



Prophecies of the Advent

FaithBuilder 4 | Lesson 12 | Christmas

Lesson Overview

1. Brain Builder

What are prophecies?
Why are they important?

2. Read

Prophecies of the Advent about light that the Lord brought into the world at His coming, pp.1-2.

3. Discuss

What caused darkness before the Lord came into the world? What was the new light He brought into the world to dispel the darkness? p. 2.

4. What True Ideas Have Changed Your Life?
Optional activity, p. 3.

New Church Concept Darkness & Light

Darkness signifies falsity because light signifies truth, and falsity is the opposite of truth as darkness is of light; moreover, when the light of life, which is the Divine truth, is not with man, the shadow of death is with him, which is falsity; for man from what is his own (proprium) is in every evil and in falsity from the evil, and he is removed from these only by means of the truths of the church; consequently where there are no truths there are the falsities of evil. *Apocalypse Explained* 526.2

Brain Builder

1. What does the word “prophecy” mean to you? Why is anticipation important?
2. Prophecies of the Lord’s birth appear throughout the Old Testament. Can you think of one?
3. Why were prophecies important to people waiting for the Lord?
4. Why are the prophecies important for us today?

Read

Prophecies of the Lord’s coming on earth are given in a variety of ways. Some describe His coming as the coming of a glorious King. Others give us the image of a Comforter, a Shepherd, or a Light coming to illumine a dark world. Today we will be focusing on prophecies on the theme of light.

Think about what the light of the natural sun does for us. It gives us the ability to see. It is essential for the growth of plants—which in turn provide food for animals and people, wood for building, etc. The sun also warms the earth. Without it the earth would freeze and all forms of life would cease to exist.

Natural light and spiritual light are linked through correspondence. So just as there would be no life on earth without sunlight, there would be no spiritual life without the presence spiritual light from the Lord or truth in human minds. Spiritual light is the *cause* of natural light.

Prophecies about light describe the *spiritual* impact the Lord’s birth into the world would have on the dark states of ignorance within the human race at the time of His coming. As you read the following prophecies, think about the spiritual implications of this new light in the world.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. **Then God said, “Let there be light” and there was light.** Genesis 1:1-3

A Star shall come out of Jacob; and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and batter the brow of Moab, and destroy the sons of tumult. Numbers 24:17

New Church Concept Spiritual Sight

He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. **And he shall be like the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds, like the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain.** II Samuel 23

Thus says God the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk on it: “I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand; **as a light to the Gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house.** I am the Lord, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images. Isaiah 42

Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. Isaiah 60:1-2

“For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up,” says the Lord of hosts, “That will leave them neither root or branch. **But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings;** And you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves.... Says the Lord of hosts. Malachi 4:1-3

And you child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, **with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,** to guide our feet into the way of peace.” Luke 1:76-79

Discuss

1. We sometimes talk about being “in the dark” meaning we are ignorant. What is the most serious kind of mental darkness?
2. The Lord came into the world at a time of great darkness. What caused the darkness? How did His coming bring light into the darkness?
3. What was the light that the Lord brought? What new truths did Jesus share that were not previously known?
4. At what other times has new light been given to the world?

'Seeing' in the external sense means sight, as is clear without explanation. 'Seeing' in the interior sense means the understanding, as is likewise clear, for the sight that the internal man has is nothing else than the understanding, which also is why in everyday speech the understanding is called internal sight, and the word light is used in reference to it as well as to external sight and is called the light of the understanding. 'Seeing' in the internal sense means faith received from the Lord, as is clear from the consideration that interior understanding has no other objects than those of truth and good, for these are the objects of faith. This interior understanding, or internal sight, which has truths of faith as its objects, does not show itself so plainly as the understanding does which has truths to do with public and private life as its objects, the reason being that it exists inside this latter understanding and dwells in the light of heaven, which light is in obscurity as long as a person dwells in the light of the world. Nevertheless it does reveal itself with those who are regenerate, in particular by means of conscience. 'Seeing' in the highest sense clearly means foresight, for the intelligence spoken of in reference to the Lord is an infinite intelligence, which is nothing else than foresight. *Arcana Coelestia* 3863.4

What True Ideas Have Changed Your Life?

The Lord's birth on earth at Christmas pictures the way He comes to us and can be born in us at any time, giving new spiritual insight into things such as a difficult relationship, a new understanding of something we had not previously understood, etc.

Reflect on the ways in which truths can open your eyes spiritually by thinking of true ideas that have helped you *or* think about a situation in which knowing the truth could have helped or changed the situation.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. **And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. **This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.** He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. **That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.** John 1:1-9