

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

Psalm 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 πολλαὶ ἀπὸ μακρόθεν
were And there women many afar off G3113
G2258 G1161 G1563 G1135 G4183 G575

θεωροῦσαι αἵτινες ἡκολούθησαν τῷ Ἰησοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς
beholding which followed G3588 Jesus afar off G3588
G2334 G3748 G190 G2424 G575

Γαλιλαίας διακονοῦσαι αὐτῷ.
Galilee ministering unto him G846
G1056 G1247 G846

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