

## John 20

1 It is possible to have all the accounts of the visit to the tomb fit together. To do so, this would be the visit by Mary (Miriam of Magdala) with the other women around dawn (The word used means before 6A.M.). John leaves out the other women because Mary M. is the one the Lord appears to. The first day is Sunday, later called the Lord's Day (Revelation 1:10). That seems to have become the day of worship for the new church (1Corinthians 16:2) Jesus was buried late on Friday, in the tomb Saturday and rose sometime in the early morning Sunday. The stones that were used to seal tombs weighed hundreds of pounds. They must have been wondering how she would get in (Mark 16:3). They may not have known about the Roman watch.

2 Mary M. runs to tell the others. She is assuming that the body was stolen for some reason. Grave robbers were common, but they would take the linen and spices and leave the body.

3-7 Peter and John run to see what has happened. John outruns Peter, but bold Peter runs right into the tomb. The headpiece is folded and the linen in a pile. A very recent discovery of a first century burial had the same woolen had covering and linen cloth. Ray Vanderlaan suggests that the folded headpiece says that the head's work is done. The linen unfolded then would suggest the body has work to do. John 11:44 does seem to suggest the linen was wrapped in some way, not just a covering. Another thought comes from a possibly different rendering in of the Greek. The headpiece and linen were there with the folds that were made when they laid the body down. In other words, the body seemed to have passed right through them. Imagine the thoughts that must have been racing through their heads!

8-9 John finally believes. Was it the undisturbed grave clothes? Even though they did not understand what He predicted, John believed that Jesus had conquered death. John 1:50 Mary is the first to the tomb. She who was forgiven much loved much. John was the first to believe. Called the disciple who Jesus loved, he must have loved Him greatly for love begets love. 1John 4:19

10-13 The disciples go home to ponder what it all means. Mary M. stays and sees the two angels. The question is why cry when death has been swallowed up in victory. It's time to rejoice not cry. Her answer showed she did not yet comprehend what had happened. Mark mentions one angel, Luke two. The Luke account says the angels tried to tell them what had happened. Luke 24:3-7

14-15 As in several other accounts, He is not recognized at first. Consider that the last time they saw Him He was beaten and lifeless. It was probably more than tears that kept her from recognizing Him. Consider Mark 16:12

16 "Mary!" He calls our name and we instantly recognize His voice. John 10:3 What an incredible moment! "Teacher!" She cries out.

17 Though correctly translated, I think we often miss the intent of the expression. Mary has been working through the painful process of separating from the presence of One she has deeply loved. He suddenly is back. Jesus asks her not to hang onto that physical presence. "Don't cling to me as I'm on my way to the Father." He is soon to leave and she will have to go through it all over again. She needs to get used to the fact that He will not physically be present. Matthew 28:7-9 has all the women see Him and they clasp His feet. He was not merely saying not to hold Him. Notice He says, "...to my Father and your Father, to my God and to your God." Jesus is affirming her faith. He is declaring that they have the same Father God. Realize that your Father God is the same as Jesus' Father God through what He did for you.

18 She obeys and goes to the disciples to tell them. Mark records the sad fact that they did not believe her. Mark 16:10-11 We often have a tendency to doubt incredible news. I wonder if they had believed her if Jesus would have met them next in Galilee. Matthew 28:10 Why does John just mention Mary M? Luke 24:10

Skeptics propose that the Bible was written some time after the events with much of it fabricated to form a new religion. If that were the case, they never would have had Jesus appearing first to a woman who had a questionable past. But that is perfectly in keeping with Jesus' character, the friend of tax collectors and sinners.

The disciples did not believe the incredible promise of God that He would rise again in 3 days. We wonder how they could doubt after seeing His life, and yet we often live as if we do not believe the promises of God to us. It was when they began living in total conviction of His teaching that the world began to be converted. Let us live in total assurance that His every promise will come to pass.