

Swedenborgian Sunday School Notes for the Revised Common Lectionary

Isaiah 2:1–5 • The Mountain of the Lord

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Isaiah 2:1–5 The mountain of the Lord
Matthew 24:26–44 . . . The Son of Man’s coming

Overview

This is the first Sunday in Advent. Our goal is to help the children prepare their minds and hearts for the Lord to come into their lives in new ways. Today we will ask the children to think of one of their bad habits and decide to give it up as a way of making room in their lives for the Lord to be born.

Key Points

- During Advent, we prepare ourselves for the Lord to come into our lives in new ways.
- For this to happen, we need to make some changes in the way we think, feel, and act.
- When we do this, the Lord will come to us, shining new life and new love into our hearts and minds.

Example for Teaching Children

Did you have a good Thanksgiving? (*Let them tell about their Thanksgiving.*) Thanksgiving helps get us into the holiday spirit as we look forward to Christmas. Today is the first Sunday in the Advent season, when we prepare ourselves for the Lord’s coming.

This is what our Bible reading is about. Isaiah talks about the Lord’s temple being built on a high mountain, and all the nations coming to it. “Temple” is what the Jewish people call their churches. What do we do here at church? (*Pause*) At church, we learn about the Lord and about how to love each other.

That’s exactly what the mountain of the Lord means. When we climb a mountain, we get above the fog and pollution, and into the beautiful, clear sunlight—which is like feeling the Lord’s beautiful love. And when we learn about the Lord, we can see the best ways to live—just as we can see for miles around us when we are at the top of a mountain.

But if we want to feel the Lord’s love and see the best ways to live, there is something we have to do first. Our reading says that when the Lord comes, he will “settle arguments for many people,” and that “nations will not fight against each other anymore.” Before the Lord can be born at Christmas time, people have to stop doing things that are wrong.

Let’s each think of one bad habit that we can give up to get ourselves ready for Christmas. Do you ever argue and fight like the people in our Bible reading?

Or is there something else you do that you know is not very nice? (*Let them state a bad habit if they want, or they may simply think of one in their heads.*)

Would you be happier if you gave up that bad habit? (*Pause*) Let’s each decide to do our best not to do that *one* thing, so that we can be ready for the Lord to be born in us in a beautiful new way. (*Offer a prayer for help in preparing for Christmas.*)

Basic Correspondences

mountain = love for the Lord

ways = true ideas

paths = teachings for life

light = wisdom

Thoughts from Swedenborg

Isaiah 2:3–5 speaks of the Lord’s coming—that those who will be part of his new religious era will be taught true ideas by which they will be led to heaven.

- “The mountain of Jehovah” and “the house of Jacob” means a religion in which people love the Lord, and worship from that love.
- “Many peoples will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to that mountain.’” means that people will be called to that religion, and therefore to the Lord.
- “He will teach of us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths” means that we will be taught true ideas that will guide us, since “ways” means true ideas, and “paths” means teachings for life.
- “The law will go out of Zion, and the Word from Jerusalem” means that we will be led by teachings of the goodness of love, and by teachings of truth from that goodness, which come to our religion out of heaven from the Lord. “The law” means teachings about the goodness of love, and “the Word” means true ideas from that goodness.
- “He will judge between the nations, and arbitrate among the peoples” means that evil ways of living and false teachings will then be dispersed. “Nations” means people involved in evil things, and “peoples” those who have false ideas— so in an abstract sense they mean evil ways of living and false teachings. . . .
- “Come, let us walk in the light of Jehovah” means that we will live a life of wisdom.

Apocalypse Explained #734b.2, .3