

## Responding to the atheists and skeptics—3- The different Marys.

### SUMMARY OF THE RESURRECTION EVENTS

- Event #1: Saturday, 5:45 p.m., April 4, 33: Two Marys go to “look” at tomb then return, Matt. 28:1.  
Event #2: Sunday, 3:00 a.m., April 5, 33: Earthquake and angel from heaven, Matt. 28:2-4.  
Event #3: Sunday, 4:00 a.m., April 5, 33: MM visits the tomb before daybreak, Jn. 20:1.  
Event #4: Sunday, 4:15 a.m.: MM reports empty tomb to John & Peter, Jn. 20:2.  
Event #5: Sunday, 4:30 a.m.: Peter and John run to the tomb, Jn. 20:3-9.  
Event #6: Sunday, 4:40 a.m.: MM returns to tomb & sees 2 angels, Jn. 20:10-13.  
Event #7: Sunday, 4:50 a.m.: MM sees the Risen Lord, Jn. 20:14-17.  
Event #8: Sunday, 5:00 a.m.: MM tells disciples who do not believe her, Jn. 20:18; Mk. 16:9-11.  
Event #9: Sunday, 6:00 a.m.: MM & other women go to tomb of Jesus, Mk. 16:1-3; Lk. 24:1-2.  
Event #10: Sunday, 6:30 a.m.: Women enter tomb; 3 angels, Mt. 28:5-7; Mk 16:4-7; Lk. 24:3-8.  
Event #11: Sunday, 7:00 a.m.: Women run in fear; Jesus meets them, Mt. 28:8-10; Mk. 16:8.  
Event #12: Sunday, 8:00 a.m.: Women went to tell disciples; soldiers report, Mat 28:11-15.  
Event #13: Sunday, 8:10 a.m.: Once again, the disciples do not believe the women, Lk. 24:9-11  
Event #14: Sunday, 8:30 a.m.: However, Peter runs to the tomb a second time, Lk. 24:12.  
Event #15: Sunday, 8:45 a.m.: Private meeting between Jesus and Peter, 1 Cor. 15:5; Lk. 24:34.  
Event #16: Sunday, 10 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Jesus & 2 travelers to Emmaus, Mk. 16:12; Lk. 24:13-32.  
Event #17: Sunday, 5:00 p.m. The 2 travelers tell the 11 Disciples, Mk. 16:13; Lk. 24:33-35.  
Event #18: Sunday, 5:20 p.m. Thomas leaves; Jesus appears, Lk. 24:36-49; Jn. 20:19-25.  
Event #19: 8 days after the resurrection. Jesus appears to Thomas, Mk. 16:14-18; Jn 20:26-31.  
Event #20: 2 weeks after the resurrection. Jesus appears to disciples on shore of Galilean Sea, Jn 21:1-25.  
Event #21: 3 weeks after the resurrection. Jesus appears to eleven disciples on mountain, Matt. 28:16-20.  
Event #22: 40 days after the resurrection. Jesus’s last group appearance, and His ascension into Heaven,  
Mk 16:19-20; Lk. 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-12.  
Event #23: 3-6 years after the resurrection. Jesus appears to Saul of Tarsus, Acts 9:3-9.

We are now in the final chapter of these studies where I will directly answer the specific **attacks** on the resurrection narratives by various atheists and skeptics. A good representation of the attacks on the resurrection accounts of Jesus Christ is found at Dan Barker's website.

His next set of discrepancies: (cf. <http://www.ffrf.org/legacy/books/lfif/?t=stone>):

### Who were the women?

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- **Matthew: Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (28:1)**
- **Mark: Mary Magdalene, the mother of James, and Salome (16:1)**
- **Luke: Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and other women (24:10)**
- **John: Mary Magdalene (20:1)**

Responses to the above:

- Matthew tells us that late on the Sabbath (Saturday; perhaps around 5:45 p.m.) Mary Magdalene and another Mary came to see the sepulcher (28:1). See event #1.
- Mark 16:1 took place about 6:00 a.m. Sunday. It records Mary Magdalene catching up with the other women who were going to the tomb. The passage reads, "*And when the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, **and Mary** the mother of James, and Salome.*" Note the error in Barker's citation of this passage. He writes "Mary Magdalene, the mother of James, and Salome." He leaves out the other Mary who is in fact the mother of James, and Salome. See event #9.
- Luke 24:10 records women reporting to the disciples that they had seen the Lord: "Now they were Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James; also the other women with them were telling these things to the apostles." This occurred around 8:10 a.m., see event #13.
- John 20:1 records Mary Magdalene visiting the tomb alone before daybreak. See event #3.

Another way to look at my **response** to the **charges of discrepancies**:

- **Matthew: Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (28:1) = see event #1**
- **Mark: Mary Magdalene, the mother of James, and Salome (16:1) = Barker misquotes the verse; he leaves out the other Mary who is the mother of James, and Salome.**
- **Luke: Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and other women (24:10) = event #13**
- **John: Mary Magdalene (20:1) = event #3**

A discrepancy is a disagreement between facts—a flat out contradiction. We may not know who the other Mary or some of the other women were, but that in no way *implies* a contradiction. A contradiction would be where one Gospel states that Mary was the first to visit the tomb while another Gospel says that Salome was the first to visit the tomb. Note in all of the accounts which Barker lists that Mary Magdalene is *consistently* listed. Sometimes she is by herself while other times she is with other women. So where is the problem?

To recap the chronological order: Mary Magdalene and other Mary went to look at the tomb around Saturday evening around 5:45 p.m. (Matt. 28:1); she then visited the tomb by herself before daybreak Sunday morning (John 20:1); later around 6:00 a.m. she caught up with a certain Mary (and other women) who were on their way to the tomb (Mark 16:1); then around 8:10 a.m. she was with a certain Mary and other women as they reported the news to the disciples (Luke 24:10). So where is the problem?

Certainly, no one would suggest that just because we do not know the precise identity of the Mary who was with Mary Magdalene that we should reject the resurrection narratives! If so, it is a *prima facie* case that there is something else going on in rejecting Jesus Christ.

In closing I would like to point out that the only discrepancy I have discovered in this attack on the historicity of the resurrection is between what Mark 16:1 says (in all Bible versions and manuscripts) and what Barker says that it says: he lists Mary Magdalene as the mother of James and Salome. That is not what the Bible says. Is this deliberate or an oversight?

For review, I will keep a running chart on the veracity of the attacks on the resurrection accounts:

## **Scorecard on the validity of the atheistic and skeptical attacks on the resurrection narratives of Jesus Christ:**

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| 1. It is impossible to provide a reasonable and non-contradictory narrative of the resurrection narratives that includes every single passage. | <b>FALSE:</b> See above for hour-by hour narrative—not a single passage is omitted. Above is a reasonable account-- it is very plausible. |
| 2. There is a contradiction regarding the earthquake occurring after the women visit the tomb (Matt 28:1-2) versus before visiting the tomb.   | <b>FALSE:</b> Matt. 28:1-2 occurred Saturday evening (see event 1 above) before earthquake and should not be confused with event 9.       |
| 3. There is contradiction between the times of morning the women visited the tomb  | <b>FALSE:</b> Skeptics make the <i>error</i> in conflating events 1, 3, and 9.  |

4. There is discrepancy in the names of the women; or at least we do not know who they were.

**FALSE:** There is no discrepancy. All of the accounts list Mary Magdalene as a principal witness. Lack of ability to identify other Marys is not an argument against the historicity of resurrection accounts in the Gospels.

**One Day Closer to the Beatific Vision,**

*Pastor Don*