

The Gospel of John

Chapter 20

Outline:

- 1-10 Apostles Verify Empty Tomb
 - 1. Mary reported Jesus stolen (1-2)
 - 2. Peter and John confirmed it (3-7)
 - 3. Reaction to Jesus missing (8-10)
- 11-18 Mary Magdalene Sees Jesus
 - 1. Two angels engaged Mary (11-13)
 - 2. Jesus appeared to Mary (14-16)
 - 3. Mary told the apostles (17-18)
- 19-23 Ten Apostles See Jesus
 - 1. Jesus appeared to apostles (19-20)
 - 2. Jesus commissioned them (21)
 - 3. Jesus gave them the Spirit (22-23)
- 24-29 Doubting Thomas Sees Jesus
 - 1. Thomas rejected their report (24-25)
 - 2. Jesus appeared for Thomas (26-27)
 - 3. Jesus blessed unseen faith (28-29)
- 30-31 Why John Wrote John
 - 1. He could have written more (30)
 - 2. The evidence enough for faith (31)

Preparatory Reading: Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-20; Luke 24:1-53; I Corinthians 15

Related Links:

- A. *Resurrection Power* (sermon outline with many related links at the end) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/resurrection-power.pdf>.
- B. *The Resurrection Chapter* (I Corinthians 15 outline) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/first-corinthians-15.pdf>.
- C. *This Day Have I Begotten Thee* (slides) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/this-day-have-i-begotten-thee.pdf>.
- D. *John 11 – Resurrection of Lazarus* (expository sermon outline) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/john-eleven.pdf>.
- E. Many harmonies may be found in the Internet, though each of them will vary in reconciliation.

Introduction:

- A. The most important event and fact the apostles had to prove was the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.
 - 1. Jesus answered the scribes and Pharisees about His identity by timed resurrection (Matt 12:38-45).
 - 2. Though He performed many miracles, He directed skeptics to the sign of Jonah, which He fulfilled.
 - 3. It was not very challenging in the first century to prove the existence and ministry of Jesus Christ.
 - 4. The Jews and the Romans had record of His crucifixion death, which could easily be ascertained.
 - 5. However, it was His resurrection that both Jews and Romans vociferously denied with their might.
 - 6. If Jesus rose, the Jews had murdered their Messiah; if Jesus rose, the Romans were incompetent.
 - 7. God made His death very open and public, but His resurrection was private proof to friends only.
 - 8. Those who have not seen the risen Lord but believe the sweet evidence pass the test of eternal life.
 - 9. Peter could reason with Cornelius that he knew about Jesus' life but not about His resurrection.
 - 10. There were about 520 eyewitnesses of the risen Jesus, and there many infallible proofs of His life.
 - 11. Gifts of the Holy Ghost to fishermen were to prove Jesus was indeed risen (Acts 4:33; Heb 2:1-4).
 - 12. John's details about persons, words, linens, stone, etc., are all facts to bolster the resurrection case.
 - 13. Salvation from sin required resurrection, or Jesus had not satisfied God (I Cor 15:17; Ro 4:23-25).

14. Faith that gives assurance of salvation must include Jesus as Son of God and raised (Ro 10:8-11).
 15. There have been several investigative reports done by detectives and cold case analysts to prove that the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a closed case of truth by all usual measures.
 16. Here is an example for illustrative purposes only ... <http://www.tektonics.org/harmonize/greenharmony.htm>.
 17. Here is another example for illustration only ... <http://coldcasechristianity.com/tag/evidence-for-the-resurrection/>.
 18. Here is another example of a book/movie doing the same ... https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Case_for_Christ.
 19. Here is another example for illustration only ... <https://citybibleforum.org/city/melbourne/blog/resurrection-case-dismissed/>.
 20. An example for illustration ... <https://crossexamined.org/the-evidence-for-jesus-resurrection-part-9-probabilities-and-plagiarism/>.
 21. Another ... http://users.ox.ac.uk/~orie0087/pdf_files/Papers%20from%20Philosophical%20Journals/Swinburne_2013-resurrection.pdf.
- B. The Gospel of John is special and unique. What he related here is additional matter beyond the others.
1. We find a focus on Mary Magdalene to the exclusion of many women the other Gospels include.
 2. We find more of the personal relationship between Jesus and Mary and extra things He said to her.
 3. We find more details pertaining to Peter and John and their reaction to finding the empty tomb.
 4. We find dated meetings with apostles and Jesus displaying His wounds and doing ministerial work.
 5. We find the exchange with doubting Thomas and our Lord's praise of our faith without seeing.
 6. These are the main differences between John and the other Gospels; minor differences also exist.
 7. John's details about persons, words, linens, stone, etc., are all facts to bolster the resurrection case.
- C. Our Lord's resurrection is one of the most important facts of the gospel with great attendant blessings.
1. *Prophecy of the resurrection* ... was in more places than thought (Psalm 2; 16; 22; 110; Isaiah 53).
 2. *Priority of the resurrection* ... without it the crucifixion does not save (I Cor 15:17; Heb 2:14-15).
 3. *Power of the resurrection* ... is direct and indirect power (Mat 27:50-54; Phil 3:10; Eph 1:19-20).
 4. *Privacy of the resurrection* ... only a few insiders witnessed it firsthand (Ac 13:31; I Cor 15:3-8).
 5. *Proof of the resurrection* ... accounts of infallible proofs (Jn 20:30-31; Acts 1:1-4,22; 10:39-41).
 6. *Persons of the resurrection* ... are showings to Mary, Peter, and others (Jn 20:1-29; I Cor 15:3-8).
 7. *Preaching of the resurrection* ... was apostolic focus (Acts 2:22-32; 4:7-12; 10:36-42; 13:26-37).
 8. *Peculiarity of the resurrection* ... is its role in our perfect religion (Ac 17:16-20,30-34; I Co 15:19).
 9. *Profession of the resurrection* ... is the need to believe and confess it (Rom 10:9-10; I Jn 5:4-13).
 10. *Perpetuity of the resurrection* ... is by Baptist baptism (Ro 6:4-5; I Co 15:29; Col 2:12; I Pet 3:21).
 11. *Peace of the resurrection* ... is to comfort one another (I Cor 15:20-23,45,51-58; I Thess 4:13-18).
 12. *Practice of the resurrection* ... illustrates our changed lives (Rom 6:1-11; Eph 2:1-10; Col 3:1).
 13. *Promise of the resurrection* ... is why we bury, not cremate (Ro 8:11,23; I Cor 15:20; I Thes 4:14).
 14. *Punishment of the resurrection* ... is eternal judgment for denying it (Ac 13:26-41; II The 1:7-10).
- D. The apostolic emphasis was evidentiary proof for the resurrection rather than ideas for speculation.
1. John's details about persons, words, linens, stone, etc., are all facts to bolster the resurrection case.
 2. The varied accounts with circumstantial differences but agreement in substance indicate integrity.
 3. All true witnesses have this accepted character – *substantial truth, under circumstantial variety*.
 4. Consider – not a mention of *when* Jesus arose, when their epistles could have exalted such highly.
 5. Consider – not a mention of *how* Jesus arose, for any such speculation was inferior to real evidence.
 6. We give the apostolic writers the same liberty to differ as we do historians and witnesses in trials.
 7. There is enough discrepancy to show that there could have been no earlier conspiracy among them.
 8. We want to see the picture painted by each writer, and we want to emphasize Jesus Christ Himself.
 9. Too much focus on details or timeline could distract us from the writer's record and/or from Jesus.
 10. We want to see Jesus, like the Greeks in John 12:20-21, and details can be distracting like apostles.
 11. We do care about details that matter ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/two-or-three-some-details-do-not-matter.pdf>.
 12. There are difficulties to reconcile the four gospel accounts; all gospel harmonies vary in solutions.
- E. John had a purpose – for you to believe Jesus is the Christ the Son of God for assurance of salvation.
1. What he did or did not include was subordinate to his loving design by God's plan (Jn 20:30-31).
 2. You can know you have eternal life by believing on Jesus Christ and obeying Him (I John 5:1,13).
 3. You can learn enough for gospel conversion by John without Matthew, Mark, or Luke's accounts.

4. It is one thing to believe an innocent Man died, but a whole different thing that He rose again.
- F. John's emphasis on several individuals provide impetus for us to examine ourselves about the faith.
 1. Many of John's chapters have individuals identified or emphasized that the other Gospels ignore.
 2. God and His Son deal with each child of God on an individual basis for our comfort and conviction.
 3. Here in John 20 you will meet Mary Magdalene, John, Peter, and Thomas, each with unique angles.
 4. Do you love Jesus like Mary? Run and believe like John? Be bold like Peter? Confess like Thomas?

***** *Apostles Verify Empty Tomb – Mary Reported Jesus Stolen – Verses 1-2* *****

1 The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. The first day of the week.

- A. Crucifixion week was past – the disciples, both men and women, waited and wondered.
 1. They did not wait for three days and nights to pass to see Him as He had promised.
 2. They did not understand the scriptures or His promises (Matt 16:21; 17:23; 20:19).
 3. They were away from home, since many lived in Galilee, and were out of sorts.
 4. Salvation from such confusion, doubt, and fear is to believe His word and love Him.
 5. Love God and His Son with the faith you have and He will reveal more to help you.
- B. This is Sunday, following the Jewish weekly Sabbath, when they rested (Luke 23:56).
 1. After watching His burial, they rested Thursday, the Passover sabbath (Mark 16:1).
 2. They bought the spices and prepared them on the workday Friday, when they could.
 3. They then rested the weekly Sabbath before heading to the tomb very early Sunday.
 4. They brought spices for their love was great but their faith was weak. Consider it.
 5. For a timeline and verses and much more ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/bible/holidays/easter.php>.
- C. We are Christians, since Jesus quickly exalted the first day of the week by His presence.
 1. Jesus met His apostles on this day, and He did it again the next week (Jn 20:19,26).
 2. We reject and resent any effort to exalt or recover the Jewish seventh-day Sabbath.
 3. The Jewish seventh-day Sabbath was God's special sign for the nation of Israel only.
 4. Our rest is in our Lord's finished work, including resurrection (Heb 3:7-19; 4:1-11).
 5. Denial of the seventh day ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/sermons/heresy/sabbatarianism/sermon.php>.

Cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark.

- A. Mary and her friends came very early, when it was still dark, not with the sun rising.
 1. John focuses on Mary alone, as he did Nathanael, Nicodemus, and others in his book.
 2. Matthew said at dawn, Mark sunrise; Luke very early (Mat 28:1; Mk 16:2; Lu 24:1).
 3. Therefore, it must have been at the first stages of the sunrise, while it was still dark.
 4. They did not see Jesus rise from the dead, for the stone and He were already gone.
 5. John did not write how or when He arose, though liars would have emphasized it.
 6. Note Mary Magdalene came early – she did not wait – and you should not (Pr 8:17).
 7. Her passion was exceptional in life, at His death, and now ... and she was rewarded.

- B. Mary Magdalene is prominent in all accounts, for she was a special friend of our Lord.
1. **Magdalene.** Identifies origin from Magdala, Galilee (Matt 15:39). See Nazarene.
 2. The other Marys in the New Testament are identified by their children, not this Mary.
 3. Jesus saved harlots and women, but He cast seven devils out of this Mary (Luke 8:2).
 4. We cannot prove Mary Magdalene is the great sinner at Simon's (Luke 7:36-50).
 5. But we do understand her great love due to her great sins as Simon's lesson taught.
 6. She was a woman from Galilee serving Jesus and at Calvary (Matthew 27:55-56,61).
 7. She was a woman from Galilee serving Jesus and at Calvary (Mark 15:40-41,47).
 8. Mary also stood with Mary our Lord's mother near the cross as well (John 19:25).
 9. We assume she was among women in the upper room at Pentecost (Acts 1:13-14).
- C. Mary Magdalene is prominent in all accounts, but there were many other women also.
1. Notice by the terminology in context that Mary was not alone on this trip (Jn 20:2).
 2. John focuses entirely on Mary, but the other Gospels each identify the other women.
 3. This exclusive emphasis must be seen and applied to construct a proper harmony.
 4. Emphasis on Mary is like one or two Gadarenes and one or two blind men at Jericho.
 5. We find Mary the mother of Jesus (John 19:25); Mary the mother of James and Joses (Matt 27:55-56,61; 28:1) = Mary the mother of James the less (Mark 15:40); Salome the mother of Zebedee's children (Matt 27:56; Mark 15:40; 16:1), Joanna wife of Chuza Herod's steward (Luke 8:3; 24:10), and many other women (Mark 15:41).
- D. Mary and her friends came to the tomb very early Sunday morning to anoint Jesus body.
1. Two other gospel accounts give us this information (Mark 16:1; Luke 23:56; 24:1).
 2. Nicodemus's 100 pounds of spices were not enough to satisfy their love for Jesus.
 3. Mary did not come in faith, but in love, and her love was soon rewarded with faith.
 4. Though Song of Solomon 8:6-7 is about marriage, Mary surely showed it right here.
 5. How are you like these women? What do you do that is extra special toward Jesus?
 6. If you have to be told, it is not the kind of love David and these showed their Lord.

Unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

- A. They had carefully observed where Jesus was buried, so now they went there directly.
- B. They wondered on their way to the tomb about rolling the great stone away (Mark 16:3).
1. They should have asked about Pilate's seal, but it happened later (Matt 27:62-66).
 2. They should have wondered about the governor's soldiers, but they were also later.
- C. They did not arrive in time to feel, hear, or see the earthquake and the Lord Jesus rise.
1. They did not feel or hear the earthquake caused by the angel of the Lord (Matt 28:2).
 2. They did not see the angel of the Lord roll the stone away from the door (Matt 28:2).
 3. Get all Easter fantasies out of your mind about Jesus rising at sunrise. He was gone.
- D. When they arrived, the stone was already rolled away – great stone, sealed, and guarded.
- E. With such circumstances, they either find the body or assume He had risen as promised.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

Then she runneth.

- A. What is your gospel gait or pace? It should be equivalent to Mary Magdalene's running.
 - 1. Christianity is not a resting, sitting, talking, or walking faith – it is a Christian race.
 - 2. Haste to do what is right – haste to pursue Jesus Christ – should mark true believers.
- B. Of course, we discover in the context that she did not run for joy but rather for unbelief.
 - 1. She thought some plural party, *they*, had removed the body of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 2. But her great love and zeal for her Master will win the day and His singular approval.

And cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved.

- A. Simon Peter had gone into Jerusalem when Jesus was arrested and had a friend there.
- B. John had been at the cross, for Jesus spoke to him, assigning his mother's care to him.
- C. The other apostles might very well have been in Bethany, since they often stayed there.
- D. True Christians and especially ministers – forgive each other fully and quickly (Peter).
- E. John identified himself somewhat anonymously, as wont to do, as a favorite of Jesus.

And saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre.

- A. Mary by this account did not have more comprehension than the stone and body gone.
- B. She did not believe yet, and she will be still weeping at the tomb later than this event.
- C. She did not know whether Jews, Romans, or Joseph and Nicodemus had moved Him.

And we know not where they have laid him.

- A. Mary did not make a solitary trip to the tomb, as some speculate, due to John's focus.
 - 1. Observe that she used the plural *we* to describe the women that saw the tomb empty.
 - 2. When alone later, Mary used the singular *I*, for stating a similar fact (John 20:13,15).
- B. There is confusion, doubt, and ignorance by all related parties, indicating no conspiracy.

***** *Apostles Verify Empty Tomb – Peter and John Confirmed It – Verses 3-7* *****

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple.

- A. Luke mentioned only Peter, but recall different accounts of a Gadarene and a blind man.
 - 1. Matthew wrote of two Gadarenes but Mark only one (Matt 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20).
 - 2. Matthew has two blind men, others one (Mat 20:29-34; Mk 10:46-52; Lu 18:35-43).
- B. Peter and John, two of our Lord's triumvirate, are not surprisingly together at this time.
 - 1. John called himself *that other disciple*, consistent with his usual, humble anonymity.

2. John had already introduced himself in context as the disciple Jesus loved (Jn 20:2).
 3. These two apostles fulfilled their high regard and showed again their superiority.
- C. They went forth, out of the place of seclusion and out of the city to visit Joseph's garden.

And came to the sepulchre.

- A. With both men likely in Jerusalem, Mary could access them more quickly than Bethany.
- B. They heard Mary's frantic tone and concern and followed this close friend of their Lord.
1. They did not take Mary's word about the stone, but hastened there to prove it firsthand.
 2. Every detail of these accounts should be considered for the greater evidentiary proof.
- C. This far there is no mention of their haste or speed or which of the two was the fastest.

4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

So they ran both together.

- A. John gives considerable detail here, for it involves Peter and him, and his better result.
1. He recorded that the other unidentified runner outran Peter and got to the tomb first.
 2. He explained later that the great Peter did not yet believe while he John did believe.
 3. Can you identify John's four references to the fact that he outran Peter to the tomb?
 4. We must do our best, not envying those doing better, or despising those doing worse.
 5. If John deserved the title as the disciple Jesus loved, then he should have run fastest.
 6. Love of Christ – in both directions – should always elicit passion and zeal for Him.
- B. Let it always be true of God's people that they run together in gospel duties to Christ.
1. First, they should run, for there is no other gait or pace worthy of their reigning Lord.
 2. Second, they should run together, helping each other forward in the Christian race.
 3. The Lord sent His apostles out various times two by two, and they followed it here.
 4. The wisdom of Solomon was practiced by His Son and Lord (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).
- C. They ran because they were surprised and confused by the report, opposite a conspiracy.

And the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

- A. Did John outrun Peter because of an age difference, conditioning, or bold affection?
- B. We do not want to be too hard on Peter, but he might still grieve his denial of Jesus.
- C. Church history says John lived until 90 A.D.; he might have been younger than Peter.
- D. Why does this matter? There are other lesser reasons, but it provides further evidence.
1. Criminals or investigators may plant evidence, misdirecting the crime investigation.
 2. John got to the tomb first, did not enter, and saw the linen burial clothes lying there.
 3. Peter got to the tomb second, but did enter, and he also saw the linen burial clothes.
 4. John then entered after Peter and both saw firsthand the unusual nature of the clothes.
 5. Neither man could have planted the evidence, for John did not enter and saw first.
 6. Therefore, there are two corroborating witnesses to unique treatment of the clothes.

5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying.

- A. John was there first, but less impulsive than Peter, he was content to look in the tomb.
- B. When he looked in the tomb, he saw the linen burial clothes of Jesus still lying there.
- C. The detailed record of the burial clothes in this account has strong resurrection value.
 - 1. If thieves stole a body under watch, they would not carry the body without its clothes.
 - 2. If thieves stole a body under watch, they would not leave the burial clothes folded.
 - 3. The haste of a robbery precludes unwrapping the body and carefully folding clothes.
 - 4. The goal of a robbery precludes leaving valuables at all – linen clothes and spices.
 - 5. Recall how the Roman soldiers at the cross were very interested in clothing articles.
 - 6. If it had been a robbery, the body would have been left but the burial clothes taken.
 - 7. The burial clothes of Jesus were both fine linen and just purchased (Mark 15:46).
- D. The detailed record of burial clothes in this account has strong Shroud of Turin value.
 - 1. We will learn the Jews did not bury in a single cloth but had a napkin for the head.
 - 2. We will learn that the hoax of the RCC relic can be refuted by a Bible-reading child.
 - 3. For more about the Shroud of Turin ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/heresies/shroud.php>.

Yet went he not in.

- A. Great passion does not always result in great courage, so in this case our John held back.
- B. Since Peter will have the courage, but not the speed, together they were a great team.
 - 1. Complementary synergism is a great thing two possess, as in Solomon (Ec 4:9-12).
 - 2. John's speed pulled Peter along the road; Peter's boldness pulled John into the tomb.
- C. Christians with zeal that know Proverbs know not to imagine a lion where there is none.
- D. By not going in, yet getting there first, John proves no planting of evidence by either.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

Then cometh Simon Peter following him.

- A. Peter eventually got to the tomb after John, not used to being second in many things.
- B. John was the leader in this case due to his greater speed running toward the sepulchre.

And went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie.

- A. Peter, bold as usual, went right past John into the sepulchre without fear or hesitation.
- B. Blessed are those men that have Christian brethren both faster and bolder in their faith.
- C. Peter also saw the linen clothes lie. This is the second of three references to the clothes.
 - 1. Jesus' linen burial clothes are considerable circumstantial evidence of resurrection.
 - 2. They provide strong evidence against grave robbers and against the Shroud of Turin.
- D. Pagan unbelievers may fear cemeteries. Christians should consider them a sleep ward.

7 *And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.*

And the napkin, that was about his head.

- A. Here we are told plainly that the Jews did not bury in a single cloth like the RCC Shroud.
- B. Lazarus was wrapped with burial clothes the same way – with a head napkin (Jn 11:44).
- C. For much more against the RCC Shroud ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/heresies/shroud.php>.

Not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

- A. There was a neatness about the whole picture that rejected the idea of grave robbers.
- B. This is the third reference to the burial clothes in three consecutive verses. Consider it.
- C. The detailed record of the burial clothes in this account has strong resurrection value.
 - 1. If thieves stole a body under watch, they would not carry the body without its clothes.
 - 2. If thieves stole a body under watch, they would not leave the burial clothes folded.
 - 3. The haste of a robbery precludes unwrapping the body and carefully folding clothes.
 - 4. The goal of a robbery precludes leaving valuables at all – linen clothes and spices.
 - 5. Recall how the Roman soldiers at the cross were very interested in clothing articles.
 - 6. If it had been a robbery, the body would have been left but the burial clothes taken.
 - 7. The burial clothes of Jesus were both fine linen and just purchased (Mark 15:46).
- D. The detailed record of burial clothes in this account has strong Shroud of Turin value.
 - 1. We will learn the Jews did not bury in a single cloth but had a napkin for the head.
 - 2. We will learn that the hoax of the RCC relic can be refuted by a Bible-reading child.
 - 3. For more about the Shroud of Turin ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/heresies/shroud.php>.
- E. Why does this matter? There are other lesser reasons, but it provides further evidence.
 - 1. Criminals or investigators may plant evidence, misdirecting the crime investigation.
 - 2. John got to the tomb first, did not enter, and saw the linen burial clothes lying there.
 - 3. Peter got to the tomb second, but did enter, and he also saw the linen burial clothes.
 - 4. John then entered after Peter and both saw firsthand the unusual nature of the clothes.
 - 5. Neither man could have planted the evidence, for John did not enter and saw first.
 - 6. Therefore, there are two corroborating witnesses to unique treatment of the clothes.

***** *Apostles Verify Empty Tomb – Reaction to Jesus Missing – Verses 8-10* *****

8 *Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.*

Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre.

- A. Peter's boldness helped John, so he followed him into the tomb to see things firsthand.
- B. John was not first to enter the tomb, but he wants you to know he did get there first.
- C. These were not two foolish men for idle reports, but cautious and older men taking note.
- D. Both men were now eyewitnesses to the unique treatment of the linen burial clothes.

And he saw, and believed.

- A. What did John see, and what did he believe? There are two options regarding the matter.
 - 1. Does John's emphasis on faith indicate here that he was quick to believe Jesus rose?
 - 2. Or does the context of the next verse include John and deny that he believed it at all?
 - 3. Luke recorded that when Peter saw the situation, he wondered in himself (Lu 24:12).
- B. Did John only see the linen clothes without a standing Jesus and believed Mary's report?
 - 1. The reason they came to the tomb was not due to three days but because of Mary.
 - 2. They ran – made haste – was not by a resurrection report but a missing person report.
 - 3. John arrived at the tomb before Peter; he had already seen the linens (John 20:4-5).
 - 4. Did he need to get into the tomb to confirm Jesus was not standing in a corner of it?
 - 5. By not going in, he cut off any false accusation that he planted the linens evidence.
- C. Or did John see the empty tomb and believe first of all that Jesus was risen from death?
 - 1. John wrote this Gospel account to bolster faith (John 20:30-31). Surely this is faith.
 - 2. But the context indicates that the apostles did not believe, or at least had not this far.
 - 3. If John believed Jesus had risen, why did he go to Jerusalem? To wait for Him there?
 - 4. We certainly value the context, but those merely confirming Mary go way too far.
 - 5. The word *believe* used like this requires spiritual intent (John 4:41,53; 6:64; 20:29).
 - 6. Yes, they returned home while still in doubt, as Luke's account of Peter (Lu 24:12).
 - 7. The emphasis on the clothes indicate something other than stealing away His body.
 - 8. Why would John write in a context of comparison to Peter of believing Mary first?
 - 9. Thus, we conclude John had his first moment of faith that Jesus rose from the dead.
 - 10. John did not believe scripture yet, but he believed the evidence, his epistle's purpose.
 - 11. His faith was by sight – he could see the evidence that it pointed toward resurrection.
- D. Observe that John did not try to convince Peter, for they had no such plan or conspiracy.
- E. They, the rest of the eleven, the women, and others believed as evidence was gathered.

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

For as yet they knew not the scripture.

- A. God had blinded them to the prophecies of the resurrection to force dependence on evidence.
- B. The Old Testament had foretold Messiah's resurrection or assumed His resurrection.
 - 1. Do not presume the singular *scripture* means only one place; it is a collective noun.
 - 2. Jesus on this subject referred to many different Bible places (Luke 24:25-27,44-46).
 - 3. Paul wrote that Jesus was buried and rose again according to scriptures (I Cor 15:4).
- C. Jesus also made N.T. promises they missed (Mark 8:31-33; 9:9-10,31-32; Matt 12:40).
- D. There were specific O.T. prophecies of the Christ being delivered from His burial grave.
 - 1. David had prophesied clearly about Jesus being raised from the dead (Ps 16:9-11).
 - 2. Peter quoted this clear promise at Pentecost to prove His resurrection (Ac 2:24-31).
 - 3. Paul used David's same passage again in his first recorded sermon (Acts 13:35-37).

- E. There were other prophecies that assumed or implied the Messiah had to rise from death.
1. For example, Psalm 2:1-6 promised victory after rulers took counsel against the Son.
 2. For example, Psalm 2:7 meant more than His birth (Acts 13:29-33; Hebrews 1:3-5).
 3. For example, Psalm 22 does not end at death, but continues upward (Ps 22:22-31).
 4. For example, Psalm 110:1-4 could not be true if enemies killed Jesus (Ac 2:33-36).
 5. For example, Isaiah 53:10 refers to the Messiah in the context prolonging his days.
 6. For example, Isaiah 53:12 refers to the Messiah sharing spoil because after death.
 7. For example, Isaiah 55:3 meant that death would not end David's Son (Acts 13:34).
- F. *This Day Have I Begotten Thee* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/this-day-have-i-begotten-thee.pdf>.

That he must rise again from the dead.

- A. Jesus had to rise from the dead so as to fulfill Bible prophecies, as shown directly above.
- B. But Jesus also had to rise from the dead to further the work of redemption of our souls.
1. Paul argued directly that if Jesus did not rise, we are still in our sins (I Co 15:12-23).
 2. The last enemy Jesus will destroy formally and finally is our death (I Cor 15:24-26).
 3. Paul connected our Lord's death and resurrection closely in salvation (Ro 4:23-25).
 4. Paul took it further to include ascension and intercession (Rom 5:10; 8:34; He 7:25).
- C. The chief apostles' disbelief in the resurrection enhances their later witnessing for it.
1. With O.T. prophecies, Jesus' promises, and a missing body, they still did not believe.
 2. Peter was not the first to believe it, though he would be one of the loudest very soon.
 3. The demand for greater evidence indicates they later must have seen infallible proof.
 4. There is no doubt the apostles declared the resurrection without apology or doubt.
 5. There must have been during the 40 days, as Luke wrote, infallible proofs (Acts 1:3).

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

Then the disciples went away again.

- A. There was no reason to stay around the grave, for John did not believe Jesus was nearby.
- B. He had not been hauled out of the grave by robbers to discard his body and keep clothes.
- C. They did not go anywhere to cause a stir by circulating their opinions about the Lord.
- D. They did not do anything lying promoters do; they waited for further confirmation.

Unto their own home.

- A. Whether home was Bethany or an apartment in Jerusalem, we are not told by John.
- B. But they were together, as Mary had found them, and were likely within Jerusalem.
- C. Even with this progress – a missing body – they did not promote any speculative theory.