

Mark 16:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

Analysis

After resurrection, 'when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils' (Ἀναστὰς δὲ πρῶτῃ πρώτῃ σαββάτου ἐφάνη πρῶτον Μαρία τῇ Μαγδαληνῇ, ἀφ' ἧς ἐκβεβλήκει ἑπτὰ δαιμόνια). Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, a woman—shocking in ancient culture where women's testimony wasn't valued in courts. God consistently chooses the lowly to confound the wise (1 Corinthians 1:27-29). Mary, once demon-possessed, became first resurrection witness. This illustrates gospel transformation—those most radically saved become most effective witnesses. The detail 'seven devils' emphasizes complete demonic bondage from which Jesus delivered her. Her grateful love motivated faithful discipleship—she served Jesus during His ministry (Luke 8:2-3), witnessed His crucifixion (Mark 15:40), and came early to the tomb. Faithful devotion was rewarded with first seeing the risen Lord.

Historical Context

Mary Magdalene (from Magdala, a town on Sea of Galilee's western shore) was among women who supported Jesus' ministry financially (Luke 8:2-3). Jesus had cast seven demons from her, indicating severe oppression. She became devoted follower, present at crucifixion (Mark 15:40), burial (Mark 15:47), and first at tomb on resurrection morning (Mark 16:1-2). In first-century Judaism, women couldn't testify in court—their witness wasn't legally valid. Yet God chose a woman as first resurrection witness, demonstrating divine values differ from human hierarchies.

Mary initially didn't recognize risen Jesus (John 20:14-15), then became first to see and hear Him (John 20:16-18). Early church tradition honored her as 'apostle to the apostles'—commissioned to tell disciples (John 20:17-18). Later legends (conflating her with other Marys and the sinful woman in Luke 7:37-50) obscured her actual biblical role.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. Why did Jesus choose Mary Magdalene, a formerly demon-possessed woman, as first resurrection witness rather than male disciples or religious authorities?
2. What does Mary's faithful devotion (present at cross, burial, and first at tomb) teach about the relationship between grateful love and faithful service?

Interlinear Text

Ἀναστὰς	δὲ	πρωὶ	πρώτῃ	σαββάτου	ἐφάνη	
when Jesus was risen	Now	early	the first	day of the week	he appeared	
G450	G1161	G4404	G4413	G4521	G5316	
πρῶτον	Μαρία	τῇ	Μαγδαληνῇ	ἀφ'	ἧς	ἐκβεβλήκει
first	to Mary	G3588	Magdalene	out of	whom	he had cast
G4412	G3137		G3094	G575	G3739	G1544
ἐπτά	δαιμόνια					
seven	devils					
G2033	G1140					

Additional Cross-References

Luke 8:2 (Evil): And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

Acts 20:7 (Parallel theme): And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

Mark 15:47 (Parallel theme): And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid.

Mark 15:40 (Parallel theme): There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome;

1 Corinthians 16:2 (Parallel theme): Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

Matthew 27:56 (Parallel theme): Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

John 20:12 (References Jesus): And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

Luke 24:10 (Parallel theme): It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.