

## Exegetical Notes, John 20:1-9

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### John 20:1-9

#### Verses 1-2

***Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. <sup>2</sup> So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"***

- The first day of the week on the Hebrew calendar was Sunday.
- "Early," "before dawn"...these events happened around dawn as the sun was rising.
- Mary Magdalene who was a follower of Jesus came to the tomb where Jesus had been buried. Although only Mary is mentioned here, she came with a group of women to anoint Jesus' body for burial. See Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-8, and Luke 24:1-10. This is confirmed by the use of the plural pronoun "we." "**WE** don't know where they have put him."
- Mary saw that the stone which sealed Jesus' tomb had been rolled back from the entrance to the tomb. The tomb was not sealed but standing wide open.
- Mary saw that Jesus' body was missing. So she ran to find Peter, who was still the leader of the twelve, and "the one Jesus loved." Scholars believe that "the one Jesus loved" was John. She told them that Jesus' body had been removed from the tomb and that she and those with her at the tomb had no idea where "they" had put Jesus' body. She clearly had no idea that Jesus had risen from the dead.

#### Verses 3-8a

***So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. <sup>4</sup> Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen***

***lying there,<sup>7</sup> as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen.<sup>8</sup> Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside.***

- When Peter and John heard Mary's report, they raced to Jesus' tomb to confirm the fact that Jesus' body was missing. John reached the tomb first but did not go inside. From outside the tomb, John could see the grave clothes still in the tomb.
- When Peter arrived, he went into the tomb immediately. The grave clothes were still in the tomb lying just as if the body of Jesus was still in them, but the body was gone. The face covering, the burial cloth, had been removed from the strips of linen and was rolled up or folded and carefully placed.
- The description of the grave clothes is extremely important. If Jesus' body had been removed from the grave by human hand, most likely, they would not have removed the grave clothes from the body. Had they done so they would have been taking a naked corpse from the tomb. It would have been utterly impossible for any human being to remove the strips of linen wrapped around the body and then lay them out so that it looked as if the body had been sucked out of them. The way the graves clothes were left testifies to the resurrection.

### **Verses 8b-9**

***He saw and believed.<sup>9</sup> (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)***

- What Peter and John believed was the report which Mary had brought to them that Jesus' body had been taken from the tomb. They still did not understand that Jesus had risen from the dead. Like Mary, this was incredulous! Why would someone, they did not know who, remove Jesus' body from the tomb? They did not yet know what had happened!

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