

# Luke 8:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

## Analysis

**And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward**—Luke provides precise biographical detail, identifying Joanna (Ιωάννα, Ἰωάννα, Hebrew Hannah, "Yahweh is gracious") through her husband Chuza (Chouzas, Χουζᾶς), described as epitropos Ἡέροδου (ἐπίτροπος Ἡέροδου, "steward/manager of Herod"). This term indicates high administrative position managing Herod Antipas' household finances and estates. Joanna's presence among Jesus' followers reveals the gospel penetrated even Herod's court, despite Herod's later hostility (Luke 9:9, 23:8-12). Her inclusion demonstrates Christianity's social diversity—from demon-possessed outcasts to aristocratic court officials.

**And Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance**—Susanna (Sousanna, Σουσάννα, "lily") appears only here, suggesting she was well-known to Luke's original audience. The phrase διέκονουν αὐτοῖς ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐταῖς, "were ministering to them from their possessions" uses διάκονεῖ (διάκονεῖ), the verb from which "deacon" derives, indicating practical service. These women financially supported Jesus' itinerant ministry from personal resources, making possible His full-time kingdom proclamation without earning income.

## Historical Context

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Roman law allowed women to own property and conduct business, unlike classical Greek practice. Wealthy widows especially possessed financial independence. Joanna's connection to Herod's court is historically significant—Herod Antipas (who beheaded John the Baptist) ruled Galilee and Perea (4 BC-AD 39). That his steward's wife followed Jesus indicates the gospel's reach into political circles and suggests potential intelligence about Herod's activities reached Jesus' circle. The women's financial support established precedent for Christian patronage. Paul later received support from Lydia (Acts 16:14-15) and others. In Jewish culture, supporting Torah scholars was considered meritorious; these women applied this principle to supporting the ultimate Rabbi. Their service fulfilled prophetic expectation that in Messiah's kingdom, women would participate fully (Joel 2:28-29, quoted in Acts 2:17-18).

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How does Joanna's position as wife of Herod's steward yet follower of Jesus demonstrate that the gospel creates divided loyalties between earthly powers and kingdom allegiance?
2. What does the women's financial support of Jesus' ministry from their own resources teach about Christian stewardship and the use of personal wealth for kingdom purposes?
3. In what ways does Luke's careful identification of these women by name combat the historical erasure of women's contributions to early Christianity?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ Ἰωάννα γυνὴ Χουζᾶ ἐπιτρόπου Ἡρόδου καὶ  
And Joanna the wife of Chuza steward Herod's And  
G2532 G2489 G1135 G5529 G2012 G2264 G2532

Σουσάννα καὶ ἔτεραι πολλαί αἵτινες διηκόνουν αὐταῖς  
Susanna And others many which ministered their  
G4677 G2532 G2087 G4183 G3748 G1247 G846

ἀπὸ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐταῖς  
of substance their  
G3588 G5224 G846

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Timothy 5:10** (Parallel theme): Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

**2 Corinthians 8:9** (Parallel theme): For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

**Philippians 4:22** (Parallel theme): All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

**Isaiah 23:18** (Parallel theme): And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing.

**1 Chronicles 29:14** (Parallel theme): But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.

**Matthew 2:11** (Parallel theme): And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and

when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

**Matthew 25:40** (Parallel theme): And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

**Matthew 26:11** (Parallel theme): For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.

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