

John 21:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

Analysis

There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. This list of seven disciples is precise yet incomplete—'two other' remain unnamed. The number seven suggests completeness or a representative group.

Σίμων Πέτρος (Simōn Petros) heads the list, as usual, despite his threefold denial. His prominence continues even after catastrophic failure—grace doesn't demote, it restores. Thomas, called Δίδυμος (Didymos, 'the twin'), who doubted the resurrection until seeing Jesus (20:24-29), is here present and presumably believing. Nathanael (Ναθαναήλ), mentioned only in John's Gospel (1:45-49), was from Cana in Galilee where Jesus performed His first sign (2:1-11).

The 'sons of Zebedee'—James and John—are mentioned collectively, which is unusual for John's Gospel that typically avoids naming himself. This may indicate Johannine authorship; the beloved disciple who wrote the Gospel modestly refrains from self-identification. These were part of Jesus's inner circle who witnessed the Transfiguration (Mark 9:2) and Gethsemane (Mark 14:33).

The 'two other disciples' remain anonymous. Perhaps this invites readers to see themselves in the narrative—we too can be among those to whom the risen Christ reveals Himself.

Historical Context

After Jesus's crucifixion, the disciples scattered and then regathered. Luke 24:33 mentions 'the eleven gathered together' in Jerusalem. But Galilee was home, and Jesus had instructed them to go there (Matthew 28:7, 10). This group of seven represents those who returned north, awaiting further direction.

The Sea of Galilee region was the disciples' home territory. Peter, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen from Bethsaida and Capernaum. Nathanael was from Cana, about 8 miles north of Nazareth. Returning to familiar places after traumatic events is psychologically understandable—these men had witnessed their Master's brutal execution and then His shocking resurrection. Processing this required time.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does Peter's continued leadership despite his denial teach about God's grace and restoration?
2. Why might John have left two disciples unnamed, and how does this anonymity serve the narrative?
3. What is the significance of these particular disciples being together at this moment?

Interlinear Text

ἦσαν	ὁμοῦ	Σίμων	Πέτρος	καὶ	Θωμᾶς	τῶν	
There were	together	Simon	Peter	and	Thomas	the sons	
G2258	G3674	G4613	G4074	G2532	G2381	G3588	
λεγόμενος	Δίδυμος	καὶ	Ναθαναὴλ	τῶν	ἀπὸ	Κανὰ	
called	Didymus	and	Nathanael	the sons	of	Cana	
G3004	G1324	G2532	G3482	G3588	G575	G2580	
τῶν	Γαλιλαίας	καὶ	τῶν	τῶν	Ζεβεδαίου	καὶ	ἄλλοι
the sons	in Galilee	and	the sons	the sons	of Zebedee	and	other
G3588	G1056	G2532	G3588	G3588	G2199	G2532	G243
ἐκ	τῶν	μαθητῶν	αὐτοῦ	δύο			
of	the sons	disciples	his	two			
G1537	G3588	G3101	G846	G1417			

Additional Cross-References

John 4:46 (Parallel theme): So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

John 20:28 (Parallel theme): And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

John 11:16 (Parallel theme): Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.