

General Church Education



The Sixth Day

Genesis 1:24-31

Lesson 6

Youth Journey Program

Creation: Reflection of God

Level C: For ages 11-14 years

Teacher Background

Creation: Reflecting God through Correspondences

A Key for Understanding the Word

There is a New Church teaching that, “The Word of God is like a body with a living soul” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1408). Many readers have sensed this deeper level of meaning within the words and images of the Bible.

God wrote His Word so that every image contains multiple levels of meaning. The literal meaning focuses on the natural, physical world. A deeper symbolic meaning focuses on the world of the spirit, the world of the human mind. The relationship between the two levels is called “correspondence”. Natural images and symbols “correspond” to spiritual qualities.

We often make this connection between levels without thinking about it. For example, we may talk about not “muddying the waters”, or say that a child is “testing the waters”. When we say “not muddying the waters” we are not talking about water at all; we are saying that false or misleading ideas should not be brought into a situation. Similarly, a child “testing the waters” is experimenting with his or her behavior to see how others react. These sayings make connections between the way true ideas work in our minds with the way water works in the natural world.

Jesus made connections like this in His conversations with people. To a woman at Jacob’s well, He said, “Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14). Jesus was associating the true spiritual ideas He came on earth to teach with water. The connection is in how they are useful—how they work in our lives. True ideas from the Word cleanse our thoughts just as water cleanses our bodies.

Sometimes these connections are harder to see in the stories of the Old Testament. The key, according to the Heavenly Doctrine for the New Church, is this concept of correspondences. Correspondences allow us to see more than the general allegory of the human journey to the “promised land” of heaven. They help us see who God is and what He intends for us in specific ways. A knowledge of correspondences can help us gain fresh insight into the stories of the Old Testament.

This is true for the creation story. The Heavenly Doctrine explains creation in terms of a person’s step-by-step spiritual progress along the path to heaven. Each “day” of creation pictures a new level of personal development. The seventh day is a beautiful picture of the restful state of heaven—a state free from the struggles against selfishness that we all deal with in this world.

The spiritual meanings of the days of creation are interwoven throughout this lesson. We hope they bring this familiar story to life in new ways.

Correspondences are natural truths in which spiritual truths are reflected as in a mirror. *Arcana Coelestia* 9300



The Sixth Day

Level C

Genesis 1:24-31

Ages 11-14

Life Focus: The Word and the created world reflect the Lord, the Creator.

Lesson Focus: The Lord loves us and created us in His image. We choose to return His love or not.

Reading Summary: And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.... So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.... Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day (Genesis 1:24-31, excerpts).

Lesson 6

		Materials Supplied	Materials Needed
1. Getting Started (2-3 minutes)	Welcome Warm-up Activity	Alphabet Animals directions p. 4	
2. Focus on the Word Use all activities (5-7 minutes)	Read the Word		Bible or copy of Genesis 1:24-31
	Talk About It discuss the reading	Talk About It discussion guide p. 4	
3. Learn by Doing Choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes)	Discussion students will set a goal and make a plan and then read about God’s goals and how He makes them happen	Reflecting God directions p. 5 <i>An Afternoon of Fun</i> p. 7 <i>What God Wants and How He Makes it Happen</i> p. 8	scissors or paper cutter, pens or pencils
	Create learn about the spiritual correspondences of animals and create a “combination” animal that represents the spiritual qualities of a fictional character	Animal Correspondences directions pp. 5-6 <i>Animal Correspondences</i> p. 9 <i>Animal Outlines</i> pp. 10-11	blank paper, scissors, tape, pencils or pens
4. Wrap It Up (2-3 minutes)	Take the Message Home introduce quotation for the week	Take Home Cards p. 12	

1. Getting Started

Welcome Alphabet Animals

Warm-up Activity

Seat students in a circle. Choose whether you will play individually or in teams. Individuals or teams take turns calling out the name of an animal. Each animal name must start with the letter that the previous animal name ended with, e.g. elephant, tiger, rabbit, turtle, etc. If you cannot think of an animal with a name that starts with the last letter of the previous animal, e.g. x (ox), start again! How many animals can you name in a row before getting stuck?

In what ways are animals and people different? Animals are concerned only with physical and worldly desires, e.g. food, safety. People, on the other hand, can know and love the Lord and freely choose to do what is right. But, we become like animals when we do not make the Lord and spiritual things most important in our lives. Genesis 1:26 says we should have “dominion” over the animals. This means that heavenly priorities should be more important than worldly priorities.

2. Focus on the Word

Read Genesis 1:24-31

Talk About It

The creation story is a parable about how a heavenly person is formed. What happens during the first five days or stages of formation? 1. light/dark; 2. divided waters/created seas; 3. dry land/plants; 4. sun/moon/stars; 5. fish/birds. These steps are about learning true ideas from the Word—what is right and wrong—and trying to do what the Word teaches because you know it is the right thing to do.

What did the Lord create first on the sixth day? Animals. Animals correspond to desires—what we want to say, think or do. Good animals are desires for acting and thinking in good and useful ways.

How are animals different from the things made on the previous days of creation? They are not fixed to one spot—they move about, choose what to eat, where to go, what to do. They feed and protect their babies and interact with other animals.

In what ways does being created in the Lord’s “image” and after His “likeness” make people different than other forms of creation? Encourage brainstorming. Humans are the only created beings that can freely respond to the Lord. Nothing else in creation does—which is why only human beings live to eternity. Note that heaven is also in the human form.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Our “earth” is our body and all the thoughts and desires having to do with it. Genesis 1:28 says that the spiritual part of us, “heaven”, should have control over our “earth”. What does this say about ways in which we think and act?

The Lord never forces us to do what will make us truly and eternally happy. Why is this important? We can only love the Lord freely by *choosing* to return His love. In returning His love, we become fully human, in His image and likeness.

3. Learn by Doing

Choose one or two activities

Choice

Reflecting God

The Lord, like us, has loves and goals. He plans ways to achieve His goals so that what He wants can happen. One of the Lord's goals is to have relationships with people so He can bless them. In order to achieve this goal the Lord created the whole world and made each person in His image and likeness.

This activity invites students to dream up and plan an activity they love. Students can discover that our efforts of goal-setting, planning and action are similar to ways in which the Lord acts.

1. What do you like to do with a free afternoon? Brainstorm ideas and then give each student a copy of *An Afternoon of Fun* (p. 7) and a pen or pencil.
2. Write your chosen activity at the top of the page. Take three minutes to think about it and write down how you would go about making it happen. Keep in mind that you will be sharing your ideas with the group.
3. Invite each student to share his or her activity and plans for making it happen. Ask the following: 1. Why did you choose this activity? 2. How did you plan it? 3. What do you hope to enjoy?
4. What you have just done—loving something, setting a goal or planning a way to make it happen, and achieving your goal—is what makes you human! This is what the Lord does that people can also do.
5. What are the Lord's goals? What are His plans? How does He make them happen? Allow plenty of time for brainstorming.
6. The Lord shares His goals and plans in *True Christian Religion*. Pass out copies of *What the Lord Wants and How He Makes It Happen* (p. 8). Read aloud.
7. What are the Lord's goals? How does He make them happen?

Choice

Animal Correspondences

Like all other natural things, animals correspond to spiritual things. In general, animals correspond to human feelings or affections. Mild natured animals tend to correspond to good affections and fierce animals to bad affections. Often we can see connections between an animal's correspondence and the characteristics that are considered typical of that animal.

In this activity, students learn about some animal correspondences and use them to create "composite" animals. Most of the correspondences and characteristics in this activity are drawn from *Correspondences of the Bible: The Animals* by John Worcester (Swedenborg Foundation Publishers; West Chester, Pennsylvania; 2009). Others in the series include *The Plants* and *The Human Body*.

1. Today we're going to learn about the spiritual affections that animals

Materials Needed

copy of *An Afternoon of Fun* (p. 7) and *What God Wants...* (p. 8) for each student, scissors or paper cutter, pens or pencils

Prepare in Advance

Cut activity pages in half.

New Church Concept Image and Likeness

By creation we are made in God's image and likeness. It is the constant effort of the Lord's Divine providence to unite us with Himself and Himself with us and thereby to make us in His image. The Lord is doing this so that He may give us the bliss of eternal life, since this is the nature of the Divine love. He cannot make this gift unless we banish sins from our outer self in apparent autonomy. We cannot be united to the Lord and thus reformed, regenerated, and saved unless we act freely and rationally. This is what makes us human (see *Divine Providence* 123).

Sample:
pig-wolf-dog



Materials for Each Student

Animal Correspondences p. 9, *Animal Outlines* pp. 10-11, scissors, tape, blank piece of paper, pen or pencil

Second Activity *continued*

correspond to. Hand out *Animal Correspondences* p. 9 and read through it with the students. As you read each animal, ask if anyone knows the Biblical story that is referenced. If they do, ask if they can see how the correspondence works in the story.

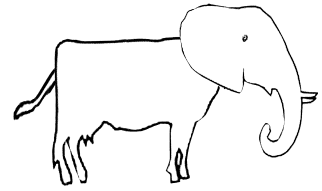
- In the spiritual world, where we continue to live after death, animals appear as representatives or symbols of the thoughts and feelings of the people who are nearby. Sometimes, an animal will appear that is a combination of two or more different animals that we might see on earth. Read the following quotation:
- Hand out the *Animal Outlines* p. 10-11 and point out the sample combination animals. Divide students into pairs and ask each pair to

A bear symbolizes people who read the Word but fail to understand it.... That these are the people symbolized by bears became apparent to me from seeing bears in the spiritual world.... Some bears seen in the spiritual world are dangerous and some are not...but they are told apart by their heads. Bears that are not dangerous have heads like those of calves or sheep. Apocalypse Revealed 573

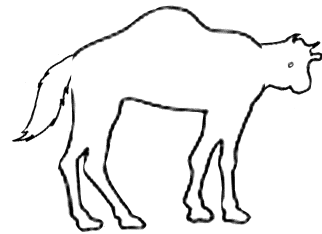
choose a well-known *fictional* hero or villain. If students have trouble thinking of someone, ask them to brainstorm favorite books, movies or TV shows. Both students in a pair should be familiar with the character they choose.

- Referring to the correspondences, have students choose 2-3 animals that represent characteristics of their chosen person.
- Cut the chosen animals apart and use the pieces—head, body, tail—to create a composite animal. Tape the pieces together on a blank piece of paper. Draw “connecting lines” between the parts as needed.
- Have student pairs take turns explaining the meaning of their composite animals and who they represent.

Sample:
elephant-cow-camel



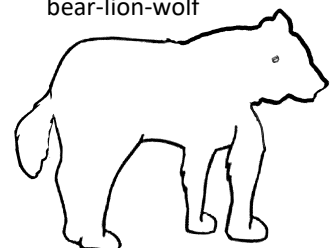
Sample:
cow-camel-horse



Teaching Hint

This activity can be done individually if your class is small.

Sample:
bear-lion-wolf



4. Wrap It Up

Closing

What is a person’s “heaven” and “earth”? (The spiritual and natural parts of us.)

Why is it important for a person to freely choose to follow the Lord? (We can only love the Lord freely by *choosing* to return His love. In returning His love we become fully human, made in His image and likeness.)

Take the Message Home

Read this quotation aloud: “You shall be My people, and I will be Your God” (Jeremiah 30:22). The Lord is your Heavenly Father, and you are His beloved child. Think of the ways in which you fulfill the promise of being created in the His image and likeness.

Give Take Home Cards (p. 12) to the students as they leave and suggest they put them up somewhere they will see them this week.

An Afternoon of Fun

What is something you love to do?

What would a fun afternoon of doing this look like?

An Afternoon of Fun

What is something you love to do?

What would a fun afternoon of doing this look like?

What God Wants and How He Makes It Happen

God is love and wisdom. His love and wisdom are made up of three things: loving others outside of Himself, wanting to be one with them, and making them happy from Himself. Love wants those things; wisdom makes them happen.

God's **goal** is to love others outside of Himself. He loves the entire human race, as well as everything in the world He created because it supports human life. God is limitless or infinite, however everything in the universe is outside of God and so is limited or finite. He loves good and evil people who are in heaven or in hell equally. People who choose to love goodness receive the Lord's love. People who choose to love evil turn away from the Lord and so receive His love in a lesser and more limited way.

God's **plan** is to be one with other people. He creates partnerships with angels in heaven, with people who receive Him, and with everything good and true in us. God created people in His image and likeness so that He could become one with us.

God **makes people happy** when they receive His love. He devotes Himself to making us happy—with a wonderful happiness that lasts forever, in heaven.

Based on *True Christian Religion* 43

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Based on *True Christian Religion* 43

Sheep

Characteristics:

herd animals, will follow a shepherd's voice, provide wool

Correspondence:

People who love and trust the Lord, innocent and willing to follow Him

Biblical Reference:

Jesus tells Peter to "Feed My lambs" and "Tend My sheep" (John 21:15-17).

Ox (Cow)

Characteristics:

strong, patient, obeys human authority, provides milk and other dairy food

Correspondence:

natural good will, obedience to rules, affection for learning to be useful

Biblical Reference:

It is prophesied that Jesus will eat butter and honey, so that "He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good" (Isaiah 7:15).

Dog

Characteristics:

obedient, eager to please, indiscriminating, unclean (rolling in mud, etc.)

Correspondence:

Strong affection for evil or good

Biblical Reference:

After the evil queen Jezebel is killed, dogs eat her flesh (2 Kings 9:36). Dogs try to comfort the beggar Lazarus by licking his sores (see Luke 16:21).

Donkey

Characteristics:

strong, sure-footed, smaller than a horse, can be used for transportation

Correspondence:

understanding of natural things

Biblical Reference:

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. (Matthew 21:1-9; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19).

Horse

Characteristics:

strong, intelligent, sure-footed, larger than a donkey, can be used for transportation

Correspondence:

understanding of spiritual things

Biblical Reference:

The disciple John sees a vision of the Lord riding on a white horse in heaven (Revelation 19:11-16).

Pig

Characteristics:

Omnivorous, unclean (wallows in mud, etc.)

Correspondence:

greedy love of claiming everything for oneself

Biblical Reference:

The Prodigal Son wastes the inheritance he demanded and wishes that he could eat the food that he feeds to pigs (Luke 28:11-32).

Lion

Characteristics:

strong, fierce, known for roar, hunter

Correspondence:

power of Divine Truth, love for truth

Biblical Reference:

The Lord is called the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Revelation 5:5).

Elephant

Characteristics:

large, intelligent, mostly slow-moving, sensitive to skin irritation, ivory tusks

Correspondence:

love of justice and sense of fairness

Biblical Reference:

Solomon, a king known for his wise judgments, had a throne made of ivory (1 Kings 10:18).

Camel

Characteristics:

can survive desert conditions with little food or water, doesn't care about pleasing humans

Correspondence:

natural knowledge, the "rightness" of things

Biblical Reference:

John the Baptist dressed in camel's skin as He told people to repent (Matthew 3:1-4).

Wolf

Characteristics:

hunts in packs to cut off prey from help, clever, carnivorous

Correspondence:

People who use truth to make themselves important and teach falsities to others as if they were truths. This makes people dependent on *them*, rather than on the Lord.

Biblical Reference:

Jesus likens false prophets to wolves (Matthew 7:15).

Bear

Characteristics:

large, strong, clumsy, protective of young

Correspondence:

love of the literal sense of the Word; people who follow a rule or law literally

Biblical Reference:

Bears maul children who mocked the prophet Elisha (2 Kings 2:23-24).

Snake

Characteristics:

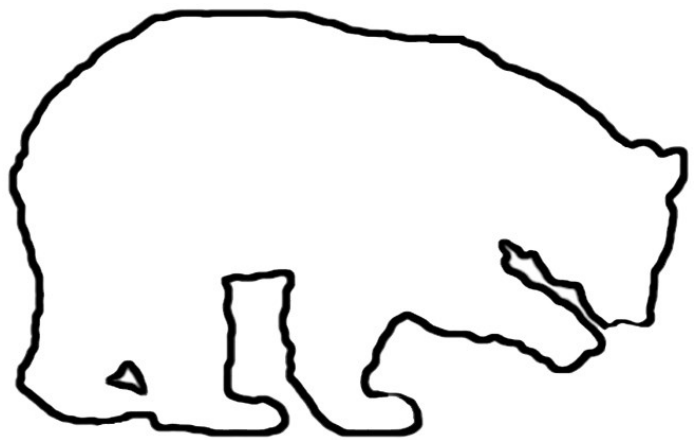
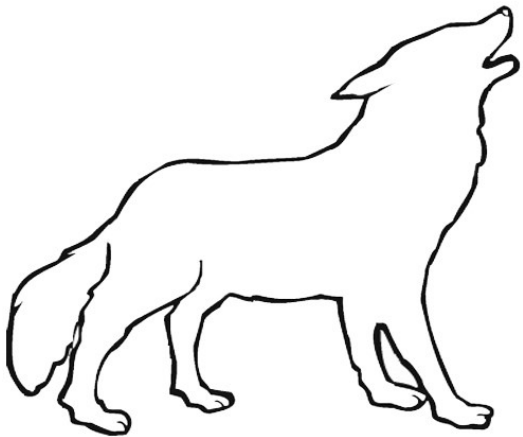
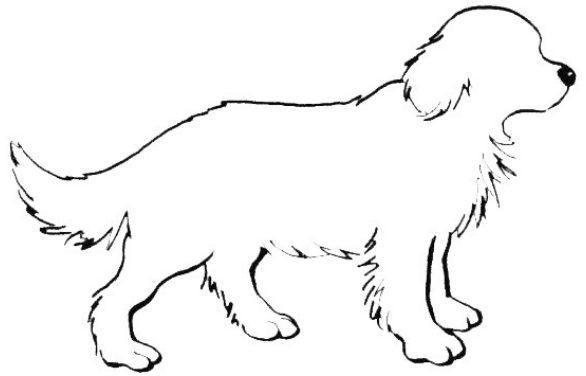
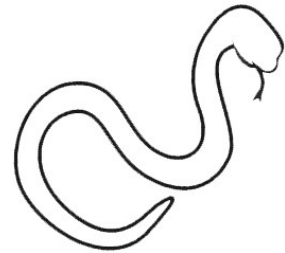
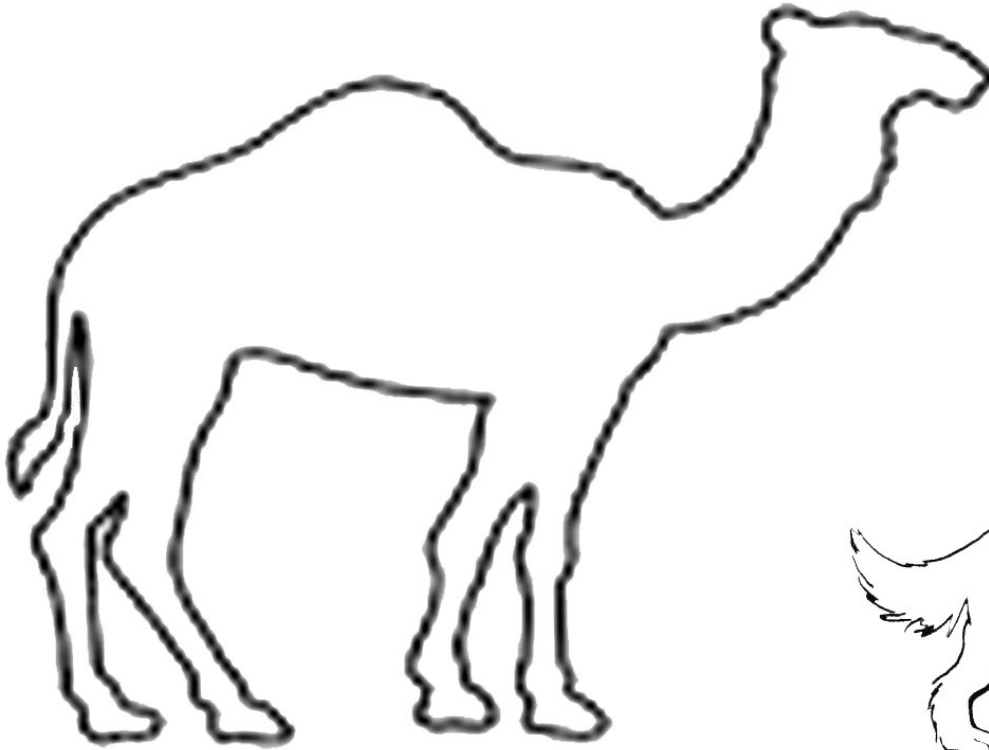
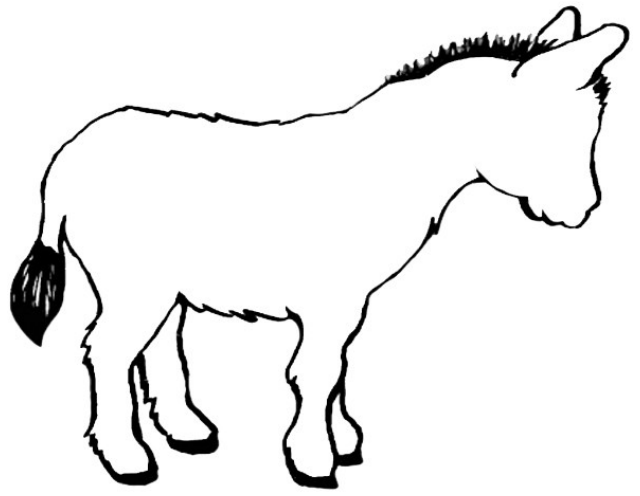
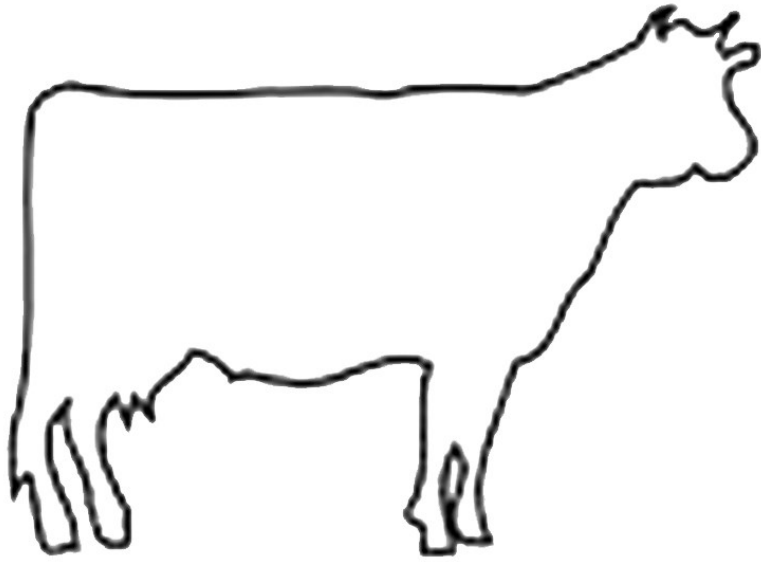
moves silently, carnivorous, wriggles on the ground, some harmless and some poisonous

Correspondence:

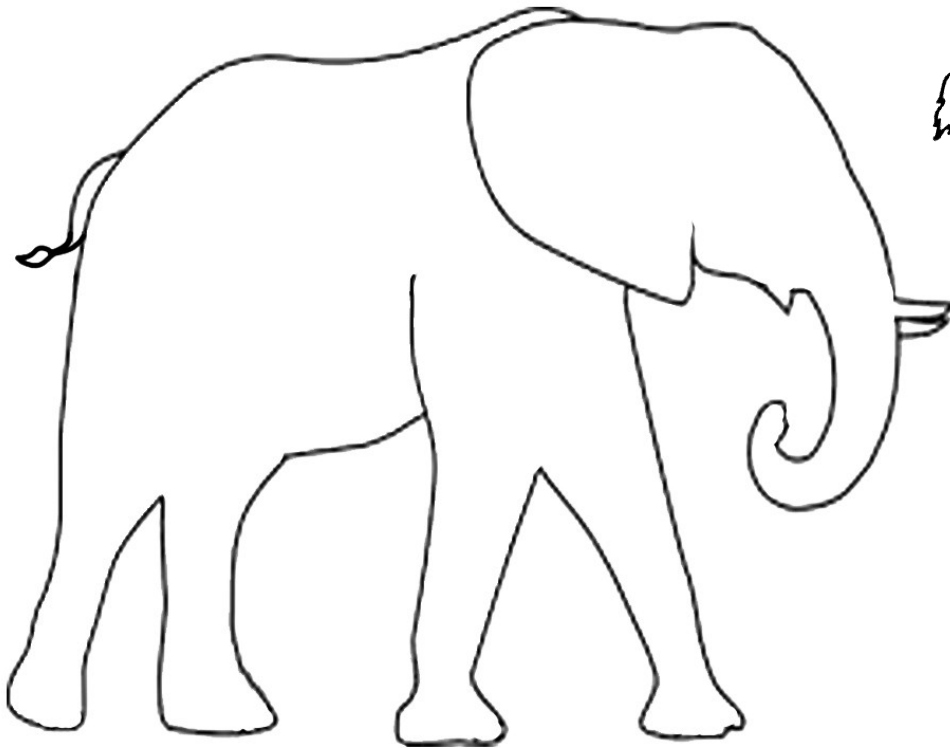
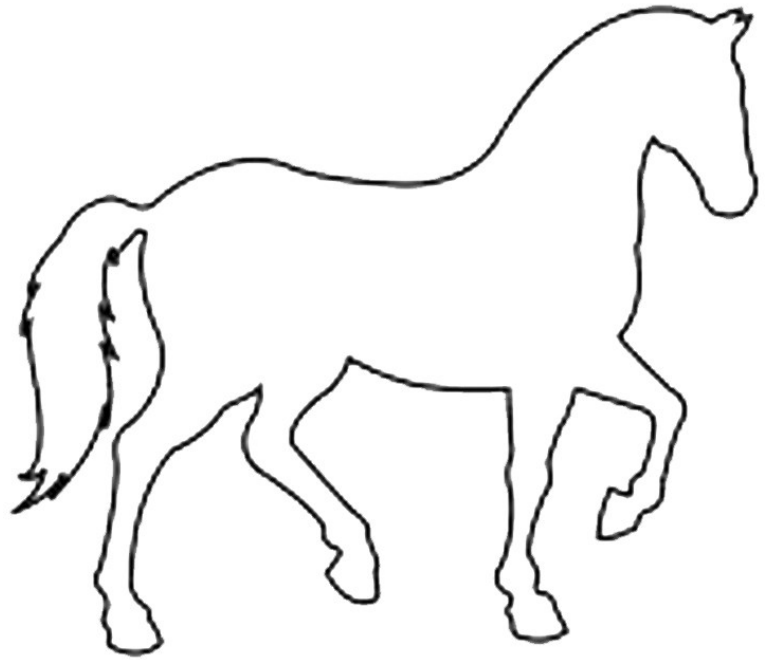
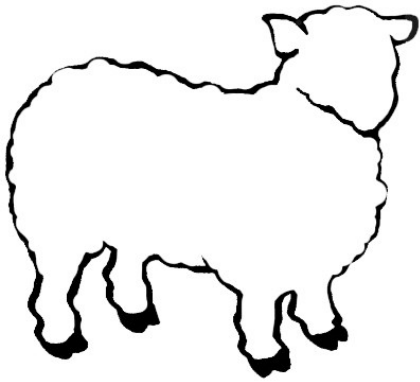
Pleasure from the five senses. Enjoying the senses is harmful if it is our main focus

Biblical Reference:

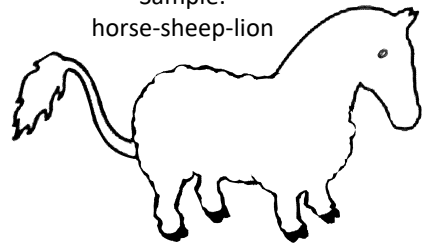
The serpent tempts Eve and persuades her to disobey God (Genesis 3:1-6).



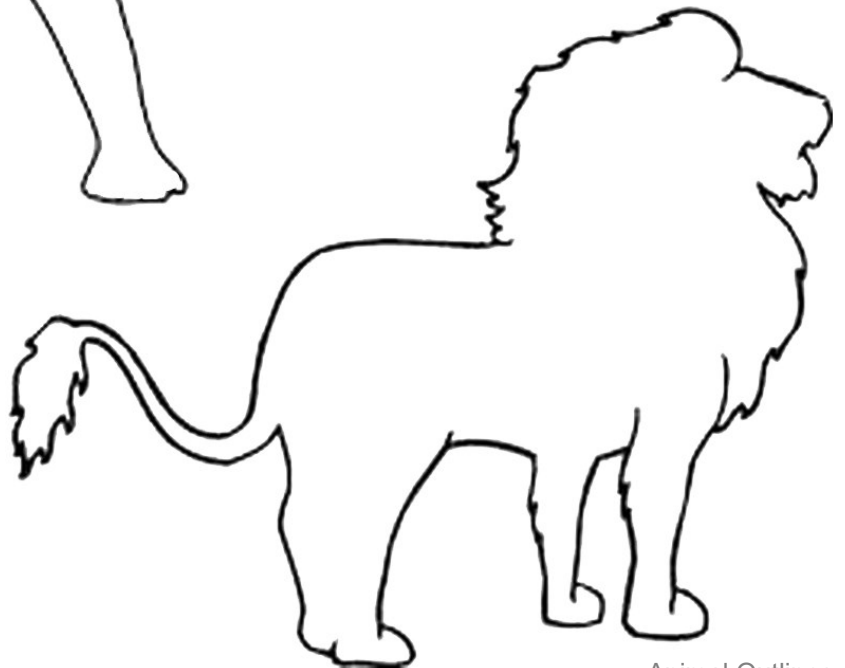
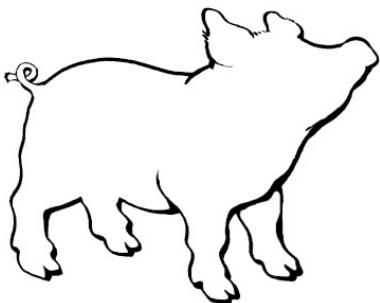
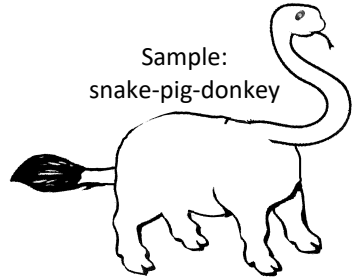
Animal Outlines



Sample:
horse-sheep-lion



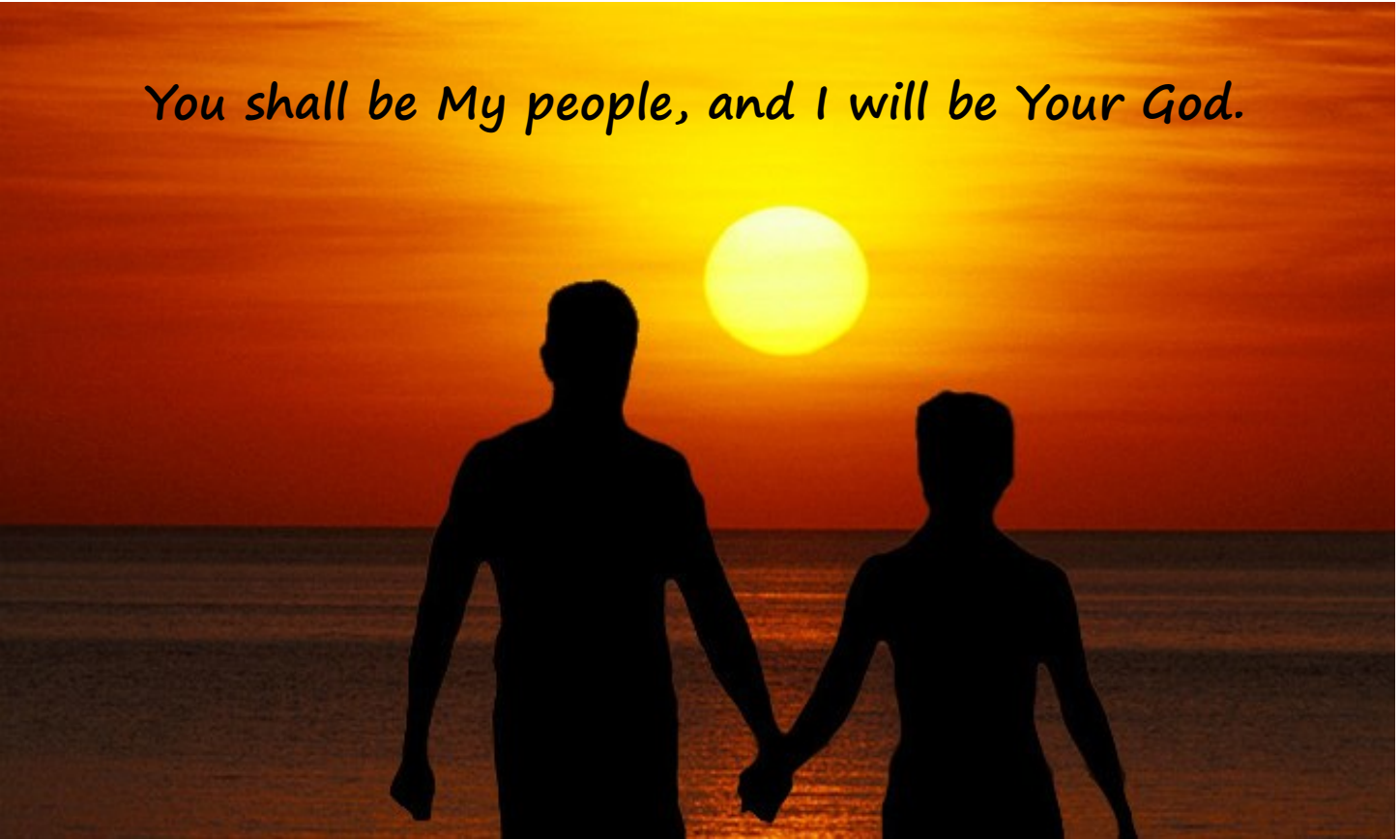
Sample:
snake-pig-donkey



Animal Outlines

Take Home Cards
Make a copy for each student.

You shall be My people, and I will be Your God.



You shall be My people, and I will be Your God.

