

The Gospel According to

SAINT MATTHEW

SAINT MARK

SAINT LUKE

SAINT JOHN

<p>NOTHING RECORDED</p>	<p>NOTHING RECORDED</p>	<p>CHAPTER 8, VERSES 1-3</p> <p>8:1 - And it came to pass¹ afterward², that he went throughout³ every city⁴ and village⁵, preaching⁶ and shewing the glad tidings⁷ of the kingdom of God⁸; and the twelve⁹ were with him,</p> <p>8:2 - And certain women¹⁰, which had been healed¹¹ of evil spirits¹² and infirmities¹³, Mary called Magdalene¹⁴, out of whom went seven devils¹⁵,</p> <p>8:3 - And Joanna¹⁶ the wife of Chuza¹⁷ Herod's¹⁸ steward¹⁹, and Susanna²⁰, and many others²¹, which ministered²² unto him of their substance²³.</p>	<p>NOTHING RECORDED</p>
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CHRONOLOGY: After April 30, 28CE, **In the Spring of 28CE (Possibly between May and July of 28CE)**. This chapter includes a ministry throughout Galilee which would have taken at the very least a month or two, and more likely two or three months.

LOCATION: Throughout the Province of Galilee, Edersheim suggests that the specifics of this chapter take place in **Capernaum**. Farrar suggests that this chapter takes place in **the Hills between Cana and Hattin**, which is between Nain and Magdala. We cannot be sure where this chapter takes place other than somewhere in Galilee.

COMMENTARY: Jesus starts a two to three month missionary journey throughout the province of Galilee. He will visit every city and village, numbering at least 30 to 60, if not more. He went forth preaching His own divinity. He taught the good news of His mission in mortality; to save mankind from both physical and spiritual death. He taught this good news in both word and deed. It was also a training mission. Jesus brought with Him the relatively newly called twelve apostles. They had been ordained to their positions within the last two months. He also had an entourage of faithful disciples and women. This chapter mentions Mary Magdalene, Joana the wife of Chuza, and Susanna by name. Mary Magdalene is mentioned as one who Jesus had cast out seven evil spirits. We have no information regarding this miracle. We do know that these faithful women, and the other disciples traveled with Jesus that they might serve Him and further His sacred work. They ministered unto Him, which means that they provided service to Him. We learn that Jesus traveled without money or means of support. He relied on His Father in Heaven to provide, while He focused on ministering to the children of God. God provided through the faithful saints, who imparted of their means to support the work.

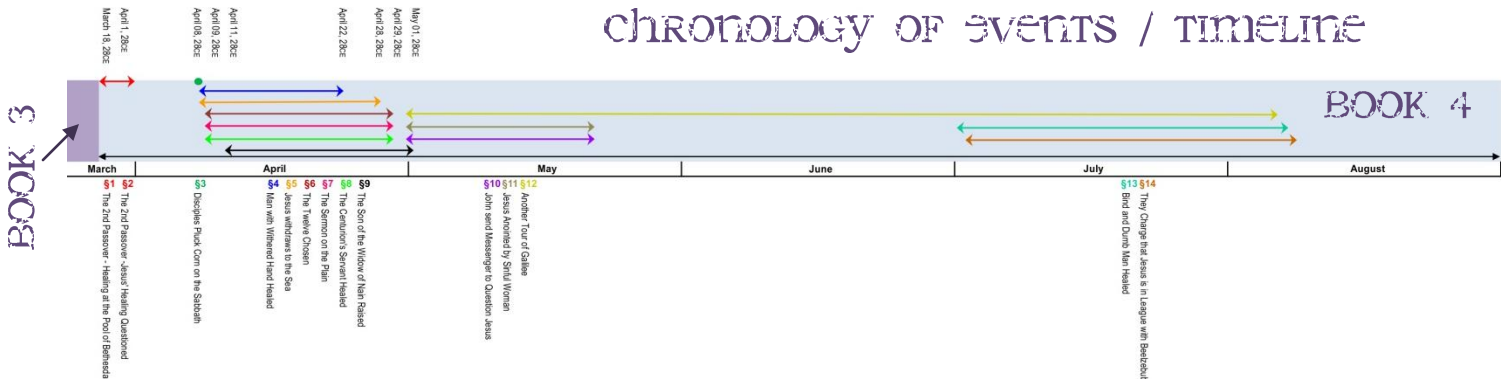
FOOTNOTES:

1- **And it came to pass** – The Phrase “And it came to pass” is translated from the Greek word “γίνομαι” or “ginomai”. It means to become, to come into existence, to begin to be, or to happen.

The Hebrew language, which was likely the original language of the New Testament, had no punctuation at the time of Jesus. Though Jesus and the Apostles most probably spoke Aramaic, Aramaic is but a dialect of Hebrew. To compensate for the lack of periods, the ancient writers commonly used terms like “And it came to pass” to indicate a change in thought, subject, or storyline. Though the New Testament is written in Greek, it is most probably translated from an original Hebrew text. The Greek would have preserved the ancient sentence structure.

We assume that “And it came to pass” is ending the prior story of the banquet in the home of Simon the Pharisee. It also represents the start of another mission, by the Savior, to the people of Galilee. Elder McConkie wrote, “Throughout his whole ministry, Jesus traveled, preached, and healed. We are now with him in the autumn of A.D. 28 when he is making another tour of Galilee.” (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 139). As we have evaluated the chronology of events, I think it is more likely that this mission to the cities and villages of Galilee took place in the late spring and early summer of 28CE. Please see the timeline below;

chronology of events / timeline



- 2- **afterwards** – The word “afterwards” is translated from the Greek word “καθἑξῆς” or “kathexēs”. It means one after another, successively, or in order. Fitzmyer translates this passage as “**Literally, ‘and it happened in the near (future) (as) he was traveling about...that (there were) with him...’**” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 697).

One of the first questions that may be asked when studying this chapter is; where is Jesus at this point? There are conflicting theories set forth to answer this very question. We know that Jesus has most recently been in the city of Nain. We conclude that He left Nain to a city large enough to have a synagogue and a Pharisee of substantial status, but most likely within a day’s journey. Farrar places this chapter in the plains near the city of Cana. He writes, “**We are on that little plain that runs between the hills of Zebulon and Naphtali, somewhere between the villages of Kefr Kenna and the so called Kana el-Jalil. A sea of corn, fast yellowing to the harvest, is around us, and the bright, innumerable flowers that broder the wayside are richer and larger than those of home. The path on which we stand leads in one direction to Accho and the coast, in the other over the summit of Hattin to the sea of Galilee.**” (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar’s Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., pages 202-203). On the other hand, Edersheim theorizes that Jesus was back in His home town of Capernaum; which, is a little farther than I would have anticipated. Edersheim wrote, “**We conclude, that Christ was now returning to Capernaum from that missionary journey of which Nain had been the southernmost point.**” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, page 570). It should be noted that Edersheim also believes that this chapter is the end of a missionary journey, and not the beginning. He would conveniently place the miracle in Nain, and the banquet at Simon the Pharisee’s house as part of the Galilean missionary tour.

The term “afterwards” gives some question to Edersheim’s theory. I prefer to take the gospel writer at his word, and place this missionary tour of Galilee after the prior chapters. Even so, Farrar seems to agree with Edersheim. He wrote, “**It is to this period of our Lord’s earlier ministry that those mission journeys belong – those circuits through the towns and villages of Galilee, teaching, and preaching, and performing works of mercy – which are so frequently alluded to in the first three Gospels, and which are specially mentioned at this point of the narrative by the Evangelist St. Luke. ‘He walked in Galilee.’ It was the brightest, hopefulest, most active episode in His life.**” (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar’s Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 202).

- 3- **throughout** – The word “throughout” is translated from the Greek word “κατά” or “kata”. It means down from, throughout, according to, toward, and along. “**Jesus appears to be making a fairly thorough circuit through the region of Galilee, teaching ‘in every city and village.’**” (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 269).

The scope of this mission is larger than one might think. There were at the very least 32 sizable cities in Galilee at the time of Jesus. A city is best differentiated as large enough to have a city wall, and a synagogue. This would also qualify the city for a local Sanhedrin. In addition, Jesus would have visited villages and towns throughout the region. We would estimate that Jesus ministered to upwards of 60 cities, villages, and towns during this missionary tour. Given the lack of travel on the Sabbath, it would have surely taken several months to accomplish this feat. If the missionary tour started in first part of May, it may not have been reasonably finished until the first part of August in 28CE.

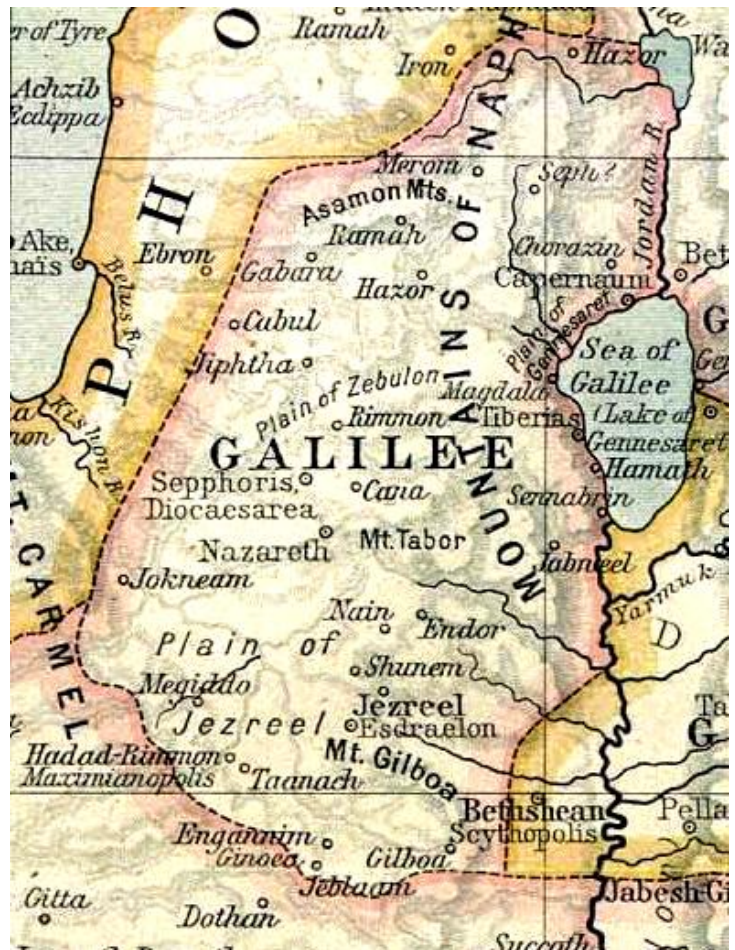
What makes this missionary tour even more impressive is that “**Jesus apparently traveled without purse or scrip, devoted his entire time to the ministry, was not engaged in carpentry or other temporal pursuits, and gained his sustenance from disciples who contributed freely to his upkeep.**” (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 266).

- 4- **every city** – The term “every city” is translated from the Greek word “πόλις” or “polis”. It means a city, one’s native city, or the city in which one lives.

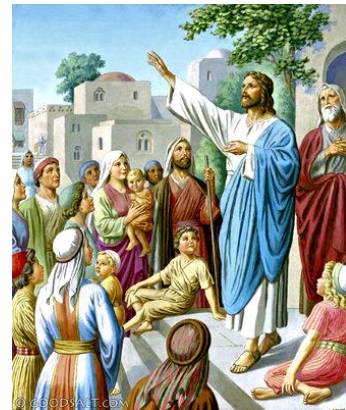
Matthews helps us understand the difference between a city and a village at the time of Jesus. He wrote, “**Difference between city and village, as to walls. In early Old Testament times the villages were smaller places of abode without walls around them, whereas the cities or towns were larger places that had walls around them. The Mosaic Law made such a distinction: ‘If a man sell a dwelling house in a walled city’ (Lev. 25:29). ‘But the houses of the villages which have no wall round about them’ (Lev. 25:31). The villages were often located near a fortified city upon which they were more or less dependent. Thus the city was the metropolis of the villages. We often read in the Bible of ‘cities and their villages,’ and sometimes a literal translation would give us the expression: cities and their daughters,’ indicating a mother-city, and her dependent villages surrounding her (cf. Joshua 15:45; Joshua 17:11, A. R. V. margin).’** (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 322).

Part of the Gospel, or the Good News, of Jesus Christ is that it is spread in a very personal way from city to city, and town to town. It is done so with very personal interactions. Heralds, or authorized representatives of Jesus, go forth and proclaim the good news; that there is a Savior and through Him we might be saved from all things. When Jesus was in mortality, He personally established the pattern for proclaiming the good news. He taught it wherever He was, and He sought out all those who were willing to hear. In the latter days, the gospel was restored. Part of that restoration was the restoring of this missionary pattern. The Lord repeated, on many occasions, to the newly covenanted saints the command to follow this pattern. He declared, “**Behold, verily I say unto you, that it is my will that you should proclaim my gospel from land to land, and from city to city, yea, in those regions round about where it has not been proclaimed.**” (Doctrine & Covenants 66:5). In another passage he said, “**Yea, let all those take their journey, as I have commanded them, going from house to house, and from village to village, and from city to city.**” (Doctrine & Covenants 75:18).

- 5- **village** – The word “village” is translated from the Greek word “κώμη” or “kōmē”. It means the common sleeping place to which laborers in the field return, or a village. These would be small gatherings of dwellings in the countryside. They generally lacked city walls, a synagogue, or a Sanhedrin. They were often associated with a nearby larger city where they would go to for Synagogue services, to sell their labors in the market, and for legal matters where a Sanhedrin was required. Fitzmyer translates this passage slightly different. He writes, “**Or, better perhaps, ‘from town to town and village to village,’ since the distributive use of the prep. Kata is intended here.**” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 697).



6- **preaching** – The word “preaching” is translated from the Greek word “κηρύσσω” or “kēryssō”. It means to be a herald, to officiate as a herald, to publish, or proclaim openly. Christ’s mission in mortality was not limited to His great and infinite atoning sacrifice. His mission also included the declaration of His sacrifice and how to partake of it. He taught the process for forgiveness, and how to align our hearts with our Father of Heaven. Elder McConkie wrote, **“We repeat – and the concept must be ever before us, lest we slip into the sectarian concept that Jesus’ ministry was one of teaching ethical verities only, that he was not, as a teacher, first and foremost one who taught doctrine, or that he was not a theologian of superlative capacity – we repeat that his teaching was ‘the glad tidings of the kingdom of God.’ In other words, he preached the gospel, as all the prophets preached it. He proclaimed the fatherhood of God, his own divine Sonship, the fall of Adam, and the resultant atoning sacrifice of a Savior of the world.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 139).



7- **showing the glad tidings** – The phrase “showing the glad tidings” is translated from the Greek word “εὐαγγελίζω” or “euaggelizō”. It means to bring good news, to announce glad tidings, or joyful tidings of God’s mercy. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the word “showing” as “telling”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 8, Verse 1, page 119). The word “gospel” is an old English term taken from two words “gode” and “spel”; meaning “good” – “news”. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus came to mortality so that all mankind may be saved. Upon seeing the depth of the gospel miracle, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon recorded, **“And this is the gospel, the glad tidings, which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us—”** (Doctrine & Covenants 76:40).

8- **the kingdom of God** – The term “the kingdom of God” is translated from the Greek word “βασιλεία” or “basileia”. It means a royal power, kingship, dominion, or rule.

The term “kingdom of God” has two interpretations. The first makes reference to the Lord’s church here on earth. When Jesus was on the earth He organized His church and authorized righteous men to perform the saving ordinances and preach the saving doctrines required to obtain the second interpretation. The second makes reference to the eternal place of glory where God the Father lives. The earthly kingdom is but a prelude to the heavenly kingdom of God. This was the message of Christ; that through Him all may return home. This is **“identically the same message which the latter-day elders carry to the world: The Church and kingdom is again set up; the gospel has been restored; salvation in its fullness is again available through faith, repentance, baptism, obtaining the Holy Ghost, and enduring in righteousness and truth to the end.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 266).

9- **the twelve** – The term “the twelve” is translated from the Greek word “δώδεκα” or “dōdeka”. It means twelve. The number twelve symbolizes perfection in the earthly sense (the number 4) and the spiritual sense (the number 3) as the number twelve is made up of 3 x 4. The Israelites were divided into twelve tribes symbolizing all of God children who have covenanted with Him. The covenants of God generally involve striving for perfection in mortality in order to obtain perfection in the spiritual spheres. The twelve apostle would therefore represent messengers from God sent to minister physically and spiritually. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 120).



Joseph Smith gives us better insight into this passage through his inspired translation of the Bible. His translation reads, **“... and the twelve who were ordained of him, were with him...”** (Joseph Smith Translation of Luke 8:1). The additional information stresses that the Lord’s work is always conducted under the proper authority. These authorized representatives always follow after their Master; in this case literally. **“His ordained apostles traveled with Him.”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 269). Otherwise, the Lord’s authorized representatives follow Him in word and deed. They use revelation to know His will, and then they follow that will. **“They follow him in this passage as his chosen ones and foreordained witnesses.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 697).

The Lord’s servants are not limited to twelve chosen men. **“On this journey He was attended, not only by the Twelve, but by loving, grateful women, who ministered to Him of their substance.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, page 570). Without doubt, there were many others who were called of God to serve with specific duties vital to building the kingdom of God on earth. We know that many will be called to serve in the priesthood office of the “seventy”. Surely there were deacons, teachers, priests, and all the offices within the priesthood. All of whom took direction from the twelve, who took their counsel from the Lord. **“We have slivers of knowledge about each of the Twelve, which we have noted or will yet mention in other connections.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 140).



- 10 - **certain women** – The term “certain women” is translated from the Greek word “γυνή” or “gynē”. It means a woman of any age; whether virgin, married or widow. It can also be used to mean a wife or a betrothed woman. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the term “certain women” as “some women”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 8, Verse 2, page 119).

In a review of the ancient world, it is easy to find evidence that women were deprived of certain rights and privileges. They were restricted from speaking public, or having a voice in their own society, and limited to the kind of work they could perform. In many ancient customs, including the ancient Middle East, women were seen as an inferior gender. This is not God’s view of women, and never has been. From the beginning, God saw women as an equal creation to man and a supporting companion to their mutual exaltation. Eve was not subservient to Adam, but an equal partner. President Hinckley taught, **“And so Eve became God’s final creation, the grand summation of all of the marvelous work that had gone before. Notwithstanding this preeminence given the creation of woman, she has so frequently through the ages been relegated to a secondary position. She has been put down. She has been denigrated. She has been enslaved. She has been abused. And yet some few of the greatest characters of scripture have been women of integrity, accomplishment, and faith.”** (General Conference, “The Women in Our Lives”, Gordon B. Hinckley, October 2004). In fact, women are vital to the exaltation of all mankind. **“Women are such a necessary part of the plan of happiness which our Heavenly Father has outlined for us. That plan cannot operate without them.”** (General Conference, “The Women in Our Lives”, Gordon B. Hinckley, October 2004).



It is of little surprise to me that Jesus called valiant faithful women to the ministry. Speaking of the women in this passage, Ogden and Skinner wrote, **“Many women also accompanied them to help care for the physical welfare of the traveling group. (Some of the women could have been wives of apostles; McConkie, Mortal Messiah 3:31).”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 269). Despite this reference to domestic service, of which men in the kingdom should be performing as diligent as the women, women served in many other diverse capacities. Sister Linda K. Burton taught, **“I have read and passed over the seemingly unremarkable expression ‘certain women’ numerous times before, but recently as I pondered more carefully, those words seemed to jump off the page. Consider these synonyms of one meaning of the word certain as connected to faithful, certain women: ‘convinced,’ ‘positive,’ ‘confident,’ ‘firm,’ ‘definite,’ ‘assured,’ and ‘dependable’.** As I pondered those powerful descriptors, I remembered two of those New Testament certain women who bore positive, confident, firm, assured testimonies of the Savior. Though they, like us, were imperfect women, their witness is inspiring. Remember the unnamed woman at the well who invited others to come and see what she had learned of the Savior? She bore her certain witness in the form of a question: **‘Is not this the Christ?’ Her testimony and invitation were so compelling that ‘many ... believed on him’.**” (General Conference, “Certain Women”, Linda K. Burton, April 2017). I would confidently make the claim that the “certain” women of this passage serve in the great missionary and ministry effort, seeking out the valiant souls of men.



President Howard W. Hunter affirmed the Savior’s regard for all women and asked the women of the Church in our day to stand united with the brethren in furthering the work of the Lord: **“It must be comforting to you beloved sisters of his Church to remember that this same Jesus, our Savior through the Atonement, demonstrated his love and concern for the women of his time. He enjoyed the company of women and had close friends among them. ... Is there any reason to think that he cares any less about women today? ...As our Lord and Savior needed the women of his time for a comforting hand, a listening ear, a believing heart, a kind look, an encouraging word, loyalty—even in his hour of humiliation, agony, and death—so we, his servants all across the Church, need you, the women of the Church, to stand with us and for us in stemming the tide of evil that threatens to engulf us. Together we must stand faithful and firm in the faith against superior numbers of other-minded people. It seems to me that there is a great need to rally the women of the Church to stand with and for the Brethren in stemming the tide of evil that surrounds us and in moving forward the work of our Savior”** (“To the Women of the Church,” Ensign, Nov. 1992, 95–96).

- 11 - **healed** – The word “healed” is translated from the Greek word “θεραπεύω” or “therapeuō”. It means to serve, do service, heal, cure, or restore to health. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “healed” as “cured”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 8, Verse 2, page 119). This word can be used in reference to spiritual as well as physical healings. Jesus had divine power over both, and performed such healings according to His Father’s will and when their was faith sufficient to heal.
- 12 - **evil spirits** – The word “evil” is translated from the Greek word “πονηρός” or “ponēros”. It means full of labor, annoyances, hardships, bad or bad in nature or conditions. The word “spirits” is translated from the Greek word “πνεῦμα” or “pneuma”. It means a spirit. Fitzmyer translates this passage as **“some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases.” So far only one woman has been cured in the Lucan story of Jesus’ ministry. Simon’s mother-in-law (4:38-39); presumably she has remained at home.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 697).

There are numerous accounts in the gospel records of people being possessed by evil spirits, demons or devils. It is a subject not referenced much by modern scholars or scriptorians. They typically acknowledge the possessions in the scriptures as real, but generally gloss over the hows and whys. Additionally puzzling is the fact that possessions are nearly unheard of in our time. If they were so prevalent at the time of Jesus, why are they non-existent today? How is it possible for evil spirits to take possession of someone’s body? Were they not denied bodies in the pre-mortals realm? Would this not prohibit them from possessing the bodies created for us? These are just some of the questions surrounding the subject of people being possessed by evil spirits.

The lack of information on the subject suggests that the Brethren of the church have been guided away from the topic. We will not belabor the issue, but will try to at least provide a rudimentary response to the questions. The Bible dictionary provides a foundation to the matter. It reads, **“Since the devil and his premortal angels have no physical body of flesh and bones, they often seek to possess the bodies of mortal beings. There are many such instances recorded in scripture (Matt. 9:32; 12:22; Mark 1:24; 5:7; Luke 8:30; Acts 19:15; see also Mosiah 3:6). Such can be evicted by the power of faith in Jesus Christ and the exercise of the holy priesthood. Jesus gave this power to His disciples (Matt. 10:1; Mark 16:17; Luke 10:17; Acts 5:16; D&C 84:67).”** (LDS Authorized Bible Dictionary). Satan and his followers may have the ability to possess the bodies of those that entered mortality, but mortal men have the power to reject them and cast them out through the name of the Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Satan and his followers only have access to our bodies when we give them access through our sinful behavior and disobedience to the commandments of God. Even then, the Lord protects His children, not allowing them to experience trials beyond their capacity to overcome. Satan's objectives are tempered by God's will. Additionally, our vigilance in keeping God's commandments will resist any advances against us by Satan or his followers. Brigham Young taught, "I know very well that, whether we are active or not, the invisible spirits are active. And every person who desires and strives to be a Saint is closely watched by fallen spirits that came here when Lucifer fell, and by the spirits of wicked persons who have been here in tabernacles and departed from them, but who are still under the control of the prince of the power of the air. Those spirits are never idle; they are watching every person who wishes to do right, and are continually prompting them to do wrong. This makes it necessary for us to be continually on our guard – makes this probation a continual warfare. We do not expect to be idle. The individual that obtains a celestial kingdom will never be idle in the flesh. It is a spiritual warfare. He contends against the spirits of darkness and against the workers of iniquity, and wars all the day long against his own passions that pertain to fallen man. It is therefore necessary that the people speak often one with another, encourage each other in every good word and work, sustain every one in every good act, operate against every evil act, and continue so to do through life." (Journal of Discourses, Volume 7, Brigham Young, September 1, 1859, page 239).

Though we might suppose that demonic possessions are a thing of the past, there are numerous examples from modern church history which speak otherwise. One example of this is Newel K. Whitney, who was possessed of an evil spirit. It was removed through the power of the Priesthood. It is quite possible that such possessions are more common than we may think. Again we turn to the words of Brigham Young, who said, "You may now see people with legions of evil spirits in and around them; there are men who walk our streets that have more than a hundred devils in them and round about them, prompting them to all manner of evil, and some too that profess to be Latter Day Saints, and if you were to take the devils out of them and from about them, you would leave them dead corpses; for I believe there would be nothing left of them." (Journal of Discourses, Volume 3, Brigham Young, June 22, 1856, page 369).

13- infirmities – The word "infirmities" is translated from the Greek word "ἀσθένεια" or "astheneia". It means want of strength, weakness, infirmity; of body or spirit.

One of the premises of the mortal experience is infirmities. At times, we wrongly expect life to be free of physical or spiritual sicknesses. Even worse, we often judge others without taking into account the fact that they too are enduring mortality and the frailties associated there with. The prophet Joseph Smith said, "I told them I was but a man, and they must not expect me to be perfect; if they expected perfection from me, I should expect it from them; but if they would bear with my infirmities and the infirmities of the brethren, I would likewise bear with their infirmities." (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Selected and arranged by the Historian of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints - Joseph Fielding Smith, page 268). No man will go through life without experiencing infirmities.

One of the purposes of Jesus' mission here in mortality was to bear our infirmities. Through Him, we might all overcome the infirmities of mortality. Even so, "We ought at all times to be very careful that such highmindedness shall never have place in our hearts; but condescend to men of low estate, and with all long-suffering bear the infirmities of the weak." (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Selected and arranged by the Historian of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints - Joseph Fielding Smith, page 141).

14- Mary called Magdalene – The name "Mary called Magdalene" is translated from the Greek word "Μαρία" or "Maria". The name is a transliteration of the Hebrew word "מִרְיָם" or "Miryam". Literally translated, the name means "rebellion". The name "Magdalene" is translated from the Greek word "Μαγδαληνή" or "Magdalēnē". The name Magdalene is believed to identify someone with the town of "Magdala". The name, literally translated, means "a tower".



Before we evaluate the woman named "Mary", we will look at her name extension: Magdalene. "Mary, called Magdalene, had received from Him special benefit of healing to body and soul. Her designation as Magdalene was probably derived from her native city, Magdala." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, pages 570-571). Magdala was a coastal town on the west coast of the Sea of Galilee. "Located 4 miles north of Tiberias, Magdala was one of the sites which Josephus fortified when he was governor of Galilee – before his defection to the Romans. When the city fell to Titus in the struggle of the Jews against the Romans, 6,700 Jews were killed; thousands of the strongest were sent to dig the Corinthian canal (which was not actually accomplished until the 19th century) and 30,400 were auctioned off as slaves... Jesus came here after feeding the 4,000 (Matthew 15:39; Mark 8:10)." (Discovering the World of the Bible, LaMar C. Berrett and D. Kelly Ogden, page 127). Using Josephus' record, which have been known to contain exaggerations, we can conclude that Magdala was a walled city containing thousands of inhabitants. It would have been one of the larger cities in Galilee. Large enough that "Magdala had a synagogue." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, page 571).

Magdala was also an economic powerhouse. "Magdala, which was a Sabbath-day's journey from Tiberius, was celebrated for its dye-works, and its manufactories of the fine wollen textures, of which eighty are mentioned. Indeed, all that district seems to have been engaged in this industry. It was also reputed for its traffic in turtles-doves and pigeons for purification – tradition, with its usual exaggeration of numbers, mentioning three hundred such shops. Accordingly, its wealth was very great, and it is named among the three cities whose contributions were so large as to be sent in a wagon to Jerusalem." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, page 571).

PICTURE OF THE
RUINS OF MAGDALA



AERIAL VIEW OF THE
RUINS OF MAGDALA



As is typical with most worldly cities, when they become economically wealthy, they become wicked. **“Its moral corruption was also great, and to this the Rabbis attributed its final destruction.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, page 571).

Great walled cities with wealth were also accustomed to have towers for additional protection. Towers were used to survey the surrounding land for enemies and robbers. **“The Oriental city has had two types of towers located in it. First was the tower constructed as a part of the city wall. At this point the wall was built higher and served as a fortification. The approach of an enemy could be sighted from here, and weapons hurled down upon men who attempted to take the city. Almost every gate of any consequence would have a tower over it. Then towers were often built where the wall turned a corner. These were called ‘corner towers.’ King Uzziah made use of such towers: ‘And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by skillful men, to be on the towers and upon the battlements [A. R. V. margin: ‘corner towers’] to shoot arrows and great stones withal’ (2Chron. 26:15). Second was a citadel tower or fortress which was built apart from the wall and on higher ground than the rest of the city, and thus served to defend the city. The tower of Shechem referred to in the story of Abimelech was doubtless this sort of tower (Judges 9:46).”** (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 327).

We are unclear as to the number of towers, or the size thereof, but we do know that the city was renown for it’s tower. In fact, the name of the town is thought to be a derivative of the Hebrew word for tower. Fitzmyer explained, **“The name of the town may be related to Hebrew migdol, ‘tower.’ A word often used either by itself as a proper name. It is often combination with other specifying names. It is often thought that Josephus refers to the town from which Mary comes, when he speaks of tarichaeae in Galilee. This Greek name is related to tarichos, ‘dried or smoked fish’ and perhaps its name in later rabbinic writings, Migdal nunayya, ‘Fish Tower,’ reflects the same tradition.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 697). There is evidence to support that the city of Magdala had several towers bearing the names of its industry; i.e. ‘the tower of the dyers’, ‘the tower of the doves’, and ‘the tower of the fish’. Speaking of the name of the city, Edersheim taught, **“Its name was probably derived from a strong tower which defended its approaches, or served for outlook. This suggestion is supported by the circumstance, that what seems to have formed part, or a suburb or Magdala, bore the names of ‘Fish-tower’ and ‘Tower of the Dyers’. One at least, if not both these towers, would be near the landing-place, by the Lake of Galilee, and overlook and defense, making the town a Magdala, would be increased by the proximity of the magnificent plain of Gennesaret, of which Josephus speaks in such rapturous terms.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, page 571).

Magdala may have had a false sense of righteousness since it provided a large volume of turtle doves and pigeons to the Temple in Jerusalem. In spite of her wickedness, she may have viewed herself as better than other cities or towns because of this sacred association. The valley to the north was called the Valley of the Doves, and lied upon a major highway. Edersheim taught, **“Moreover, only twenty minutes to the north of Magdala descended the so called ‘Valley of Doves’ (the Wady Hamam), through which passed the ancient caravan-road that led over Nazareth to Damascus. The name ‘valley of doves’ illustrates the substantial accuracy of the Rabbinic descriptions of ancient Magdala.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, page 571).

In spite of all this discussion about Magdala being a reference to “towers”, there are some scholars that theorized that the name of the city means something all together different. Evidently, the Biblical scholar Lightfoot had a different translation in mind. Edersheim wrote, **“The suggestion that the word meant ‘curler of hair’ which is made by Lightfoot, and repeated by his modern followers depends on entire misapprehension.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, page 571).

mary magdalene



The woman identified as Mary Magdalene, though most probably a woman from the city of Magdala, is relatively unknown. We assume that she was a Jew from Galilee, based primarily on the fact that she is identified from Magdala. We do not know the year of her birth, or her approximate age in this chapter. Because the previous chapter tells the story of a sinful woman entering Simon the Pharisees home, many have associated Mary Magdalene with the sinner. There is no factual connection, and yet for centuries she has been identified as a repentant prostitute. She has even become the patron saint of prostitutes in the Catholic Church. Such an association is not only ill warranted, but false. Elder McConkie corrected the record when he taught that Mary Magdalene was **“one of the most virtuous and righteous women ever to follow Jesus. So great was her faith and so extensive her good works that she was singled out to stand as the first mortal person to see our Lord after his resurrection. She is not to be confused with the unnamed though repentant sinner who anointed Jesus’ feet in the house of Simon. It is one of the basest slanders of all history to suppose that Mary of Magdala was a fallen woman and therefore to use the term Magdalene as an appellation descriptive of reformed prostitutes.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 266). She was evidently obedient and faithful; a true disciple of Jesus.

Elder Talmage taught that Mary Magdalene was part of Jesus’ inner circle. She was a confidant. **“Mary Magdalene became one of the closest friends Christ had among women; her devotion to Him as her Healer and as the One whom she adored as the Christ, was unswerving; he stood close by the cross while other women tarried afar off in the time of His mortal agony; she was among the first at the sepulchre on the resurrection morning, and was the first mortal to look upon and recognize a resurrected Being—the Lord whom she had loved with all the fervor of spiritual adoration. To say that this woman, chosen from among women as deserving of such**

distinctive honors, was once a fallen creature, her soul seared by the heat of unhallowed lust, is to contribute to the perpetuating of an error for which there is no excuse." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 192).

There are those that suggest that Mary Magdalene was more than a friend to Jesus. It is believed that she was His wife. This may seem to be a sacrilege in some circles, but let us just review some of the specifics surrounding this theory. First, a man was not allowed to preach in public or bear the title of Rabbi unless he was at least 30 years of age and married. Unmarried men were not considered worthy to act as Rabbis since the belief was that they would otherwise only think about women. Jesus taught publically, and was



regularly referred to as a Rabbi, even by His opponents. We would therefore assume Him to be married. Second, the marriage in Cana has all the signs of being Jesus' wedding. The mother of the groom was responsible for assuring that all the aspects of the wedding dinner went smoothly and as planned. When things went wrong with the wine, it was Mary (the mother of Jesus) that took the charge to fix the problem. The Groom was solely responsible for providing the wine for the guests. When they were out of wine, Mary came to Jesus; indicating that He was the Groom. Jesus miraculously provided additional wine for the guests, even though the time for such miracles had not come. He fulfilled the obligation of the Groom. Finally, when Jesus died and was laid in the tomb there was a delay in anointing, perfuming, and dressing His body properly. He was rushed to the tomb after death so that the quickly approaching Sabbath would not be violated. He was wrapped in linen until the Sabbath, a High day (treated as a Sabbath), and the first day of Passover (also treated as a Sabbath) were concluded. At this point, three days later, the Jewish custom of preparing the dead could be performed. This was reserved for the wife of a man, because it would be inappropriate for anyone else to uncover his nakedness. If the man was not married, the task was required to be performed by his mother. The woman who came to the sepulcher to prepare Jesus was Mary Magdalene. The Gospel according to Mark records, "And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him... 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." (Mark 16:1,9). If Jesus was not married, the job should have fallen to His mother who we know was still living. Mary Magdalene fulfilled the role of the wife in this instance. President Hyde taught, "I discover that some of the Eastern papers represent me as a great blasphemer, because I said, in my lecture on Marriage, at our last Conference, that Jesus Christ was married at Cana of Galilee, that Mary, Martha, and others were his wives, and that he begat children. All that I have to say in reply to that charge is this—they worship a Savior that is too pure and holy to fulfil the commands of his Father. I worship one that is just pure and holy enough 'to fulfil all righteousness;' not only the righteous law of baptism, but the still more righteous and important law 'to multiply and replenish the earth.' Startle not at this! for even the Father himself honored that law by coming down to Mary, without a natural body, and begetting a son; and if Jesus begat children, he only 'did that which he had seen his Father do.'" (Journal of Discourses, Volume 2, "Judgments on the United States", A Sermon by President Orson Hyde, Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, March 18, 1855, page 210). Not only did he confirm that Jesus was married, but he added insult to injury and testified that He had children.

In General Conference, a year later, in 1855, President Hyde reaffirmed the doctrine that Jesus was married saying, "How was it with Mary and Martha, and other women that followed him? In old times, and it is common in this day, the women, even as Sarah, called their husbands

Lord; the word Lord is tantamount to husband in some languages, master, lord, husband, are about synonymous. In England we frequently hear the wife say, 'Where is my master?' She does not mean a tyrant, but as Sarah called her husband Lord, she designates hers by the word master. When Mary of old came to the sepulchre on the first day of the week, instead of finding Jesus she saw two angels in white, 'And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She said unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord,' or husband, 'and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, 'Master.' Is there not here manifested the affections of a wife. These words speak the kindred ties and sympathies that are common to that relation of husband and wife. Where will you find a family so nearly allied by the ties of common religion? 'Well,' you say, 'that appears rather plausible, but I want a little more evidence, I want you to find where it says the Savior was actually married.' (Journal of Discourses, Volume 2, "The Marriage Relations", President Orson Hyde, General Conference, in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, October 6, 1854, pages 81-82). We then learn that Jesus lived to see His own children. He experience mortality in every aspect. He experienced fatherhood, married life, and all the challenges therewith. President Hyde went on to say, "Well, then, he shall see his seed, and who shall declare his generation, for he was cut off from the earth? I shall say here, that before the Savior died, he looked upon his own natural children, as we look upon ours; he saw his seed, and immediately afterwards he was cut off from the earth; but who shall declare his generation? They had no father to hold them in honorable remembrance; they passed into the shades of obscurity, never to be exposed to mortal eye as the seed of the blessed one. For no doubt had they been exposed to the eye of the world, those infants might have shared the same fate as the children of Jerusalem in the days of Herod, when all the children were ordered to be slain under such an age, with the hopes of slaying the infant Savior. They might have suffered by the hand of the assassin, as the sons of many kings have done who were heirs apparent to the thrones of their fathers." (Journal of Discourses, Volume 2, "The Marriage Relations", President Orson Hyde, General Conference, in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, October 6, 1854, page 83).

Let us conclude this topic by saying that there is no official church doctrine declaring that Jesus was married, nor for that matter that Mary Magdalene was one of His wives. We should be cautious in proclaiming any such theory as doctrine, though it is noteworthy in considering the role of Mary Magdalene; especially given our vague understanding of her.

Though I readily accept the teachings of Elder McConkie and Elder Talmage regarding the virtuous and worthy nature of Mary Magdalene; it is evident that she was possessed of an evil spirit at some point during Jesus' ministry. We have no revealed details regarding that occurrence, or the subsequent removal of the spirits by Jesus. "At some unrecorded time she was healed by Jesus from severe physical and mental maladies, and from her body the Master – of the seen and the unseen – cast out seven devils. Hers was no ordinary illness, and we cannot do other than suppose that she underwent some great spiritual test – a personal Gethsemane, a personal temptation in the wilderness for forty days, as it were – which she overcame and rose above – all preparatory to the great mission and work she was destined to perform." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 140). She was apparently virtuous, but not without trials. Furthermore, there is not claim that she was perfect. In fact, we can safely say that she encounter vice and folly like all other mortal beings. Brigham Young declared, "You cannot give any person their exaltation, unless they know what evil is, what sin, sorrow, and misery are, for no person could comprehend, appreciate, and enjoy an exaltation upon any other principle. The devil with one third part of the spirits of our Father's Kingdom got here before us, and we tarried there with our friends, until the time came for us to come to the earth and take tabernacles; but those spirits that revolted were forbidden ever to have tabernacles of their own. You can now comprehend how it is that

they are always trying to get possession of the bodies of human beings; we read of a man's being possessed of a legion, and Mary Magdalene had seven." (Journal of Discourses, Volume 3, Brigham Young, June 22, 1856, page 369).

We know very little else about Mary Magdalene. "Aside from the references to her in the New Testament," (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 697) and some contemporary works, there is not much known about her. This makes it even more odd that we claim to have her remains, at least in part. In the Southern part on France, just north-east of the city of Cognin, lies the town of Sainte-Maxime. In this coastal town, is a Cathedral called the Sant Maximin La Sainte Baume.

saint maximin la sainte baume



In this Cathedral is a rather odd relic. According to tradition, James, the son of Zebedee, was martyred in Jerusalem in 44CE. This created a significant unrest for the followers of Jesus, especially in Jerusalem. As the story goes, the Jews responsible for James' death also arrested key figures in the Christian church; Mary Salome, Mary Magdalene, her sister Martha, and her brother Lazarus. Their intent was to execute them as well; however, they were afraid of a local revolt. A local revolt would have displeased the Romans who expected the Jewish leaders to keep the peace. They decided that they would get rid of the predominate followers of Christ by banishing them. They took them to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea where they had boats waiting. Traditions says that they were hopeful that the followers of Jesus would die at sea. The boats had no sails, oars, or food.

In the mean time, the leading Jews in Jerusalem managed to round up other predominate Christian leaders. They too would be placed in the boats. They included; Mary Jacobe (the mother of James Zebedee and sister to the virgin Mary), Maximin (a member of the seventy), Cedonius (a blind man who received his sight from Jesus), Marcelle (Martha's servant), and Sara (a handmaiden to Mary Magdalene and Martha). The group was launched into the sea to a suspected death.

Narrowly escaping death, the boats survived a storm at sea and naturally came a ground on the shores of Gaul (present day southern France). They came a ground near the present day city of Saintes-Maries-da-la-Mer in Camargue. Tradition records, Mary Jacobe, Mary Salome and Sara remained in Camargue. Martha traveled towards Avignon and ended up in Tarascon. Mary Magdalene, Lazarus, Maximin and Cedonius traveled on to Marseille where Mary Magdalene began to preach. They ended up converting the whole of Provence. Lazarus became the first bishop of Marseille. Mary Magdalene then went on to Aix where Maximin had already gone, some twenty miles north of Marseille. In an odd turn of events, Mary Magdalene retreated to a mountain cave on the plain of the Plan d'Aups known as La Sainte Baume (47CE) where she remained alone for the last thirty years of her life in contemplation, prayer and penance. She is said to have died in Maximin's arms and was buried in the Gallo Roman town of Villa Latta or Tégulata, which after Maximin's death became St. Maximin.



In 1254CE, King Louis of France was returning from the 7th crusade and heard tale of the grave of Mary Magdalene and diverted his troops to visit it. In 1279CE, Louis nephew, Charles II was sent back to the area to obtain the relics of Mary. He ordered her remain exhumed. On December 10, 1279, deep in the earth, he found the marble tomb. When he tried to open it a wonderful smell of perfume filled the air. Inside rested Mary's entire body except her jaw bone. In the dust inside the tomb was a wooden tablet wrapped in wax: "Here lies the body of Mary Magdalene" and a parchment which explained that in 710CE her remains had been secretly transferred during the night into the marble tomb of Cedonius and hidden so that the Saracens wouldn't find them. This lead to a search for the original grave to acquire the jawbone. On April 6, 1295CE, the original grave was found and a single jaw bone was reunited with the supposed remains of Mary Magdalene. The remains are highly fragmented except that of the skull.

The local Basilica displays the skull of Mary Magdalene in a gruesome gold reliquary. It also displays a large bone fragment, which many come to worship. Many Popes have visited the Basilica, and worked to preserve the relics.

Over the years, many artists have painted renditions of Mary Magdalene. She is often depicted with a skull, or a book.



In the modern age, scientist have taken samples of the alledged "Mary Magdalene" skull and verified that the age of the relic coincides with the period in which Mary lived. They have also used computerized scanning of the skull to recreate a facial structure for Mary. Using typical Middle Eastern hair color and features, they created a possible image of what Mary may have looked like. It is shown to the right.



- 15 - **seven devils** – The term "seven devils" is translated from the Greek word "ἑπτὰ hepta". It means the number seven. The word "devils" is translated from the Greek word "δαίμονιον" or "daimonion". The word means the divine power, deity, or divinity. It can be used to refer to a spirit; being inferior to God and superior to man. Finally, it can be used of evil spirits or messengers and ministers of the devil. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the term "seven devils" as "seven demons". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 8, Verse 2, page 119).

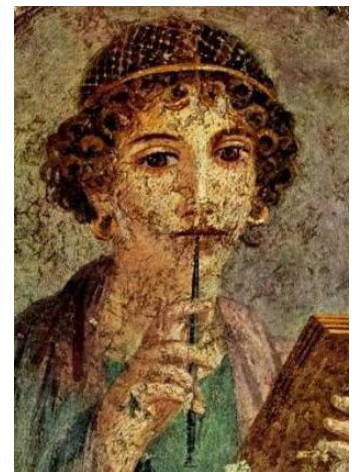
The number seven represents "**completeness and totality.**" (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 117). The number seven, like the number twelve, is the joining of the symbol three (3 is spiritual perfection) and the symbol four (4 is temporal perfection); 3+4=7. It is quite possible that the number seven used in this passage in a figurative sense. Rather than depicting seven distinct spirits, it may refer to the significance or totality of her possession. Perhaps she was totally incapacitated by the evil spirits. There is no record in the Bible explaining the circumstances of Mary's possession or the removal of the spirits by Jesus. Fitzmyer translated this passage as " **out of whom seven demons had come** ' i.e. through an exorcism, presumably performed by Jesus. **The number of demons is supposed to imply the severity of the possession.**" (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, pages 697-698).

Given Elder McConkie's description of Mary Magdalene as a virtuous, righteous woman, it is difficult to explain her demonic possession. Either she was a wicked soul who had transgressed to the point that her choices invited evil spirits, or she was a righteous soul who the Lord allowed to be possessed by evil spirits for a wise purpose currently unknown to us.

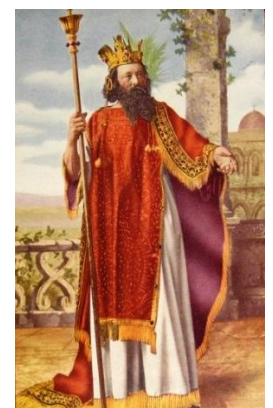
- 16 - **Joanna** – The name "Joanna" is translated from the Greek word "Ἰωάν(ν)α ἰωαν(ν)α". Translated literally, it means "Jehovah is a gracious giver". In Hebrew it is "**Yochani**". (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, pages 572-573). Fitzmyer, speaking of Johanna said, "**This woman is mentioned again in 14:10; she is otherwise unknown.**" (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 697).

We do have fragments of information that allow us some educated speculation. She is said to be "**the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, the record also is bare, although we speculate that she may have been the mother of the young man, the nobleman's son, who was healed by Jesus' word spoken in Cana while the youth was in Capernaum.**" (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 140). The fact that she was the wife of a nobleman is often used as proof that her husband was the nobleman who Jesus had healed his son. There are many Biblical scholars who support this claim. Edersheim, however, states, "**She was the wife of Chuzan, Herod's Steward – possibly, though not likely, the Court-official whose son Jesus had healed by the word spoken in Cana. The absence of any reference to the event seems rather opposed to this supposition. In deed, it seems doubtful, whether Chuzan was a Jewish name. In Jewish writings the designation seems rather used as a by name (little pitcher) for a small, insignificant person, than as a proper name.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, pages 572-573).

We can safely say that the Joanna of this passage was a faithful follower of Jesus. She accompanied Him on His missionary journey throughout Galilee. This was at least a two to three month commitment. She must have had a testimony of His divinity in order to facilitate this significant act of service.



- 17 - **wife of Chuza** – The term "wife" is translated from the Greek word "γυνή" or "gynē". It means a woman of any age; whether virgin, married or widow. It can also be used to mean a wife or a betrothed woman. The name "Chuza" is translated from the Greek word "Χουζᾶς" or "Chouzas". Literally, the name means "the seer". Chuza was the house steward of Herod Antipas. It is unsure as to Chuza's nationality or religious adherence. He may have been a gentile. "**The name Chuza has been found in Nabatean and Syrian inscriptions. It suggests an Aramean connection, having nothing to do, however, with the Idumaean deity Qaws,**" (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 698). Whether he was Jewish or a gentile, he must have had at the very least a respect and tolerance for Jesus and His doctrines. I say this because it appears that Chuza allowed his wife to serve Jesus and follow Him as a disciple. Without Chuza's permission, it would have been highly inappropriate for Joanna to accompany Jesus. Though another possibility is that Chuza was deceased at this point. That would make Joanna a widow, and afforded her the freedom to follow Jesus without her husband's permission. Whatever the case, the bottom line is that we do not have the facts before us. We do not know who Chuza really was and the circumstance associated with him and this passage.



- 18 - **Herod's** – The name "Herod's" is translated from the Greek word "Ἡρώδης" or "Hērōdēs". Translated literally, the name means "heroic". Herod was the name of a tyrant ruler who served as a vassal king to Rome over all of Palestine. After Herod the Great's death, his name was used by his descendants as a title indicating claim to at least a portion of the area that Herod the Great ruled. Galilee was eventually given to Herod the Great's son Antipas, "**I.e. of Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee (3:1).**" (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 698). Herod Antipas was a slightly milder version of his father, but none the less evil and cruel. He was responsible for the beheading of John the Baptist, and would play a hand in the crucifixion of Jesus.

Herod surnamed "Antipas", was the son of Herod the Great and Malthace, a Samaritan woman. After the death of his father, he was appointed by the Romans to be tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea. His first wife was the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia; but he subsequently repudiated her and took to himself Herodias (a half sister), the wife of his brother Herod Philip; and in consequence Aretas, his father-in-law, made war against him and conquered him. Herod Antipas cast John the Baptist into prison because John had rebuked him for this unlawful and sinful relationship; and afterwards, at the instigation of Herodias, he ordered him to be beheaded. Herod Antipas was induced by Herodias to journey to Rome so that he could appeal to the Emperor Caligula for the title of king. Unfortunately, he arrived in Rome only to face accusations brought against him by Herod Agrippa I. The accusation resulted in Caligula banishing him (39CE) to Lugdunum in Gaul, where he seems to have remained until he died. He was light minded, sensual and vicious.

- 19 - **steward** – The word “steward” is translated from the Greek word “ἐπίτροπος” or “epitropos”. It means one to whose care or honor anything has been trusted; a curator, a guardian, or a steward. **“The title epitropos (used only here in the Lucan writings) cannot be understood as the Greek equivalent of Latin praefectus or procurator. It should rather be understood as ‘manager’ of Herod’s estate. This detail, used to identify Joanna, suggests that Jesus’ influence and preaching was reaching even the high places.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 698).

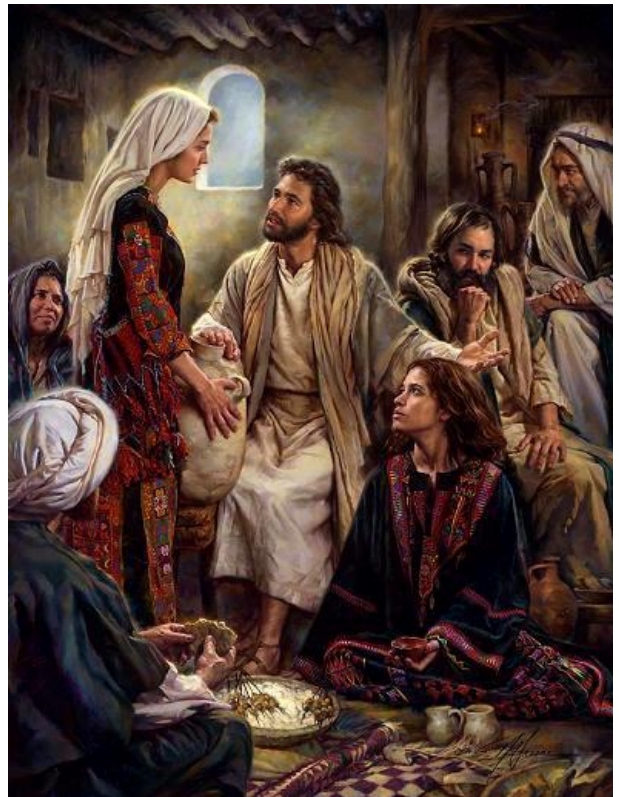
In the ancient world, a steward was someone entrusted with someone else’s property. He was given responsibility over it, and consequently all the power and authority necessary to protect it. In the owners absence, the steward could make decisions as though he was the master himself. He wielded great power; however, he was also accountable for the use of that power. When the master returned, it was expected that the steward would give an accounting of the possessions that he had been entrusted and consequence of any power and authority he had used. Misuse of power, or loss of possessions often resulted in death, imprisonment or loss of position. Barclay explained, **“A king had many perquisites and much private property; his epitropos (Greek #2012) was the official who looked after the king’s financial interests. In the Roman Empire, even in provinces which were governed by proconsuls appointed by the senate, the Emperor still had his epitropos (Greek #2012) to safeguard his interests. There could be no more trusted and important official.”** (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 96).

- 20 - **Susanna** – The name “Susanna” is translated from the Greek word “Σουσάννα” or “Sousanna”. Translated literally, it means “a lily”. The name is a transliteration of the Hebrew word “שושן” or “shuwshan” meaning a lily. Edersheim writes, **“It is Susanna, the ‘lily.’”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, page 573). This passage is the only mention of this Susanna during the time of Jesus. **“She is otherwise unknown.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 698) or as McConkie words it, **“Of Susanna we know nothing.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 140).

- 21 - **many others** – The term “many others” is translated from the Greek word “ἕτερος” or “heteros”. It means the other, another, or other. **“The names of the other loving women are not written on the page of earth’s history, but only on that of the ‘Lamb’s Book of Life’. And they ‘ministered to Him of their substance’. So early did eternal riches appear in the garb of poverty; so soon did love to Christ find its treasure in consecrating it to His ministry. And ever since has this been the law of His Kingdom, to our great humiliation and yet greater exaltation in fellowship with Him.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, page 573).

We do not know the size of Jesus’ entourage during this Galilean ministry; however, we know that the twelve were with Him. We know that many women accompanied Him. We assume that other faithful disciples followed as well. **“With reference to this missionary journey, Luke specifies that Jesus took with him a large entourage. Apostles, disciples, and loyal followers were almost always with him as he taught and traveled. His work was not done in a corner, and always, by precept and by example, he was training others to do and be as he did and was.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 139).

- 22 - **ministered** – The word “ministered” is translated from the Greek word “διακονέω” or “diakoneō”. It means to be a servant, attendant, domestic, to serve, or to wait upon. It can also mean to minister. Fitzmyer translates this passage as **“Literally ‘who were serving them,’ with the verb diakonein not being restricted to table service... The ‘them’ would refer to Jesus and the twelve.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 698). These faithful sisters served as they could, in any fashion necessary to further the work of salvation.



- 23 - **their substance** – The term “their substance” is translated from the Greek word “ὑπάρχοντα” or “hyparchonta”. It means possessions, goods, wealth or property. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the term “their substance” as “their goods”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 8, Verse 3, page 119). Fitzmyer translates this passage **“‘out of their own means.’ I.e. they were ‘persons of substance’ who were expressing their gratitude to Jesus for the cures wrought. Luke uses here ta hyparchonta, lit. ‘those (things) belonging to someone,’ in the sense ‘possessions’; this expression occurs frequently in Hellenistic Greek.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 698). We understand this passage slightly different. We know that all that we have, or may yet have in life, is a blessing from God. It is not a result of our greatness, for even great men have been denied riches because it was not in God’s plan. When we are blessed with wealth or circumstance, it is given from God so that we might further His work and bless His children. Our substance is a falsehood, for we are but stewards of God’s substance. This is how the Gospel works, and why Jesus had nothing. He gave all that He had to the furtherance of His Father’s work. Elder McConkie explains, **“Our Lord obeyed his own law, which is, ‘They which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.’”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 266). Therefore, **“All of these ‘ministered unto him of their substance, which is to say, he traveled without purse or script, as it were, relying on the goodness of God and the sustaining help of his believing friends for food and for clothing and for shelter.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 139). He did not live off of them, but offered His followers the opportunity to build faith, proclaim the word, and be perfected in Him. This required the willingness and ability to depart of one’s worldly possessions.

President Brigham Young warned, **“When men came into our midst, who shut up the bowels of their compassion, and held their money with an iron fist, they were held in communion with us, our faith was exercised for them, we mingled with them, and gave them fellowship for a time, yet one man, with his covetousness, tied up the whole people. In many instances, men were cut off for their covetousness, and because they had not confidence in the Prophet, and held their substance when means were wanted to carry on the work of God, to send the Gospel to distant lands, to sustain the poor, build houses, and accomplish that which was necessary to be done. While this means was withheld, it brought the whole Church under condemnation, for this reason all had to suffer.”** (Journal of Discourses, Volume 1, Brigham Young, September 1, 1853, page 75). Should we want the blessings of heaven, we must first let go of the blessings already given to us. This is one of the primary characteristics of the early saints, and should be ours as well.