

ANSWER TEXT John 20:1-18

SEARCH TEXT Luke 24:1-12

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Job 19:25; 1 Peter 1:3

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that the miracle of Christ's Resurrection is the heart of the Christian faith. It establishes the risen Christ as the source of redemption and transforms the tragedy of the Cross into the source of life and hope for all mankind.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Matthew 28:6

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. John 11:25

ANSWER TITLE: **My Lord Is Risen**

SEARCH TITLE: **The Risen Christ**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

At the time of Christ, the Pharisees proclaimed belief in the resurrection of the body (Acts 23:6), while the Saducees, who were in the minority, claimed there was none (Matthew 22:23). Even prior to that period, we find Enoch testifying to the doctrine of Resurrection in Jude 14, "the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints." And we find Job saying in Job 19:25-27, "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." David spoke of the Resurrection of Christ in Psalm 16:8-10, which is quoted in the New Testament in Peter's first recorded sermon found in Acts, chapter 2. And finally, Daniel spoke plainly of the Resurrection in Chapter 12, verse 2, "And many of them that sleep in

the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." These worthies, together with others, no doubt, of whom we have no record, understood something of the mystery of the Resurrection. But it was for Christ to open the Book for all of us to read! It was He who guaranteed our resurrection by coming forth from the tomb.

The Jewish Christians linked the Resurrection Day with the Passover, and so observed it on the fourteenth day of Nisan regardless of the day of the week. But the Gentile believers celebrated the Resurrection on the Lord's Day, Sunday. This difference was settled in 325 A.D. at which time it was ruled that Easter should be celebrated on the first Sunday after the full moon following the Vernal Equinox, the date of which varies between March and April.

YOUR OPENER

The Risen Christ

TEXT: Luke 24:1-12

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Job 19:25; 1 Peter 1:3

KEY VERSE: Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. — John 11:25

RESPONSES

1. After His Resurrection, Jesus met with His disciples on several occasions on the first day of the week. Since that time the first day has been the Christian Sabbath. Develop this thought by discussing how we also use the term "Lord's Day," to denote that this is a day we consecrate to the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Mark 16:9 — Mary Magdalene
Luke 24:13-15 — the two on the way to Emmaus
Luke 24:34 — Simon Peter
John 20:19 — the assembled disciples, except Thomas (verse 24)

Help your students picture the initial grief and despair the disciples felt when Christ died. Then contrast these feelings to the hope and joy they felt when they understood that He actually had risen from the dead.

3. An angel rolled the stone away. Ask your students what they think was the significance of the angel, helping them to see that supernatural power was involved. This should lead to the conclusion that there was no power on earth or in Hell great enough to prevent God's wonderful plan of redemption for mankind from being completed.

4. Emphasis can be placed here on both the empty tomb and the presence of two of God's special messengers, angels, appearing on the scene. The women were afraid and bowed to the ground. You could ask the class how they might have reacted in such a situation. Would they have believed the report of the angel? What would they have done next?

The story of the Resurrection of Jesus is given us by all four writers of the Gospels because the truth of the Resurrection is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. Had Christ remained in the grave there would have been no New Testament. The Resurrection changed the course of history. It established the risen Christ as the source of redemption and transformed the tragedy of the Cross into the source of life and hope for all mankind.

1. Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week. What significance does this have for the Christian?

2. To substantiate that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead, name some witnesses to whom Christ appeared on this Resurrection day (Mark 16:9; Luke 24:13-15,34; John 20:19). Describe the probable emotions the disciples felt when Christ died, and then as they realized He actually was alive again.

3. Verse 2 of Luke's account says they found the stone rolled away from the door of the sepulchre. It was large, sealed with the Roman seal, and guarded by a band of soldiers. How was the stone moved? See Matthew 28:1,2.

4. Some women went early in the morning to anoint the body of Jesus. When they arrived at the tomb, what did they find and how did they respond?

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ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. Read carefully the message of the angels, verses 5 to 7. Then write how this message affects your life now.

6. To whom did the women who visited the tomb tell of their experience, and how was their story received?

7. Using John 20:8 and Luke 24:12, describe in your own words the reaction of John and of Peter when they saw the neatly arranged graveclothes and the empty tomb.

8. What is the Christian's assurance that if he dies he will be resurrected with a new glorified body? See John 14:19, Romans 8:11, and Philipians 3:20,21.

9. How many people were in the largest group recorded as seeing Jesus after His Resurrection? See 1 Corinthians 15:6.

10. Suppose a friend asked you the question, "How do you know Christ really rose from the dead?" How would you answer?

5. Allow your students to express their thoughts. The focus of their comments should bring out that Jesus was crucified, but on the third day rose again. This affects them personally since it was through Christ's death and Resurrection that we can experience new life in Him. Supporting Scriptures could be used: Romans 4:25; 5:10; 8:34.

6. They told the story to the eleven and others, but these did not believe. Even though the eleven disciples had witnessed many miracles, they were having real difficulty believing the testimony of the women. Ask your students why.

7. Impress the students with John's reaction of belief and Peter's reaction of wondering. In today's English, *wondering* can mean either "questioning" or "marveling." Tracing the Greek word in the original you will find that the meaning here is "marveling." Peter was astonished, dumbfounded! Then how wonderfully Jesus personally revealed Himself to them again by the Sea of Galilee. They gave all to their Lord. Do you believe and marvel? Have you given Him your all?

8. Your students' responses to this question should bring out that our hope of resurrection rests on our having the Spirit of Christ in us, and a heart belief in the historical fact of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. See 1 Corinthians 15:20-22.

9. Over five hundred. This question presents an opportunity to stress the certainty of Christ's Resurrection. Suppose you were a reporter and you interviewed the group of five hundred witnesses who all agreed on the fact, even on the details. Certainly that would be conclusive evidence.

10. This question should stimulate two lines of thought: The overwhelming recorded historical data given us by witnesses who believed enough to give their lives in martyrdom, and present-day evidence including miracles of salvation from sin and healing of sick bodies through belief in the risen Christ. This is a beautiful opening for your testimony—"He lives within my heart!"

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is the Resurrection?

How does it affect your life?

How did the tragedy of the Cross become our source of life?

For whom did Jesus die? Why?

Jesus died, but He rose from the grave. Why?

What can you do to show that you appreciate what God did for you by sending His Son into the world?

Why is it so important for us to believe that Jesus did rise from the grave?

Easter is a very special time of year. Why and how should the Christian celebrate Easter?

As related in the ANSWER story, what did Jesus do that made Mary know that He had risen from the grave? Has Jesus ever done the same for you?

If a friend at school asked how you know that Jesus rose from the grave, how would you explain your belief?

THINGS TO DO

Bring objects to class that might signify the Resurrection and the new life. For example: you could bring an egg with the yolk and white drawn out and explain how the egg signifies new life and the empty shell reminds us that Jesus arose from the grave. You could also bring a picture of a cocoon and a butterfly to explain how this also reminds us of Christ's Resurrection. (If you truly want a challenge, find a real cocoon and butterfly!)

To begin your class, give each student a slip of paper and ask them to write down what they think Easter is about and what Easter means to them. Discuss the responses.

Bring an Easter lily or lily bulb to class. When Jesus was here on earth He said, "consider the lilies of the field." Let us consider the lily: It was once a brown bulb with no beauty. Could anything beautiful come from something like that? But one day it begins to grow, becomes a green plant, and then blooms. Jesus was here on earth, and then one day He suffered and died on the cross. People wondered if anything good could come from that. But He came forth resurrected, and He lives today! He gives us the beauty of life and hope of salvation. Like the lily from bulb to bloom, there was real beauty in what Jesus did for us.

Bring a grain of wheat or corn to class and discuss how, when planted, the outer shell decays and life springs through the soil from the inner kernel. Liken this, as did both Jesus and Paul, to the Resurrection. Explain how the

one grain or kernel is multiplied by hundreds (in the case of corn). Liken that multiplication to the great number of souls who are saved in the knowledge of Christ's Resurrection.

Ask your class if they understand how radio waves can penetrate the walls of a building. Ask further, if anyone would wish to tell the class what electricity is. Using 1 Corinthians 15 and the instances of Jesus' appearances after He rose from the dead, describe the new body God is going to give to each of His saints at the resurrection:

It can defy gravity.

It can go through walls.

It can travel through space.

It will never die.

It will never be ill or experience pain.

At the same time, it will have all the good attributes of our present body:

We will eat and drink in Christ's Kingdom.

We will have great social fellowship with Christ and the redeemed.

We will be able to sing.

How many more can the class add?

Answers for ANSWER

