

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Rev. Fredrick L. Schnarr

The Book of Revelation, otherwise known as “The Apocalypse,” was the last book of the New Testament to be written. The Heavenly Doctrine for the New Church tells us that it was written by the disciple John sometime during the first century, while he was on the island of Patmos.

Although the Christian Church accepted this work as part of the Lord’s Word, people were unsure why it had been given, or what was meant by the strange visions it described.

Then, in the late 1700s, Emanuel Swedenborg was told by the Lord the meaning of the visions John saw. And he wrote down these explanations. The first work explaining these visions fills almost six books. It is called *Apocalypse Explained* (1757–59). In 1765 Swedenborg wrote still another work from the Lord in two volumes, called the *Apocalypse Revealed*. These are parts of the Heavenly Doctrine given by the Lord for the New Church.

In studying the Lord’s life on earth we see how His new teachings provided for the beginning of the Christian Church with His disciples. The Lord gave the means whereby the people of this world could see the pathway that leads to heaven. For a time, using these new truths and goods from the New Testament, Christians began to live like the angels in heaven. They could do this, even though wars, diseases, crime, poverty, and many other unpleasant and ugly things, still continued to exist in the world around them.

But we know that the Lord told His disciples that He would have to come again. This first Christian Church would not last forever. The visions that John on the island of Patmos were prophecies of a wonderful New Church. The Lord promised to bring a New Christian Church into existence, a true Christian Church that would last forever. It would make the salvation of all people who truly looked to the Lord possible, no matter what their religion or the condition of their natural life.

Because the Lord would give this church a new Word, a Word revealing all the spiritual knowledges about the Lord, heaven, the church, and people, it would be strong and wise and able to fully love the Lord. This is the prophecy of the book of Revelation which was fulfilled in the teachings of the Heavenly Doctrine.