

Matthew 27:56

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

Analysis

Mary Magdalene—from Magdala, delivered from seven demons (Luke 8:2), she became Jesus' devoted follower and would be the first resurrection witness (John 20:11-18). **Mary the mother of James and Joses**—likely the wife of Clopas (John 19:25), possibly Jesus' aunt, making James and Joses his cousins. **The mother of Zebedee's children**—Salome (Mark 15:40), mother of James and John, who had requested thrones for her sons (Matthew 20:20-21).

This threefold naming emphasizes eyewitness testimony—ancient legal documents required multiple witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15). These women's presence at cross, burial, and resurrection makes them foundational witnesses to the gospel events. Notably, women's testimony was generally inadmissible in Jewish courts, yet God chose them as primary witnesses, subverting human authority structures.

Historical Context

Matthew carefully identifies these women by their relationships to men (standard practice in patriarchal society) yet elevates their role as witnesses. That the Gospel writers included women as primary sources—despite their testimony being legally invalid—argues for historical authenticity. No one fabricating a story would base it on 'unreliable' witnesses.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. Why would God choose women as primary witnesses to the resurrection in a culture that dismissed their testimony?
2. How does Mary Magdalene's transformation from demon-possessed to faithful disciple illustrate the gospel's power?

Interlinear Text

ἐν	αἷς	ἥν	Μαρία	ἡ	Μαγδαληνὴ	καὶ	Μαρία	ἡ
Among	which	was	Mary	G3588	Magdalene	and	Mary	G3588
G1722	G3739	G2258	G3137		G3094	G2532	G3137	
τοῦ	Ἰακώβου	καὶ	Ἰωσὴ	μήτηρ	καὶ	ἡ	μήτηρ	τῶν
G3588	of James	and	G2499	the mother	and	G3588	the mother	G3588
	G2385	G2532		G3384	G2532		G3384	
υἱῶν	Ζεβεδαίου							
children	of Zebedee's							
G5207	G2199							

Additional Cross-References

John 19:25 (Parallel theme): Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

Mark 16:9 (Parallel theme): 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.

Matthew 28:1 (Parallel theme): In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

Matthew 27:61 (Parallel theme): And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

Matthew 13:55 (Parallel theme): Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

John 20:1 (Parallel theme): The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

John 20:18 (Parallel theme): Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

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.