

THE STORY OF CREATION IN GENESIS THE FIFTH DAY OF CREATION

**From
"The Seven Days of Creation"
by
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How knowledges become living.

"And God said, Let the waters cause to creep forth the creeping thing and let the birds fly above the land in the expanse of the heavens." Gen. 1:20.

In the last lecture we treated of the creation of the sun, moon and stars, and today we will consider the meaning of the creation of the fish and the birds.

Genesis commences with the words: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." On the second day God was said to have divided between the waters above which He called heaven and the waters below which were called seas. The third day treats of the grass and the trees on the earth, the fourth day of the sun, moon and stars in the heavens, and the remaining days treat again of things created in the seas and on the earth.

In this series of lectures we have shown that the sky or heavens represent or stand for the "kingdom of heaven within you", and the earth and sea stand for the outer man, the man in relation to the world around him. In the Writings of Swedenborg what the Lord called the "kingdom of heaven within you", is called the internal man, and the outer

man, earth, is called the external man.

It is known by every one that a man has a mind and a body. It is also known that a man has two kinds of thought, abstract and concrete: abstract thought, consisting of thought about things of the mind, such as love, wisdom, affections, thoughts, will, understanding, etc., and concrete thought dealing with physical objects.

But the distinction between the internal man represented by heaven, and the external man represented by earth, is still a different distinction. Few know the difference between this inner and outer, or rather internal and external man, because few know what the Lord meant by the "kingdom of heaven within you". The reason that few know what this internal man, this "kingdom of heaven within you" is, is that men's minds are so much directed to the outer world, to accomplishing their purposes in regard to the outer world, in gaining a living, in perfecting machines, in satisfying their material wants, that they seldom turn their minds to what is higher. Even if they go to church

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on Sunday, the service is not an essential thing of their lives in which they center their love and thought. They let the minister do the work, if he really does any work; and even in the churches men's minds are largely centered on things of this world and the kingdom of heaven is largely forgotten.

Therefore if one reads in the *Arcana Coelestia* of Swedenborg where he treats concerning the creation of heaven: "the next thing therefore a man observes in the course of regeneration is that he begins to know that there is an internal man, or that the things of the internal man are goods and truths, which are of the Lord alone," the reading of such a sentence in this day and age means nothing to the average man and woman, for the reason that they have not turned their minds inward and therefore have never observed the things of the internal man, the things of the kingdom of heaven. This inner or internal mind is therefore a blank as far as they are concerned. Now it is in the internal mind in the heavens within one that the sun and moon are created.

In our last lecture it was shown that the Lord God our Saviour Jesus Christ dwells in man in His inner kingdom of heaven, if and when a man has had a new heart and a new spirit created within him. It was also shown that of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, it was said that "His countenance was as the sun shining in his strength," Rev. 1:16, for the reason that from Him go forth love and wisdom, giving man spiritual life in the same way as heat and light go forth from the sun of the world and make natural life possible.

It was also shown that when a man advances to the fourth day or state of his spiritual life, his mind is opened, and he feels and sees that all his love to the Lord and his love

to the neighbor, all his wisdom of life, is from the Lord who is their source, and has His dwelling place in the Sun of life, in the kingdom of heaven within him.

When a man has such a perception of the presence of the Lord God, such a perception of the presence of His love and wisdom within us, he begins to really live, for before such an experience a man can scarcely be said to live; wherefore the things created on the following day are living, animate things, fish and birds.

When man's internal mind is opened, that mind where the love of God and the wisdom of God reign, he begins to live also a different natural life, a different life in relation to his work, his family, his friends, a different life as to what he cares to understand, as to what he wishes or wills.

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The first things created below the heavens after the creation of the sun and moon are said to be "the moving creatures having life that the waters brought forth",—that is fish.

When treating of the second day, it was shown that by the seas and the waters which were called seas, were meant the truths of the Word of God in the memory or external man. A man may love the Word of God as a thing which he has been taught in his childhood, he may love the things he remembers~ the things that he reads, and hears, but there may be nothing truly living or animate in his knowledges. He may not have a living understanding. If, on the other hand, man is given a vision of the Sun of heaven in which the Lord dwells, if he feels that all love and wisdom come from Him, warming the heart and enlightening the spirit, then there begin to be living, animate things in his understanding of the Word of God or the Bible that were not there before. These living things are called fish. These are living knowledges.

There are dead knowledges of religion and living knowledges. Dead knowledges are not of inspiration, of enlightenment or insight, but are merely things that have been learnt. Especially are knowledges dead when there is not a great love that animates them. Living knowledges are all knowledges which a man takes great delight in, not merely to know them but on account of their service to God and man.

On account of this signification of fish, fish are so often spoken of in the New Testament, where we are told of the miracle of the feeding of a great multitude with a few small fishes, of the miraculous draught of fish. Also it is told us that the Lord chose chiefly fishermen for His Apostles to whom He said He would make them fishers of men. If we are willing to believe that the Bible is the Word of God, we will acknowledge that such things are not of mere chance but of Divine Providence, and involve deep secrets, hidden reasons, things of profound wisdom.

We will therefore consider a few of the things involved, first in regard to the feeding of the five thousand:

The disciples had a few loaves of bread and a few small fishes in the wilderness, with which the Lord commanded them to feed the multitude. The Lord called Himself "the bread of life" which had come down from heaven, because bread stands for the Lord's love of the salvation of the human race and the reception of the Good of His love in the heart of man. Therefore bread is given in the Sacrament of the Holy Supper, and the Lord called it His body; for the body of our Lord after His

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resurrection from the dead, the body of our Lord seen in glory, is nothing but the Divine Love in human form, the Divine Love appearing in the form of a man. The few loaves of bread therefore means that with the disciples there was a little of the Divine Good, a little of the Divine Love; the fishes stood for the living knowledges of the Kingdom of God, Of these also they had few. It therefore appeared as if they could not feed the great multitude in the wilderness, the wilderness signifying a state in which there is little that is spiritually alive, a state such as we see around us where most persons are alive in regard to the things of this world, but for the most part dead in regard to the things of the Kingdom of God. The miracle is that if one has even a very little of the love of good, a very little of the living knowledge of religion, these things can be immensely increased and multiplied by the Lord, so that they amply feed the spirit of man.

If man opens himself to the presence of the Lord, the few living knowledges that he has from the Word of God and which he loves and according to which he lives can be miraculously increased by the presence of the Lord.

Another miracle was the miracle of the draught of fishes. The disciples after the resurrection of the Lord had fished all night, the night of ignorance, and had caught nothing. In the morning the Lord appeared and told them to cast their net on the right side of the boat, and the net was filled with great fishes.

The right and left, the right hand and the left hand, are frequently spoken of in the Word of God and stand for the good of love and the truth of wisdom. Man's mind has as it were two halves to it, the intellectual and the voluntary, or what is the same, the will of doing good from a genuine love of God and the neighbor, and an understanding of truth, a genuine wisdom of life. These two halves of the mind are represented by the right and left sides of the body. Wherefore casting the net on the right side of the ship signifies acting from love. If a man will but act from the love of God and the neighbor, his living knowledge of the Word will be immensely increased.

At this time mention will be made of but one other passage in the New Testament in

which a fish is mentioned. The Lord said: "If a man's son asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?" Matt. 7:10. A serpent which is said "to go on its belly" stands for those knowledges which are closest to the earth: that is, the knowledges of science, of experiment, of material objects and the laws governing them. Youth with its natural ideals asks for knowledges of the spirit, things which will inspire it, feed it, but

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the schools for the most part reply by feeding them only serpents, merely scientific knowledges. It is this tragedy of feeding our sons serpents instead of fish which has brought about the tragic state of the world which we see about us, where hardly any food for the spirit, living knowledges of the spirit, are to be found.

It was once asked Swedenborg why the Lord had chosen him, a layman, to manifest to him the internal sense of the Scriptures and not a clergyman or theologian; to which Swedenborg replied that the Lord had chosen fishermen and not priests or scribes to be His Apostles; that he, Swedenborg, also had been a natural fisherman, that is, he had been one who had investigated the wonders of nature as showing forth the wisdom and handiwork of God as manifested in the laws of nature, and had been called to show forth the laws of the kingdom of God as they lay hidden in the Word of God.

Swedenborg up until his fifty-fifth year had been a scientist and philosopher known throughout Europe. We will not stop here to speak of his remarkable writings in relation to philosophy and science, only noting that the spirit that ran throughout his scientific works was one of showing the wonders and the wisdom of God in nature and in the created natural universe.

He said: "A fisherman in the Word denotes a man who investigates and teaches natural truths, and afterwards spiritual truths in a rational manner." *Intercourse of the Soul and the Body*. No. 20.

On the fifth day of creation first the fish were created, then the birds of the heavens. Fish stand for or signify living knowledges in the external or outer thought; birds of the heavens signify truths in the inner or internal thought, things of the inspired rational mind, the thoughts of the spirit which as it were ascend into heaven towards God.

That living thoughts as it were fly in the inner or interior mind of man, thoughts which rise as it were towards heaven, can be felt by one who raises his mind towards God in His heaven. Birds are therefore frequently spoken of in the Word of God. That birds do not stand for material birds is evident from what is said in the Psalms: "Yea, the sparrow hath found an house and the swallow a nest for herself, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God." Ps. 84:3.

But it is especially evident that birds stand for thoughts of the spirit, yea for the Holy Spirit Itself, in the description of

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John the Baptist's baptism of the Lord where we are told of "the spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him". Matt. 3: 16.

If man comes to the fourth state or day of creation, the Lord dwells in as it were the Sun in the kingdom of heaven within man, and man perceives and feels that the Lord is the source of all his love and wisdom, and then living knowledges, represented by fish, begin to live in his mind, especially in the things of the Word of God which are in man's memory. What he has learned begins to be full of animate or living things like fish, and the thoughts of his spirit ascend like birds into the heavens.

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