

The New Church Newsletter

Hurstville Society

November 2011

The Nature Of Temptation Or How Evil Spirits Attack Us

A Favourite Passage - by Rev. Glenn Alden

The passage I have chosen to talk about this month is very different from the ones I have discussed in previous months. This is not a "warm and fuzzy - the Lord loves everyone" kind of passage. It talks about evil spirits and the way they attack and try to destroy us. I have chosen it because I have found it personally helpful and practical. It helps me to understand where feelings of despair and self-loathing come from.

"Anyone who is being tested is unsure of the end. The end is love, and love is what evil spirits and evil demons attack, throwing the end into doubt. The more love the victim has, the more doubt they cast. If the cherished end did not become doubtful, even to the point of despair, there would be no struggle. Certainty about the outcome precedes victory and is a part of victory."
(Swedenborg Secrets of Heaven 1820)

The most encouraging part of this teaching to me, is that evil spirits only attack what we love. Now it is not encouraging that evil spirits attack us, but it is encouraging that if we are being attacked it is because we love. The loves that they attack are the good loves that the Lord is trying to implant in us.

If I am trying to become a more honest person and I aspire to love and speak the truth, the evil spirits see that love in me and they attack it. If I didn't love they wouldn't attack. The Lord allows the attack because fighting for what we love and grieving the potential loss of those loves attaches them to us and makes them our own.

We also grow in our aversion to evil, dishonesty, and to the self-centeredness that these evils are attached to. As the feelings of despair in temptation become stronger and we feel like we are going to fail, that is when we turn to the Lord for help. Feeling hopeless and powerless allows us to give the credit for our salvation to the Lord instead of thinking we did it all ourselves.

Knowing that evil spirits attack what we love does not enable us to avoid temptation. We will experience despair and hopelessness. But when the trial is over we can look back and understand how the Lord has been working to save us by implanting good loves.

Secrets of Heaven #1820 is a long passage (with only a short excerpt quoted above), but it contains much useful information about the way evil spirits work, and the things they attack in us. I hope you will enjoy going back and re-reading it, time and again, as I do.

Response to Meditation

by Margaret Heldon

Thank you to Mary Alden for her interesting article called Meditation in the last Newsletter (October 2011). My experience is quite different. I thought readers might like to hear another perspective on the subject.

First, here is a bit of information about meditation. From Wikipedia, the free internet encyclopaedia:

There are dozens of specific styles of meditation practice; the word meditation may carry different meanings in different contexts. Meditation has been practiced since antiquity as a component of numerous religious traditions.

And at <http://www.healthandyoga.com/html/meditation.html> I found this:

Meditation means awareness. Whatever you do with awareness is meditation. "Watching your breath" is meditation; listening to the birds is meditation. As long as these activities are free from any other distraction to the mind, it is effective meditation. . . .

The word meditation, is derived from two Latin words: meditari (to think, to dwell upon, to exercise the mind) and mederi (to heal). Its Sanskrit derivation 'medha' means wisdom.

I've had several people say to me they can't meditate. If you fall into this category it may be you have a preconceived idea of meditation and it's not for you. My hope is that this article will give you encouragement to have a go. I can guarantee the benefits that are gained will enhance your life. What I am going to relate was a gradual process for me. Initially I wasn't even aware that I was meditating.

In brief, this is my story. Almost four years ago I made a life changing decision to look after someone who was helpless. I left my family and home in Sydney to do this. It was like my life had begun all over. It was possible for me to get up early and go for a walk on the beautiful property where I was staying. It kept me sane. The challenges I faced were overwhelming but I believe in God and I turned to Him in earnest.

Soon I found myself spending some of my walk sitting on various logs (or rocks) praying. They were my prayer logs. It felt right to face the sun in the east, perhaps because I had been taught that the Lord is the Sun of Heaven, and that way I would be giving Him my full attention. I would begin by breathing deeply to relax and when I was ready I would say the Lord's Prayer to myself, synching it with my breathing in and out. Finally, I would concentrate on being a willing vessel for the Lord to flow in. He always did. Little thoughts and messages would come to me to help me through my day. I came to depend on this. For the first time in my life I began to understand what it meant to trust in the Lord.

Now I am back with my family and have brought that helpless someone with me. The Lord has led me in all of this. I continue my early morning walks but now they are in my local bush area. I have found special places to meditate each day because I know this is how I connect with the Lord. The actual walking is part of the process. Apparently your brain is in a meditative state when walking.

Here are some quotes that help explain to me how meditating in nature allows the Lord to guide me. However, I believe I now have the skill to meditate anywhere when I feel the need. Mary is right when she says practise, practise, practise! Also for me, constant prayer. If the willingness is there to open a channel to the Lord, He will provide.

"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature -- the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter." (Rachel Carson, Biologist, Writer and Ecologist. 1907 - 1964)

"The things in nature are nothing but effects; their causes are in the spiritual world." (Secrets of Heaven 5711 Emanuel Swedenborg)

The Kempton Project **A New Church Translation of the Sacred Scripture** ***And Much More*** Reviewed by Owen Heldon

The Hurstville Society has obtained a copy of the first English translation of the Sacred Scripture or Word of God made in the light of the Heavenly Doctrines (i.e. A New Church translation of the entire Word). This is a hefty tome, a large print volume with an impressive red cover with gold lettering and is one of only 415 copies printed¹, brought back to Australia by **Mike Lockhart** returning from his recent visit to Bryn Athyn (see News Notes).

This translation is the result of 20 years of work by the current editors (Rev Stephen Cole, Rev Andy Heilman, Roy Odhner, Kate Pitcairn and Rev Lawson Smith) based on the work of some of the foremost sacred language scholars of the New Church in the past 200 years, notably John Clowes and Louis H Tafel. Not only is this translation closer to the original languages, which is the style of the Heavenly Doctrine itself, but it has also corrected some major doctrinal errors introduced shortly after the Council of Nicea.

But wait there's more: As impressive as this new copy of the Word is, to me the website the Kempton Project has set up is even more impressive. Go to:

<http://www.kemptonproject.org>

I found the most exciting discovery was being able to select a passage from the Word and click "Study". This brings up the new translation of the Word on the left side of the screen and the ability to display any of the references in the Writings relating to this passage instantly at the click of the mouse on the right side of the screen. In most cases multiple translations of the passages of the Writings are available and even the Latin as well if you are a language scholar.

This makes it possible to research what the Writings say about a passage of the Word in a couple of seconds instead of the painstaking task it used to be of looking up Potts's Concordance or Searle's Index and then flicking through pages of multiple books of the Writings. It is also free!

This copy of the Word will be on display at the Society Meeting on 6th November.

Footnote: ¹ This copy is a limited edition of only 415 copies. The reason for this is because this is being treated as an "advance copy" so that any errors picked up by readers can be corrected in a revised final edition to be printed in the future on thinner paper which will substantially reduce the size of the book and keep it down to a reasonable cost. But the copy of the Word we have obtained looks most impressive to me.

The style of the Word is the Divine style itself, with which no other style can be compared, however sublime and excellent it may seem. The style of the Word is such that there is a holiness in every sentence and in every word, and even in some places in the very letters, and thereby the Word conjoins man with the Lord and opens heaven.

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Calendar Notes

In November we will resume the **Ten Commandments** series on Monday evenings at **8 pm** with a **dinner** preceding the class at **7 pm** on the **14th**.

Please make an effort to attend the **Society Meetings** on **6th November**. This will be a double meeting, our regular bi-annual meeting normally held in October followed by the AGM. Every effort will be made to streamline the meetings.

News Notes

Mike Lockhart has returned after attending his 50th Class reunion in Bryn Athyn and was the MC for the celebrations! He had a great time catching up with family and friends. Kerry remained at home and managed the business but was very relieved when he was back to take over again.

Lori Heldon spent eight days with her mom **Endrede Gladish** in Bryn Athyn, helping her in many ways. She was fortunate to be in town to attend the resurrection service for **Rev Mauro DePadua** who died tragically of a heart attack at age 45. She also had two days of visit time with her sister, **Marci Sopko** and her family in New York.

The Manse has received some further refurbishment in the last few days with more painting and carpeting throughout the upstairs. All we need now is for some good news regarding the immigration status of our new pastor **Rev Todd Beiswenger**.

Rev Glenn and **Mary Alden** are spending two weeks touring New Zealand and enjoying the stunning scenery the country has to offer. Glenn will also take the service in Auckland on Sunday 30th October.



Glenn & Mary sent the following message in a recent email. "We are absolutely blown away by our trip here to New Zealand. Having a wonderful time, have seen penguins, seals, & dolphin while sea Kayaking. Love the farmland and beautiful mountains and ocean vistas."

Birthdays

Happy Birthday to **Cliff Adamou** (2nd), **Jesse Horner** (3rd), **Brian Heldon** (8th), **Mary Alden** (9th), **Cathy Kermond** (11th), **Skye Horner** (11th), and **Lori Heldon**(30th)

November 2011 Calendar of Events

<p>Note: All events are located at the church at 22 Dudley St, Penshurst 2222 (off Hillcrest Ave) unless otherwise stated. Contact the Hurstville New Church on (02) 9580 1589 for more information or email us at newchurch@optusnet.com.au All are welcome and refreshments are served after church each Sunday.</p>		
Sunday	6th November	10 00 a.m. Worship followed by Society Mtg & AGM
Monday	7th November	8 pm Ten Commandments class
Sunday	13th November	10 00 a.m. Worship (Holy Supper)
Monday	17th November	7 pm Dinner then Class 10 Commandments
Sunday	20th November	10 00 a.m. Worship
Monday	21st November	8 pm Ten Commandments class
Sunday	27th November	10 00 a.m. Worship followed by Property Trust Mtg
Monday	28th November	8 pm Ten Commandments class