower part of the body, which come in contact with the ground, are broad belts, each overlapping the other, and each connected with one pair of ribs. When, therefore, the serpent pushes forward the ribs, the edges of the scaly belts will catch against the slightest projection, and are able to give a very powerful impetus to the body. It is scarcely possible to drag a snake backwards

over rough ground; while on a smooth surface, such as glass, the serpent would be totally unable to proceed. (*Bible Animals*)

This gliding motion is as if the animal were intent with his whole mind upon keeping out of sight, and attaining his ends without suspicion. It is both offensive and defensive. By means of it he creeps unheard and unsuspected close to the insects, reptiles, or other small creatures which are his food, and seizes his prey by a sudden dart of his tongue or head. And, on the other hand, when surprised by an intruder whom he fears, he glides away so noiselessly and with so little appearance of movement, that an unpracticed eye will remain fixed upon the neighboring grass or sticks, and will only know that the snake is gone.

Describing the manner of handling venomous snakes practiced by Mr. Waterton, Mr. Wood says:

The nature of all serpents is rather peculiar. . . . They are extremely unwilling to move except where urged by the wants of nature, and will lie coiled up for many hours together when not pressed by hunger. Consequently, when touched, their feeling is evidently like that of a drowsy man, who only tries to shake off the object which may rouse him, and compose himself afresh to sleep. A quick and sudden movement would,



however, alarm the reptile, which would strike in self-defense; and, sluggish as are its general movements, its stroke is delivered with such lightning rapidity that it would be sure to inflict its fatal wound before it was seized. If, therefore, Mr. Waterton saw a serpent which he desired to catch, he would creep very quietly up to it, and with a gentle, slow movement place his fingers round its neck just behind the head. If it happened to be coiled up in such a manner that he could not get at its neck, he had only to touch it gently until it moved sufficiently for his purpose. When he had once placed his hand on the serpent it was in his power. He would then grasp it very lightly indeed, and raise it gently from the ground, trusting that the reptile would be more inclined to be carried quietly than to summon up sufficient energy to bite. Even if it were inclined to use its fangs, it could not have done so as long as its captor's fingers were round its neck. (*Bible Animals*)

Some charmers of serpents display snakes with their fangs extracted; but others:

... handle with impunity the cobra or the cerastes with all its venomous apparatus in good order. The charmers are always provided with musical instruments, of which a sort of flute with a loud shrill sound is the one which is mostly used in the performances. Having ascertained from slight marks which their practiced eyes eas-

ily discover, that a serpent is hidden in some crevice, the charmer plays upon his flute, and in a short time the snake is sure to make its appearance.

As soon as it is fairly out, the man seizes it by the end of the tail, and holds it up in the air at arm's length. In this position it is helpless, having no leverage, and merely wriggles about in fruitless struggles to escape. Having allowed it to exhaust its strength by its efforts, the man lowers it into a basket, where it is only too glad to find a refuge, and closes the lid. After awhile he raises the lid and begins to play the flute. The serpent tries to glide out of the basket; but, as soon as it does so, the lid is shut down again and in a very short time the reptile finds that escape is impossible, and, as long as it hears the sound of the flute, only raises its head in the air, supporting itself on the lower part of its tail, and continues to wave its head from side to side. . . . The rapidity with which a cobra learns this lesson is extraordinary, the charmers being as willing to show their mastery over newly caught serpents as over those which have been long in their possession. . . . The allusion to the "deaf adder [probably cobra] that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely" (Psalm 58:4, 5), needs a little explanation. Some species of serpent are more susceptible to sound than others, the cobra being the most sensitive of

all the tribe. Any of these which are comparatively insensible to the charmer's efforts may be considered as 'deaf adders.' But there has been from time immemorial a belief in the East that some individual serpents are very obstinate and self-willed, refusing to hear the sound of the flute, or the magic song of the charmer, and pressing one ear into the dust, while they stop the other with the tail."

After quoting various comments upon this belief, Mr. Wood adds:

It may be as well to remark, . . . that snakes have no external ears, and that therefore the notion of the serpent stopping its ears is, zoologically, a simple absurdity.

The asp of our English Bible is identified with tolerable certainty with the cobra. The adder, in the expression, "Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse's heels, so that his rider shall fall backward," seems to be the cerastes, or horned snake. Of this little snake Tristram writes:

Its habit is usually to coil itself on the sand, where it basks in the impress of a camel's foot, and thence suddenly to dart out on any passing animal. So great is the terror which its sight inspires in horses, that I have known mine, when I was riding in the Sahara, suddenly start and rear, trembling and perspiring in every limb, and

no persuasions would induce him to proceed. I was quite unable to account for his terror, until I noticed a cerastes coiled up in a depression two or three paces in front, with its basilisk eyes steadily fixed on us, and no doubt preparing for a spring, as the horse passed. (*Natural History of the Bible*)

Swedenborg says:

All beasts signify affections, . . . and serpents signify the affections of the sensual man, by reason of their creeping on the belly upon the ground in like manner as the sensual principle of man; for this is in the lowest place, and as it were creeps upon the ground under all other principles. . . . The evil . . . who are in the hells, are mostly sensual, and many of them subtle; wherefore when they are viewed from the light of heaven, they appear as serpents of various kinds and hence it is that the devil is called a serpent. (*Apocalypse Explained* #581)

By sensual affection is not meant the power of perceiving through the senses, nor thoughts from such perception; but the love of sensual pleasure, to which these perceptions and thoughts minister. The men of ancient days at first had interior perceptions of love and wisdom from heaven, and attended chiefly to these and to the pleasant things of the world as representatives of them. But after awhile they began to think of the plea-

asures of external sensations separate from spiritual perceptions—they listened to the Serpent, who was more subtle than any wild beast of the field which the Lord God had made; and, judging of good and evil by his advice, they lost everything heavenly.

“In old time, they were called serpents,” Swedenborg says, “who trusted to things of sense more than to things revealed” (*Arcana Coelestia* #196; also #195).

The poison of serpents is the subtle persuasion of the love of sensual pleasure, by which it torpifies our spiritual perceptions, and delivers us up to spiritual death. The senses are not equally dangerous in this way. The affections of sight and hearing sometimes beguile us; the affections of taste and touch do so continually. And they always act like serpents. The affections for the pleasant things of these senses insinuate themselves so cautiously, and present such plausible appearances of use or necessity, that we do not perceive them at all until we have gone too far. Then, perhaps, we wake with a shock to find the serpent taking possession of us. By the poison of these serpents more than by any other causes the spirit of man is deadened, closed to the perception of spiritual truth, and hardened to the delights of heavenly loves. And when these

things of interior life are destroyed, the man is all serpent—cold, sluggish, stupid—keen and cruel only when some appetite is excited.

The serpent in the way, biting the horse's heels so that his rider shall fall backward, denotes reasonings from appearances and externally pleasant things by which the understanding of spiritual truth is taken away.<sup>1</sup>

But the love of sensual pleasure is not always evil. In the earliest times it was simply an external delight subservient to and completing heavenly delights; and so it becomes again as men are regenerated. To quote once more from Swedenborg:

In as much as by serpents are signified sensual things, which are the ultimates of the natural man, and these are not evil except with those persons who are evil . . . by . . . serpents not poisonous . . . are signified in the Word sensual things not evil, or, as applied to persons, sensual men not evil. (*Apocalypse Explained* #714)

By the serpent, among the most ancient people, who were celestial men, was signified circumspection, and in like manner the sensual, by which they exercised circumspection lest they should be injured by evil; which is evident from the words of the Lord to His disciples, "Behold, I

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #6400.

send you forth as sheep into the midst of wolves; be ye therefore prudent as serpents, and harmless as doves” (Matthew 10:16). So also by the brazen serpent which was set up in the wilderness, by which was signified the sensual of the Lord, who alone is the celestial man, and alone is circumspect and provident for all; wherefore all who looked upon it were preserved. (*Arcana Coelestia* #197)

The Lord glorified His whole human, even to the senses and the sensual affections. He made them divine in Him, and perfectly subservient to His love and wisdom. And He has power to subdue excited sensual affections in us. If we bring them at once to Him, they subside, and the spirit is healed. This is represented by the elevation of the brazen serpent, and the healing of all whom the serpents had bitten, who looked upon it.

The charming of serpents by music seems to represent the subjection of pleasures of sense to spiritual affections. “The deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of charmers charming never so wisely,” is the persistent love of such pleasure, which will not attend to words of wisdom, or tones of spiritual affection.<sup>1</sup> Possibly the serpents most easily charmed in this manner have relation to the

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #195.

sense of hearing, which may exert a most enervating influence upon the spirit, but may with comparative ease be made to serve noble affections.

It would be an interesting inquiry whether there are also serpents charmed by bright colors, since the eye is even more readily made the servant of intelligence.

In a good sense, the harmless serpents represent the watchfulness of the senses lest the body suffer injury.

In a deeper sense, the watchful caution and noiseless retreat of the harmless serpents image the useful circumspection which we ought to exercise in dealing with others—as, for instance, in presenting truth to them, lest we subject the truth to abuse or misunderstanding, advancing our views cautiously, and when we perceive that they will not be received, withdrawing them if possible without observation. The senses are then all on the watch for tones, looks, or touches which agree or disagree; and so guide and protect our advance and retreat. This sensitiveness we call “tact.”



## BIRDS

A distinguishing characteristic of birds is that the arms—which in mammalia generally serve for support upon the ground or on trees, also for weapons of offense and defense, in man for work, and in all for expressing most effectively the power of the animal—are transformed into wings, the chief use of which is to support their possessor in the air, whence he commands an extensive view, and to bear him with extreme rapidity from place to place. Another peculiarity of birds is the sharpness of their sight, and the wonderful quickness with which it is accommodated to objects at various distances.

Their other organs of sense are not remarkably developed. The touch cannot be delicate through a coat of feathers; the tasting papilla of the tongue are few; the olfactory nerves are small in most birds; and even the ears, though quick and delicate within certain limits, do not attain a high development, either externally or internally. The sensitive power of birds is concentrated in the eyes, which are very large, and

marvelously quick to discern objects near or remote.

The creature whose chief powers are those of rising into the air, of penetrating vision, and of rapid flight, is a representative of the human faculty of rising in thought out of the common states of life, of obtaining clear ideas of states quite remote, and entering into them with intellectual delight.

It is a faculty unlike that represented by the beasts of burden, in that it does not attempt to introduce our affections, knowledge, and life into the states observed; but merely to obtain a distinct idea of them, with, perhaps, some taste of their productions. After obtaining such an idea, we may make the effort to transport ourselves into the new state of life, which is comparatively a slow, toilsome process; or we may desire to bring into our lives, as they are, some new element of which we have obtained an idea; and this also is a process involving mental labor. This is a kind of work which birds do not do, except in the small degree which is represented by their carrying seeds and small fruits, and sometimes larger prey, to their nests. But good spiritual birds have a very exquisite pleasure in seeing in the light of heaven, and thinking in the air of heaven, cared for and blessed by the Lord.

The feathers of such birds represent what is good and beautiful in spiritual thought. For garments represent that which is right and becoming to him who is clothed. The wool of sheep represents the reverent and affectionate manners of those who are in love to the Lord and mutual love; the hair of goats represents the truths of charity expressed by those who are in neighborly love from principle. And the feathers of birds describe the grace and delight of thinking.

The wings of birds, by which they take hold of the air and climb, are the power of feeling the reality and the support of spiritual truth and heavenly influences. The influence of good spirits and angels is about everyone, and a divine influence from the Lord. The mere presence of these does not raise the mind into the region of heavenly thought. But if one acknowledges their reality, and, trusting to their support, endeavors to think truly of heaven and of the Lord in heaven, he immediately begins to float. Therefore the experiences of the reality and supporting power of angels' thought and affection are the pinions of the wings. If these are extensive, and their conscious hold of such supporting influence is strong, the mind spreads its wings and soars in easy sweeps. If they are slight and weak, the mind is obliged constantly to reassure itself

of the reality of spiritual things, and takes only short and labored flights.

Under their wings birds gather their young for safety, saying in effect that tender affections for spiritual thought are justified and protected by the experience and power of others in spiritual thinking. Under their wings they protect their own heads as they sleep, shielding their lives by their knowledge and experience of heavenly influences. They are made as forms of trust in the protection of heaven; even in the egg the birdlings grow with their heads under their wings.

There is a remarkable difference between birds and the mammalia as to the mode of reproduction. The birds lay eggs containing all the materials from which the young are formed, and sit upon them and care for them, giving them closest attention until the development is complete. In mammalia the egg is retained by the mother, and grows gradually, with comparatively little attention, from the daily life of the mother, until the young are ready for separate life. The birds are forms of affection for thinking, and even their young immediately become objects of thought and absorbing attention. The mammalia are forms of affection for living; and their young become similar forms not by

thoughtful attention, but by being a part of their parents' living, till they are completely developed.

## EAGLES

The birds of prey, as they are commonly called, are divided into three families: vultures, falcons (including eagles, hawks, and kites), and owls.

The vultures are distinguished by the shape of the beak, which is of moderate size, nearly straight above, curved suddenly and rounded at the tip, and without any 'teeth' in the upper mandible. . . . In the greater number of species the head and upper part of the neck are nearly naked, and the eyes are unshaded by the feathery ridge which overhangs these organs in the eagles. As a general rule, the vultures feed on dead carion, and are therefore most beneficial to the countries which they inhabit. When pressed by hunger, however, they will make inroads upon the flocks and herds. (Wood's *Natural History*)

The eagle family, like the vultures, seek their food by daylight, and are therefore grouped with them as the diurnal birds of prey.

All the falconidæ possess powerful hooked beaks, not running straight for some distance, and then suddenly curved, as in the vultures, but nearly always bent in a curve from the very base.

The head and neck are covered with plumage, and above the eyes the feathers are so thick and projecting that they form a kind of roof or shade, under which the eye is situated and effectually sheltered from the bright rays of the noontide sun.

The whole of the falconidæ are eminently destructive birds, gaining their subsistence chiefly by the chase, seldom feeding on carrion except when pressed by hunger, or when the dead animal has only recently been killed. Herein they form a complete contrast to the vultures, whose usual food is putrefying carrion, and fresh meat the exception. Destructive though they may be, they are by no means cruel, neither do they inflict needless pain on the object of their pursuit. . . . Although they deprive any birds and beasts of life, they effect their purpose with a single blow, sweeping down upon the doomed creature with such lightning velocity, and striking it so fiercely with the death dealing talons, that in the generality of instances the victim must be unconscious even of danger, and be suddenly killed while busily engaged in its ordinary pursuits, without suffering the terrors of anticipation, or even a single pang of bodily pain. . . . When the eagle perceives a bird on the wing, the mere shock caused by the stroke of the eagle's body is almost invariably sufficient to cause death; and the bird, should it be a large one, such

as a swan, for example, falls dead upon the earth without even a wound. Smaller birds are carried off in the talons of their pursuers, and are killed by the grip of their tremendous claws; the eagle in no case making use of its beak for the purpose of killing its prey. If the bird carries off a lamb or a hare, it grasps the body firmly with its claws, and then, by a sudden exertion of its wonderful strength, drives the sharp talons deep into the vitals of its prey, and does not loosen its grasp until the breath of life has fled, and all movement has ceased.

The eagles are all monogamous, keeping themselves to a single mate, and living together in perfect harmony through their lives. Should, however, one of them die, or be killed, the survivor is not long left in a state of widowhood, but vanishes from the spot for a few days, and then returns with a new mate. . . . It is a rather remarkable fact that, whereas the vultures feed their young by disgorging the food which they have taken into their crops, the eagles carry the prey to their nests, and there tear it to pieces, and feed the eaglets with the morsels.

A golden eagle had been captured in Scotland, and, being very tame, always accompanied the family to which it belonged in all their journeys. . . . Like other tame eagles, . . . she would persist in killing cats if they came within reach, although her ordinary food was fowls, rab-



bits, and similar articles of diet. On one occasion, a sickly, pining chicken . . . was given to the eagle. The royal bird, however, refused to eat it, but seemed to be struck with pity at its miserable state, and took it under her protection. She even made it sit under her wing, which she extended as a shield; and once, when a man unkindly endeavored to take her protégée away, she attacked him fiercely, injuring his leg severely, and drove him fairly off her premises.

Owing to the expanse of the wings, and the great power of the muscles, the flight of this bird is peculiarly bold, striking, and graceful. It sweeps through the air in a succession of spiral curves, rising with every spire, and making no perceptible motion with its wings until it has attained an altitude at which it is hardly visible. From that post of vantage the eagle marks the ground below, and sweeps down with lightning rapidity upon bird or beast that may happen to take its fancy.

Tristram quotes Sir H. Davy's account of a pair of golden eagles teaching their young to fly:

I once saw a very interesting sight above the crags of Ben Nevis. Two parent eagles were teaching their offspring, two young birds, the maneuvers of flight. They began by rising from the top of the mountain, in the eye of the sun. It was about midday, and bright for the climate. They at first made small circles, and the young

birds imitated them. They paused on their wings, waiting until they had made their flight, and then took a second and larger gyration, always rising towards the sun, and enlarging their circle of flight so as to make a gradually ascending spiral. The young ones still and slowly followed, apparently flying better as they mounted; and they continued this sublime exercise, always rising, till they became mere points in the air, and the young ones were lost, and afterwards their parents, to our aching sight.

Of the bald eagle it is related by many writers that when he compels the fish hawk to let go its prey, he pursues the falling fish so rapidly as to catch it before it reaches the water.

The full speed of the peregrine falcon, Mr. Wood says, "has been computed at a hundred and fifty miles per hour."

Mr. Wood and Mr. Tristram agree that the griffon vulture is the bird, or one of the birds, whose name is rendered "The Eagle" in our version of the Scriptures. Mr. Tristram says of it:

There can be no doubt of the identity of the Hebrew *neshar* with the Arabic *nissr*, the name invariably applied not to any eagle, strictly so-called, but to the griffon (*gyps fulvus*) of naturalists, commonly known as the griffon vulture, or great vulture. It is unfortunate that in our language we have but one word, "vulture," applied

alike to the noble griffon, and to the very useful, but very despicable scavenger, "Pharaoh's hen," as Europeans in the East call the Egyptian vulture. . . .

We shall see, as we examine some of the passages where the *nesher* is spoken of, that the description is applicable to the griffon alone; and so far from the griffon vulture conveying the idea of a repulsive bird to the Oriental mind, it has been universally adopted as the type of the lordly and the noble. . . . In Micah 1:16 we read, 'Make thee bald, and poll thee for thy delicate children; enlarge thy baldness as the eagle,' where the similitude can only be taken from the griffon vulture, which has the neck and head bald and covered with down, a character which no eagle shares with it. . . . "Constant reference is made in Scripture to its feeding on the slain, and on dead flesh. Although this is a habit it shares with the eagle, yet no eagles congregate like the griffon; and while the latter may be seen by hundreds, the less conspicuous eagles are only to be counted by a few individuals here and there." In the expression, 'Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together' (Matthew 24:28), the griffons undoubtedly are meant, and possibly eagles also.

The beak of the griffon is hooked and of great power, but its claws and feet are much weaker

than those of the eagle, and are not adapted for killing prey. (*Natural History of the Bible*)

The vulture was one of the chief emblems of Egyptian power, its outspread wings continually recurring on the grand monuments and temples. . . .

Strangely enough, in their second captivity, the Jews met with the same emblem among the Assyrians. For example, their god Nisroch, whom we find mentioned as specially worshipped by Sennacherib, was a vulture-headed deity, bearing not only the head of the bird, but also its wings. The vast wings of the vulture were used by the Assyrians as types of divine power, and were therefore added, not only to human figures, but to those of beasts. The human-headed and vulture-winged bulls of Nineveh, with which we are now so familiar, are good examples of this peculiar imagery. The name Nisroch, by the way, is evidently the same word as nesher, and bears even closer resemblance to the Arabic nissr. This bird was also the war standard of Assyria, just as the eagle is that of France. (*Bible Animals*)

Without attempting to decide positively as to the meaning of the Hebrew name, it seems to me probable that it meant the griffons and also others of the larger and nobler birds of prey. Hebrew terms are commonly of general significance, and translators often err by limiting their

meaning to particulars. Concerning these birds as a whole it may be said that of all living creatures they soar the highest, they have the most penetrating and comprehensive sight, and they themselves follow their sight the most quickly.

If an idea of the omniscience and omnipresence of God were to be presented to us under any natural form, it could be no other than that of the eagle. These divine attributes were represented to John as a flying eagle (Revelation 4:7), of which Swedenborg says:

That by this is signified the appearance in ultimates of the Divine Watchfulness and Providence, as to intelligence and circumspection in every direction, is manifest from the signification of an eagle, as denoting intelligence; in this case the Divine Intelligence of the Watchfulness and providence of the Lord. An eagle signifies intelligence, because intelligence is in the light of heaven, and an eagle flies on high to be so, and to look about on every side. . . . In a good sense, the birds of heaven signify intellectual and rational powers; and the eagle above all others because it not only flies high, but possesses a most acute sight. (*Apocalypse Explained* #281; see also *Apocalypse Revealed* #244)

In a human sense, therefore, eagles represent the affections for thinking which penetrate the most interiorly and see the furthest; their special

delight it is to rise, and to lead their spiritual children to rise, towards the Lord, and to see things in the direct light in which He sees them. “A man who draws wisdom from God,” Swedenborg writes, “is like a bird flying on high; he looks about upon all things which are in gardens, woods, and farms, and flies to those which are of use to him” (*True Christian Religion* #69; see also *Arcana Coelestia* #8764).

There are many kinds of atmospheres—some which are heavenly, some earthly, and some infernal. There are poisonous atmospheres, in which no one can think what is true and good, but only what conduces to some selfish indulgence or acquisition. There are moral atmospheres, in which everyone thinks naturally what is becoming, orderly, and useful. There are spiritual atmospheres, in which it is easy to think what is from the Lord, and spiritually good and right. To climb into heavenly atmospheres is to think from heavenly order and heavenly truth, to perceive what heaven is, and to look upon all things from an interior heavenly state. “To be borne on eagles’ wings,” Swedenborg says, “is to be raised on high even into heavenly light. For the ancients understood by the visible heaven the angelic heaven; the simple also believed that the home of the angels was there; and also that on

high, as being nearer to the sun and stars, there was heavenly light itself. Hence it is that to be borne on eagles' wings denotes to be raised on high into that light" (*Arcana Coelestia* #8764). This appearance is in the spiritual world entirely true. The homes of angels are there on high; and to rise towards them is to come into the light.

What is meant by the light, or illustration, which they receive who rise into the heaven of their minds, Swedenborg explains thus:

Every man, as to his thoughts and affections, is in the spiritual world, consequently he is there as to his spirit; for it is the spirit of man which thinks and is affected. He who is made spiritual by regeneration from the Lord is, as to his spirit, in a heavenly society; but the natural man, or one who is not regenerated, is, as to his spirit, in an infernal society; with the latter, evils continually flow in from hell, and are also received with delight; but with the former, good things continually flow in from heaven, and are also received; and whereas good things flow into his affection and by means of the affection into the thought, he has thence illustration. This illustration is what is understood by the spiritual intelligence and power of view which are signified by the wings of the eagle, given to the woman, with which she fled into the wilderness. . . . Moreover, by these is signified the understanding of truth; for all

who are of that church [signified by the woman] have the understanding enlightened, by virtue whereof they are enabled to see truth from the light of truth. (*Apocalypse Explained* #759)

The process by which the Lord raises man from a natural to a spiritual state, in which he thinks the truth of heaven, and sees in the light of heaven, is thus described in the Song of Moses:

The Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness. He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. (Deuteronomy 32:9–12)

Elevation into heavenly states by spiritual flying has been described, but there is also descent from the heavens to those who need help; and rapid change of place without much elevation, which corresponds to the power of quickly thinking or imagining remote things. Of such mental sight and presence Swedenborg writes:

That by flying, in speaking of men, is signified observation and simultaneous presence, is because sight is present with the object which it sees; that it appears remote or distant, is from the intermediate things which appear at the same



time, and can be measured as to spaces. This may be fully confirmed from those things which exist in the spiritual world; there, spaces themselves are appearances arising from the diversity of affections and thoughts thence; wherefore, when any persons or things appear at a distance, and an angel or spirit desires from intense affection to meet those who are there, or to examine the things, he is immediately present. It is similar with thought, which is the internal or spiritual sight of man: this looks at the things which it had seen before, in itself without space, thus altogether as present. Hence it is that flying is predicated of the intellect and its intelligence, and that by it is signified observation, looking about, and presence. (*Apocalypse Explained* #282)

There are angels who have a special faculty of clear sight and quick presence in distant places, for the sake of giving instruction from the Lord where it is needed. In one of his "Relations," Swedenborg describes an angel who was seen by him, "flying beneath the eastern heaven. . . . He was clad in a robe which flowed backwards as he flew, and was girded with a belt of carbuncles and sapphires, which, as it were, flamed and shone; he flew downwards and alighted gently upon the earth" in the world of spirits. He came to convoke an assembly of the wisest men from Christendom, that they might declare what they

knew concerning heavenly joy and happiness; for it had been related in the society from which the angel descended that no one in the Christian world knew what these things are. This information was found to be entirely correct; and after the angel had introduced various companies of spirits into the enjoyments which they supposed to constitute heavenly happiness, and they had found how wearisome and unsatisfactory they were, he selected ten men from the assembly and led them up “a certain hill, and thence up a mountain, upon which was the heaven of those angels, which had before appeared to them at a distance like an expanse in the clouds.” They were prepared by the Lord to remain there three days; and during that time they were instructed in many delightful things of angelic life and happiness.

But what is noticeable for our present purpose is that the ensign of that society, which, made of gold and diamonds, was worn by the prince, was “an eagle brooding her young at the top of a tree.” The marriage ensign also was “a young eagle,” which was engraved upon a golden plate set around with diamonds, and worn by the bridegroom as a breastplate.

Now, no doubt, the intelligence with which these angels scrutinized the ignorance of the

Christian world, and the good they did in gathering and instructing the representatives of it, belonged to their ordinary faculty and duty as a heavenly society; though their faculties might usually be exercised in other directions. Like eagles of heaven, they looked down upon the state of the world; and, quickly descending, they gathered those who needed instruction, and selecting those who were most suitable for their purpose, they carried them to their mountain home, probably with the resulting benefit of mutual information.

The spirits from another earth in the starry heaven, Swedenborg describes as having relation in the Greatest Man to keenness of vision. He adds:

On this account, they appear on high, and they also are remarkably keen-sighted. In consequence of their having such relation in the Greatest Man, which is heaven, and of their seeing clearly the things which are beneath, in discoursing with them I compared them to eagles, which fly aloft, and enjoy a clear and extensive view of objects beneath. But at this they expressed indignation, supposing I compared them to eagles as to rapaciousness, and thus that they were wicked; but I replied that I did not liken them to eagles as to rapaciousness, but as to quick-sightedness; adding that they who are like eagles as to rap-

ciousness, are wicked, but that they who resemble them as to quick-sightedness only, are good. (*Arcana Coelestia* #9969, 9970)

In regard to the difference between vultures and eagles: the vultures are chiefly carrion feeders, and have little power of taking prey; the eagles usually take their prey alive, and have the power to kill it quickly and almost painlessly; the vultures feed their young on food which they disgorge; the eagles on the fresh meat which they bring in their claws; the vultures flock together in hungry crowds; the eagles are usually solitary with their mates. That both feed upon flesh signifies that the subjects of attention and thought of the intelligence which they typify are human affections. That vultures gorge themselves with such as is dead and putrefying, signifies that the peculiar intelligence which they represent loves to spy and think of affections in which there is no heavenly life, but which are redolent of evil; this also they disgorge to their young, not simply as they saw it, but as they have thought it over and gloated upon it. The eagles' love of taking their prey in life, and carrying it home as it is, represents, in the good sense, the affection for seeing good life as it is, and presenting it to those who need instruction, with simple truthfulness.

I think that in every instance in the Bible in which the name “eagles” is applied to animals which are bald, or which flock to their prey—consequently to vultures—it is used in the evil sense.<sup>1</sup> The signification of the solitary eagles spoken of in the Bible is usually—perhaps always—good. The Lord likens the Church, when its life is gone because there is no charity in it, to a carcass over which the vultures gather together, where “the vultures” represent those who enjoy seeing and thinking evil.

Sennacharib also, and the Assyrians and Chaldeans, as worshippers of Nisroch, have the same signification as vultures, though Assyria in other connections has sometimes a good signification.

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1. See examples in *Arcana Coelestia* #3900, 3901.

## DOVES

If there is in eagles something of the nobility of lions, doves are marked with the innocence and mutual love of lambs and sheep. Indeed, they were accepted for certain sacrifices instead of lambs (Leviticus 12:8). They are without weapons of offense or defense, and can protect themselves from danger only by the remarkable swiftness and endurance of their flight. They are timid, and love the neighborhood and protection of man, by whom they are easily tamed.

They love to live in companies, and to fly together, "as a cloud, to their windows." Immense flocks of them, darkening the sky for many miles in their flight, are known to our western country. Of these flocks Wilson relates a curious fact illustrative of their resemblance to sheep. He says that when a hawk swoops upon a pigeon in the flying cloud, the others in the neighborhood dive low in fear, quickly rising again to rejoin their companions; and as others come up to the same place, though the hawk be

gone, they drop also, thus preserving a wave in the line till the last pigeon has passed.

The Arabs take a cruel advantage of their ready sympathy. They tie to a bough of a tree a dove with his eyelids fastened together. Others hear his cries and flock about to help him, when they are easily knocked down or snared.

The faithfulness of doves to their mates during life is not peculiar to them, but I think that the extreme tenderness of their expressions of love belongs to them alone. They stroke each other with their bills, and kiss and coo as if they never could express enough, and never would be weary. If one dies, it occasionally happens that the mate dies too from grief, though it more commonly happens that after a time it is mated again. They work together in building their nest, sit upon the eggs in turn, and alike care for the young. Their eggs are generally two at a time, usually a male and a female; and they may have as many as nine broods in a year; so that their love for their young is perennial, instead of being limited to a short season, as in most birds. They are very fond of their little ones, and have a curious means of preparing food for them, which approaches the milk glands of mammals. During the time for feeding the young birds, the walls of their crops thicken and become rough with

glands, which secrete a milky fluid. This mixes with the grains in the crop, reducing them to a soft pulp, with which they feed the little doves according to their need.

The difference between love for the young in doves and the same in fierce birds and beasts is that the fierce animals resent injury to their young as injury to themselves, and are furious and revengeful; but the doves only flutter anxiously, and grieve and moan. Self-love is revengeful; good love sorrows. The difference between the dove's feeding her young with food from her own crop, and the similar habit of vultures, is spiritually that the dove affection teaches the truth with innocent love both for the truth and for her little ones; and vultures teach evil with selfish exultation.

So plain is the representation of the dove that it tells its own meaning; yet, for the sake of completeness, we may acknowledge that as all birds represent affections for ideas, and for thinking from ideas, doves represent affections for the heavenly ideas that agree with innocent love to the Lord and conjugal love.<sup>1</sup>

Swedenborg relates that one time he was thinking deeply of the region of the mind in

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1. *Apocalypse Explained* #282; *Arcana Coelestia* #10132.



which conjugal love resides, and suddenly, in the spiritual world, the mind was represented to him as a palace with three stories, having open windows in each story. And there appeared a pair of swans which flew in by the lower windows, a pair of birds of paradise which entered through the middle windows, and a pair of turtle-doves which flew in through the highest. And then an angel explained to him that the turtle-doves signified conjugal love in the highest region of the mind, which is the plane of love from the Lord with the wisdom of that love; and that the birds of paradise and the swans represented conjugal love on the lower planes respectively. Again he says:

When I was meditating concerning conjugal love, behold there appeared at a distance two naked infants with baskets in their hands, and turtledoves flying around them; and when they were seen nearer they appeared as if they were naked, but handsomely adorned with garlands; chaplets of flowers decorated their heads, and wreaths of lilies and roses of a violet color, hanging obliquely from the shoulders to the loins, adorned their breasts; and round about them both was as it were a common band woven together from small leaves with olives interspersed. But when they came up nearer they did not appear as infants, nor naked, but in the first flower of age,

clad in robes and tunics of shining silk, in which were interwoven flowers most beautiful to the sight; and, when they were close to me, there breathed forth from heaven through them a vernal heat, with a sweet odor, as from the earliest flowers in gardens and fields. (*Conjugal Love* #137)

They came to him from the inmost heaven as forms of conjugal love; all the things about them were representatives of that love; and among them the turtledoves represented the delights of its innocent thoughts.

In the Scriptures, the destruction of the innocent goodness of the earliest men on earth by the falsities of their selfish conceits is represented by a flood of waters destroying all life from the earth. And the first perception of the return of goodness from the Lord to the hearts of men is represented by the plucking of an olive leaf by the dove. The olive leaf is such perception; and the dove is delight in it from love for conjunction with the Lord.

When Jesus was baptized by John, it is related that “He went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him” (Matthew 3:16). The baptism of the Lord represented the

gradual process of separating from Him the evils of His maternal humanity, and ordering His life according to the truth of the Word. After every such effort, by which the divine truth was established in Him, the Love of God descended upon Him like a dove, filling him with the delights of the union of goodness and truth, and with the love of providing for the multiplication of such delights in men.

The wings of the dove are described by the psalmist as “covered with silver,” from the charity of her flights of thought; and “her feathers with yellow gold,” from the celestial delights of her love of thinking from the Lord.

## SONG BIRDS

We have admired in the eagle the strong sweeps with which he climbs to the upper air, the penetration of his sight, and a general nobility of character. Not for these things do we love our little singing birds, nor yet for any power of work, but chiefly for what they *say*, and their manner of saying it. Of all created things outside of humanity, these are the only ones which we value primarily for their voices and their vocal expressions. They love to take short flights in the air; their sight is very quick, though of limited range compared with that of the eagle; they love the sunshine, the growing plants, with their flowers and fruits and the busy insects among them; and in the time of spring and early summer, for which they seem to exist through the rest of the year, from the first dawn of the morning till the last golden light fades from the sky, they continually express their delight by songs. There is immense variety in their tones, from the busy chatter of the sparrows and the twitter of the swallows to the sweetly varied responses of

the wood thrushes, as they answer one another from the distant treetops, giving assurance of friendly neighborhood and sympathy, far into the shades of the night.

The singing birds embody the love of conversation and vocal expression, so far as these relate to good human life. We find in their tones the counterparts of human expressions of gladness and affection, innocent converse and tender song.

If our conversation be wholly and thoroughly sincere; if our friendship be the sympathy of spiritual love for truth and goodness; our love of doing good and giving pleasure unselfish; and our delights, from the heavenly sunshine of the Lord's presence—we shall have in the social communication of such affection the correspondence of the songs of birds. Spiritual song birds do not love sustained thought and abstract truth; but they enjoy seeing everywhere the evidences and illustrations of truth. Swedenborg says:

There are some persons who, as soon as they hear the truth, perceive that it is truth; these are represented in the spiritual world as eagles. There are others who do not perceive truth, but conclude it from confirmations by appearances; and these are represented by singing birds. There are others who believe a thing to be true because it was asserted by a man of authority; these are represented by magpies. And also there are oth-

ers who are not willing, and then not able, to perceive truth, but only falsity; . . . the thoughts of these are represented by owls, and their speech by screech owls. (*True Christian Religion* #42)

It does not belong to our present work to distinguish carefully the varieties of social affection represented by the many song birds. They all are included under the common term *tsippor*, in the Hebrew, and, with rare exceptions, are not mentioned separately in the Bible. The principal exception occurs in the verse, “Even the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself where she may lay her young, near thine altars, O Jehovah of hosts, my King and my God” (Psalm 84:4).

“Sparrow” in this passage is *tsippor*, and means any singing, chirping bird. And the name “liberty,” as applied to a bird which builds in the temple, can hardly mean any other than the swallow, which lives on the wing, perpetually going and coming, and cannot bear the least confinement. The Psalm from which these words are taken is a song of desire from the captives in Babylon for return to their temple and their homes in Jerusalem. The song bird and the swallow can go, but they cannot; that is, their affection for the spiritual truth of the service of the Lord, and for natural, free delight in His service, all center there

as in their homes; but their own daily lives are still in spiritual captivity to evil and falsity.<sup>1</sup>

With careful attention, those who are familiar with birds will readily see their analogies. But, without attempting perfect accuracy, I may say that among our common birds the one which we familiarly call the robin, industrious, domestic, loud-voiced, at home in the orchards and mowing fields, talks to me of the cares of house and family, and gives thanks for abundant supplies; his friend, the bluebird, not less domestic, but softer and more varied in voice, and of more elegant plumage and form, tells of modest content, and of the pleasures of natural tastefulness in a frugal home. The merry, boastful bobolink, tumbling his notes out promiscuously as he flies, reminds me of children just from school, and tells of the joys of recreation after labor.<sup>2</sup> The

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1. *Apocalypse Explained* #391.

2. The bobolink dons his gay black and white plumage, comes to his summer home and bursts into song, quite late in the season—not until summer is fully established. After a very short season he silently resumes his sober robes and retires for a long winter. As a song bird, he probably expresses the joys of deliverance from temptations, of relief from suffering, as well as “recreation after labor.” It is significant in this connection, that in winter he is so fond of rice as to take the name of “rice bird” in the South. The correspondence of rice is with duties done from obedience.

sweet minor song of the mountain sparrow brings the restfulness of spiritual views of nature in solitude. And the several kinds of thrushes, living in the woods and by the waters, some with the power of appreciating and imitating the notes of all other birds, and most of them having of their own sweeter and more varied songs than any others, seem the very poets and singers of our social world. They sing to me of the sweetest and most interior domestic affections and friendships.

All these, and many others, represent affections which enjoy illustrations of truth and evidences of goodness; of these they talk and sing, innocently and with charity.



## BIRDS OF BEAUTIFUL PLUMAGE

It is rare that birds possessing pleasant voices are gifted also with beautiful feathers. The bluebirds and canaries are, perhaps, the most notable exceptions. Upon this subject Mr. Wood remarks:

As a general rule, it is found that the most brilliant songsters among the birds are attired in the plainest garb; and it may safely be predicted of any peculiarly gorgeous bird, that power, quality, and sweetness of voice are in inverse ratio to its beauty of plumage.

He mentions the dazzling colors of sunbirds, hummingbirds, and some others, and says:

In all these creatures, the male possesses no real song, the glorious beauty of the feathers compensating him and his mate for the absence of poetic utterance. Why this should be the case is a problem which has long attracted the attention of observant men, and it seems to me that a key may be found to its solution in the now acknowledged fact that sound and color run in parallel lines through creation, and closely correspond with each other in their several relations. . . . It

may be therefore that, on the one side, the bird which is possessed of a good voice and a plain dress pours forth his love and manifests his sympathetic emotions in gushing strains, which are addressed to the ears of his mate; again, the bright-plumaged bird utters his voiceless song by the vivid hues that flash from his glittering attire, the eye being the only medium through which his partner, whose ears are not attuned to melody, could realize the fullness of his emotional utterance. (*Natural History*, p. 258)

It is a singular fact that among the brilliant birds there are several which love to adorn their homes and favorite haunts with lichens, bright feathers, shells, white stones, or any other gaily colored materials that they can find. Perhaps they are the only animals with a decided taste of this kind. It is interesting to discover the love of expression by color and form, here in the line of birds parallel to that in which we found the love of musical expression.

The difference seems to answer perfectly to that between the senses of sight and hearing. Songs, addressed to the ear, have more power to communicate affection; but forms and colors, addressed to the eye, impart ideas. The songs of birds are representatives of social communion of glad, grateful, and affectionate thoughts. Their

beautiful plumage is representative of true ideas of the nature and quality of spiritual affections.

We may express affection simply by words—chiefly by the tones of the words—and by songs; or we may express it by truthful description, and by tasteful decorations in colors and forms. The expression by sound has more power to excite strong feeling; that by description and decoration shows more clearly its quality as to intelligence, refinement, and wisdom.

## THE BIRD OF PARADISE

The most charming of the beautiful birds is the bird of paradise. There are several species quite unlike one another in the disposition of their charms, yet all eminent for the combined grace and richness of their plumage. The emerald bird of paradise is thus described:

The general color of the upper part of the body is rich chocolate brown, the whole of the front being covered with velvet-like feathers of the deepest green, at one moment sinking into black, and at another flashing forth with glittering emerald. The upper part of the throat is bright golden green, and the upper part of the neck a delicate yellow. The most wonderful part of this bird's plumage is the mass of loose floating plumes that rises from the flanks, and extends in a most graceful manner far beyond the tail. Even in the absolute quiet of a stuffed skin under a glass case, these plumes are full of an astonishing beauty, their translucent golden white vanelets producing a most superb effect as they cross and recross each other, forming every imaginable shade of white, gold, and orange, and then deep-

ening towards their extremities into a soft, purplish red. There is a magnificently arranged specimen of this bird in the British Museum, placed in a separate case, and worthy of a separate journey merely for that one object.

But when the bird is living and healthy, no pen can describe the varied and changeful beauties that develop themselves at every moment; for the creature seems to comprehend within its own single form the united beauties of all other members of the feathered tribe.

Mr. Bennett describes the habits of an emerald bird of paradise in captivity. He says:<sup>1</sup>

One of the best opportunities of seeing this splendid bird in all its beauty of actions, as well as display of plumage, is early in the morning, when he makes his toilet; the beautiful subalar plumage is then thrown out and cleared from any spot that may sully its purity, by being passed gently through the bill; the short chocolate colored wings are extended to the utmost, and he keeps them in a steady, flapping motion, as if in imitation of their use in flight, at the same time raising up the delicate long feathers over the back, which are spread in a chaste and elegant manner, floating like films in the air. In this position the bird would remain for a short time,

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1. *Bennett's Wanderings*, quoted in Wood's *Natural History*.

seemingly proud of its heavenly beauty, and in raptures of delight with its most enchanting self; it will then assume various attitudes, so as to regard its plumage in every direction.”

The bird took a bath regularly twice a day; but except for the bath would not descend to the bottom of its cage, for fear of soiling its feathers.

So proud is the creature of its elegant dress, that it never permits a soil to remain upon it, and it may frequently be seen spreading out its wings and feathers, and regarding its splendid self in every direction, to observe whether the whole of its plumage is in an unsullied condition.

He was much pleased with the reflection of himself in a mirror, regarding it kindly as another beautiful bird, but without the slightest envy.

If he has no envy, I think it follows that he is not vain; and, indeed, the whole description seems to show that he considers himself charged with the delightful duty of preserving in good order, and presenting always to the best advantage the exquisite beauties entrusted to him. He evidently corresponds to a love for presenting spiritual truth in all its gracefulness and goodness in order that it may be loved and lived. Swedenborg remarks:

Some have thought what is spiritual to be like a bird that flies above the air in the ether, where sight does not reach; when yet it is like a bird of

paradise that flies near the eye, and touches its pupil with his beautiful wings, and wishes to be seen. (*Divine Love and Wisdom* #374)

Into the middle windows of the palace which represented the habitations of conjugal love in human minds flew a pair of birds of paradise, which, the angel said, represented the conjugal love of “the love of truth with its intelligence”; that is, they represented the love of perceiving and presenting the beautiful truths of spiritual life, with the intelligent affection which receives them.

The angels of the silver age delight in the study of spiritual truth, and, what is remarkably like the bird of paradise, they love the representation of it in forms and colors. In the visit to them, described in the work *Conjugal Love*, #76, Swedenborg relates that a rainbow was presented “upon the wall, consisting of three colors, purple, blue, and white; and we saw how the purple color passed the blue, and tinged the white with an azure color, and that this color flowed back through the blue into the purple, and elevated the purple into a brightness as of flame”; and an angel, explaining, said: “The purple color, from its correspondence, signifies the conjugal love of the wife, the white color the intelligence of the husband, the blue color the

beginning of conjugal love in the husband's perception from the wife, and the azure color with which the whiteness was tinged, conjugal love then in the husband; this color flowing back through the blue into the purple, and elevating it into a brightness as of flame, signifies the conjugal love of the husband flowing back to the wife."

This was one of many representations exhibited in that heaven in which the angels delighted. Such delight would be presented in form as noble birds of beautiful plumage, varying in kind according to the wisdom especially loved.

Our love of beautiful forms and colors is sometimes from a similar origin. If our taste were quite sincere, that is, if we loved the things which really touch our hearts, and if our hearts were full of affection for spiritual truth and charity, and our perceptions of these things were clear, we should see that our hearts were touched, and consequently that our taste was delighted with the things that correspond to our affections. As it is, our sincerest pleasure in beauty is of this kind, though we perceive the correspondence obscurely or not at all.



## THE PEACOCK

There must be a quite noble charity in the love for presenting spiritual truth, or its beautiful representatives, simply for the use of it, and without personal complacency. The natural love of beautiful display is altogether another thing. It is vain and capricious; and, if not sufficiently flattered, it becomes sulky and resentful. It is also jealous of rivals, and may be cruel. It does not produce its charms as a duty, and with a single view to doing good; but capriciously, and, in part, to win admiration.

This love is embodied in the peacock, a polygamous, jealous creature, who sometimes will graciously display his really beautiful plumes, sometimes will fold them and take them away, deaf to persuasion; and, again, will persistently and earnestly press upon the attention of common fowls his worn-out drapery, too shabby for polite society. Mr. Wood remarks:

In character, the peacock is as variable as other creatures, some individuals being mild and good-tempered, while others are morose and jealous to

the extreme. One of these birds, living in the north of Ireland, was a curious mixture of cruelty and fun. He had four wives, but he killed them all successively by pecking them to death, for what cause no one could find out. Even his own children shared the same fate, until his owner put the pea fowl eggs under a sitting hen, and forced her to hatch the eggs and tend the young far out of his sight. (*Natural History*)

Similar complaints of their cruelty are not uncommon.

Peacocks were among Solomon's importations with the gold and silver, ivory and apes. And as his apes corresponded to the externals of doctrine and devotion which seemed human, yet had no human soul, because no spiritual thought in them, so the peacocks represented the love of religious ceremonial, with no care for the spiritual truth and charity which it ought to express.

## THE OSTRICH

Another bird which, perhaps, should be mentioned among those of remarkable plumage, is the ostrich. It is a bird of the desert, with no power of flying, the very looseness of structure for which its wing and tail feathers are valued depriving them of their hold on the air. Instead, it possesses a power of running perhaps superior to that of any other animal.

The ostrich is polygamous, and several hens deposit their eggs in one place—a hole scraped in the sand. The eggs are then covered over, and left during the heat of the day; but in the colder regions at any rate, as in the Sahara, the birds sit regularly during the night, and until the sun has full power, the male also incubating. But the ostrich lays an immense number of eggs, far more than are ever hatched, and round the covered eggs are to be found many dropped carelessly, as if she forgot that the frost might crack them, or the wild beast might break them. But most naturalists confirm the statement of the natives, that the eggs on the surface are left in order to afford sustenance to the newly hatched

chicks, which could not otherwise find food at first in these arid regions. (Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible*)

Some of these peculiarities are well described in the book of Job:

The wings of the ostrich exult; but are her pinions and feathers like the stork? Who leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust; and forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them. She is hardened against her young ones as if they were not hers; her labor is in vain without fear, because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath He imparted to her understanding. What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider. (Job 39:13–19)

The Arabs call the ostrich the “camel bird”;<sup>1</sup> and they also regard him as stupid, partly because, since it is usually safest for him to run towards the wind, towards the wind he will go, even if it be also towards his enemies; and partly from his habit of swallowing all sorts of indigestible things; no doubt they are acquainted with other habits of his which seem stupid.<sup>2</sup>

I think they name him well; and that he is among birds very much what the camel is among

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1. *Bible Animals*.

2. Tristram.

quadrupeds. That he cannot fly means that there is nothing spiritual in the thought which he represents; but the showiness of his wings indicates a great appearance of spiritual principle in it. His desert home, hard diet, and usual solitariness all belong to the love of thinking such ascetic principles as spiritual camels love to live. The stupid persistency with which he follows his rule, even when inapplicable to the circumstances, is also camel-like. His usual representation in the Bible seems to be a state of severe and gloomy thought, deprived of all that is good and pleasant. "The daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness" (Lamentations 4:3). "I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the ostriches" (Isaiah 43:19, 20). In several other places they are mentioned similarly, as signs of vastation.

## THE STORK

In the passage quoted from the book of Job, the wings of the ostrich are contrasted with those of the stork.

There is a marked contrast between them, ostrich wings being composed of showy plumes useless for flight, and the wings of the stork being long and firm, adapted to flights both high and prolonged. But the contrast meant by the ancient writer is between the characters of the birds, especially in regard to their affection for their young. This also is exhibited in the structure of the wings; for the light plumage of the ostrich has no capacity and expresses no desire for protection of the little ones; to which motherly work the stork's strong pinions are as well suited as for flight.

The Hebrew name for the stork is "kindness." It is a slightly modified form of the word which occurs in such expressions as "Shew kindness to thy servant"; "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness." The Romans called it the "pious bird" (*pia avis*), from its duti-

fulness both to its young, and, as they believed, to its parents also. Mr. Wood says:

The stork is noted for being a peculiarly kind and loving parent to its young, in that point fully deserving of its Hebrew name, though its love manifests itself towards the young, and not towards the parent.

Tristram relates that he:

. . . was once in a camp near an old ruined tower in the plains of Zana, south of the Atlas, where a pair of storks had their nest. The four young might often be seen from a little distance, surveying the prospect from their lonely height, but whenever any of the human party happened to stroll near the tower, one of the old storks, invisible before, would instantly appear, and, lighting on the nest, put its feet gently on the necks of all the young, so as to hold them down out of sight till the stranger had passed, snapping its bill meanwhile, and assuming a grotesque air of indifference and unconsciousness of there being anything under its charge. (*Dictionary of the Bible*)

It should be mentioned further that the stork is a migratory bird, in its journeyings flying very high, in large flocks, and returning with remarkable certainty to its old haunts; and that its long legs are made for wading in shallow pools and streams, in which it catches the fish, eels, frogs,

and other small creatures which naturally constitute its food. We may safely see in the stork the affection for observing and thinking carefully of little children, for understanding the ways of education, and providing for them suitable natural information. It does not seem to represent a very interior affection, but one which is very faithful to duty.

The passages in the Bible where it is mentioned refer to the natural habits of the bird, but do not very fully illustrate its meaning. "Where the birds make their nests; as for the stork, the fir trees are her house" (Psalm 104:17). "Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord" (Jeremiah 8:7).



## THE COCK AND HEN

Our common domestic fowls, with small powers of flight, but busy all day scratching and searching the ground for seeds, insects, and scraps of everything that has nutriment in it, represent a love of collecting all sorts of knowledge serviceable to good natural life. They never stray far from their own house or barn, which represents a subservience to uses. They lay up the nourishment they obtain in a generous supply of eggs, the first use of which is the multiplication of their kind; but another, not second in importance, is to furnish food to man. The meat in the eggs corresponds to knowledge which has been digested and prepared to nourish other similar affections for knowledge, and to serve for use to spiritual thought.

The calf has also been called a love of knowledge; but his love is for knowing the things which will make him useful to society. The fowls, spiritually understood, love knowledge of the same kind; but they serve by knowledge itself, not by affection or work.

Their early crowing is from pleasure in the coming light by which knowledge may be gained; their fighting is from conceit of knowledge; the motherly carefulness of hens is from delight in ministering to desires for knowledge.

The Lord said to Peter, "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice"; predicting the utter lack of faith in Him before the dawn of His second coming. This coming is heralded by a new pleasure in the pursuit of useful knowledge, of which we see an amazing increase in every direction; and that increase is for the service of spiritual thought and life when the sun ariseth. He also said to Jerusalem, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen doth gather her chickens under her wings; and ye would not." They would not, because they had no desire for the knowledge of useful life.

## PARTRIDGES AND QUAILS

Partridges and quails are closely akin to our domestic fowls, being scratchers, and living upon the ground; but they are wild, and love their freedom. They represent a kindred love of knowledge, but natural, and for the sake of knowing, without regard to useful ends. Therefore it is said in the Bible, “As the partridge sitteth upon eggs and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool” (Jeremiah 17:11). Swedenborg explains that the partridge here means “those who procure to themselves knowledges without any other use . . . than that they may know them” (*Apocalypse Explained* #236). Yet partridges are among the birds useful for food; the stores which they collect are serviceable, though this is no part of their intention.

Of quails, we read in the Bible that during the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness of Sinai, though the Lord fed them with manna from heaven, they complained and wept, saying:

“Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers and the melons, the leeks and the onions and the garlic; but now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all besides this manna before our eyes.” . . .

And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day’s journey on this side, and as it were a day’s journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high above the face of the earth. And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails. (Numbers 11:4, 5, 31, 32)

The manna which the people despised represents the delight of being taught by the Lord. The quails which they desired represent the desire for the natural pleasure of learning for themselves; a desire which, in conflict with the duty of being led by the Lord, was evil, and brought a plague; but which is good in its right place, in time of rest and recreation.

It seems to me that as the common fowls are, in the line of birds, correlative with the kine among quadrupeds, so the partridges and quails, which are their wild and natural relatives, are correlative with the deer and antelopes: the partridges with the deer, because they are more

lonely, and endure the northern winters; the quails with antelopes, because they are smaller, more social, and usually migratory. The knowledge which spiritual partridges love is certainly a knowledge of the winters as well as the summers of life; but the quails, as a rule, seek that of perpetual summer.

## THE OWL

There are few groups of birds which are so decidedly marked as the owls, and so easy of recognition. The round, puffy head, the little hooked beak just appearing from the downy plumage with which it is surrounded, the large, soft, blinking eyes, and the curious disk of feathers which radiate from the eye and form a funnel-shaped depression, are such characteristic distinctions, that an owl, even of the least owl-like aspect, can at once be detected and referred to its proper place in the animal kingdom. There is a singular resemblance between the face of an owl and that of a cat, which is the more notable as both these creatures have much the same kind of habits, live on the same prey, and are evidently representatives of the same idea in their different classes. The owl, in fact, is a winged cat, just as the cat is a furred owl. These birds are, almost without an exception, nocturnal in their habits, and are fitted for their peculiar life by a most wonderfully adapted form and structure. The eyes are made so as to take in every ray of light, and are so sensitive to its influence that they are unable to endure

the glare of daylight, being formed expressly for the dim light of evening or earliest dawn. An ordinary owl of almost any species, when brought into the full light of day, becomes quite bewildered with the unwonted glare, and sits blinking uncomfortably, in a pitiable manner, seemingly as distressed as a human being on whose undefended eyes the meridian sun is shining. (Wood's *Natural History*)

The common food of owls consists of mice, bats, other small animals, and insects. There are many species of owls, some not larger than jays, and others appearing in full plumage as large as eagles.

Mr. Wilson states that the great owls not infrequently engage in combat with the eagle himself, and that they often come off victorious. These powerful and voracious birds . . . occasionally kill the fawns of the stag, roebuck, and reindeer. (Quoted in *Natural History*)

Mr. Wood quotes from "a correspondent" the following account of a horned owlet:

The horned owlet has a peculiarly catlike expression of face; and this, I think, was the chief attraction possessed by a downy, grayish white ball, that was thrust into my lap by one of my boy friends, who at the same time announced its name and nature.

With great delight I proceeded to introduce him to my other bird pets, but the intense excite-

ment caused by his presence compelled me to remove him with all speed. The small birds were all afraid of him; but the jackdaw and magpie both charged poor "Blinker" at once. It then struck me that the catlike face and nocturnal mousing habits of the creature indicated the deep secret of its nature, and, if so, that it would have more sympathy with the feline establishment than with that of the birds. Acting upon this impression, I at once conveyed him to pussy's closet, and introduced him to its occupants; namely, Mrs. Fanny and her blind kitten. Pussy regarded him at first with very suspicious looks; but the poor bird, feeling pleased with the dim light and pussy's soft, warm coat, soon nestled up to her. This act of confidence on Blinker's part appeared to affect Fanny favorably, and she at once purred him a welcome. From this time they were fast friends, and many mice did she good-naturedly provide for Blinker in common with her own kitten.

The barn owl, he writes:

. . . is a terrible foe to mice, especially to the common field mouse, great numbers of which are killed daily by a single pair of owls when they are bringing up their young family. . . . One of these owls, belonging to a friend, . . . was a confirmed murderer of bats and small birds, as well as mice. . . . Six to eight small birds were often counted when its hole was explored in the



early morning, and once the owl had poked fourteen bats into it. . . . So fiercely does this bird strike, that I knew an instance where a dog was blinded by the stroke of a barn owl's claws. The owl was a tame one, and the dog—a stranger—went up to inspect the bird. As the dog approached the owl, the bird rolled quietly over on its back, and when the dog put his head to the prostrate bird, it struck so sharply with its claws that it destroyed both the eyes of the poor animal, which had to be killed on account of the injury.

Of the great owl, Mr. Tristram writes:

It is a large and noble looking bird, nearly two feet long. . . . It inhabits ruins and caves all over the Holy Land. We found it in tombs in Carmel, in the robbers' caves near Gennesaret, in the hermit caves above Jericho, among the ruined cities of southern Judah, and in the desert wadys near Beersheba, among the temples of Rabbath-Ammon; in fact, everywhere where man has been and is not. (*Natural History of the Bible*)

This fierce, darkness-loving bird represents a mind quick and keen in its powers of thinking, yet hating the light of truth, and active only in false and delusive light. Swedenborg says:

They who have confirmed themselves in faith separated from charity . . . are not in possession of any truths, but merely of falsities. But the falsities of their faith do not indeed appear before them as darkness, that is, as falsities, but they

appear to them as if they were lucid, that is, as if they were truths, after they have confirmed themselves in them; but nevertheless, while they are viewed from the light of heaven, which discovers all things, they appear dark; for which reason, when the light of heaven flows into their dens in hell, the darkness is such that they cannot see one another; on which account every hell is closed so as not to leave a crevice open, and then they are in their own light; the reason that they do not appear to themselves to be in darkness, but in the light, although they are in falsities, is because their falsities after confirmation appear to them as truths; hence comes their light, but it is the light of infatuation, such as is the light of the confirmation of what is false. This light corresponds to that to which owls and bats owe their sight, to whom darkness is light, and light darkness; yea, to whom the sun itself is thick darkness; eyes like these have they after death, who, during their abode in the world, confirmed themselves in falsities to such a degree as to see falsity as truth and truth as falsity. (*Apocalypse Revealed* #695; see also *Apocalypse Revealed* #566, *Arcana Coelestia* #4967, 866)

The desolate places and ruins which owls love to inhabit represent states from which the life of charity has disappeared. The Christian Church, at its end, was a ruined city, deserted by every good spiritual affection. The light of truth also

was gone from it; for in both the Catholic and the Protestant Churches the Lord was denied. Catholic leaders taught that He had given all power to Peter, and through him to the popes, reserving none to Himself; and Protestants that He was one of three Gods; that the Father alone was to be worshipped; and that salvation was given to all who believed in the sacrifice of the Son as atonement for their sins. When men who have confirmed such doctrines are told that the Lord is the only God; that He removes the desire for evil from those who repent and do His commandments, and then gives them His own love for good; when they are thus led into clear heavenly sunlight, they can only blink, and hurry as fast as possible into the dark, talking about the penalty of the violation of law, the Lord as bearing the penalty for us all, and making it possible for a just God to forgive all who believe in that vicarious atonement. In this dark light they are sharp, quick, and eager for prey, and some are really powerful. The mice which they especially hunt for and easily capture are the loves for sly, selfish indulgence, which are afraid to show themselves openly, but are readily caught by the idea that the quality of the life makes no difference—faith alone, or the Pope alone, being necessary to salvation.

The bats, which seem to be equally desired for prey, are similar to mice, except that they are winged. They correspond to loves for thinking similar false principles, with delight in the evil pleasures to which they lead. Having wings and powers of flight, they are somewhat like birds, and represent quick thought and confirmations of falsity; but their real heart is love for the evil pleasures taught or excused by the falsity.

Since the representation of owls is as has been described, when the psalmist says, "I am like an owl of the desert" (Psalm 102:6), he describes a state of inability to see the truth, or in which falsity appears as truth. The prophet Isaiah says of a church from which truth and charity have departed, "The owl also and the raven shall dwell in it. . . . There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow" (Isaiah 34:11, 15).

The same prophet, speaking of the coming of the Lord, says, "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats" (Isaiah 2:20); because the idols of silver and gold represent the fictitious good, or the pleasant evil of false principles, in which spiritual moles and bats delight.

## THE RAVEN

Associated with the owl, as an inhabitant of waste places, is the raven; under which term, no doubt, are included all birds of the raven family.

Perhaps it will never be a settled question whether our crows and their kindred rooks do more good as insect and carrion eaters, or harm by devouring little birds and pulling up the corn. If regarded as helpers, they are very blundering and indiscriminate helpers; if as enemies, they are clumsy, not malignant, and not very harmful.

The raven proper is a much larger bird, now scarce in our country except in the forests. Mr. Tristram says of him:

The carnivorous propensities of the raven, and especially its habit of attacking weak or sickly animals, and of always commencing by picking out their eyes, is alluded to in Proverbs 30:17: "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out." We have more than once seen the ravens thus attack a newly dropped kid.  
*(Natural History of the Bible)*

Mr. Wood adds:

Like all feeders on carrion, it is wonderfully quick in detecting a dead or dying animal, and rivals the vulture itself in the sharpness of its vision. If anyone who is passing over a part of the country where ravens still survive should wish to see one of the birds, he has only to lie flat on the ground, and keep his eyes nearly shut, so as only to see through the lashes. Should there be a raven within many miles, it is sure to discover the apparently dead body, and to alight at no great distance, walking round and round, with its peculiar sidelong gait, and, if it be not checked in time, will make a dash at the eye of the prostrate individual, and probably blind him for life. This habit of pecking at the eye is inherent in all the crow tribe. (*Bible Animals*)

With little beauty in their blue-black coats and no music in their voices, they present to us images of those who are ignorant and superstitious, not knowing very clearly the difference between good and evil, but loving to think and chatter about spiritual things from appearances, seeing in them signs and omens. The Scandinavians called the raven “the bird of Odin”; the ancient Greeks also drew auguries from his doings, supposed to reveal his intuitions of future events. Swedenborg says they signify “natural men, who, concerning divine truths, are

in darkest lumen from fallacies, in which have been many of the gentiles” (*Apocalypse Explained* #650).

In the Scriptures, the raven stands sometimes for those who hold tenaciously to the falsities of ignorance, and sometimes simply for the densely ignorant gentiles, who yet are cared for by God, and may afterwards be instructed. In the former sense, it is said that when the waters of the flood began to subside, Noah “sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro until the waters were dried up from off the earth” (Genesis 8:7); signifying that after the falsities which destroyed the most ancient Church began to diminish, the fallacies of ignorance still caused confusion.<sup>1</sup> In the same sense it is said of Edom, “The owl also and the raven shall dwell in it” (Isaiah 34:11).

In the better sense, it is related that when Elijah fled from Ahab, “he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook” (1 Kings 17:5, 6). By Elijah is represented the literal precepts of the Word; his persecution by Ahab represents the hatred of those precepts by those who are in the evil

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #864.

delights of self-love; and his maintenance, under the providence of the Lord, by the ravens, represents the preservation of such precepts by those who were in simple gentile ignorance.

In the passage, “He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry” (Psalm 147:9), they are meant who are in fallacies of ignorance, and desire instruction. Again, the Lord says, “Consider the ravens; for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them” (Luke 12:24). The ravens are here put for the “fowls of the heavens,” which signify affections for thinking truth, which do not labor for the production of it, neither lay it up. Of these the ravens represent the most ignorant. Yet even for them provision is made by the Lord of some knowledge of religion and morality, by traditions and derivations from others, by which a capacity for heaven may be formed in them.



## FISHES

Like birds of a grosser atmosphere, fishes swim in the sea. They have eyes which are typical of dullness, rude ears, adapted only to the coarsest discrimination of sounds; for wings they have fins, and their feathers are horny scales. They are exceedingly prolific; but when they have deposited their eggs in suitable places they rarely take further thought for their young. They are mostly carnivorous and voracious, feeding upon insects, mollusks, little fishes, and any living creatures which they can swallow.

The water in which fishes live is a representative of a natural atmosphere of thought relating to the world and to practical life in it. The air, called in ancient languages by the same name as the spirit, corresponds to truth concerning spiritual life, the spiritual states of men, the spiritual world, and the Lord; but water, in its best sense, as the water of baptism, represents truth by which the practical life is cleansed—truth which distinguishes between right and wrong in act. Such truth applied more generally, yet rightly,

becomes the truth of what is practicable or impracticable, possible or impossible; it is an atmosphere of physical truth concerning the world with all its products and phenomena. Applied unjustly, it is an atmosphere of merely natural thought which extinguishes or drowns affections for thinking and living spiritually.

The fishes which swim in this mental sea are affections for thinking naturally.<sup>1</sup> The good among them love scientific knowledge because of its truth and for the sake of its use; the bad love their own natural intelligence and intellectual aggrandizement. The insects upon which they live are affections for the impressions or experience of the senses, which are the natural food for the love of knowledge; and it is as inevitable that broader scientific minds should comprehend the lesser, and absorb the results of their labors, as that great fishes should swallow the small.

It was commanded the children of Israel that they should eat of the fishes which had fins and scales; but that all other animals living in the water should be unclean to them.<sup>2</sup> With their fins fishes take hold of the water, and support, bal-

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1. *Apocalypse Explained* #513.

2. Leviticus 11:9-12.

ance, and guide themselves in it. Fins represent, therefore, the hold of the mind upon natural truth, with the power and the love of thinking in it. They have this faculty, represented by fins, who are able to sustain themselves in natural thought, in a position to see clearly whether ideas of natural things are true or not.

Scales are the clothing of fishes; and as sheep's clothing represents the expressions of innocence and neighborly love which characterize the followers of the Lord, so the scales of fishes represent the expressions of love for truth and of respect for the usefulness of it, professed by honest seekers for truth in every department of natural knowledge.

Among the affections for physical truth, those are serviceable to spiritual life, and are food for the spiritual man, which have power to think truth clearly, and which also love truth for the good it may do. They are fishes which have fins and scales.

Besides these spiritual fishes, there are many others of strong natural intelligence but no love for use, which accumulate knowledge to no purpose, and are of no service to spiritual life. Scaleless creatures they are, some of them fierce and predaceous, and some, perhaps, harmless. And, again, there are those which profess the

strongest regard for the usefulness of truth, and yet have no perception of what is true, but rather stir up the mud like crocodiles, in the obscurity of which they seize their innocent prey. Scales they have of the hardest; but not the slightest love for sustaining themselves in clear water.

Innumerable other creatures there are in the water, infusoria, crustacea, mollusks, corresponding to mere physical aptitude for impressions and observations, or to bodily states of activity or repose, of hunger or satisfaction, quite apart from the states and desires of the mind. These are not in themselves food to the spiritual mind, but they are to affections for physical knowledge.

And besides these there are whales, warm-blooded, air-breathing, affectionate; ranging from sea to sea, and consuming immense quantities of small marine creatures. They represent affections for generalizing knowledge, themselves breathing the atmosphere of spiritual truth and believing in the divine Creator; which range with comprehensive zeal from one department of natural truth to another, finding everywhere evidences of divine origin and purpose.

Such generous affections are represented by the whales of the fifth day of creation;<sup>1</sup> and

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1. Genesis 1:20-23.

innocent loves for learning natural truth of every kind, for the sake of its practical usefulness, are represented by the fishes.

A state of the world in which there is no spiritual life from charity, and consequently no living interest in even natural truth, is meant by the turning the waters of Egypt to blood, so that all the fish of the river died.<sup>1</sup> Quite similar is the meaning of the following verses from Ezekiel:

Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, "My river is mine own, and I have made myself." But I will put hooks in thy jaws, and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales, and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales. And I will leave thee thrown into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy rivers; thou shalt fall upon the open fields; thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered; I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of the heaven. (Ezekiel 29:3-5)

The word for "dragon" here is the same as that translated "whale" elsewhere. It is a general word for great water animals. Here the creature is said to have "scales," and to live in the Nile,

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1. Exodus 7.

and can scarcely be any other animal than the crocodile. It represents a monstrous selfish doctrine, such as the infallibility of the Pope, which compels all lovers of knowledge to adhere to it for the sake of salvation; but which, with all its adherents, will be left in the waste places of history when the presence of the living God shall be felt among men.

The increase of affection for knowledge, and the renewed vitality which will be imparted to it by the influence of clearer truth concerning the Lord and heaven and the life which leads to heaven—an increase and renewal which are among the brightest signs of the coming of the Lord in our generation—are thus graphically predicted by the same prophet:

Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and behold waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward. . . . Then said he unto me, These waters issue out towards the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea; which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither; for they shall be healed; and everything shall live whither the river cometh. And it

shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many. (Ezekiel 47:1, 8–10)

In the gospels, fish and fishermen are often mentioned as signifying affection for natural truth and men who possess such affection. The Lord likens the kingdom of heaven to “a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away” (Matthew 13:47, 48); and by the good fish He means men who have sincerely loved natural truth for the sake of doing good; who, when they die, will be ready to receive spiritual instruction in the kingdom of heaven.

In essentially the same meaning, the disciples were said to fish for men, when they drew into the Church those who before had known only natural truth. But in their former occupation as fishermen, supplying fish to consumers, they represent those who love to acquire natural truth, and then, as it were gathering the fish from the seas of their own minds, teach such truth to others.

In this sense Swedenborg likens himself to the Lord’s disciples, saying that he was a spiri-

tual fisherman, whose delight it was to learn and teach science, until the Lord called him to teach spiritual truth. And it is not unreasonable to hope that many sincere lovers of science will become equally sincere and candid teachers of the truth of heaven, when once the Lord calls and instructs them.



## OYSTERS

Low things are not necessarily bad; whether they are good or bad depends much upon their proper subordination and proportion. The love of eating and the love of sleeping are low; if excessive, they are bad; but if just strong enough to assist in recreating higher faculties, they are good and useful.

The popular expression, "lazy as an oyster," probably comes pretty near to the human quality which the oyster represents. In excess we call it "laziness"; in moderation it may be a good *enjoyment in repose*. When undisturbed, an oyster is certainly a picture of repose itself. It has no power to change its place, and not the slightest desire to do so. Its shell stands partly open, held by the elasticity of its hinge. The water which brings air to its gills and particles of food to its stomach is indeed helped in its circulation by ciliary motions, of which the animal probably is entirely unconscious, and by slight movements of its mantle. It produces young, it is said, at the rate of two or three millions in a year, during the

months of May to August inclusive—a prodigious swarm of helpless little desires to lie still, which for a few days are busy finding a place to be quiet in, and then never move again, nor want to. Of these the parent has at first perhaps a faint parental fondness; but she does scarcely anything more for them than to secrete a little limy fluid which hardens on the little ones into the rudiments of a shell.

The shell is to an oyster the most important thing in the world. It is home, protection, and opportunity for repose. The one great muscle which an oyster has is the muscle which closes the shell. This corresponds to a desire to prevent intrusion; and the shell itself to the laws and facts which justify rest and seclusion.

It is easy to see in all this a description of some morbid states of mind—when the love of seclusion is excessive—and of some healthful states. Our common country and seashore resting places might fairly be called “oyster beds,” on which people lie about enjoying their rest, and catching at the most trifling entertainments to keep them alive. But there is a deeper and nobler meaning, at least to some oysters, than this. Pearls are found in oysters; and they are made of the substance of the inner shell. When a grain of sand or other hard substance is intruded

within the shell, and the animal is unable to expel it, a secretion of shelly substance is deposited upon it, which at least shuts it out from irritating contact with the sensitive animal. And this deposit, which grows by successive layers, is the pearl. From the point of view of the living animal, the surface of the pearl is the inside, and the intrusive material is shut out.

Of pearls are made the gates of the Holy City. The intruded materials which cause their formation are the insinuations and suggestions of evil from hell, which induce states of temptation. The pearly substance by which these are shut out from the mind are the truths which forbid such evils as sins against God, and brand them as of the devil and from the devil. Swedenborg calls the gates of pearl "introductory truths"; but the truths which introduce into the streets of the Holy City are truths which separate evil from good, and open the way to good life at the same time that they shut out the evil. So the pearls of our city of life are the truths we have lived which forbid evils as sins; which truths are lovely walls of protection to the good life within. The one pearl of great price, for which the merchant sold all that he had, and to which the kingdom of heaven is likened, is the knowledge of salvation by the Lord, through His commandments.

The enjoyment of such protection and of the repose which it brings—not in the peacefulness of the interior mind, but the restfulness of the external mind, next the body—is an oyster in its best sense.

## INSECTS

Most insects pass through three stages of life: that of the caterpillar, worm, or maggot; that of the pupa, or chrysalis; and the winged state, like that of flies, butterflies, moths, etc. There are exceptions to this general rule, some of which will be mentioned hereafter.

In the first state, the business of their life is eating. They are intent upon gathering, while they may, food from leaves, flowers, wool, putrefying substances or whatever the worms may live on, usually acquiring their full growth during this period, and sometimes storing up all the nourishment they will need in the rest of their lives.

The second is a period of more or less complete repose, usually in a cocoon or case, where the formation of wings and other organs of the fully developed insect is rapidly completed.

And thus the little creature is prepared to enter upon the third and final state, in which it lives in part upon the wing, feeding upon the nectar of flowers, or some other more delicate

food than it had known before, and laying its eggs, sometimes storing with them a considerable supply of provisions for the future young.

We have seen in birds, with their quick sight, pleasant voices, or brilliant plumage, and their human sympathy, images of our affections for thinking of human life, and of the spiritual or moral principles relating to that life. The winged insects, likewise, love to fly in the air, yet not in long flights, but from one near object to another, as their changing fancy happens to be attracted. They are forms of thinking, but of mere sensual impressions and pleasures.

In their caterpillar or grub state, they are expressions of desire for the knowledge or impressions of sense from which they may think. The perfect insects represent delights in thinking from appearances, and gathering the pleasures of them. And the chrysalis state represents the intermediate time of assimilation of the impressions acquired and development of the power of enjoying them.

A little child, when first he sees a toy quite new to him, or an unfamiliar face, is not immediately delighted. He is for awhile intent upon observing, examining, and becoming thoroughly acquainted with it; and then, after a time of repose, in which perhaps the object or person is

withdrawn or neglected, he will greet it with a laugh, and play with it familiarly. I once saw a large company of poor children brought from crowded quarters in the city for a first play in green fields, among the spring flowers. Instead of the constant expressions of delight which I expected from them, they exhibited an almost greedy eagerness to see, examine, explore, and possess; and they went home almost as seriously and silently as a swarm of caterpillars to their nest. I presume, however, that if they had returned in a few days to the scenes already made familiar, they would have manifested a great deal of enjoyment, and probably they did feel such enjoyment in thinking it over. So almost everybody, in a first visit to an unfamiliar country, as, for instance, to the mountains, from the desire to enjoy it, is at first eagerly intent upon becoming acquainted with it; many persons are much disappointed at their own want of ability to enjoy what they know to be so enjoyable; but after the due steps of development are completed, their power of enjoyment opens its beautiful wings unexpectedly, like a butterfly fresh from his chrysalis case.

In regard to certain kinds of music or painting, for which I had the highest respect, I have several times felt such disappointment at my

lack of power of enjoyment, and have not understood that the power of appreciation must first attain its full growth by diligent attention and the acquisition of knowledge; and that the capacity for free enjoyment springs from this as the butterfly from the caterpillar. Of course there must exist the sincere interest in the subject, and desire to appreciate it, like a butterfly's egg, or no faculty of enjoying will be developed. But if these do exist, they are proof that the faculty may be formed by cultivation.

Worms, caterpillars, and the perfect insects serve as food to birds, and also to serpents; because the knowledge of appearances to the senses is food for spiritual thought, and also to the love of sensual pleasure. We observe the worms and butterflies, and our love of observing and learning their ways is like a caterpillar; but the spiritual thought to which we submit our observations is a bird that eats the caterpillar.

Our common name, "bookworm," is rightly applied to one who devours books without caring for any other work or pleasure in life.

That the power of thinking, understanding, and enjoying the appearances presented to the senses is represented by insects, is thus taught by Swedenborg:



The animals which walk, and also those which creep, signify affections in each sense, thus goods or evils, for these are of the affections; but the animals which fly, and also the winged insects signify such things as are of the thoughts in each sense, thus truths or falsities; for these are of the thoughts; . . . hence, winged insects signify like things, but in the extremes of man. (*Arcana Coelestia* #9331)

Again, he says:

Flying things in the Word all signify things intellectual, and thence truths, and in the opposite sense falsities; but the flying things of the lowest kind, which are insects, signify truths, and in the opposite sense falsities, which are more obscure, as those which belong to the sensual; for those, unless they be illustrated by interior things, are altogether in obscurity and darkness, being next to the body, and thence next to terrestrial things where heavenly things terminate, and are immersed in thick darkness. (*Arcana Coelestia* #7441)

And once more:

It is not the sensual principle of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch which is here meant, for these things are proper to the body; but it is the ultimate or lowest principle of thought and affection, which is first opened with infants, and which is of such a nature that they do not think anything else, nor are affected with any other

objects than what make one with the senses above mentioned; for infants learn to think by means of the senses, and to be affected with objects according to the things which have pleased the senses; wherefore, the first internal principle which is opened to them is the sensual, which is called the ultimate sensual principle of man, and also corporeal sensual; but afterwards, as the infant advances in age, and becomes a boy, the sensual principle is opened more interiorly, from which he thinks naturally, and is also affected naturally; at length, when he becomes a youth and young man, his sensual principle is opened still more interiorly, from which he thinks rationally, and if he is in the good of charity and faith, spiritually, and also is affected rationally and spiritually; this thought and affection is what is called the rational and spiritual man, whereas the former is called the natural man, and the first the sensual man. (*Apocalypse Explained* #548)

The appearances of life, of which the insects of the mind love to think, are of every kind, from the vilest and most cruel to the delightful loveliness of heaven itself. Happy thoughts of the beautiful appearances of heaven, and of heavenly life on earth, are represented by the beautiful butterflies and moths. Probably the various kinds of heavenly life from which these lovely

appearances spring could be traced by careful attention in the characteristics of the butterflies which represent the thoughts of them.

Several of these, which perhaps should be ranked as the noblest of the insect race, surround themselves, as they enter the chrysalis state, with cocoons of silk, from which all our supplies of that beautiful material are derived. When caterpillars have attained their full growth, they immediately search for a suitable place for their cocoons, which they spin with impatient zeal, working night and day till they are completed; they then cast their caterpillar skins, and in a state of absolute helplessness, but equally absolute trust, they await their rebirth into their heaven.

Such caterpillars correspond to a love for descriptions of heaven, and of the lovely forms of the life that is from heaven. This love eagerly learns these things from desire to see and enjoy such loveliness. The silken thread with which it clothes itself in its helplessness is from the knowledge it has obtained of the objects of its love, now expressed with trustful hope of being enabled to enjoy them. The moths are delights in the happy things of heaven, and the honey upon which they live is the pleasantness of truth in its first promise of producing good fruit.

That a knowledge of the external lovely things of heaven, with the hope of enjoying them, is represented by silk, is evident from the angels who came to Swedenborg as forms of conjugal love: "They were clad in robes and tunics of shining silk, in which were inwoven flowers most beautiful to the sight" (*Conjugal Love* #137). And what they described to him was not the spiritual operation and delight of that love in the soul, but the warmth and light, the gardens and the fragrance of their heaven. Such description, from their own knowledge and constant desire, was represented in their silken garments; and the delights of it were still more fully expressed by the flowers inwoven in them.

"Truth from a spiritual origin," Swedenborg says, is represented by silk; and adds: "This signification it derives from its splendor of light" (*Apocalypse Explained* #619, 1144). "By silk is signified mediate heavenly good and truth; good from its softness, and truth from its shining" (*Apocalypse Revealed* #773).

In heaven, they who are in natural truth appear clothed in white, which appears white as if from linen; natural truth itself is also represented there, as if woven of finer threads of linen; those threads appear like silken threads, splendid, beautifully translucent, and soft, and the raiment

of them likewise, if the truth which is so represented is from good; but, on the contrary, those threads as of linen do not appear translucent, nor splendid, nor soft, but hard and brittle, and yet white, if the truth so represented be not from good. (*Arcana Coelestia* #6701)

## THE LOCUST

The locust is quite a different insect from those that have been described. The changes through which it passes are not those of worm, helpless chrysalis, and winged insect; it has its insect legs from the start, and only sheds its skin repeatedly, and by degrees acquires wings.<sup>1</sup>

As there are several species of locust, and several stages of their individual life, it is not surprising to find them spoken of under different names. Some authorities regard the names rendered in our English Bible palmer worm, canker worm, and caterpillar, beetle, locust, and bald locust, as all belonging to members of this family.<sup>2</sup> They play an important part in the imagery of the Bible, both as plagues by reason of their numbers and destructiveness, and as themselves constituting an article of food.

All the locusts are vegetable feeders, and do great harm wherever they happen to be plentiful,

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1. Lubbock.

2. Tristram and Wood; cf. *Apocalypse Explained* #543.

their powerful jaws severing even the thick grass stems as if cut by scissors. But it is only when they invade a country that their real power is felt. They come flying with the wind in such vast multitudes that the sky is darkened as if by thunderclouds; and when they settle, every vestige of green disappears off the face of the earth.

Mr. Gordon Cumming once saw a flight of these locusts. They flew about three hundred feet from the ground, and came on in thick, solid masses, forming one unbroken cloud. On all sides nothing was to be seen but locusts. The air was full of them, and the plain was covered with them, and for more than an hour the insect army flew past him. When the locusts settle, they eat with such voracity that the sound caused by their jaws cutting the leaves and grass can be heard at a great distance; and even the young locusts, which have no wings, and are graphically termed by the Dutch colonists of Southern Africa "voet-gangers," or foot-goers, are little inferior in power of jaw to the fully developed insect.

As long as they have a favorable wind, nothing stops the progress of the locusts. They press forward just like the vast herds of antelopes that cover the plains of Africa, or the bison that blacken the prairies of America, and the progress of even the wingless young is as irresistible as that of the adult insects. Regiments of soldiers have in vain attempted to stop them. Trenches

have been dug across their path, only to be filled up in a few minutes with the advancing hosts, over whose bodies the millions of survivors continued their march. When the trenches were filled with water, the result was the same; and even when fire was substituted for water, the flames were quenched by the masses of locusts that fell into them. When they come to a tree, they climb up it in swarms, and devour every particle of foliage, not even sparing the bark of the smaller branches. They ascend the walls of houses that come in the line of their march, swarming in at the windows, and gnawing in their hunger the very woodwork of the furniture.”

These insects are . . . eaten in all parts of the world which they frequent, and in some places form an important article of diet, thus compensating in some way for the amount of vegetable food which they consume.

Herodotus, for example, when describing the various tribes of Libyans, mentions the use of the locust as an article of diet. . . . “When they have caught the insects” [he says] “they dry them in the sun, reduce them to powder, and, sprinkling them in milk, drink them.”

This is precisely the plan which is followed at the present day by the Bosjesmans of South Africa. To them the locusts are a blessing, and not a plague. . . . When they see a cloud of locusts in the distance, they light great fires, and



heap plenty of green boughs upon them, so as to create a thick smoke. The locusts have no idea of avoiding these smoke columns, but fly over the fires, and, stifled by the vapor, fall to the ground, where they are caught in vast numbers by the Bosjesmans. When their captors have roasted and eaten as many as they can manage to devour, they dry the rest over the fires, pulverize them between two stones, and keep the meal for future use, mixing it with water, or, if they can get it, with milk.

In Palestine, locusts are eaten either roasted or boiled in salt and water; but, when preserved for future use, they are dried in the sun, their heads, wings, and legs picked off, and their bodies ground into dust. This dust has naturally a rather bitter flavor, which is corrected by mixing it with camel's milk or honey, the latter being the favorite substance. (Wood's *Bible Animals*)

The locust and grasshopper tribe, the most common of our summer insects, loving to eat every green thing, represent the desire to see and know what is going on, not from interest in the ends, but simply from curiosity to know every living thought and plan of life. It is a desire universal in children, and hardly less general in adults.

The same desire directed to the Word loves to know all the appearances and ways of life described in its letter. John the Baptist, therefore,

who represented the literal sense of the Word in its application to life, had for his meat locusts and wild honey; the locusts representing a knowledge of the letter of the Word, and the honey the natural pleasure in such knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

In ancient times, when churches were representative churches, all who were in ministries were clothed according to their representations, and also did eat according thereto. (*Apocalypse Explained* #543)

When the mind is good, and loves a charitable, upright life, then all this superficial knowledge of life is serviceable as food for useful thought; but when a man loves only himself, and not goodness of life, he sees and knows all the thoughts and plans of life about him only to despise and pervert them. The locusts in his mind are a plague which destroys every green and living thing.

The plagues of Egypt represented the exposure of the evils that infested men before the coming of the Lord. And one of those plagues was a cloud of locusts that “covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left; and

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #9372, 7643.

there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt” (Exodus 10:15), by which was represented the destruction of every principle of good life in the Church, by those who intensely loved their own selfish power and evil pleasures.

In like manner, the thoughts of those who from love of evil were in the doctrine of faith alone, concerning good life, were represented by locusts that came out of the smoke of the bottomless pit, by which they entirely stupefied their followers in regard to good spiritual life.

In a better sense, men, because they are in the most external appearances of the Lord’s universe, are called locusts in comparison with Him. “It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers” (Isaiah 40:22). And, again, in the sight of those who are persuaded of their own eminence, others appear even to themselves as grasshoppers: “And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight” (Numbers 13:33).<sup>1</sup>

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1. *Apocalypse Explained* #543.

## BEES

Not for the green grass and foliage do the bees care, but for the fragrant flowers, into which they dive, like diviners of hidden treasure, for the honey and pollen. Neither do spiritual bees care for a knowledge of the world with its theories and principles so long as they are only theories and principles; but as soon as they blossom with the promise of usefulness, the bees hurry to them, sure of finding in them their favorite sweetness.

The locusts care only to know—it makes not much difference what. The bees ask, “What is it for? What is the use of it?” And in a knowledge of the usefulness they find honey.

That honey is enjoyment, is because it is sweet; and every sweetness in the natural world corresponds to enjoyment and pleasantness in the spiritual. . . . Every truth, and especially truths from good, have their enjoyment, but enjoyment from the affection of them, and thence the use. (*Arcana Coelestia* #5620)

But bees have not only a love for the sweetness of usefulness, but also a stinging contempt for what is useless or mischievous. They sting all intruders upon their busy lives; even the drones of their own race they carry out from the hive, and sting to death.

Many human insects have the power to annoy us with impertinent suggestions or remarks, of which we shall say more presently; but they have no power to sting unless there are appearances of evil or disgrace in our lives from which they can draw stinging inferences. The stings of the bees are charges of uselessness or intrusion.

Honey is frequently mentioned in the Bible; but bees rarely.

It is related of Samson, that after he had rent the young lion, and returned to take a wife from the nation of the Philistines, "he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion; and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion" (Judges 14:8, 9). By this was signified the dissipation of the faith separate from charity, which the Philistines represented; it was on this account that the Philistines were called "the uncircumcised," by which name is signified that they were without spiritual love and charity, and only in natural love, which is the love of self and the world; such faith inasmuch as it destroys the good of charity, was represented by the young

lion which assaulted Samson with intent to tear him in pieces; but Samson, because he was a Nazarite, and by his Nazariteship represented the Lord as to His ultimate natural, rent the lion in pieces, and afterwards found in his carcass a swarm of bees and honey, by which was signified that after that faith is dissipated the good of charity succeeds in its place. (*Apocalypse Explained* #619)

This is the common signification of honey in the Scriptures. Therefore it is said that “the judgments of Jehovah are sweeter than honey, and the dropping of the honeycombs” (Psalm 119:102, 103).

The land of Canaan is called “a land flowing with milk and honey,” because it represents “heaven, where is the good of charity and truth of faith, and thence pleasantness and enjoyment” (*Arcana Coelestia* #6857).

Yet, because spiritual bees judge wholly from appearances, and may mistake the appearance of industry and the promise of use for genuine usefulness, honey also represents what appears like the pleasure of use, but may be merely selfish elation. In this sense of selfish delight, it was forbidden that any honey should be used in the sacrifices to the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Leviticus 2:11; *Apocalypse Explained* #619.

As the stings of bees in a good sense signify the imputation of idleness and opposition to pleasant work, by which the love of such pleasantness defends itself, in the perverse sense they signify such charges against those who object to merely selfish pleasure. Bees are therefore mentioned once as means by which genuine goodness is destroyed, and selfish pleasure substituted. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria” (Isaiah 7:18, 19).<sup>1</sup>

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1. *Apocalypse Explained* #543; *Arcana Coelestia* #9331.

## HORNETS

It has been said that the power to sting spiritually is the power to bring home some accusations or insinuations of evil or disgrace to our lives. Bees sting in their way; but the imputation of worse evils to those exposed to the attack is represented by the stings of wasps and hornets.

When the children of Israel were approaching the land of Canaan, the Lord promised, as one of the means by which their safety would be secured, that He would send “the hornet” before them to drive out the nations which were there, signifying that their own false thoughts from evil loves would return to plague and condemn them.<sup>1</sup>

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1. *Arcana Coelestia* #9331.



## FLIES

Flies buzz about for honey, sugar, sweet things generally, and any kind of filth. They also breed in manure, which represents the filthy things rejected from spiritual life. In the grub state they love to learn such things; in the winged, to think them. They are the annoying thoughts of self-indulgence and evil, which come unbidden, and even though hated. Swedenborg says:

The “fly in the extremity of the rivers of Egypt” (Isaiah 7:18, 19) is the falsities in the extremes of the natural mind, thus which are in the sensual nearest the body. These are compared to such an insect, because the things there are no other than as insects flying in the air, and obscuring interior things, and also doing them harm. For, as to the greater part, the things there are imaginations and fallacies. (*Arcana Coelestia* #7441)

Similar false suggestions from evil loves are represented by the flies which were one of the plagues of Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Ibid.

## SPIDERS

Spiders we know chiefly as spinners of webs, sometimes with much apparent beauty, the purpose of which is to ensnare other insects which they may devour. By long threads of webs, also, spiders sail in the air sometimes considerable distances.

In Swedenborg's Diary is the following account of men who appeared like spiders in the spiritual world:

There was seen a spider's thread and web, which reached up on high into the interior heaven; this thread was drawn down, and there followed thence a diabolical spirit, who appeared before angelic sight like a great and horrid spider. . . .

It was then told and shown who those are; namely, that they are those who learn the arts of raising themselves towards the interior heaven, which is done especially by the habit of entering into the feelings of others, and almost absorbing them, even so far as to think as they do. Especially do they learn truths of faith and learn to enter into the affection of truth, by holding the thoughts long in them, but this always with the

intent to deceive, make sport of, and rule; thus it is full of cunning, deceit, and malice. By such things they insinuate themselves among the angels of heaven. . . .

The angels said that sometimes they are observed, and that they sit in corners, and sometimes appear and sometimes do not appear; and that they cannot be removed before the time of their casting down has come. (*Spiritual Diary* #4735–37)

A spider appeared, dropping down from heaven by a spider's thread. The form and the slipping down were altogether like a spider. At first it appeared small, and was able to let itself down by the thread, and also raise itself up; it was borne to the right, and also there wished to draw itself up towards heaven; but he could not, because thus who and what he was was detected. Others said that he appeared to them as a man. It was said by angels that he was from the third heaven, and that such are they who have long been poisoners, or assassins, and practiced such things with cunning and deceit; but afterwards seemed to repent, thinking of heaven, and also believing, and externally practicing piety; these, when in this latter state, are elevated into heaven; but still their inner quality is there disclosed; for their interiors are more and more exposed; and so they cast themselves down thence, and appear like spiders. (*Spiritual Diary* #4889)

I have seen many, who appeared like spiders which let themselves down by threads, who were cast down from heaven. Their affections thus appeared. They were women who in speech, gestures, and appearance seemed pious and devout, but inwardly overflowed with adulteries, thefts, and every malice and deceit; thus their interiors were full of poisons. (*Spiritual Diary* #5199)

“They weave the spider’s web,” is said of evil men, who by treachery and craft seduce others in spiritual affairs. . . . Their treacherous falsities are signified by the spider’s web which they are said to weave. (*Arcana Coelestia* #581)

The web of the spider bears some resemblance to the silkworm’s thread; and, representatively, they both are spun from knowledge of heaven or heavenly good. But the spider spins it from her abdomen, with no care for it but to catch those who can be deceived by it; while the silkworm spins lovingly from her mouth, from sincere desire to become heavenly herself.

Flies are much like insect mice, in their love for pleasant frivolities; and the crafty spiders in their beautiful webs, zealously condemning the flies for evils much lighter than their own fierce lusts, are not unlike insect cats.

## SCORPIONS

The scorpions belong to the class Arachnida, and have much the appearance of a small lobster, whence they were formerly classed with the Crustacea. Their palpi, or claws, are of the proportionate shape and size of those of the lobster, and are employed for seizing their prey, which they then dispatch by striking it with the powerful curved claw at the end of their tail, which secretes an acrid poison. The tail is jointed and of great length, and, in running, the animal holds it over its back in a threatening attitude, and in this position it always strikes with it, and thus in efforts to escape will sometimes strike its own head, and mortally wound itself.

Scorpions are carnivorous, feeding chiefly on beetles and locusts. They swarm in every part of Palestine, and are found in houses, in chinks of walls, among ruins, and under stones, whether in dry or moist situations. . . .

The sting of the scorpion is very painful, much more so than that of the hornet, and our muleteers were several times stung; but suction and the application of ammonia and sweet oil

reduced the swelling and pain in two or three hours. I have known an instance of a man dying from the effects of a scorpion sting, which he received in the throat when leaning against a wall in which the creature was secreted. (Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible*)

Swedenborg speaks of the scorpion as:

. . . denoting a persuasive principle which is of an infatuating and suffocating character. . . . The nature and quality of the persuasive principle signified by the scorpion," he says, "are as yet scarcely known to anyone in the world, because it is the persuasive principle of the spirit of a sensual man, in which he is when he becomes a spirit, but not while he lives as a man in the world. The reason is, that a man in the world rarely speaks out what his spirit thinks and inmosty loves; for he is taught from infancy to converse about such things as pertain to civil and moral life, although his spirit, which thinks and wills inwardly, is differently inclined; the spirit of man, whilst it resides in the body, makes a show of such things before the world, because otherwise he cannot receive favor, so as to obtain the ends which his spirit aims at, which are principally honors and gains, and a name and fame on account of them. This is the reason that the nature and quality of the infatuating and suffocating persuasive principle which is signified by the scorpion is not known in the world; such,

however, is its nature with the spirits in whom it is operative, that it infuses itself into the soul and spirit of another, and lays asleep, and almost extinguishes, his rational and intellectual faculties, whence he cannot possibly know otherwise than that what is spoken is the truth, although it should be most false. (*Apocalypse Explained* #544)