

Study of the Gospel of Mark

Chapter 16 (Part 1)

Background

In the last section we studied the death and burial of Jesus. After Jesus died, his body was removed by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who prepared Jesus' body for burial using the custom of the Jews. Finally His body was placed in a nearby tomb which had been carved into rock. The women who had witnessed the crucifixion also remained to see where Jesus was taken with plans to return after the Sabbath was over to conduct their own burial ceremony. Mark 16 picks up the account after the Sabbath.

Read Mark 16:1-8. Many critics of the Bible point to the seeming contradictions in the resurrection accounts of the Gospels in order to discredit the Gospels in particular and the Bible as a whole. We are going to compare the four Gospels and look at the similarities and differences between them and then respond to the assertions against these accounts. You can use the attached Harmony to compare the Gospel accounts.

1. **Assertion #1** - Each of the Gospels record a different group of women going to the tomb on Easter morning. Matthew mentions two: Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. Mark has three: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome. Luke records "the women who had come with Him from Galilee" (Luke 23:55). John only mentions Mary Magdalene. How would you respond?

2. **Assertion #2** - Mark and John contradict each other in the timing. Mark says the women "came to the tomb when the sun had risen" while John says that Mary "went to the tomb early, while it was still dark." How can this be reconciled?

3. **Assertion #3** - Who did the women see at the tomb? Was it an angel (Matthew) a young man (Mark) or two men (Luke)? How would you explain these differences?

4. **Assertion #4** - What did the women do after they left the tomb? Matthew says they “ran to bring His disciples word” and Luke says that they “told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.” But Mark says the women “said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.” Isn’t this a contradiction?

5. Now lets look at the similarities of the accounts. Provide a Scripture reference from each of the Gospels in your answer.

What day of the week was it when the women returned to the tomb?

Where were they going and at what time of day?

What had happened with the stone?

The men (angels) who met the women at the tomb were striking in appearance. While the details are slightly different they are not contradictory. How are they described?

Where was the body of Jesus?

6. These short Gospel narratives of Jesus’ resurrection do not stand alone. All of Scripture proclaims our Savior’s resurrection from the dead. Find at least two passages in each of the following sections of Scripture which confirm these Gospel records of Jesus’ resurrection. Jesus’ resurrection was...

prophesied in the Old Testament: _____

foretold by Jesus Himself during His ministry: _____

confirmed by the apostles’ sermons (Acts): _____

announced by the apostles by letter (Epistles): _____