



# Easter Morning

## Lesson Overview

### 1. Jesus' Last Week

What happened during Jesus' last week on earth?

### 2. Watch a Video

Watch *The Gospel of John* at [bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn](http://bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn) (3min 23sec).

### 3. Discuss

How does the Lord appear to us?

### 4. *Optional*: Read

*Trying to Entomb the Lord* by Rev. Grant Odhner.

### New Church Concept The Lord at Easter

"The dawn" or "the morning" means the coming of the Lord or approach of His kingdom. Thus "sunrise" or its going forth over the earth is His actual arrival or presence. *Arcana Coelestia* 2441

The Lord came into the world to render salvation possible to people. Without His advent no mortal could have been reformed and regenerated, and so saved. But this became possible after the Lord had deprived the devil (that is, hell) of all his power; and had glorified His Human, that is, had united it to the Divine of His Father. If these things had not been done, no person would have been capable of permanently receiving any Divine truth, still less any Divine good. *Doctrine of the Lord* 17.1

## FaithBuilder 1 | Lesson 25 | Easter

### The Last Week of Jesus' Life on Earth

*Choose questions to prompt thinking about Jesus' last week on earth.*

1. The Lord lived on earth for thirty three years. The Gospels say little about the first thirty years; His entire ministry happened during the three final years. Almost one third of the New Testament tells the story of the final week of His life—which show how many important events happened that week. How did the week begin? (Palm Sunday) What else took place? (The events are too many to list and include evicting the money changers from the temple, the Last Supper, discourses with Scribes and Pharisees, Garden of Gethsemane, betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, trial, disciples' denial, crucifixion, burial.)
2. Where were the disciples after the crucifixion? How did they feel?
3. Did Jesus' followers believe He would die?
4. Was Jesus really dead—as people thought?
5. What did Jesus prophesy about His death? Did people understand it?

### Watch a Video

Watch the story of Easter morning from *The Gospel of John*, John 20:1-18 at [bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn](http://bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn). (*Start the video at 2:40:50 and end at 2:44:13.* (3min 23sec). (Enter link in the web browser search bar at the top of your screen.)

### Discussion

*Choose questions for discussion.*

1. Times of day in the Word give clues to the meanings of stories. What time of day was the Lord born? (night) What time of day did He rise from the tomb? (dawn) Compare these events. What might the different times of day suggest?
2. Two disciples ran to the tomb—John (love) and Simon Peter (truth). John stopped at the door. Peter was the first to go in. What quality in us questions at the "door of the tomb?" What, in us, "goes in" to seek the Lord?
3. The disciples saw the Lord's graveclothes—but not the Lord. What, in us, sees a person's clothing—but not the person?
4. Mary saw the risen Lord. Why couldn't she recognize Him? Do we recognize the Lord when He appears to us? How does He call to us so we can recognize Him?
5. How can we meet the Lord? Does He come to us, or do we go to Him?
6. Unlike us, the Lord made His body Divine and so it could be fully united to His "Father" or Divine soul. Why did the Lord warn Mary not to touch or hold on to Him?
7. Can we "touch" the Lord?

## Trying to Entomb the Lord

by the Rev. Grant H. Odhner (Text—Matthew 27:57, 28:17)

We all admire people who can't be stopped—the soccer player who always gets through the defensive line, the person who suffers unbelievable setbacks yet stays cheerful and does a lot for others, the hero in a movie whose enemy forces him to jump off a cliff yet who manages to escape alive.

Think of the Lord: surrounded by soldiers at night, captured by His enemies for no just reason, tied up, slapped and spit upon, struck, teased and made fun of, lashed with a whip, then nailed to a wooden cross, and left to die a horrible death before being buried in a rock tomb. He seemed to be completely beaten.

The Scribes and the Pharisees must have been pleased. They thought that Jesus was dead, out of their way. They had gotten rid of Him. And His body was even sealed away in a tomb and guarded by soldiers so that no one could get in or out. Jesus couldn't worry them anymore. This would "shut up" His disciples!

Then think of what happened on Easter morning when the two Marys came sadly to the tomb. The guards, with their swords and spears, were still keeping watch. It was quiet and still dark. All of a sudden the ground heaved and rumbled and shook. A dazzling angel appeared, pushed away the rock and sat on it. The guards were terrified and helpless. Light shone from the angel as he showed the women the opened tomb and told them the good news. And moments later the women saw the Lord with new eyes, never to doubt again!

This story is one of the most important ones in the Word. It teaches us that the Lord Jesus, who came to earth and touched us with His great love and wisdom, is more than a man. He is our God. Who else could have risen from the dead like He did? This story also teaches that there really is a life after this one. And, finally, it teaches us that the Lord has all power. He cannot be hurt by evil people. Nor can they stop Him from helping good people. The Lord could not be stopped. The scribes and Pharisees used soldiers and the power of a Roman governor to try to capture and kill Him. They shut the Lord in a rock tomb and sealed it with a heavy stone.

So, also, evil people had used lies and tricks to "kill" the Lord in other people's minds. They had tried to shut His Word so that no one would read it, nor understand it, nor think it was worth understanding. They had tried to twist its meaning so that people wouldn't really see what it said, nor do what it said. They had tried to block the way to heaven so that they could be in control.

All this is pictured in the Easter story. The tomb where the Lord's body was placed represents heaven because when angels think of a tomb, they don't think about dying, but about entering heaven. The great stone door is the Word. The Word is the way to heaven. Evil people in the church had sealed up the Word and wouldn't let anyone near it. They did not want anyone to "open" it and get to heaven (see *Arcana Coelestia* 2916; *Apocalypse Explained* 400:14, 687:18).

But, just as things seemed darkest, the Lord came. And, with great power, He changed the way things had been in the church. His coming was like an earthquake! He pushed back the evil and, all by himself, He broke the seal of falsity and opened the Word. Then people could see that He was still alive, and they could see the way to eternal life (see *Apocalypse Explained* 400:14).

When the two Marys saw the risen Lord, He said to them, "Rejoice!" And we should also rejoice. For we are blessed to know that the Lord is alive! He has made His truth shine brightly for us in His Word! He has opened the way to heaven for us! And no one can stop the Lord from bringing us into eternal happiness—if only we will let Him.

## New Church Concepts Rolling away the Stone

The "great earthquake" that occurred when the angel descended from heaven and rolled away the stone from the mouth of the sepulcher means that the state of the church was altogether changed. For the Lord then rose again, and in respect to His Human assumed all dominion over heaven and earth, as He Himself says in Matthew (28:18). "The angel rolled away the stone from the mouth and sat upon it" means that the Lord removed all the falsity that had shut off access to Him. *Apocalypse Explained* 400.14

[T]he "stone" that was placed before the sepulcher, and that was rolled away by the angel, symbolizes Divine truth, thus the Word, which was...opened by the Lord. *Apocalypse Explained* 687.18

### Glorification

As the Lord's Human was glorified, that is, made Divine, He rose again after death on the third day with His whole body, which does not take place with any person; for a person rises again solely as to the spirit, and not as to the body. In order that people may know, and no one doubt, that the Lord rose again with His whole body, He not only said so through the angels in the sepulcher, but also showed Himself to His disciples in His human body, saying to them when they believed that they saw a spirit: "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; handle Me and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see Me have." *Doctrine of the Lord* 35.9

The Lord rises again with every person who is being regenerated. See *Arcana Coelestia* 2917