

SONNETS FOR THE MAGI[†]

Linda Simonetti Odhner^{*}

Sir Isaac Newton

One foot on Galileo's shoulder set,
Borne up by earthly motion's mastery;
The other's searching need by Kepler met,
Brought within scope of movements heavenly:
Thus lifted up, his lofty vision soared
In proud defiance of earth's downward pull,
Yet bent to its demand, and found accord
In matter's interplay made visible.
By measurement and formula released
From crystal spheres, the wheeling stars sing on,
While, caught by crystal prism, their light displays
All color; and the tides that never ceased,
As he discerned, by sun and moon are drawn
Upon the seashore where the boy still plays.

Johann Sebastian Bach

O magnify the Lord with me! Each voice
Must make the call its own; if they conflict,
Strike dissonance, with more cause they'll rejoice,
Bent, breaking to His will, to sentience pricked,
When chaos meets perfection. Shifted free
By symmetry in the well-tempered scale,
Turn, turn again: with every change of key
Let added meaning burn a different trail,
Light unsuspected facets, while one phrase
Insists, repeats, cascading, staggered through
The dance of insight endlessly renewed.
Sound turns to sight, makes bright the songs of praise,
Each a complete departure, and all true,
Their beauty by the Maker long pursued.

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Emanuel Swedenborg

The egg's forms rise from nowhere: watch them fill
The empty matrix, as it yearns for shape,
Self-conscious life, the exercise of will,
And from material bondage seeks escape.
The force no depth of search can ever find
Now teaches all who comprehend its tongue
To rise above, yet not to leave behind
The faulty cradle, damp from hatching young.
So Scripture bears the Word that it enfolds,
Concealing, then revealing what it means;
And he who turned from nature to record
Such marvels of the spirit, now beholds
New light that from his worldly studies weans
His sight, and makes him servant of the Lord.

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