

General Church Education



New Church Day: The Little Book

Revelation 10:1-2, 8-11

Lesson 35

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 2: The Lord Is Our Shepherd

For ages 7-8 years

New Church Day: The Little Book

Revelation 10:1-2, 8-11

Ideas for Parents & Teachers

Once again we see the Lord as our Shepherd leading us toward heaven through the teaching of His Word. The stories of Revelation tell us about the New Church and the second coming of the Lord. In this story the mighty angel represents the Lord Himself, tempering His majesty and power, as He appears and brings His message of life to people. In the Lord's Book—the Word—we find the truth we need to support every sincere effort for a good and heavenly life.

As adults we give examples to children in our care. Children can begin to see how adults they know use the truths from the Word to lead them. The Lord gave the truths in the Old and New Testaments, but when people were not choosing to follow them, He came again, giving new truths that explain why it is so important to follow Him. He cannot lead people to heaven if they do not wish to go there.

Ideas for Children

- The Lord came a second time through the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.
- Angels are messengers of the Lord.
- The stories of the Word teach us the truth and give us the ability to live a good life.
- We can spread the Lord's Word through becoming a living example of His teachings.

From the Writings

Since a person's spirit means their mind, 'being in the spirit,' a phrase in the Word, means the state in which the mind is separated from the body. That was the state the Prophets were in when they saw the kind of things which happen in the spiritual world, so it is called 'the vision of God.' They were then in the same state as that of the spirits and angels of that world. In that state a person's spirit can be transported from place to place while their body remains in one place. It was the same with John when he wrote Revelation. See *True Christian Religion* 157

By themselves people think nothing but evil; for by themselves they do not think about God nor about good and just behavior toward their neighbors, unless it is to their own advantage. Nor indeed do they think about heaven and eternal life, but only about the world and life there. As long as this is someone's state of mind their thought springs from what is below and not from what is above. To think what is good, therefore, people's thought must spring from heaven, their minds must be raised in that direction. This is accomplished solely by means of truths derived from the Word; for those truths teach about the nature of God, who the neighbor is, the existence of heaven, the reality of eternal life, and in particular what evil and good are. When these truths pass into the mind its inner levels are raised above the self, and are accordingly drawn away from those things below the self, thus away from evils. From this it may be recognized that all purification or removal from evils is effected by means of truths. See *Arcana Coelestia* 10229

New Church Day: The Little Book

Do you have dreams? What is the difference between a dream and a vision? (Dreams come when we are asleep. Visions usually come during wakeful times when someone is allowed to see into the spiritual world. A vision gives an important message or tells about things that will happen in the future.) In our last two stories the Lord sent important visions to someone. Who was it? (The disciple John.) John had been a close friend and disciple of the Lord while He was on earth. John spent his whole life telling people the good news of the Lord's coming to earth and His teachings about heaven. Then when John was very old, the Lord appeared and revealed prophecies of the future to him.

John wrote all these visions down. They are in the last book of the Word. Do you remember the name of that book? (Revelation.) The Lord revealed what would happen to the church on earth through the visions He gave to John. Much later the Lord came again to another man who was to tell more about these prophecies and about what the stories in the Word mean. Do you remember his name? (Emanuel Swedenborg.) Swedenborg also had his spiritual eyes opened by the Lord so that he could tell people important messages. This was the second coming of the Lord.

A Mighty Angel with a Book

Our story for today is about a vision John had of a special angel. Listen carefully to the details and try to picture this angel in your mind.

Read Revelation 10:1-2. This angel must have been large and strong because he is described as “mighty.” What else do you remember about the angel? (Clothed with a cloud, rainbow on his head, his face like the sun, feet like pillars of fire, right foot on the sea and left foot on the land.)



What did the angel have in his hand? (A little book that was open.)

This is a bright and beautiful picture with the colorful rainbow over the angel's head and light coming from the angel's face and feet. It is a soft picture too, with the cloud surrounding the angel as clothing. Angels are messengers from the Lord. This mighty angel was bringing the bright light of the Lord's truth in a comforting way. He had one foot on the earth and one foot on the sea to show that the Lord is standing near everyone no matter where they are.

Read Revelation 10:8-11 to find out what John is told to do with the little book.

What did the voice from heaven tell John to do? (Take the little book from the angel.)

When John asked the angel for the book, what did he tell John to do with it? (To eat the book and that it would be sweet in his mouth and bitter in his stomach.)

What happened when John ate the book? (It was just as the angel had said: sweet in his mouth and bitter in his stomach.)

What is a bitter taste? (It usually means something unpleasant that might even make your stomach hurt.)

Many years earlier the Lord had given Ezekiel, a prophet of Israel, a similar vision (Ezekiel 3). In this vision Ezekiel saw a book that he was told to eat as well. Ezekiel was a prophet sent to the people of Israel to tell them to stop their evil ways and return to the worship of the Lord.

In both of these visions the little book means the Word of God. It contains our spiritual food. Our minds and hearts are fed by the ideas we learn from reading and listening to stories from the Word. It is through the Word that the Lord speaks to us, tells us about heaven and shows us the right way to live so that we can make good choices.

Do you like to listen to stories from the Word? It is pleasant to hear a story. Stories from the Word are more important than any others because they show us how the Lord is always leading us to the beautiful, happy kingdom of heaven. When we hear these stories and try to put the truths we learn into action, the Lord works with us to make us happy. These stories seem sweet.

But then we sometimes find that there is a part of us that does not want to do what is right. How does it feel



when you know what you should do but you don't want to? Most of us know the right thing to do but there are times when we would rather not do it. We want to have our own way no matter what. It is not as easy to do what is right as it is to learn about it! At these times, knowing what is right can seem bitter to us when we would rather not do it.

After John ate the little book, he was told to prophesy again. He obeyed and went on to give more messages to people so that they could know about the Lord. When we learn from the Lord and obey Him, we also “give good messages” to others. We do this when others see us behaving well, being kind and thoughtful of our neighbors, and showing our respect for the Lord.

The Word Contains Food for Our Minds

The Lord knows that we sometimes want to have our own way instead of obeying His commandments. He knew that in the future people would struggle with this desire just as the ancient Israelites had. So the Lord tells us to “eat the book” because it is very important that we feed our minds and learn how to live from His Word. The more we are fed in this way, the easier it is for us to try to do what the Lord teaches. And that food will not be bitter in our bellies if we use the truths we learn to live good lives.



Discussion Questions

- What do you think it would feel like to have a vision? (Answers may include feeling afraid, amazed, fortunate, or happy to see into the spiritual world.)
- What do you think it was like for people like John, Swedenborg and Ezekiel to have visions and write them down? (Answers may include ideas such as that it was an honor to serve the Lord in this way, it was difficult to tell people things they might not want to hear, that they had to write everything down very carefully.)
- Think about a time when you knew what the right thing to do was but you did not want to do it. Why do you think it is sometimes difficult to obey the Lord? (Because we tend to think of ourselves first instead of the Lord and our neighbor.)

Activity Overview | New Church Day: The Little Book

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying.

There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. Revelation 21: 2-3

Song

Rejoice Ye Heavenly Throng

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-rejoice-ye-heavenly-throng/>

Activities

Choose one or two.

- Activity 1 | John Takes the Book
- Activity 2 | Make a Little Book of the Lord’s Prayer
- Picture to color

Additional Activity Ideas

- Make a scroll (book) to eat out of edible rice paper. Drizzle honey on it to make it taste sweet, and eat it!
- Taste foods that are sweet (e.g. honey, fruits) and foods that are bitter (e.g. dark chocolate, endive, kale). Discuss what it might mean to eat something that is bitter in your belly.

Activity 1 | John Takes the Book

Create a moving picture and help John take the book from the mighty angel.

Materials

stiff paper for printing

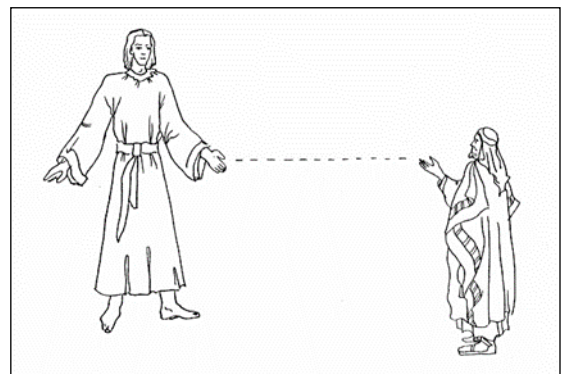
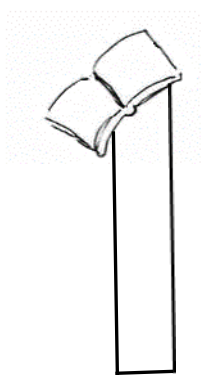
scissors

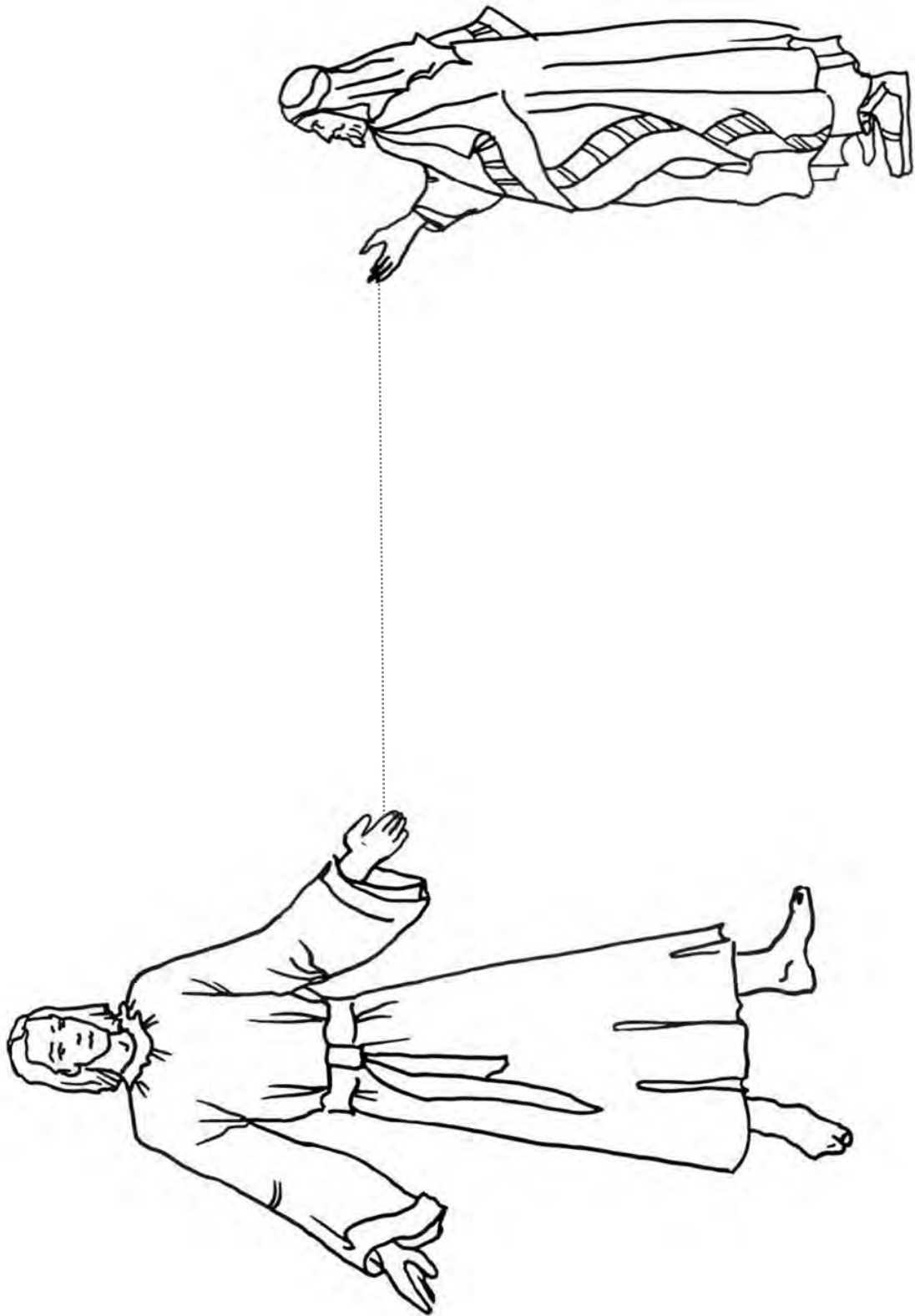
crayons, markers or colored pencils

optional: popsicle stick and tape

Directions

1. Color the pictures of John, the mighty angel and the little book.
2. Cut out the little book below, being careful not to cut off the tab.
3. *Optional*: tape a popsicle stick to the tab on the little book to make it easier to move it.
4. Cut a slit in the picture from the angel's hand to John's hand.
5. Insert the book tab so that it can slide from the angel's hand to John's hand.
6. Use the picture to tell the story about what happened to John when he saw the mighty angel with the little book.





Activity 2 | Make a Little Book of the Lord's Prayer

When the Lord was in the world he taught what we should do in order to live a life that would lead to heaven. He also taught us how to pray, so we could ask His help in doing it. Make a little book of the Lord's Prayer as a reminder of what we should do.

Materials

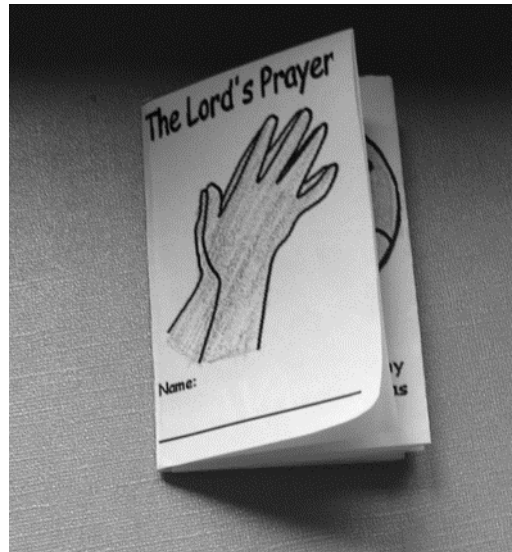
Little Book Template

scissors

crayons, markers or colored pencils

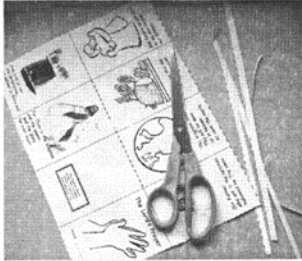
Directions

1. Color *The Lord's Prayer* book page.
2. Follow directions for cutting and folding the book as shown on the *Prayer Book Stages* page.
3. Read through the book. The Lord gave this prayer to us—just as the mighty angel gave the little book to John.



Prayer Book Stages

1.



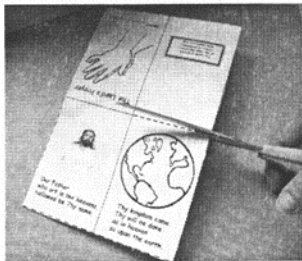
Trim page.

2.



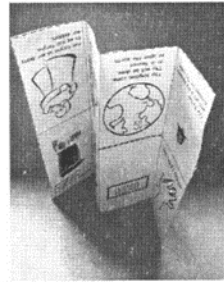
Fold in half.

3.



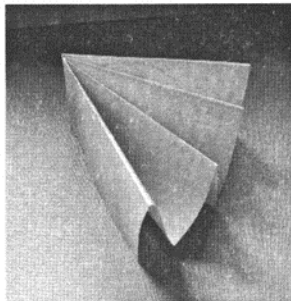
Cut along the dotted part of the line in the middle.

4.



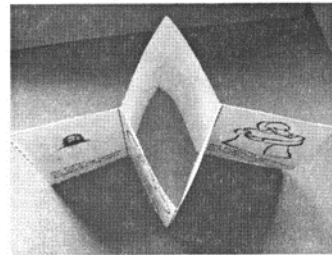
Fold in half again.

5.



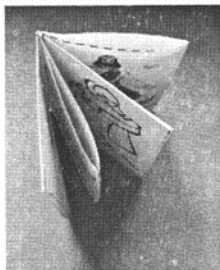
Fold in half across the middle.

6.



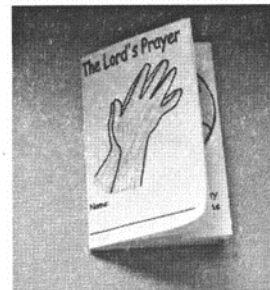
Open folded paper. Refold just the long way. Move ends in. Middle opens up on cut line.

7.



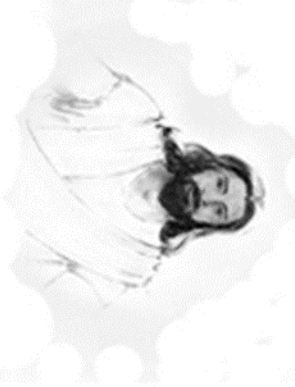
Fold into book.

8.



Finished book.

Our Father
who art in the heavens,
hallowed be Thy name.



The Lord's Prayer



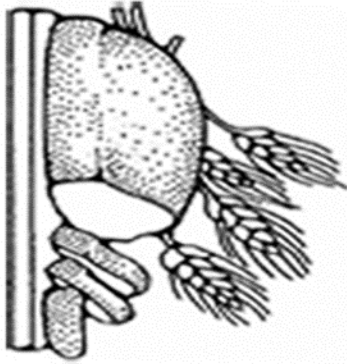
Name: _____

Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done,
as in heaven
so upon the earth.



The General Church
of the New Jerusalem
Office of Education
www.newchurch.org

Give us this day
our daily bread.



For Thine is the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glory
for ever. Amen.



And forgive us our debts
as we also forgive
our debtors.



And lead us not
into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

