

General Church Education



Seven Seals Opened (New Church Day)

Revelation 5-9, 11 (parts)

Lesson 35

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 4: The Lord Is the Hero

For ages 9-10

Seven Seals Opened

Revelation 5-9, 11 (parts)

For Parents and Teachers

The Lord's disciple John saw remarkable prophetic visions in the spiritual world which are written in the book of Revelation. John saw seven seals on a scroll being opened. These describe judgments in the spiritual world that happened as the inner meaning of the Word was opened through the revelation for the New Church. The "seals" with which the scroll was shut are truths the Lord guards until people are ready use them. The opening of the seals affects people according to their receptiveness to true ideas. People like the rider on the white horse welcome the truth, use it to correct their faults, and live as the Lord wants them to. The rider on the red horse pictures people who learn true ideas only to condemn others. The rider on the black horse pictures people who are interested in learning true ideas to argue over their literal meaning. The rider on the pale horse is like people who reject the Word completely. They are only interested in themselves and worldly things. As more seals were opened, greater evils were revealed. Opening the fifth seal showed souls under the altar who could be saved. The sixth seal showed those who could not be saved but wanted to hide from the Lord because they had done wrong. When the seventh seal was opened seven trumpets sounded. Various kinds of destruction followed each one. The great destruction in the vision pictures the judgment that was to come before the New Church could be established on earth.

Ideas for Children

- The book of Revelation prophesies about the coming of the New Church.
- The Lord opened the seals by revealing the inner meanings of the Word.
- The New Church is founded on the opened Word, that is on seeing the inner meaning.

From the Writings

And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back symbolizes the Lord in respect to His underlying Divinity from eternity who embodies the Word. The Lamb means the Lord in respect to His Divine Human. The book written inside and on the back means the Word in every particular and in its entirety. Inside and on the back also mean the inner meaning of the Word, which is spiritual, and its outer meaning, which is natural. The right hand means the Lord in respect to His omnipotence and omniscience, because the subject is the exploration of all in heaven and on earth on whom the Last Judgment would fall, and their separation.

As the embodiment of the Word, the Lord knows the states of life of all in heaven and on earth, because He is Divine Truth itself, and Divine Truth itself, of itself, knows everything. Since the Lord embodies the Word, and the Word is the Divine Truth which forms heaven and the church in general, and each angel in particular so as to have heaven in him, and each person so as to have the church in him, and because the Word is here meant by the book on the basis of which and according to which all are to be judged, therefore we find references here and there to being written in the book, to being judged on the basis of the book, and to being blotted out from the book, where the subject is someone's state of eternal life. See *Apocalypse Revealed* 256.

Seven Seals Opened

Revelation 5-9

Vocabulary

exile—send a person away from their home country

elder—a wise older ruler

worthy—people with faith in the Lord (preface, *Apocalypse Revealed*)

seal—something that held the scroll closed, like sealing wax

The Coming of the Lord

When the Lord was on earth He told His disciples, “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now” (John 16:12). What were the things that people were not ready to hear? We will discover some of them in our lesson today.

When John was on the island of Patmos he saw a great moving picture being acted out in the spiritual world. In one scene the Lord sat on a throne in heaven. A beautiful green rainbow shone around the throne. Before the throne was a sea of glass. Twenty four elders sat around the Lord. Each elder sat on a throne. Four living creatures that looked like a lion, a calf, a man and an eagle

also sat by the throne. The creatures were amazing. Each one was covered with eyes and had six wings. The elders and the creatures worshiped the Lord.

Have your parents or a teacher ever trusted you to do something that you didn’t do, and so you let them down? If so, did you feel *unworthy* of the trust they placed in you? As the scene unfolded, John saw that the Lord held a scroll or book in his right hand. But no one in heaven or on earth was worthy to open the seals that held the scroll shut.

Read Revelation 5:1-7. Pay attention to who was worthy to open the seals.

The Lamb

Only the Lord Himself could open the scroll. He appeared as a Lamb. The four living creatures and the elders bowed down before the Lamb and sang a joyful song of praise. The angels in heaven also praised the Lord.



The scroll sealed with seven seals was the Lord's Word. The Word was sealed. Nobody knew what it meant. Things were mixed up in the spiritual world. It was impossible to tell who loved the Lord and should be in heaven, and who did not love the Lord and should be in hell. Some people pretended to be good, and told good people ideas that were wrong. People waited in the spiritual world for many years until the true meaning of the Word could be revealed.

The opening of the seals on the scroll pictures true ideas for the New Church being revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg, servant of the Lord. Each seal opened would tell who was good and who was bad. The new truth being revealed brought judgment in the spiritual world. The things that happened there are called the Last Judgment. The heavens rejoiced as each new truth was given, because at last people who had waited for so long could go to their eternal homes.



The Seals Opened

As each seal on the scroll was opened, John saw a new scene. When something good appeared, he saw people who loved the Lord and would live in heaven. When something bad appeared, the scene was about people who did not love the Lord and would live in hell. The Lord was showing how He would sort out the spiritual world so it would not be mixed up any more.

When the first seal was opened, a white horse appeared. Its rider held a bow. The white horse meant loving the Lord's truth. The rider received a crown and rode off to fight against evil. Spirits like this rider were good. They fought evil while they lived on earth and would be led to heaven.

When the Lamb opened the second seal, a fiery red horse rode out. The rider was given a sword, and rode away to take away peace and hurt people. The rider was like evil spirits who pretended to love the Lord's Word while they lived on earth when really they had used the Word to become powerful and hurt people.

When the third seal was opened, John saw a black horse. Its rider held a pair of scales to measure things. The rider was like evil spirits who pretended to be interested in the Word but really only wanted to argue about what it meant.

The rider who appeared when the fourth seal was opened rode a pale horse. His name was Death. He represented people who wanted to destroy the Word and did not care about doing what was right. The rider was called Death because when we turn away from the Lord we have no life at all.

This is the life of hell.

Many spirits who loved the Lord were trapped in the world of spirits. They could not go to heaven because evil spirits had too much power over them when they lived on earth. When the fifth seal was opened, these people appeared as souls under the altar. They would be freed when the Lord judged the spiritual world.

When the sixth seal was opened, there was a great earthquake. Spirits could now be seen as they truly were. People who knew they had done wrong hid. They did not want the Lord to see them. Read Revelation 6:1-17.

Before the seventh seal was opened, the Lord commanded that all the good people be “sealed” or marked with a sign. The sign would stop them from being hurt by the things that would happen next. When the Lamb opened the seventh seal there was silence in heaven. Then seven angels appeared and were given seven trumpets. The sound of a trumpet is a symbol of proclaiming truth from the Lord. As each trumpet sounded, more and more truth appeared.

Read Revelation 8:1-6; 11:15, 19.

The Last Judgment

The opening of the seals is a picture of the Lord making His Second Coming in the truths for the New Church. The new truths clearly show people how to lead a good life, a life that leads to heaven. We celebrate these ideas, and the peace and joy they bring, on New Church Day, June 19th.

Discussion Questions

- While John was on the island of Patmos he saw a scroll sealed with seven seals. What is another name for the scroll? Why was it sealed shut?
- Who prophesied that the Word would be shut? Why was it important not to open the scroll before the right time?
- Who was worthy to open the seals?
- What happened in the spiritual world when the seals were opened?
- Why were people trapped in the world of spirits? What stopped them from going to heaven or hell?
- How does the Lord protect us from evil?
- What do we celebrate on New Church day?

Activity Overview | Seven Seals Opened

New Church Day Lesson

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne
A scroll written inside and on the back,
Sealed with seven seals. Revelation 5:1

Projects

Choose one or two activities.

- Opening the Seven Seals Project
- New Church Paper Chain
- Picture to Color—Seventh Seal: Seven Angels with Seven Trumpets (Revelation 8)

Additional Activity Ideas

- Additional coloring pages for the first through the sixth seals are available online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resources/?q=Seal&scope=all&type=5&age=&auth=&lang=123>.
- The scroll was sealed with seven seals. Discover other places in the Word where the number seven appears by completing a Crossword Puzzle about the Number Seven. This activity is online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-the-number-seven-in-the-word-crossword-puzzle.pdf>.

Activity 1 | Opening the Seven Seals Project



John saw a scroll sealed with seven seals. Only the Lamb could open the seals. Make a scroll “sealed” with seven seals. Open each seal to find out what happened as the Lamb broke the seals.

Materials Needed

Seven Seals Project

scissors

tape

stapler

Optional: stickers that look like seals

Directions

1. Cut off the white edges at the top and bottom of the *Seven Seals Project*. Do not trim the white edges at the sides of the page.
2. Fold the page into a “scroll”. Start by folding the white edge under the pictures of events that happened as the scroll was opened. Folding along a sharp edge, such as the edge of a table, will make this easier.
3. Continue folding along each tan line, and finish by folding the white edge under, as shown on the right.



4. Staple the pictures to the back of the scroll in several places to give the project strength. (See photo on left.)
5. Separate the seven seals by cutting along the white lines between each seal.
6. Using small pieces of tape, secure each seal to the scroll. Your finished project should look like the picture at the top of this page. *Optional:* use stickers that look like seals to fasten the seals to the scroll.
7. Use your completed project to tell the story of the opening of the seven seals. Open each seal in the order the Lamb opened the scroll and talk about what John.





Activity 2 | New Church Paper Chain

Celebrate New Church Day by decorating with colorful paper chains. Each link features a symbol of the New Church, such as the woman clothed with the sun, Michael fighting the dragon, the holy city New Jerusalem, Nunc Licet temple, Alpha and Omega, and the General Church Seal.

Materials Needed

New Church Paper Chain links

scissors

Stapler

optional: paper cutter



Note: to make a long chain, make extra copies of the *New Church Paper Chain* links before beginning this project.

Directions



1. Cut off or fold under the white edges at the top, bottom and sides of the *New Church Paper Chain* Links.
2. Cut each page in half on the black center line. Each half of the page will be used to make one chain link.
3. Take one chain link. Fold the link in half along the center line so that color shows on each side of the link. Choose a side to feature on the outside of the chain link. Staple the link into a circle.
4. Take another link. Fold the link on the center line. Thread the link through the link you previously assembled. Staple into a circle.
5. Continue adding links until your chain is as long as you would like to make it.

Happy New Church Day!









