

courage and entered the tomb. When he saw, he believed. Actual sight was needed to call forth this faith, "for as yet they knew not the scripture, that He must rise again from the dead." The disciples went away unto their own home, believing that Jesus was risen, and that it was vain to make a search for Him in the tomb.

In these first ten verses of this twentieth chapter of John we have noticed that it was seen that Jesus was not in the tomb, and that the inference was that He was risen. Verses 11 through 18 present the story of the risen Lord appearing to Mary Magdalene. While Mary was near the sepulchre, she beheld Jesus standing, and she did not know that it was Jesus. Like the two on the way to Emmaus, perhaps her "eyes were holden" that she should not discern the Lord. Jesus speaks to Mary, but she supposing Him to be the gardener, says, "Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus says to her, "Mary." Mary turns, and says to Him in Aramaic, "Rabboni" which means "Master." Jesus says to her, "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father." Why this prohibition not to touch Him? In Matthew 28:9 we read that the women to whom Jesus appeared held Him by the feet. Later on Jesus invites Thomas to touch Him. It is to be noted here that the Greek verb (*haptō*) means "Cling not to Me" or its equivalent "Keep not thy touch upon Me." Mary Magdalene would have held the Lord fast with the grasp of earthly friendship and love. It was needful for her to understand that the time for such bodily touching of the Word of Life was past. Thereupon Jesus tells Mary to go unto His brethren, and say, "I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God." The present tense of the verb here translated "I ascend" is no doubt a futuristic present, meaning "I will ascend." There is a definite reference to the ascension! Mary Magdalene comes and tells the disciples that she has