



LESSON I.—APRIL 7.

SECOND QUARTER.

**The Resurrection of Jesus.**

Luke xxiv., 1-12. Memory verses, 4-7.  
Read Matthew xxviii., 1-15; Mark xvi.,  
1-8; John xx., 1-10; I. Corinthians  
xv., 35-53.

**Golden Text.**

'Now is Christ risen from the dead.'—I.  
Corinthians xv., 20.

**Lesson Text.**

(1) Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came upon the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. (2) And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. (3) And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. (4) And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: (5) And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? (6) He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, (7) Saying, the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. (8) And they remembered his words, (9) And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. (10) It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. (11) And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. (12) Then arose Peter, and ran into the sepulchre; and stooping down he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

**Suggestions.**

(Condensed from 'Peloubet's Select Notes.')

The Gospels say sometimes that Jesus would rise 'on the third day,' and sometimes 'after three days,' Matthew using both terms (compare Matt. xii., 40 with xvi., 21), showing that the terms are interchangeable. Each part of a day was reckoned as a day, just as in computing the reigns of the Jewish kings each part of a year is reckoned as a year. Thus a reign extending from December, 1899, through 1900 into January, 1901, would be counted as three years, although only thirteen or fourteen months. It is so in the Old Testament, in the Talmud, in Josephus, and in the Assyrian fables. Days were counted in the same way. Jesus was buried between four and six o'clock (probably nearer four) on Friday afternoon, April 7, and rose early on Sunday morning, April 9, so that he was in the tomb part of three days.

If any one feels any hesitancy on this point they have only to adopt the theory, which several volumes have been written to prove, that Jesus was crucified on Thursday instead of Friday, in which case Jesus would have been in the tomb three complete days and nights.

Every possible precaution was taken without thought of its importance to Christianity, but by the overruling providence of God, to prevent any mistake or doubt as to the reality of the death of Christ, and of his resurrection, for there could be no real resurrection unless there was real death.

The soldiers pierced his body with a spear, and blood and water flowed from the wound—a proof of death (John xix., 34, 35).

The tomb in which he was buried was a new one, in which no one had ever been buried, and so there could be no doubt as to the identity of the body of Christ.

At the request of the chief priests, the stone against the door of the sepulchre was sealed, and a Roman guard placed around

the tomb, so that no one could take away the body and then pretend that he had risen, (Matt. xxvii., 62-66).

His friends believed he was dead, and wrapped him in spices for burial. They had no expectation of his rising in the day he did. They expected not his coming back to them in the body, but, if at all, 'his second coming in glory into his kingdom.' They were so certain of his death that it was very hard to convince them even when they saw him alive.

The story of the guards that the disciples came by night and stole the body away while they slept (Matt. xxviii., 11-14) was a falsehood paid for by the Jewish rulers, was stupid, contradictory, and absurd. (1) For if the guard were asleep, how could they know that the disciples stole him away? (2) The disciples could not have stolen the body away if they would, with the soldiers placed on watch especially to prevent it. Even the noise of rolling away the stone would have awakened a sleepy guard. (3) The disciples had no motive for stealing the body. They did not expect a resurrection. They did not know its importance. What could they have done with the body to escape detection when the whole government would have paid well to have it found.

The Resurrection of Jesus.—Very early Sunday morning, April 9. (Matt. xxviii., 2-4.) Nothing is known of the manner of it, but we are told that it was accompanied by a great earthquake, and an angel, whose countenance was like lightning, and whose raiment was white as snow, came and rolled away the stone from the sepulchre; not to allow Jesus to come forth, of course, but for the sake of those who were coming to view the sepulchre, and to show that the resurrection was an act of divine power. 'There is a sublime irony in the contrast between man's elaborate precautions and the ease with which the divine hand can sweep them away.'—Eldersheim.

A singular and significant testimony to the truth of the resurrection is afforded by the change in the Sabbath day. It was changed, not by any express command in the New Testament, but by the almost universal consent of the church, which could not endure to observe as a day of joy and gladness that on which Christ lay in the tomb, nor forbear to mark as a weekly festival that on which he arose.—Abbott.

The very existence of the Christian church is a proof of the resurrection of Jesus. 'Faith in mere visions or phantoms may produce phantoms, but not such a phenomenon as the Christian church, the greatest fact and the mightiest institution in the history of the world.'—President Woolsey.

Illustration from Seeds.—The best of all possible illustrations of the resurrection is that which Paul gives of a seed buried in the ground springing up into a plant. The little seed becomes a plant radiant with blossoms; the acorn becomes a spreading oak, with new powers and glories inconceivable in the seed. So Spurgeon says, 'We put into the ground a bulb, and it rises a golden lily. We drop into the mold a seed, and it comes forth an exquisite flower, resplendant with brilliant colors; these are the same that we put into the earth, the same identically, but oh, how different!'

Illustration from a Watch.—The case represents the body; the works, the soul. The works can be taken from the old case, and put into a new one, and go on just the same as before. It is really the same watch.

Illustration from Rags.—A rag picked from the heap of refuse, taken to a paper-mill, and changed into pure white paper (on which can be written the Word of God, the noblest truths, the highest poetry, unlimited promises): So our bodies are like rags to be changed into a body like unto an angel, with eyes of fire, a face like the brightness of the sun, and wings like lightning for swiftness.—C. H. Spurgeon.

**Questions.**

When the good women who loved Jesus went to the tomb to embalm his body what did they find? Whom did they see there? How did they feel? What did the angels say? Is Jesus dead? Had he told his disciples that he would rise again? Who were the women who carried the news of the resurrection to the apostles? Did they believe when they first heard it? What did Peter and John do?

**C. E. Topic.**

Sun., April 7.—Dead to sin, alive to Christ.  
Eph. ii., 1-10.

**Junior C. E. Topic.****SIGNS—OF EASTER.**

Mon., Apr. 1.—Death is conquered.—Isa. xxv., 8, 9.

Tues., Apr. 2.—Christ the first bloom.—I. Cor. xv., 20.

Wed., April 3.—Our only hope.—I. Thess. iv., 13, 14.

Thu., Apr. 4.—Because He arose.—I. Cor. xv., 54-57.

Fri., Apr. 5.—The risen life.—Col. iii., 1.

Sat., Apr. 6.—An eternal spring.—John vi., 47.

Sun., Apr. 7.—Spring flowers and risen bodies.—Matt. xxviii., 1-8. (Easter meeting.)

**Free Church Catechism.**

39. Q.—What is a Christian minister?

A.—A Christian minister is one who is called of God and the Church to be a teacher of the Word and a pastor of the flock of Christ.

40. Q.—How may the validity of such a ministry be proved?

A.—The decisive proof of a valid ministry is the sanction of the Divine Head of the Church, manifested in the conversion of sinners and the edification of the Body of Christ.

**Too Late.**

(By Isabel Maude Hamill.)

Mrs. Ellerston was a beautiful woman, tall, well-made, full of life and animation, and whenever she entered a room people turned to look at her. Her guests were unanimous in thinking they had never seen her look more lovely than on the occasion of a garden party she gave for the benefit of the society to help crippled children. She had none of her own, and this was the one sorrow in her hitherto cloudless married life.

What a gay scene it was! The pretty dresses, the exquisite flowers, the music of the band, and the happy laughter and chatter of those present. Claret cup, iced champagne, and various other refreshments were served, regardless of expense, and many young girls left the garden with a flushed face and an excited manner. Amongst the guests was a lady upon whose sweet face when in repose there was a sad look. She was talking earnestly to a man whose appearance denoted him to be a clergyman.

'Yes, there are more cripples made by drink than anyone here imagines. It has made me quite sad, since I have made inquiries on the subject, to find out how many young lives have been ruined, as far as this world is concerned, through no other agent.'

'I don't quite understand you, Mrs. Graham. How can drink make children cripples?'

She smiled at him incredulously.

'Is it possible that you, the clergyman of a parish in England, ask such a question?'

He appeared ill at ease under her gaze, and replied apologetically:—

'Ah, well, you see, mine is a country parish, and we see very little of drinking.'

'Thank God for that! During the last three months I have myself discovered more than twelve children who have been made cripples, owing to the father's or mother's drunken habits. One woman let her little baby fall from her arms when returning home late from a public-house, and so injured its spine that the doctor says she will never be able to walk any distance as long as she lives. A father threw a brick at his boy of three years old, when mad with drink, and fractured the poor little fellow's foot so horribly that the surgeon said the only chance for his life was to amputate above the ankle, and that lad has to limp through life on crutches as best he can. Oh! it is heartrending. These are only two of scores of cases that I could name.'

'Very, very sad, indeed; heartrending, as you say.'

'Then, Mr. Warren, ought we not, as pro-