

# "Our Fellow Creatures"

*The Present Truth* – April 20, 1899

E. J. Waggoner

"Through created things thrills one pulse of life from the great heart of God." We are told in the Book of Proverbs that "out of the heart are the issues of life," and you know that every time your heart beats it sends the blood pulsing through your whole body, carrying life to every part of it.

So from the heart of God comes the life that supplies the whole creation, and pulsates through all the things that He has made. It is His life that

"Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees."

His Spirit is in the air, the breath of life to all His creatures. All breathe in the same air, the same breath, and so share one life,—the life of God.

We sometimes think of the animals, the birds, the fishes, and the plants, as altogether different beings from ourselves. But the wise King Solomon, speaking of animals and man, tells us that "they have all one breath," one life.

So all these other creatures are only different forms of the same life that we share. They as our fellow-creatures; they all spring from the same Father as ourselves, and live by breathing in His life, just as we do.

If we really love God, we shall love everything in which we see God, everything that shares with us the life of God,—even the grass beneath our feet, the flowers, the trees, the birds, the animals, as well as our human brothers and sisters.

Love delights in the happiness of all things. So as we learn to see God's life in all, and to love them because of it, we shall delight more and more in seeing them happy. The life that we have in common with them will be a bond of sympathy and love between us, so that we shall be able to understand them better,—to understand their wants and to supply them, and to learn the lessons that God is teaching us by them.

All the animal creation God made for man, and gave to him to rule and to have dominion over. In this way man would be always learning lessons of love, as God should use him as the channel through which to shed His kindness and love upon them. And besides this it must have added directly to man's own happiness, to be the instrument used by God to bring blessing and happiness to all His other works.

"There is no fear in love," and so man and all the animals were perfectly free and fearless in the beginning. But when man lost the spirit of love out of his heart, the animals began to fear and flee from him, and to try to defend themselves from him, so that he was led to fear them also.

This fear of man that most of the animals have, makes it hard for him to get near to them in their natural state, to find out much about them, and the wonderful lessons they teach.

Thoreau, an American naturalist, shut himself away from all human society in the lonely depths of a wood for two years and a half, so that he might study the works of God around him,—the creatures that made their home there.

We are told of him that “he knew how to sit immoveable, a part of the rock he rested on, until the bird, the reptile, the fish, which had retired from him, should come back and resume its habits—nay, moved by curiosity should come to him and watch him.”

The birds in Walden Woods would come at his call and perch upon his arms and shoulders. The snakes coiled, round at legs, and fishes swam between his hands and even the foxes, we are told, would run to him for protection from the hunter.

This was because he was so gentle and harmless, and had studied these animals so well that he was able to make them understand that he would not hurt them. So they did not fear him, nor try to hurt him.

In the good time that is coming, when God shall “make all things new,” all the “new creatures” that live in His “new earth” will be holy and harmless. Perfect love, the perfect life of God, will cast out all fear, and unite all living creatures in one great brotherhood.