

## THE CALL OF JOSHUA

### *Joshua 1*

The transition to this lesson can be made by reminding the children of a recent lesson where Joshua played a major part. This is a discussion lesson rather than a story. It can well be introduced by a brief review of the whole Bible story so far. An outline for such a review will be found with this lesson. This review is especially important for the Juniors and Intermediates.

---

#### **Doctrinal Points**

*The Lord wants us to enjoy the things of this world, but not to put them first. He created the world for our happiness.*

*The difference between reformation and regeneration.*

*The best courage is the courage to say no in temptation.*

---

#### **Notes for Parents**

The lesson the children have for today is an inspiring chapter. The children of Israel are encamped beside the Jordan River, not far from the northern end of the Dead Sea, about opposite the city of Jericho. They are looking across the river at the land of their fathers, the land toward which they have been traveling for forty years, the land which has been promised them by the Lord. Moses has died, but Joshua, who has led them in all their battles, has been appointed to take his place. They know Joshua and trust him. All the people who refused to take Joshua's advice thirty-eight years before have died in the wilderness.

The charge to Joshua, "Be strong and of good courage," is one which we all should learn, for we all need it again and again in our lives. The right way is not always the easy way, and it takes courage to do right. This is a lesson which parents should help the church to impress upon children, for they will often be tempted by others to do wrong and be called "sissies" if they refuse. If they can be

brought to feel that it takes more courage to face ridicule than to do something wrong, it will be a help to them and to you. Children like to feel that they are brave. Bravery in a good cause is true bravery, and a virtue.

There is another part of the charge to Joshua which we must not forget. He was to obey the law of Moses and to “meditate therein day and night.” This was the condition on which the Lord could help him and give him success. The Lord wants to help all of us to succeed, but because He loves us, He cannot help us when what we want to do is contrary to His laws. For His laws are the only laws which lead to happiness, and He wants us to be happy. This is also something the children especially need to understand. The Lord sees farther than we do. He sees the final result of anything we undertake to do, and many times He sees that the thing we think will make us happy will have just the opposite result in the end. Because we are naturally selfish, the Lord’s laws seem hard to us, but obedience to them is actually much easier than suffering the consequences of breaking them will be. When the Lord was in the world He said, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me . . . For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:29-30)

---

### Primary

Build your story around Joshua, and talk about the necessity for being brave enough to do right. Even little children need this lesson. Something of the review should be given, especially with reference to the decision of the people when the spies returned, and its consequences. The children can see the connection between this and the charge to Joshua and can be shown how it applies to their own lives.

Do you remember the name of the man who led the children of Israel out of Egypt and in all their long journey through the wilderness? It was *Moses*. Now they have come to the time when they are to be allowed to enter the Holy Land. They are encamped on the banks of the Jordan River, looking across at the beautiful land that has been promised to them for their home.

What had the children of Israel done at Kadesh?  
What report had the spies brought back?  
What had the people decided to do?  
What was their punishment?  
Which two spies had given different advice?  
What was their reward?

Now Moses is not to lead them across the river, for Moses is dead. Their new leader is *Joshua*. He was one of the two spies who trusted the Lord and told the people they could take the Holy Land if they tried because the Lord would help them.

Joshua had been the leader of their army in all the battles they had fought in the wilderness; so the people trusted him.

What words from the Lord are repeated three times in our chapter?

We have to be brave and strong to do right.

It is really cowardly to do wrong when we know better.

But there was one thing the Lord told Joshua he must remember.

What was it?

This is something we must all remember to do all our lives, too.



### Junior

Begin with a suggestion of the difference between living in one's own proper country and living in a "strange" or foreign land. Point out that heaven is the true home of everyone, and that the Holy Land pictures heaven, which begins in us with a heavenly character. Then take up the review to give the children the background necessary for recognizing the importance of crossing the Jordan and understanding the meaning of the charge to Joshua. A challenge to courage is very helpful at this age.

The children of Israel had come to Kadesh sometime during the second year of their journey in the wilderness.

What did they do at Kadesh?  
What good things did the spies find in the Holy Land?  
What did they find that discouraged them?  
What did ten of the spies advise?  
Who were the two who gave different advice?  
Which advice did the people take?  
What was their punishment?

The children of Israel had to wander in the wilderness for another thirty-eight years before all the people had died who were responsible for their cowardly choice. Even Moses had at one time been disobedient to the Lord; so he could not enter the Holy Land either. You will find this story in Numbers 20:1-13. The forty years in the wilderness are a long history of unwilling obedience to the law of the Lord. And unwilling obedience has no place in heaven. This is because unwilling obedience is always mostly selfish—we obey because we want some reward or are afraid of some punishment—and we are never in heavenly states when we are selfish.

Everyone recognizes that the Holy Land (the “Promised Land”) pictures heaven. But the Lord told His followers that the kingdom of heaven was within them. That is, heaven must be within our hearts before we can live in heaven. The heavenly life is a happy life because everyone in heaven loves to do what the Lord wants him to do. We know we are not born loving to do right. First our parents have to make us do it. Then we begin to make ourselves do right because we see that we get along better that way. This is like the children of Israel going about in the wilderness obeying Moses because they were sure to get into trouble if they didn’t. But this is not a heavenly state of life.

However, if we keep on doing right until it becomes a habit, the Lord can put into our hearts the love of doing right. Then we are ready to enter the Holy Land—not necessarily to leave this world for heaven, but to have heaven in our hearts and minds.

After Moses died, the new leader appointed by the Lord was Joshua. He had been the leader of Israel’s fighting men from the beginning of the wilderness journey and had led them to victory several times. And of course he was one of the two spies who had urged them to go bravely ahead into the Holy Land years before. The people obeyed him because they knew and trusted his leadership. We have seen that all the stories in the Bible are given us by the Lord to teach us things we need to know about our own lives. All the leaders appointed by the Lord picture the leadership of the

Word of God as it comes to us in different stages of our development. So Moses pictures the Law as it appears to us when we are obeying it because we know we have to. But Joshua pictures the same Law when we accept it freely and willingly, and use it to help us conquer our inner enemies, our selfishness and laziness and general hatefulness—all the bad things that keep cropping up in our hearts and minds all our lives. These are the enemies which the children of Israel were to find waiting for them in the Holy Land itself.

It takes courage for us to recognize and fight these enemies. That is why three times in our chapter Joshua is told to be strong and of a good courage. But we must also always keep in mind that we still do not know enough by ourselves to do right: we must always go on learning more and more from the Word of God and thinking about it and about what it teaches. The Lord says to Joshua, “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.” And He says, “Observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left.” Sometimes we get to thinking that we are pretty good and so don’t need to worry anymore about doing wrong; we say that our conscience will tell us what is right. But our conscience tells us only what we have already learned about right—if we have not always had the wisest teachers, our conscience may even tell us wrong things. You remember Abraham’s conscience told him to sacrifice Isaac, and he was saved from doing so great a wrong only by the Lord’s voice speaking to him. The Lord speaks to us in His Word, and we need to read it every day all our lives and listen for the Lord’s voice in it.

There is one other incident in our chapter which we need to understand. Read Numbers 32:1-6, 16-22. As the Holy Land pictures heaven, the country just outside of it on the east side of the Jordan pictures earthly life and the kind of pleasure we get out of

REVIEW OUTLINE OF THE PENTATEUCH				
BOOK	CHAPTER	SUBJECT	OUTLINE OF THE STORY	GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS
Genesis	1; 2:1-17 2:18-25; 3 4 5	The Creation Adam and Eve Cain and Abel Genealogy	Genesis 1-5 describes the Most Ancient Church, or “Golden Age” of the human race, and its decline.	Archaeological as well as Biblical research indicates that the earliest people lived in the Bible lands. Swedenborg says they were led by the Lord to give symbolic names to their rivers, mountains, etc., in preparation for the writing of the Word. Genesis 1-11 is allegorical, however, and we cannot necessarily identify the places mentioned with actual historical sites.
	6-10 11	Noah and the Flood The Tower of Babel	The rise and fall of the Ancient Church, or “Silver Age.” <i>Eber</i> (Heber) in Genesis 11:14-17 is the first person in the Bible who was a real person. The Hebrews took their name from him.	
	12-25	Abraham	Abraham’s journey Abraham and Lot Abraham and Abimelech	Ur of Chaldea, Haran, Shechem, Bethel, Egypt, Bethel and Hai (Ai) Gerar
	17; 21-27	Isaac	Birth of Isaac	Beersheba
			Sacrifice of Isaac Isaac and Rebekah	Mount Moriah, Beersheba Haran, Beer-lahairoi
	25-36	Jacob	Jacob and Esau	Bethel, Haran, Hebron
	30; 37-50	Joseph	Joseph and his brothers Joseph in Egypt	Hebron, Shechem, Dothan, Egypt (Land of Goshen)
	Exodus	1-4	Moses: first 80 years	Birth of Moses
Moses flees from Egypt				Land of Midian (Sinai Peninsula)
The Burning Bush				Horeb range, near Mount Sinai
5-40		The Exodus	Plagues, Passover, crossing the Red Sea	Rameses (Egypt) southward to the Red Sea
	The first two months: water and food Mount Sinai (for about one year): ten commandments, ark, tabernacle, priesthood, laws		Marah, Elim, wilderness of Sin, Rephidim, Sinai Mount Sinai	
Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	All	The Wilderness Wanderings	Many detailed laws. The spies: 38 more years of wandering. Rebellions, fiery serpents, Balaam, death of Moses.	Kadesh, Mt. Hor and its environs, lands of Edom and Moab, Bashan, Mount Nebo, encampment on Jordan River (across from Jericho)

this world. The Lord wants us to enjoy the good things of this world—food, clothing, beautiful possessions, music, art, entertainment, success—but there is one condition: we must first be sure the selfish things in our hearts and minds are seen and overcome. There is a right way and a wrong way to use the possessions of this world and to enjoy its pleasures. So long as we are selfish and greedy, the good things that are given to us do us more harm than good. You remember the dangers into which Lot fell when he chose to live in the fertile and attractive valley. The two and a half tribes spoken of in Numbers 32 and mentioned again in this lesson agreed not to make this mistake; they agreed to fight alongside their brethren until the enemies were conquered, before going back and settling in the land of their choice.

---

### Intermediate

The meaning of the change from the period of reformation to that of regeneration is important here. The Intermediates have not reached this change, but they should look forward to it. For all young people we may hope that the decision to lead heavenly lives will be made early, and orderly progress will then follow.

We have learned that the Israelites were condemned to wander in the wilderness for thirty-eight years because they allowed the ten spies to frighten them out of the attempt to conquer the Holy Land which the Lord had promised them. Of all the men twenty years old and upward (that is, all the men old enough to have voted at the time) only Joshua and Caleb, the two spies who told them to trust in the Lord and go forward, would live beyond this period and cross the Jordan. Even Moses was not allowed to enter the Holy Land. He had been told by the Lord on one occasion when he used his power to glorify himself in the eyes of the people (Numbers 20:1-13) that he would be allowed to see the Promised Land but not to enter it. The last chapter of the book of Deuteronomy tells how, at the end of the wanderings, Moses went up on top of Mount Nebo, was shown by the Lord all the land into which the people were to enter, and died.

During the thirty-eight years, the children of Israel had many experiences of the Lord's protection and mercy. For they were constantly becoming discouraged and discontented and had to be taught how much safer and happier they were when they obeyed the Lord. Can you see that we have to be taught in just the same way? We know that we get along better when we are good, but our own way always looks so much easier and pleasanter at the moment that, like the people in the Bible, we keep putting off the real effort to change. So we get into one trouble after another until gradually, one by one, our weak and selfish feelings are killed off and we are ready to face ourselves as we really are. This is the time when we are finally prepared to enter the Holy Land. For no one can live in the Holy Land of heavenly character who is not willing to see and acknowledge his own faults and fight against them with the Lord's help. As long as we are doing right just for the sake of getting along better in the world or from a general "sense of duty," we stay in the wilderness.

When Moses died, Joshua was appointed by the Lord to take his place. In fact, Moses had told the people that Joshua was to succeed him. Joshua had been the leader of the fighting men of Israel from the very first battle in the wilderness. The people knew and trusted him. Swedenborg tells us that he represents "the truth fighting." When we really begin to use the truth we know to fight against the bad things in ourselves and in the world, we are going forward under Joshua. For example, suppose you have a tendency to blame other people for everything that happens to you. This is a common fault, because it seems the easiest way of getting out of taking the blame ourselves. Your parents see this fault in you and try to break you of the bad habit, and you gradually learn to control it outwardly so that you will get along better at home; but you still have the same feelings inside, and every once in a while they get too strong for you and you have to be corrected again. This is like the enemies rising up against Israel in the wilderness. When you get a little older, the Lord shows you that this is really a fault in yourself which you must recognize and fight, that you yourself are



responsible for your troubles and not someone else; you begin to fight it because you see that He is telling you the truth; and then you go ahead and overcome it. This is the time when you are entering the Holy Land under Joshua.

The Lord's charge to Joshua was a twofold one: He told him to be "strong and of a good courage," and He told him to "observe to do according to all the law" of Moses—to "turn not from it to the right hand or to the left," and to "meditate therein day and night." We need to read the Word every day and to study it and think about it so that our knowledge of what is really right in the Lord's sight will always lead us forward. And we need to try to live up to every bit of truth we learn from the Word. If we are doing this, we may be sure that the Lord is with us and will help us. He will never help us to get our own way when our own way is selfish, because He loves us and wants us to be happy, and selfishness always leads to unhappiness. And we need to remember that it takes courage to do what is right in the face of temptation. If we can say "no" when someone tries to get us to do what we know is wrong, we are showing ourselves to be "strong and of a good courage." The people in any community who are trusted and respected are those who have developed this kind of courage.

There is something else in our chapter which we will not understand unless we go back and read Numbers 32:1-6, 16-22. You remember from the lesson on Abram and Lot that the low valley of the Jordan was very fertile and a fine grazing country, and that it pictures the *natural* plane of our lives—the work and pleasure we have in making a living in this world and enjoying its good things. Lot, you remember, got into trouble because he separated from Abram and was drawn into the wicked city of Sodom which was in the plain. But the tribes which settled in the valley east of the Jordan River in our chapter today did not make this mistake. They had agreed that their fighting men would go on into the Holy Land with the others and not come back to settle down until they had helped overcome the enemies in the land. The fact that they left their wives and children and flocks and herds there means that

they continued to love and think about the fertile valley, but they put doing right ahead of the enjoyment of the kind of life they had chosen. The Lord wants us to enjoy our life here in this world and to have its good things—food, entertainment, success—but He knows that there is only one way in which we can enjoy these things without their hurting us, and that is by obeying the divine laws and overcoming the selfishness which is natural to us. The Holy Land must be conquered before we can safely enjoy worldly things. Think, for example, of the possession of money. Naturally we all imagine we should like to have plenty of it. We think people who have money ought to be happy. But you know, if you stop to think, that some wealthy people are happy and others are not. Some make their money without hurting other people and use it to make other people as well as themselves happy. Others make their money at the expense of other people and use it selfishly. They may be lonely misers or they may live an apparently gay social life with others like themselves, but they are not happy because they always want more than they can have and wear themselves out trying to get it. All through the Word the Lord shows us the proper relation of worldly things to spiritual things. Of the worldly things He says (Matthew 6:32-33): “Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

*Basic Correspondences*

Joshua = truth fighting

valley = the natural plane of our lives

---

**Senior**

The twofold charge to Joshua is the important lesson for this age group. Stress the necessity of reading and studying the Word and accepting its teaching instead of trying to lead ourselves.

Since the death of Moses marks the end of a particular point in our life’s journey, it may be well to review briefly at this point.

In one sense we pass through the whole cycle of the Bible story again and again, and there is no part of the Word which does not have its application to something in our experience at almost any point in our life. However, the narrative in its general outline covers our life from conception to the finding of our final home in heaven or hell. In this larger view the stories of Creation, the Garden of Eden, the Flood and the Tower of Babel give us an understanding of what is in us by heredity from our whole ancestry in the human race; and the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob tell us about our progress—after we are born into this world—from infancy to early youth, to later youth. During this period we descend spiritually as we develop naturally. That is, in infancy (the Abraham state) we are close to the Lord in a celestial state of innocence and trust, but entirely ignorant and helpless from the point of view of our ability to take care of ourselves in the world. In the state of early childhood we learn a measure of control over our bodies and physical wants. Then comes the period covered by the stories of Ishmael and Isaac, when our reasoning powers are developed: first the natural reason (Ishmael) and a little later the higher or spiritual reason (Isaac). Then we are ready to begin to try our wings independently of our parents, and the life of Jacob pictures the period when we first try to regulate our own external conduct, making a good many mistakes, but learning all the time and developing our various faculties as Jacob produced his twelve sons. We can see that this is an advance so far as our life in this world is concerned, but a descent from a celestial to a natural state as to our inner life. When we reach maturity—or nearly reach it—we come to the period of the Egyptian bondage, when we are so occupied with finding our place in the worldly scheme of things that we are apt to forget our spiritual responsibilities altogether for a time. In our recent lessons we have seen that most people sooner or later realize this bondage and try to break away from it. Then our spiritual progress upward begins. Its first essential is the recognition that the law of God must be our leader and guide—Moses and the pillar of cloud and fire. We have to remake our external conduct under this guid-

ance, and it is a long, hard journey. We obey first from a rational perception that the orderly, religious life is actually the most likely to lead to success; then we progress to obedience from a sense of duty—as the Israelites came to think of themselves as the “chosen people.” This whole period is the period of reformation: it is not a heavenly state. Fairly early in this process of reformation we come into sight of the Holy Land of heavenly character, see its beauties and even taste its fruits, but we cannot actually enter it until our good habits have become so firmly established that the Lord can remove the things in us which have been resisting and retarding our progress. Moses does not enter the Holy Land. This does not mean that when we become heavenly people we cease to obey the Law. But it does mean that the Law is no longer a hard taskmaster, but a trusted leader. We go forward eagerly and willingly instead of under compulsion.

Joshua, Swedenborg says, represents “truth fighting.” He had been the leader of the fighting men of Israel from the beginning of the wilderness journey. He was also one of the two spies who urged the people to go forward into the Holy Land and reminded them that the Lord would help them. The Holy Land represents heaven or a heavenly character, for we do not enter heaven unless heaven is first within us. It is the Lord’s spirit of unselfish love which makes heaven, and we can receive this in our hearts from Him if and when we are prepared to recognize the evils which are in our hearts and to fight them with His help. This is what is meant by the conquest of the Holy Land, and it is called *regeneration* or a new birth. *Reformation* and *regeneration* are two different things\*: reformation is the setting in order of the external life, and regeneration has to do primarily with the will. All the stories of the Israelites up to our lesson for today have had to do with our development and preparation for the beginning of regeneration. Swedenborg says no one begins to regenerate until he is grown up:

---

\*Or, to put it another way, two consecutive stages in the process of becoming a spiritual person. –Ed.

that is, until the Lord sees that his choices are really his own and not dictated by his parents and teachers, or by his other associates. So regeneration begins in the will and works down into the thought and then into the act. Regeneration is not our work, but the Lord's work in us as we prepare the way. It is like the growth of a plant after we have prepared the ground and planted the seed in it.

There are two parts to the charge given to Joshua as the Israelites lay encamped by the Jordan. He is told to be "strong and of a good courage"; and he is to do according to all the law of Moses, not to depart from it "to the right hand or to the left," and to "meditate therein day and night." This is the way in which our regeneration must go forward, constantly seeking new truth from the Word of God, obeying it, and fighting bravely with full belief that the Lord is present and helping us.

For the meaning of verses 12 to 15 of our chapter, look up Numbers 32:1-6 and 13-22. Notice the difference between this occupation of the Jordan valley by the two and a half tribes, and Lot's settling there in the time of Abraham. In the new settlement the same country is chosen, but the fighting men first go forward with the rest and help to conquer the Holy Land. When we have recognized and overcome the evils which lie deep within us, we can safely enjoy the things of this world.



### Adult

*The charge to Joshua offers plenty of material for discussion. The difference between reformation and regeneration is also a fruitful subject. The personal attitude toward the place of religion in life enters into both and carries over into our attitude toward the Word, the doctrines, and the church. There is a good deal of superficial thinking in regard to the organized New Church today. We need to go more deeply into the subject and to face our responsibility to the organization.*

After the decision to follow the advice of the ten fainthearted spies, the children of Israel wandered for thirty-eight more years in the wilderness. There are three accounts of these wanderings: the longer account (Exodus 15 through Numbers 32) and two sum-

maries (Numbers 33 and Deuteronomy 1-3). Because many of the places named have not been identified, it is not easy to trace the wanderings on the map, but we know that they were in the general region of what is called the wilderness of Zin and the Arabah or Mount Seir, the country which lies between the Gulf of Aqabah and the Dead Sea. Some of the incidents of this period are studied in this course: the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; the blossoming of Aaron's rod; and the story of Balaam. There is also the story of the fiery serpents in Numbers 21 which we need to know because of later mentions of the serpent of brass which Moses set up at that time. The Israelites fought a number of battles and conquered such enemies as opposed them. Their leader in battle was Joshua, who had been chosen for this duty in their first battle against Amalek, before they reached Sinai. We recall that he was also one of the two spies who urged the people to go bravely forward and take possession of the Holy Land in spite of the apparent difficulties in the way.

All the leaders chosen by the Lord throughout the Bible story picture the Word of God in some aspect. Moses represents the Law as it appears to us when we obey it through hope of reward or fear of consequences. This type of obedience serves to set our outward lives in order and leads us to the border of the Holy Land, but it cannot cross the border. Moses had been told by the Lord that he would not be allowed to enter the Holy Land, although he would have an opportunity to see it before he died. Read Numbers 20:1-13. In the type of obedience represented by Moses there is a spirit of self-praise. In fact, Swedenborg points out (AC 2946) that in the first stage of reformation a man does not believe that he is being reformed by the Lord but by himself. This spirit cannot enter the Holy Land. However, if the person in this first state wants to become good—if he longs for a more spiritual state—even if he goes no further in this life, he can be introduced into further states after death (TCR 571). The wilderness, Swedenborg says, is predicated both of those who are afterward reformed and of those who cannot be reformed (AC 2708<sup>5</sup>). In the literal sense of the story

of the wilderness wanderings, the great mass of the people did actually die in the wilderness and never reached the Holy Land. But the children—those in states of innocence and trust—along with Joshua and Caleb—who in this application would represent those who progress to the point of regeneration from mature choice of truth and good—did go on into the Holy Land. The crossing of the Jordan represents the end of the state of reformation and the beginning of regeneration. Reformation and regeneration are two different things\*: reformation is the setting in order of the external life, and regeneration has to do primarily with the will. We may reform our conduct without making any effort to change our feelings.

We “leave the wilderness and cross the Jordan” when we are ready to face the evils and falsities in our hearts and minds and fight against them. Then we begin to use the truth willingly because we have proved it and found that it led us to where we really wanted to go all the time. Joshua represents “truth fighting.” We still know that our “Holy Land” is full of enemies; that we have our severest temptations ahead of us, those evils within ourselves which we have not yet faced; but we are now eager to go forward and face them. The whole spirit is changed. Read the people’s answer to Joshua in our chapter for today (verses 16-18) and compare it with their treatment of Joshua in Numbers 14:6-10.

The Lord’s charge to Joshua was twofold. We always remember the first part of it because it is three times repeated in this first chapter and impresses itself on our memories: “Be strong and of a good courage.” The children of Israel had learned by long and bitter experience that they got nowhere by trying to avoid conflict. Neither do we. When we refuse to recognize and fight evil and falsity, our character is weakened and with it our influence for good in the world. We get nowhere ourselves and we are of no real help to anyone else. We should be “of a good courage.” The charge is important to us at every step of our regeneration. To see an evil in

---

\*See footnote in Senior notes.

oneself and regret it but say, “I was born that way; I can’t change” is to close the mind to the Lord’s promises and make it impossible for Him to give us power to overcome. To see so many evils in ourselves that we give up without attacking any one of them is not only cowardly but irrational. If we recognize our evils and fight them one by one, sure of the Lord’s help, we shall progress steadily toward the desired goal.

The charge is also especially important to us in the New Church today. We are a small body and many of our societies have been dwindling and even going out of existence. Many have lost confidence in the importance of our organization. When we show this lack of trust and faith, our children are not inspired with love for the church, they are not adequately instructed in it, and no one else is made aware of what the New Church has to give them. In every community there are individuals hungering for just what we alone can give. We do not find these people by hiding our light under a bushel. If we believe—as we should—that our doctrines have been given by the Lord to meet the spiritual needs of the people of this new age, then we must take the Lord’s charge to Joshua as a charge to each one of us.

And the second part of the charge is equally pertinent: “Observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left.” To turn to the right hand is to err on the side of what we imagine to be charity, to refuse to recognize that sin brings inevitable punishment, not from God but from its own corrupting nature, to explain away the rational statements in our doctrines on the ground that the Lord could not have meant them. To turn to the left hand is to err on the side of intellectualism, to look at the Word from human reason and self-intelligence rather than accepting it as it was given and seeing divine wisdom in it. The charge goes on: “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein.” The Word—as the Lord has given it to us, not as men would like to interpret and change it—is our bul-



wark and defense, our leader, the light on our path, the river which cleanses our lives and quenches our spiritual thirst. If we go forward obeying this charge and trusting in the Lord, we shall have good success.

To understand verses 12 to 15 we need to read Numbers 32. Just as Lot long before had seen the rich Jordan valley and chosen it for his dwelling place, so now some of the tribes preferred it to the Holy Land itself. Many people want to know what is right and to do it, yet their real enjoyment is in outward activity, “good works” in the natural sense. But they should be like the tribes in our story rather than like Lot. They should be willing to cross the Jordan with their brethren and help in the conquest of the land before settling down in the valley; that is, to recognize their inner evils and fight and overcome them as a means to innocent enjoyment. The whole life must be set in order, inward as well as outward. Read here Joshua 22, which tells of the final settlement of these tribes and the altar they set up east of the Jordan as a reminder of their duty to the Lord.

---

#### From the Writings of Swedenborg

*True Christian Religion*, n. 42: “It must be understood that there are three degrees of love and wisdom and consequently three degrees of life, and that the human mind is formed into regions, as it were, in accordance with these degrees; and that in the highest region life is in its highest degree, in the second region in a less degree, and in the outmost region in the lowest degree. These regions are opened in man successively—the outmost region, where there is life in the lowest degree, from infancy to childhood; and this is done by means of knowledges: the second region, where there is life in a larger degree, from childhood to youth; and this is done by means of thought from knowledges: and the highest region, where there is life in the highest degree, from youth to early manhood and onward; and this is done by means of perceptions of moral and spiritual truths.”

---

#### Suggested Questions on the Lesson

P. What did the spies bring back from the Holy Land? *fruit*

- P. What good things did they report about the land? *fertile, beautiful*
- P. What bad things did they report? *giants, walled cities*
- J. What did ten of the spies advise? *“We are not able . . .”*
- J. What did the other two say? *“We are well able . . .”*
- P. Who were the two spies who trusted in the Lord? *Caleb, Joshua*
- J. Which advice did the people take? *that of the ten*
- J. What was the result? *38 years more in desert*
- J. How long altogether did they wander in the wilderness? *40 years*
- J. What was their last encampment before they entered the Holy Land?  
*Plain of Moab*
- P. When Moses died, who became the leader of the Israelites? *Joshua*
- J. What do you remember about Joshua from earlier lessons? *good spy, army leader*
- J. What was the Lord’s charge to Joshua? *“Be strong and of a good courage”*
- J. What tribes were given homes east of the Jordan? *Reuben, Gad, half Manasseh*
- J. What were the men of these tribes to do before they settled down?  
*help others fight*
- I. What does entering the Holy Land mean? *beginning regeneration*
- S. What is the difference in correspondence between (1) Moses, and (2) Joshua?  
*(1) law obeyed*  
*(2) truth fighting*
- S. What is the difference between (1) reformation, and (2) regeneration?  
*(1) putting outer life in order*  
*(2) getting a new will from the Lord*