

Women Deliver the Word!

16 When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³ And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" ⁴ And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. ⁵ And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. ⁶ And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." ⁸ And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. ⁹ Now when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹ But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.

¹⁴ Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.

- 1. Why had the women prepared spices for the body of Jesus?** Customarily spices were placed on the deceased bodies to keep them from smelling so badly since embalming was not practiced then among the Jews.
- 2. Why had they gone so early in the morning?** Jesus died so close to the Sabbath hour, there was no time to prepare Jesus' body by the customary anointings and wrappings. Therefore, they only had time to wrap the body in a sheet. So, they went on Sunday morning to begin traditional the burial ritual.
- 3. Why wasn't the body prepared for burial immediately after it was taken down from the cross?** Because the body was taken down so quickly as not to interfere with the customary Sabbath observances. Also, because God never intended the body to be buried. (Deuteronomy 21:22, 23.- dead bodies are not to remain on the stake overnight.)
- 4. Why is it significant that women were the first to the tomb?** Because the women could carry the Word to the disciples without the same customary scrutiny from the Jewish leaders.
- 5. Why do the women seem to respond to Jesus differently regarding going to the tomb first?** Most likely the Romans did not take the women on a mission seriously because neither had the Jews. However, God trusts the women to proclaim His Word.

- 6. Why did it appear that there were differences between what the men feared, and what the women were afraid at the tomb?** The men were afraid for their lives, the women were afraid of not having someone with strength to roll away the stone. The proclamation of the Word may appear more powerful when delivered by men, however, what matters is that the Word of God goes forth.

- 7. Why does Jesus rebuke the disciples?** Because they refused to believe those who had delivered the Word to them the first time. It is important that we choose to believe and respond to the Word of God with a generous and believing heart.