

Jakob Böhme

*The Signature
of All Things*

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The First Chapter.

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How that all whatever is spoken of God without the Knowledge of the Signature is dumb and without Understanding; and that in the Mind of Man the Signature lies very exactly composed according to the Essence of all Essences.

1. ALL whatever is spoken, written, or taught of God, without the Knowledge of the Signature is dumb and void of Understanding; for it proceeds only from an historical Conjecture, from the Mouth of another, wherein the Spirit without Knowledge is dumb, but if the Spirit opens to him the Signature, then he understands the Speech of another; and further he understands how the Spirit has manifested and revealed itself (out of the Essence through the Principle) in the Sound with the Voice. For though I see one to speak, teach, preach, and write of God, and though I hear and read the same, yet this is not sufficient for me to understand him; but if his Sound and Spirit out of his Signature and Similitude enter into my own Similitude, and imprint his Similitude into mine, then I may understand him really and fundamentally, be it either spoken or written, if he has the Hammer that can strike my Bell.

2. By this we know, that all human Properties proceed from one; that they all have but one only Root and Mother; otherwise one Man could not understand another in the Sound, for with the Sound or Speech the Form notes and

imprints itself into the Similitude of another; a like Tone or Sound catches and moves another, and in the Sound the Spirit imprints its own Similitude, which it has conceived in the Essence, and brought to Form in the Principle.

3. So that in the Word may be understood in what the Spirit has conceived, either in Good or Evil; and with this Signature he enters into another Man's Form, and awakens also in the other such a Form in the Signature; so that both Forms mutually assimilate [assimilate] together in one Form, and then there is one Comprehension, one Will, one Spirit, and also one Understanding.

4. And then secondly we understand, that the Signature or Form is no Spirit, but the Receptacle, Container, or Cabinet of the Spirit, wherein it lies; for the Signature stands in the Essence, and is as a Lute that lies still, and is indeed a dumb Thing that is neither heard or understood, but if it be played upon, then its Form is understood, in what Form and Tune it stands, and according to what Note it is set. Thus likewise the Signature of Nature in its Form is a dumb Essence; it is as a prepared Instrument of Music, upon which the Will's Spirit plays; what Strings he touches, they sound according to their Property.

5. In the human Mind the Signature lies most artificially composed, according to the Essence of all Essences; and Man wants nothing but the wise Master that can strike his Instrument, which is the true Spirit of the high Might of Eternity; if that be quickened in Man, that it stirs and acts in the Center of the Mind, then it plays on the Instrument of the human Form, and even then the Form is uttered with the Sound in the Word: As his Instrument was set in the Time of

his Incarnation, so it Sounds, and so is his Knowledge, the inward manifests itself in the Sound of the Word, for that is the Mind's natural Knowledge of itself.

6. Man has indeed all the Forms of all the three Worlds lying in him; for he is a complete Image of God, or of the Being of all Beings; only the Order is placed in him at this Incarnation; for there are three Work-masters in him which prepare his Form [or Signature,] viz. the three-fold Fiat, according to the three Worlds, and they are in Contest about the Form, and the Form is figured according to the Contest; which of the Masters holds the predominant Rule, and obtains it in the Essence, according to that his Instrument is tuned, and the other lie hid, and come behind with their Sound, as it plainly shews itself.

7. So soon as Man is born into this World, his Spirit plays upon his Instrument, so that his innate genuine Form [or Signature] in Good or Evil is seen by his Words and Conversation; for as his Instrument Sounds, accordingly the Senses and Thoughts proceed from the Essence of the Mind, and so the external Spirit of the Will is carried in its Behaviour, as is to be seen both in Men and Beasts; that there is a great Difference in the Procreation, that one Brother and Sister does not as the other.

8. Further we are to know, that though one Fiat thus keeps the upper Hand, and figures the Form according to itself, that yet the other two give their Sound, if their Instrument be but played upon; as it is seen that many a Man, and also many a Beast, though it is very much inclined either to Good or Evil, yet it is moved either to Evil or Good by a contrary Tune, and often lets its inbred Signature [or

Figure] fall, when the contrary Tune is played upon his hidden Lute or Form: As we see that an Evil Man is often moved by a good Man to repent of, and cease from his Iniquity, when the good Man touches and strikes his hidden Instrument with his meek and loving Spirit.

9. And thus also it happens to the good Man, that when the wicked Man strikes his hidden Instrument with the Spirit of his Wrath, that then the Form of Anger is stirred up also in the good Man, and the one is set against the other, that so one Might be the Cure and Healer of the other. For as the vital Signature, that is, as the Form of Life is figured in the Time of the Fiat at the Conception, even so is its natural Spirit; for it takes its Rise out of the Essence of all the three Principles, and such a Will, it acts and manifests out of its Property.

10. But now the Will may be broken, for when a stronger comes, and raises his inward Signature with his introduced Sound and Will's-Spirit, then its upper Dominion loses the Power, Right, and Authority, which we see in the powerful Influence of the Sun, how that by its Strength it qualifies a bitter and sour Fruit, turning it into a Sweetness and Pleasantness; in like Manner how a good Man corrupts among Evil Company, and also how that a good Herb cannot sufficiently shew its real genuine Virtue in a bad Soil; for in the good Man the hidden Evil Instrument is awakened, and in the Herb a contrary Essence is received from the Earth, so that often the Good is changed into an Evil, and an Evil into a Good.

11. And now observe, as it stands in the Power and Predominance of the Quality, so it is signed and marked

externally in its outward Form, Signature, or Figure; Man in his Speech, Will and Behavior, also of the Form of the Members which he has, and must use to that Signature, his inward Form is noted in the Form of his Face; and thus also is a Beast, an Herb, and the Trees; every Thing as it is inwardly [in its innate Virtue and Quality] so it is outwardly signed; and though it falls out; that often a Thing is changed from Evil into Good, and from Good into Evil, yet it has its external Character, that the Good or Evil [that is, the change] may be known.

12. For Man is known herein by his daily Practice, also by his Course and Discourse; for the Upper Instrument, which is most strongly drawn, is always played upon: Thus also it is with a Beast that is wild, but when it is over-awed and tamed, and brought to another Property, it does not easily shew its first innate Form, unless it be stirred up, and then it breaks forth, and appears above all other Forms.

13. Thus likewise it is with the Herbs of the Earth; if an Herb be transplanted out of a bad Soil into a good, then it soon gets a stronger Body, and a more pleasant Smell and Power, and shews the inward Essence externally; and there's nothing that is created or born in Nature, but it also manifests its internal Form externally, for the internal continually labours or Works itself forth to Manifestation: As we know it in the Power and Form of this World, how the one only Essence has manifested itself with the external Birth in the Desire of the Similitude, how it has manifested itself in so many Forms and shapes, which we see and know in the Stars and Elements, likewise in the living Creatures, and also in the Trees and Herbs.

14. Therefore the greatest Understanding lies in the Signature, wherein Man (viz., the Image of the greatest Virtue) may not only learn to know himself, but therein also he may learn to know the Essence of all Essences; for by the external Form of all Creatures, by their Instigation, Inclination and Desire, also by their Sound, Voice and Speech which they utter, the hidden Spirit is known; for Nature has given to every Thing its Language, according to its Essence and Form, for out of the Essence the Language or Sound arises, and the Fiat of that Essence Forms the Quality of the Essence in the Voice or Virtue which it sends forth, to the Animals in the Sound, and to the Essentials in Smell, Virtue, and Form.

15. Every Thing has its Mouth to Manifestation; and this is the Language of Nature, whence every Thing speaks out of its Property, and continually manifests, declares, and sets forth itself for what it is good or profitable; for each Thing manifests its Mother, which thus gives the Essence and the Will to the Form.

The Second Chapter.

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Opposition and Combat in the Essence of all Essences, whereby the Ground of the Antipathy and Sympathy in Nature may be seen, and also the Corruption and Cure of each Thing.

1. SEEING then there are so many and divers Forms, that the one always produces and affords out of its Property a Will different in one from another, we herein understand the Contrariety and Combat in the Being of all Beings, how that one does oppose, Poison, and kill another, that is, overcome its Essence, and the Spirit of the Essence, and introduces it into another Form, whence Sickness and Pains arise, when one Essence destroys another.

2. And then we understand herein the Cure, how the one heals another, and brings it to Health, and if this were not, there were no Nature, but an eternal Stillness, and no Will; for the contrary Will makes the Motion, and the Original of the Seeking, that the opposite Sound seeks the Rest, and yet in the Seeking it only elevates and more enkindles itself.

3. And we are to understand how the Cure of each Thing consists in the Assimilate; for in the Assimilate arises the Satisfaction of the Will, viz. its highest Joy, for each Thing desires a Will of its Likeness, and by the contrary Will it is discomfited; but if it obtains a Will of its Likeness, it rejoices in the Assimilate, and therein falls into Rest, and the Enmity is turned into Joy.

4. For the Eternal Nature has produced nothing in its Desire, except a Likeness out of itself; and if there were not an everlasting Mixing, there would be an eternal Peace in Nature, but so Nature would not be revealed and made manifest, in the Combat it becomes manifest; so that each Thing elevates itself, and would get out of the Combat into the still Rest, and so it runs to and fro, and thereby only awakens and stirs up the Combat.

5. And we find clearly in the Light of Nature, that there is no better Help and Remedy for this Opposition, and that it has no higher Cure than the Liberty, that is, the Light of Nature, which is the Desire of the Spirit.

6. And then we find that the Essence cannot be better remedied than with the Assimilate; for the Essence is a Being, and its Desire is after Being: Now every Taste desires only its like, and if it obtains it, then its Hunger is satisfied, appeased and eased, and it ceases to Hunger, and rejoices in itself, whereby the Sickness falls into a Rest in itself; for the Hunger of the Contrariety ceases to Work.

7. Seeing now that Man's Life consists in three Principles, viz. in a three-fold Essence, and has also a three-fold Spirit out of the Property of each Essence, viz. first, according to the eternal Nature, according to the Fire's Property; and secondly, according to the Property of the eternal Light and divine Essentiality; and thirdly, according to the Property of the outward World: Thereupon we are to consider the Property of this three-fold Spirit, and also of this three-fold Essence and Will; how each Spirit with its Essence introduces itself into Strife and Sickness, and what its Cure and Remedy is.

8. We understand, that without Nature there is an eternal Stillness and Rest, viz. the Nothing; and then we understand that an Eternal Will arises in the Nothing, to introduce the Nothing into Something, that the Will might find, feel and behold itself

9. For in the Nothing the Will would not be manifest to itself, wherefore we know that the Will seeks itself, and finds itself in itself, and its seeking is a Desire, and its finding is the Essence of the Desire, wherein the Will finds itself.

10. It finds nothing except only the Property of the Hunger, which is itself, which it draws into itself, that is, draws itself into itself, and finds itself in itself; and its Attraction into itself makes an Overshadowing or Darkness in it, which is not in the Liberty, viz. in the Nothing; for the Will of the Liberty overshadows itself with the Essence of the Desire, for the Desire makes Essence and not the Will.

11. Now that the Will must be in Darkness is its Contrariety, and it conceives in itself another Will to go out from the Darkness again into the Liberty, viz. into the Nothing, and yet it cannot reach the Liberty from without itself, for the Desire goes outwards, and causes Source and Darkness; therefore the Will (understand the re-conceived Will) must enter inwards, and yet there is no Separation.

12. For in itself before the Desire is the Liberty, viz. the Nothing, and the Will may not be a Nothing, for it desires to manifest in the Nothing; and yet no Manifestation can be effected, except only through the Essence of the Desire; and the more the re-conceived Will desires Manifestation, the more strongly and eagerly the Desire draws into itself and makes in itself three Forms, viz. the Desire, which is

astringent, and makes Hardness, for it is an Enclosing, when Coldness arises, and the Attraction causes a Compunction, and stirring in the Hardness, an Enmity against the attracted Hardness; the Attraction is the second Form, and a Cause of Motion and Life, and stirs itself in the Astringency and Hardness, which the Hardness, viz. the Enclosing, cannot endure, and therefore it attracts more eagerly to hold the Compunction, and yet the Compunction is thereby only the stronger

13. Thus the Compunction willeth upwards, and whirls crossways, and yet cannot effect it, for the Hardness, viz. the Desire stays and detains it, and therefore it stands like a Triangle, and transverted Orb, which (seeing it cannot remove from the Place) becomes Wheeling, whence arises the Mixture in the Desire, viz. the Essence, or Multiplicity of the Desire; for the Turning makes a continual Confusion and Contrition, whence the Anguish, viz. the Pain, the third Form (or Sting of Sense) arises.

14. But seeing the Desire, viz. the Astringency becomes only the more strong thereby, (for from the Stirring arises the Wrath and Nature, viz. the Motion) the first Will to the Desire is made wholly austere and a Hunger, for it is in a hard compunctive dry Essence, and also cannot get rid and quit of it, for itself makes the Essence, and likewise possesses it, for thus it finds itself now out of Nothing in the Something, and the Something is yet its contrary Will, for it is an Unquietness, and the Free-Will is a Stillness.

15. This is now the Original of Enmity, that Nature opposes the Free-Will, and a Thing is at Enmity in itself; and here we understand the Center of Nature with three Forms,

in the Original, viz. in the first Principle, it is Spirit; in the second it is Love, and in the third Principle Essence, and these three Forms are called in the third Principle Sulphur, Mercury, and Sal.

16. Understand it thus; Sul is in the first Principle the Free-Will, or the Lubet in the Nothing to Something, it is in the Liberty without Nature; Phur is the Desire of the free Lubet, and makes in itself, in the Phur, viz. in the Desire, an Essence, and this Essence is austere by Reason of the Attraction, and introduces itself into three Forms (as is above mentioned) and so forward into the fourth Form, viz. into the Fire; in the Phur the Original of the eternal and also external Nature is understood, for the Hardness is a Mother of the Sharpness of all Essences, and a Preserver of all Essences; out of the Sul, viz. out of the Lubet of the Liberty, the dark Anguish becomes a shining Light; and in the third Principle, viz. in the outward Kingdom, Sul is the Oil of Nature, wherein Life burns, and every Thing grows.

17. But now the Phur, viz. the Desire, is not divided from Sul, it is one Word, one Original also, and one Essence, but it severs itself into two Properties, viz. into Joy and Sorrow, Light and Darkness; for it makes two Worlds, viz. a dark Fire-World in the Austerity, and a Light Fire-World in the Lubet of the Liberty; for the Lubet of the Liberty is the only Cause that the Fire shines, for the Original Fire is dark and black, for in the shining of the Fire in the Original the Deity is understood, and in the dark Fire, viz. in the Anguish-Source, the Original of Nature is understood, and herein we do further understand the Cure.

18. The Source is the Cure of the free Lubet, viz. of the still Eternity; for the Stillness finds itself alive therein, it brings itself through the Anguish-Source into Life, viz. into the Kingdom of Joy, Namely that the Nothing is become an eternal Life, and has found itself, which cannot be in the Stillness.

19. Secondly, We find, that the Sul, viz. the Lubet of the Liberty, is the Curer of the Desire, viz. of the anxious Nature; for the Lustre of the Liberty does again (from the enkindled Fire out of Nature) shine in the dark Anguish, and fills or satiates the Anguish with the Liberty, whereby the Wrath extinguishes, and the Turning Orb stands still, and instead of the Turning a Sound is caused in the Essence.

20. This is now the Form of the Spiritual Life, and of the Essential Life; Sul is the Original of the Joyful Life, and Phur is the Original of the Essential Life; the Lubet is before and without Nature, which is the true Sul; and the Spirit is made manifest in Nature, viz. through the Source, and that in a two-fold Form, viz. according to the Lubet of the Liberty in a Source of Joy, and according to the anxious Desire's Lubet, according to the Astringency, compunctive, bitter, and envious from the Comp-unction, and according to the Anguish of the Wheel wholly murderous and hateful; and each Property dwells in itself, and yet they are in one another; herein God's Love and Anger are understood, they dwell in each other, and the one apprehends not the other, and yet the one is the Curer of the other; understand through Imagination, for the Eternal is Magical.

21. The second Form in Nature, in Eternity is the Orb with the conjunctive bitter Essences: for there arises the

Essence, understand with the Perturbation; for the Nothing is still without Motion, but the Perturbation makes the Nothing active: but in the third Principle, viz. in the Dominion in the Essence, and Source of the out-ward World, the Form is called Mercury, which is opposite, odious, and poisonous, and the Cause of Life and stirring, also the Cause of the Senses: Where one Glance may conceive itself in the Infinity, and then also immerse itself into it, where out of one only the Abyssal, unsearchable, and infinite Multiplicity may arise.

22. This Form is the Unquietness, and yet the Seeker of Rest; and with its seeking it causes Unquietness, it makes itself its own Enemy; its Cure is twofold, for its Desire is also twofold, viz. according to the Lubet of the Liberty, according to the Stillness and Meekness; and then also in the Hunger according to the rising of Unquietness, and the finding of itself; the Root desires only Joy with the first Will, and yet it cannot obtain it, except through the opposite Source, for no Joy can arise in the still Nothing; it must arise only through Motion and Elevation that the Nothing finds itself.

23. Now that which is Sound desires to enter again into the Will of the still Nothing, that it may have Peace and Rest therein; and the Nothing is its Cure; and the Wrath and Poison is the Remedy of the Seeker and Finder, that is their Life which they find, an Example whereof we have in the poisonous Gall, whence in the Life arises Joy and Sorrow, wherein we also understand a two-fold Will, viz. one to the wrathful Fire and anxious painful Life to the Original of Nature, and one to the Light-life, viz. to the Joy of Nature; this takes its Original out of the Eternal Nothing.

24. The first Will's Cure is the Lubet of the Liberty, if it obtains that, then it makes triumphant Joy in itself; and the Wrath in the hungry Desire is the Curer and Helper of the other Will, viz. the Will of Nature, and herein God's Love and Anger are understood, and also how Evil and Good are in the Center of each Life, and how no Joy could arise without Sorrow, and how one is the Curer of the other.

25. And here we understand the third Will, (which takes its Original out of both these, viz. out of such an Essence, viz. out of the Mother) viz. the Spirit, which has both these Properties in it, and is a Son of the Properties and also a Lord of the same; for in him consists the Power, he may awaken which he pleases; the Properties lie in the Essence, and are as a well-constituted Life, or as an Instrument with many Strings, which stand still; and the Spirit, viz. the Egress is the real Life, he may play upon the Instrument as he pleases, in Evil or Good, according to Love or Anger, and as he plays, and as the Instrument Sounds, so is it received of its Contra-tenor, viz. of the Assimilate.

26. If the Tune of Love be played, viz. the Liberty's Desire, then is the Sound received of the same Liberty and Love-Lubet; for it is its pleasing Relish, and agreeable to its Will's Desire, one similar Lubet takes another.

27. And thus likewise is it to be understood of the Enmity and contrary Will; if the Instrument be struck according to the Desire to Nature, viz. in the Wrath, Anger, and bitter Falsehood, then the same contrary Sound and wrathful Desire receives it, for it is of its Property, and a Satiating of its Hunger, wherein we understand the Desire of the Light, and also of the dark World; a two-fold Source and Property.

28. The Desire of the Liberty is meek, easy, and pleasant, and it is called Good; and the Desire to Nature makes itself in itself dark, dry, hungry, and wrathful, which is called God's Anger, and the dark World, viz. the first Principle; and the light World is the second Principle.

29. And we are to understand, that it is no divided Essence, but one holds the other hidden or closed up in it, and the one is the Beginning and Cause of the other, also its Healing and Cure; that which is awaked and stirred up, that gets Dominion, and manifests itself externally with its Character, and makes a Form and Signature according to its Will in the External after itself. A Similitude whereof we see in an enraged Man or Beast; though the outward Man and Beast are not in the inward World, yet the outward Nature has even the same Forms; for it arises originally from the inward, and stands upon the inward Root.

30. The third Form is the Anxiousness, which arises in Nature from the first and second Form, and is the Upholder or Preserver of the first and second; it is in itself the sharp Fiat, and the second Form has the Verbum, viz. the Property to the Word, and it consists in three Properties, and makes out of herself with the three the fourth, viz. the Fire; in the external Birth, viz. in the third Principle, it is called Sal, or Salt, according to its Matter; but in its Spirit it has many Forms; for it is the Fire-Root, the great Anguish, it arises betwixt and out of the Astringency and Bitterness in the austere Attraction; it is the Essentiality of that which is attracted, viz. the Corporality, or Comprehensibility; from Sulphur it is of a Brimstone Nature, and from Mercury a Blaze or Flash; it is in itself painful, viz. a Sharpness of

Dying, and that from the sharp Attraction of the Astringency: It has a two-fold Fire, one cold, another hot; the cold arises from the Astringency, from the sharp Attraction, and is a dark black Fire; and the hot arises from the driving forth the Compunction in the Anguish in the Desire after the Liberty, and the Liberty is its Enkindler, and the raging Compunction is the Cold's Fire's Awakener.

31. These three Forms are in one another as one, and yet they are but one Mother, viz. the desiring Will to Manifestation, which is called the Father of Nature, and of the Being of all Beings.

32. Now we are to consider the Hunger of the Anxiety, or the Salt-Spirit, and then also its satiating or fulfilling: The Anguish has in it two Wills, from the Original of the first Will out of the Liberty to the Manifestation of itself, viz. the first Will is to Nature, and the other reconceived Will is the Son of the first, which goes out of the Manifestation again into itself into the Liberty; for it is become an eternal Life in Nature, and yet possesses not Nature essentially, but dwells in itself, and pene-trates Nature as a transparent Shining, and the first Will goes outwards, for it is the Desire of Manifestation; it seeks itself out of itself, and yet amasses the Desire in itself; it desires to educe [bring out] the internal out of itself.

33. Thus it has two Properties; with the Seeking in itself it makes the Center of Nature: For it is like a Poison, a Will of dreadful Aspiring, like a Lightning and Thunder-clap; for this Desire desires only Anguish, and to be horrible, to find itself in itself, out of the Nothing in the Something; and the second Form proceeds forth as a Flagrat, or produces Sound

out of itself; for it is not the Desire of the first Will to continue in the horrible Death, but only thus to educe itself out of the Nothing, and to find itself.

34. And we understand by the Center in itself, with the aspiring Wrathfulness, with the wrathful Will to Nature, the dark World, and with the Egress out of itself to Manifestation, the outward World; and with the second Will out of the first, which enters again into the Liberty, we understand the Light World, or the Kingdom of Joy, or the true Deity.

35. The Desire of the dark World is after the Manifestation, viz. after the outward World, to attract and draw the same Essentiality into it, and thereby to satisfy its wrathful Hunger; and the Desire of the outward World is after the Essence or Life, which arises from the Pain and Anguish.

36. Its Desire in itself is the Wonder of Eternity, a Mystery, or Mirror, or what is comprehended of the first Will to Nature.

37. The outward World's Desire is Sulphur, Mercury, and Sal; for such an Essence it; is in itself, viz. a Hunger after itself, and is also its own Satisfying; for Sul desires Phur, and Phur desires Mercury, and both these desire Sal; for Sal is their Son, which they hatch in their Desire, and afterwards becomes their Habitation, and also Food.

38. Each Desire desires only the Essentiality of Salt according to its Property; for Salt is diverse; one Part is Sharpness of cold, and one Part Sharpness of Heat, also one Part Brimstone; and one Part Salniter from Mercury.

39. These Properties are in one another as one, but they sever themselves, each dwelling in itself; for they are of a different Essence, and when one enters into another, then there is Enmity, and a Flagrat. A Similitude whereof we may apprehend in Thunder and Lightning, which comes to pass when the great Anguish, viz. the Mother of all Salts, understand the third Form of Nature, impresses itself; which comes to pass from the Aspect of the Sun, which stirs up the hot Fire's Form, so that it is penetrative, as the Property of the Fire is; and when it reaches the Salniter, then it enkindles itself; and the Salniter is in itself the great Flagrat in Mercury, viz. the Flash, or Compunction, which enters into the Coldness, so also into the cold Sharpness of the Salt-Spirit; this Coldness is exceedingly dismayed at the Flash of the Fire, and in a trice wraps or folds up itself in itself, whence arises the Thunder-clap (or the tempestuous Flash, which gives a Stroke in the Flagrat) and the Flagrat goes downwards, for it is heavy by Reason of the Coldness, and the Salnitrous Spirit is Light by Reason of the Fire, which [Spirit] carries the Thunder or Sound side-ways, as is to be heard in Tempests and Thunder; presently thereupon comes the Wind or Spirit out of ail the four Forms one against another, for they are all four enkindled in the penetrating Flagrat whereupon follows Hail and Rain; the Hail folds itself together in the Coldness, in the Property of the cold Salt-Spirit; for the Wrath attracts to itself, and turns the Water to Ice and the Water arises from the Meekness, viz. from the Desire of the Light, for it is the Essentiality of the Meekness; this the cold Salt-Spirit congeals into Drops, and distills it

upon the Earth, for before the Congelation it is only as a Mist, or Steam, or as a Vapour, or Damp.

40. Thus we see this Ground very exactly and properly in Thunder and Lightning; for the Flash, or Lightening, or ethereal Blaze, goes always before, for it is the enkindled Salniter; thereupon follows the Stroke in the Flagrat of the Coldness; as you see, as soon as the Stroke is given the astringent Chamber is opened, and a cool Wind follows, and oftentimes Whirling and Wheeling, for the Forms or Nature are awakened, and are as a turning Wheel, and So they carry their Spirit the Wind.

The Third Chapter.

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Of the grand Mystery of all Beings

1. COURTEOUS Reader, observe the Meaning right; we understand not by this Description a Beginning of the Deity, but we shew you the Manifestation of the Deity through Nature; for God is without Beginning, and has an eternal Beginning, and an eternal End, which he is himself, and the Nature of the inward World is in the like Essence from Eternity.

2. We give you to understand this of the Divine Essence; without Nature God is a Mystery, understand in the Nothing, for without Nature is the Nothing, which is an Eye of Eternity, an Abyssal Eye, that stands or sees in the Nothing, for it is the Abyss; and this same Eye is a Will, understand a Longing after Manifestation, to find the Nothing; but now there is nothing before the Will, where it Might find something, where it Might have a Place to rest, therefore it enters into itself, and finds itself through Nature.

3. And, we understand in the Mystery without Nature in the first Will two Forms; one to Nature, to the Manifestation of the Wonder-eye; and the second Form is produced out of the first, which is a Desire after Virtue and Power, and is the first Will's Son, its Desire of Joyfulness. And understand us thus: the Desire is egressive, and that which proceeds is the Spirit of the Will and Desire, for it is a Moving, and the Desire makes a Form in the Spirit, viz. Formings of the Infinity of the Mystery.

4. And this Form [or Likeness] is the eternal Wisdom of the Deity; and we understand herein the Trinity of the only Deity, whose Ground we must not know, how the first Will arises in the Abyss from Eternity, which is called Father; only we know the eternal Birth, and distinguish the Deity, viz. what purely and merely concerns the Deity, or the, Good, from Nature, and shew you the Arcanum of the greatest secret Mystery; Namely, how the Abyss, or the Deity, manifests itself with this eternal Generation, for God is a Spirit, and as subtle as a Thought or Will, and Nature is his corporeal Essence, understand, the Eternal Nature, and the outward Nature of this visible comprehensible World is a Manifestation or external Birth of the inward Spirit and Essence in Evil and Good, that is a Representation, Resemblance, and typical Similitude of the dark Fire, and Light World.

5. And as we have shewn you concerning the Original, of Thunder and Lightning with the tempestuous Stroke; so likewise the inward Nature of the inward World is, and stands in the Generation: For the outward Birth takes its Original from the inward; the inward Birth is unapprehensible to the Creature, but the outward is apprehensible to it; yet each Property apprehends its Mother from whence it is brought forth.

6. As the Soul comprehends the inward eternal Nature, and the Spirit of the Soul, viz. the precious Image according to God, comprehends the Birth of the angelical Light-World, and the sidereal and Elemental Spirit comprehends the Birth and Property of Stars and Elements; every Eye sees into its Mother from whence it was brought forth.

7. Therefore we will set down the Generation of all Essences out of all Mothers and Beginnings, how one Generation proceeds from another, and how one is the Cause of another, and this we will do from the Eyesight of all the three Mothers.

8. Let none account it impossible, seeing Man is a Likeness according to and in God, an Image of the Being of all Beings; and yet it stands not in the Power of the Creature, but in the Might of God, for the Sight and Science of all Essences consist alone in the clearest Light.

9. We have made mention before how the external Birth, viz. the Essence of this World consists in three Things, viz. in Sulphur, Mercury, and Sal: Now we must set down and declare what it is, seeing that all Things arise from one Original, and then how its inward Separation is effected, that out of one Beginning many Beginnings are produced; this is now to be understood, as is before-mentioned, concerning the Center of all Essences.

10. For Sulphur in the eternal Beginning consists in two Forms, and so also in the outward Beginning of this World: viz. in the internal the first Form, viz. the Sul consists in the eternal Liberty; it is the Lubet of the eternal Abyss, viz. a Will or an Original to the Desire and the other Original is the Desire, which is the first Motion, viz. an Hunger to the Something; and in this same Hunger is the eternal Beginning to the pregnant Nature, and it is called Sulphur, viz. a Conception of the Liberty, viz. of Nature of the Good, and a Conception or Comprehension of the Desire, viz. of the austere Attraction in the Desire.

11. Sul in the Internal is God, and Phur is the Nature, for it makes a Spirit of the Nature of Brimstone, as is to be seen externally in the Property of Brimstone; for its Substance is a dry constringent Matter, and is of a painful anxious fiery Property, forcing itself forth; it attracts eagerly and hardly into itself, and parches up as a dry Hunger, and its painful Property does eagerly and anxiously force itself forth: The Cause and Original is this: because it stands in two Beginnings, viz. in the Property of the Desire.

12. The Desire, viz. the Attraction makes Hardness, and is the Cause of the Fire, and the Lubet is a Cause of the Lustre or Light of the Fire: Sul is Light, and Phur makes Fire, yet it cannot be reduced alone in Sulphur to Fire and Light, but in Mercury and at last in Sal, which is the real Body, but not of the Brimstone, but of the Essence and Water: And so understand, that in the first Desire, which arises in the Lubet of the Liberty, all Things are, and are made substantial and essential, from whence the Creation of this World is proceeded, and we find herein the Property of the Earth, so likewise of all Metals and Stones, and also of the Astrum, and the Original of the Elements, all out of one only Mother, which is the Lubet and the Desire, from whence all Things proceeded and still proceed.

13. For Mercury is generated in Sulphur: It is the severing, viz. of Light and Darkness from one another, the breaking Wheel, and Cause of the various Division or Multiplicity: it separates the dark Essentiality from the Essentiality of the Light, viz. the Metals from the gross, astringent, dark, stony, and earthly Property; for the Property of the Desire gives and makes dark Essence, and

the Property of the free Lubet makes Light Essence, viz. Metals, and all of the same Kind and Resemblance.

14. Mercury has in the Beginning of his Birth three Properties, viz. the Trembling in the Austerity, and Anguish from the hard impressing of the astringent hard Desire, and the Expulsion of the Multiplicity, viz. the essential Life; for the Desire attracts very hard to itself, and the Attraction makes the Motion, or Sting of Trembling, [or horrible Compunction] and that which is impressed is the Anguish; but if the Liberty be therein comprehended, it refuses it, and there arises the Original of Enmity, and the Severing, that one Form separates from another, and a twofold Will arises.

15. For the Lubet of the Liberty does again set its Desire into the Stillness, viz. into the Nothing, and forces again out of the Darkness of the Desire's Austerity into itself, viz. into the Liberty, without the Wrath of the Enmity, and so it has only sharpened itself in the austere Impression in Mercury, that it is a moving feeling Life, and that its Liberty is sharpened so that it becomes a Lustre, which is, and causes a Kingdom of Joy in the Liberty; and so understand us, that the Spirit's Dominion, viz. the Spirit and the Essence do thus separate.

16. The Essence remains in the Impression, and becomes Material; that is not God, but Gold, or any other Metal, according to the Property of the first Conception, in the Sulphur, or Stone, or Earth, out of the Desire's own peculiar Property, all according to the first Sude or Seething in Mercury; for no Metal can be generated without Salniter, which is the Flagrat in Mercury; which also becomes

Material in the astringent Impression, and divides itself in the Separation, one Part into Brimstone, another into Salniter, and a third into a Salt Sharpness; whereas yet there cannot be any corporeal Essence in all these, but only the Spirit of the Essence; the Essence proceeds wholly out of the Death thro' Mortification, which is effected in the great Anguish of the Impression, where there is a Dying Source, which is the Mercurial Life, where the Salnitral Flagrat arises as an opening, displaying Flash: For the Liberty, viz. the Property of the eternal Lubet, does there separate itself, and yet the attracted Essence out of the Lubet of the Liberty continues all along in the Comprehension of the Attraction in the astringent austere dark Anguish: Now if the Wrath enters so vehemently into itself as to raise up the Salnitral Flagrat, then it apprehends the Essentiality of the free Lubet in itself, from, whence arises the Flagrat; for the Wrath there apprehends the Meekness, which is even as if Water were poured into Fire, which gives a Flagrat; and then the Wrath of the great Anguish dies, and with the Flagrat the Joy ascends, and the Flagrat is out of Mercury, or out of the Anguish of Death, and becomes also Material, but by Reason of the Liberty it changes itself into white, which is Salniter: Now if the Fire, viz. the horrible anxious Sharpness, does again come into it, then the Salniter is dismayed, and gives a Repulse; for the first Property [which was] before the Death is again enkindled with the Brimstone Spirit; a sufficient Resemblance of which you have in Gunpowder, which is the Matter of these Properties.

17. Further, we are to know the Dying with the Enkindling of the Fire, all which is done in the Flagrat; for it is a Flagrat to Death, and to Life; one Part immerses itself into the Property of Death, viz. into. the Wrath of the austere Desire; and the other Part, which is from the Lubet or Love-Essentiality, arises up in the Kingdom of Joy: But seeing there happens also a Mortifying in the free Materia (though it is no Mortifying, but a Redeeming from the Wrath, for the Materia of the Liberty will be free from the Wrath) thereupon this Materia falls downwards, which is Water; and it is not of the Property of the Wrath, but the Wrath holds it captive in itself; but they are separated from one another in the Essence and Source; the Wrath's Essence gives Earth and Stones, and the Essence of the Liberty is Water, which arises with the Enkindling of the Fire through the Mortification out of the Meekness of the Light.

18. But seeing this Water does also separate itself in the Salnitral Flagrat, and before the Salniter was all mutually enwrappt together, thereupon it obtains different Properties in the Separation, and there is a Diversity of Water; and this various Diversity of Properties gives in each Property also a bodily or corporeal Essence, all according to the first Separation of Mercury in Sulphur, for in the Mortification in the Salnitral Flagrat two Things are effected and come forth, viz. a Life, and a Body of the Life; understand an essential, and a lifeless senseless Body, whose Materia is mortified in the Flagrat: Thus there is a Diversity of Water, and a Diversity of the Life, and a Diversity of the Body, or of the Materia; as each Body is, so is also its essential Spirit.

19. Now we must consider this from the first Original, as, 1. from the Lubet of the Liberty; and 2. from the Desire to Nature, or the Manifestation of the Abyss.

20. First, in the Salnitral Flagrat there is produced through the anxious Mortification a Sulphureous Water from the Anguish, which affords a Brimstone, as we plainly see, and all whatever is of the like Sort and Resemblance.

21. Secondly, There is generated from the astringent, austere, attractive Property, which draws in to itself, a Salt Water; its Materia is Salt; if it be again impressed through the Fire or Heat, then it turns into Salt; and all whatever is sharp and attractive, be it either in Herbs or Trees, proceeds from thence; for there is as much Diversity of Brimstone and Salt, as there is Variety of Taste and Fire to be found in all Creatures, Herbs, and Trees; also all whatever lives and grows has Brimstone and Salt; for the Saltish Property attracts, and preserves the Body; and the Brimstone has in it the Oil or Light, wherein the free Lubet to Manifestation consists, whence the Growth arises.

22. Thirdly, there is brought forth through the Salnitral Flagrat out of the Property of the bitter compunctive Attraction, in the first Impression in the Spirit, an earthly Property of Water; its Materia is Earth; for the same arises from the dark Essentiality, where the Darkness impresses itself in the first Desire, wherein the Darkness arises, as is before mentioned: Thus it begets out of its Property in the Impression a Mist, smoaky Steam, or Vapour, which the Flagrat in the Salniter apprehends, and its Essence is dismayed or dies, and falls downwards; this is the Materia of the Earth, though the Earth is not of one only Sort, but has