

-SCENE IV (The Face of Sorrow)-

The next scene is the face of sorrow and grief! We have Mary **again** at the feet of Jesus, **but** there is wood between them. THE CROSS! He's dead. John has taken Mother Mary and gone. The other disciples are hiding out up in the last place they saw Jesus in peace, the upper room. The door is locked. Everyone has left Jesus...except Mary! She is weeping at His feet and her tears are running down His feet like the day at the feast-this time they're not mingled with perfume, but with blood from the nails hammered thru them. She would **never** leave Him. She loved Him too much!

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus take the body of Christ down from the cross and take Him to a tomb where Mary helps to apply some embalming materials before the Sabbath begins.

Early Sunday morning Mary leaves the disciples and heads for the tomb to finish burial preparations, but finds the "stone" over the grave removed and His body gone! As she lingers near the tomb she looks up through her tears to see the gardener. Then in the darkness of her despair a voice: "Mary". It is the voice of the One who brought her life once before. It is JESUS! Resurrected and real! She reaches out to grab hold of Him, but he says, "Mary, do not detain Me, for I have yet to see My Father".

-SCENE V (The Face of Joy)-

Mary became the first person to see the resurrected Jesus! The first person **to preach** the story of the gospel of a risen Saviour. Her tears of grief became tears of joy.

Jesus told His disciples, "the least among you-he shall be greatest. He that is last shall be first." Dear friends, may we suggest who we think will be at the right hand of God in heaven? **Answer:** It wouldn't be a surprise if the former mental patient from Magdala who made her living by prostitution is there. She may stand by his side forever as the symbol of Christ's church and how He had redeemed it from the depths of despair into the highest holy places of eternity.

-My Prayer-

Thank you Lord for continuing to search for people like us, buried in the scrap heap of life, to transform and save us by your marvelous grace, amen!

THE VOICE OF PROPHECY SPEAKS

WHAT BIBLE PROPHECYSAYS ABOUT YOUR FUTURE

#11

OUT OF THE SCRAP HEAP

One of the most important views of the character of God we see in scripture, is that He has a tendency to take damage goods/lives, out of the scrape heap of this world and restore them into something again. Jesus reached out and reclaimed the refuse of society and amazing masterpieces of life were the result!

When we look at the life of a woman named Mary Magdalene, we one of Christ's masterpieces of restoration that he said would survive over two millenniums of time.

-SCENE I (A Haunted Face)-

Mary was a mentally sick prostitute, who the bible says was possessed of seven devils! She was engulfed in the complete darkness of rejection and despair. There was "*emptiness*" in her face.

Mary's home was not actually the town of Magdala, but Bethany. She lived in a very fashionable upscale community on the outskirts of Jerusalem where many elders and leaders lived. Her older brother was Lazarus and she had an older sister named Martha. Mary was the youngest child, very lovely, intelligent, and highly sensitive.

Martha apparently catered for feasts when dignitaries in Jerusalem had a special occasion. Probably at one of the feasts but on by Simon the Pharisee, Mary became acquainted with this great scholar and teacher in Israel. Although women were not generally given an education, Simon saw in Mary a keen mind and gave her that opportunity. As time passed, Simon was very attracted to Mary

and apparently her to him. This finally developed into a full-blown affair, that was kept secret!

Now, Roman law did not condemn immorality with a death penalty (by stoning) as did Jewish law. Therefore, the best thing that Mary could do to spare her family the disgrace, was to go away to Magdala. You see, Mary was probably pregnant as well.

Analysis of A Fall

-7 DEVILS –

The Bible says Mary was possessed of seven devils! Her thoughts, her attitudes had been destroyed. These evil spirits were partly the thoughts and feelings she had that led to ruin and despair!

-RATIONALIZATION-

When Simon first approached her, Mary *rationalized* to make the unreasonable, reasonable. It was so good, it couldn't be bad!

-GUILT-

This always follows when we rationalize. Any medical doctor will affirm that the real problem with immorality isn't only S.T.D's, but the terrific negative impact it has especially on the girl's emotional health of mind.

-FEAR-

The next feeling was worst than the former: FEAR. What if this gets out? Will he marry me?

-ESCAPE-

Mary went to Simon, but when she heard his cold reproach her next instinct was to ESCAPE. Hide. She apparently ran off to Magdala to find some privacy. People do that with sin: they try to hide it at first.

-TRAGEDY-

What to do with the child? Does she keep the child and the public stigma with it? Does she take the baby to a foster home and fight back the tears because she wants it for her own? And down in the depths of her mind for the rest of her life wonders if the child is alright!

-TENSION-

Now, all of a sudden come the tremendous TENSIONS inside her. A terrible guilt now, worse than adultery, worse than the fornication. The guilt of giving up the child

-HATRED-

A new feeling takes over. Not just against Simon for how he dealt with her, but a hatred for men! She's half insane! And the fear, the tension, and the hatred only intensifies her guilt in this chain-reaction of emotions. Self loathing leads to prostitution. Darkness settles in and we see the emptiness in her face. Then-a voice, "Mary". She looks up and all she sees is a man. Six times Jesus tried to heal Mary but couldn't break through to her. She would just see another man's face and back off. **But** He never gave up!

The seventh time Mary looks into His eyes and sees not sensuality there! For the first time she looks into the face of a man who loved her for herself, not for what he could get out of her! She finds her sanity again. The fathomless love of Jesus lifts her from her despair and ruin.

-SCENE II (The Face of Interest)-

Luke 8:1-3 says that Mary and other women of similar reputation followed after Jesus. These women ministered to the personal needs of Christ. Just picture this: Jesus, the three disciples (Peter, James & John), **then** the women (& then the other disciples). Then one day Jesus says, "Mary, it's time to go home."

-SCENE III (The Feast at Simon's)-

Mary came over to help Martha cater the feast. Jesus was reclining there and Mary heard Him tell that he was going to die. The disciples **did not** catch on. Mary did and went to prepare for the funeral and spent an entire year's salary to buy expensive embalming perfume from the Himalayas. She anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped them with her hair and her tears of appreciation for His unconditional love! Simon walks in on this scene passes judgment upon Christ for receiving her. *See: Luke 7:39* and Jesus reads his heart *VS.40-46*.