

## Correspondences 2022 Notes.

**AC 2988:** That some idea may be formed of representations and correspondences, it is only necessary to reflect on the things of the mind, i.e., of the thought and the will. These things so beam forth from the face that they are manifest in its expression; especially is this the case with the affections, the more interior of which are seen from and in the eyes. When the things of the face act as a one with things of the mind, they are said to correspond, and they are correspondences; and the very expressions of the face represent, and are representations. The case is similar with all that is expressed by the gestures of the body, and with all the acts produced by the muscles; for it is well known that all these things take place according to what the person is thinking and willing. The gesture and actions themselves, which are of the body, represent the things of the mind, and are representations; and that they are in agreement, they are correspondences.

**AC 2990:** It is also known, or may be known, that there is a spiritual world, and also a natural world. In the universal sense, the spiritual world is where spirits and angels dwell; and the natural world is where people dwell. In particular, there is a spiritual world and a natural world with every person; his internal person being to him a spiritual world, and his external person being to him a natural world. The things that flow in from the spiritual world and are presented in the natural world, are in general representations; and in so far as they agree, they are correspondences.

**AC 2998:** That such correspondences exist has become so familiar to me in the course of years that hardly anything can be more so; though the fact itself is such that man does not know of its existence, nor believes that he has any connection with the spiritual world; when yet all his connection is from this correspondence; and without this connection neither himself nor any part of him could subsist for a moment; for all his subsistence is from it.

**HH 89:** What correspondence is: the whole natural world corresponds to the spiritual world, and not merely the natural world in general, but also every particular of it; and as a consequence everything in the natural world is called a correspondent. It must be understood that the natural world springs from and has permanent existence from the spiritual world, precisely like an effect from an effective cause. All that is spread out under the sun is what is called the natural world, and all things that derive their substance therefrom belong to that world. But the spiritual world is heaven; and all things in the heavens belong to that world.

**HH 90:** Since man is both a heaven and a world in least form after the image of the greatest, there is in him both a spiritual and a natural world. The interior things that belong to his mind, and that have relation to the understanding and will, constitute his spiritual world; while the exterior things that belong to his body, and that have relation to its senses and activities, constitutes his natural world. Consequently, everything in his natural world (that is, in his body and its senses and activities), that has existence from his spiritual world (that is, from his mind and its understanding and will) is called a correspondent.

**AC 6057:** In man the spiritual world is conjoined with the natural world, and therefore in him the spiritual world flows into the natural world in so vivid a manner that he can notice it, provided he pays attention. This influx and conjunction is at this day unknown, for the reason that each and all things are attributed to nature, and nothing is known about what is spiritual, which at this day is so far set aside that when it is thought of it appears as nothing. (cf. AC 69)

**DSS 55, 56:** The doctrine of genuine truth can be drawn in full from the sense of the letter of the Word, because in this the Word is like a man clothed whose face and hands are bare. All things that concern man's life, and consequently his salvation, are bare; but the rest are clothed. In many places also where they are clothed they shine through their clothing more and more clearly in proportion as they multiplied by a love for them, and are ranged in order by this love. But this also is by means of doctrine.

It might be believed that the doctrine of genuine truth could be procured by means of the spiritual sense of the Word which is furnished through a knowledge of correspondences. But doctrine is not procured by means of that sense, but is only lighted up and corroborated. For as said before (n. 26), no one comes into the spiritual sense of the Word by means of correspondences unless he is first in genuine truths from doctrine. If a man is not first in genuine truths he may falsify the Word by means of some correspondences with which he is acquainted, by connecting them together and interpreting them so as to confirm that which cleaves to his mind from some principle previously received. Moreover the spiritual sense of the Word is not given any one except by the Lord alone, and it is guarded by Him as heaven is guarded, for heaven is in it. It is better therefore for man to study the Word in the sense of the letter; from this alone is doctrine furnished.

*(n. 26 involves a vision of the Word: two sacks of silver guarded by two angels, situated in a manger in a stable; also, modest maidens, a chaste wife, two little children, and then a harlot and a dead horse.)*

### **GFD: Tools for a Swedenborgian Exegesis of Scripture**

1. Perception of the series, or context. (Initial event, setting, or sequence sets the “meaning” of subsequent developments.)
2. Note the affections or “feeling tones” of the characters of the story, as well as those of the reader (cf. *lectio divina*).
3. What results must be in accord with or compatible with fundamental doctrine.
4. Check for overall coherence and consistencies within both the literal and spiritual sense.
5. Meaning should be vivid and alive.
6. Meaning should be pertinent to life situations.
7. There should be a basic unity (not strict identity) with the literal story.

### **GFD: Universal Principles**

Things which are true on a spiritual level cannot be grasped without awareness of the following principles:

1. All phenomena in the universe go back to the good and the true, and to the union of these two, for their very existence.
2. There are intention and discernment within a person, intention being what receives the good, and discernment being what receives the true. Everything in a person goes back to these two capacities (faculties) and their union, just as everything (in the universe) goes back to the good and the true and their bonding.
3. There is an inner and outer person, as distinguishable from each other as heaven and the world; yet they must constitute a single being if a person is to be truly a person.
4. Heaven’s light is the light the inner person is involved in; the world’s light is the light the outer person is involved in. Heaven’s light is the Divine-True itself, to source of all intelligence.
5. There exists between the elements of the inner person and those of the outer person, a correspondence. As a result, elements from either side become perceptible in different guise, different even to the point that they are unrecognizable without the aid of a knowledge of correspondences.

## DOLE: Correspondence is the Language of Creation

Language: not just words, but pictures, gestures, and more: anything that communicates meaning through symbols and images. And language can always be either understood or misunderstood.

“The ultimate reality of this universe is purpose, or more precisely, purposeful love, united with infinite wisdom as its means. This love ‘projects’ itself into forms envisioned by its wisdom, at distances – or ‘levels’ – increasingly remote from itself, with the resultant creations increasingly inert or decreasingly receptive of life; and in this process a certain representation of the source is maintained on each successive level of spirit, mind, and body. Thus the substantiality of the universe, and its awesome mass, or energy, reflect the reality and vitality of infinite love; while the order of the universe, on cosmic or atomic scales, reflects the scope and perfection of infinite wisdom.

“The central purpose of this creation, which is the source of all lesser purposes, is self-giving – the sharing of love with beings capable of receiving it willingly and being blessed by it. This purpose is not just a surface characteristic of love, it *is* love itself.

“We live in a universe, then, that reflects its source but, as the last of a series of increasingly remote creations, it reflects the source only dimly. . . . Every step, every level, bears a necessary resemblance to the one preceding it. Every level is the expression or embodiment of the purposes of the one immediately preceding it, and all these purposes relate finally to the central purpose, which is love. Every level is the effect of the preceding one and the instrumental cause of the one that follows, with infinite love as the first cause of them all.” (Emanation)

Consider the sun, or the human body: “Thus, nature – all its phenomena perceptible to our bodily senses, all its expressions in our material environment – is the *language* by which the infinite expresses itself to the finite: the language of creation.”

Why can we not read this language easily or clearly?

1. It is not evident or “necessary,” it is ambiguous, and requires our free assent. And this “free assent” can only come as the result of spiritual growth, with all of its struggles and sacrifices. (Our *proprium*, already in place before we start to seek meaning, clouds our understanding; it is this that must be removed before we can see clearly enough to understand the language of creation. See Nicoll)

2. It is actually common and easy to read the language of creation: we do it all the time with analogies and metaphors.