

Matthew 27:55

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him:

Analysis

Many women were there beholding afar off (ἀπὸ μακρόθεν θεωροῦσαι)—while the eleven disciples fled (except John), faithful women remained. The Greek theorousai (beholding) means sustained, careful watching, not casual glancing. These women had **followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him** (διακονοῦσαι)—the same word for 'deacon' service.

Their presence fulfills Jesus' teaching that 'whoever wants to be first must be servant of all' (Mark 10:44). These women exemplified discipleship through service and steadfast loyalty. Though Roman custom kept them at a distance from crucifixion sites, they remained as close as possible—contrasting sharply with the absent male disciples who had promised 'we will never forsake you' (Matthew 26:35).

Historical Context

Women in first-century Judaism had limited public religious roles, yet they formed crucial support networks for Jesus' ministry. Their financial support (Luke 8:2-3) and loyal presence were essential. Roman law generally forbade close approach to crucifixion sites except for soldiers and officials, explaining 'afar off.'

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does the women's faithfulness reveal about authentic discipleship versus mere profession?
2. How does Jesus' treatment of women as valued disciples challenge both ancient and modern gender prejudices?

Interlinear Text

Ἦσαν	δὲ	ἐκεῖ	γυναῖκες	πολλὰ	ἀπὸ	μακρόθεν
were	And	there	women	many	afar off	G3113
G2258	G1161	G1563	G1135	G4183	G575	
θεωροῦσαι	αἵτινες	ἠκολούθησαν	τῷ	Ἰησοῦ	ἀπὸ	τῆς
beholding	which	followed	G3588	Jesus	afar off	G3588
G2334	G3748	G190		G2424	G575	
Γαλιλαίας	διακονοῦσαι	αὐτῷ·				
Galilee	ministering	unto him				
G1056	G1247	G846				

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