

“Surprised By Joy!”

John 20:11-18

Now on the first day of the week (**Sunday**), Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, & saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran & came to Simon Peter, & to the **“other disciple, whom Jesus loved”**, & said to both of them, “They have taken away the **Lord** out of the tomb, & we do not know where they have laid **Him**.” Peter therefore went out, & the **“other disciple (whom Jesus loved)”**, also went to the tomb. So, they both ran together, & the **“other disciple (whom Jesus loved)”**, outran Peter & came to the tomb first. And **“he (the beloved disciple)”**, stooped down & looked in, **saw** the **linen cloths** lying there; yet **“he (the beloved disciple)”** did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following **“him (the beloved disciple)”**, & went into the tomb; & he (Peter) **saw** the **linen cloths** lying there, & the **linen cloth that had been placed over His Head**, not lying with the **other linen cloths**, but was **folded together in a place by itself**. Then the **“other disciple (whom Jesus loved)”**, who came to the tomb first, went in also; & **“he (the beloved disciple)”**, **saw** (the **linen cloths** lying there) & believed! For as yet they did not know the Scripture that **He** must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again to their own homes ... But Mary (alone) stood outside by the tomb weeping, & as she wept, she stooped down & looked into the tomb. Then she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head & the other at the feet, where the body of **Jesus** had lain. Then they said to her, **“Woman, why are you weeping?”** She replied, **“Because they have taken away My Lord, & I do not know where they have laid Him!”** Now when she had said this, she turned around & saw **Jesus** standing there, but she did not know that it was **Jesus**. **He** asked, **“Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?”** She, supposing **Him** to be the gardener, inquired of **Him**, **“Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, & I will take Him away.”** (**He** replied,) **“Mary!”** (She responded,) **“Rabboni!”** (**Jesus** continued,) **“Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My Brothers & Sisters & say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father & Your Father, to My God & Your God.’”** Mary Magdalene came & told the disciples that she had seen the **Lord**, & that **He** had spoken all these things to her!

John 20:1-18 (NKJV)

Our story picks up with everyone huddled & hunkered down in the upper room. Well everyone but a small group of women. Among whom was Mary Magdalene. It was this Mary who found the empty tomb and ran told *Peter* & *“The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved”* that the body of Jesus was missing from the tomb. Peter & *“The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved”*, ran to the tomb. They had just arrived, and Peter had looked inside and inspected the empty Shroud & Face Cloth, & then they both decided to leave and return home to contemplate these things!

Verse 10: Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

But Mary is still at the empty tomb all alone.

Verse 11: But Mary (alone) stood outside by the tomb weeping, & as she wept, she stooped down & looked into the tomb.

When Mary, looked into the tomb herself, instead of just seeing some empty grave clothes, she also saw something totally out of the ordinary!

Verse 12: Then she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head & the other at the feet, where the body of **Jesus** had lain.

Angels Have Four Important Roles To Play Between God & Us:

1) Comforter, 2) Messenger, 3) Protector, & 4) Strengthener

1st The Two Angels Act As Comforters To Mary & To Us Today

Verse 13a: Then they said to her, *“Woman, why are you weeping?”*

Notice The Angels Are Genuinely Concerned About Her Feelings & Mental Well Being!

2nd The Two Angels Act As Messengers To Mary & To Us Today

Angels Deliver Three Types of Messages From God To Us

- 1) Prophecy From God About The Future Or The Fulfillment Of A Prophecy
- 2) Command/Word From God To Cause Us To Make A Decision & Take Action
- 3) Witness From God To Give Us A Better Understanding About Something Or Someone

The Two Angels At The Tomb That Morning Our Witnesses To Mary - Resurrection Of Jesus.

- 1) They Are There To Pay Witness To An Empty Tomb
- 2) They Are There To Pay Witness To The Empty Grave Clothes That Are A Living Testimony To This Day By Their Indelible Images Of Jesus’ Face (*“Sudarium of Oviedo”* – *“Mandala”*) & His Entire Body (*“Shroud of Turin”*) That He Indeed Rose Again From The Dead!

Mary in her great sorrow almost seems unable to recognize that the two men are in fact angels! In any other right state of mind, no one could overlook the signs of their angelic & heavenly presence! But that Sunday morning, the sorrow, grief, & confusion of losing her Lord on Friday compounded by the missing body must have caused her to overlook the obvious & to think they were mere men & to think the worst for she replies:

Verse 13b: She replied, *“Because they have taken away My Lord, & I do not know where they have laid Him!”*

Interestingly enough however, on the one hand she seems to overlooks two angelic beings talking to her, but on the other hand immediately recognizes the presence of what appears to her to be merely another human being, whom she perceives, because of the holy day of the Passover, to be merely the tomb’s gardener!

Verse 14: Now when she had said this, she turned around & saw **Jesus** standing there, but she did not know that it was **Jesus**.

But the man, a stranger she perceives to be a gardener, says to her:

Verse 15a: He asked, *“Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?”*

Notice Jesus repeats the 1st question of the angels; but adds a second question of His Own; which is really her question? The grief stricken, anxiety ridden, & confused mind, of Mary is apparent in her response in answering this question!

Verse 15b: She, supposing Him to be the gardener, inquired of Him, *“Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, & I will take Him away.”*

Then Jesus says something that is familiar to her. Jesus calls her by her name as He must have done many times in the living!

Verse 16a: *“Mary!”*

Mary almost instinctively, habitually, recognized Who it was Who called her by name! Immediately the soul of Mary is at peace, & understanding returns to her mind & she responds with a loving & respectful reply:

Verse 16b: *“Rabboni”*

Her choice of Rabboni over the more common Rabbi is noteworthy here because

“Rabbi” = “Teacher” Vs. “Rabboni” = “Dearest Teacher & Friend!”

Here John the Evangelist harkens back to the teaching of The Good Shepherd In calling His Sheep by Name!

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief & a robber. But he who enters by the door is the Shepherd of the Sheep. To Him the doorkeeper opens, & the sheep hear His Voice; & He Calls His Own Sheep by Name & leads them out. And when He brings out His Own Sheep, He goes before them; & the sheep follow Him, for they know His Voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of the stranger.”

John 10:1-5 (NKJV)

Q: “Why Did Jesus Call Mary By Name?”

A: Jesus Called Mary By Name To Calm Her Troubled Mind, To Lovingly Reach Her In Her Distress. Jesus Calms Her By Calling Her By Name. A Name He Has Known Before Time Began, A Name That Signifies Her, Mary Magdalene, Not Another Mary, Only Her. The One He Created & Knew, The One He Gave Immortality Too. The One He Came & Died For, The One He Rose Again For. The One He Desires To Be In A Living Eternal Relationship With Forever!

Q: “What Was His Purpose In Meeting With Mary In Person?”

A: Jesus Met With Mary To Prove He Was Alive. To Show Her His Wounds & That His Death & His Resurrection Were Real, Scientifically Provable. That Death Is Not The Final Word, That He Is The God Of Life, Death, Salvation, Resurrection, & Eternity!

**A: Jesus Met With Mary To Restore To Her An Unending Hope,
& To Give To Her An Irremovable Peace,
& To Fill Her With His Irrepressible Joy!**

Q: “What Message Did Jesus Leave Mary With That Easter Morning Long Ago?”

**A: Jesus Left Her With A Daily Command To Tell Everyone The His Good News!
The Good News That He Is Alive Forevermore! That In Him, We Have Salvation & Forgiveness Of Our Sins That Separate Us From God Our Father & From One Another! That In Him, We Can Die To Our Former Selves, & Rise Again To A New Life In His Holy Spirit! That In Him, We Can Overcome Death & The Grave! That In Him We Shall Live Forever & Ever In His Presence!**

**Q: “What Do I Do With This Message
I Have Heard This Easter Morning?”**

Mary Told Me The Answer In Her Joy & Obedience To God!

**“Mary Magdalene came & told the disciples that she had seen the Lord,
& that He had spoken all these things to her!”**

**For The Rest Of Mary’s Earthly Life
She Told Everyone She Met
The Hope Of Her Resurrected Lord,
Who Lived Within Her Still By His Holy Spirit!**

**This Easter Morning,
And Every Day Hereafter,
Whatever Comes Our Way,
Just Like Mary, Each Of Us,
May Choose To Live Our Lives**

“Surprised By Joy!”