

# Law & Order, II

## *Peter's Secret Confession*

April 3, 2016

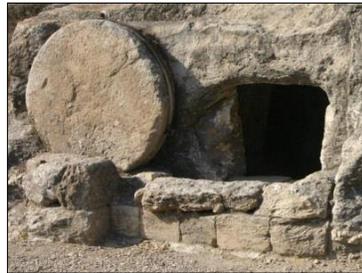
He is risen! [RESPONSE: *He is risen indeed!*] That's not only an Easter proclamation it's the battle cry of our faith! *There's a war on Easter! This world is bent on discrediting the divinity of Jesus, the legitimacy of His Word, and the power of His resurrection.*

It's a fight not against flesh and blood (Eph 6:12) ... *per se*. **We battle spiritual forces; but ... they use people to serve their purpose; but ... the people aren't the enemy, they're the victims.** This is how we must see 'em even as we battle their blindness.



Last week we looked at God's Law and order. Jesus fulfills the Law and brings order. But, **when the Law is read, a veil blinds the minds of those who refuse to see the order.** (2 Cor 3:14-16) **This is why very intelligent people can draw very ignorant conclusions.** Their logic might be *perfect*, but it's based on a false premise. **If you accept that 2+2=5, perfect logic will tell you that 2+3=6.**

**It's perfect logic; but, not truth. It's logic built on a false premise.**



Let's recap what we cleared up; 'cause the critics have *missed* a critical detail: **There are two distinct groups described at the tomb:** the women who **prepared** spices **before sunset on Friday**, (Luke 23:55-56) **and** those who **bought** spices **after sunset on Saturday**. (Mark 16:1)

**The Gospels cover the same event but not the same stories.** They're like overlapping news reports with four distinct angles. **It's best** when they bring unique accounts within the same event.



**John reports that "Mary Magdalene" goes first, alone, in the dark.** The stone is tilted, the body missing. She gets a beloved disciple and Peter who see the linen strips and folded mantle, and leave. She *stays and sees* two angels inside, and one Savior outside.

**Matthew and Mark report Mary's return at dawn with Jesus' "mom".<sup>1</sup>** They don't bring the spices they bought; they go to *"look at the tomb"* (Mat 28:1) and to *"seek Jesus"* (Mat 28:5 Mark 16:6). There's an earthquake. One angel opens the tomb and paralyzes the soldiers. They see a young man inside who quotes the angel outside. (Mark 16:7) They flee the tomb, sprint past **the approaching "Galilean" group (whose story Luke records)**, race down the trail, run right into Jesus, and fall at His feet.

**So: Was it one woman, two women, or a group?** One went first and returned with another (1+1=2); **and then a whole group of 'em came! Well: Was it dark or was it daylight?** Yes.

<sup>1</sup> *Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother* (John 19:25); *Mary the mother of James and Joseph* (Mat 27:56); *Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph* (Mark 15:40); *Isn't [Jesus] Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph* (Mark 6:3)

One went first in the dark, and returned with another at dawn; *and then a whole group of 'em came!* Okay, but: **Was there one angel, one man, two angels, or two men?** The one woman who went first saw two angels; then, she returned with another, and they saw *one angel* outside and *one man* inside. *And then a whole group of 'em came!* And guess what *they* saw ...

Let's read **Matthew 28:11 (PURPLE)** and **Luke 24:1-12 (GREEN)**. No verse has been left out or taken out of order. And, the added information has been deduced from other verses.

... the women [of the *Galilean* group, led by an aristocrat named *Joanna* (Luke 23:55)] took the spices they had prepared [before sunset on *Friday*] and went to the tomb. [To care for Jesus' dead body; having no clue what's going on] **While the women [Mary and Mary] were on their way,** [fleeing the tomb, the guardian angel left, the guards *un-petrified*, and] **some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened.** [Leaving the remaining soldiers, rocks, trees, and tomb, quite shaken and now eerily calm] They [Joanna's incredibly curious group, having been passed first by the Marys, and then by the soldiers] **found** [*heuriskō: came upon*] the stone rolled away from the tomb, [I'm still wondering just how far the angel blew that stone away] but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. [And He won't appear to them at this point because, they came looking for a dead man, and they should've known better; so, they get a little scolding] **While they were wondering about this,** [the fleeing Marys having said nothing to anyone as they fled (Mark 16:8; Mat 28:8)] 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? **The Son of God cannot be comprehended by those who aren't seeking a living Savior**] He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with 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.'" [(Mat 17:22-23; Mark 9:30-32)] Then they remembered his words. When they came back from the tomb, [they caught up to the Marys, who'd been delayed on the trail, and together interrupted the emergency meeting of the Apostles and frightened influential followers who were discussing why the authorities would seal the tomb and then steal the corpse: the only completely logical, yet totally untrue, reason being, to create a legal recourse to hunt down and execute the Apostles and influential followers] they [Mary, Mary, and Joanna's group] told **all** these things [*pas: individually; each and every; and collectively*] to the **Eleven** [not the Twelve; *Judas* isn't there. But, neither is "doubting Thomas" (John 20:24) which would make *ten*. So, this is seen as a contradiction by those who fail to see the verse that says *Judas*' replacement, *Matthias* was there (Acts 1:21-22), and was an official Apostle when this was written (Acts 1:26)] and to all the others. [Including the two who return home that afternoon on the road to *Emmaus* (Luke 24:13)] It was **Mary Magdalene**, [who reported that Jesus must've wiggled out through the gap, and then hid in the garden until His beloved disciple and Peter left; because: "The moment you were gone, He snuck up and surprised me, but it didn't look like Him, but it was Him, but He's only half-risen, He hasn't returned to the Father. And, when I returned with the Mother, a lightening-angel opened the tomb, and a young man inside told Mother that I'm not crazy, He's risen, and we must tell this to *all of His disciples, and also to Peter ... no idea why he didn't address Peter as a disciple.*" And, it was] **Joanna**, [who would've reported that: "My group got there right after, but *we* didn't see an angel or a young man inside, and the soldiers weren't paralyzed; *but, we* saw two men." And, it was] **Mary the mother of James**, [and Joseph, (Mat 27:56; Mark 15:40) Jesus' two oldest brothers, (Mat 13:55; Mark 6:3) who would've added that: "We didn't see the two men, but

we ran into Jesus and fell at His feet, and they still have the nail holes! He said ... 'Greetings,' such a polite boy, and told us to tell you men that you can see Him too if you'll leave this locked room and go 80 miles to Galilee." and [it was] the others with them [all women, whose testimony was legally invalid; but, highly regarded by Jesus] who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because **their words seemed to them like nonsense**. [As they still do to this day; because, **they were basing sound logic on a false premise**. But, the Lord uses the seemingly silly, and the element of surprise, to confound those who are wise-in-their-own-eyes, and He reveals Himself to those who are humble in heart, especially when they are despised-in-their-own-eyes] Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying **by themselves**, [monos: alone (without a companion); only. (No carefully folded head covering this time)] and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

This is part of another set of perfectly logical contradictions:

- Was Peter among the first or the last to the tomb?
- Did he go alone or with a beloved disciple?
- Did he go inside or stay outside?
- Did he see the folded mantle or just the linen strips?

It's not *enough* to just synchronize the stories. We could fix this by simply saying that Peter went twice. But, **there needs to be a motive, or it isn't reasonable**. And even *that's* not enough. We can't just say *he forgot his keys*. If Peter went back, **the story itself must present the motive**.



Now, the most *nonsensical* part of the reports would've been the separating of Peter, the Rock, from the flock, when the young man told the women to go tell the disciples ... *and Peter*. (Mark 16:7) **But, it would've been proof positive**, and *devastating*, to the only one who knew that there was only one way these women could know what *nobody* knew, except for just two: *Peter and ... who?* Let's go back, to just before the crack of dawn, on Friday:

**"You are not one of his disciples**, are you?" the girl at the door asked Peter. He replied, **"I am not."** – John 18:17 NIV

He denied it again, **with an oath**: "I don't know the man!" – Matthew 26:72 NIV

Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned **and looked straight at Peter**. ... **And he went outside and wept bitterly**. – Luke 22:60a-62 NIV

Because, **he hated himself for what he'd done**. Ever been in Peter's shoes? "Tell His disciples ... *and Peter*." *Ouch*. Which men first went to the tomb? A beloved disciple ... *and Peter*: **a self-deposed disciple in a broken relationship with Jesus**. And now he returns. Ashamed. Alone. Afraid.

He didn't even tell the others why. He threw the women under the bus. He let 'em look foolish. And, he kept everyone in the dark. Peter had a problem with appearances. Paul later confronts him for not eating with Gentiles when certain Jews come around.

The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, “You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile ...” – Galatians 2:11-14 NIV

Who does Jesus appear to the third time? The third to go looking for the One who looked at *him* the third time he denied Him.

Peter, however, [not wanting anyone to accompany him, and unwilling to say why] got up and ran to the tomb. [His emotions in anxious turmoil. The tomb is wide open; the dazed soldiers offer no resistance] Bending over, [with a full view of the interior, too apprehensive to enter, and dreading an encounter with the One he most hopes to see] he saw the strips of linen [and suddenly realizes they’re] **lying by themselves**, [Where’d the mantle go?! Even today, Jewish burial custom is to wrap a man in his tallit (prayer shawl) but with some of the Tzitzit (fringe) removed to signify he’s released from the Law (JewsForJesus.org “The Tallit and Tzitzit”)] and [some time later] he went away, **wondering** [thaumazō: marveling] **to** [pros: with regard to] himself what had **happened**. [ginomai: come to pass]

So, **what marvelous thing had happened, with regard to himself, in that tomb**, when he noticed Jesus’ missing mantle? Ever notice there’s no record of Peter apologizing? And yet, when Jesus later asks him three times if he loves Him ...

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you **know** [eidō: perceive] all things; you **know** [ginōskō: come to know; get a knowledge of] that I love you.” – John 21:17b

**Why is Peter so adamant that Jesus “came to know” his love?** We’re told that we’ll behold the truth, line upon line. (Isaiah 28:9-10) And, one of the lines Paul later writes is this:

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. – 1 Cor 15:3-5 NIV

Jesus *had* to appear to Peter *before* the Twelve. Know why? **There couldn’t be Twelve until Peter was restored and reinstated!** That one line allows us to know what marvelous thing happened.

I imagine Peter suddenly realizing the mantle is missing, and spinning around to see its Owner wearing it. “Looking for something?” And then: **sobbing in sorrow, those bitter tears, overwhelmed with guilt, crushed with shame. “I’m sorry. I’m sorry. I’m sorry.” Ever been in Peter’s shoes?** If so, I hope you follow in his footsteps: confessing his sin and receiving forgiveness and restoration from a living Savior.

**We know by deduction, common sense, and the character of Christ what happened next: Jesus embraced him, forgave him, comforted him, reinstated him, and reassured him**, with the *perfect words*. While His runny-nosed Apostle sobbed, “I love you. I love you. I love you.”

You’d assume Peter took some time to regain his composure and returned to confess and clear everything up. *And, you’d assume wrong*. He might be forgiven, but he’s still *Peter*. Next Sunday, we take the road to Emmaus and ask where Jesus was going, why He changed His mind, how He changed His form, why He was unrecognized, and what unwritten rebuke He sent back to Peter?