

Was King Hezekiah Tempted?

2 Kings 18:14-37; 19:1-20, 32-37

"Temptations exist by means of evil spirits, who excite with a person his falsities and evils, thus by means of influx [from the evil spirits]: Evil spirits use cunning and malice in temptations."
(Arcana Coelestia Index 20)

"When a person both in faith and in life is such that he is able to be regenerated he overcomes in temptations, but when he is such that he is not able to be regenerated he goes under in temptations."
(Arcana Coelestia 3927.3)

The quotations above are from the Writings for the New Church. They tell us something about temptations. Both help us to understand why Hezekiah, the king of Judah, might have felt some temptations, but also why he was able to resist them.

- ❖ In what ways did Sennacherib tempt Hezekiah to surrender? What did Sennacherib promise him?

- ❖ Study the first quotation above. Explain why you think Hezekiah could be tempted.

- ❖ Study the second quotation. Explain why Hezekiah was able to overcome the temptations.

- ❖ When Hezekiah tore his clothes, he probably felt afraid for himself and for his people. However, the Writings for the New Church tell us that tearing one's clothes pictures grief for the loss of truth. What aspects of the story might illustrate the loss of truth? Think about what kind of people the Assyrians were and what they wanted to do.

- ❖ From what you have learned, what do you think a person should do to help such a person become strong against temptation?