

THE ANIMALS OF THE BIBLE AND THEIR CORRESPONDENCES

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The Animals of the Bible and Their Correspondences by John Worcester

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JOHN WORCESTER

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AND THEIR

CORRESPONDENCES

BY THE

REV. JOHN WORCESTER

JAMES SPEIRS

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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 intro-

duction 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 co-operate 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.