LESSON 37  
THE COMING OF THE NEW CHURCH

The Lord's second coming, is not in person, but in the Word.  
(True Christian Religion 776)

Introduction
Why did the Lord start the New Church? People were ready to learn more about God, heaven, and how to lead a good life. By starting the New Church with a new revelation, the Lord could help people see Him as the Lord Jesus Christ—the one God of heaven and earth. And He could help them find and follow the path of life.

Near the end of His life on earth, the Lord had told the disciples that He would come again. He had talked about the Son of Man “coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:30). The disciples didn’t understand what the Lord was telling them. They thought that He would come in person. In fact, the disciples and other early Christians expected the Lord to come quickly. Instead, He would make His second coming through the beautiful truths of a new revelation. These new teachings would open the inner, spiritual meaning of the Old and New Testaments so that His “power and great glory” could be seen. But this couldn’t happen until people were ready and the time was right.

Prophecies Prepare the Way
Prophecies helped prepare people for the Lord’s birth on earth, and prophecies would also help prepare the way for His second coming. The Lord called His disciple, John, to serve as a revelator, opening his spiritual eyes and telling him:

“Write the things which you have seen...and the things which will take place after this” (Revelation 1:17-19).

John saw many wonderful things in the spiritual world that are prophecies of the New Church, and he wrote about them in the book of Revelation. We are going to look at two of them: the vision of the woman clothed with the sun and a vision of the holy city, New Jerusalem, descending from the Lord.

The Woman Clothed with the Sun
One of John’s most dramatic visions was a woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was ready to give birth to a baby, but a red dragon threatened the woman and her unborn child.
The dragon stood ready before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. And she bore a male Child.... And her Child was caught up to God and to His throne (Revelation 12:4,5).

God protected the woman and her child, lifting the child to safety as soon as he was born and sending Michael and his angels to fight the dragon. The beautiful woman symbolizes the New Church, and her child stands for the teachings of this church. The dragon stands for people who hate the Lord and the New Church. Just as the Lord was not accepted by everyone when He came into the world, not everyone will accept these new teachings from the Lord.

The Holy City New Jerusalem
In another vision, John saw a city of gold, coming down from God out of heaven. As you read what the Lord told John to write, imagine that you are seeing this amazing city yourself.

[An angel showed John] the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.... Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates.... And the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones (see Revelation 21:10-12,18,19).

What would you think if you saw this city? Would you know that it must have a special meaning? This holy city, with its streets and walls of gold, pictures the wonderful teachings of the New Church. It would be many years later—hundreds of years later—before this prophecy could be fulfilled and the new revelation given. First people would need to be ready to receive these teachings.

New Freedom and Interest in Learning
When the Lord gave the revelation for the New Church, people had greater religious freedom than ever before. More people could read the Bible because it had been published in many languages, and the invention of the printing press made it more available. There was more freedom of the press, and people could publish books that presented new ideas. This was a time when many people were learning all that they could to better understand life and the world around them. One of these people was Emanuel Swedenborg, whose life was preparing him to serve the Lord in a special way.

Emanuel Swedenborg
The Lord called Emanuel Swedenborg to write the revelation that is the Lord’s second coming. Why did the Lord choose Swedenborg to do this wonderful work? Starting as a young boy, Swedenborg prayed to the Lord and read the Word. His father was a
minister, and Swedenborg had an excellent education in religion, science, Latin, and the other subjects that young scholars learned at the time. After finishing his studies at the University of Uppsala in Sweden, Swedenborg spent four years touring Europe to continue his education. Along the way, he sketched plans for fourteen inventions, including a flying machine, a submarine, canal locks, and a machine gun. Back home in Sweden, Emanuel Swedenborg helped improve the way valuable resources were mined, and he served in the government in the House of Nobles. He was very interested in philosophy and thought deeply about religion. Swedenborg was well-respected for all that he accomplished.

Swedenborg Is Called by the Lord
When Swedenborg was 56 years old, the Lord appeared to him and told him to think more about spiritual things. He began studying the Word with great care. At one point, Swedenborg wrote these humble words: “Lord Jesus Christ, lead me to and on the way on which You will that I shall walk.” He was ready to serve the Lord in whatever way he could.

It was in 1745 that the Lord called Swedenborg to serve as revelator. He opened Swedenborg’s spiritual eyes so that he could see into the other world. Here is what Swedenborg wrote about his mission:

I affirm in truth that the Lord manifested Himself before me, His Servant, and sent me to perform this use. Afterward, He opened the eyes of my spirit and thus introduced me into the spiritual world and granted me to see the heavens and the hells, and to talk with angels and spirits (see True Christian Religion 779).

From the time of his call until his death in 1772, Swedenborg focused his energies on receiving revelation from the Lord. The Lord told Swedenborg what to write but also let him explore the spiritual world. Talking with angels and spirits helped Swedenborg understand all that the Lord was teaching him. Because he was a scientist, Swedenborg remembered and carefully wrote down what he saw and heard.

Altogether, the Lord led Swedenborg to write and publish 18 theological works. He wrote many other theological works which were published after his death. Because some of these works are very long and others are quite short, they are often published as 35 or more books. We call these books the Heavenly Doctrine or the Writings. These books tell the deeper meaning of stories in the Old and New Testaments and discuss life after death, marriage, how the Lord leads us, and many other important topics.

The Beginning of the New Church
One of the books the Lord told Swedenborg to write was called True Christian Religion. It explained key teachings of the New Church, which the Lord was then establishing in heaven and on earth. When Swedenborg finished writing this book, the Lord called together the twelve disciples who had followed Him in the world.
The next day He sent them all forth throughout the whole spiritual world to preach the Gospel that the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns, and His kingdom shall be for ever and ever…. This took place on the nineteenth day of June, 1770 (*True Christian Religion* 791).

This event marked the beginning of the New Church, and this is why we celebrate the Nineteenth of June as its birthday. Emanuel Swedenborg saw this event in the spiritual world and wrote about it in *True Christian Religion*. When he published this book, the Lord commanded that he write these words in the front: “Emanuel Swedenborg, Servant of the Lord Jesus Christ”. Not long after this, Swedenborg was ready to stay in the spiritual world. He had no fear of death, for he knew what heaven was like. Swedenborg died on March 29th, 1772. He was happy to have been “a servant of the Lord”.

**The Second Coming of the Lord**

People thought the Lord would make His second coming in person, but it is by means of the new revelation that He came again.

The Lord’s second coming is taking place by means of a man, to whom He has shown Himself in person, and whom He has filled with His spirit, so that he may teach the doctrines of the New Church which come from the Lord by means of the Word (see *True Christian Religion* 779).

The teachings of the New Church are from the Lord alone. As we read the Word—the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Heavenly Doctrine—we can form a clearer idea of the Lord Jesus Christ in our minds. We won’t see Him walking here on earth, but we can see and follow Him by receiving these beautiful truths into our lives.

**Picturing the Second Coming of the Lord**

After reading this lesson, how do you picture the second coming of the Lord? Perhaps you think of one of the prophecies of the New Church—the beautiful woman clothed with the sun or the amazing city of gold, the New Jerusalem. Remembering the Lord’s words to His disciples about “coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory”, you might picture brilliant light shining through the clouds of heaven. Or perhaps you think about Emanuel Swedenborg serving the Lord and carefully writing what the Lord told him to reveal. No matter how we picture the Lord’s second coming, it is important to realize that we experience His coming when we read the Word and let the light of heaven flow into our minds.

**The Word is from the Lord, about the Lord, and is the Lord.**

(*Apocalypse Revealed* 200)
ACTIVITIES

LESSON 7: THE COMING OF THE NEW CHURCH

❖ REFLECTIONS ON GEMS FROM THE WORD

The Word is from the Lord, about the Lord, and is the Lord.

*(Apocalypse Revealed 200)*

1. Do any of these phrases surprise you:
   - The Word is from the Lord.
   - The Word is about the Lord.
   - The Word is the Lord.

   Why or why not?

2. Why do we feel connected with the Lord and with heaven when we read the Word?

❖ ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

❖ THE NEW CHURCH CHART

After filling in the chart at the top of the page, there is an opportunity to think of 3-5 ways that your family could celebrate New Church Day.

❖ PROPHECIES OF THE NEW CHURCH

This activity helps you to review the prophecies about the New Church by matching pictorial images with quotations.

❖ THE CHILD PROTECTED IN HEAVEN

In this activity you are asked to analyze a drawing by Robert G. Glenn, answering questions, such as, “Why did the Lord protect the woman’s child?” “What does this child stand for?”

❖ WRITE A POEM ABOUT EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

This is an open-ended activity which will help you learn more about Emanuel Swedenborg.

❖ MAKE A MODEL OF THE HOLY CITY

This activity can help you to celebrate New Church Day! The instructions for making the model are in this book. The pattern can be found in your Activity Packet.
QUESTIONS—THE COMING OF THE NEW CHURCH

1. Who saw and wrote about visions that were prophecies of the New Church?

2. What does the woman clothed with the sun symbolize?

3. What does the red dragon stand for?

4. What does the holy city New Jerusalem picture?

5. Name two developments in Europe that helped prepare for the New Church.

6. Why was Emanuel Swedenborg well prepared to serve the Lord as a revelator for the New Church? In other words, why do you think the Lord called him instead of someone else?

7. What did the Lord command Swedenborg to write at the front of True Christian Religion?

8. Why do we celebrate the birthday of the New Church on June 19th?

Give Your Opinion!
Imagine that you have been asked to help with plans for celebrating New Church Day with your family or church congregation. Write about 3-5 ways you would recommend celebrating the birthday of the church. (Hint: Searching for “New Church Day” on www.newchurchvineyard.org will help you find many ideas to consider.)
THE NEW CHURCH
The Fifth Specific Church Established by the Lord

Fill in the right side of the chart with information from the lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How They Saw the Lord</th>
<th>Revelation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love</th>
<th>Love to the Lord and Love to the Neighbor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worship</th>
<th>Internal and external at the same time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Story in the Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Note: The key loves in the New Church and the nature of worship are not mentioned in this lesson so these answers are supplied for you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Picturing the Second Coming of the Lord

Write about how you picture the second coming of the Lord: as the women clothed with the sun, the Holy City, Emanuel Swedenborg carefully writing what the Lord told him, or in some other way?
# Prophecies of the New Church

*Draw a line from each prophecy to the picture illustrating it, then answer the questions.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words of the Prophecy</th>
<th>Pictorial Representation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.... And she bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and to His throne (Revelation 12:1,5).</td>
<td>![Prophecy Image]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon.... And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born (Revelation 12:3-4).

Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True...and His name is called The Word of God (Revelation 19:11,13).

I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as bride adorned for her husband (Revelation 21:2).

## Questions

- Which of these visions would be the most frightening to see?
- Which of these prophecies is your favorite? Why?
THE CHILD PROTECTED IN HEAVEN

Look at this illustration of the woman clothed with the sun, by Robert G. Glenn.

- What details catch your eye?
- Why did the Lord protect the woman’s child?
- What does this child stand for?
WRITE A POEM ABOUT EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

Write a five line poem—called a cinquain—about Emanuel Swedenborg. You can use format A or B for your poem, trying both ways before deciding on one. Brainstorm words that come to mind when you think of Swedenborg and what he did. (You may want to reread the lesson first.) Then play with the words using the spaces below.

**Format A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>1 noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 adjectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 –ing words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 word phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 word which refers back to the noun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Format B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>2 syllables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 syllables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 syllables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 syllables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 syllables</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your Cinquain About Emanuel Swedenborg

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title


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DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING THE MODEL OF THE HOLY CITY

Suggested Materials
- crayons, water colors, or colored pencils
- scissors
- glue
- gold foil paper
- cotton balls
- clear drinking glass or glass bowl

Coloring Directions—Part A
Paint or color foundation and step at gate. Outline the gate and keystone in same color.

1. Gad - jacinth – violet color
2. Simeon - topaz – golden yellow
3. Reuben - sardius – ruby red
4. Judah - emerald – bright green
5. Issachar - amethyst – deep purple
6. Zebulon - beryl – greenish yellow
7. Naphtali - chrysophrasus – blue-green stone
8. Asher - chalcedony – turquoise blue or light purple
9. Dan - sapphire – dark blue
10. Benjamin - jasper – gleaming white
11. Manasseh - chrysolite – yellow
12. Ephraim - sardonyx – red-orange (or show with bands of red and white)

If you wish, you could color the windows light blue and the turrets yellow or gold.

Cutting Directions - Read all directions on sheet before cutting.

1. With sharp pointed scissors cut the T-sections apart.
2. Cut the outline.
3. Cut out the gates. “And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day....”
4. Paste sections together and fold.
5. Fluff cotton to make pretty clouds. Fold out paper clouds and set over cotton.
6. Cut out a square of gold paper, then set the Holy City model on top of it.
7. Place green or blue cloth (or paper) on a flat surface to serve as the backdrop.
8. Place a clear drinking glass (or glass bowl) upside down toward the rear of your backdrop (green or blue cloth or paper), in the middle.
9. Put the “Holy Jerusalem” on top of the glass tumbler or bowl.

Coloring Directions—Part B
Give John a white inner garment. Cut out and stand him up looking at the Holy City from below, as if he is watching it coming down from heaven.

Color and cut out the Throne of God.
1. Throne – gold or yellow
2. Lamb – white
3. The Word – white with a red edge
4. Alpha and Omega (above the Lamb) – red
5. Steps – gold or yellow
6. Fold and insert the throne in the middle of the city
Lesson 37

The Coming of the New Church

Overview of the Story
- Introduction
- Prophecies Helped Prepare the Way
- The Woman Clothed with the Sun
- The Holy City New Jerusalem
- Emanuel Swedenborg
- Swedenborg Is Called by the Lord
- The Beginning of the New Church
- The Second Coming of the Lord
- Picturing the Second Coming of the Lord

Thoughts for Parents
Before discussing this lesson with your child, you may want to review the comments about the New Church found in the *Five Churches: Introduction and Additional Information* at the beginning of this book. Below are a few thoughts suggested by this lesson which may help you nurture your children.

- If you are using this lesson as part of your celebration of New Church Day, you may want to explore ways to make the nineteenth of June—the birthday of the New Church—a special occasion. Your local congregation may offer a worship service, pageant, and picnic, but there are many ways you can celebrate this occasion in your home. For an array of suggestions, please see www.newchurchvineyard.org and explore the topics relating to New Church Day.

- It is hard for us to comprehend all the ways that the Lord, in providence, prepared for the coming of the New Church: the prophecies; renewed interest in learning; the Protestant Reformation; Swedenborg’s preparation as a revelator; and much, much more. This lesson should help us appreciate the Lord’s infinite love and wisdom and help us acknowledge His providence.

- Reflecting on how hard it is for us to grasp how much the Lord is doing for us may help us understand when our children question our parental wisdom or fail to appreciate all that we do for them. They may not fully appreciate what is involved in parenting until they are involved in this use themselves. It is gratifying when our children express their appreciation, but perhaps we can make use of the times when we feel taken for granted as an opportunity to reflect on whether we fully appreciate what the Lord does for us.
From the Word

The Lord's second coming, is not in person, but in the Word, which is from Him and which He is (True Christian Religion 776).

The whole of Revelation from beginning to end prophesies the Lord's second coming, His conquest of the hells, the creation of a new heaven of angels and then the establishment of a new church on earth. All these things were there foretold, but they have not been revealed before the present time (True Christian Religion 116:4).

This, the Lord's second coming, is taking place by means of a man, to whom He has shown Himself in person, and whom He has filled with His spirit, so that he may teach the doctrines of the new church which come from the Lord through the Word.... I bear true witness that the Lord has shown Himself in the presence of me, His servant, and sent me to perform this function. After this He opened the sight of my spirit, thus admitting me to the spiritual world, and allowing me to see the heavens and the hells, and also to talk with angels and spirits.... From the first day of my calling, I have not received any instruction concerning the doctrines of that church from any angel, but only from the Lord, while I was reading the Word (see True Christian Religion 779).

After the completion of the book [True Christian Religion], the Lord called together His twelve disciples, who had followed Him in the world; and a day later He sent them all forth throughout the spiritual world to preach the Gospel, that the Lord God Jesus Christ is king, and His kingdom shall be for ever and ever.... This happened on the nineteenth of June in the year 1770 (see True Christian Religion 791).

The New Christian Church is not being established through miracles [such as the Lord's birth on earth], but through revelation of the spiritual sense of the Word and teachings about life after death, and these surpass all miracles.... This New Church, truly Christian, which at this day is being established by the Lord will endure to eternity. It will be the crown of the four preceding churches, because it will have true faith and true charity. In this New Church there will be spiritual peace, glory and internal blessedness of life (see Summary to Coronis).
READING THE LESSON IN THE STUDENT ACTIVITY BOOK

1. Pre-reading Activities and Questions
   - How did prophecies prepare people for the Lord’s birth on earth? (*e.g.* People knew to look for Him. In difficult times, knowing about the Lord’s coming gave them hope.)
   - Vocabulary - Please review those words you feel might be difficult for your child to read and/or understand.
     1. prophecies—revelations foretelling future events
     2. revelator—someone the Lord chooses to give His teachings to so that this person can transmit them to others through speech or by writing them down
     3. revelation—what the Lord reveals to us; the means by which the Lord gives people His truths so they can live a good life; the Lord’s Word
     4. philosophy—the love of wisdom
     5. manifested—clearly shown or displayed
     6. theological—relating to God and religion
     7. Writings—another name for the Heavenly Doctrine
     8. New Church Day—the spiritual birthday of the New Church, celebrated on the nineteenth day of June

2. Read the Lesson
   - Your child should now read the lesson in the Student Activity Book.
   - Please help your child as needed with reading the lesson, perhaps reading with your child at times.
   - Note: The series of lessons on the Five Churches are not preceded by a reading from the Word but do include quotations from it.

3. Ideas/Questions to Discuss Together After Reading the Lesson
   If your child is working independently, you might give him or her the following question to think about. It is not designed to answer on paper.
   - Do you think that the Lord might have prepared other people who could have received the revelation for the New Church instead of Emanuel Swedenborg, if this had been necessary?

ACTIVITIES IN THE STUDENT ACTIVITY BOOK
Your child may need some guidance deciding which activities to choose. He or she may also need some assistance finding materials not provided with the lessons. Following are some additional notes for each activity.

- **Reflections on Gems from the Word**—You may wish to discuss the quotation with your child before he or she writes a response, using the suggestions for this lesson found in the Student Activity Book.
Answers to the Questions

These questions focus on how the Lord made His second coming and on Swedenborg’s preparation to become a revelator.

1. John; 2. The New Church; 3. people who hate the Lord and the New Church; 4. the teachings of the New Church; 5. [any two of the following] people had more religious freedom than before, more people could read the Word because it was published in more languages, greater freedom of the press, greater interest in learning; 6. answers will vary; 7. “Emanuel Swedenborg, Servant of the Lord Jesus Christ”; 8. This is the day on which the Lord sent His disciples throughout the spiritual world in 1770, starting the New Church.

Give Your Opinion! Answers will vary.

The New Church Chart

In this activity your child looks in the lesson for the information needed to fill in the chart. Your child will also have an opportunity to write about how he or she pictures the second coming of the Lord.

Possible answers for the chart (from the information in the lesson)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How they see the Lord</th>
<th>The Lord Jesus Christ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revelation</td>
<td>The Heavenly Doctrine (also called the Writings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Love(s)</td>
<td>Love to the Lord and love to the neighbor*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>Internal and external at the same time*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Story in the Word</td>
<td>Woman Clothed with the Sun, Holy City</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These answers are provided in the chart because the information is not given in this lesson.

Prophecies of the New Church—This activity is an opportunity for your child to review the prophecies about the New Church by matching pictorial images with quotations. Answers to the questions will vary.

The Child Protected in Heaven—In this activity your child is asked to analyze a drawing by Robert G. Glenn, answering questions, such as, “Why did the Lord protect the woman’s child?” and “What does this child stand for?”. The purpose of this activity is to reinforce the idea that the Lord is establishing His church. Answers: 1. Answers will vary; 2. To keep the child safe from the dragon (from those who hate the Lord); 3. The teachings of the New Church.

Write a Poem About Emanuel Swedenborg—In this activity your child will use a cinquain format to write a poem about Swedenborg.

Make a Model of the Holy City—In this activity you child can color and cut out a three-dimensional model of the Holy City. The directions are in the Student Activity Book; the pattern is in the Activity Packet.
Further Background:

Swedenborg tells us that his study of philosophy led him to become a theologian:

I was once asked how from a philosopher I became a theologian: and I answered, In the same manner that fishermen were made disciples and apostles by the Lord: and that I also from early youth had been a spiritual fisherman. On hearing this the inquirer asked, What is a spiritual fisherman? I replied that a fisherman in the spiritual sense of the Word, signifies a man who investigates and teaches natural truths, and afterwards spiritual truths rationally....

[After Swedenborg explained more about the spiritual meaning of “fishermen, the man said] “Since you are become a theologian, explain what is your theology.” I replied, “These are the two principles of it, That God is one, and that there is a conjunction of charity and faith” (Interaction of the Soul and Body 20:1,5).

This information is not included in the student page but we wanted to give parents the option to talk further about Swedenborg’s interest in philosophy and how it prepared Him to become a revelator for the Lord.