

The New Church Newsletter

Hurstville Society June 2006

The Aramaic language is a language of the Middle East. It belongs to the Semitic family of languages, along with Hebrew and Arabic. The earliest evidence of Aramaic dates from about 900 BC. Jesus Christ and His disciples spoke Aramaic. World Book Encyclopaedia

This language was the basis of five discussion classes on the Lord's Prayer offered by Roslyn Taylor during her visit to the Hurstville Society. We have asked Ros to summarise these classes for our newsletter, which she has kindly done in the following article. Her presentations were a parallel comparison of the teachings of the Writings of the New Church on the Lord's Prayer with the scholar Douglas-Klotz's study of the Aramaic prayer. The beautiful sound of the language and the shades of meanings in the words touched our affections. The body prayers (explained in Ros's article) added another dimension. As we all said the King James version of the Lord's prayer together at the conclusion of each session our appreciation of the prayer was deepened and enhanced. We thank Ros for sharing her experiences with us, which she did with sincerity, reverence and love.

The Lord's Prayer: Awareness and Meditation

Roslyn Taylor

In the last few years, my experience of praying the Lord's Prayer has been revolutionized, and incredibly deepened. As those readers know who attended the recent classes about this prayer in both Hurstville and Perth, this change came about after I read *Prayers of the Cosmos: Meditations on the Aramaic Words of Jesus*, by Neil Douglas-Klotz (Harper Collins, New York, 1990.) Douglas-Klotz explains that Jesus spoke in Aramaic, including of course when he taught his disciples the way they should pray. The Aramaic language may be derived from Hebrew but is more likely derived from more ancient Middle Eastern roots. Like Hebrew, it expresses many layers of meaning due to its root and pattern system. Sometimes a word may have several seemingly unrelated meanings, but on reflection an inner connection becomes apparent. Douglas-Klotz also points out that Aramaic has sound meaning that can resonate in the body, as other ancient languages do.

Aramaic New Testament texts known as Peshitta, meaning simple or true, were preserved and used in the Syrian Christian church since at least the second century AD. Some controversy exists regarding the age and authority of the Peshitta texts, but regardless the language is closer to Jesus' spoken words than the Greek texts used in the Western Christian church which have also been preserved in the Lord's Providence. The Eastern Orthodox church believes all the gospels were in fact first written in Aramaic, and then translated into Greek for the use of the Western European converts to Christianity. It is the Peshitta texts of the New Testament that Douglas-Klotz uses to find the actual words spoken by Jesus as he taught his followers, including us, how to pray.

The book offers possible new translations and layers of meaning within the Lord's Prayer, all from the original Aramaic words. It also offers body prayers for each line of the prayer, as a way to access the body resonance of the language, and as an embodied meditation on the deeper meanings of the prayer. As I read and experienced these built-in deeper meanings, I was sometimes stunned at how closely they echoed explanations in the Writings about the

Lord's Prayer. Further reading in the Writings showed, not surprisingly, some obvious instances of congruity between the explanation given in the Writings, and the meanings packed into the words - meanings that were obvious to the original audience and have been obvious to readers of the Peshitta over time. Not only that, but both Douglas-Klotz and the Writings address the layers of meaning within the original language of the Word, and how the meaning layers work.

Consider this from Arcana Coelestia 6619, concerning the Lord's Prayer in general:

[T]he contents of that prayer hold more within them than the whole of heaven is capable of understanding; also that people find more in it, the more their thought is opened towards heaven.

Arcana 9349 addresses the nature of the ancient languages used to record God's Word:

Therefore also in the Lord's Divine Providence it has happened that every jot and tittle of the Word, especially in the Old Testament, has been preserved since it was written. I have been shown from heaven that in the Word not only each word but also each letter, indeed - incredibly so - each small part of a letter in the original language has an inner holiness, as angels of the inmost heaven are able to perceive.

And so I offer you several new ways to appreciate the Lord's Prayer, hoping that your experience of praying this sacred prayer may be enhanced and deepened. First, there is a transcription of the Aramaic words Jesus used when he taught this prayer, followed by one possible translation from the many possible, due to the richness of meaning in the Aramaic words. This is followed by another possible version of the prayer, constructed from statements and phrases in the Writings that unpack the inner meaning of the words. Finally, there is a series of body prayers, one for each line of the prayer, which can be used as a meditative way to experience the depth of meaning in this most important prayer.

[The following versions of the Lord's Prayer are not meant to replace the traditional King James prayer but are offered to assist with a deeper understanding and awareness. Ed]

The Lord's Prayer, transcribed from the Aramaic
(from Prayers of the Cosmos)

Abwoon d'bwashmaya
Our Father who art in the heavens

Nethqadash shmakh
hallowed be Thy name

Teytey malkuthakh
Thy kingdom come

Nehwey tzevyanach aykanna d'bwashmaya aph b'arha.
Thy will be done, as in heaven, so upon the earth

Hawvlan lachma d'sunqanan yaomana.
Give us this day our daily bread

Washboqlan khaubayn (wakhtahayn) aykanna daph khnan shbwoqan l'khayabayn.
And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors

Wela tahlan l'nesyuna
And lead us not into temptation

Ela patzan min bisha.
but deliver us from evil

Metol dilakhie malkutha wahayla wateshbukhta l'ahlam almin.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.

Ameyn
Amen

The Lord's Prayer: One Possible Translation from the Aramaic (from Prayers of the Cosmos)	The Lord's Prayer: One Possible Version from the Writings
O Birther! Father-Mother of the Cosmos,	Lord Jesus Christ, one with God, we have eternal life from You
Focus your light within us - make it useful:	May everything that is divine within You, and everything that proceeds from You, be kept holy.
Create your reign of unity now -	Help us to be joined with You through love.
Your one desire then acts with ours, as in all light, so in all forms.	We ask that our lives can become an image of heaven as we receive You in our hearts and souls.
Grant what we need each day in bread and insight.	We trust You to move us continually towards an everlasting state of happiness.
Loose the cords of mistakes binding us, as we release the strands we hold of others' guilt.	In your total mercy, prepare us to admit and detest our evil ways and start a new life, while we look with mercy as You do on the lives of others.
Don't let surface things delude us, But free us from what holds us back.	You seem so far away as we struggle, yet we know you are present, freeing us from the evil we have chosen.
From you is born all ruling will, the power and the life to do, the song that beautifies all, from age to age it renews. Truly - power to these statements - may they be the ground from which all my actions grow:	Glorious truth emanates eternally from You and moves into creation, with power for never-ending goodness.
Amen.	Amen.

The Lord's Prayer: Body Prayers (adapted from *Prayers of the Cosmos*)

Abwoon/Father/Birther/Lord God Jesus Christ

Breathe in feeling the sound Ah; breathe out feeling the sound bwoon. Inhale, feeling newness and nourishment coming into your heart-lung area. Exhale, feeling everything old and unwanted leaving with your breath.

Nethqadash/Holy/Useful/Divine

Relax and feel the shrine created by your heartbeat and breathing. Take one long deep breath, remembering the holy of holies within. The holy Name can become hallowed again, with every breath, in an instant.

Malkuthakh/Kingdom/Reign/Joining

When in need of healing or rest, or in emotional turmoil, return to your heart-shrine. Let whatever feelings emerge be OK, and accepted by the Breath of Life within your own breathing. Gradually allow the breathing, yours and God's together, to become more rhythmic. Inhale from the One Source of healing; exhale to that part of yourself in need or in turmoil.

Tzevyanach/Will/Desire/Image

Remember a negative habitual response in your life, to work/relationships/life situation. Go to your heart-shrine, and clear a space for a new response. A new response or action may suggest itself to you that doesn't make sense, but it won't ever go against your conscience. Breathe Abwoon, and ask for confirmation. If confirmed, envision it so clearly you can feel yourself doing it in your body. Then when the situation arises again, act from your heart, from this new response, before your mind drags you back to a habitual response.

Lachma/Bread/Insight/Happiness

Intone the sound lachma slowly, feeling how the phrase becomes denser inside. We are reminded to take things step by step as we work through the issues of each day, not forcing beyond the needs of the time, but accepting today's manna only. Remember an issue or situation for which you need understanding or growth today. Keep it in mind as you continue to repeat lachma slowly. Notice what insight comes to your attention. Notice what you need for this moment of your life.

Washboqlan/Forgive/Release/New Life

Sit comfortably. Feel your heartbeat and pulse, focusing this time on its releasing power. Feel and visualise your blood bringing to your lungs what needs to be released this moment. Breathe out what needs to be released, breathe in new life and pulse it out to every cell. During "body forgiveness", feel your muscles relax, your blood vessels relax and improved blood flow, maybe even your psychological armour dissolving a little. Remember Jesus' words "This is my blood given for the untying of mistakes and failures."

Patzan/Deliver/Free/Present

Walk freely in a circle. With each step become more present just to your own footfalls, now. Walk simply being present. Be present with and accept any part of you that resists. Feel yourself fully and completely accepted in the presence of God.

L'ahlam/Forever/Age/Eternal

Breathe in and out, feeling the steps along the journey that the prayer has presented. Try to not focus on the concepts, but enter the inner temple of your heart with the feelings and body sensations the prayer has evoked, both pleasant and unpleasant. Gather them in and feel them as a whole, then let them slowly disperse again to their source in God's universe.

Our Commitment To Conjugal Love As The Precious Jewel Of Human Life.

A look at the General Church's efforts to value the teachings of Conjugal Love. Submitted by **Mary Smuts** in response to the article in the May issue entitled *Our Love Affair With Conjugal Love* by Roslyn Taylor.

The conjugal of one man with one woman is the precious jewel of human life and the repository of the Christian religion. After death conjugal love is imputed to everyone according to his/her spiritual rational life; and for that person to whom it is imputed after his/her decease, marriage in Heaven is provided, whatsoever may have been the nature of his/her marriage in the world. Conjugal Love 531

Whether or not a person has or has not conjugal love must not be judged from the appearance of marriage or scortation. "*Judge not that ye be not judged*" Matthew 7:1

The world has been gifted with the wonderful ideal of true marriage love and a whole book written by the Lord about it to help us attain this ideal. The General Church has recognised the value of it.

Of all the spheres emanating from the Lord the universal sphere is the Conjugal. (see CL 222)

Since *the purpose of creation is a Heaven from the Human race*, it is logical that the priority of studying and emphasising the Doctrine of Conjugal Love is one of our most precious and valuable teachings.

We in the New Church have the opportunity to try to develop healthy New Church families, where the institution of marriage may be upheld with rich truths from the Writings. In fact marriage can be regarded as more important than the individual "happiness" of each partner in it, (if discord or cold is experienced in the course of the marriage). In the passage of time with this in view it is possible for marriage love to be rekindled and the marriage to progress and be healed. (see CL 271)

Marriage is one of the most difficult and complex relationships as it involves a promise and commitment between two human beings with evil heredities. It involves being considerate and understanding to someone who is not of one's own gender and therefore may "miss" communicate (see "Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus" by John Gray). It involves the separate and yet combined regeneration attempts of two separate people, who may be at different stages of regeneration. It involves huge stresses and strains on each of the partners as children arrive and states change within each partner. It involves the continual temptations of the world to consider marriage as of no significance. It involves a huge commitment of time, energy, loyalty, hard work and forgiveness. It involves the greatest opportunity to regenerate as trials and tribulations of life together as a family interact with the individual partner.

The Hells are ever present trying to break down marriages as they are the king pin of a healthy society and the seminary of the human race. The devastating effects of a broken marriage on the children are to be avoided. Often by placing the institution above the idea of personal "happiness" the marriage can be salvaged. But only of course if both parties are willing.

The Writings speak very clearly to us that men and women are different but equal. They **together** can perform a wonderful use in procreation and bringing up their offspring. But men and women are opposites the men are representative of truths which are obvious. The women on the other hand are representative of goods which are often invisible and far less obvious. One can see this often in a marriage relationship where the Dad is harsher to the children disciplining with truth and the Mum softens this with love. It is seen in other areas of life as well.

It is unfortunate for those who find themselves in the position of being separated or divorced. There is heartsore and grief. There is often bitterness and regret. There may be some hatred and revenge. There is the ongoing problem of the ex partner's visits to children etc the grandparents, the extended family, the step family if there is a re-marriage.

This is no doubt a disorder. However no blame can be laid by the onlooker. No judgment can be made. Spiritual issues of others are not for us to discuss and ponder on. They are a matter only for the people concerned.

And as for the single folk who have not found their soul mate, they have the knowledge that they too have a part to play in remaining chaste and pure and longing for a relationship with one; whether they find the partner here on earth or in Heaven.

Conferences and workshops provided by the Church are therefore of fundamental importance to everyone whether married, separated, divorced, re-married, or single. The teachings apply to us all whether single, married, divorced or separated. Studying Conjugal Love, providing Marriage Conferences, developing awareness that conjugal love is the deepest love of all and that marriage excels all other uses, **is** vital for a Church where the Lord has said that marriage and religion go hand in hand (see CL 80).

Fortunately there is a church on God's earth today that has accepted the authority of the Writings and recognised the value of helping people maintain the ideal of Conjugal Love and bring it into their lives. And it does emphasise this ideal.

There is absolutely no advantage in downgrading the focus and emphasis on Conjugal Love. There would only be a turning away from the Lord, and an increase in disorder and evil.

And with this focus and emphasis, we await the day when the truths of the New Church spread throughout the world and engulf all other churches.

Then everyone will have the opportunity to live according to the wonderful teachings with which we have been gifted.

Appointment of Lay Leaders

[In response to the recommendation of the Society meeting on 30/04/2006]

As Executive Bishop of the General Church of the New Jerusalem, I recognize Mr. Owen Heldon and Mr. Murray Heldon as the lay leaders of the Hurstville Society of the General Church of the New Jerusalem.

In the absence of a resident Pastor, the Messrs. Heldon will act on the behalf of the Hurstville Congregation in matters relating to the church, and serve as liaisons with the General Church Bishop and business offices.

Thomas L. Kline

New Church Day

There will be a **Progressive Dinner** beginning at **6 pm** on **Saturday 17th June** at **Lori** and **Murray Heldon's** house, 35 O'Briens Rd Hurstville with drinks and hors d'oeuvres. This will be followed by the main course at **Baringa** and will finish at the home of **Kerry** and **Mike Lockhart's** for dessert. A New Church Day programme will be incorporated into the evening and it will be a first chance for most people to meet **Rev Frank Rose** and his wife **Louise** newly arrived from Tucson Arizona. Cost for the evening is \$15 per person with \$10 for pensioners and students. RSVP to either Lori Heldon (9579 5248) or Kerry Lockhart (9570 4629) by Sunday 11th June.

Following the New Church Day service on **Sunday 18th June** we will have a Pot Luck lunch after church. *Please bring something savoury to share.* Drinks and dessert will be provided.

News Notes

Brand New Baby Hot off the press! **Robert Cooper** and his wife **Huiling** are the proud parents of a baby boy born Friday 25th May. Both mother and baby are doing well. Although they didn't make it in time Huiling's parents are due to arrive in Sydney shortly from China to see their first grandchild.

Congratulations also to **Robert Cooper** on being accepted into the Theological School in Bryn Athyn.

Also in news just to hand we are pleased to announce that **Rev Douglas Taylor** and his wife **Christine** will be serving the Hurstville Society for 4-6 months beginning in September after the departure of Rev Frank and Louise Rose.

June Birthdays

Happy Birthday to **Connor Hinds** (3rd), **Angela Heldon** (8th), **Michelle Heldon** (8th), **June Kirsten** (8th), **Isaak Horner** (17th), and **Greg Hinds** (23rd).=

June 2006 Calendar of Events

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.

Sunday	June 4th	10 00 a. m. Worship (Lay Service) followed by Property Trust Meeting
Friday	June 9th	6 00 p.m. Young People (at Roseville - to be confirmed)
Sunday	June 11th	10 00 a. m. Worship (Lay Service)
Thursday	June 15th	Rev Frank & Louise Rose arrive
Saturday	June 17th	6 00 p.m. Progressive Dinner
Sunday	June 18th	10 00 a. m. Worship (Rev Frank Rose) followed by Pot Luck Luncheon
Friday	June 23rd	7 30 p.m. Doctrinal Class (Rev Frank Rose) ("Living Spiritually")
Sunday	June 25th	10 00 a.m. Worship (Rev Frank Rose) (Holy Supper)
Monday	June 26th	6 30 p.m. Young People (at Hurstville - to be confirmed)