



CAPITOL COMMISSION

He is Risen! (John 20:1-31)

JUNE 28, 2010

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The Empty Tomb

John 20:1-2—Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

We know from taking all of the Gospels together that there were other women in addition to Mary Magdalene at the tomb on Resurrection Sunday. This is also confirmed by the use of "we" in verse 2. John is reporting his perspective—how Mary ran and brought the message of the open tomb to Peter and himself. Comparing the various Gospels it appears that the group of women approached the tomb but as they did so, Mary Magdalene left them behind and ran back telling Peter and John that the body had been removed.

During the time Mary Magdalene was gone seeking the Apostles, the other women had the encounters with the angels as describe in the Synoptic Gospels.

John 20:3-9—So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)

John appears to be the first Apostle (not the first person) to actually observe the empty tomb as he outruns Peter to the site. Peter catches up and confirms the grave clothes lying without a body. Some believe Jesus passed through the cloth and others suggest he simply unwrapped himself and folded the headpiece leaving it separate from the strips. The Matthew account suggests the angel rolled away the stone to reveal a tomb already empty which would indicate Jesus did not walk out of the tomb but escaped in His resurrection form.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

John 20:10—Then the disciples went back to their homes.

Peter and John return to their homes. It is likely that Mary, mother of Jesus would have been told of the empty tomb at this point as she was in John's custody. It is impossible to know the feelings and the conversations of the disciples of Jesus as they took in all of the mystery. Imagine the heartache mixed with a wild new hope! How much of His teaching about rising again made sense to them at this point? One wonders if His mother fully realized what had happened.

By now, the other women had left the tomb and Mary found herself alone at the empty grave.

John 20:11-15—But Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

"Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

From the conversation we can conclude that Mary believed the body of Jesus was missing by some human agency. The fact that the grave clothes were in place made it unlikely that the body had been moved, but Mary was focused on its absence and knew it had to be someplace else.

John 20:16—Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).

Mary probably is beginning to understand that Jesus was not stolen away, but He had risen from the grave. One can assume, however, her emotions must have trumped any clear thinking. Questions undoubtedly remained.

BIBLE STUDIES

MONDAYS @ 5-6 P.M., ROOM 1425-PIZZA 1200 CT
MONDAYS @ NOON, CHAPEL

NORTH CAROLINA

He is Risen! (John 20:1-31)

John 20:17—Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' "

Mary was likely hanging on to Jesus with all of her strength and determination. Jesus was telling her that His physical presence on earth was temporary and He would be ascending to the Father. She could not hold on to Him physically for very long. Jesus would be ascending to Heaven and there He continues to intercede on our behalf.

John 20:18—Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

Mary was able to add new information to the mix of reports from the various witnesses. But, she was the first to encounter the risen Savior.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

John 20:19-20—On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

The disciples were not over their fear, but Jesus came to them offering peace. The disciples were overjoyed to be in the same room as Jesus.

John 20:21-23—Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Jesus appears to ten of the disciples for Judas was already dead and Thomas was not present. It is not clear if Jesus was able to pass through the walls in His newly resurrected form or if the door opened at his command even though it was locked. Taking the resurrection narratives as a whole it is likely that His new body had capabilities beyond our bodies in their current form.

Jesus breathing on the disciples with the words, "Receive the Holy Spirit" was probably prophetic behavior on His part. We

know the Holy Spirit was given in His fullest sense on Pentecost in the upper room.

Jesus Appears to Thomas

John 20:24-25—Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

John 20:26-27—A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

John 20:28—Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Literally, Thomas said, "The Lord of me, and the God of me." This is important because some have incorrectly suggested that Jesus is not full deity. Here we have His deity expressed in very explicit terms in the Greek, the Lord and the God.

John 20:29—Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

The reaction of Jesus is an important apologetic proof of the deity of Jesus. When Thomas declared Jesus to be "my Lord and my God," the statement was fully received by Jesus without any rebuke. Jesus expands the notion by saying others would be blessed as they believe in the Christ as God.

John 20:30-31—Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John gives us his purpose summary—Jesus' miracles establish Him as the Christ, and believing in Him gives eternal life. Believing in him is more than some mental assent to His being. It is knowing Him to be God incarnate, the Lamb of God who lived and died on our behalf, and trusting in Him and His work for our eternal life