

Matthew 28:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

Analysis

And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. The angel's words reveal divine knowledge and distinguish the women from the terrified guards. While the guards fled in terror, the women receive comfort: 'Fear not ye' (Μὴ φοβεῖσθε ὑμεῖς/Mē phobeisthe hymeyis). The emphatic 'ye' (ὑμεῖς/hymeis) contrasts them with the guards—'You need not fear; you are not objects of judgment but recipients of grace.'

The angel says 'I know' (οἶδα/oida)—perfect tense indicating complete, certain knowledge. God sees and knows those who seek Christ. The women's devotion, their journey to the tomb in the darkness, their desire to honor Jesus's body—all was known and approved by heaven. Their seeking was not in vain.

'Ye seek Jesus, which was crucified' (ζητεῖτε Ἰησοῦν τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον/zēteite Iēsoun ton estaurōmenon). The perfect passive participle 'crucified' emphasizes the completed state—Jesus who has been crucified and bore that crucifixion's marks. The angel acknowledges the reality of the cross; resurrection does not erase crucifixion but validates it. The Risen Christ is the Crucified Christ; His glorified body bears nail scars (John 20:27). The cross was not a tragic failure overcome by resurrection but the very means of redemption confirmed by resurrection.

The women sought Jesus at the place of death, but He is the Prince of Life. They

came to anoint a corpse; they will announce a living Savior. Their misunderstanding would soon give way to joy, but their devotion even in ignorance was honored.

Historical Context

Women held low social status in first-century Judaism, their testimony deemed unreliable in legal proceedings. Yet God chose women as first witnesses of the resurrection—a detail no fabricator would invent, as it weakened the account's credibility to ancient audiences. This demonstrates the narrative's authenticity and reveals God's kingdom values that overthrow worldly hierarchies.

Mary Magdalene had been delivered from seven demons (Luke 8:2), representing the depths of Christ's transforming power. The 'other Mary' (likely the mother of James and Joses, Matthew 27:56) was also among women who supported Jesus's ministry. Their devotion was proven through accompanying Jesus to the cross (Matthew 27:55-56) and now to the tomb.

The phrase 'which was crucified' would have immediately identified Jesus to the hearers, as crucifixion was the specific mode of His death, publicly known in Jerusalem. This phrase became an early creedal element: 'Jesus Christ, and him crucified' (1 Corinthians 2:2). The early church did not avoid the scandal of the cross but proclaimed it boldly.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the angel's 'Fear not' to the women illustrate the difference between servile fear of judgment and reverent fear that trusts in God's mercy through Christ?
2. What encouragement can we draw from God knowing and honoring the women's devotion even when their understanding was incomplete?
3. Why is it significant that Jesus is identified as 'which was crucified' even in resurrection—how does this shape our understanding of His ongoing mediatorial work?

Interlinear Text

ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ τὸν ἄγγελος εἶπεν τὸν γυναιξίν, Μὴ
answered And which the angel and said which unto the women not
G611 G1161 G3588 G32 G2036 G3588 G1135 G3361

φοβεῖσθε ὑμεῖς· οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι Ἰησοῦν τὸν
Fear ye I know for that Jesus which
G5399 G5210 G1492 G1063 G3754 G2424 G3588

ἐσταυρωμένον ζητεῖτε·
was crucified ye seek
G4717 G2212

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 1:14 (Parallel theme): Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Isaiah 41:10 (Parallel theme): Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Luke 24:5 (Parallel theme): And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

