

pattern. As stated earlier, we are very close to the Lord in temptations, but we still have to do it 'as if we were alone'.

A note.

I realise that these Notes are not following the same pattern with which I started. I apologise for this, but in the beginning I just had no idea how this course would develop and I wanted to encourage each reader to do it more or less as it comes to him/her. These Notes, I hope will help, but do not use them too rigidly : let your thoughts lead you whichever way they will. I confess that each Session so far had brought me new surprises (and some difficulties), but it does not seem the right idea to decide just how everything is going to be done before we know how it may turn out. So bear with me, I do not know what will happen, but we need to pray for guidance, trusting that we shall be given the right answers when we need them.

The Lord bless you,

Christopher Hasler

United Search for Divine Providence



Session 7

Every person is taught by the Lord by means of the Word, and yet does not feel the operation of Providence but should acknowledge it.

**The 4th Law of Divine Providence -
The Lord leads teaches every person by means of the Word
and doctrines, and yet it feels that we are doing this by
ourselves. (DP 154-174)**

In this Session we shall deal with the 4th and 5th Laws of Divine Providence. To have a clear concept of these fundamental laws is very important, because the rest of the book is based on them, and everything will then become much easier.

We live in a world which is in deep turmoil and is divided into many conflicting ideologies. You may know that song about God: "He's got the whole wide world, in His hand" but alas, it does not look like it at present. In our study we shall find out how the Lord controls everything by means of His Providence, and yet, we must not be aware of it in any way. That may seem strange at first, but I will ask you at this point to read a short story which will explain this quite simply. But while reading it imagine that you are Moses and the Lord has given you a difficult task to do: to marshal all your feelings and thoughts and to lead them to the Promised Land (or heaven). But at crucial times, in temptations, you seem to lose the presence of God and you seem to be completely in the dark. What is going on? Now please read **Exodus 33:12-23**. Afterwards think for a while what it may mean in your life.

So there we are, apparently left on our own and in the dark, in the cleft of the rock and covered up! But that is not the reality, because the Lord is

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never closer to us than when we are tempted. We have to take some hard decisions and we really are 'squeezed' in a cleft of temptations, in darkness and seemingly alone and frightened. In fact the Lord is covering us up with His hand. The book we are studying goes into minute details as to what happens during temptations, and why we need to be 'in the dark' and feel completely alone. But that is only an appearance. The Lord is there and provides an equilibrium in which we can tip the scales in whichever way we want. We also learn that if we did feel the operation of Providence, we would immediately react against it. We would no longer feel free, or even human. We would feel that we have no other alternative but to do what the Lord has decided is right for us. There would be anger and resentment. So what exactly is the Lord doing to us? He is only holding us in an equilibrium: "I will cover you with my hand, until I have passed by" – that is, until we have decided which way we want to go. Let me assure you, we are free to decide to lead a hellish life and the Lord will not stop us. He also knows the consequences of our decision and is already providing for them. But the responsibility is ours; so remember: "I myself am to blame if I do anything which I know is against the commandments." Unless the Lord held the balances in His hand, the hells would simply swamp us and we would never be free to decide anything.

If we have taken wrong decisions, the Lord never abandons us. When we were young, we probably disagreed many times with the rules and advice of our parents and yearned to do our own thing. If things had turned out badly our parents still cared for us and sheltered us. That was the Lord fuelling their love with His Divine mercy for His creation.

While we are reading this book, let us just pause for a moment to see what is happening. First of all, we are beginning to have a much better concept of the Lord's nature. But since we were created in his image and likeness, we are also getting to know ourselves! See 157.

Think about it: Heaven is always close to us and angels are aware of our uniqueness and individuality. (164) We receive enlightenment whenever we sincerely turn to the Lord and read and meditate on His Word. It really is inspiring to realise that the Lord alone teaches us and enlightens us. No teacher or preacher can really do that, though s/he may move us; the inner self is entirely in the Lord's hands alone. (162-174)

The 5th Law -

The Lord does not let us see or be aware of the operation of Providence, but still we should know about it and acknowledge it. (DP 175-190)

We have touched on this already, but we may doubt that we would react so strongly if we perceived the operation of the Lord's Providence. Would it not be just wonderful and would we not welcome it? Well, unfortunately, no we would not. It would soon feel like an intrusion and interference in our life, against our personality. This is stressed a number of times. We would soon be in revolt, because we would realise that the Lord is trying to lead us away from all the things that are dear to us. We might even do worse things just to prove we can. Therefore the Lord leads us gently, imperceptibly, away from our inclinations and habits of many years. But the gentle influence does teach us that when we are a little bit less selfish, and less demanding that everyone does things 'My way!', then a sense of peace enters our hearts, and the unselfish life carries many of its rewards. We realise we can do many things to bring a happier atmosphere all round (183). This is quite a difficult section to read and absorb, but it provides such a deep, psychological insight into the way the Lord leads each one of us into heaven and towards Himself.

Meditation and Prayers without words -

Psalm 25 – Read this Psalm slowly, one verse at a time and sense how each one establishes a close relationship with the Lord. Invite Him into your life and acknowledge those dark moments when you felt you were utterly alone. Yet He was there at every step.

Psalm 119 - This is the longest Psalm and has 22 sections of 8 verses each. In the Original each verse of each section begins with one and the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet, so verses 1-8 all begin with an **A**, 9-16 with a **B**, etc. New Church doctrines explain that the spiritual sense of this Psalm contains the prayers of Jesus to the Father, even from His earliest days when the Divine within Him seemed distant. Who else could say the words in verses 97-101? You may like to read one section a day and feel close to the Lord as a young boy and man beginning to realise that He had a very great task before Him. And He did feel weak and was often filled with fear that He might not be able to overcome those human inclinations He had from His human inheritance. While all this was experienced on a deeper level, yet our temptations do follow the same