

writings give a perfect exposition of the Word of God, and afford an infallible principle of interpretation, or *exegesis*, by which each passage of Scripture is seen in its own light, and all in the light of Heaven. The spirit is revealed through the letter, and every truth is subject to the spiritual test. There is no escape from their conclusions; the reasoning is irresistible, and the honest mind yields its ready assent to these laws of Scriptural interpretation.

This is strong language, you may say; but it is not so strong as the subject requires, because the evidences are higher than may be contained in any mere expressions of human thought. What do you think of a principle of interpretation which shall explain every chapter and verse in the Word of God by one uniform rule—which shall read out to you, for instance, in plain and intelligible language, the meaning of each and every syllable in the first ten chapters of Genesis, and make the Apocalypse itself translucent from a Divine source—that book which is *else* darker than the midnight sky? The difference between the expositions of Swedenborg and that of the reigning Church is as the difference between the eagle flying in the air and the serpent crawling upon the ground.

Do you ask *how* the word is explained? I answer, by the use of that language in which it was first written, and the knowledge of which was suffered to lapse in the order of Divine Providence, but is now again restored, through a messenger chosen by the Lord for that purpose. This language is literally Divine; it is the expression of the Divine Mind from all eternity, and was read and understood by men before books and letters were the medium of thought and affection. It is the language written all over the face of creation, where every object is the expression of a Divine thought and of a Divine emotion. This book of natural things contains all possible knowledge, to those who have learned to read; its letters are the indefinite things of all creation, and their combinations are infinite.

Originally this was the *only* Word of God, and it was read fluently and at sight, by the first race of men, called Adam. They had an instinctive perception of what each thing in Nature signified, or, in other words, what was its *name* or quality. Every object in creation, from the dust under their feet to the sun, moon, and stars over their heads, had a distinctive meaning; it was a *Word* of God, and had its application to some thought or emotion of the human mind; there was a correspondence between the external and the internal man, and the whole mind was effigied or imaged in the visible creation. The Creation, therefore, represented man; and hence he was called the Microcosm, or the universe in miniature, because he partook, as it were, of all its parts.

When man departed from innocence, *this* intuitive perception of the name or quality of things was lost, by degrees, as he descended lower and lower in the scale of being, till he finally sunk into that grossness of the senses which prompted him to worship the objects of Nature themselves, instead of considering them as the representatives of heavenly things. At this period the Word was *written*, and the created word was transcribed into the written word; and though embracing a continuous history, it was *so* written, that all things