

Come Follow Me  
Elo Viz production  
Week 27

Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20-21

There are three very important principles this week that I hope to be able to look at briefly. I love love love the accounts of the gospels of the event of the resurrection. Of course we call it the resurrection but what we actually speak of is the discovery of the resurrection. Our Lord Jesus Christ actually resurrected at a time and in a manner that we have no record of. By the time everyone got there it was already done. John 20 states:

“1 The **first day** of the week (Sunday) cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet **dark**,” (John 20:1)

So. He must have risen from the dead sometime before the sun came up on Easter morning.

I find that the account of John gives the most detail about the discovery of the resurrected Lord. After Mary found the stone rolled away at the empty tomb. She ran to tell the disciples that someone had stolen the body of Jesus. So, Peter and John ran to see for themselves. An interesting side note is that John refers to himself, not just in this chapter but a few times prior as “the other disciple, whom Jesus loved”. It’s kind of his self-effacing, humble way authoring this record. As if somehow referring to, not once but twice the speed at which he got to the sepulcher, beating Simon Peter there but seemingly hiding the identity of himself in the account would keep the image of humility. Most who discover this find it rather comedic.

What is extremely important to understand as Peter and John arrive at the scene is the weakness of the English language. Both Hebrew and Greek are rather exact in their expressions and descriptions.

When John arrived at the sepulcher in verse 5 it says:

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

The word “saw” in the Greek translation is “*blepō*” Which is to say that he looked in and he could see the clothes. But that was it. It is a visual rendering of the word “saw” to see with your eyes or to notice what is before you.

In the next verse, verse 6 Simon Peter actually goes into the sepulcher and it says:

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

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

So Peter also saw what was in the tomb but the Greek translation of this word saw is "*theoreo*" It is where we get the word Theater from. It means more than just seeing. It means to study or to concentrate on, to watch closely or experience. Peter didn't just see the empty tomb he analyzed what it was he was looking at.

But John, seeing Peter's boldness to enter into the sepulcher he too goes inside, and in verse 8 it says:

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

All three verses tell us that John and Peter "saw". But the Greek translation of verse eight tells us that John "*eidon*" or comprehended, he understood, His eyes were open and because of that he believed.

We use the word "saw" for all three but the Greek tells us a much deeper story of the events. How they experienced different things as they understood what was before them.

So what was it that they saw? In the Jewish culture they care for their dead in a very specific way. They take long strips of cloth and cover the arms and legs first, then they cover the whole body wrapping it tightly with the strips of cloth and a gel made of aloe and other spices. The Gel is intended to harden with the wrap to create a type of cocoon or shell around the body. The face however was only covered with a single cloth. We understand a lot about this process from the story of Lazarus when he was raised from the dead by Jesus. The account says:

"44 And he that was **dead** came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a **napkin**. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go." (John 11:44)

So when John looks into the empty tomb where Jesus once laid, he would have seen the bandages still in their form in the shape of His body, undisturbed or deflated like a flat tire. If someone would have stolen the body the clothes would have been in a messy pile as they attempted to remove them or they would have been missing all together. But there they were, just as if He vanished. But the face napkin that was in a place all by itself. An interesting detail to include. We don't know for sure, and this is not doctrinal, but it is an interesting thought to consider: that it was a Jewish custom that if you sat at the meal in someone's home and you had a good time there, and they were kind and hospitable to you. You would crumple up your napkin and leave it on the table. However, If for some reason you didn't find your stay there to be enjoyable or the host was not as gracious as they could have been, the guest would take the napkin and fold it neatly. Signifying that they would never return or enter into their home again. Just a thought for you to ponder on.

So, Peter and John leave and Mary is still there, this is where things get really interesting.

“11 ¶ But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, *and looked* into the sepulchre,

12 And seeth two **angels** in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.” (John 20:11-12)

This is the only time in all of scripture that we read of Angles sitting. But what is more fascinating is that: Why didn't Peter and John see the angles? It is almost as if as soon as they leave or get out of the way and Mary has a chance to get in, there they are. And not just angels.

“13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and **saw** Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.” (John 20:13-15)

Mary had a long history with Jesus. From the first part of His ministry as He cast out seven demons from her, and ever since then her unwavering faith and loyalty to Him. from helping to support Him as He fulfilled His mission to minister and heal. To being at the foot of the cross as they crucified Him. She was always there and always faithful, always loyal. There is a series that I'm sure you have all heard of called “The Chosen” It is not produced by the church and it does not follow the timeline or doctrine contained in the gospels. However, the depiction of Jesus during His earthly ministry is outstanding and emotionally moving. In the opening episodes of season one, Mary is struggling without success to conquer the demons that have taken over her life. Searching for relief anywhere she can, even resorting to the thought that it's not worth trying any more and she considers ending it all. In the last scene she is in a friend's bar and in an attempt to numb the pain asks for a drink. Very reluctantly the friend finally gives in and hands her a cut. Just then, Jesus comes up behind her and says “That is not for you”. Somewhat belligerent and angry she storms out of the bar. You can see in her eyes the pain she is living with everyday. She only makes it a few steps when you hear Jesus calling from behind her, “Mary” He says. With a voice that pierces her and you right through the heart. Mary of Magdala. He then heals her. Literally saving her life. When I read this account of Mary at the tomb and Jesus calling her name, Mary. I picture in my mind that same piercing voice that saved her the first time. A voice that became so familiar to her as they followed Him for the last 3 years of His life.

“16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, **Master**.

17 Jesus saith unto her, **Touch me not**; for I am not yet **ascended** to my **Father**: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my **Father**, and your Father; and *to* my God, and your God.” (John 20:16-17)

There is great power in what Jesus says to her right here. Up until this point Jesus has not called His disciples brethren. He has called them servants, sheep and at the last supper He calls the friends. But this is the first time He refers to His disciples as Brethren. Why?

It is because up to this point we were all doomed for certain condemnation and damned to hell for the imperfection of our lives. Up till this point we had no way to reach to the Father or even come close to His presents as mortal failures. But because of Him that knows our names, “He that **ascended** up on high, as also he **descended** below all things, in that he **comprehended** all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the **light** of truth; Which truth shineth. This is the **light of Christ.**” (D&C 88:6-7)

So, What were the three principles we looked at today?

-first, that seeing is not believing, but seeing with faith is understanding.

When we see something through a spiritual lens having faith, like Nephi when he was shown his fathers dream, we can truly comprehend all things.

-second, Mary did not see the Master until after she heard Him and recognized His voice.

Most of the time God wants us to respond to His voice first before our eyes may be open.

-and thirdly; There is power in being a sister or brother of Christ.

It is only because of Him and what He did for us, that we can be called His brothers or Sisters.

Might we truly be the best Sisters or Brothers that we can be to Him who sacrificed it all for us.

In His sacred name, Even Jesus Christ. Amen.