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"For I Will Consider My Cat Jeoffry" is a poem Christopher Smart wrote about the cats of another time. Though he makes references to "Jeoffry" his underlying connotation is towards felines in a biblical sense. He will cover both their physical and metaphysical characteristics. He shows their worship of a higher being as well as their worship of themselves and others.

In his beginning lines, "For at the first glance of the glory of God in the east he worships in his way," shows Jeoffry as a servant of the sun because at the first sign of the sun he goes into his routine, following the sun around his house. He circles a spot many times to find the perfect position to lie. Once he's found the perfect resting spot in the sun he immediately springs to his feet at the opportunity to enjoy some catnip. This catnip is the ultimate enjoyment by a cat, the perfect answer to his prayers. He rolls around doing tricks to expend the newly found energy. After he has paid his homage to the sun and has received his reward he begins to tend to himself.

"For this he performs in ten degrees." While this poem has an underlying correlation to God, as we have our Ten Commandments, a cat has his own ten rules that can't be broken. "First he looks upon his fore-paws to see if they are clean", the first act that all cats do is to make sure their paws are clean before moving on to other parts of themselves. "For secondly he kicks up behind to clear away there", this is simply the act of him cleaning his backside. "For thirdly he works it upon stretch with the fore-paws

extended", this is the act of him stretching his muscles. " For fourthly he sharpens his paws by wood", cats like to keep their claws sharpened.

" For fifthly he washes himself," he continues his bath with the rest of his body. " For sixthly he rolls upon wash," when he finishes his bath he basks in his cleanliness by rolling around. " For seventhly he fleas himself, that he may not be interrupted upon the beat," he briskly takes care of that one final itch before going out on the prowl. " For eighthly he rubs himself against a post," he satisfies his urges by indulging in a back rub. " For ninthly he looks up for his instructions, " when done with himself he thinks of his caretaker and waits for him in perfect stillness to receive guidance from his master. " For tenthly he goes in quest of food," all his activity has made him hungry and he must go find nourishment.

The cat has worshipped God through the sun and has tended to himself - now he will regard others around him. " For if he meets another cat he will kiss her in kindness," Jeoffry is friendly to all of his peers. " For when he takes his pray he plays with it to give it a chance." By doing this he shows acts of kindness and sportsmanship to his quarry, for one mouse in seven escapes by his dallying. Now that the day's activities are done he turns to his nightly duties. " For he keeps the Lord's watch in the night against the adversary." Just as a cat is active during the day, he becomes more active during the night as he is a nocturnal creature. He fights the forces of evil with the fur on his back standing on end and with his glowing yellow eyes. " For he counteracts the Devil, who is death, by brisking about the life," this is portrayed by the cat's love of life, his attitude towards the world. He takes

nothing for granted and enjoys all of life's pleasures. At least Jeoffry did as much as possible. " For in his morning orisons he loves the sun and the sun loves him," this simply ties back to him loving God and God loving him.

" For he is of the tribe of tiger. For the Cherub Cat is a term of the Angel Tiger." In this line the cat is being characterized as an angelic and noble animal. From an analogy standpoint of hissing, he possesses the characteristics of the serpent. But these characteristics are generally withdrawn. " For he will not do destruction if he is well-fed, neither will he spit without provocation, " just as he suppresses his darker quality with his hissing he does not wantonly destroy things. "For he purrs in thankfulness when God tells him he's a good cat," simply put, he accepts praise for his good deeds from his master. " For he is an instrument for the children to learn benevolence upon." All these characteristics of the cat show children how they should act. Though I don't see a cat spitting I feel that Smart may have included hissing as a symbol for cursing. As with wonton destruction, he is trying to steer children towards angelic behavior. " For every house is incomplete without him, and a blessing is lacking in the spirit." If the cat is the spirit of good behavior, then every household should have one.

At this point in the poem the author begins to steer away from talking specifically about his cat, Jeoffry, and more about cats in general. According to Smart, the lord commanded Moses to consider the cats of Egypt when leading the Israelites from captivity, for every family had at least one. In this he is saying that like the Israelites, cats are innocents and good creatures. He then goes on to say that English cats are the better of all cats in Europe.

They are the cleanest of any animal that walks on all fours, the most dexterous, one of the quickest, most patient, and are a combination of seriousness and fun. This is all because he knows God his is master, he is one of God's loved creatures. A sleeping cat is peaceful and precious, but when awake there is nothing more energetic and lively.

At this point in the poem Smart is giving homage to felines. Smart seems to be going on praising the cats qualities as possible justification for God to keep Jeoffry around longer as he fallen upon tough times. While these characteristics describe most cats Smart is saying that Jeoffry is a very peaceful and smart creature, he can do useful tasks such as bring his master things and he can do tricks upon command. " He can jump from an eminence into his master's bosom. For he can catch the cork and toss it again." Here Smart is saying that Jeoffry is capable of being dependent and loving or he can amuse himself just as easily. He has the ability to sniff out the " hypocrites and miser," a sort of sixth sense. Smart characterizes cats as angelic and noble, though some people continue to have an unjustified dislike for them. Smart jokes about the discovery of electricity through Jeoffry. Metaphorically speaking, it is this energy that maintains all living creatures. The cat is extremely resourceful, though he can not fly, he can climb well, and though he hates water he can swim if it means his life.

These animals depict how the world should be. Cats are servants of God and respect their masters. They portray the more respectable characteristics of man. They are noble and good-natured and care about all those around them. They protect and bring blessings upon their households. The cat

misunderstood by many but revered by some. In this poem Christopher Smart shows the cat as the antithesis of everything in the world that is great about existence.