

Mary Magdalene — Truth and Fiction

Part 2

Introduction

In the first part of this study, we looked at what the Bible says about Mary' Magdalene's relationship with Jesus before and during His crucifixion. In this part we will see what Scripture says and doesn't say about their relationship after His resurrection and ascension.

Our Study

The Scripture: Luke 24:1-3

"On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus."

1. What did the women do on the first day of the week? _____

2. What did they find? _____

The Scripture: Luke 24:4-6

"While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright, the women bowed down with their faces to the ground but the men said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen! Remember how He told you in Galilee: 'The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' Then they remembered His words."

3. What was their reaction? _____

4. What happened next? _____

5. What did the women do? _____

6. What did the angels say? _____

7. What did the angels remind them of? _____

Certainly, the women were frightened. Who were these men? The presence of angels was as unusual to them as it would be to us. Probably the first glimmer of hope sparked in their hearts. Was it possible? Was it really possible that Jesus had risen as He said He would?

The Scripture: Luke 24:9-11

"When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the eleven and to all the others, but they did not believe the women (Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and others) because their words seemed to them like nonsense."

8. What did the women do? _____

9. How did the disciples respond to the women's news? _____

10. Why? _____

The Scripture: John 20:10-11

"The disciples went back to their homes, but Mary stood outside the tomb weeping."

11. What did Mary do next? _____

The Scripture: John 20:14-16

"[Mary] saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. 'Woman', He said, 'why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?' Thinking He was the gardener, she said, 'Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have put Him, and I will get Him.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary.' She turned toward Him and cried out. 'Rabboni,' which means Teacher."

12. When Mary saw Jesus, who did she think He was? _____

Mary's faith was still so fragile that she did not believe her eyes.

13. What did Mary ask Him? _____

14. What did Jesus say? _____

15. How did she respond? _____

Hardly the response of a loving wife who has just learned that her "dead" husband is alive!

The Scripture: John 20:17-18

"Jesus said, 'Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.' Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news, 'I have seen the Lord!'"

16. What did Jesus tell Mary? _____

17. What did He tell her to do? _____

18. What did Mary do? _____

Peter was apparently the only disciple who reacted with any emotion other than despair to Mary's news.

The Scripture: Luke 24:12

"Peter got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened."

19. What did Peter do? _____

20. What did he see? _____

21. What was Peter's reaction? _____

Even now, the evidence of the empty tomb did not convince Peter that Jesus had risen. Mary Magdalene is not mentioned again in the Gospels, although she is referred to in the beginning of Acts. After Jesus' resurrection the disciples returned to Jerusalem.

The Scripture: Acts 1:13-14

"When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brothers."

22. What did they do when they reached Jerusalem? _____

23. Who was present? _____

24. What did they do? _____

25. Who was with them? _____

It is safe to assume that Mary Magdalene was one of "the women."

The Scripture: Acts 2:1-4

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

26. What happened on Pentecost? _____

Mary Magdalene was undoubtedly one of those who received the baptism in the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Although I have condensed some scripture, this is basically what the Bible has to say about Mary Magdalene and Jesus. Certainly Mary played a pivotal part in Jesus' ministry, especially after His crucifixion. But the Bible speaks of no great romance and marriage between Jesus and Mary, no birth of a child. Nothing here to indicate they were more than Lord and faithful follower, good friends.

Dan Brown has written a story that has intrigued many readers, but it is a story based on lies. The greatest danger is in believing this story to be true and thereby missing the important message of Scripture regarding women. Time and time again, Jesus freed women from the sin and sicknesses that had marginalized them in their culture, releasing them to the full stature of what God intended for their lives. This was unheard of in those times and it is the heart of God's goodness to see Jesus' love at work. Brown's plot diverts us from seeing the redemptive work of Jesus and its power. And that is bad news! The enemy must cheer when people fall for this.

The Bible warns us in no uncertain terms not to alter anything to Scripture. The DaVinci Code simply cannot be taken as truth.

The Answers

1. Took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb
2. The stone had been rolled away but they did not find Jesus' body.
3. They were undoubtedly perplexed.
4. Two men in gleaming clothing stood beside them.
5. They bowed down with their faces to the ground.
6. "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen!"
7. Of how Jesus had told them He must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again
8. They went to the disciples and told them what had happened.
9. They did not believe them.
10. Because of the disciples' lack of faith, the women's words seemed like nonsense to them.
11. She stood outside the tomb crying.
12. The gardener
13. To tell her if he had taken Jesus away so she could get Him
14. He called her by name.
15. She called Him "Rabboni," which means "Teacher."
16. Not to hold on to Him because He had not yet returned to the Father
17. To go to the disciples and tell them He was returning to God, the Father
18. She went to the disciples and told them that she had seen the Lord.
19. Went to the tomb
20. The strips of linen lying by themselves
21. He wondered what had happened.
22. They went to the room where they were staying.
23. Peter, James, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas (the son of James)
24. They met for prayer.
25. Mary, Jesus' mother; His brothers; and the women
26. All those meeting together received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

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