

## NEW WINE

### *Mark 2*

Review briefly the last lesson, calling attention especially to the latter part of chapter 1, as the connection with today's lesson can be made most easily by speaking of the miracles, and pointing out again that the Lord's ministry had three parts: preaching, teaching, and healing, and that the physical healings were always done as signs of His power to heal the souls of men.

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#### **Doctrinal Points**

*The Lord performed miracles in order to teach spiritual lessons. The Lord "broke" the laws only in the Jewish interpretation of them.*

*Faith had to be present if a man was to be healed by a miracle. It is right to do good on the sabbath day.*

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#### **Notes for Parents**

There were three parts of the Lord's ministry: preaching, teaching, and healing. He preached in the synagogues. He taught in many surroundings, on mountaintops and by the seashore to great crowds of people, and in houses and quiet places apart to His close disciples. And everywhere He went He healed people of all kinds of diseases. The people probably thought that the miracles of healing were the most important part of His work. We all tend to think that our bodies are the most important part of us. But the Lord's miracles were just evidences of His power to do more important things for us, to help us get rid of selfish passions and wrong thoughts which make our souls sick. So the palsied man in our chapter for today is a picture of every one of us in the times when we mean to do right but just don't seem able to do it. The Lord shows us in the story of this miracle that first we must see our faults and want

to be forgiven, and then we must make a real effort to walk in the right way.

The scribes and Pharisees were called hypocrites by the Lord because they pretended to keep all the laws more strictly than other people and yet were proud and scornful and hard and selfish. The new wine He came to bring was a new spirit of unselfish love and service to all mankind, and this could not be contained in the little petty regulations with which the scribes and Pharisees had burdened the people. The Lord never broke the commandments, but He brushed aside all the man-made rules which interfered with His ministry. He emphasized keeping the spirit of the Law. So He said that the sabbath was made for man. The sabbath is our opportunity to put aside a lot of the things that keep us so busy and tired during the week, and to think about the really important things which will last forever. Our bodies do need rest, but our souls need rest in the Lord; they need spiritual food, knowledge of the Lord and of what He wants us to be, and time to do some of the kind and helpful things for others which are crowded out during the week. Sunday should be the happiest day of the week because it brings us closer to the Lord, from whom all real happiness comes.

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### Primary

Although this lesson is oriented toward the latter part of the chapter, it is suggested that the better passage for the teacher to read aloud is the story of the healing of the palsied man, which will be easier for the children to understand. However, they can understand verses 21 and 22 in the literal sense and will be interested in what “bottles” [KJV] were in those days. Be sure they understand who the scribes and Pharisees and the publicans (tax collectors) were.

Where did the Lord grow up?

Who was sent to prepare the people to receive Him?

How did John prepare them?

You remember how the Lord came to John the Baptist to be baptized. That was the first time most of the people had seen Him, but He soon became known to many as He went about through

Galilee doing good. He preached in the synagogues, and He healed many sick people who were brought to Him.

In our lesson today the Lord had come back to Capernaum.

The first part of the chapter tells about how He healed a man who had the palsy and was paralyzed so that he had to be carried about on a bed.

The people all flocked about the Lord.

You can imagine how eager people were to see the Lord and how they listened to what He taught them. But you know there are always people who want to be important themselves and don't like to see people paying attention to someone else. In the Lord's time the scribes and Pharisees were like that. The scribes were the men who knew how to read and write and spent most of their time copying the books of the Law and the Prophets, and so thought they knew more than anyone else. And the Pharisees were a group who prided themselves on keeping every little bit of the Law. They set themselves up as the most religious people in the country and thought everyone ought to obey them. So the scribes and Pharisees were always finding fault with the Lord and asking why He didn't do just as they did. Our chapter tells about some of their foolish complaints.

What fault did they find first?

What was the Lord's answer to this complaint?

The publicans were hated because they earned their living by collecting taxes for the Romans from their own people.

The Lord came to help all who really wanted help.

What was the next complaint against Him?

What did He answer?

He could not be hindered in His work by the silly rules of the Pharisees. He compared these rules to old cloth into which you could not put a new piece, and to old wine skins too weak to hold new wine. The "bottles" [KJV] of that day were not glass bottles such as we have, but the skins of animals drawn off whole and then tied tightly at the legs so that they would hold liquid.

New ideas necessarily change our ways of living.

The Lord came to give a new understanding of what real goodness is.

The old ways did not fit this new understanding.

### Junior

This is a good opportunity to discuss the New Testament division of the Holy Land, comparing it with the earlier division between Israel and Judah and with the even earlier division among the twelve tribes. We shall not be using a map much in our study of Mark, but the children need to have the geography clearly in mind. Have the class look up the Bible references. Explain who the scribes, Pharisees, and publicans were, and the nature of the “bottles” [KJV]. Emphasize the purpose of the sabbath.

Where was the Lord brought up?

Who was sent to prepare his way?

How did He prepare it?

In what river did John baptize?

During the three years of His ministry the Lord made His headquarters at Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. At this time the Holy Land was divided into three districts, Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. The greatest concentration of people was in Judea, although there were many Jews in the northern part of the land also. Samaria was largely occupied by the descendants of the “strangers” brought in from the east when Assyria conquered Israel. Galilee was called “Galilee of the Gentiles” because there were so many Greeks and other foreigners there. Bethlehem and Jerusalem were in Judea, Nazareth and Capernaum in Galilee. Most of the Lord’s ministry was in Galilee, but He went down to Jerusalem for the great feasts, going and coming through Samaria, and also frequently crossing the Jordan or the Sea of Galilee into the territory on the other side, which was called Perea by the Romans.

Which of the twelve tribes had originally settled in this cross-Jordan country?

Who were the first four disciples of the Lord?

Where did He find them?

After the Lord’s baptism He went about Galilee preaching in the synagogues and healing all kinds of diseases. In our lesson for today He has come back to Capernaum. Because of His miracles of healing His fame had grown and people in Capernaum flocked to see Him and brought their sick to be healed.

What miracle is described in our chapter?

Palsy is a form of paralysis and this man was so palsied that he was not able to walk.

How was he brought within reach of the Lord?

What did the Lord do for him first?

What did the scribes think?

How did the Lord silence them?

The scribes were men who copied the Scriptures—printing had not yet been invented—and also various commentaries written by the rabbis. They prided themselves on their knowledge of the Law and were looked up to as authorities. And the Pharisees were the sect who placed great weight on observing every little detail not only of the Law but of the sayings of the rabbis. The Lord called both the scribes and the Pharisees hypocrites. Read what He says about them in Matthew 23:13-33, especially verses 23 to 28. The scribes and Pharisees were jealous of anyone who seemed to be drawing the attention and respect of the people. They saw in the Lord a threat to their own authority, and throughout His ministry they tried in every possible way to find fault and to lead Him into saying something which they could use against Him.

In this chapter whom did the Lord call to be His disciple?

What was this man's business?

The publicans were Jews who earned their living by collecting the taxes imposed on the Jews by Rome. The Jews of course resented the Roman rule and also the taxation, and so they despised any of their own people who went into this occupation. Look up Matthew 9:9 to see who this Levi was whom the Lord called to be His disciple. As we learned in our lesson on the first chapter of Mark, it was not uncommon for a man to have two names and to be called sometimes by one and sometimes by the other.

What fault did the scribes and Pharisees now find with the Lord?

How did the Lord answer?

The only people whom the Lord cannot help are those who are so satisfied with themselves that they think they do not need His help. We should constantly be on our guard against becoming self-satisfied because this, above everything else, closes the door of our

souls against the Lord.

What was the next criticism of the Lord?

The Lord's answer may seem hard to understand unless we think of what fasting is and why people fast. Literally fasting means going without food or at least without certain foods we especially like. People fast when they are physically sick or when they are feeling very sorrowful. The fasts of Bible days were prescribed to bring the people into a state of repentance and humility. So the disciples of John did fast. But the Lord's presence always made His disciples happy and as long as He was with them they could not grieve or fast. Read John 15:11.

Now let us see what the Lord meant by verses 21 and 22. We can very easily understand about the cloth because we all know how thin and weak the edges of a hole in old cloth are. To understand about the "bottles" we need to know that they were not the kind of bottles we use, but wineskins, made of the skins of animals, usually goats, drawn off very carefully and tied tightly at the legs so that they would hold liquid. These skins of course gradually wore thin and might easily break under the fermenting pressure of new wine. But we should know that both these verses are parables with a deeper meaning within the letter. Read again Matthew 23:23. The old garment and the old wineskin were like the tithes which the scribes and Pharisees made so important that they forgot "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith" which were the real "wine" inside. The Lord came to bring to men a new understanding of what goodness is, goodness of heart, kindness, unselfishness, service of the Lord and the neighbor. These were the new "cloth" to be woven, the new "wine" which could not be contained in the old formal observances of rites and ceremonies.

What was the final complaint in this chapter against the Lord?

In this case the Lord silenced His accusers by reminding them that David himself, who was their great hero, had broken the sabbath in the sense in which they were using it. We need to read this part of the lesson carefully. The Lord, when He said that the sabbath

was made for man, was not doing away with the sabbath. He was pointing out why it was ordained. It is set apart so that we may have time to learn of the Lord and do things for others which we have no time for during the week. The Lord often healed on the sabbath day. He was criticized for it, but his way of using the sabbath was a “new bottle” to hold the “new wine” He brought.

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### *Intermediate*

There are several important lessons in correspondence here, especially the palsy, the wine, and the “bottles” or wineskins. The meaning of verses 21 and 22 can be discussed in connection with the lesson on the sabbath.

The first chapter of Mark tells us that after His baptism and His forty days’ temptation in the wilderness the Lord went about Galilee preaching in the synagogues and healing all manner of diseases. The Lord did heal the sick, but we know that it was the souls of the people rather than their bodies in which He was primarily interested and that His physical healings were a picture of what He can do and wants to do for our souls. It is a good thing to have a healthy body if we use our bodies for good purposes. Our bodies are tools given us for use in this world and we should take care of them just as a good workman takes care of his tools, but the really important thing is what we make or build with our tools.

In the Scriptures diseases always picture spiritual weaknesses, each disease a different weakness. In our chapter for today we have the story of the man who was sick of the palsy. Palsy or paralysis pictures the inability to carry out our good intentions. We often know what is right and say that we want to do it, but we just can’t seem to make ourselves do it. This is spiritual palsy. Notice that the Lord pointed out that the first need the man had was to get rid of his sins. Then He told him to take up his bed and walk. We need first to acknowledge that the failure to do right is our own fault—not the fault of our inheritance or of anything in the world around us—and then we must force ourselves to do what we know we ought to do. If you have forgotten the Lord’s charge to Joshua, re-read Joshua 1:7.

Then in our lesson we have the calling of another disciple. The first four, you remember, were fishermen, but this one was a tax collector, or publican, an occupation despised by the Jews because they hated the Roman rule and taxation. You may wonder why we do not hear more of this Levi, as we do of Peter and some of the others. But Levi had another name by which we know him well. Read Matthew 9:9.

The scribes and Pharisees were afraid of this new preacher whom the people were flocking to hear. They had always been considered the authorities as to the Law and they were very jealous of their authority. So they constantly looked for some breaking of the Law of which they might accuse the Lord. The Gospels frequently tell of the Lord's encounters with the scribes and Pharisees. The Lord called them hypocrites (Matthew 23:13-33), and He always was able to answer their criticisms in such a way as to silence them. Even when they put Him to death, He rose again from the dead. In our chapter they first accuse Him of eating with publicans and sinners and He merely points out—what they cannot deny—that the duty of a preacher, as of a physician, is to help those who need his help. The religious leaders despised all who were different from themselves. You remember how Jonah resisted the Lord's command to preach to the people of Nineveh. The Scriptures, both the Old and the New Testaments, are full of condemnations of the church for its attitude toward Gentiles. No one who sets himself up as better than other people is in a state to receive instruction or help from the Lord.

The next fault the scribes and Pharisees found was with the fact that the Lord's disciples did not fast. The Lord answered this time by pointing out that there is a time for everything and that His disciples were not in any need of fasting so long as He was with them. Fasting is a symbol of sorrow, especially sorrow during temptation. The Lord himself fasted during the forty days of His temptation in the wilderness. But the disciples were happy when they were with the Lord; so during His lifetime on earth there would have been no point in their fasting.



The Lord sums up this teaching in the verses about the new cloth and the new wine. Garments picture truths with which we clothe our affections. When we receive new truth, everything in our old ideas which is not in agreement with it has to go. For example, people used to think that the earth was flat. Maps were drawn with this in mind and you can imagine how everything had to be changed when they discovered that the earth is round. New wine is a picture of new spiritual truth, new truth about the Lord and our relation to Him. Up to this time, people had always thought of God as like themselves in the sense of wanting praise and glory for Himself, loving only those who served and flattered Him, and punishing those who disobeyed Him. In addition to the Law given them in the Word, the scribes and Pharisees had built up a man-made system of rules of all kinds which they made the people obey. These were the old “bottles” which the new “wine” would break.

We have another clear example of what the Lord meant in the last few verses of our chapter. The Pharisees had made the sabbath a very hard and trying day. Others have sometimes done this too. Perhaps you have read how the Puritans in the early days of America thought the sabbath should be observed. Such mistakes come from putting more importance on outward than on inward things. All through His ministry the Lord was condemned by the Pharisees for “breaking” the sabbath, because He went about freely on that day, healed the sick, and did whatever was necessary to help others. The fact was that the sabbath of the Pharisees was an old bottle that had to be broken.

The Lord, when He said “the sabbath was made for man,” did not do away with the sabbath: He merely told us what it is for. In Luke 4:16 we read, “As his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day.” The sabbath is a day set apart for the special purpose of learning of the Lord, joining in public worship, resting from the rush of our worldly activities, and doing some of those kind and helpful things for which we do not have time during the week. It should be different from every other day of

the week, but it should be our happiest day because it should bring us closer to the Lord and to each other. The commandments had to be given in the negative because it is so easy for us to carry our weekday habits and occupations over into Sunday and so to spoil it for its real use; but we should get over the old idea of Sunday as a day on which we are *not* to do this or that, and think of it as our opportunity *to do* the most important things of all.

*Basic Correspondences*

palsy or paralysis	=	inability to do right
fasting	=	sorrow because of temptations
“bottles” or wineskins	=	outward forms in which truth is to be contained

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**Senior**

It is important for the young people to understand why we do not keep all the laws of the Old Testament in the letter and the difference between the ancient Jewish and the early Christian churches. This can be brought out well by a discussion of the meaning of the new wine and the old “bottles” or wineskins. Be sure that they understand that all the laws in the Old Testament are still valid in their internal meaning, and that the ten commandments still hold in their letter also.

In our lesson on the first chapter of Mark we considered principally the mission of John the Baptist and the meaning of the Lord’s baptism. But that chapter, after mentioning the Lord’s forty days’ temptation in the wilderness and the calling of the first four disciples, goes immediately to the account of some of the Lord’s miracles. The Gospel of Mark is the shortest of the Gospels and omits some of the important events and teachings of the others, but it contains almost as many of the stories of the miracles as do Matthew and Luke. It was the reports of the Lord’s miracles which made the people flock to see and hear Him wherever He went. But we are not left in any real doubt as to the purpose of the miracles. The emphasis is steadily on the casting out of evil and falsity from the heart and mind and restoring the person to usefulness.

Our chapter for today begins with the healing of the palsied man, in which the Lord's first concern is with the man's sins. Palsy or paralysis is a picture of inability to walk in right ways. Spiritually we are all subject to this disease. We mean to lead good lives but we often fail to live up to our good intentions. A bed is a symbol of "doctrine." Doctrine may be religious truth or it may be a system of thinking derived from our environment and past experience. When we excuse ourselves for our shortcomings by saying, "Everybody does it," or "I can't change my nature," or "Under the circumstances anyone would have acted as I did," we are lying down on our bed and letting others carry us. When we come to the Lord for help, the first step is to acknowledge that the sin is ours and that we need forgiveness, and the next step is to get up on our own feet spiritually and pick up the bed on which we have been carried and take it in the direction in which we ought to go.

The scribes and Pharisees could not deny the miracles. The Lord's power to heal was obvious to everyone. But they refused to believe that it was God's power. Swedenborg tells us that this was the very reason why miracles could be performed then, whereas they could not be performed today. Such miracles today would force men to believe in the Lord even when they did not want to obey Him. The Lord never forces us to believe in Him against our wills. Even among the people of Bible days the miracles were accepted and believed only by those who already believed.

The greater part of our chapter is concerned with efforts of the scribes and Pharisees to discredit the Lord. Their first complaint was that He ate with publicans and sinners. This is introduced by the incident of His calling Levi—Matthew (see Matthew 9:9)—from his place as tax collector to be one of His disciples. Matthew was a publican, one of the Jews despised by the Pharisees because they collected taxes for the Roman rulers. Several times the Lord's enemies tried to trick Him into saying something which they could report as treasonable, but He foiled each attempt by putting His finger on the root of the complaint. In this case He pointed out that it is the duty of the truly strong and great to help the weak

and unfortunate. There was no answer to this obvious truth.

The rest of the chapter finds its keynote in verses 21 and 22. The scribes and Pharisees, as we read in Matthew 23:13-33, were sticklers for the Law but had no interest in the virtues which the Law was intended to develop and express. The Lord came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets, to live out before men the inner quality of divine truth. We are familiar with the fact that every little regulation commanded in the books of Moses has a spiritual meaning which is its timeless meaning. The regulation itself is like the husk in which the nourishing kernel of wheat is preserved. The Lord came to bring the wheat to view and the husks had to be broken in the process. The charge that His disciples did not fast and the frequent charges that He and His disciples “broke” the sabbath showed that to the scribes and Pharisees the husks were the all of religion.

New wine is a new interpretation of divine truth, which requires new forms for its expression. In the sermon on the mount we read several times: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time. . . . But I say unto you . . .” (Matthew 5:21-48). The Lord thus contrasted old forms with the new spirit which He had come to give. And He said (Mark 10:5) of one of the regulations of the Law of Moses: “For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.” Yet the Lord did not come to “destroy the law, or the prophets.” He came to point out that the Law was not in the letter but in the spirit and that the spirit of the Law was love to the Lord and the neighbor.

This is brought out clearly in His teaching with regard to the sabbath. He said that “the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.” He and His disciples transgressed the law of the sabbath as the Pharisees had interpreted it, but they never “broke the sabbath.” They used the sabbath for worship, for instruction, and for works of healing and charity. This is the purpose for which the sabbath was ordained, a regularly recurring opportunity to rest from the worldly occupations which claim so much of our time and strength and to recognize and develop the higher

spiritual faculties which alone make us truly human beings.

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### Adult

A profitable discussion topic is the attitude of the scribes and Pharisees toward the Lord and its counterpart in our modern world. One of the prime tasks of the New Church is to counteract the prevailing superficial materialistic trend. The new wine of which the Lord spoke is spiritual truth, and this cannot be confined in materialistic forms of thought.

As we saw in our lesson on chapter 1, the impression made by Mark's Gospel is that of the sudden appearance of the Lord at the beginning of His ministry. So we are almost immediately confronted with the miracles and with the reaction of the scribes and Pharisees against the new prophet to whom all the common people were flocking. John the Baptist had prepared the way of the Lord literally as well as spiritually. Because John dwelt in the wilderness and wore the hairy mantle of the prophets, and especially because nothing he said or did interfered with the position or convenience of the scribes and Pharisees, they had been willing enough to recognize John's claim to be a prophet. In fact, we can imagine that the appearance of such an authentic prophet after four hundred years in which the prophetic voice had been silent might be regarded as a strengthening of the position of religious orthodoxy. But now a person appears of very unorthodox demeanor who nevertheless has the sanction of John. As we learn later (Mark 11:29-32), they were afraid to discredit John because he had been generally accepted as a prophet. So it was a long time before they dared to do more than harass the Lord.

Swedenborg tells us that the miracles could be wrought among the people of that day because they would not interfere with their freedom, as they would have with people of greater spiritual sensitiveness. We read in Luke 10:13, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes." But the scribes

and Pharisees could witness the miracles and merely say, “He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of devils casteth he out devils.” (Mark 3:22) The Lord never performed miracles to create faith. Faith had to be present before the miracle was performed. We read in connection with Nazareth, “He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.” (Matthew 13:58) The Lord did have compassion on the sick and maimed and obsessed, and He healed as many as were in humble and receptive states, but we are told that the miracles were wrought principally for the sake of the Word, that they might serve as pictures of the works of healing which the Lord can perform in our souls.

This is clearly illustrated in the miracle performed in our chapter. When the palsied man on his bed was let down through the roof into the Lord’s presence, we read, “When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.” His first concern was with the state of the man’s faith and His second with the removal of his sins. Then he healed the man of his sickness “that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins.” There is a lesson in this miracle for us. The man had faith but could not walk. We often mean to do right but somehow are too weak to carry out our good intentions. We fall back on the mental “bed” we have made to support us in our weakness, excusing ourselves on the ground of our inherited limitations or of our worldly environment or of the provocation under which we labor. If we look to the Lord for help, He shows us that we must first fully trust Him, then recognize that the fault is our own and desire to be forgiven, and finally that we must “take up our bed and walk” in the strength that He can give us.

Our chapter is really a series of encounters with the scribes and Pharisees. They were present at the miracle and objected to the Lord’s claim to the power to forgive sins. The physical miracle silenced them only temporarily. When the Lord called a despised publican to be one of His disciples, Levi or Matthew (Matthew 9:9), they immediately found occasion to criticize Him for consorting with publicans and sinners. The new prophet was not following

their pattern and so became a threat. The Lord's answer reminds us of the story of Jonah's experience when he refused to take the Lord's message to Nineveh. The religious leaders were proud, hard, contemptuous of everyone outside their own class and especially of Gentiles. We recall the Lord's condemnation of them in Matthew 23:13-33. The Lord is "no respecter of persons" (i.e., He does not show partiality). Humility and need are the gateway to His mercy. The scribes and Pharisees could not answer Him. They knew He was right. But their opposition was merely turned into another channel.

The next attack was on the fact that the Lord's disciples did not fast, and here they took pains to remind Him that the disciples of John did fast. And the Lord pointed out to them that fasting has a meaning and a purpose and that apart from its meaning it is of no value. Fasting, Swedenborg says, is a representation of sorrow, especially of sorrow during temptation. The Lord Himself fasted during the forty days' temptation in the wilderness. But the consciousness of the Lord's presence brings only joy to His disciples. Fasting under such circumstances would be a mockery.

The same distinction between substance and shadow is made in answer to the final complaint in this chapter in regard to the observance of the sabbath. The Lord did not say that either fasting or the sabbath is to be abandoned. Each is to be observed in the time and way for which it was ordained. The individual human soul is the thing in whose interest all observances were commanded, and the way in which these observances are to be kept is the way which promotes the welfare of the soul. The church then was an empty shell, merely the representative of a church, with no spiritual life within it. The Lord came to restore the church, to fulfill the Law and the Prophets, to live out before men the divine truth contained within them. Observance of the old outward forms was not adequate to express the spiritual power which He brought down to men. We know that for the Christian Church the sacrament of baptism is substituted for all the ceremonial washings of the ancient Jewish Church, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper for all the

sacrifices and feasts. There are laws, such as the ten commandments, whose letter can never be abrogated because they are the basic general laws of divine order. But most of the Old Testament ceremonial and civil laws took their literal form, as the Lord noted concerning the law of divorce, “because of the hardness of their hearts.”

The teaching of the whole chapter is summed up in verses 21 and 22. (See the quotation from AE 376<sup>28</sup> below.) We need to remember this teaching in our thought about the New Church in its relation to the first Christian Church. When the Lord came into the world He brought new “wine,” new truth from the Divine. It required new forms of expression, new “bottles.” When He came the second time, He again brought new “wine” and the old forms will not contain it. The new truths revealed in the opened Word vastly expand our concept of our duty to the Lord and the neighbor. They cannot be lived adequately within the boundaries and forms of other churches. While there are all over the world in all religions people who “will be” of the New Church in the other life, they are not yet of that Church. With them the old “bottles” are merely being broken by the new “wine.” There must be the specific New Church in the world to keep the new “wine” from being spilled and lost. The organized New Church is a new “bottle” with which its members are entrusted.

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### From the Writings of Swedenborg

*Arcana Coelestia*, n. 9182<sup>10</sup>: “That ‘the sons of the wedding do not mourn so long as the bridegroom is with them’ denotes that they are in a blessed and happy state, thus with the Lord, when they are in truths conjoined with their good; ‘they shall fast when the bridegroom is taken away from them’ denotes that they are in an unhappy state when good is no longer conjoined with truths.”

*Apocalypse Explained*, n. 376<sup>28</sup>: [referring to new wine and old bottles] “This comparison, like all others in the Word, is from correspondences, ‘wine’ signifying truth, ‘old wine’ the truth of the old or Jewish Church, and ‘wine-skins’ things that contain, ‘old wine-skins’ the statutes and judgments of the



Jewish Church, and ‘fresh wine-skins’ the precepts and commandments of the Lord. That the statutes and judgments of the Jewish Church, which related especially to sacrifices and representative worship, are not in agreement with the truths of the Christian Church is meant by ‘they do not put new wine into old wine-skins, else the wine-skins burst and the wine is spilled; but they put new wine into fresh wine-skins, and both are preserved together’ (Matthew 9:17).”

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### Suggested Questions on the Lesson

- P. Who prepared the way of the Lord? *John the Baptist*
- P. What happened when the Lord was baptized? *dove appeared*
- J. Who were the first four disciples called? *Peter, Andrew, James, John*
- J. What three forms did the Lord’s ministry take? *preaching, teaching, healing*
- J. Where did he preach? *in the synagogues, many other places*
- J. Into what three parts was the Holy Land divided in the Lord’s time? *Galilee, Samaria, Judea*
- J. In what part was He born? *Judea*
- J. In what part did He grow up? *Galilee*
- J. Where did most of His ministry take place? *Galilee*
- J. Where did He live during His ministry? *Capernaum (by the Sea of Galilee)*
- P. What miracle is described in our chapter? *healing paralytic or palsied man*
- P. How was the palsied man brought to the Lord? *on a bed or pallet*
- J. What did the Lord do for him first? *forgave his sins*
- J. What disciple was called in our chapter? *Levi (Matthew)*
- J. What was his occupation? *tax collector*
- J. Who were (1) the scribes, and (2) the Pharisees? *(1) those who copied Scripture, (2) legalists*
- J. Why did the people despise the publicans? *collected taxes for Rome*
- J. What was their first complaint against the Lord? *He ate with tax collectors*
- J. What was their second complaint? *His disciples didn’t fast*
- P. What did the Lord say about the new cloth and new wine? *need to go together*
- J. What was the third complaint? *He broke the sabbath (picking grain)*
- I. What did the Lord say about the sabbath? *made for man*
- S. How should the sabbath be used? *to worship, to learn about God, to do good*