

John 20:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

Analysis

They ran both together (ἔτρεχον δὲ οἱ δύο ὁμοῦ, etrechon de hoi dyo homou)—the imperfect tense paints the scene: they kept running together, initial solidarity before separation. **The other disciple did outrun Peter** (ὁ ἄλλος μαθητὴς προέδραμεν τάχιον τοῦ Πέτρου, ho allos mathētēs proedramen tachion tou Petrou)—John was likely younger, but this detail serves theology, not biography.

The one who later shows greater spiritual perception arrives first physically but hesitates; Peter who denied Christ charges in despite arriving second. This reversal pattern pervades John's Gospel: first/last, seeing/believing, arriving/entering. The race isn't about competition but about how different temperaments approach the same truth.

Historical Context

The distance and terrain would have made running difficult—Jerusalem's streets were narrow and uneven. That both disciples ran shows the urgency and shock of Mary's report. John's inclusion of himself 'outrunning' Peter is sometimes seen as pride, but more likely it's the eyewitness's unconscious recall of vivid details, written decades later when such personal memories had theological significance.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. Why does John, writing 60 years later, remember who ran faster—and why include this detail?
2. What does the contrast between arriving first (John) but entering first (Peter) teach about faith's different expressions?
3. How do your natural temperament and personality shape your approach to evidence about Jesus?

Interlinear Text

ἔτρεχον	δὲ	οἱ	δύο	ὁμοῦ·	καὶ	ὁ	ἄλλος	μαθητῆς
they ran	So	G3588	both	together	and	G3588	the other	disciple
G5143	G1161		G1417	G3674	G2532		G243	G3101
προέδραμεν	τάχιον	τοῦ	Πέτρου	καὶ	ἦλθεν	πρῶτος	εἰς	
did outrun		G5032	Peter	and	came	first	to	
G4390			G4074	G2532	G2064	G4413	G1519	
τὸ	μνημεῖον							
G3588	the sepulchre							
	G3419							