

Lesson 20: THE “NUNC LICET” TEMPLE
True Christian Religion 508

INTRODUCTION:

Heaven is a place of great beauty, and everything that is seen there is a symbol of something beautiful about the Lord or His kingdom. I will read today about a time when Swedenborg saw a scene that represented the New Church. Swedenborg would be shown amazing scenes in heaven, and then the Lord would put thoughts into his mind to help him understand what the scene meant. Before I begin, I must explain what a cherub is, because a cherub appeared in this scene. A cherub is not an angel, or a somebody. A cherub is a symbol that appears sometimes, in heaven or in visions seen by people in the stories of the Word. A cherub can appear looking like a human, or like an animal, and it often has wings. A cherub is a symbol of protection from the Lord of his most deep and precious truths. These truths must be protected from those who would want to treat them badly, by falsifying them or using them for evil purposes. In this scene, the cherub represents the literal stories of the Word, because those stories protect the deep meanings that are within the Word.

READING:

And now for today’s description of the “Nunc Licet” temple.

Swedenborg wrote:

“One day there appeared to me a magnificent temple. It was square, and its roof was in the shape of a crown, with its lofty arches rising on high all around. Its walls were made of clear crystal, and its gate of a pearly substance.

Inside was a pulpit, on which lay the open Word, surrounded by a blaze of light that lit up the whole pulpit. In the center of the temple was a shrine, with a veil that hung in front of it. But now, this veil was pulled back, and in the shrine stood a golden cherub with a sword in his hand. The cherub waved this sword back and forth.

While I was watching this scene, thoughts flowed into my mind, telling me what it meant. The temple was a symbol of the New Church, and the pearly gate symbolized the entrance into this church. The crystal walls showed how truth will enlighten the New Church, and the pulpit was a symbol of the priesthood and preaching. The open Word, lying on top of the pulpit, showed that now the internal meanings of the Word are revealed. The shrine in the center of the temple symbolized the connection of the New Church with the angels in heaven; and the veil was now pulled back, because now an understanding of the Word is opened that is like the understanding of the angels. The golden cherub was a symbol of the literal stories of the Word, and the cherub waved his sword to show that the stories of the Word can be turned this way and that, to be used in many ways to teach true ideas.

When I went closer to the temple, I saw an inscription over the gate, which said “Nunc Licet,” which means “Now it is permitted.” I knew this meant that now people were allowed to understand things of faith that had just been mysteries before. I realized how dangerous it is when people think they can solve mysteries about God and eternal life and what the Word is saying, just by figuring it out by themselves. If they do this, they will fall into all sorts of mistaken ideas, which may close their minds to heaven. Only from a revelation from the Lord

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Himself can these mysteries be solved, and this new knowledge will connect a person with heaven.

In the New Church, there will be no more mysteries. The Lord explains what the stories of the Word are telling us, and through learning this and living a good life our minds can be opened to understand more and more.

After I had thought about these things, I saw an infant overhead, holding a paper in his hand. As he came nearer to me, his form gradually changed to that of a grown man. He was an angel from the highest heaven, and all angels there appear like infants from a distance, because they are so willing to be led by the Lord.

When this angel reached me, he handed the paper to me. But it was written in the curved letters of the highest heaven, and I did not know how to read them. I returned the paper to the angel, and asked if he would please adapt the writing into a form that I could read and understand. The angel did this, and handed the paper back to me, and this is what was written on it:

Now enter into the mysteries of the Word, which before had been a closed book; for all its truths are mirrors of the Lord.”

**Nunc Licet Project:
Make a Hanging “Stained Glass” Window of the Nunc Licet Temple**

Supplies:

The Nunc Licet patterns
Sheets of poster board for the frames (dark blue would be nice)
Wax paper
Iron
2 pieces of cloth, to cover the wax paper while ironing
Scissors
Pencils
Glue or glue stick
Tissue paper in red, white, yellow, Orange, and one or more other colors
Gold pen or gold glitter pen (not essential, but would be neat)
String or yarn to hang them

Ahead of time:

Cut out 2 poster board frames for each child.
Cut 2 pieces of wax paper for each child, big enough to fit in the frames.

Procedure:

1. Explain that you’ll be making something like a stained glass window.
2. Show an image of a special temple that Swedenborg saw in heaven. You will be reading the description of this temple while they work on the project.
3. Pass out the pattern pieces, tissue paper, pencils, and scissors.
4. Show how the pieces will be laid out after they are cut. Have them work quietly, tracing and cutting, while you read the lesson aloud.
5. When the pieces are cut out, have them each lay out their scene on a piece of wax paper, waxy side up.
6. One by one, have them bring their scene to you, where you will lay the scene down on a spread-out cloth. Place the second piece of wax paper on top (waxy side down), and then add a second cloth. Iron for a few seconds, until the wax paper is sticking to the tissue pieces. Flip it over and iron the other side.
7. Now have each child glue this scene to the 2 frame cut-outs, one on the front, and one on the back. They can then write “Nunc Licet” at the top in gold, and make a hole to hang it by a string.

Extra Tips:

- ❖ Have them cut inside the pencil lines, since the pencil lines show up very clearly.
- ❖ You can only cut 4 frames out of each poster board
- ❖ Cutting of tissue takes a while. If you have less time, you could either trace and cut some patterns ahead of time or have a child layer the tissue to do several at once. Then pass the cut-outs to the other kids.

Project Layout and Templates

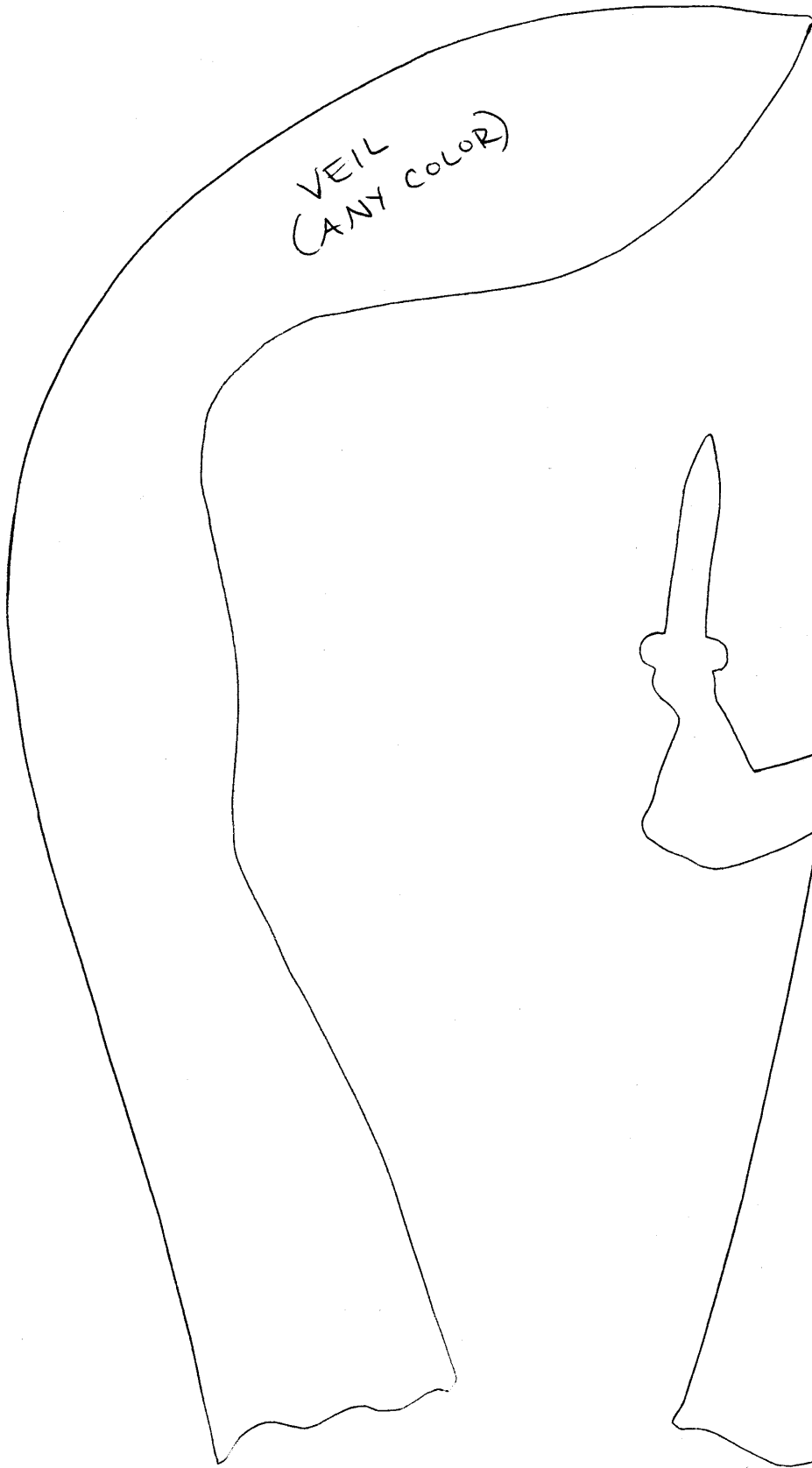
This is the layout for placing the tissue paper cut-outs on the wax paper:
(When laying it out, place the frame around the pieces, to make sure they'll fit in the opening.
But then remove the frame before laying the top layer of wax paper and ironing.)



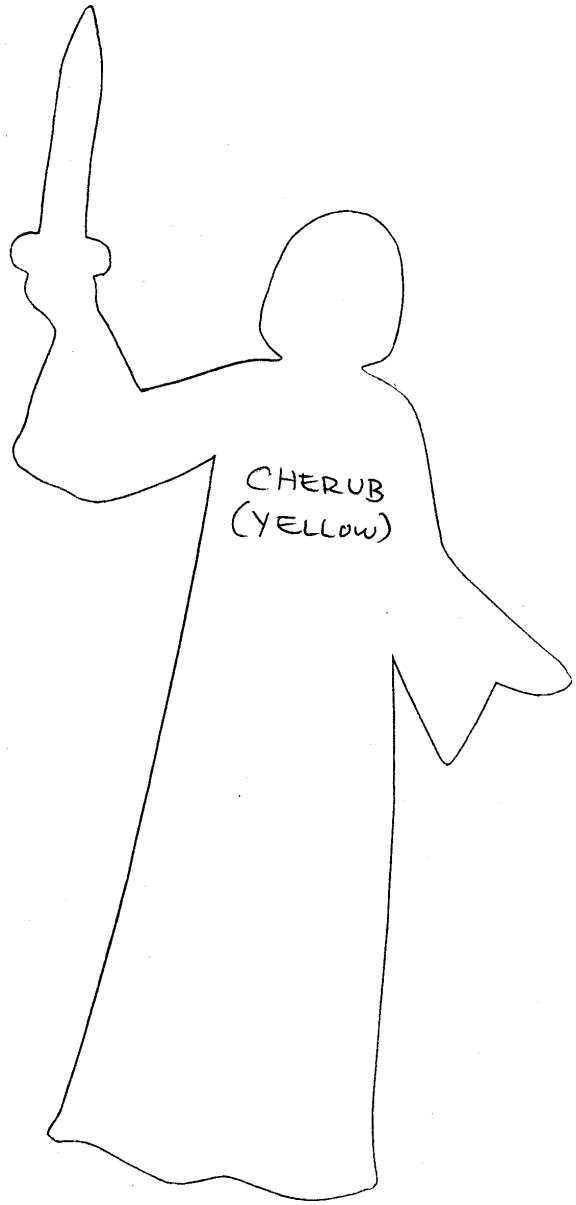
NUNC

LICET

Pattern: Cut 2 for each child



VEIL
(ANY COLOR)



CHERUB
(YELLOW)

