

CORRESPONDENCES: LIGHT AND HUNGER

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*The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.
He was in the world, and though the world was made through him,
the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own,
but his own did not receive him. John 1:9–11*

We easily understand these words metaphorically, but symbolism is not the same as metaphor, and clearly the use of light as symbol is extant in the Bible. If such symbolism is to have timeless, universal application, then it is our work to show how it applies today. The failure to do so is also to fail to recognize Him and remain in the dark, as the Jews from that era. So the question is, do we truly recognize the Lord in these words that rises beyond mere metaphor into a deeper form of symbolism that is true correspondence? This is the task here.

Many people would be surprised to discover that the Bible has a great deal to say about natural ways of thinking about and perceiving reality. It is not that the Bible is a theory of mind, but a drama that unfolds all aspects of our thought, and how the natural ways in our thinking represent a starting point to build upon. Consequently, the natural mind is an extremely important ingredient in our spiritual growth.

The word in the Bible that is used to talk about the natural level is Egypt, and there are two kinds of Egypt. Firstly there is the Egypt in which Pharaoh places Joseph in a position of highest authority. We know this story today thanks to Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice who tell that story in “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat.” But essentially this is a story of the natural level, which has the Lord at the heart of it. But then there is the story of Egypt in Exodus where the new Pharaoh clearly declares he has no memory of Joseph. In other words, it is the natural level with no spiritual content. It is this Egypt that is described in Isaiah as follows:

Woe to those who go down into Egypt for help and rely *on horses and trust in chariots* because they are many, and *on horsemen* because they are extremely strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 31:1.

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Every reference to Egypt, and there are over 600 of them in the Bible, is a reference to the natural mind. If we take this as a rule of thumb, then every reference to its contents, like horses and chariots, is loaded with meaning. However, the problem in our inability to recognize this has more to do with the literal and superficial manner in which all of reality is now understood, and this has much to do with the way we are educated to perceive only a superficial or skin resemblance in form, but without the substrata which is embodied within it. This is what Swedenborg has to say about horses and chariots:

3] Chariots are mentioned in very many places in the Word, yet scarcely anyone knows that matters of doctrine concerning goodness and truth, *and also factual knowledge attached to those matters of doctrine are meant by "chariots."* The reason for such lack of knowledge is that nothing spiritual, only what is natural and historical, enters their thinking when "a chariot" is mentioned, or similarly when the horses in front of a chariot are mentioned. But in the Word the powers of the understanding are meant by "horses," and therefore "a chariot" means matters of doctrine and associated factual knowledge. AC 5321

So chariots and horses clearly reference factual knowledge, but here factual knowledge with no spiritual content. But perhaps the most telling reference here is to relying and trusting in such knowledge because we are surrounded by it, and all our energies are bent to its protection and furtherance, with no reference to anything spiritual.

Here is the point: is this not a description in which we are swayed by the chariot and horse equivalents in our own times, the many things we have, the expertise that persuades us, the concepts and ideas that surround us? And equally there is the fact that there is no reference in any of it to anything spiritual.

What, then, would factual knowledge look like that has spiritual content? Perhaps an example can be given here by way of demonstration with some basic science.

Here is natural knowledge: Atoms have a positive charge in their nucleus and are surrounded by a shell of electrons that are negatively charged. What is less well known is that every single cell in our bodies, numbering trillions,

also has a positively charged nucleus and a membrane surrounding it that is negatively charged. As one doctor put it, we are body electric.

This model of the human body is one that is beginning to take root and determine the kinds of treatments necessary when things go wrong. For instance, in order for proper growth to take place, a cell gives birth to a daughter cell in such a way that the daughter cell separates from it as the old mother cell dies. But how does it do this?

The answer lies in the negative charges. Like poles repel, and so the negative charges in the membranes repel each other and the two cells separate and we grow. But when the negative charge is low, separation cannot take place, and this results in chronic illnesses.

What is the solution? Put simply, it is to get the voltage back up again, and this can be done by eating foods that are rich in electrons.

Now how are we to do this? Do we take some sort of Geiger counter with us to the shops when buying our food? No. The fact is that a lot of food has been stripped of its charge in order to increase shelf life. Generally speaking, we are talking here of green vegetables and oils. To keep it brief, and to keep it relevant, all these foods contain light. But because we are talking here of food, this light which comes from the sun is captured in food and is called biophotons. “Bio” means life and “photons” are the smallest particles of light, and all food should contain these. Rather than try to describe it myself, here is how one doctor put it:

The last of the points mentioned by Dr. Budwig and maybe the most important, is that the electrons in our food serve as the resonance system for the sun’s energy and are truly the element of life. Man acts as an antenna for the sun. The interplay between the photons in the sunbeams and the electrons in the seed oils and our foods, governs all the vital functions of the body. (William Donald Kelley, *Cancer: Curing the Incurable Without Surgery, Chemotherapy, or Radiation* [California: New Century Promotions, 2001], 164)

While this may sound like a perfectly reasonable model, it may not yet be apparent why this should have a spiritual content. But we should be mindful that what is meant by “spiritual content” is correspondence, and when that is known, the reason for mentioning this model of reality will become apparent in a moment.

But here is the main point that is relevant to us:

There is a great deal unknown about what these photons, these bits of light, do in our body, but they have the capability of creating order. (*source unknown*)

Now where have we heard that expression before? It is in Swedenborg when he refers to the Lord, who is the true light, and the laws of order that emanate from him. If we keep that in mind, then consider what this doctor says next about the effects of this ordering principle.

I believe that this light energy that is produced from your cells, I believe that's the aura. I believe that this energy which is produced by taking that sunlight into your cells and then putting it back out, I believe that is your life force. That life force surrounds you in an energy field, and that aura puts you in contact with the earth's magnetic field, which puts you in contact with the solar system and the universe, and so we are made one with the universe. So, light is vital to life, and in the healing of the body . . . (*source unknown*)

What do you think of a doctor who speaks like this? And yet he is not an exception, and this is growing into a more prevalent view. In effect, he is saying that we are a microcosm, a little heaven as Swedenborg would say. But far more than this, what we are discovering is a whole new range of correspondences that science is beginning to reveal to us. We can, for instance see in this description of auras a correlation with what Swedenborg tells us about spheres in the next life which emanate from spiritual beings in much the same way. If this is so, then this attitude expressed by the doctor is saying far more than what we usually hear in descriptions of biological forms like ourselves.

It is this kind of science that is the Egypt in Genesis with the Lord in the middle. How can we know this? Firstly, it is from the humility with which they speak of their abilities to heal people from chronic illnesses. It is contained in their attitude and in what they actually say:

If you follow these protocols, what we hope for is an improvement in the quality of life, and if this is followed by a remission in the illness, that is a blessing from God. (*source unknown*)

If that is true, then there have been a lot of blessings since success rates are astonishing. And yet they do not credit themselves with these cures. One doctor (Lorraine Day, MD) who cured herself of a chronic disease wrote a book on this entitled *You Can't Improve On God*. Clearly, this attitude is very different from what we are accustomed to hearing. It speaks of a new kind of humility, and it is the spirit of humility that shines out of their knowledge, never claiming things to themselves and always referencing the spiritual. In fact, when speaking of the levels of treatment, they emphasize that an important part of the healing process is spiritual.

But there are more things to be seen here. We have mentioned the humility, but now let us think of a word that is the subject of much discussion in Swedenborg circles. It is cognitions. It is the subject of a great deal of discussion in the Swedenborg movement generally, but to keep it simple, and for our limited purposes here, they can be thought of as the intuitions that accompany true factual knowledge. Where do we see it among this new breed of doctors? It is as if they cannot help themselves, but quite often they reference the Bible. As one doctor put it, is it any wonder that the first thing mentioned in Genesis is the creation of light. Another, when talking about the benefits of seed oils, remarked in his own words:

If you think about the creation of man, when God created man in the garden of Eden days when everything was natural. The food was plants and seeds and so forth, and when you think about where we are now, and look at what we eat now and to think about how far off track we have gone, it's no wonder how chronic and terminal we have become in how we live and in what we eat. (source unknown)

These are, I believe, the kinds of thoughts we get when the knowledge base itself does not close out on itself as it does in the old type sciences, but opens up into actual correspondences which are the whole connection between the spiritual and the natural because the processes in both mirror each other. But just to finish on this point, consider for a moment what you imagine to be the meaning of hunger. The general view is that it stems from a lack of food. This may seem obvious. But in our modern world, at least in the west, this kind of starvation is not rife. Instead there is a different kind of hunger. As these doctors explain it, if we do not take in the correct

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enzymes and amino acids to fire up our cells and make them grow, which is the whole purpose of eating, then what we take in leaves us still hungry, and that is why being overweight has reached epidemic proportions, because paradoxically we have to keep eating to get some nutrition because what we eat leaves us hungry. In effect, we find ourselves starving because we are eating.

As it happens, this has a correspondence which I am sure may have surprised these doctors had they been aware of it. Now we know that the Bible is full of references to famines and hunger, but we rarely think that it means anything more than the traditional concept of hunger meaning lack of food. In actual fact, it is the sense of hunger that is the result of too much. In our age, where “not enough” has become the rule, where processing of foods has led to depletion, we find these passages in the Bible:

I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and *be satisfied*.
Deuteronomy 11:15.

This is provided when there is a proper spiritual correspondence and awareness of the Lord. When however this is absent, then hunger ensues, but in the way just mentioned. In Leviticus we read:

When I cut off your supply of bread, ten women will *be* able to bake your bread in one oven, and they will dole out the bread by weight. *You will eat, but you will not be satisfied*. Leviticus 26:26

Notice how applicable this is to us today, and is a medical condition defining obesity—we eat but we are not satisfied. And this is repeated several times as here in Isaiah:

On the right they will devour, but still be hungry; on the left they will eat, but not be satisfied. Each will feed on the flesh of their own offspring. Isaiah 9:20
As when a *hungry* person dreams of eating, but awakens *hungry* still; as when a thirsty person dreams of drinking, but awakens faint and thirsty still. So will it be with the hordes of all the nations that fight against Mount Zion. Isaiah 29:8

So here now is a basis for a much richer and fuller understanding of the Lord Jesus Christ. Given the context spoken of here today, consider the Lord's words:

When Jesus spoke again to *the* people, he said, "I am *the light of the world*. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have *the light of life*." John 8:12

These are no mere metaphors or poetic allusions but correspondences. Just as light from the sun feeds us in a real way, so the Lord truly is the light that feeds our souls. And it is that feeding, the meaning of which is always how we make things our own, that is referenced in that enigmatic statement by the Lord that he is actually to be eaten. No ordinary human could have ever made such statements as these:

Whoever *eats my flesh* and drinks *my* blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. John 6:54

Whoever *eats my flesh* and drinks *my* blood remains in me, and I in them. John 6:56

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever *eats* this bread will live forever. This bread is *my flesh*, which I will give for the life of the world. John 6:51

How are we to understand this? We already know. For just as ordinary light becomes part of the fabric of our bodies and orders all those trillions of cells to grow and multiply in efficient ways, this corresponds precisely to how the Lord, as light, enters our lives in exactly the same manner and orders even more and greater things in us in preparation for our eternal lives. Is this not exactly what he teaches in the gospels and why His presence among us healed so many? Is all this coincidence? It almost seems as if the Lord has been waiting these two thousand years to reveal these deeper meanings, meanings I have to say that I feel we are truly only beginning to see in their meanings today, just as the new models of the human body are beginning to form that exactly mirror spiritual processes. The presence

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of light in us creates its own order and its own shining out. Ask yourself, is that sentence a description of a spiritual or a natural process? It is, of course, a rhetorical question, for it is both linked together through correspondences. For both are a study of light, and how it impinges on our health, both spiritually and physically.

And so when we consider that the task of New Church thinking, based on the principles and teachings laid out in Swedenborg's work, is to distinguish between good science and bad science, we can see that the re-establishment of correspondences is a key feature of this, and this has not been possible until science itself caught up with this view in its new models, and we see how instinctively these cognitions of thought are attached to their models and indeed inform it.□