Walking on Eggshells

Materials Needed

copies of The Lord's Protection p. 3 for each student; supplies for one of the *Eggshell Experiments* p. 2.

Prepare in Advance

Choose an experiment from p. 2. Gather or purchase supplies. Read over *The Lord's Protection* p. 3.

New Church Concept
The Lord's Protection

People who are strong in truths are kept safe from harm wherever they go, even if they are surrounded by hell. See *Arcana Coelestia* 6769

All people are under the protection of the Lord so far as they abstain from doing evil, but in the measure that they do not abstain, so far do they remove themselves from the protection of the Lord. *Apocalypse Explained* 643.2

When the Lord is with someone He leads them and makes provision so that all that happens, whether sad or joyful may bring them what is good. *Arcana Coelestia* 6303



The protective design of eggshells keeps the embryos inside them safe until they are ready to hatch. The Lord protects human life in a similar way, guarding people's spiritual freedom every second of their lives to eternity. The angel appearing in the fiery furnace gives us a picture of this amazing protection.

In this activity students will explore how strong eggshells are—and by analogy, how strongly the Lord protects our spirits. Two choices are offered for experimenting with eggs. An explanation as to why eggshells are so strong is provided below. Follow up with a discussion on the Lord's protection.

1. Do an eggshell experiment.
2. Engage students in a discussion about the Lord's protection.

Discussion

Provide students with copies of *The Lord's Protection* (p. 3) and read it together. Decide whether the following statements are true or false. Circle your answers and discuss.

1. Intending and acting well toward others protects us from evil. T F
2. People who avoid evil are protected by the Lord. T F
3. The Lord protects us through the true ideas we know. T F
4. The Lord protects evil as well as good people. T F
5. People who do evil remove themselves from the Lord's protection. T F
6. The Lord does not stop all bad things from happening to us. T F

Shell size and thickness are the most important factors in determining the strength of a shell. Chicken eggs have a compressive strength of about 100lb. The curved shape of a shell lets any force that is put on it to be spread vertically and horizontally throughout the shell. Egg shells are like a 360 degree arched bridge—they are very stable and support a lot of weight. Architects have long recognized the beauty and strength of arches for bridges and domes.

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Eggshell Experiments

Experiment 1: Standing on Eggshells

Can a person literally stand *on eggs*? Follow these directions carefully to find out! You will need:

- 2 dozen medium or large raw eggs in two one-dozen cartons
- a large plastic garbage bag to cover the floor
- three sturdy chairs

1. Put a large plastic garbage bag on the floor. Place two full open cartons of eggs on top of the bag.
2. Inspect the eggs and make sure none are cracked.
3. If the egg cartons have cardboard pieces that tower over the eggs, cut them down so they are no taller than the eggs.
4. Make sure all eggs have their pointy end facing UP, and their broader end facing DOWN.
5. Have a student take off their shoes and socks.
6. Place one chair so that it faces the eggs. Seat the student on the chair so they can dangle their feet down and place them gently on the eggs. (*Important Note:* There is a limit to the strength of eggs. Two dozen eggs should be able to support about 132lb (60kg) of weight evenly distributed over them.)
7. *Optional*: Place a chair where the student can hold the back for support, on either side of the eggs.
8. Invite the student to stand up slowly, spreading their weight evenly over all the eggs. (Give assistance, if needed.) If all goes well, the student should be able to stand on the eggs without any breaking.
9. When the student is ready to sit down again, he or she should do so gently, and then lift one foot at a time off the eggs.

Experiment 2: How Much Weight Can Eggs Withstand?

How much weight can eggs withstand before breaking? Do this experiment to find out. You will need:

- three or four (or more) raw eggs with no cracks
- 6-8 washers, or smallish plastic lids to put underneath and on top of each egg so they can sit upright
- large plastic garbage bag to protect the table or floor
- flat objects to gently place on top of the eggs, such as pieces of wood, magazines, books, a plastic tub with water in it, etc.

1. Place a large garbage bag on the table or floor where you plan to do your experiment.
2. Place washers (or lids) as corners of a triangle or square that is slightly smaller than the objects you plan to put on the eggs.
3. Place the eggs on the washers so they stand upright, and place an additional washer on top of each egg to provide a slightly more level surface. Make sure the pointy end of the egg is up.
4. Experiment with how much weight can be put on eggs without breaking. Start by placing a rigid object directly on top of the eggs—e.g. a cutting board, hard-cover book, etc. Continue to add magazines, books, or water in a plastic tub, observing the eggs' ability to withstand the weight. (The eggs will crack eventually—so be careful what you use.)

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The Lord's Protection

The Lord protects and guides us because He loves every person. He does this through angels who are with a person at all times. *Arcana Coelestia* 5992 describes how these angels work:

- They notice the direction in which a person's delights turn, and modify and bend them.
- They act gently.
- When evil spirits infuse evils and falsities, they instill truths and goods.
- They moderate affections.
- They notice any new influences on a person.
- They call forth the forms of good and truth with a person and set them opposite the evils and falsities.
- The person is therefore in the middle and is free to choose.

"Watching over a person" means dealing with the things that affect their mind and heart. It does not mean preventing bad things from happening, or making good things happen. This may seem less complete than the protection most people would like, but it gives the greatest benefit in the long run, and leaves the person in freedom.

Here are additional readings describing how the Lord protects people.

> When the Lord is with someone He leads them and makes provision so that all that happens, whether sad or joyful may bring them what is good. *Arcana Coelestia* 6303
>
> Good and its affection does not protect itself; but it is defended by truth and its understanding. *Apocalypse Explained* 1121
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> People who are strong in truths are kept safe from harm wherever they go, even if they are surrounded by hell. See *Arcana Coelestia* 6769
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> The Lord protects His own by means of Divine truth, for He surrounds them with a sphere of light. See *Apocalypse Explained* 395.2
>
> Those in innocence are the safest of all. Everyone in heaven is kept safe by the Lord through states of innocence. See *Arcana Coelestia* 3519.4,5
>
> Every person and every spirit is under the Lord's protection, the evil equally as the good. No evil can happen to a person who is under the Lord's protection, for it is the Lord's will that no one should perish or be punished. People are under the protection of the Lord so far as they abstain from doing evil, but in the measure that they do not abstain, so far do they remove themselves from the protection of the Lord. And in the measure that they thus remove themselves, so far they are hurt by evil spirits from hell. *Apocalypse Explained* 643.2
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> When, therefore, evil is done from an evil heart, because it thereby discards all protection from the Lord, infernal spirits rush upon the one who does the evil and inflict punishment. *Heaven and Hell* 550