

**Lesson 16: THE THREE HUNDRED PRIESTS**  
*Apocalypse Revealed 611*

**INTRODUCTION:**

People who have died first live for a while in the world of spirits. Then, when they want to seek heaven, they look, and a path to follow appears. Good or bad people may want to look for heaven – good people because they want to be close to the Lord, and bad people because they think they deserve good treasures they might find there. The Lord doesn't stop anyone from seeking heaven. But not everyone who travels to heaven ends up feeling good when they get there. This story is based on something Swedenborg saw happen. Some boys in the world of spirits were watching, too.

**READING:**

*“Brad and Mihn and the Three Hundred Priests”* by Greg Henderson. This story is based on a story in *Apocalypse Revealed 611*. (This book is out of print, but the text of this story is attached at the end of this lesson.)

**DISCUSSION:**

These priests didn't want to stay in heaven because they felt awful there. Why did they feel awful? (Inside, these priests were evil, so they couldn't stand being in a place that was so full of goodness and love.)

In the spiritual world, people sometimes appear from a distance in some other form – something that represents what they are like. Why did the priests first appear like calves? (Because calves represent a love of learning and finding things out. These priests *did* love to learn and find out, but unfortunately it was not so they could help people with the knowledge. They wanted to learn in order to take advantage of other people.)

Why did they have such trouble breathing, and writhe on the ground like snakes? (The air there was of a heavenly atmosphere, and it choked them. They felt so tortured that they fell to the ground and writhed around like snakes.)

Why did they look like dead horses when they left the city? (A live horse represents a good, spiritual understanding of the Word. A dead horse represents a bad, merely worldly understanding of the Word.)

Notice how it was not the Lord or any angel that caused the priests to leave the heavenly city. The priests themselves desperately wanted to leave, and it was they who hurled themselves down the steep hill. That's how it is – everyone is invited by the Lord to come to heaven. But people who just don't love heavenly things – in fact, hate heavenly things – cannot handle the power of good, and feel tortured by it. So, by the Lord's mercy, they find another place to dwell, and that place is called hell.

But for all who want to have friendship, kindness, use, faith, and love as the most important things in life, a home will be waiting in heaven. This is the Lord's promise.

**PROJECT: Three Hundred Priests Memory Game**

**PREPARING THE THREE HUNDRED PRIESTS MEMORY GAME**

- A) Make *four* photocopies of the enclosed page, which shows the playing cards.
- B) Color **2** cards of each of the following descriptions for the **standing** priests:
- 1) white robes and hats, red headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 2) red robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 3) white robes and hats, orange headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 4) orange robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 5) white robes and hats, yellow headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 6) yellow robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 7) white robes and hats, green headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 8) green robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 9) white robes and hats, blue headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 10) blue robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 11) white robes and hats, purple headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 12) purple robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 13) white robes and hats, brown headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 14) brown robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 15) white robes and hats, black headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 16) black robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 17) white robes and hats, gray headbands and hanging cloths.
  - 18) gray robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.

Color **2** cards for each of the following descriptions of **slithering** priests:

- 19) red robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.
- 20) orange robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.
- 21) yellow robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.
- 22) green robes and hats, white headbands and hanging cloths.

Color **2** cards for each of the following:

- 23) Brown calves.
- 24) Black calves.
- 25) White calves with brown spots.
- 26) White calves with black spots.
- 27) Brown dead horses.
- 28) Gray dead horses.
- 29) Black, brown, and gray spotted dead horses.
- 30) Red or red-brown dead horses.

- C) Get some self-sticking contact paper with a dark pattern. Lay some down on a table and remove the peel-off paper, so that the contact paper is lying with the sticky side up. Now place the four sheets of paper you have colored face up onto the sticky contact paper, so the contact paper is sticking onto the *back* of the colored sheets.
- D) Cut the contact paper down to the size of the sheets of paper.

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- E) Get some clear, transparent contact paper. Lay it on the table and remove the peel-off paper so that the sticky side is up. Lay the sheets of paper *face down* onto the clear contact paper, so the contact paper is sticking onto the side that you colored.
- F) Cut the contact paper down to the size of the sheets of paper.
- G) Cut the individual cards apart. Now the memory game is ready to play!

**PLAYING THE “THREE HUNDRED PRIESTS” MEMORY GAME**

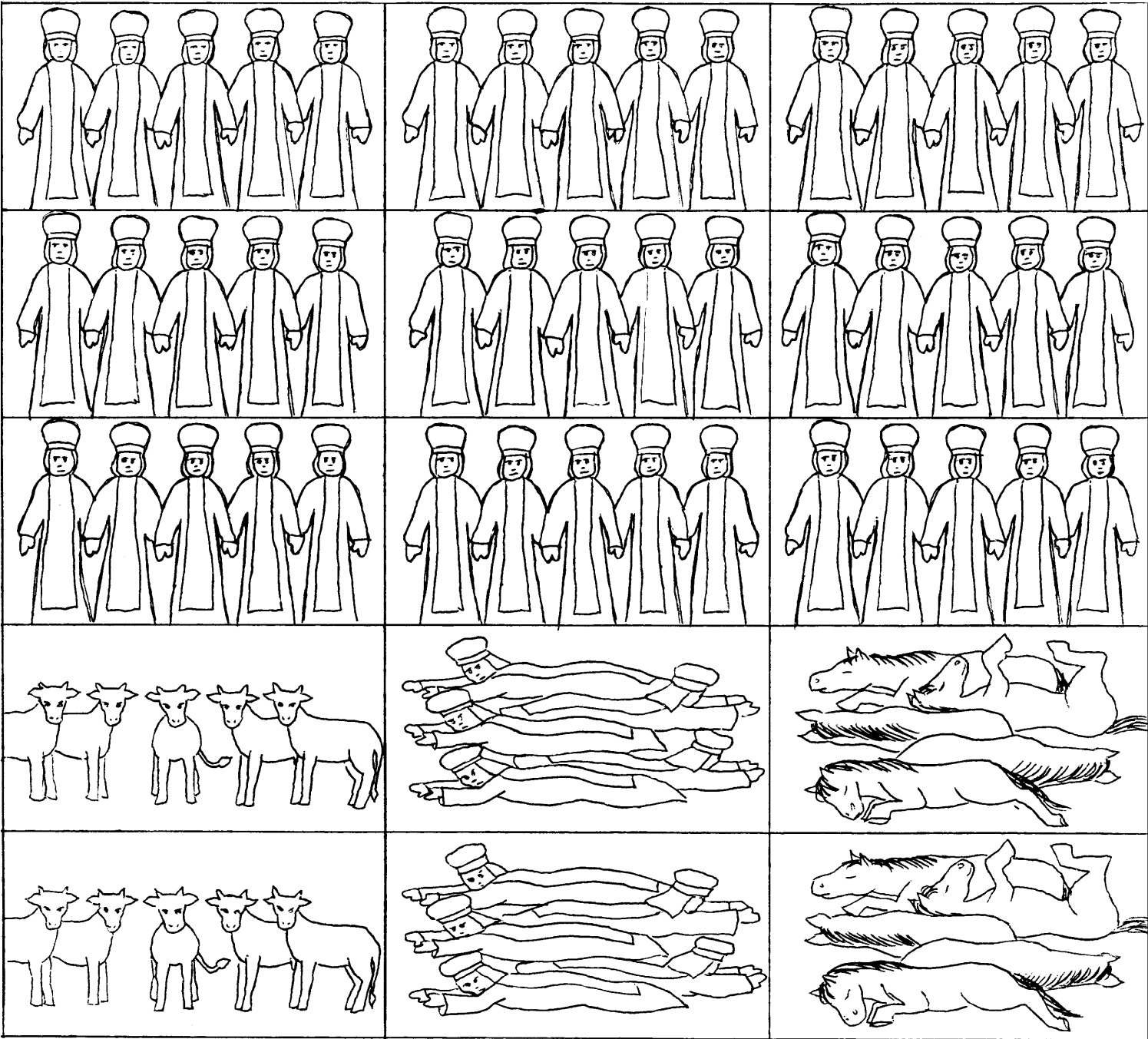
The three hundred priests need to get out of the heavenly city – they don’t belong there! Shuffle the deck of cards and lay them out in six rows of ten on the table, face down.

**Take turns turning over two cards. If they match, you can remove them. Those priests are out of the city! If they don’t match, turn them back face down.**

**Everyone can try to help each other remember where the matches are.**

**There are three hundred priests in all. Some are standing. Some are slithering on the ground like snakes. Some look like calves, and some look like dead horses. See how long it takes to get them all out of the city!**

MEMORY GAME CARDS



# **Brad and Mihn and the Three Hundred Priests**

**Based on Apocalypse Revealed 611 by Emanuel Swedenborg**

**By Greg Henderson**

Anyone who thinks materially when he reads the Word or meditates on anything from it looks from a distance like a dead horse; but if he thinks spiritually, like a live one (*True Christian Religion* 623).

Brad and Mihn had come to the spiritual world as children. They lived in heaven with an angel mother. Now that they were older they went to school in a different part of heaven where angel men taught them.

One day Mihn asked his teacher, “How do spirits enter heaven once they have left the world of spirits?”

“Follow me and watch,” was Mr. Chamberlain’s answer. He led the two boys down to a path on a steep hillside.

“Why have you brought us here?” asked Mihn.

“This path is one of the many ways which lead from the world of spirits to the societies in heaven. If we wait, soon we will be able to see spirits traveling up to heaven.”

“Look, Mr. Chamberlain!” shouted Brad, pointing down the trail.

Mihn and Mr. Chamberlain turned to where Brad was pointing and saw at least three hundred calves trudging up the path.

“Why are calves coming to heaven?” Mihn asked.

“Those aren’t really calves, Mihn. Wait until they come closer and you will see who they really are.”

Brad and Mihn watched the herd of calves carefully, and, as they passed the boys, they began to look less and less like calves and more and more like priests.

“Can we follow them?” Brad asked Mr. Chamberlain.

“I don’t see how we can watch them enter heaven unless we do,” he replied and the three of them climbed the hill after the three hundred priests.

The path led them to a walled city with a great door at its entrance. Next to the door stood a man holding a spear.

Realizing that he was the gatekeeper to the city, one of the priests walked up to him and said, “My many brethren and I have spent our lives as priests and have long looked forward to entering heaven. Therefore we have traveled from the world of spirits and have come here to dwell in heaven.”

## **Brad and Mihn and the Three Hundred Priests**

The gatekeeper nodded his head and unlocked the door. The three hundred priests then hurried inside the city, and Mr. Chamberlain and the boys stood at the entrance and watched them.

“What is wrong with the air here?” asked one of the priests. “I can’t breathe.” He began to grab his throat, hoping this would let more air into his lungs.

“There must be foul pollution in this city. I can’t breathe either,” cried out the priest next to him.

“Why are they having problems breathing? I can breathe fine,” said Mihn.

“Just watch. There will be more to see,” said his teacher.

Before long, all the priests were gasping for air, and some were even running into each other.

“Hey, why don’t you look where you’re going?” shouted one priest to another who had just bumped him.

“I can’t see where I’m going. Everything has gone blurry,” the other answered.

One by one all the priests lost their sight, as if they were in a cloud, and they began to be afraid — so afraid that all they could do was to stand as still as statues.

“What is happening to them?” Mihn wondered.

“Shouldn’t we help them?” Brad asked.

“No, Bradley, we must let them do as they wish,” said Mr. Chamberlain.

The priests were moving now, but not as priests should. Instead they were slithering around on the ground like snakes.

Then Brad, Mihn and their teacher had to step away from the city’s entrance, because the miserable clergymen began to run out.

The boys turned and saw all three hundred priests hurl themselves headfirst down the steep hill. But as they did so, they no longer looked like priests, but had turned into dead horses!

Then the three hundred dead horses rolled all the way down the hill until the boys could no longer see them.

“Is this what happens to everyone who tries to enter heaven?” asked Brad.

“Oh no, certainly not,” replied his teacher. “To most people heaven is just as wonderful and pleasant as it is for us. But for people who are evil and who do not love the truth, heaven is a miserable place to be, just as hell would be a terrible place for us.”

“But those people were priests; they couldn’t have been evil,” said Brad.

“And why did the priests look like calves at first?” asked Mihn.

## **Brad and Mihn and the Three Hundred Priests**

“You are right that they were priests on earth,” said Mr. Chamberlain, “and outwardly these priests seemed to care about the Lord’s Word. That’s why at first they looked like calves, because calves represent people with a natural affection for learning. Unfortunately,” he continued, “on earth, people can pretend to be good and love the truth in the Lord’s Word. They can fool everyone, even themselves.”

“So that’s why they thought they wanted to go to heaven?” asked Mihn.

“Yes, but when they arrived here they couldn’t stand it.”

Mr. Chamberlain then pointed to a house in the same walled city which had just been built. “Do you see that house, boys?” he asked. “That’s going to be the home of a good spirit. Soon he will walk up this path and enter the city just as those three hundred spirits did, but he will love the city when he arrives and will find this house waiting for him.”

“Do we have a house like that waiting for us?” asked Mihn.

“Yes, one is being built for each of you, and when you enter heaven as an adult, the Lord will lead you to it,” replied Mr. Chamberlain. “You’ll know right away that it’s yours because you will feel happy there. There’ll be friends and relatives living near you who love the same things you do and who feel the way you do.” Smiling at the boys, he said, “Then you will truly know that you are in heaven!”

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