

TEXT John 20:1-18

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Matthew 28:1-15; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-9

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to describe what took place the day of the Resurrection, and will also be able to explain the significance of this event as it pertains to the Christians today.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. — Matthew 28:6

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. — 1 Corinthians 15:20

ANSWER TITLE: **A Promise Kept**

SEARCH TITLE: **He Lives**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

One of God’s ministers of an earlier day said of the prophecies concerning the death and burial of Christ: “A keen-sighted man may forecast tendencies, and go far to anticipate events on a large scale, but only God can see trifles.” Only God could have looked down through centuries of time and forecast so exactly the detailed happenings of the death of Christ.

One of these detailed predictions was spoken of by the Prophet Isaiah: “And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death;” (Isaiah 53:9). Jesus did make His grave with the wicked in the sense that He was crucified as a malefactor between two thieves. These three men entered into death the same day, and their graves received their bodies.

The persecutors of Jesus had made it hazardous for His followers. Nevertheless, in this perilous hour, Joseph of Arimathaea stepped forward and asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. He was granted permission, and Christ was buried in the tomb of the rich; for Joseph was rich, and had a tomb already prepared, as was the custom. Thus God proved the infallibility of His Word.

Caves were sometimes used as sepulchers. They were often whitewashed so they could be seen easily and not desecrated, and also for cleanliness and beauty.

The Resurrection of Jesus has been established as a historical fact by the testimony of the disciples who witnessed His crucifixion and then afterwards met their risen Lord. This fact is further verified by the Apostle Paul, who writes that above 500 brethren at once saw Jesus before He ascended into Heaven, and that he himself also saw the Lord as “one born out of due time” after Jesus’ ascension. See 1 Corinthians 15:5-8.

In the Jewish method of recording time, any fraction of a 24-hour day was referred to and counted as a whole day, or a “day and a night.” Jesus was crucified at 9 o’clock Friday morning and died about 3 o’clock that afternoon. The Jewish day ended at sundown, but these few remaining hours are referred to as a whole day. Jesus arose early Sunday morning, and this portion of the day was also counted as a whole day. Jesus, therefore, was dead for what the Jews call “three days and three nights.”

YOUR OPENER

He Lives

TEXT: John 20:1-18

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Matthew 28:1-15; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-9

KEY VERSE: But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. — 1 Corinthians 15:20

Jesus had been crucified, had died, and had been buried in a garden tomb. The hopes of His followers had been shattered. Then on the third day, when the women went to the sepulchre to anoint His body with spices, they found the tomb was empty. An angel in white announced the glorious news, "He is not here: for he is risen, as he said" (Matthew 28:6).

RESPONSES

1. Jesus rose from the grave with a glorified Body which was not subject to the laws of nature. The stone was rolled away from the door to show the world that He was no longer in the tomb. Discuss with your students the various appearances of Christ after His resurrection. He could appear and disappear without apparent effort. He entered the room where the disciples had shut the door for fear of the Jews. He could withhold His identity at will, or comfort His disciples by revealing His identity.

2. Jesus was victor over the efforts of the chief priests in that the stone they had placed was rolled away; over the Roman government in that the seal was broken and the Roman guards became as dead men; and over nature in the physical phenomenon of the earthquake. Discuss with your class what effect one might expect these evidences of Christ's resurrection to have had on the people of that day. Was everyone who heard the news convinced of the authenticity of Christ's claim to be the Divine Son of God? In actuality, many of that day rejected the evidence and merely claimed that Christ's disciples had stolen His body away. Compare this to the reaction of people today when they witness the miraculous power of God to save a soul or heal a diseased body.

3. The texts in Mark and John establish that Christ was officially declared dead by the Romans and laid in a tomb. Three days later, by Jewish time, He was seen alive, with the nail prints and pierced side as evidence removing any doubt that it was indeed Jesus. It had been foretold that His wounds would be visible in His glorified body (Zechariah 12:10 and 13:6). A further proof is recorded when Paul relates that He was seen by more than five hundred brethren at one time (1 Corinthians 15:5-8).

1. Was it necessary for the stone to be rolled away from the tomb in order for Jesus to come forth? Explain, using John 20:19 as a reference. If not, then why did the angel come down from Heaven to roll back the stone?

2. Using Matthew 27:66 and 28:2,4, describe how the visible effects of the Resurrection showed that Jesus was victor over the efforts of the chief priests, the Roman government, and nature.

3. What particular point of the Easter story does Mark 15:43-46 and John 19:31-34 establish? How does John 20:20 prove that He rose from the dead?

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. What is the great importance of the Resurrection of Christ to the Christian and the Church today?

5. To whom did Jesus first personally appear after His resurrection? Who else saw Him alive that first day? See Mark 16:12; Luke 24:13-18,34 and John 20:19.

6. Using the following Scriptures, what were the different reactions of those who were told of His resurrection?

Matthew 28:8

Matthew 28:9; John 20:16

Matthew 28:11-15

Mark 16:11; Luke 24:11; John 20:25

Luke 24:12

Luke 24:22,23

John 20:8

7. What had Jesus done to prepare His disciples for the shock of His death and resurrection? See Matthew 16:21; Mark 9:9,10 and Luke 9:21,22; 24:6-8,44.

8. In considering the events of the first Easter, what do we have today that helps us to believe that Jesus is alive? See John 20:31. What might we conclude with regard to our responsibility to believe?

YOUR WRAP-UP

4. The Resurrection of Christ is the Christian's hope of eternal life. 1 Corinthians 15:2-23 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17 will amplify this thought. Since Christ was victor over death, He has opened the way for each one who died believing in Him, to be resurrected at His Second Coming. Broaden your discussion by bringing out that Christ is also one's hope of salvation (Romans 10:9). Believing in His resurrection is absolutely necessary if one is to be saved. He is the hope for a changed incorruptible body. The bodies of the redeemed will be like Jesus' body was after His resurrection, when He appeared to His followers (1 Corinthians 15:51-54 and Philippians 3:20,21).

5. Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9) who thought He was the gardener. Allow your students to share their thoughts about this meeting and Mary's love for her Master, considering what He had delivered her from (Luke 8:2). He then appeared to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. He also appeared to Peter, and then at evening to ten of the Apostles as they were assembled behind closed doors.

6. Matthew 28:8 — fear and great joy
Matthew 28:9; John 20:16 — worship
Matthew 28:11-15 — tried to cover it up
Mark 16:11; Luke 24:11; John 20:25 — unbelief
Luke 24:12 — wonderment
Luke 24:22,23 — astonishment
John 20:8 — belief

After your students have given their answers, discuss what their reactions might have been if they had been there.

7. He had told them ahead of time exactly what would happen to Him, and the reason for it, explaining that it was necessary in order for the Scriptures to be fulfilled. Scriptures must also be fulfilled concerning the Second Coming of Christ. Discuss with your students how the disciples, having been told of His death and resurrection, still seemed to not fully understand what was to take place. Is it possible that some will experience the same confusion when Christ comes again? We have been told through Scripture of the events that will surround this momentous occurrence. How can we best strengthen our faith and prepare ourselves to be in complete readiness for that day?

8. Your students should bring out that Christians today have all the events of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection explained by the Word of God. If we had lived at that time, we may well have had the same reactions as the disciples did. Although Jesus was aware of their feelings, He still reproved those who doubted or were slow to believe (Mark 16:14; Luke 24:25,26; John 20:27-29). Our responsibility is to accept the veracity of this account.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Tell in your own words what *resurrection* means.

Why was the Resurrection such a victory?

How can we have a hope of being resurrected?

Why do you suppose Mary thought Jesus was the gardener?

The Pharisees put up barriers to keep Jesus in the tomb, but He had the power to remove those barriers. How are the people today like the Pharisees of those days?

What impresses you most about the Resurrection?

How do we know it was very early in the morning that Mary came to the tomb? Can you tell of some time when you were anxious about something that was going to happen, and woke up while it was still dark?

In verse 2 of the text, who do you think the disciple was, "whom Jesus loved"?

THINGS TO DO

Bring pictures of what the Holy Land looks like today, showing Jerusalem, Golgotha, a sepulcher, etc.

Make a tomb from a shoe box, discarding the lid. Cut an irregular hole in the bottom of the box. Color two pieces of tissue paper with brown tempera paint or felt pen. (Your coloring job will look more realistic if it is splotchy.) Crinkle the dry brown paper so it's wrinkled. Fit one piece loosely around half the box, tucking edges into the tomb's opening and around the inside of the box. Paste or tape paper inside the shoe box. Fit the other piece of tissue over the other half of the box. (Your paste or tape job will be on inside of box so does not need to be tidy.) Make a movable rock (crush a small brown bag) to seal tomb's opening. Tie a piece of nylon string around a stone and put the stone inside the bag. Make a small hole near the bag's bottom and thread the transparent string through the hole so it can be stretched out on the

table in front of the tomb. When you want to move the rock pull the string to reveal an angel inside the tomb. You can make the angel out of chenille wire.

Give each student a sheet of paper with a heading designed to look like the masthead of a newspaper (for example: Jerusalem Herald). Ask the students to write headlines (or, if time permits, a short article) describing the events of the Resurrection. If they prefer, they could draw an illustration to use as a "photograph" of some aspect of the story, such as the empty tomb, some of the disciples, or the Roman guards.

Answers for ANSWER

He is Risen!

Our Redeemer is Jesus Christ. He arose on Easter and lives today to redeem all who will come to Him. The verses listed below tell more about Him. Find the correct words and fill in the empty boxes.



1. A word in our key verse. Matthew 28:6
2. Jesus said He would give us this kind of life. John 17:3
3. Jesus had this kind of power. 2 Peter 1:3
4. The Lord's name is this. Psalm 8:1
5. Jesus is this to us. 1 Peter 2:21
6. God's _____ is great. Psalm 103:11
7. God's love sent us this kind of life. John 3:16
8. God sent this to His people. Psalm 111:9

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