

A WINDOW TO THE SOUL NISHAN YARDUMIAN'S BIBLICAL ART

1. JOSEPH REVEALING HIS TRUE IDENTITY TO HIS BROTHERS

Genesis 45:1-15 (New King James Version)

¹ Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!" So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard *it*.

³ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I *am* Joseph; does my father still live?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence. ⁴ And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said:

"I *am* Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For these two years the famine *has been* in the land, and *there are* still five years in which *there will be* neither plowing nor harvesting. ⁷ And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. ⁸ So now *it was* not you *who* sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

⁹ "Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph: "God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry. ¹⁰ You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for *there are* still five years of famine.'"

¹² "And behold, your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that *it is* my mouth that speaks to you. ¹³ So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring my father down here."

¹⁴ Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. ¹⁵ Moreover he kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

2. DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

(Based on a 12th c. sculpture in the Louvre Museum)

John 19:38-42 (New King James Version)

³⁸ After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave *him* permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. ³⁹ And Nicodemus, who

at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. ⁴¹ Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation *Day*, for the tomb was nearby.

3. NOAH ENTERING THE ARK

Genesis 7:7-12 (New King James Version)

⁷ So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. ⁸ Of clean animals, of animals that *are* unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth, ⁹ two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰ And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth. ¹¹ In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. ¹² And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.

4. THREE ANGELS APPEARING TO ABRAHAM

Genesis 18:1-15 (New King James Version)

¹ Then the Lord appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. ² So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw *them*, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, ³ and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. ⁴ Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. ⁵ And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant." They said, "Do as you have said."

⁶ So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead *it* and make cakes." ⁷ And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave *it* to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it. ⁸ So he took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate.

⁹ Then they said to him, "Where *is* Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, in the tent."

¹⁰ And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son."

(Sarah was listening in the tent door which *was* behind him.) ¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; *and* Sarah had passed the age of childbearing.

¹² Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, “After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?”

¹³ And the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I surely bear *a child*, since I am old?’ ¹⁴ Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.”

¹⁵ But Sarah denied *it*, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid. And He said, “No, but you did laugh!”

Inscription around the frame:

“Vellet ut Divinum ad Ipsius Humanum propius accederet et quod Humanum Ipsius propius ad Divinum.”

“He desired that the Divine should draw nearer to His Human and His Human nearer to the Divine.”

Emanuel Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia* 2137

5. BETHLEHEM

Luke 2:4-7 (New King James Version)

⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. ⁶ So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

6-8. ANNUNCIATION TO SHEPHERDS

Luke 2:8-14 (New King James Version)

⁸ Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

9. ANNUNCIATION TO MARY

Luke 1:26-38 (New King James Version)

²⁶ Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name *was* Mary. ²⁸ And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored *one*, the Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women!"

²⁹ But when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. ³⁰ Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. ³³ And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴ Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

³⁵ And the angel answered and said to her, "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.* ³⁶ Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. ³⁷ For with God nothing will be impossible."

³⁸ Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

10. SUPPER AT EMMAUS

Luke 24:28-35 (New King James Version)

²⁸ Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. ²⁹ But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them.

³⁰ Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.

³² And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" ³³ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were* with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ And they told about the things *that had happened* on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

11-12. ANNUNCIATION TO MARY

See number 9

13. DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

(Based on 12th c. Spanish capital at Glencairn Museum)

John 19:38-42 (New King James Version)

³⁸ After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave *him* permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. ³⁹ And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. ⁴¹ Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation *Day*, for the tomb was nearby.

14. THREE ANGELS APPEARING TO ABRAHAM

See number 4

15. JOSEPH REVEALING HIS TRUE IDENTITY TO HIS BROTHERS (STUDY)

See number 1

16. "ELI, ELI"

Mathew 27:45-50 (New King James Version)

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

⁴⁷ Some of those who stood there, when they heard *that*, said, "This Man is calling for Elijah!" ⁴⁸ Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled *it* with sour wine and put *it* on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink.

⁴⁹ The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him."

⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

17. HE GAVE UP THE SPIRIT

John 19:28-30 (New King James Version)

²⁸ After this, Jesus, knowing^[e] that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!” ²⁹ Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth. ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

18. THE THREE CROSSES

Luke 23:32-34 (New King James Version)

³² There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. ³³ And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.”

19. ANNUNCIATION TO SHEPHERDS (STUDY)

See number 6

20. BAPTISM OF CHRIST

(Based on 12th c. French capital at Glencairn Museum)

Mark 1:9-11 (New King James Version)

⁹ It came to pass in those days *that* Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. ¹¹ Then a voice came from heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

21. ANNUNCIATION TO SHEPHERDS (STUDY)

See number 6

22. SUPPER AT EMMAUS (STUDY)

See number 10

QUOTES BY THE ARTIST

Painting aims at the universal with the hope that each individual can find his identification with it. Teaching aims at the individual with the hope of developing the universal.

Ideally paintings add to a room something spiritual, that is, something genuinely human. One may hang a painting and have thereafter on his wall a window to the soul.

In the end it is not what we paint pictures *of* but what we paint and look at pictures *from* that is the real issue.

To me, the very strength of painting is that it is static – monumental. It doesn't change, we do.

The artist takes inert materials and with them makes a fleeting moment permanent.

“Bethlehem” intends to evoke a quality of mind; one within a person where a genuine idea, that is, something of God, can be born.

While analyzing the appeal a picture has for us, we must ask – to what in us is the picture making its appeal? The answer to this will determine the type of friendship we are, thereafter, to have with it.

The great thing about art is it isn't necessary. We are moved deeply by the fact that the artist didn't have to do it.

The Appearance of the Angel to the Shepherds would represent an idea born; the angel is an idea “appearing,” the shepherds are the trauma of change an idea might occasion in one's life. The sheep is reflection on the phenomenon.

The product [of art] is love formally stated. The most sublime form of physically adorning space.

The discipline the artist must develop with constancy is that of discerning the angelic from the worldly in his environment.