

Mediation of the Prophet Haggai (only 2 chapters!). However, they are concerned with the rebuilding of the Church within us. This is represented by rebuilding the Temple, but we have to put material concepts behind us. Only the spiritual 'Church' within us can ever be truly everlasting. But to attain it, there has to be a lot of tearing down the old structures which need to be replaced by the New Temple, the New Jerusalem. Haggai becomes very personal. Read the prophet once a week this month and see if your attitudes change as you become aware of your inner development.

Christopher Hasler

United Search for Divine Providence



Session 9

Divine Providence regards eternal and not temporal things, except so far as they can accord with eternal things.

Divine Providence always regards eternal things (DP 214-220)

Rather a formidable title! But a word of advice: before you start reading the text, first have a look at the *TABLE OF CONTENTS* at the beginning of the book and read carefully the headings for 214-220. You will then have a better picture of the ideas we shall be covering. This is rather like examining a map before setting out on a new journey - so that you don't get lost.

Section 1 (215) Please begin by reading Luke 12:13-21, which summarises this Session in a short parable. Take a few minutes to think about it, or discuss it if you are in a group. Take note of its simplicity, yet the punch line is very direct! (verse 20) Notice also that in ancient times people had values, which lasted beyond the grave. Those who were close to heaven looked to being useful to others. Our present ambitions are very different, yet 'ambition' should not be regarded as a dirty word! We would achieve nothing without it. No artist would produce great works; no teacher would develop necessary skill, etc. Think about your ambitions for a few moments. Can you identify them? There is no need to discuss them, as long as you know what they are! Sometime this month read Habakkuk chapter 2, which is a marvellous description of very wrong ambitions.

Section 2 (216-217) It is good to learn that dignities, honours and wealth are not in themselves a curse, but in the right circumstances, may be a blessing! Many millionaires have set up trusts which saved and healed

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millions of lives. This is a very practical section and a very important lesson for today's world. In fact in 217:4 we are told that 'trading and exchange of goods' go on between heavenly societies! That is not really so surprising, since our talents will blossom beyond our wildest dreams, and we shall want to share them with others. This is almost a necessity of our continuing development. Beautiful objects remind us of the Lord's love and our gratitude to Him. But equally, notice the warning in 217:7 – in other words, 'You can't take it with you! Remind yourself from time to time about the Lord's 'ambition' for you! And isn't the present state of the world just the best time to look at it? Many people seem to hold on to their early goals and never change them.

Read Genesis 2:7 Just a single verse, but it sums up what we are! Abraham felt it when he was speaking in prayer: Genesis 18:27 and Psalm 103:8-18.

Section 3 (218-219) Surprising paragraphs, because they tell us that the Lord makes use of temporal things and in fact only He can bring them together with infinite things and that is good news from our point of view. In a sense, we shall always have *terra firma* under our feet. It will always be our foundation. It would be a great pity if we took a dislike to everything to do with the earth, our first home. Let us by all means love and cherish this cradle of our humanity. To reject it is like spitting into the face of our mother. These are two lovely paragraphs which establish our identity, but also remind us that only the Lord alone can maintain for us the right balance between the infinite and the eternal. When you consider such a thought it is as if you were filled with some other-worldly vibrations buzzing through you. Can you feel them? This is not simply an intellectual exercise; you are sensing the tremor of life itself! It is the way the 'Lord conjoins Himself to us by means of appearances.'

It is not as if the Lord was some sort of a filling station or a battery charger. His is a constant presence and continual influx of life, experienced as love and light. Without Him we would not just simply stop doing what we are doing. We would cease to be: Full Stop. And yet, we enjoy what is called 'real appearance'. This means that we really, really feel that life is our own. "It is me, that's what I am!" But there is a mention of something in subsection 219:6, which is remarkable because it is so very brief! This union, or conjunction we have with the Lord happens through correspondences! Now to us, who were brought up in the New Church, correspondences are those concepts by means of which we can begin to understand the spiritual meaning of the Word. For example, the

Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:1-9 and Mark 4:1-9 and explained in Matt 13:18-23 and Mark 4:11-15. What are we to make of these most important passages which are the key to understanding what the spiritual sense of the Word is all about? It is quite amazing that the Lord was by no means explaining to farmers how and where they ought to cast seeds to have a good harvest. They knew that better than anyone. And the disciples realised this and asked, "Now what is the real meaning of that story?" And they were rewarded with a very important key to all parables, and all stories in the Word. These are all about the inner realities of our life and how we can reap a rich spiritual harvest. Therefore everything has to do with 'correspondences', those inner vibrations as the Lord conjoins us with Him. We should all be buzzing with Divine vibrations when the Word is expounded! And that is dealt with in the next paragraph.

Section (220) Please read first John 12:23-26, another of those passages which stir in your heart and lungs! And no, we should not be embarrassed by a touch of glory now and again! This natural shrine of our body was created for no other purpose but to sense the current of Divine Love passing through us. This is also the reason why no angel was created as such. We have first to enter through the natural gate so that we can really sense and appreciate what is spiritual and eternal. It is so much higher and better than we could ever be: in short it is the Divine Itself! And so our loving Father has created the optimum conditions for enjoyment and happiness. The Divine and temporal things are united, and that is only possible in people who can learn and understand this divine magic of human happiness and ecstasy! We are honoured by it. And that, in a nutshell is what the Divine Providence is all about.

Meditation and Prayers without words

This Session asks you to realise that you are the connection between the outermost material creation, and you can sense how your body is structured on a hard bony scaffold and crowned with the dome of the skull where the brain, the most complicated computer, lies. It connects you with most sublime thoughts and sensations of love that are too intense to be described adequately. We can sense eternity, and know that your Creator loves you infinitely, notwithstanding the fact that He loves every other person as fully. We can sense the real brotherhood of all people.