

Episode #2-27 – John 20 Part 1-The Empty Tomb

I. The purpose of the gospel of John is to produce believers in the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the One anointed by God to be the Savior of the world, and that Jesus is the Son of God, God represented in human form.

II. We have considered the Lord's death on the cross for our sins, and His burial. Now, we come to the momentous event of His resurrection.

III. Mary Magdalene, Peter, and John visit the tomb. John 20:1-10.

- A. Verse 1. Mary comes "*te mia ton sabbaton*," = "on one (day) of the Sabbaths." But Luke 23:56 denies they came on the Sabbath. Yet Luke 24:1 says they came on the Sabbath! Lev. 23:9-11, 15-17. This was the feast of the LORD called Firstfruits. It means day one of the fifty days used to count to Pentecost. I Corinthians 15:20, the Lord was Firstfruits of those who rise from the dead! Since Firstfruits was always on a Sunday, this was actually a Sunday, not a Saturday. The word "early" means it was in the fourth watch of the night, 3:00-6:00AM, still dark. The stone in front of the tomb was very large, and would take many men with the right equipment to move it.
- B. Verse 2. The "other disciple" = John, not referring to himself directly, as elsewhere in the book. She probably means she thinks Joseph and Nicodemus moved His body somewhere, "laid" indicates with reverent care (same word as Lazarus in John 11:34.)
- C. Verse 3. They run to see. If He is not there, will just think He has been moved.
- D. Verse 4. Did they have a sentimental attachment to the body? This is common soon after death. Does John running faster mean he was younger than Peter? No, for it is unlikely that he would proudly mention outrunning a much older man. Such insignificant details speak of an eyewitness account. Remember John's purpose: that you would believe his eyewitness account of what happened!
- E. Verse 5. John is more cautious than Peter, stoops down and looks, but does not enter.
- F. Verse 6. Peter is more impetuous, so when he arrives he rushes right in.
- G. Verse 7. This "handkerchief" was a head-cloth wrapped around the head like a turban. When He rose His body passed through it, and it fell down still wrapped as it had been when He was in it. The body was not taken by grave robbers, for no robber would have neatly wrapped the head-cloth back up like this! Compare this to John 11:44, when Lazarus had to be released from his grave clothes. The Lord had power, and needed no such help.
- H. Verse 8. John did not believe the truth of Christ's resurrection. He believes what Mary said in verse 2. If this is not what he means, then why does he say what he does in verse 9? This raises question: what do you believe about Christ's resurrection?
- I. Verse 9. This is why they believed Mary's story over the evidence. Their belief was not the truth.
- J. Verse 10. They did not return to their "homes," but to their current lodgings. They had no realization of the reality of the resurrection!
- K. V.11. The Lord had done much for Mary Magdalene, Mark 16:9, Luke 8:2. She had dedicated her life to Him and loved Him purely, but now He is dead. She has nothing to do but weep! This is the first time she has looked into the sepulcher (verse 2.)

IV. Conclusion: Eyewitnesses tell us so: the Lord's tomb was empty. Yet He was not stolen by grave robbers, for the disposition of his grave clothes makes that clear. No, He rose from the dead, and is God, as He said. There is only one question left: do we believe it?