

# New Church Canadian

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the General Church in Canada



## NOW IT IS PERMITTED— BUT BY WHOM?

By Rev. Mark Allais

### What Opens When the Internal Sense Is Revealed

There is a passage in Swedenborg's writings that has shaped how many in the New Christian tradition understand their relationship to his entire body of work. The claim is this: *now it is permitted to enter, with the understanding, into the mysteries of faith*. For a tradition that believes these writings contain the revealed internal sense of Scripture, the Lord's very meaning beneath the letter, this statement carries enormous weight. It has been taken to mean that we are living in a unique moment, that the veil has been lifted, and that by reading and studying these writings, we receive a kind of enlightenment unavailable to previous ages.

That reading is not entirely wrong. But something important is missing from it. And what is missing changes everything.

### The Door Is Unlocked — But That Is Not the Same as Walking Through It

The Latin behind the phrase is *nunc licet* — "now it is lawful," or "now it is permitted." The permission is real. Something has genuinely shifted. Before this moment in church history, the internal sense of Scripture was sealed. The correspondences between natural images and spiritual realities were not openly

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From the Editor



disclosed. People received spiritual light through the letter of the Word in ways they could not trace or articulate. Now those connections have been drawn out into plain sight.

This is a real gift. The door is unlocked.

But permission to enter is not the same as having entered. And an unlocked door still requires you to walk through it.

The comfortable reading of *nunc licet* quietly slides these two things together. It assumes that because the internal sense is now available in the Writings, engaging with those Writings is itself the entry into understanding. The text has the light; the reader receives it by contact. Read carefully, study deeply, and the illumination follows.

This is a version of an old error in new clothing. It locates the work entirely in the text and removes it from the reader's interior condition. What you are, what you love, what your will is oriented toward, none of this enters the picture. Understanding is treated as a faculty that operates independently of the person it belongs to.

New Christian thought does not support this.

### **Understanding Is Not a Machine You Can Run From the Outside**

In the New Christian framework, the human mind has three distinct levels: the will, the understanding, and the memory. These are not three compartments in a box. They are in a living relationship with each other, and the quality of that relationship determines what actually reaches the person when they engage with truth.

The memory holds what a person has learned: facts, ideas, doctrines, images. The understanding is where those facts become *seen*, where they illuminate, connect, and reorder how things appear.

But the understanding does not operate in isolation. It is either drawn toward what the will loves, or pulled toward what the memory finds pleasing. And what the will loves determines the quality of light the understanding works by.

This means that when the will is still oriented toward self, toward status, comfort, intellectual pleasure, the satisfaction of having figured things out, it engages with spiritual truth, but the understanding does not rise. It expands laterally. It produces more sophisticated versions of what we already believed, more elaborate theological structures, and a richer vocabulary for positions we already held. The content has changed. The interior operation has not.

Swedenborg is consistent and precise on this point: intellectual engagement with spiritual things, without the active practice of self-examination and repentance, does not produce enlightenment. It produces a more educated proprium. We now have the internal sense as material, for self-congratulation, for theological performance, for the warm feeling of being among those who understand what others cannot see. The understanding has been entered, but from below. From the natural mind's own level. Not from the influx of truth through a will that is being reformed.

The *nunc licet* is not permission for the natural mind to explore spiritual territory on its own

terms. It is an invitation for the understanding to be *raised*, which is a fundamentally different operation.

### **Raising Requires Something of the Will**

Raising the understanding is not something the understanding does to itself. It is something that happens to the understanding when the will is in the process of being turned away from what it loves for its own sake, toward what is genuinely good and true. This turning is what Swedenborg means by charity. Not generosity. Not good feelings toward others. Charity, in its precise sense, means self-examination and repentance: looking honestly at what you actually love, what you are actually driven by, and working, with whatever freedom you have, against the parts of yourself that resist the Lord's influx.

Without that work underway, the threshold between natural and spiritual understanding remains closed. Not because the permission hasn't been granted. But because the reader has not moved toward the door.

This threshold is real and non-negotiable in New Christian thought. It cannot be crossed by accumulation, by reading more, studying harder, memorising more passages, or achieving greater doctrinal precision. The natural mind does not ascend into spiritual understanding by being full enough of spiritual content. It crosses the threshold by transformation. Specifically, by the gradual transformation of the will's dominant love, through the process of regeneration.

The Writings are extraordinarily valuable in this process. They give you far more precise tools than any previous generation has had. They name the states clearly. They trace the correspondences. They show you the map in detail. But a map is not the territory. And having a detailed map does not mean you have taken a single step.

### **The Second Coming Does Not Come to a Closed House**

The identification of Swedenborg's Writings as the Lord's Second Coming is a serious claim, and those who make it have grounds for it. If the Lord is the Word, if to approach Him is to approach the living Text, then the opening of the internal sense of that Text is a real and weighty event. Something happened. Something was given.

But the Lord's coming is always a coming *into* something. It is not a broadcast that reaches every receiver equally simply because the signal is in the air. In New Christian thought, the Lord comes into a will that is being prepared, a will from which obstructions are being cleared through self-examination and repentance. He comes into the interior space that genuine charity creates.

Think of it this way. The sun has risen. That fact is real and permanent. But whether you receive its light depends on whether you are standing in the open or behind shutters you have not yet opened. The *nunc licet* is the sun having risen. The work of charity, honest self-examination, repentance, the willingness to have your proprium exposed and corrected, is the opening of the shutters. The Second Coming as an event in spiritual history makes the light available. It does not automatically illuminate every interior.

To assume otherwise is to mistake the sunrise for the opening of the shutters.

## What the Comfortable Reading Costs

It is worth being honest about what is at stake when *nunc licet* is read as automatic enlightenment. The cost is not merely theological precision. The cost is the interior life itself. If reading and studying the Writings is itself the entry into understanding, then the central work of regeneration, self-examination, repentance, the painful and unglamorous process of having your will gradually turned, becomes secondary. Optional. The thing that matters is engagement with the text. And engagement with the text is something the natural mind can do indefinitely, on its own terms, without ever being genuinely disturbed. This is faith alone that the Lord warns about.

This is precisely what the proprium wants. The proprium, the deep sense of self that experiences itself as the source of its own life and loves, is always looking for a way to locate spiritual achievement in something it already possesses or has already done. It wants the accomplished credential. It wants the work to be behind it rather than ahead. And a tradition that says *we have the revealed internal sense, we have the Writings of the Second Coming*, is offering the proprium a very plausible credential to reach for.

The irony is sharp. The Writings are perhaps the most anti-proprrium, anti-faith alone body of doctrine in Christian history. They describe the proprium with surgical precision. They name its disguises, trace its operations, and expose its hiding places. And yet the *nunc licet* can be read in such a way that the proprium uses this very body of doctrine to confirm itself, to feel illuminated, arrived, chosen, among those who truly understand.

If reading the Writings produces mostly a sense of arrival, that is worth examining carefully.

## What Genuine Entry Looks Like

Real entry into understanding, in the New Christian sense, does not feel like having finally understood. It feels like being shown how little you have yet seen. It is humbling rather than credentialing. It opens questions rather than closing them. It makes the interior life more vivid, not more settled. It increases your awareness of what is operating in you, what you love when no one is watching, what you reach for when you are threatened, and what the quality of your delight actually is in any given moment.

The Writings are a gift precisely because they give you language for this, specific, precise, honest language for states that would otherwise remain unnamed and therefore invisible. But the gift is only received by someone moving toward the threshold, not someone sitting comfortably on the near side of it and reading reports from the other side.

The door is unlocked. The permission is real. But entry is an interior act. And it begins, always, with self-examination, with the willingness to ask not *what do these truths mean?* But *what do they teach me about me, right now, in this actual state I am in?*

That question is the first step through the door.

*Exploring more of these themes: the interior life, the Word's hidden depths, and what it means to actually change from the inside, over at [markallais.substack.com](http://markallais.substack.com) - Come take a look.*



**A New Church Camp for Teens  
Held at the Ecology Retreat Centre in Mono, Ontario**

*We look forward to welcoming campers  
Friday, June 26 – Wednesday, July 1, 2026.*

This will be a week of friendship building, laughter, restorative relaxation, and spiritual growth for teens who will have just completed any year of high school.

**Our theme this year is BLESSINGS.**

**"...I will bless you, and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing."  
~ Genesis 12:2 ~**

Want to register or get more information?  
Please visit [maplecamp.com](http://maplecamp.com) or contact  
Stephanie Kuhl, Camp Director, regarding any questions  
at [gcic.mapleleafcamp@gmail.com](mailto:gcic.mapleleafcamp@gmail.com)  
Facebook: @MapleLeafAcademy | Instagram: @MapleLeafCamp

Maple has been serving New Church youth since 1969; it is sponsored by the General Church in Canada and is staffed by experienced volunteers.

After GCIC contributions, regular camper fee is **\$300**, with discounts for early bird registration (before May 1) or for "junior staff" (returning campers finishing high school). A deposit of at least **\$50** (\$5 non-refundable) is required with registration and full payment is due by **June 12**.



## **2026 JACOB'S CREEK FAMILY RETREAT - JULY 23-26**

Our retreat will be held at the Laurelville Retreat Center in Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania.

This Year's Theme: "Use: The Soul & Life of All Heavenly Joy"

We are capping attendance at 150 people, so don't wait to sign up.

The registration this year is online at: [jacobscreekfamilyretreat.org](http://jacobscreekfamilyretreat.org)

Friend us on Facebook at: [facebook.com/JacobsCreekFamilyRetreat](https://facebook.com/JacobsCreekFamilyRetreat)

Please contact Julie Uber at 412-782-2710 (h) or [julie.uber@gmail.com](mailto:julie.uber@gmail.com) if you have any questions.





## 12th Annual LIVING WATERS FAMILY CAMP

Thursday, July 16 –  
Sunday, July 19, 2026

This Year's Theme  
***“Evangelizing for the New Church”***

Now is a great time to start a family tradition where grandparents, parents, and children can all go to a summer camp and worship, learn, pray, and play together. These family camps provide a fantastic opportunity for the Lord to store up some cross-generational New Church “remains.” Every good church camp has the Lord at the center of it, and the opportunity to learn about Him from His Word and to worship Him with thankful praise!

The theme for our camp this summer is **“Evangelizing for the New Church.”** There are many different ways to look at what “Evangelization” really means. One very concise and clear passage from the Heavenly Doctrine says this: *“Evangelization is annunciation about the Lord, His coming, and the things that are from Him which belong to salvation and eternal life”* (Arcana Coelestia 9925). It is interesting to note that it mentions not only teaching about the Lord but also of His coming, which in the context of the New Church would be His Second Coming! And then of course we have the exhortation of the Lord when He gave this great commission to His disciples, ***“Go forth into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”*** (Mark 16:15).

The camp is located near Paisley, Ontario on the Saugeen River and is called Hidden Valley Christian Camp. It is only 194 kilometers from the Olivet New Church and just 154 kilometers from the Carmel New Church. It is also an easy trip across the border for our Southern neighbors from the United States. Canoeing and fishing are available, and the camp is just 20 kilometers from a beautiful beach on Lake Huron. There are cabins, rooms, and service hookups available for campers.

The General Church in Canada has been wonderfully supportive of this venture and, there are scholarships available to ensure that the camp is affordable enough for most everyone to attend! If you would like to register online, please go to: [livingwatersfamilycamp.wordpress.com](http://livingwatersfamilycamp.wordpress.com) and sign up! If you would like more information about **Living Waters Family Camp**, you can email [LivingWatersFamilyCamp@gmail.com](mailto:LivingWatersFamilyCamp@gmail.com) or call Brad Heinrichs at 215-870-0591. Currently, the ministers on staff are Bishops David Lindrooth and Brad Heinrichs, who will be assisted by some of the young theologs. It promises to be a great camp once again!

Rt. Rev. Brad Heinrichs

**“Living waters” are often mentioned in the Word, and by them are meant truths that come from the Lord and are received. These are living, because the Lord is Life itself, as He Himself teaches, and that which comes from Life itself is living.”**  
**(AE 483:1)**

# CANADIAN NEW CHURCH WOMEN'S WEEKEND: IT'S HAPPENING OCTOBER 23-25, 2026



*It's official, we're doing it! Enough interest was expressed in having a women's gathering that we've chosen dates and place – it's happening! Mark your calendars:*

*Friday, Oct 23<sup>rd</sup> afternoon/evening – early afternoon  
Sunday, Oct 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026*

*Collingwood, ON and via Zoom*

If you're already in touch with Jenn about this, you know the details; if you haven't reached out but your interest is piqued, drop me a line, there's time and space yet!

If this is all news to you, the intention for this weekend is to gather New Church-minded (i.e. needn't be dyed-in-the-wool, membership card-holding New Church) women for relevant presentations & discussions, a charitable project, guided meditation, games/down-time/relaxing activities and food. The cost for the weekend will be approximately \$220 plus shared responsibility for food; financial aid will be available, please let me know as I don't want money to be a barrier to anyone coming.

For more information and to get onto the mailing list, email me at [jenn@beiswenger.net](mailto:jenn@beiswenger.net). I look forward to a fun weekend with my new 'sisters'!

~Jenn Beiswenger

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## REGIONAL PASTOR & EVP NOTES

By Rev. James Cooper

### A Word of Encouragement

Much of our experience with Religion is of a negative nature, focused on the “thou shalt nots” of the Old Testament. It has its place because all children and young people have to learn the rules that guide and define our culture and community. Some things are learned from parents or peers, other things through study, and sometimes things are learned by trial and error, but most people eventually figure out what's going to work for them.

But what about our adult states? Once we've figured out how to avoid getting into trouble by following the rules, is there anything more, anything more fulfilling? Here's a comforting thought from Emanuel Swedenborg: “When a person feels or perceives within himself that he has thoughts regarding the Lord which are good and thoughts regarding the neighbour which are good, and he wishes to perform acts of kindness for him, but not for the sake of any gain or for the sake of his own position, and when he feels that he has pity for anyone who suffers misfortune, ... he may then know that ... there are with him things of a [spiritual] nature by means of which the Lord is working” (Heavenly Secrets 1102:e).

When you take a quiet moment to reflect on the course of our lives (as we all should from time to time), you may notice that you have good and kind thoughts about your friends and family and that you are moved to do kind and helpful things for them without thought of keeping score, or the payback. When you see these things in yourself, know that you have found the Lord's presence with you and be encouraged that you are on the right track.

### General Church in Canada Annual General Meeting

This is a reminder that the AGM of the GCIC will take place on Saturday, May 23rd at 7:30 pm, EDT. The meeting will be held at Olivet church and there will be a social supper at the church starting at 6:30 pm. If you are able to attend the meal, please RSVP to [KarenAnnCooper@gmail.com](mailto:KarenAnnCooper@gmail.com) so we will know how many to prepare for.

For those not able to attend the meeting in Toronto you can attend by Zoom. Here is the link that you can copy and paste into your browser:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87877093041?pwd=sF54VkAstrgKJMF1bgXJ1JxjiEDkOO.1>

Meeting ID: 878 7709 3041

Passcode: 413539

Members of the GCIC have received a copy of the Annual Report by email or if we don't have their email, by Canada Post.

If you don't know if you are a member, or would like to become a member, please contact the Secretary, Karen Cooper, at [KarenAnnCooper@gmail.com](mailto:KarenAnnCooper@gmail.com).

### News

On May 8th, there was a fire in the Carmel New Church School in Kitchener. Thankfully, it broke out in the evening when no one was in the building, so there were no injuries. Although the fire was restricted to one classroom, there is a lot of smoke and water damage, especially in the school wing. As I write this they are in the process of assessing the damage and making plans for re-opening the school by using available space in the church wing of the building. The weather is also improving, so there may be some extra "open air" experiences for the students.

### Calendar

The General Church has a number of Theologs in training, which is a good thing, but they are not ready to go out into the field. With several pastoral retirements coming up it means, among other things, that we have a shortage of pastors and we are not able to place a resident pastor in the United Kingdom for the '26/'27 year. In order to serve the several congregations in the UK, several senior pastors will make extended visits. Both Michael Cowley and I will visit the UK in the fall of '26 and again in the spring of '27. This will have an impact on our ability to travel to the various groups in Canada, but we are working on finding volunteers to help out. It's a lot easier to find someone willing and able to make a weekend trip within North America than it is to find someone willing to move to another country for a month or two. At this point we don't have any details about how it will all shake out, but we are working on it, and we will let you know what's happening in due course.

And, of course, with summer just around the corner there are a lot of church camps to choose from if you are so inclined:

- Tools 4 Life: June 14 - 20
- Olivet Bible Camp: June 22 - July 3
- Maple: June 26 - July 1
- ANC Summer Camp: July 6 - 11
- Living Waters Family Camp: July 16 - 19
- Cascadia Retreat: July 22 - 26



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## A TRIBUTE TO RICHARD AND GILLIAN PARKER

By Karen Cooper

Years ago, I saw Richard and Gillian Parker do something, and at the time, I said to myself that that incident would make a good anecdote to tell at one or the other's memorial service. Well, Gillian recently made her way to Heaven, and I wasn't able to be at the service! So I'll tell my story here, because I think it's relevant to all of us.

We were having a New Church celebration at the Olivet Church (complete with at least one bouncy castle!) and it rained pretty much all morning. Anticipating that the event would be moved indoors, the organizers set up tables and chairs in the church hall. But lo and behold, when the church service was done, the rain cleared up and it was a beautiful sunny day! We all had a wonderful time outside, eating our picnics on blankets, the way it was supposed to be. As the event was winding down, I overheard Gillian lean over to Richard and say something to the effect of, "let's go take care of the chairs." They then proceeded to go into the church and put away all the tables and chairs. (I like to think that I volunteered to help too, but I don't actually remember.)

To me, this just typifies what it means to be of useful service. Richard and Gillian saw a job that needed doing, and without any fanfare, and without any need for congratulations, or recognition, they just did it. We are taught that we are here on earth to be of use to others, and that we don't get into Heaven by merit ("earning" it), but for many of us, it doesn't always work this way. We like people to notice when we're doing something good! We think we're better than other people if we do good things! But apparently it shouldn't work that way.

Richard and Gillian did this sort of thing so often that they really didn't think about it anymore—they just did it. It had become a way of life—to notice when other people could use some help, and then just doing it. And happily, they passed that on to their kids who now behave in a very similar fashion. Isn't this really the essence of what it means to be a good person, and an angel? They help other people, without regards to their own comfort (does anyone ever put away chairs because they like doing it so much?!) because they know it's the right thing to do; it's what the Lord asks of all of us.

Godspeed, dear people.

# FROM SCORTATORY LOVE TO CONJUGIAL LOVE: A LENTEN REFLECTION

By Dwight Jenkins

Now that the Lenten season has passed, I find myself reflecting on its deeper purpose, and on the meaning of Good Friday in our daily lives.

Emanuel Swedenborg describes conjugal love as a love that flows from the Lord—one that is spiritual, unselfish, and life-giving. In contrast, he speaks of scortatory love, a love turned away from what is heavenly and directed instead toward self-centered desire.

In our time, this contrast is perhaps most visible in the widespread presence of pornography. Studies suggest that a significant number of young people are exposed to it, and even within Christian communities, many quietly struggle.

As a former criminal defence attorney and Crown prosecutor, I have seen how disordered desire, left unchecked, can gradually lead individuals down paths they never intended to walk.

Good Friday reminds us that spiritual transformation requires more than suppression—it calls for renewal. Just as a garden must be tended, with weeds removed so that healthy growth can take place, so too must we examine the habits and thoughts we allow to take root within us.

Lent, in the Swedenborgian understanding, is a time of regeneration: a turning away from what diminishes us and a turning toward what gives life.

The question is not simply whether we abstain, but whether we are willing to be transformed. What might it look like to replace harmful patterns with something better? To seek what is truly life-giving rather than what is merely momentarily satisfying?

These are not easy questions: Good Friday and the Lenten period remind us that transformation is always possible.



## FROM THE EDITOR

Many thanks to everyone who submitted articles for this issue of the New Church Canadian. Your contributions are greatly appreciated and help make each issue informative, engaging, and meaningful for our readers.

If you would like to submit an article for publication in the next issue of the New Church Canadian, please send your submissions by June 20, 2026. We look forward to hearing from you and sharing your stories, reflections, and news with the wider community.

Articles can be emailed to [NCCEditor@outlook.com](mailto:NCCEditor@outlook.com) or mailed c/o Olivet New Church (address on next page).



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**Editorial Deadline for the  
July - August 2026 Issue:  
June 20, 2026**

Comments, letters and articles are welcome!

Please send submissions to Lindsay Hyatt

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## General Church in Canada Worship Services



Carmel New Church  
Kitchener, ON  
11 AM Sunday  
in person & online



Dawson Creek New Church  
Dawson Creek, BC

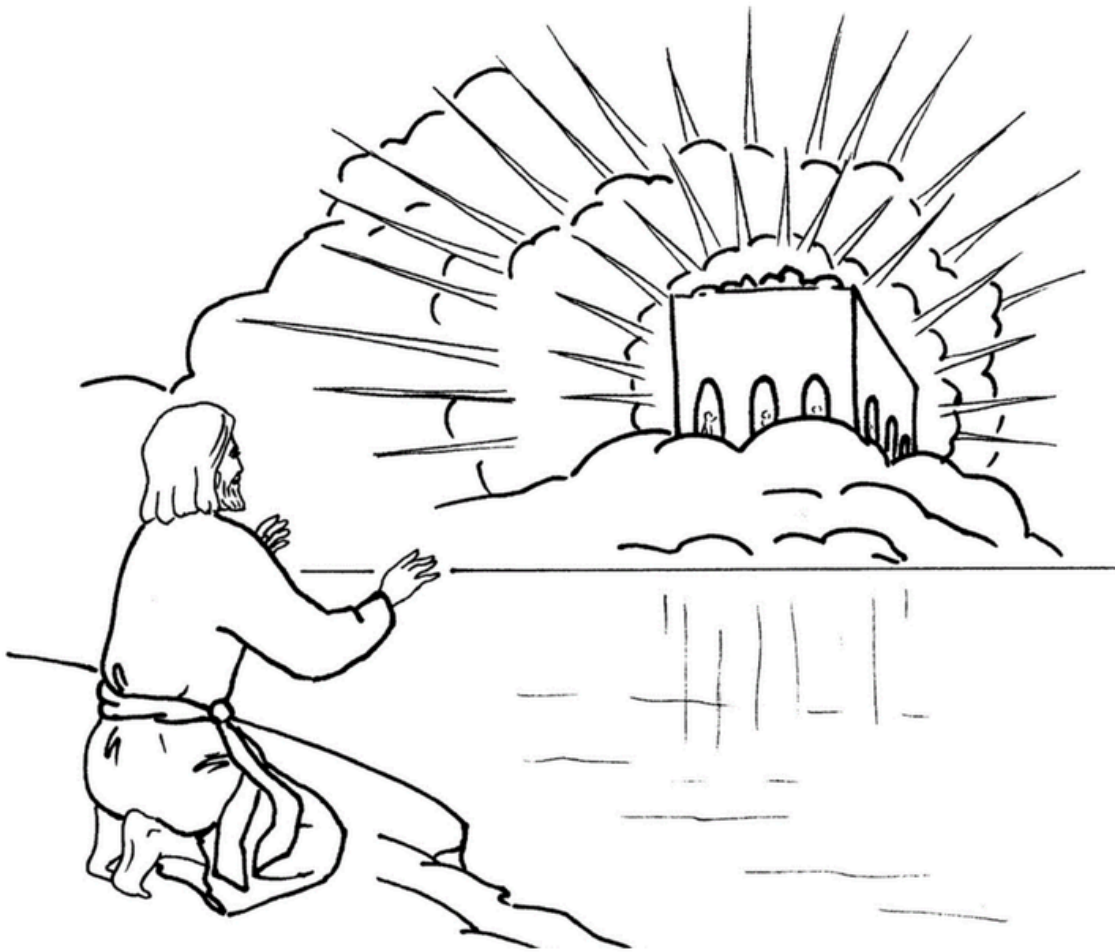


Olivet New Church  
Etobicoke, ON  
10:30 AM Sunday  
in person & online



## New Church Canadian

c/o 279 Burnhamthorpe Rd.  
Etobicoke, ON, CANADA  
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Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Revelation 21: 2