

General Church Education



The First Easter

John 20:1-18

Lesson 32

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Introductory Level: The Lord Is Our
Heavenly Father

For ages 5-6 years

THE FIRST EASTER

John 20:1-18

OVERVIEW OF THE STORY

After welcoming Jesus as their King, the people quickly turned against Him. He was crucified and buried in a stone tomb. When a faithful woman came to anoint His body with spices, she heard the good news that He had risen. Then she herself saw the Lord Jesus alive.

CONCEPTS FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

- ❖ On the first Easter Sunday the Lord rose from the tomb. Then He appeared to His followers over the next forty days.
- ❖ These appearances taught His followers that they did not need to fear death. Death is actually the beginning of eternal life.
- ❖ This miraculous event restored the disciples' faith. They had new courage and gladly went forth with a new sense of mission to tell the good news to all those who would receive it.
- ❖ The disciples' devotion and mission helped spread Christianity throughout the world.
- ❖ The Lord is always with us and we can "see" Him as we learn from His Word and follow Him.

THE FIRST EASTER

IMPORTANT IDEAS FOR CHILDREN

We never really die; our life goes on in the spiritual world forever.
The Lord is always with us even when we cannot see Him.

LET'S REMEMBER:

- ♦ Did the people welcome the Lord when He rode into Jerusalem (Yes.)
- ♦ What did they throw in His path? (Garments and palm branches.)
- ♦ Do you remember what "Hosanna" means? (Lord, save us.)

The people of Jerusalem were happy to see Jesus and welcomed Him as their earthly king. They thought He had been sent by God to make their nation great again. However, some of the leaders of the Jewish people, the scribes and chief priests, were jealous of Him. They wanted to put Him to death. The Lord knew this was going to happen. Later that week He let them capture Him.



OUR STORY FOR TODAY:

It was very sad when Jesus was crucified or hung on a cross until He died. It was a painful and cruel way to die. His enemies did their worst to Him, but listen to how He won the final victory!

Faithful women watched on that sad afternoon, as the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross, wrapped in clean cloth and placed in a tomb. The tomb was in a stone cave in the side of a hill. Bodies were often buried in caves in the stone hills around Jerusalem. Then the women watched as a large stone was rolled over the opening. It was sealed shut and a guard was placed there to watch over it. The women could do nothing more because the Sabbath was beginning when the Jewish people were supposed to rest and do no work. Saturday was the sabbath for them. Sunday is the sabbath for Christians and here is the reason why.

Very early on Sunday, the first day of the week, one of the women, Mary Magdalene, came back to the tomb. She had prepared ointment with good smelling spices to anoint the body of the Lord. This was the custom in those times and she wanted to do this to show her love for Him. She was surprised to see that the stone had been taken away and the body of



Jesus was no longer there. She ran to tell his disciples. Listen to the story. See if you can remember the names of the two disciples and what they did.



Read **John 20:1-10**.

Who were the disciples? (Simon Peter and "the other disciple whom Jesus loved.") The second disciple, the one whom it said Jesus loved, is the disciple who is writing the story. This disciple's name is John and he was a very good friend of the Lord's. What did the disciples find? (Only the linen cloths that had covered the body.) Then the story says that "they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead." This means that His body was not lying there dead, but He was alive! They must have been very confused and returned to their own homes. But Mary Magdalene stayed outside the tomb. She was sad and weeping. Then a marvelous thing happened! She looked inside the tomb and saw two angels dressed in white sitting right where the body of Jesus had been. Listen to what they said to her.



Read **John 20:13**.

Mary Magdalene was thinking only of Jesus' natural body and wondered where to find Him. Let's read about a very happy surprise for Mary Magdalene.



Read **John 20:14-18**.

Whom did she see when she turned around? (Jesus.) Yes, she saw Jesus, but at first she did not recognize Him. Whom did she think it was? (The gardener.) Jesus spoke her name, "Mary," and she immediately recognized Him. She called Him "Rabboni," which means Teacher. Jesus told her not to cling to Him because He had not yet ascended or gone into heaven. This meant that she must no longer think of Jesus in the natural body that He used on earth. She must think of Him as her Heavenly Father. So there was no need for ointments, but she could do something else. She went and told the Lord's disciples about what had happened. How do you think she felt when they saw Him alive? (Happy.)

The Lord's rising from the dead or His resurrection as it is sometimes called is celebrated every year in our church. This is the happy event we celebrate each Easter. That is one reason why people in some parts of the world often bring spring flowers to church. It is a sign of beautiful life, after winter when the earth seems rather dead. This reminds us of how the Lord came back to life on that day so long ago.

The Lord wanted to show us that life goes on forever and that we never really die. During the next forty days, Jesus showed Himself to the disciples several times. Then the Lord went up into heaven, but He promised He would be with us always, even though we cannot see Him with our natural eyes. And He is always with us.



WHAT DID WE LEARN TODAY?

- ♦ **What did Mary Magdalene find when she came to the tomb?** (The stone was moved away and the tomb was empty.)
- ♦ **Whom did she first tell about this?** (Simon Peter and John.)
- ♦ **What did Simon Peter and John discover when they entered the tomb?** (The linen cloths that had covered His body were lying there but Jesus' body was gone.)
- ♦ **How do you think the disciples felt?** (Very sad; they did not know what had happened.)
- ♦ **What surprised Mary Magdalene when she looked inside the tomb the second time?** (Two angels dressed in white who asked her why she was weeping.)
- ♦ **Whom did she see when she turned around?** (Jesus.)
- ♦ **Did she recognize Him at first?** (No, she thought He was the gardener.)
- ♦ **How did she know Him?** (He said her name and she recognized Him.)

THE FIRST EASTER ACTIVITIES



Recitation: Learn the recitation by heart and earn an award. Awards are on the last page of this lesson.

But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

Matthew 26:5-6



Project choices:

Mary Sees the Lord project
Color a picture of Mary and Jesus



Songs:

All Glory, Praise and Honor—Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-all-glory-praise-and-honor/>
When Very Early in the Dawn—Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-when-very-early-in-the-dawn/>



Additional Activities:

- ❖ Do you know anyone who has entered the spiritual world? Talk about loved ones in their heavenly home with the Lord.
- ❖ Notice new life from the Lord by doing a gardening project, visiting a zoo or pet store to see baby animals or reading books about babies of all kinds.
- ❖ Read *He Is Risen* by Shanon Junge Smith, online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/story-he-is-risen-matthew-27-28.pdf>. This is an illustrated story of the Lord's resurrection.
- ❖ Smell spices to experience their fragrant aromas.

Mary Sees the Lord

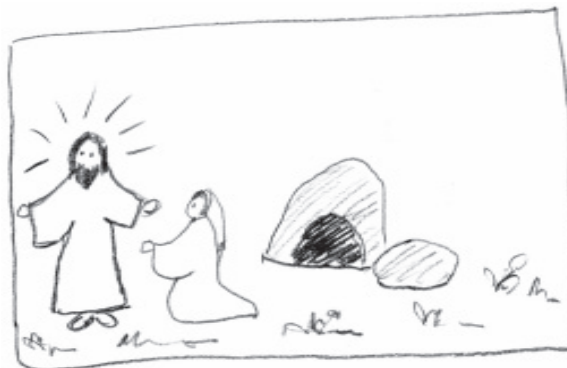
Make a project shows Mary meeting the Lord on the first Easter morning.

Supplies:

1 piece of blue paper
oil pastels
glue
glitter

Project instructions:

1. Place the construction paper horizontally in front of you.
2. Using oil pastels draw a gray dome on one side of the construction paper. Add a smaller black dome on top of it to look like a cave opening.
3. Draw the stone rolled away to one side of the cave or tomb.
4. Draw and color the Lord all the way on the other side of the construction paper. Color His robe white.
5. Color Mary in a kneeling position beside the Lord.
6. Add flowers and grass on the ground.
7. Use pink oil pastels to add a touch of sunrise color to the early morning sky.
8. Use glue and gold glitter to make rays of light around the Lord.





Recitation Award: The First Easter

Purchase a wide colorful ribbon. Attach each recitation award to the ribbon as it is learned. Multiple copies of the award are provided for classes.

