



The World Community for Christian Meditation

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Monday First Week of Lent



Many religions predict some kind of final judgment. For the ancient Egyptians it involved a confession by the dead person of their faults and then the weighing of the heart on a great scale against the “feather of *maat*”.

Maat was the principle of truth and justice. If the heart was too heavy with unconfessed sin and weighed more than the feather, the punishment was not pain but de-creation. For the Egyptians, the idea of non-existence was worse than that of hell.

Like all imaginations about the afterlife this tells more about how we should live here as about what happens in the next world. Carry a light heart into the sleep of one day and you will awaken the next morning with a relish for the life to be lived today. *Never let the sun go down on your anger*, St Benedict tells his monks. Before we collapse onto our beds at night we should prepare well for sleep – better perhaps some reading, music or time of meditation than watching a late night horror movie.

Spiritual practice involves more than giving up what we enjoy or even what we are addicted to. It also means breaking the habits that may seem harmless but accumulatively coarsen the heart and dull or trivialize the mind. Looking after ourselves is harder than we think.

Jesus urges us to allay the fears and agitation of the heart. *Set your troubled hearts at rest and banish your fears...* Taken seriously this means not only the immediate preparation for meditation but a lifestyle oriented towards meditation as the foundation, even the goal of life.

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