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Starting Science From God

4: Applications to Theistic Science


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Last of series of four evenings

Titles:

- Feb 5: Connecting Science and Theism (chs 1, 3)
- Feb 12: Discrete Degrees (chs. 4, 5)
- Feb 19: Explaining Theism (Part III)
- **Feb 26: Applications to Theistic Science (Part V)**



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4. Applications to Theistic Science

Topics for today:



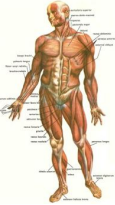
- Life on earth, and its correspondences
- Mental actions
- Mental growth from childhood to old age
- Spiritual growth and religion
- Living after old age: the afterlife
- Further internet resources

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Life on Earth, and correspondences

To outline the functional forms of:

- Wisdom and Light from the Sun
- Ecology of plants and rationality
- Ecology of energy and love
- The five senses
- Human body as a whole

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Wisdom and Light from the Sun

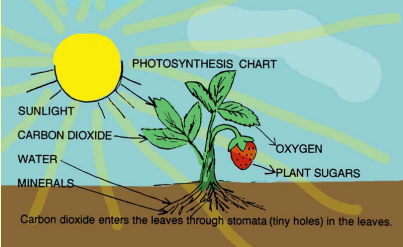
- God is the source of wisdom to see mental things
 - We do not see wisdom,
 - But we see things in the light of wisdom
 - Actually we see wisdom filtered by specific ideas, and reflected into our understanding
- This is like sunlight from the sun
 - We do not see sunlight,
 - But we see things in the light of sunlight
 - Actually we see sunlight filtered by specific objects, and reflected into our eyes
- ‘Eyes’ correspond to the direct use of wisdom
 - Insight / illumination / ‘seeing truth’ / etc




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Ecology of Plants and Rationality

- Sunlight is also received by plants
- Wisdom is also received by our first understanding



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Ecology of Plants and Rationality

- Sunlight is also received by plants
 - Photosynthesis uses light to give oxygen
 - Oxygen spreads in our atmosphere
 - We breath in oxygen with our lungs
 - Oxygen is carried around body in blood stream
 - Oxygen combines with food to produce energy
 - Energy produces action.
- Wisdom is also received by our first understanding
 - This uses wisdom to give rational awareness
 - Rational awareness spreads in spiritual air
 - We receive rational awareness in a second understanding within us
 - Rational awareness is carried around in us by mobile love
 - Rational awareness combines with stored loves to produce another degree of desire
 - Desire produces action

Conclude: plants correspond to a first rational understanding

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Ecology of Love and Energy

- We also receive energy from the Sun
- This warms the earth
- Plants convert some of their energy to fruit
- Animal eat & digest fruit-energy for living
- This is carried around body by blood, moved by means of the heart
- We also receive love from God
- This enlivens creation
- First rational converts love into processed good
- Affections ingest and using these in their life
- These are moved around spiritual body by an inner love, moved by inmost love of good for good use

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The Five Senses



Perceptions by senses:

- **Eyes:** light from the distance
- **Ears:** variations in the air caused by lungs of others
- **Nose:** compounds in the air
- **Taste:** compounds being swallowed and digested
- **Touch:** other bodies very close

Spiritual perceptions

- **Eyes:** wisdom from the distance
- **Ears:** local variations from rational forms from others
- **Nose:** good/evil in the local rationality
- **Taste:** good/evil in good being swallowed and digested
- **Touch:** other persons very close

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Human body as a whole

- **Left-right symmetry** to represent equal reception of love and wisdom, to be combined
- **Brain:** reception & stabilization of higher levels
- **Lungs:** reception & modulation of local rational environment
- **Digestive system:** swallowing & digestion of local loves
- **Senses:** reception & detection of forms (ideas) far & near.
- **Heart:** initial power to circulate loves and rationality in body
- **Skeleton:** general firm principles that keep our life in shape
- **Nervous system:** spreading influence of controlling ideas
- **Skin:** the outmost levels that contain & stabilize inner forms
- **Hair:** beyond the outermost levels > physical actions & power
- **Feet:** our outer levels that determine our spiritual place

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Beginning Theistic Science

- These ideas are just the beginning of a more complete Theistic Science.
- We need more scientific details and predictions about
 - Connections between mind and brain
 - Functions of neural networks
 - Distribution of mind in all the body
 - Mechanisms of sensation and perception

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Mental Actions

- All mental action depends on combinations of thought and feelings:
 - of Love and Wisdom (if in spiritual)
 - of thoughts and desires (if in mental)
 - cognitive and affective processes (in psychology)
- Metaphor: a kind of 'marriage' of equals
- Eventually mental actions produce physical actions.

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Mental Growth

- Mental growth is the awakening of new degrees above the present consciousness
- Depends first on new actions that provide framework for possible new receptions
- The actions are ultimately physical.
 - Physical actions provide permanent changes
- Then new thoughts and affections can be more persistently present & effective.

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Spiritual growth (bad ideas)

- **Elevated, expanded, rotated, vibrated [etc.] consciousness:** Expanding our consciousness even to the whole universe and over all time, or making it run fast or slow, does not show us what is spiritual, let alone help us regenerate.
- **Belief:** since this is just in the understanding and does not change loves in the will.
- **Knowledge, even of truths (wisdom):** knowledge of what is true, even of what is good, is no use unless it is used to reform the will. It is 'faith alone' to think that only knowledge is efficacious.
- **Blind obedience:** obedience to truth is fruitful, but blind obedience has no input from wisdom in the understanding.
- **Good intentions or love:** love needs wisdom in order to act for good purposes. Good intentions 'mean well' but often stray through lack of insight, even lack of common sense.
- **Suffering:** suffering by itself is something that happens to us not something we do. There are many causes of suffering (natural and human); what is spiritually significant is how we respond to these.

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Reminder:

Ennead (set of 9) of sub-levels

| 1: Spiritual degree love in the spirit | 2: Mental degree thoughts in mind | 3: Physical degree actions in the body |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| Love of loving: 1.1 | Thoughts of loves: 2.1 | Effects from ends: 3.1 |
| Love of thoughts: 1.2 | Thoughts of thoughts: 2.2 | Effects from thoughts: 3.2 |
| Love of actions: 1.3 | Thoughts of actions: 2.3 | Effects from actions: 3.3 |

| Spiritual | Mental | Physical |
|---|---|---|
| Love of loving: 1.1 Celestial heaven | Thoughts of loves: 2.1 Interior rational | Effects from ends: 3.1 Pregeometric physics |
| Love of thoughts: 1.2 Spiritual heaven | Thoughts of thoughts: 2.2 Scientific rational | Effects from thoughts: 3.2 Virtual physical processes |
| Love of actions: 1.3 Spiritual-natural heaven | Thoughts of actions: 2.3 Exterior mind | Effects from actions: 3.3 Actual physical processes |

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Mental growth: childhood to old age

Middle and old age
25 – years
Gowan : generative 25-40
: ego-integrity 40 –
Swedenborg: regeneration

Adolescence and youth
10 – 25 years
Piaget: operational 9-12
formal 12-18
Gowan: creative 18-25

Childhood: 0 – 8 years
Piaget: sensorimotor
pre-operational

Consider just the mind:

| Mental | |
|---|----------------------|
| Thoughts of loves: 2.1 Interior rational | Wisdom |
| Thoughts of thoughts: 2.2 Scientific rational | Understanding |
| Thoughts of actions: 2.3 Exterior mind | Knowledge |

There are 3 levels in **each of these**, that we could discuss

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Spiritual Growth: out of Egypt

- Serious spiritual growth begins in adult life
 - Previously in 2.2 “scientific rational”, like Egypt
 - Now need to ‘open up’ to allow in spiritual light, and learn about love (day 1)
 - Then can be regenerated, by temptations, to make an interior rational mind (2.1x, days 2,3,4)
- Spiritual growth is completed in the afterlife
 - Moving into the 1.x spiritual degrees (days 5,6,7)
 - Finding one’s best place among the spiritual loves

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7 days of creation

| Stage | External Representation | Internal process | |
|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------|
| Initial state | Without form and void | No spiritual form | 2.2 |
| First state | Light and Darkness | Knowing good & true are higher | →2.1 |
| Second state | Heavens and Earth | Separating source from oneself | 2.13 |
| Third state | Tender grass, fruit trees | Acting from ideas, not heart | 2.12 |
| Fourth state | Sun and moon | Love & insight begin in internal | 2.11 |
| Fifth state | Whales in sea, birds in air | Deep principles & rising thoughts | 1.3 |
| Sixth state | Living soul, image of God | Actions from insight: spiritual | 1.2 |
| Seventh state | Day of rest, likeness of God | Actions from love: celestial | 1.1 |

Explained by Emanuel Swedenborg
in Volume 1 of “Arcana Coelestia” (“Secrets of Heaven”)

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The Afterlife: living after old age

- During our life, we are building up
 - actions in the **physical degree**
 - thoughts and affections in the **mental degree**
- At death, we lose body in the physical degree
 - How can we still function, with only love & mind?
 - What actions still keep our loves = personality?

| Spiritual | Mental | Physical |
|--|--|--|
| Love of loving: 1.1 Celestial heaven | Thoughts of loves: 2.1 Interior rational | Effects from ends: 3.1 Pregeometric physics |
| Love of thoughts: 1.2 Spiritual heaven | Thoughts of thoughts: 2.2 Scientific rational | Effects from thoughts: 3.2 Virtual physical processes |
| Love of actions: 1.3 Spiritual-natural heaven | Thoughts of actions: 2.3 Exterior mind | Effects from actions: 3.3 Actual physical processes |

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Determining the Afterlife

- What seems to be important here:
 - spiritual loves (1.1)
 - interior rational ideas/doctrine (2.1)
 - ‘inner physical’ substances (3.1 = ‘limbus’) (?)
- Thoughts and sensations follow from the loves
 - Not determined by present physical events any more

| Spiritual | Mental | Physical |
|--|--|--|
| Love of loving: 1.1 Celestial heaven | Thoughts of loves: 2.1 Interior rational | Effects from ends: 3.1 Pregeometric physics |
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What to do in the Afterlife?

- Afterlife people have love and minds, but no physical body.
 - Earth people have minds and body, but spiritual loves only gradually developing
 - Would be frustrating in afterlife to have love and ideas, but no possibility of ultimate physical action!
- So a clever combination:
- Afterlife people receive spiritual loves and generate new ideas
 - Earth people receive new ideas, and then act physically.
- That is:
- the spiritual worlds supply the first stages, and we on earth carry it on to ultimate physical actions.
 - We all do something useful, and everyone enjoys the process.

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The End

We have discussed:

1. New way of connecting God and theism
2. New ideas of cause and discrete degrees
3. Using discrete degrees to understand Theism
4. Application to human life and growth

Lots more possible details for

- physics, psychology, spiritual life.
- religion, scriptures, history of religions, the incarnation, ...

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Further Resources

Websites by Ian Thompson: www.ianthompson.org

- Beginning Theistic Science, for the book “Starting Science From God”, at www.beginningtheisticscience.com
- Theistic Science at www.theisticscience.org
- Swedenborg’s writings at www.e-swedenborg.com
- Articles about Swedenborg at www.swedenborgstudy.com
- Bible Meanings at www.biblemeanings.info
- ‘7 days of creation’ at 7daysofcreation.info
- Mind & body at www.newdualism.org
- Physical and multilevel causes at www.generative-science.org

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