

## **John Lesson 58 The Empty Tomb and Mary Magdalene's Encounter with the Risen Christ John 20:1-18**

**Pray:** Before you begin lift your heart to God and ask for the Spirit's help as you read the passage and work through these questions in His divine presence and you certainly will be given understanding.

### **Background:**

**The first day of the Jewish week** began at sundown on what we would call Saturday night.

**Crucifixion** by the Romans always ended in a sure death. When Mary encountered an empty tomb, this would more than likely have been her mindset. She probably imagined that either the the body had been stolen, that the authorities had confiscated it, or that the owner of the site had moved it.

**Robbers** stealing the body was not likely. They would have either taken the grave cloths with the body or left them in disarray in their haste. There was also a 7 day mourning period when many Jewish mourners visited the tomb. Most robbers waited until this period was over for fear of encountering mourners.

**"Stooping"** suggests a tomb with a low entrance leading to a lower pit.

### **Key Words or Phrases**

**"Touch me not" (KJV)** v.20:17 is in the present imperative in Greek and might be better translated as "Stop clinging to me." (NASB) or "Do not hold on to me" (NIV)

**"weep" Strongs G2799** - "klaio" to weep, bewail, or sob. This word implies not just the shedding of tears but every external expression of grief

Mary Magdalene was a follower of Jesus . In Luke 8:2-3 we read that Jesus healed her of 7 demons and that she, along with other women, provided for Jesus during his earthly life out of their means. She was present during the closing hours of His agony on the cross (John 19:25). She remained by the cross until the body was taken down and placed in the tomb of Joseph of Aramathea. (Matt. 27:61, Mar 15:46-47). In the opening verses of John 20 we see her returning to the tomb before dawn to complete the burial preparation which had been left undone due to the onset of the Sabbath (Luke23:55-56). In all of this Mary demonstrates her love and faithfulness to her Lord.

### **Read John 20:1-18**

1. According to John 20:1-2 what did Mary see when she arrived at Jesus' tomb? Who did she then run to get and what did she tell them?

2. In John 20:4-5 what did "the other disciple" (probably John) see in the tomb? According to 20:6-7 what did Peter see?

3. How did both disciples respond to what they saw? (John 20:8-10 and Luke 24:12)

**Application:** In the midst of what Mary perceives to be devastating circumstances, she continues to show her love and faithfulness to Jesus. How can we also show our love and faithfulness to Jesus in hard times?

4. What did Mary see next as she wept? How did her response and the name she called Jesus reveal her heart? (John 20:12-13)

5. Still determined to find Jesus, she turned and saw a man whom she supposed to be the gardener. In this encounter how did she further reveal her heart?

6. What did Jesus say to her in 20:16? After Jesus spoke this one word, she immediately recognized Him. Why do you think she recognized Him then? (See John 10:3-4)

**Application:** When Mary recognized Him her grief must have instantly turned to joy! She clung to Jesus! The resurrected Jesus made all the difference in her life. How does the resurrected Jesus make a difference in your life? How in practical terms do you "cling to Jesus".?

7. According to 20:17 Jesus asks Mary not to cling to Him. He is going to the Father. What does He ask her to do and how does she respond?

**Application:** What is your relationship with Jesus like.? Are you like Mary seeking Him no matter what? Are you demonstrating your love and faithfulness to Him through your obedience? Lastly, are you experiencing daily the love Jesus has for His own?