

International Bible Lessons

• SECOND QUARTER

LESSON X—June 4

THE RESURRECTION. John 20. 11-23

GOLDEN TEXT: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." 1 Cor. 15. 20.

Primary Notes

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Approach. Make sleep the point of contact. Nothing is more familiar, and yet it has elements of attractive mystery. What is sleep? Do you all sleep? When? Why, especially at night? Do you know when you are asleep? Do you

sleep with eyes wide open? Do you see, as in the light? Do you hear, as when awake? Do you understand what is said to you, and can you answer as you should? How different everything is when you are asleep, with your eyes shut, feet and hands quiet, the voice still, and the thoughts far away! But do you ever have dreams? So the mind goes on thinking, in some queer way, doesn't it? Every part of you is not as much asleep, then, as your body. Why must we sleep? We need rest. We cannot rest when running about, playing, working, studying, all the time. We must lie still in "God's beautiful dark" and rest. In the morning, when the sun shines in and says, "Wake up, how is it? O, how rested we are when our eyes open, our ears begin to listen, our feet are ready to run and our hands to work, as the new day begins, after the quiet night! Would you be willing to give up the night and the sleep? No, indeed.

Are you afraid to go to sleep, because you don't know what you are about, as when awake? No, you don't think anything about it, but lie down in your soft bed, shut your eyes, and forget everything.

There is another sleep that is much like this, only it lasts longer than a night, and the spirit—that part which thinks and feels and loves—does not stay in the body, while the eyes are shut and the hands and feet are still in the long, quiet sleep. Jesus went to sleep in this way. When his friends, Joseph and Nicodemus, took the Saviour down from the cross, his eyes were shut in this last, long, quiet sleep. They laid Jesus's body tenderly in a rocky tomb, a cave or room cut in the rock, with a great stone like a door to shut it up. There they left the dear body of the Lord, but some women standing far off saw where they laid it.

Mary Magdalene at Jesus's Tomb. Very early on the morning of the third day after Jesus's death, the day which we keep as the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene came to the place where she had seen her Saviour laid.

Question children as to Mary's love and longing, which brought her so early to the place. Give the intervening story of the finding of the tomb empty, the hurried message to the disciples, the visit of Peter and John, and their return home—all this briefly, but graphically, as it belongs to the story.

But Mary stood weeping at the tomb after the others had gone home. She only thought of the sleeping Saviour, but she wished to find the dear body.

The Angel's Question. Picture the weeping Mary, stooping down to look into the tomb. Even through her tears, she wished to see what she could. What a bright vision she saw! Angels in white were sitting in the place where Jesus's body had lain. They asked her, "Why weepest thou?"

If angels could see us crying perhaps they would ask the same question. Why should we be so troubled when our Jesus is near?

But Mary did not know Jesus was near. She told the angels why she cried (repeat), and then turned herself about. Jesus was standing there, but she did not know him. Her eyes were too full of tears, perhaps. She thought him the gardener, and when he asked the same question as the angels she begged to know where her Lord was, thinking this gardener had taken him away.

Jesus's Voice. Then Jesus said, "Mary." It was the same dear, tender tone of voice that she had so often heard. He knew her name and called her Mary. If he should speak to you so that you could hear, he would call your name, for he knows it well.

Mary knew the voice. Her tears did not hinder her from hearing. She cried out with joy, "Master," and fell at Jesus's feet.

Then the Lord sent Mary on a beautiful errand to the rest to tell of his rising, and she



went and told that she had seen the Lord. (Teach Golden Text, and explain first fruits, as

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GOLDEN TEXT
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