

What is Lent?

The Catholic view: <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-worship/liturgical-year/lent>

The Protestant view: <https://www.christiancentury.org/blog-post/ccblogs-network/lent-won-t-save-you>

Swedenborg Readings:

Secrets of Heaven 2327

[2] By these practices [*referring here to traditional practices of prostration and donning ashes*] they represented a state of true humility, and such a state is not possible in the least except for those who acknowledge that on their own they are profane and damned. It is not possible, then, except for those who acknowledge that by themselves they cannot turn to the Lord, where they will find only what is divine and holy. So the more clearly we recognize ourselves for what we are, the more true humility we can have, and the more reverence we will feel when worshiping. Humility has to be present in all worship. If humility is removed from it, there is no reverence, and consequently there is no worship.

[3] The reason a humble frame of mind is essential to genuine worship is that the more the heart humbles itself, the more self-love dies down, along with all the evil it spawns. The more they die down, the more goodness and truth, or charity and faith, flow into it from the Lord. The main obstacle to receiving goodness and truth is self-love, since this love harbors contempt for others, hatred and vengeance toward people who fail to cultivate us, and ruthlessness and cruelty. That is to say, it harbors the very worst types of evil, in which goodness and truth can have no place, because they oppose one another.

Secrets of Heaven 5957

...The Lord does, it is true, demand humility, worship, thanksgiving, and much else from a person, which seem like repayment, so that His gifts do not seem to be free. But the Lord does not demand those things for His own sake, for the Divine derives no glory at all from a person's humility, worship, or thanksgiving. It is utterly inconceivable that any self-love should exist within the Divine, causing Him to require such actions for His own sake. Rather, they are required for man's own sake, for if someone possesses humility he is able to accept good from the Lord, since in that case he has been parted from self-

love and its evils which stand in the way of his accepting it. Therefore the Lord desires a state of humility in a person for that person's sake, because the Lord can flow in with heavenly good when that state exists in him. The same applies to worship and thanksgiving.

Further resources:

Swedenborgian sermons on Lent:

Sermon: Fast from Your "Self" by Rev. Cory Coberforward

<https://swedenborgiancommunity.org/blog/fastself>

Sermon: Lent by Rev. Emily Jane Lemole

<https://newchristianbiblestudy.org/exposition/translation/lent/>