

There is, then, only one source of truth, only one source of a sight of the Lord, and that source is the Word of God. There are, however, two foundations of truth, nature, or the truths of nature, and the Word. For those who believe the Word, truth may be founded or based on its literal teachings. But for those who doubt or deny the Word as it is in its letter, natural truth—the genuine truths of philosophy, science, and experience—must be the foundation, and by those truths such persons must be led to see the genuine truth that is in the internal sense of the Word, with which genuine natural truth can never disagree.

SWEDENBORG'S RATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

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LECTURE V

AFFECTIONS

Our reflections so far have focused on *ideas*. We have seen ideas of the memory and the imagination, based on images and similes, and we have considered ideas of the pure intellect and of the mixed intellect, and touched on those of the soul itself. We must now turn to the subject of *affections*.

A basic circumstance with regard to affections is contained, linguistically, in the term itself; for an affection comes about as a result of something that *affects*. When, for instance, we speak of an affection for truth, this implies that the truth has affected the mind. Similarly the affection of charity: a use or a need that is seen to exist with a fellow man, or with a society of men, affects the mind, so that there is a desire to fill that need. In each case harmony is involved, for unless that which affects and that which is affected are in harmony, there is no response or affirmative reaction, and consequently no resulting affection. Harmony, however, may also be involved adversely; that is to say, there may be a lack of harmony between what acts and what reacts, in which case, of course, the result is an adverse affection, thus a form of

repulsion. Consequently, if a man is favourably disposed to truth, or has an inner longing for it, then if truth comes to him, he at once experiences an affection for it; but if his disposition is contrary, so that he loathes truths and delights only in sensuous imaginations or vain-glorious schemes for power and influence, then if truth is addressed to him, he senses contempt, hatred or indifference. He rejects the truth because he is affected by fallacies and fables.

It goes without saying that this rhymes with the familiar teaching that man is a receptacle of life—a receptacle, that is, of good, which is the essence of life, and truth, which is its form. If the man receives affirmatively, then the essence and form of life affect him; and he receives life in himself as affection for good and affection for truth. This takes place if there is innocence in him, for innocence is his consent to being affected by life, or, as the Writings usually put it: his willingness to be led.

All of this clearly involves the whole concept of man as an organ receptive of life; and although our book does not make that point explicitly, its whole presentation involves it. In its analysis of forms, states, harmonies, etc., it assists the searching mind in understanding what actually takes place in the mind's own organic vessels when life is harmoniously received there. Certainly, the more clearly we can see these things—and the matter does require concentration of thought—the more intelligently, completely, and gladly will we confirm the truth of doctrine here alluded to.

BASIC TERMS

What is first required is to sort out several terms, without which thought on this subject cannot be expressed, nor reason entertained. Such terms are the following: Entity, substance, form; determination, fluxion, coexistence; determinant, compound; analogy, harmony; quality, state; modification; affection, appetite, pleasure, delight, cupidity, desire, will, love. Let us try to go ahead, by grouping under headings of their own, terms that are closely related, and so take one step at a time. The major headings that seem to suggest themselves are five, namely: Substance and form; fluxion; state; modification; and affection. In proceeding we will closely follow the chapter, entitled "Harmonies and the Affections arising therefrom, Desires in General" (175-196).

SUBSTANCE AND FORM

In the mineral kingdom, substance and form are the same as matter and shape. Anyone can see that each and all things on this plane of existence consist of these two aspects. A little above the mineral kingdom, however, it at once becomes difficult to speak of shape; for shape connotes fixity, that is to say, stillness, or non-motion. The term matter too bows in favour of a term that better expresses elasticity, thus ability to change. Hence we now have form instead of shape, and substance rather than matter. These terms are all the more required when we come to realities of the mind, such as cannot be measured by a tape, nor weighed on a scale.

A substance consists of *parts*, or *entities*. But these parts must be arranged in a certain order, and that order is what is known as *form*. Since all things that exist must, in order for their existence, respond to life, therefore the order of the parts cannot but be in the *form of motion*. The exception to this is the ultimates of creation, which consist of "substances at rest." Motion or activity ceases there; but it is not dead, only sleeps, for all the powers of the universe are stored up in these ultimates; and they are drawn out, and released, in what has aptly been termed "the return kingdom." The Writings show how all lower forms serve the next higher forms, and as it were aspire to those higher forms; thus how the mineral kingdom serves the vegetable kingdom, and this the animal kingdom, further how all the three kingdoms with everything in them are laid at the feet of man, and how he may, if he is so disposed, return all things to the Lord, their origin, by gratefully using them according to the powers and purposes that He, the Creator, implanted in them and sustains in them.

Returning to the notion of motion as form, and to the idea of entities, or parts, or prior substances, moving to produce that form, we can now add the concept of a *determinant*; for the entity that moves determines its motion, and is in this capacity a determinant. But further, the *compound* now presents itself to view; for clearly, if many little entities group themselves together, and being of the same kind and disposition, that is to say, being determinants of the same order, join in a definite form of motion, then a new substance results, but one that is a compound. The entities themselves may here be thought of as prior substances; and the com-

pound, that results from many of them joining in a definite form of motion, as a secondary substance. For instance, the cortical glands are prior substances, and the nerves of the body are secondary substances, or compounds. Similarly, the simple cortex and its simple fibres are prior substances, and the cortical gland is a secondary substance, or compound. Thus it is also seen that what is a compound in one series, will take the position of prior substance, or entity, and so will act as a determinant, in the next lower series.

FLUXION

The fluxion within a compound is what we have just called "motion." Fluxion is the better term, and is the one adopted by Swedenborg, for it suggests the motion of many entities or parts in a united flow or stream—a stream, however, which ought not to be conceived of as rectilinear. As we have previously noted, the flow in sense-impulses and in the sensory of the cortical gland is round or circular (that is, undulating), or it is spiral, or vortical; and in the higher forms—the celestial and spiritual forms—it is beyond expression and beyond purely geometric concepts.

Now, the fluxion comes about by the inherent *determination* of the entities, which by virtue of possessing such determination prove themselves to be determinants, as just noted. What is involved in this, is that each entity has within it a form of its own, and it is this inner form that compels it to behave in a certain way, and not in another; in other words, it is this inner form that endows the entity with a specific determination.

Finally, in this group of terms, the word *coexistence* now comes to life; for if a compound results from a fluxion of entities so determined, then that fluxion itself and the entities that bring it about must stand in a permanent relationship to each other, namely that of coexistence. And since the fluxion makes the compound, therefore the compound and the entities of the fluxion also regard each other by mutual coexistence. We might say that the fluxion of the entities takes on the form of coexistence.

STATE

But another term describes that mutual relationship still more fully, namely *analogy*. "Coexistence" is the term declaring that

there is a relationship, but the new term describes the nature of this relationship. The analogy, however, may be undisturbed, or disturbed. In the latter case the behavior of the compound will differ in kind from that of the entities that formed the compound. For instance, the simple cortex and its several simple fibres, having joined together to form the compound of the cortical gland, may find that the cortical gland with its imagination, mixed thoughts, etc., takes on a form that is contrary to that of the pure intellect. Nevertheless, the general relationship between the simple cortex and the cortical gland is one of analogy. If there is agreement, then the analogy is called *harmony*; if not it is described as *disharmony*.

Clearly, there is much variety within this scope, for on the one hand there is the extreme of harmony existing according to the perfect order of nature, and on the other hand there is the opposite extreme of the destruction of the order of nature. All the possible variations, potential and actual, are so many *states*, for the inner form of the compound will be in one state if there is much harmony, and in another if there is less. Moreover, there may be "much harmony," and also harmony of varying kinds; so also with less harmony. Hence an indefinite number of states is possible within each substance. State should be thought of as the specific form within a substance at any given time, and especially in its relation to the external form of that same substance. We keep in mind that state is concerned with harmony or disharmony, and consequently with the relationship between determinants and that which is determined.

Much harmony, less harmony, harmony of this kind or that, etc., is naturally described by the word *quality*. Hence the quality of a state refers to the nature of the harmony or lack of it that exists within a substance, or an organ.

Now, there are substances, and the forms of these substances, that are more perfect in their own nature than other substances and their forms. For instance, the cortical gland is in its own nature more perfect than the parts or entities of the eye. This can be illustrated by simple geometric forms. The equilateral triangle is more perfect than the oblong, the trapezium, etc.; but the circular or spherical form is in its own nature more perfect than any angular form. Again, among the circular forms, the circle itself

is more perfect than the ellipse or the parabola, etc. In fact, the circle is the perfect form itself within this group of forms, for there can be only one circle of a specific size, and this one circle by changing its state is capable of presenting an indefinite number of ellipses of all kinds. It is also capable of all other forms relating to roundness. When a circular form passes over into elliptical forms or into any other geometrical curves it is said to *change its state*.

So we think of each organic form of the human mind as holding within itself the form that is the most perfect to its own nature, and as capable of changing that form with indefinite variations, consequently as capable of undergoing so many changes of state.

The power of changing state is the very perfection of form,

being so great in the superior forms, that their changes of state exceed all number and must be counted as infinite in number. (180)

MODIFICATION

We let the concept of modifications form a group by itself, or alone; for modifications are simply expansions or constrictions of one and the same form. This does not imply any change of state at all, for if a circle expands or draws together, it is still a circle; and if an ellipse does so, it is still not only an ellipse, but an ellipse of exactly the same form. Thus,

the same essential determinations and the same analogies and harmonies remain, whether the forms be expanded or constricted. (182)

On the other hand, expansions and constrictions engender *force*. This is the motory aspect of the form, whereas change of state relates to the sensory aspect of it. And "by expansions and constrictions, the nature of the exercise of the form's forces is varied." (182)

It is by virtue of modifications that changes of state are communicated. What happens is that a form not only changes its state, but at the same time undergoes modifications; and by doing this latter thing, that is, by expanding and contracting, the form sends forth the state it is in, so as to affect other forms. If then it changes state, and continues its modifications, then the new state is similarly sent forth. Of course, this is precisely what takes place when someone speaks, and another listens. The form of

the vocal cords and the simultaneous form of the tongue and lips, etc., is at any given moment in a certain state; but since those forms are also expanding and contracting, the state, and every change of state, is constantly engendering a force which is causing a corresponding fluxion in the air, and finally a corresponding state, with its modification, in the ear of the listener. And if we are to extend our concept of speech a little further, we will of course include in our view the change of state in the cortical gland which, with its modification, sends forth its force to the organs of speech, causing an analogous change of state and modification there. Similarly, we will now have to include the change of state in the cortical gland of the listener, and also the modification of tremulation of that gland. If the listener pays close attention, the idea which now arises in his cortical gland will be similar to the idea which possessed the speaker and caused him to speak. We say cortical gland, but mean all the countless cortical glands in the cerebrum, for they are all involved both as motories and as sensories.

It may be fitting to suggest here that the law of influx from the spiritual world, thus the law of spheres which are sent forth from each spirit or mind and are capable of being received by each spirit or mind, is of exactly the same universal nature as the law of speech. In other words, in each case there are organic forms that change state and at the same time undergo modifications, and in each case there is a communicative medium, namely an atmosphere, and in each case there are similar organic forms at the receiving end which take in and register the tremulation if they are so disposed, that is to say, organic forms which respond to the influx, or sphere. Let us not think that "influx" and similar terms are nothing but terms, or clichés, invented to cover and hide a mysterious and incomprehensible mode of communication. Influx takes place by means of actual, created substances—substances which are organic and human—and mediating substances which are atmospheric; and for the influx to come about, changes of state in those organic substances, and their simultaneous modifications, are necessary; and for the influx to be received, the receiving organic substances must be capable and willing to take on a similar state to that of the "sending" organic substances, if I may so describe them. The "willingness to receive" depends entirely on whether or not the respective organic substances are in harmony; that is to say, whether their

states are either similar on the same plane of spiritual life, or correspondential on different planes. I believe I would be correct in saying that the term in the Writings is "sphere" if communication takes place on the same plane of spiritual life, and "influx" if on different planes.

AFFECTION

The philosophy of affections rises out of analyses of this kind. The universal view that presents itself is that of organs, which are the seat of conscious mental life, being impinged upon by forces from outside of themselves: forces which in their turn spring from changes of state and modifications in other substances or organs. And as we have suggested, the universal law is the same all the way up and down the scale; that is to say, whether applied to the level of the natural atmospheres or that of spiritual atmospheres. Do we not read, that the Divine "in the greatest and in the least things is the same"? (DLW 77)

The *Rational Psychology*, being based on things seen and heard in this world, and not on things "seen and heard" in the spiritual world (as are the Writings), is not concerned with influx from spirits and angels, at least not directly so. I feel, however, that we are indebted to that work and the other philosophical works for analyzing the order of physical creation for us, in order that we, when reading the pages of Revelation, may bear in mind what we have understood concerning that order, and so supply in our minds the corresponding particulars which are frequently covered in the Writings by a word or a statement without direct analysis. Take for instance the following from the Writings:

Affections, which belong to the will, are mere changes of the state of the purely organic substances of the mind; and thoughts, which belong to the understanding, are mere changes and variations of the form of those substances; and memory is the permanent state of these changes and variations. (DP 279: 6)

It is at once recognized that this is in complete accord with the observations and analyses in the philosophical works; but the difference is that the Writings, being concerned with the salvation of the mind, only make general references to the mechanism and organic structure of that mind, while the philosophical works analyze that mechanism and structure with astonishing detail and

penetration. Who is to say, therefore, that the philosophical works are not ready to serve the Writings as a handmaiden her mistress? Is it not so with all the worldly sciences; that is to say, are not all the mathematical and physical sciences and all the arts and humanities to serve spiritual truths as handmaidens, or take their place before the throne of God as a footstool? Then why not the sciences and the philosophies which were assembled in the mind of the scribe himself of the crowning Revelation, seeing that these were in fact the *immediate* basis for corresponding spiritual verities? We must not forget that the Revelation of the spiritual sense and of the spiritual world rests on a platform of two levels: the uppermost level is the letter of the Word, but the lower and wider level is the whole of nature with all its laws. In *each case* there is perfect correspondence. The Writings do, in fact, make frequent references to the platform of nature as well as to that of the letter; as for instance in setting forth the doctrine of the will and understanding and their reciprocal relations and conjunction:

Now because it is scarcely known in the world what the will and the love are, and on the other hand it is known what the heart and the lungs are; for the two latter are objects of sight and can be examined, and have been examined and described by anatomists, whereas the will and the understanding are not objects of the sight, and cannot be so examined; therefore when it is known that they correspond, and by correspondence make one, many arcana concerning the will and the understanding may be discovered *which cannot be detected otherwise.* (DLW 385; ital. added.)

In our present context we would assert that the full mechanism and organic structure of affections and thoughts cannot be known from the Writings alone, but must be supplied by means of the knowledge of the anatomy of the mind. The Writings are more than a footstool. Their business is not to reveal the natural world, but the kingdom of the Lord and the King Himself of the kingdom. Yet the footstool is never forgotten. It is constantly brought into the scope of Revelation, because there is a complete correspondence between heaven and earth, exactly as between the spiritual sense and the literal sense of the Word.

Returning now to our book, we quote concerning affections:

Affections are changes of state corresponding to the harmonies which flow into the organs, especially the sensory organs. The whole cerebrum or common sensory is affected by the sonorous harmonies of hearing; the internal sensory by the harmonies of the objects of sight; the pure intellec-

tory by the harmonies of the ideas of the imagination, and especially of the thought; the soul by the harmonies of the natural truths of the pure intellect; and God by the harmonies of the superior or spiritual truths of the soul. (189)

In all of this we note the underlying concept, that the harmonies that affect the various sensories, do so from below. Of course, in so far as the concept embraces the examples just given, we can at once see the truth of it. As for spiritual and celestial affections ("celestial" here used according to the terminology of the Writings) we will not here attempt to analyze these, but would nevertheless call attention to the matter and note the parallel.

Further we read the following:

All harmonies affect the sensory organs, both external and internal, agreeably or pleasantly, or else disagreeably or unpleasantly; that is to say, they either gladden or sadden. . . . But all harmonies are relative to the harmonic state of the sensory which is affected. In a sensory, the state whereof is disharmonic, perfect harmonies appear undelightful, and more undelightful, the more perfect in themselves the harmonies. Therefore, disharmonies are the very harmonies of such a sensory. (191, 192)

Now, therefore, it is clear that the universal concept concerning affections is that of corresponding harmonies; that is to say, that the harmony which exists within the organ of the mind is stirred with affection, or is affected, if it is approached by another harmony of a like nature. This, incidentally, illustrates the doctrine of remains; for unless harmonies of heaven were implanted in the organics of the mind, side by side with the disharmonies of heredity, there could not possibly be a willing response to, or reception of, the harmonies of truth.

We note further the difference between an idea and an affection, speaking organically. Generally, idea relates to form, affection to harmony. And since harmony is a matter of state, therefore we would express the matter of affection more fully, if we say that it relates to states of harmony. Now state, as we have noted, is nothing but an interior form; and therefore we conclude that an idea is an external change of form, and an affection an internal change of form; or that an idea is a mutation or tremulation on the surface of the organic, and an affection is a change in the interior flux itself of that same organic. At the same time we note that therefore there can be no external change without a simul-

taneous internal change; for the internal organic itself would of necessity take note of whatever takes place on its surface, and its "taking note" would consist of its putting on a state which is either harmonious (and more or less so) or disharmonious (again more or less so) with the external change. In other words, there can be no idea relating to thought without a simultaneous affection. On the other hand, we should also bear in mind that the idea may be one that is stirred up by an internal affection, for it could be an idea of the memory and the imagination, and need not be one that is at that time received by means of external sensation. This observation may turn our minds to the matter of affections flowing in from heaven, awakening similar affections with man, which in their turn are said to flow into a corresponding idea of thought. What happens is that the affections which have been awakened, as a result of an interior change of state, put on a corresponding exterior change of state also. Thus will the internal fluxion of the organic agree with the external tremulation on its surface.

If then all substances and organics in the universe are possessed of their own interior form, or state of harmony, and if all of them have also an external form; and if further their state of harmony is sensed by humans as affection, and their external form is perceived as idea: then we can see a substantial and organic support for the teaching in the Writings that all things have reference to good and truth.

Finally, we close by allowing our book itself to sort out the various forms of affection, designated by the several terms which we listed early in this lecture:

Appetite is predicated of all agreeable affections that are proper to the body, its viscera and organs. Its affections are called pleasures and delights. *Cupidities* are predicated of all those agreeable affections which are proper to the cerebrum or common sensory; *desire* and also *will*, of all those which are proper to the internal sensory; *loves* to those which are proper to the pure intellectory; *love*, in the singular, of those which are of the soul. (196)

And we would agree with the summing up:

But because these distinctions are unknown, the one is commonly taken for the other. (*Ibid.*)