

# Matthew 28:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

## Analysis

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**In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.** This verse opens the resurrection narrative, the climactic event of redemptive history. The Greek phrase ὥστε δὲ σαββάτων (opse de sabbatōn, 'after the Sabbath') indicates Saturday evening transitioning to Sunday dawn, marking a new era in God's economy.

The 'first day of the week' (μὴν σαββάτων/mia sabbatōn) becomes significant for the church—Sunday worship commemorates resurrection morning, displacing the Jewish Sabbath as the primary day of Christian assembly (Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2). This represents the dawn of new creation, as Christ rises as the 'firstfruits' (1 Corinthians 15:20) of those who sleep.

Mary Magdalene, from whom seven demons were cast out (Luke 8:2), and 'the other Mary' (likely the mother of James and Joses, Matthew 27:56) exemplify devoted discipleship. While male disciples hid in fear, these women courageously came to anoint Jesus's body, demonstrating sacrificial love. Their faithfulness is rewarded—they become the first witnesses of the resurrection, though women's testimony held little legal weight in first-century Judaism.

They came 'to see the sepulchre' (θεωρῆσαι τὸν τάφον/theōrēsai ton taphon), expecting to find a sealed tomb and perform burial rites. They had no expectation

of resurrection despite Jesus's repeated predictions (Matthew 16:21, 17:23, 20:19). Their mission of mercy becomes instead the discovery of God's mighty act—death defeated, the grave conquered.

## Historical Context

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This occurred on Sunday, likely April 9, AD 30 (or April 5, AD 33, depending on chronology). Roman guards had sealed the tomb and maintained watch (Matthew 27:65-66), making the stone's removal and body's disappearance politically and religiously explosive.

Jewish burial customs required anointing the body with spices and oils. The Sabbath (Friday sunset to Saturday sunset) prevented this work, so the women waited until the first opportunity—Sunday dawn. Joseph of Arimathea had provided hasty burial Friday evening (Matthew 27:57-60), leaving full burial rites incomplete.

The tomb was likely a hewn rock tomb near Golgotha, outside Jerusalem's walls. Wealthy families owned such tombs, and Joseph generously offered his new tomb for Jesus (fulfilling Isaiah 53:9). The rolling stone was massive, requiring multiple men to move—typically weighing 1-2 tons.

Resurrection on 'the third day' fulfilled not only Jesus's predictions but also OT typology (Jonah 1:17, Hosea 6:2). Jewish reckoning counted parts of days as full days: Friday (day

1. , Saturday (day
2. , Sunday (day
3. .

## Related Passages

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**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

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