

### The Hieros Gamos Part 3: Miriam and the Bridegroom

*Dedicated to Margaret Starbird's vision of the Reunion of the sacred marriage of the Bride and Bridegroom in Earth's healing.*

*For Sions sake I will not be silent until her vindication shines forth, like the dawn ... No longer shall you be called "forsaken" and your lands "abandoned", but you shall be called "beloved" and your lands "espoused" (Isa 62:1)*

#### Miriam the Source of the Waters of Life

This chapter is dedicated to the prophetess Miriam (p 472) because it is in her shoes that all the prophetesses down to the kadesha Mary stand. Miriam, whose name is the title of the sea goddess Mari-anna (Graves 397, Walker 584) was a female priestess on a par with Moses. 'Moses sister, later thought to be Miriam (Num 26:59) witnesses the discovery of the baby by Pharaoh's daughter (Ex 2:4) and thus becomes the mother of his second birth' thus resembling Isis (Haskins 47). It is Miriam who celebrates when the Egyptians are swallowed in the Reed Sea: 'And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea' (Ex 15:20). The tension between Miriam and Tharbis (p 472) can only further emphasize this prophetic feminine import in early history. A picture emerges from Bible and Midrash of Miriam as founding prophetess of Moses life, who prophesied his coming and left him incomplete on her death leading to his striking the waters at her well of Meribah (the spring of the goddess Qadesh who stands in the line of Hathor, Lady of Byblos) where Miriam herself died. It is the striking of these feminine waters, but not in Yahweh's name, that Moses then met his nemesis on Nabo. Micah reveals a deep secret of the origin of Zion when he says 'And I sent before you Moses, Aaron and Miriam'.

#### Jesus and Gylany

Riane Eisler (1987) in her view of 'gylany' - the partnership of woman and man in healing 'dominator society' - the dominion of man over woman and nature highlights the unique and paradoxical nature of Jesus in the midst of a patriarchal religious paradigm: "Almost two thousand years ago on the shores of Lake Galilee a gentle and compassionate young Jew called Jesus denounced the ruling classes of his time-not just the rich and powerful but even the religious authorities-for exploiting and oppressing the people of Palestine. He preached universal love and taught that the meek, humble, and weak would some day inherit the earth. Beyond this, in both his words and actions he often rejected the subservient and separate position that his culture assigned women. Freely associating with women, which was itself a form of heresy in his time, Jesus proclaimed the spiritual equality of all. Not surprisingly, according to the Bible, the authorities of his time considered Jesus a dangerous revolutionary whose radical ideas had to be silenced at all cost. How truly radical these ideas were from the perspective of an androcratic system in which the ranking of men over women is the model for all human rankings is succinctly expressed in Gal 3:28. For here we read that for those who know the gospel of Jesus, 'there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus'. Some Christian theologians, such as



Annunciation



Adoration



Transfiguration



Humiliation



Resurrection



Ascension



Coronation

The sequence of seven paintings by Fra Angelico of the seven phases of Mary illustrate the way in which the two Marys, the “virgin” and the “sinner” Magdalen complement one another as the Goddess counterpart of Jesus as the dying and resurrected God - joint manifestations of the more ancient Aphrodite-Mari. Notice the transfiguration and subsequent humiliation of the sacred king recurring as central motifs, just as the Babylonian king was annually humiliated. Mary finally receives her coronation as Queen of Heaven from her beloved son and spouse since she is also M’gadd’la (p 222). See also (p 752) (Morante and Baldini).

Leonard Swidler, have asserted Jesus was a feminist, because even from the official or 'sacred' texts it is clear that he rejected the rigid segregation and subordination of women of his time. But feminism has as its primary aim the liberation of women. So to call Jesus a feminist would not be historically accurate. It would seem more accurate to say that Jesus' teachings embody a gylanic view of human relations".

"Curiously, perhaps the most compelling argument for the historicity of Jesus is his feminist and gylanic thought and actions. For, as we have seen, the overriding requirement of the system has been the manufacture of gods and heroes that support rather than reject androcratic values. It is thus hard to see why a figure would have been invented who, as we read in John 4:7-27, violated the androcratic customs of his time by talking openly with women. Or whose disciples "marveled" that he should talk at all with women, and then at such great length. Or who would not condone the customary stoning to death of women who, in the opinion of their male overlords, were guilty of the heinous sin of having sexual relations with a man who was not their master. In Luke 10:38-42, we read how Jesus openly included women among his companions-and even encouraged them to transcend their servile roles and participate actively in public life. He praises the activist Mary over her domestic sister Martha. And in every one of the official Gospels we read about Mary Magdalen and how he treated her-a prostitute-with respect and caring. Even more astonishing, we learn from the Gospels that it is to Mary Magdalen that the risen Christ first appears" (Eisler 1987).

### **The Bridegroom: A Portrait**

Adonis was the Lord and Bridegroom, Tammuz the good shepherd, Dionysus the Flesh and the Vine King of Kings, God of Gods, Mot the Lamb of God, Thoth-Hermes the Logos, Mithra the Light of the World (Walker 465). Frazer (1890) was one of the first to enunciate the deep relation between Christian worship and the pagan celebration of the dying and resurrected god. At the turn of the century Reitzenstein and Bousset again pointed out the remarkable similarity of this motif, which was still prevalent in the first century AD and still an undercurrent in Galilee, which had always held the Northern tradition of Joseph (p 240), and had only in the last 200 years been forcibly converted to Judaism by the Maccabean revolt and the Hasmoneans. Many modern scholars have difficulty comprehending the way in which the fertility cycle became reinterpreted by Jewish thought into the apocalyptic historicity of the Suffering Servant (p 239).

Wilson (I 141) following the 'historical Jesus' approach claims that "on closer inspection the parallels are unimpressive" and suggests that, despite the universal gospel claims that Jesus expected to return, "the women's fear and astonishment" indicates that no one was expecting his resurrection. This illustrates a condition at the heart of Christianity, in which, despite its manifold pagan influences, accentuated particularly in relation to Jewish belief and expressed centrally in the eucharist, the Christian condition is entrenched in denial of paganism as an opposite anathema.

This point of view suffuses all the way to the present. Modern liberal Christian historians seek a view of the 'historical Jesus' which emphasizes as genuine only those aspects which concord with a narrow view of Jesus as a traditional apocalyptic prophet emerging from the Essene tradition - a mere insurrectionist rather than a transformer of the entire cultural paradigm. However it is the very renewal of the cultural and religious tradition which the best aspects of Jesus mission of love

reveal. The historical Jesus school goes beyond rejecting the more bizarre Hellenistic ornamentations of the virgin birth and the bodily resurrection, to lose sight of the very substance of the mission - to descend to the very roots of existence - to the most universal foundations of spiritual experience - to bring to humanity a new synthesis of forgiveness and reconciliation which will hold as true for the 'pagan' countryside of Galilee and the wilderness as for the end of days vision of the Essenes, the Pharisees of the small towns and the convoluted politics of the orthodox Jews of Jerusalem, the Herodians and the Romans. Jesus took the sacrificial path as an inspired act of empowerment to liberate humanity, through his vision, from the cultural binds of the time. The brilliance and strength of his teachings to this day lies above all in their very novel cultural universality conveyed with deep shamanistic insight, an ethic of love and reconciliation, and a sense of egalitarian social justice.

In understanding this culture shock aspect of Jesus teachings we need to remind ourselves that in Nabatea, right in Jesus' back garden were the very high places and green trees which the Old Testament had reviled. We find not only Dhu Shara - the God of Gaia (Negev 107) a veritable True Vine in the tradition of Dionysus but a Marian sea goddess. Nabatea came to a climax as a culture right as Jesus mission took place. Its coinage shows Aretas IV and Shaqilat II in gylanic union (see Daughters of Allah) and it is to the conflict with Nabatea that Herod's generals were gathered right when Salome is supposed to have danced the seven veils to John the Baptist's doom. It is also to Arabia that Paul journeyed to seek the well of this mystery which gathers the extremes of Essene end of Days and Hellenistic divine origins in one obscured key motif at the source of the Christian experience.

Jesus the Christos is described as a Son of God of a Virgin mother. He is sacrificed in the season of the Festival of Adonis. He is the 'bread of heaven' who brake bread to feed 5000 and left the bread as his body in remembrance of him. He is the resurrected saviour who is witnessed, particularly by women, ascending into heaven. He performed the descent of Inanna with Mary Magdalen the 'prostitute' out of whom seven devils (galla) were cast. He has a specific following of women of Galilee who ministered unto him of their substance. He describes himself as the bridegroom in citing the messiah reading of Isaiah 61 at Nazareth:

*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me;  
because the Lord hath anointed me...  
to proclaim liberty to the captives, ...  
He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation  
as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments  
and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels*

Often this image of the Bridegroom and bride is likened to Christ and his church and the Cross itself is identified with the 'marriage bed'. This sacred marriage symbolism carries Christianity dangerously into the kingly sacrifice of Canaanite Anath - the bridegroom cometh.

The motivating vision for this relationship would however seem to come from Ezekiel 16 rather than Isaiah, in which Yahweh describes himself as a bridegroom and Israel as the (unfaithful) bride:

*Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with*

*oil.... I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck.... But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was. Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them, And tookest thy broidered garments, and coveredst them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them.*

This image of the whoredom of Israel against Yahweh and his covenant is then carried over to the love of Christ for his Church. However this sense of Christ as Bridegroom is exceedingly blasphemous because he is then claiming to be Yahweh in the very manner which brought about his sacrificial death.

It is true that by coming to undo original sin, he is addressing the 'whoredom' of Israel - the feminine sociobiological initiative - at its root source Eve. But this is not the sense Jesus became Bridegroom in Isaiah 61 at all. There the poetic marriage imagery is both more balanced between bridegroom and bride and verdant in its appreciation of nature as the "planting of the Lord", "trees of righteousness" "as the earth bringeth forth her bud". When we come to the 'last analysis' the male sheep were scattered and it was the women who were his only support in his hour of need, and who pronounced the exaltation.

### **The Tale of the Bridegroom:**

*"And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days" (Mark 2:19)*

In Mark the bridegroom marries the five wise virgins 25:1

*"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.... While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the five foolish said unto the five wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut."*

In Luke we are reminded to wait on the Lord as a returning bridegroom 12:35:

*"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately."*

Jesus however turns the sacred redeemer into an end-of-days Messiah of cosmic renovation - the Bridegroom to end all bridegrooms. His demeanor is somewhat macho towards the virgins who aren't up to the mark. "Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." The bride has now become the eschatological church in a similar sense to Ezekiel.

In John the bridegroom is pronounced by John the Baptist, suggesting a sacred marriage as part of a coronation. 3:28: "Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled."

The Gospel of Thomas further elaborates the nature of the sacred marriage:

- (75) Jesus said, “Many are standing at the door, but it is the solitary who will enter the bridal chamber.”
- (61) Jesus said, “Two will rest on a bed: the one will die, and the other will live.” Salome said, “Who are you, man, that you... have come up on my couch and eaten from my table?” Jesus said to her, “I am he who exists from the undivided. I was given some of the things of my father.”... “I am your disciple.”... “Therefore I say, if he is destroyed he will be filled with light, but if he is divided, he will be filled with darkness.”
- (104) They said to Jesus, “Come, let us pray today and let us fast.” Jesus said, “What is the sin that I have committed, or wherein have been defeated?” But when the bridegroom leaves “the bridal chamber, then let them fast and pray.”
- (105) Jesus said, “He who knows the father and the mother will be called the son of a harlot.”

Jesus is the fertility Christ of seed, Tree and harvest:

*“Tell us what the kingdom of heaven is like.’ He said to them, ‘It is like a mustard seed. It is the smallest of all seeds. But when it falls on tilled soil, it produces a great plant and becomes a shelter for birds of the sky.’” (cf Mark 4:31). Matthew (13:32) has the birds nest in the veritable tree of life.*

Jesus is anointed on the head by a woman, not a male priest or prophet as with Saul and David, is sacrificed being watched over by three women including Magdalen other Marys, Salome, and a company of women from Galilee, and it is Magdalen the whore who witnesses his resurrection three days later. After which he ascends into heaven. These diverse references are widespread and consistent throughout the gnostic and synoptic gospels.

- Matt 21:31 “Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.”

### **Mari the Fruitful Mother**

*My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  
For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden:  
for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed (Luke 1:41).*

Rev 12:1 “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.”

The ‘Virgin’ is by tradition the Queen of Heaven. Just as Semele the mortal mother of Dionysus was originally a goddess, so was Mari, or Miriam:

Mari was the name of the goddess on whose account the Egyptians of 1000 BC called Cyprus Ay-mari and is associated with Mari on the Euphrates and at Amari in Crete. The name of the Goddess Mari of Cyprus is written with a ‘buckled post’ which stands for a reed hut, meaning ‘dwelling in’ and a buskin, so she was resident in a buskin, like the goddess Isis, who in Egypt bore her name ‘Asht’ on her head, together with a buskin - suggestive of the lame sacred king. Mari means fruitful mother (*ama* mother Sum. *rim* to bear child). Marienna is the ‘fruitful mother of heaven’, hence Miriam, Marian, and Mariamne: a word of triple power. (Graves 1948 326, 371, Walker 584).



The Assumption: Velazquez (Benard) The figure of Mary stands on the moon thus assuming power as Queen of Heaven in Inanna's stead in the Revelation paradigm.

"Is the Moon named Miriam among you?" "The moon has many names among our poets. She is Lilith and Eve and Asharoth and Rahab and Tamar and Leah and Rachel and Michal and Anatha; but she is Miriam when her star rises in love from the salt sea at evening" (Graves 1946 22). Her blue robe and pearly necklace were classic symbols of Maria "the Seas", edged with pearly foam. Such a Mari is noted in Nabatea in both astral and sea forms with dolphins (p 618). Another manifestation in Jesus' time was the dolphin Goddess of Edom. The virgin was called "the gathering together of the waters" (Walker 584). She appears prophetically as the "water of life" in Revelation 22:1. Like the galla of Inanna, Mari is associated with seven nether spirits of the ocean. One of the three towers of the Jerusalem Temple bore the name of the queen Mariamne (Walker 614). She is a 'virgin' only in the sense that she is not subject to the male fertility taboos of the Father God. Mari the 'fruitful mother' is a manifestation of fecundity and maternal love, not prudishness.

She was worshipped by the Semites as Mari-Anath in consort as an Elohim Mari-El. Anath was the death twin of Mari, Lady of Birth. "Anath annually cast her death-curse anathema maranatha - 'bridegroom come', sacer - 'holy' and 'accursed' - on the Canaanite god, fulfilling Mot's slaying of Ba'al and his destruction in turn by her. Mot stood for the barren season that slew its own fertile twin Aleyin, the son of Ba'al. "Mot-Aleyin was the son of the virgin Anath and also the bridegroom of his own mother. Like Jesus the Lamb of God, Aleyin said 'I am the lamb which is made ready with pure wheat to be sacrificed in expiation.'" (Larousse) "After Aleyin's death, Anath resurrects him and sacrifices Mot, telling him he has been forsaken by his heavenly father El." Mot cries - El, El why hast thou forsaken me? "The sacred drama included a moment when Anath broke Mot's reed scepter, to signify his castration, again foreshadowing a detail of the Christian Gospels.... The god-killing Anath was much diabolized in patriarchal legends. Abyssinian Christians called her Aynat "the evil eye of earth". They said she was an old witch destroyed by Jesus, who commanded that she must be burned and her ashes scattered on the wind" (Walker 30).

This is precisely what happened to women all over Europe as a result of Paul's reverse curse: 1 Cor 16:22 "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha."

- **Maranatha** (Syriac, the Lord will come- i.e. to execute judgment). A form of anathematizing among the Jews.
- **Ana-tithenai**: to set up, dedicate [a curse], maranatha: Our Lord [bridegroom], come. The Romans called a curse or imprecation a devotion.



Isis Mary and Artemis (Campbell, Queen of Heaven, Internet)

### **Isis and Artemis: The Assumption of the Moon Goddess**

*“Out of Egypt have I called my son” (Matt 2:15).*

Isis is the archetype of the divine mother. It is in Isis's shadow form the Church portrayed the image of the Virgin Mary with child. This is admitted as much by implication in 2 Peter 1:16 “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty”. It is also conceded that significant elements of the Christian mass are derived from the Isis tradition.

The myth of Isis contains all the same elements of tragic loss of her son to the sacrificial round of the young fertility hero who is in a sense at once bridegroom, king, lover and son, in the endless cycle of rebirth of fertility associated with the ebb and flow of the river Nile. Indeed it is to the river that we see Osiris, who represents the cut grain is committed again like Mot the twin Set is the dark one..

A third image of the Goddess, is her death twin Nephthys: “O Thou holy and eternal Saviour of the human race... Thou bestowest a mother's tender affections on the misfortunes of unhappy mortals,... Thou dispellest the storms of life and stretchest forth thy right hand of salvation, by which Thou unravellest even the inextricably tangled web of Fate... Thou treadest death underfoot. To thee the fates are responsive; by Thee the seasons turn... and the elements are in subjection... I am nature, the Parent of things, the sovereign if the elements, the primary progeny of time, the most exalted of the deities, the first of the heavenly gods and goddesses, the queen of the dead, manifested alone and under one form,... my divinity is adored throughout the world” (Walker 453).

“Terrible one, lady of the rain storm, destroyer of the souls of men, devourer of the bodies of men, orderer, producer, and maker of slaughter,... Hwer in pieces of blood... fire lover... cutter-of heads, devoted one, Lady of the Great House, hider of her creations” (Walker 454).

Likewise the many-breasted Artemis became fitted to an ideal role in relation to the Virgin as the symbol of female prudery and moral correctness. She was thus fashioned by the church forefathers to at once occlude and to personify Artemis or Diana



as she was variously called. The people of Ephesus did not convert easily to the Christian message. Acts notes: “throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: So that not only this our craft is in danger to be ‘set at nought’ [castration]; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.... But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians” (Acts 19:26).

To the Christians Diana became the “Queen of Witches” (Walker 233). However the legend that Mary had gone to Ephesus and died there in her old age resulted in Ephesus and the festival of Diana becoming the Assumption of Mary. This is an ironic twist of fate because the Christians are here using the moral prudishness of Artemis to purvey a very pure virginal image of the feminine even to the extent of Mary have been circumcised. Thus the forefathers repressed the more promiscuous aspect of the Goddess manifested in Magdalen.

In Roman Catholic doctrine, the Assumption means that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was taken (assumed) bodily into heavenly glory when she died. In the Orthodox church, the koimesis, or dormition (“falling asleep”), of the Virgin began to be commemorated on August 15 in the 6th century. The observance gradually spread to the West, where it became known as the feast of the Assumption (Grollier 1993). The Virgin is believed to have died on August 13th, to have risen again and ascended to Heaven on the third day. Since the Virgin was closely associated by the early Church with Wisdom - with the Saint ‘Sophia’, or Holy Wisdom, of the Cathedral Church at Constantinople- the choice of this feast for the passing of Wisdom into Immortality was a happy one (Graves 1948 255). When Diana's temple was finally pulled down, as the Gospels ordered, its magnificent porphyry pillars were carried to Constantinople and built into the church of Holy Sophia (Walker 234).

The Magi at the Grotto of Aphrodite (Peschio)

### **The Kadesha and the Christ**

Bethlehem means “the House of Bread” (Frazer 1890 5/257), St. Jerome stated “Bethlehem... lay formerly under the shadow of a grove dedicated to Tammuz, that is to say Adonis, and the very grotto where the infant Christ uttered his first cries resounded formerly with the lamentations over the lover of Aphrodite” (Briffault 3/97). Mary was described as a Virgin who in the Annunciation conceived a child, begotten of god.





Van Eyck's Annunciation emphasizes two aspects of Aphrodite, the lilies and the dove (Benard).

It is quite clear that Jesus parentage was a source of concern to early Christians and of satirical derision from the Rabbis. Matthew 1:19 confesses that Joseph was concerned not to make Mary "a publick example". The Talmud claims that Jesus was Yeshua ben Pantera (Panther - a known Roman name also associated with maenads (p 615)) the illegitimate son of Mary M'gadd'la (the braider or hairdresser) by a Roman (Graves 1953 98, Wilson I 62) and that she was 'descended from princes and rulers but conorted with carpenters' (Graves 1946 6). Was it Mary who had the royal line?

John 8:39 expresses the Pharisaic allegations: "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father.... We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God". Luke 3:8 appears to respond to this with a diatribe from the Baptist on divine birth "begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

The penalty for an engaged woman becoming pregnant was death, although changes to the law had made this a rare event. Jewish law, based on a polygamous male line has no concept of adoption. Holders of priestly office had to have a full-blooded genealogy (Ranke-Heinmann 1992 35, 65). John 8:7 also embeds a political white-wash in the form of the poetic episode of the woman taken in adultery, climaxing with "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her", however this is an obvious interpolation missing from the Codex Sinaiticus (Wilson I 17). Ranke-Heinmann (1988 18) lays at the feet of the gnostics responsibility for the growing obsession with virginity as captured in gnostic John's 144,000 virgins of Revelation.

With John's and Jesus' Essene influence in mind, it is worth noting that Essene men were "convinced that no woman remains faithful to one man" and associated with women only for the specific aim of achieving pregnancy and had "nothing more to do with them" once they became pregnant.

It is also worth noting that John had an independent 'immaculate' conception from Elizabeth, who, despite having a spouse, was menopausal, like Sarah and several other 'barren' matriarchs (p 483), particularly Hannah, who also offers a song (1 Sam 2:1-10). It has been suggested that the magnificat originally applied to Elizabeth for this reason (Ranke-Heinmann 1992 47). Elizabeth's tradition was independently preserved by the Mandaeans, suggesting the divine birth was a tradition, which had a matriarchal component following down from Sarah.

The two genealogies of Matt 1:1 and Luke 3:23, which in mythical vein goes all the way to Adam, are inconsistent with one another and are both broken at Joseph. Jesus' genetic claim to Davidic messiahship is thus invalid as portrayed and replaced with a divine claim as the virgin son of God, a claim shared only by such gods as

Adonis, Dionysus, Horus, Attis, Mithra, Krishna and a few legendary heroes such as Buddha and Zoroaster (Spong 1992 56) who are likewise products of religious mythology. Even if one genealogy is attributed to Mary, as suggested both by Catholics and significantly by the Talmud, and by Graves (1946) as a twin genealogy of the sacred king to the land, the lack of a paternity link to Joseph portrays Christ's claim to being Messiah entirely in the same category as Dionysus, the son of Zeus and mortal Semele.

Matthew's mythic genealogy conspicuously notes four women: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba (mentioned only as 'her that had been the wife of Urias'). Each, by their promiscuity, redeems the royal line of Israel. Tamar and Rahab were Canaanites. In Genesis 38:14 Tamar covers her head and sits by the wayside as a prostitute to secure the seed of her father-in-law to conceive. In Joshua 2:1 Rahab, the friendly prostitute, secretes the spies who precipitate the fall of Jericho in her whorehouse. Ruth is a Moabite widow who returns with her mother-in-law to Bethlehem, gleans the favour of Boaz in the cornfield and offers herself to him on the threshing floor. Bathsheba is the adulteress for whose troth David had his general, Uriah killed, to God's curse (2 Sam 19:9), who ensured by her personal influence that her son Solomon became king. Is this intended to infer the same fate upon Mary?

The famous virgin birth quote of Isaiah 7:14 "Behold a 'virgin' shall conceive and bear a son - Immanuel" cited by Matthew 1:23 in midrash prophecy is in Hebrew 'almah young woman and in Greek *parthenos* virgin, which also means 'unwed' priestess of a Goddess (Briffault 3/169). Neither term implies a non-biological virgin birth, which would be inconsistent with a Jewish messiah (Ranke-Heinmann 1992 40) despite later Christian misconceptions. The term 'almah is used in Song of Songs 6:8 in a context which is obviously consort.

*There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.  
My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother,  
she is the choice one of her that bare her.*

Although ancient Greeks did believe the woman was just a nurturing receptacle for male seed, Hebrews from the earliest times acknowledged both matriarchal and patriarchal inheritance.

Paul echoes this naturalness in his founding statement in Gal 4:4 (49-55 AD)

*But when the time had fully come,  
God sent forth his son,  
born of a woman, born under the law,  
to redeem those who were under the law,  
so that we might receive adoption as sons.*

Many people accuse Paul the Pharisee of gentile heresy against Jesus' Jewish teachings, but here Paul acknowledges Jesus is born of a woman to redeem those under the law - the Jews, and also is born 'legitimately'.

Paul at Romans 1:3 has another pertinent comment about Jesus' paternity, which again suggests a legitimate link to David in either the paternal or maternal line:

*Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,  
which was made of the seed of David  
according to the flesh.*

Eusebius noted that close relations of Jesus were arrested by the Roman authorities for their 'descent' from David for up to a century after the crucifixion (Wilson I 71).

In “True Faith and the Virgin Birth”, David Holloway (Times 20 Dec 86) cites the tradition that Joseph ‘personally’ told Matthew and Mary ‘personally’ told Luke. While this may be specious, it highlights a theme notable in the two gospels.



Fig 11.16: The dove descending on Mary in the annunciation, by a Dionysian angel. Mary has a particularly astute look of the woman about to be ‘taken’ in sexual union. Note the sceptre of kingship like the one Esther touched. - Grunwald (Pevsner and Meier).

The tradition of ‘Jesus ben Joseph’ who is not the physical son of Joseph, but his spiritual descendent indicates in the gospels the tradition of the blood-stained Josephic messiah.

While Matthew 1:20 has Joseph announcing the virgin birth, though a dream visitation, in Luke 1:28 it is a male angel, Gabriel ‘hero of God’, who

personally “came in unto her” saying “Fear not Mary, thou hast found favour with God”. This is the frank language of a sexual liaison and continues even more specifically “The holy-begotten one will be called the son of God”. ‘Begotten’ is usually amended (Ranke-Heinmann 1992 42). “And Mary said, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word’. And the angel departed from her.

Mary is referred to in the gnostic Protoevangelium of James (150 AD) as a *kadesha* - or temple hierodule, (Walker 1049) whose name originates from Qadesh, the Queen of Heaven of Sinai, after whose waters Moses' doom was sealed (Num 20:11). She was portrayed, like John the Baptist, as the miraculous child of an old couple, Joachim and Anna, who was dedicated to God and raised in the temple by holy men and when she reached puberty entrusted to an elderly widower, Joseph (Spong 1992 212). Note that in the oldest references, Jesus was “born under the law” Gal 4:4 “made of the seed of David according to the flesh” Rom 1:3 who “sprang out of Juda” Heb 7:14. It is thus likely Jesus' father was chosen by a religious protocol and explains Joseph's subsequent acquiescence to her pregnancy.

Several authors have noted that the stories of the virgin birth in Luke and Matthew do not make historical sense and are as much in conflict as the two accounts of Genesis (Fox R 27; Ranke-Heinmann 1992 5, 20; Spong 1992 43; Wilson I 55). The best interpretation that can be put on them is that they are later constructions of midrash designed to verify Christ's divine coming and his to authenticate his claim to being the Davidic messiah descended from David (by God) and born in Bethlehem like David according to the prophecy of Micah 5:2.

Matthew has the family living in Bethlehem while Luke situates them in Nazareth. The census of Luke 2:1 would not have taken Joseph to Bethlehem, because it was based on property ownership not genealogy. There is no substance to Matthew's tale of the slaughter of the innocents by Herod 2:13, and no possibility that the two accounts could have taken place together because King Herod King of Judea quoted by both Luke and Matthew could not have been alive for Quirinus' census, which was in 6 AD to institute direct rule of Judea (Fox R 28, Ranke-Heinmann 1992 9). There is also frank discord between the flight into Egypt of Matthew 2:14, and Luke's quiet sojourn as Jesus is offered at the temple 2:22. Matthews passage is obvious midrash on Jesus as a new Moses, slaughter of the innocents in Egypt (Ranke-Heinmann 1992 29), and other episodes (Exod 4:19 = Matt 2:20 etc.).

Luke's passage bears careful attention. First Jesus is a 'firstborn of the matrix' claimed as an offering by God, and secondly there is a formal offering of doves: "And when the days of her purification were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the LORD, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) And to offer a sacrifice: A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." The lamb also required by Lev 12:6 is mysteriously absent. The rite occurs specifically in the presence of a very ancient prophetess, also by the name of Anna, who had lived with an husband for a symbolic seven years from her virginity, and for 84 years after his death. Anna appears to leave a long and two-fold matriarchal shadow.

The reaction of most sceptics is to relegate much of Luke's writing to the status of Greek fantasy along the lines of mystery cults, elevating a simple Jewish hero to the status of a divine redeemer. This is a mistaken point of view for several reasons. Israel was, despite its nationalism, a crossroads of all Near Eastern cultures and had been subjected to the successive influence of every major civilization. The divine saviour was as much a Semitic motif as it was Greek. Jesus' teachings in all four gospels abound with references to the sacred marriage, the bread of heaven, and the women followers who anoint him, minister unto him, witness his death and announce his resurrection. To try to eliminate all these features would wash the messiah out with the anointing oil, leaving only a minor Jewish trouble maker with a few Essene slogans, which leaves the Northern tradition destitute.

Thus an alternative interpretation to the idea that the accounts of the virgin birth were simply later inventions of midrash is that Mary went to Bethlehem to consecrate Jesus as a 'son of God' in a more ancient rite in the grotto at the 'House of Bread', David's birthplace, and later completed this dedication by an offering of doves with Anna at the Temple in Jerusalem. This gives the only really plausible explanation for why a heavily pregnant woman, whose partner did not own land in Bethlehem made a difficult journey there right on the point of birth.

One of the earliest seats of the Christian church was at Antioch. This was where Paul first announced his ministry and where the term Christian was first coined. When the emperor Julian arrived at Antioch at the time of the Adonis festival, he was welcomed as if he had been a god by a crowd who cried that the "Star of Salvation had dawned upon them in the East". Astarte as the "morning star" of the East (Frazer 1890 5/259), which can be seen in daytime, "may have guided the 'wise men of the East' to Astarte's grotto in Bethlehem, the hallowed spot which heard the weeping of the infant Christ and the lament for Adonis": Matt 2:2 "Where is he that

is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.”

Astarte as Queen of Heaven, whose girdle was the Zodiac, was also worshipped in respect of other phenomena such as meteor strikes and probably also comets, such as the appearance of Halley's in 12 BC (Fox R 34) which would coincide with John's older Jesus (8:57).

The star of Bethlehem has a variety of other ingenious explanations which confuse the nativity date further. Kepler himself noted a striking conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter in 7 BC noting this conjunction in Pisces occurs in a Rabbinical reference to the Messiah's appearance. There was also a nova reported by the Chinese in 5 BC (Wilson I 56).

Fig 11.17: The Baptism, overlooked by women, with Aphrodite's dove descending - Francesca (Lavin).

### The Seven Veils

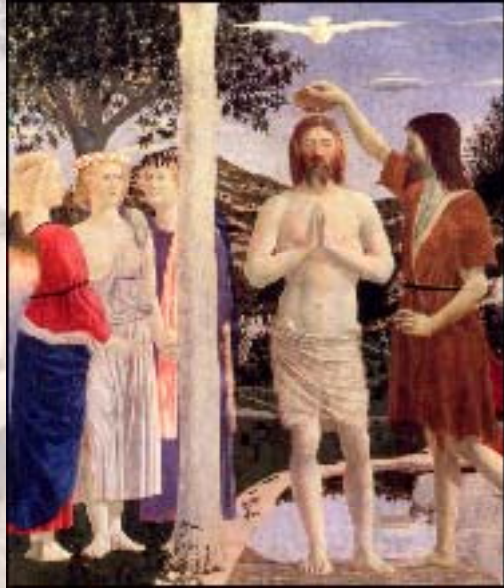
All accounts of John's meeting with Jesus, in his baptism, specify Aphrodite's dove of peace descending Mark 1:10: “And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him”.

According to the historian Josephus, Salome (shalom - peace) was the name of the daughter of Herodias and Herod Philip, whom Herodias divorced in order to marry his brother Herod Antipas. When John spoke against the marriage of Herod Antipas to Herodias, his brother's wife, Herod imprisoned John. Salome danced before Herod Antipas

[the descent of Inanna - the seven veils] Mark 6:22 “And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.”

One could conclude that John intentionally arranged to have himself immolated as a substitute sacred king in the public celebration of Herod's ‘incestuous’ and adulterous marriage to Herodias (Walker 470).

John had already made a prophetic statement of his own sexual immolation 3:10 “And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.”





Salome - Beardsley: Jochanan and Salome, The Belly Dance, The Sacrifice (Wilde)

Salome: "Jokanaan, I am amorous of thy body.... Neither the roses in the garden of the Queen of Arabia, nor the feet of the dawn when they light on the leaves, nor the breast of the moon when she lies on the breast of the sea... there is nothing in the world so white as thy body. Let me touch thy body." "Back daughter of Babylon! By woman evil came into the world." "They body is hideous... it is horrible." "It is of thy hair I am enamoured,... like the black grapes that hang from the vine trees in the land of the Edomites."...."I am waiting for my slaves to bring me perfumes and the seven veils and to take off my sandals." Herod: "The moon has a strange look tonight.... She is like a mad woman who is seeking everywhere for lovers. The clouds are seeking to clothe her nakedness.... She reels through the clouds like a drunken woman" (Wilde 2-64)

### Magdalen

In the Jewish writings, Miriam M'gadd'la - Mary the Braider is identified as Jesus' mother. "The braider of women is usually taken to mean women's hairdresser, since the notice is hostile and hairdressing for women was a despised and unclean profession; this was a period of elaborate coiffures and the chief purveyors of hair for wigs were professional grave robbers who also supplied wiches with corpse flesh. A women's hairdresser will have been suspected of being a dealer in charms and philtres.... But 'braider of the women' could also refer to Mary's particular task among the temple women who made the veil of the sanctuary" (Graves 1953 99). Mark 15:37 notes the temple veil was rent on Christ's death, another clear symbol of the involvement of women in the passion. This could refer to the mother during her time as kadesha however it could also refer as a satirical Jewish pun to Magdalen as a spiritual adoptee.

In Christian writings, Mary Magdalen is a different person from Mary the mother of Jesus, James and Joses, and distinguishable again from Mary of Bethany. By comparison with the other women in Jesus' following, Mary Magdalen "alone stands out undefined by a designation attaching her to some male as wife, mother, or daughter and she is the only one to be identifiable by her place of birth". Magdalini in Greek signified her belonging to el Mejdal (Migdal = tower) a pros-

perous fishing village on Galilee. It was destroyed in 75 AD because of its infamy and the licentious behaviour of its inhabitants (Haskins 15). A tiny desolate domed shrine marks the site. The name has also been identified with Magdal-eder of Micah 4:8 “the stronghold of the Daughter of Zion” to whom it shall come in passages fulfilling reunion with the feminine assembling her that limps and gathering her that is driven out in peace under the vine and fig (Starbird 50). Magdalen’s link with Miriam is clear also in Miriam’s blessing of the waters below Migdol in Exodus 14:2, 15:20.



Magdalen the Holy Whore (New Yorker 3 Oct 94) “Not only are we compassionate of ourselves, but we are compassionate of all the race of mankind” (Malvern 49).

*Her... whose fair inheritance Bethina was  
and jointure Magdalo:  
An active faith so highly did advance,  
That she once knew, more than the Church did know,  
The Resurrection so much good  
there is deliver'd of her,  
that some Fathers be loth to believe  
one woman could do this.  
But, think these Magdalens were two or three. John  
Donne (Haskins 3)*

The Copts identified all three Mary's as one, but the Greeks regarded Magdalen as a member of Jesus' ‘womenfolk’. At the end of the sixth century, Pope Gregory I, ‘the Great’ for whom the Gregorian chant and England’s conversion by Augustine is claimed, made the identification of the sinner, Mary

of Bethany and Magdalen a dogma (Haskins 16). The eastern Church by contrast kept these separate (Haskins 26). Pagan ideas of the trinitarian goddess would seek three distinct Maris: the bride (Magdalen or Bethany), the Virgin Mary, and she who anoints for the burial (unnamed or Magdalen). Margaret Starbird (1998) has drawn attention to the repression of the founding sacred marriage motif of Christianity as the lost heritage. The theme of Magdalen as bride of Jesus continued in gnostic circles for many centuries (p 776). “Marjorie Malvern (1975) in ‘Venus in Sackcloth’ examines the metamorphosis of Magdalen from prostitute to counterpart/friend of Jesus through two millennia of western art and literature” (Starbird 32). Graves (1946) also noted Jesus title “Balaam the Lame” (p 615) implies coronation in the sacred marriage tradition of Mari’s lamed sacred king of the buskin, common also to Isis, Dionysus and tragic drama.. “Physician heal thyself”.

Luke 8:1: “And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalen, out of whom went seven devils, And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.” The Greek version says “them” inferring the 12 were also supported by the women (Walker). They are also referred to in Mark (15:40) “There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.



Magdalen is often identified with the woman who anoints Jesus head to his doom: Mark 14:3 “And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.... And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.... She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her. ... Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests” Matt 26:7 parallels Mark's discourse. A tight pivotal sequence in which Jesus himself declares “we shall always be speaking her name”: Magdalen anoints - Jesus affirms Magdalen - Judas betrays. The Bridegroom ‘stabbed’ by the Sicarii (p 245).

Luke's foot anointing is in a lighter vein, contrasted by Jesus himself with the head anointing which dooms him. The woman is a ‘sinner’ reminiscent of the ‘seven devils’ of Magdalen whom some people have associated with ‘sacred’ prostitution and the descent of Inanna: 7:37 “And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.” Jesus defends these physical advances and contrasts her anointing with that of the head, indicating a separate event: “Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.” This person could be Mary Magdalen but it is not for Jesus' burial. A woman letting her hair loose in itself symbolizes impropriety in Jewish society. A good Jewess allowed none but her spouse to see her head unbound, and by loosening it in public, gave grounds for mandatory divorce (Haskins 18).



The ‘sinner’ anoints Christ's feet while seven galla emerge Giovanni de Milano (Haskins).

In John, Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus is portrayed in a different light. She lives in Bethany of Judea and she calls on Jesus to return there to save her brother: 11:1 “Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.” saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.”

Jesus delays ceremonially for two days. Lazarus dies and is ‘stinking’. Martha goes out to meet him. In almost ritual style Jesus has Martha declare 11:27 “Yea, Lord: I believe

that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.” Mary then appears as Jesus’ sacred Mistress: “And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.” This term is used again by Magdalen at the burial - Rabboni.

When Martha had complained for serving help Jesus indicates she has a pivotal role to play Luke 10:41: “Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” This could be interest in his teachings, but ‘that good part’ is partner or consort.

When Jesus calls on Lazarus, he groans. This very act of ‘miracle work’ with well-known associates, sets the stage for his own demise, a life for a life, because the priests plot because of this miracle, that he should become the atonement king “Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.”

The foot anointing leads to Jesus’ demise: 12:2 “There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then saith... Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?... Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.” Mary is again acclaimed by Jesus as the only one who has foreknowledge of the inner mystery that is about to take place, unlike his disciples.

Although Judas’ motives are now monetary, the betrayal role of Judas is again ritual. In John he is chosen by Jesus’ sop, the accursed sacrifice, just as Jesus is the atonement sacrifice. He is the ram in the thicket, the dark one who commends Jesus to his fate by treachery and is then in his turn later sacrificed by spilling his guts in the field of blood. There is scarcely a more Canaanite image than this.



The Ritual Sequence: Sacred birth in the grotto of Aphrodite, the baptism crowned by Aphrodite’s dove, the ritual of the atonement king, the lament of the ‘companion of the Lord’ Mary, the dying god hanging in his tree (Internet).

But wait, there is another secret here 12:23: “And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” This is the classic fertility sacrifice of Tammuzim-

mediately united with the Josephic tradition of Israel: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal., just as Duchares gained immortality by donning the tragic mask (p 620)..

The spiritual tradition of Galilee continued ancient forms of Israelite worship of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. There were influential populations of Essenes and Rechabites in the eastern deserts stretching to Damascus, where the New Covenant was made. The northern tribe of Joseph had always celebrated the Day of Atonement in memory of Joseph's bloodied coat of many colours, assimilating certain aspects of Tammuz into the prophecy of a dying messiah in the tradition of the Suffering Servant (Schonfield 207). Jesus ben Joseph (his 'spiritual' rather than genetic father) thus knew he was prophesied to die in Jerusalem in the style of Tammuz and indeed came to Jerusalem with a weeping party of women from Galilee. Aspects of Pauline Christianity often believed to be a Hellenistic heresy the first the Jewish Nazorean or Ebionite Christians are derived from his journeys to Damascus and Arabia where the Dhu Shara aspect of Jesus was more strongly felt.

Jesus declares himself to be grain of Tammuz in John 12:23 "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."

The manifestation of the Bridegroom as Tammuz, fertility god of spring, becomes clearer in the journey on the ass into Jerusalem: John 12:13 "They took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: And Jesus said 'Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt'." Although this is quoting Zechariah 9:9 exactly, it is clear that the sacred fertility king Salmah, the Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6) - shalom, after whom Jeru-salem was named, and to whom the Song of Songs was of course dedicated, arriving greeted with palm leaves in the spring festival to greet the 'daughter of Zion', Jerusalem herself, has all the sexual overtones of the 'bride of fertility.' Luke 23:28 has Jesus lament them "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children". Jesus had already escaped being taken by force and made king previously in John 6:15. Sacred kingship was still a fluent tradition in Israel.

It is said in Hebrews 6:20 "Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec", fulfilling Ps 110, "king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him" (Gen 14:18) "first being... King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace." This appears to have been a continuity of an existing Essene tradition (Wilson Edmund 193).

The fig is symbolic of female sexuality. Dionysus is born with a phallus and a fig. Jesus first says to tend the fig for three years to see if will bear fruit before cutting it down (Luke 13:6). He has three passovers in his mission in John. In his last day in Jerusalem, he curses the fig tree for not bearing fruit and it withers (Mark 11:12).

Matthew clearly describes ritual humiliation of the sexual sacred king in his scarlet robe with the traditional breaking of his phallic reed-sceptre also reflective of the humiliation of the king in the Saturnalia and more specifically the Sacaea festival in Babylon (Frazer 1890 v7 412) 27:28: "And they stripped him, and put on him a

scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.” Luke is even more specific that he is castrated, and by Herod's Jewish soldiers 23:11: “And Herod with his men of war set him at nought [castration], and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.”

The release of Bar-abbas ‘son of the father’ in a paired scapegoating noted in all four gospels is consistent with a ritual sacrifice in the manner of Mot and Ba'al and of course Haman and Mordecai Mark 15:6: “Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. (Luke 23:16 notes: For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast)... But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?... But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them” and they said ‘Crucify him, crucify him’. Ironically Barabbas may have been a respected Zealot, whom the priests rescued.

This is consistent both with Pilate's hand washing and the blood being upon the Jews: Mark 27:24 “When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.”

This theme is again consistent with the ceremonial title given Jesus somewhat determinedly by Pilate in John 19:19” And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.... Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.... Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.”



The two Marys, mother and Magdalen are two echoes of Eve, the sinner and the virtuous circumcised virgin in atonement.

The hypothesis that the Crucifixion... was merely the annual fate that befell the malefactor who played Haman appears to go some way towards relieving the gospel narrative of some difficulties which otherwise beset it. Pilate's reluctant acquiescence to the rabble becomes easier to understand if we assume that the custom obliged him annually at this season to give up some prisoner on whom they might play their cruel pranks.... the most he could do is choose the victim (Frazer 1890 v7 416). While millions of Jews have been hounded to

death for two millennia by Christians for the blood of Christ and twentieth century religious historians turn their blame on Pilate, who was after all a brutal Roman Procurator (Pagels 1995 28), the truth lies not in blame on either side but in a cruel and ancient celebration of the hieros gamos of the sacred king.

It is noted by Philo that when Agrippa, Herod's grandson, passed through Alexandria after his coronation in Rome in 38 AD, the people, in satirical celebration, rounded on a helpless lunatic entitled 'Carabas', put a paper crown on his head, thrust a broken reed into his hand by way of a sceptre, and chanting 'Lord, Lord!' surrounded him with bludgeon men and demanded his opinion in mockery on questions of law and policy. This suggests the rite was known of the Jews and that 'Barabbas' was the title of the scapegoat, who instead of meeting his fate as a condemned criminal, was paraded in indignity. "Son of the father" could derive from the ancient practice of sacred kings who sacrificed their sons in their stead. (Frazer 1890 7/418-9).

These resemblances with the Sacaea and its Jewish manifestation in the Purim can be explained as occurring on the Passover in several ways. It appears that the Babylonian Sacaea "did fall in Nisan at or very near the time of the Passover" (Frazer 1890 7/415). Purim, which was a month earlier, would likely have originally been on this date, as the lot of Pur was cast from Nisan. Provoked by the messianic spectacle of the sacred king arriving on an ass during the Passover, an enactment of the Sacaea appears to taken place. It is also notable that the king of the Saturnalia was allowed a period of licence of thirty days before he was put to death, just the interval between Purim and Passover.

We know that the disciples "all forsook him, and fled" and that even Paul denied Christ three times, however the women made it all the way to the Crucifixion, and three 'Marys' waited lamenting until the end. As the Dec 1996 Life comments (54) "Where were the Apostles?" Faithfully following Zechariah 13:7 "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered" In his last moments in Luke, Jesus curses the female in Essene end-of-time rhetoric, while being lamented in the traditional style of Adonis: 23:27 "And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck".

His last cry "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*" - "El, El, why have you forsaken me?" is the cry of Mot for El when Anath has pronounced the Anathema maranatha condemning Mot to death in favour of the victor Ba'al. "and some said 'Behold he calleth for Elias' and one ran and filled a sponge with vinegar and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink saying, 'Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down'. And Jesus cried with a loud voice and gave up the ghost." Mark 15:34. John's requiem 19:30 "It is finished" 'It is consummated' is the final marriage of the cross.

In the Ugarit slaying of Mot, Shapash says (Driver 115):

*"How of a truth shall the bull El, thy father hear thee?..."*

*verily he will overturn the throne of thy kingdom,  
verily he will break the sceptre of thy rule"*

Jesus in fact has four Mot/Aleyin twins. The first is Didymos Judas Thomas (Tammuz) the 'doubting' one of John and the gnostic 'twin'. The second is Judas Iscariot the 'traitor' [Sicari were Zealot assassins], who in Matthew hung himself accursed and in Acts was rended in the 'field of blood', also named after the 'potter' who, despite Zechariah, is also the maternal Creatrix-slayer. One can see clearly in Jesus and Judas (another traditional sacred king title) Aleyin the 'lamb' and the black traitor of chaos and the devil. Both die by hanging. Only the 'white king' is resurrected. The third is Bar-Abbas - a traditional Sacer hero. The fourth is Simon the Cyrene, possibly the last player.

Mark 15:37 "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" - the marriage is consummated and the hymen is rent.

Luke 23:48 "And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned". This is originally a cry "Woe unto our sins; for the judgement and end of Jerusalem is drawn nigh" (Schonfield 274).



The Three Marys at the crucifixion - Francesca

### **The Three Marys**

There are in each gospel three women attending the crucifixion. The consistency, despite variation of the characters, implies three women are central to the sacred drama: Mark 15:40: "There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem." These same three figure in an apocryphal insert into Mark as having been snubbed by Jesus as he came through Jericho "And they came to Jericho:... and the sister of the youth whom Jesus loved and his mother and Salome were there and Jesus did not receive them;... and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging." Matthew 27:55 has: "And many women were

there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: Among which was Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedees children." Luke 23:49 is less specific at the Crucifixion "And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.", but reverts to the three-fold pattern at the tomb. John 19:25 has a slightly different set of muses: "Now there stood by the cross of

Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen." The only satisfactory explanation of two 'sisters' being Mary is that they are sisters in law, but this idea was developed later (Wilson I 151). It is extremely unlikely these repeated motifs concerning the Marys and the women would have been included in all four gospels, given the already established patriarchal heritage that followed Paul, had not it had a pivotal basis in history. From his controversial sermon at Nazareth, we note that mother Mary is 'the mother of James and Joses': Mark 6:3 "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him."



Three Marys are also present to anoint him at the empty sepulchre (Hendy 31).

*There were three who always walked with the Lord:  
Mary his mother and her sister and Magdalen,  
the one who was called his companion. Gospel of Philip*

In each of the gospels it was the women, and particularly Mary Magdalen who were first to see the risen Christ, for which she receives the title *Apostola Apostolorum* - apostle of apostles: Mark 16:9 "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalen, out of whom he had cast seven devils." Now unfortunately this section of Mark is missing from the Codex Sinaiticus recovered from St. Catherine's monastery and is thus believed to be a later addition, however Luke 24:10 confirms "It was Mary Magdalen and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles." and of course they are not believed "And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." Matthew is very difficult to believe after all souls emerging in the crucifixion, and certainly again there is an earthquake and angels everywhere. Discounting the angel and the earthquake, we still however have these two female participants. 27:61 "And there was Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre." out the sepulchre when the others left. A little later we find then back: 28:1 "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalen and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning,

and his raiment white as snow.”

In John 20:1 it is Mary Magdalen who calls [the risen] Jesus ‘Rabboni’ and who afterwards utters the exaltation to the others: “The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalen early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. When she goes to get Peter the disciples did not understand the Resurrection of the dying god: John 20:8 “Then cometh Simon Peter... then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw [the empty napkins] and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.” They depart but Mary waits.



Noli me tangere (Titian Hendy 103)

Mary then utters the searching cry for Tammuz: 20:13 “And they say unto her, ‘Woman, why weepest thou?’ She saith unto them, ‘Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him’.” Compare with the Song of Songs “I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him”. Even today the Song of Songs is traditionally recited on the passover sabbath (Klagsbrun and Podwal). Israel bride of God, Jesus Bridegroom of the Church. Immediately she turns and he is there! 20:15: “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. Jesus saith unto her, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father:” In Greek this reads ‘Do not embrace me’.” The gardener of course is Adam.



Just as Inanna's descent and the resurrection of Attis took three days, so did that of Jesus, following on from Jonah: Matt 12:40 "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." "St Paul says that Christ 'descended into the lower parts of the earth' (Eph. 4:9). St Peter writes that Christ 'preached unto the spirits in prison' (1 Pet. 3:19), meaning hell; and also that 'the gospel was preached to them that are dead' (1 Pet. 4:6). The Apostles' Creed states explicitly that Christ 'descended into hell'" (Walker, Benj. 79).

"There is still the question of why it was to her Christ appeared after his resurrection, and why, if a fundamental part of the Christian kerygma (preaching) is based on the witness of Mary Magdalen and other women, its importance and meaning has been played down in the Christian tradition" (Haskins 31).

### **Magdalen and the Exaltation: Jesus' Feminine Complement**

As the first and only human to witness the resurrection of Christ, Mary Magdalen clearly occupies the pivotal position at the very origin of Christianity. Just as Jesus was the Bridegroom, Magdalen is the true bride of the Church - the feminine physical principle which complements the transcendental Christ. It is to her if anyone that the church should turn. Her time of penitence is ended.

Renan (1853) comments: The cry "He is risen!" quickly spread among the disciples. Love caused it to find ready credence everywhere.... Had his body been taken away, or did enthusiasm... create afterwards the group of narratives by which it was sought to establish faith in the resurrection?... Let us say however that the strong imagination of Mary Magdalen played an important part in this circumstance. Divine power of love! Sacred moments in which the passion of one possessed gave the world a resuscitated God! (Renan 215) The Syrian expression *Maran atha* "Our Lord Cometh"! became a sort of password which the believers used among themselves to strengthen their faith and hope (Renan 147).

Magdalen - Apostola Apostolorum announcing the Resurrection to the Apostles Albani Psalter b 1123 (Haskins facing).

This role of Mary is akin to that of Miriam (p 472) in relation to Moses (Haskins 47). The Jews identified her as Jesus' mother, but she appears more as the witness of the risen Christ, second-born, just as Moses was in the bulrushes. This role, which parallels that of Isis, complements the uniquely female anointings.

Easter is of course the European festival of Astarte, who is named Eostre (Walker 267).

Matthew notes concern that Jesus disappearance and resurrection might be staged by his followers. The Jews entreaty Pilate: 27:63 "Saying, Sir, we



remember that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first." This fear was clearly realized.

Some gnostic texts followed a docetic belief that Jesus was not human, a spiritual emanation which neither blinked nor left footprints, who appeared to John in a vision while being crucified, and to Peter: "Who is the one above the cross who is glad and laughing?" "He... is the living Jesus, but he into whose hands and feet they are driving the nails is his fleshy part, the substitute (Pagels 1979 91). Others saw in the passion a paradoxical Christ of two natures, a physical person who suffered, and a divine Logos of gentleness who in his incarnation transcended human nature so that he could prevail over death by divine power (Pagels 1979 109).

One gnostic Christian text even reverses the doom that fell on Jesus in exchange for Barabbas. It is noted in Matt 27:32 that immediately after the humiliation "as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross." The "Second Treatise of the Great Seth", a revelation dialogue allegedly delivered by Jesus, says "It was another, their father who drank the gall and vinegar; it was not I. They struck me with the reed; it was another, Simon, who bore the cross on his shoulder. It was another on whom they placed the crown of thorns.. But I was rejoicing in the height... and I was laughing at their ignorance." (Robinson 365, Pagels 1979 91).

Given four 'twins', a large following of women, and centuries of the Dionysian heritage of enacting tragic drama, it is by no means 'beyond all reasonable doubt' that it was Jesus who was crucified, nor that the person crucified really died. Jesus declined to partake of myrrh, (Mark 15:23) and died so quickly that "Pilate marvelled if he were already dead" and called the centurion to affirm it (Mark 15:43). Only one gospel reports he was pierced with a sword (John 19:33), and then only for midrash to satisfy Zechariah 12:10 and John 7:38. His bones were not broken like the others (John 19:33), a practice common with Jewish victims because bodies should not hang after sundown (Deut 21:22, Wilson I 130), it also fulfils the requirements for a Paschal Aleyin (Exod 12:46) and (Psalm 34:20). Although death often follows by suffocation, there are contemporary records of crucified people having been rescued (Wilson I 126). He was taken away as quickly as possible (Mark 15:43) by Joseph of Arimathea and the women of Galilee. 'Ointments and spices were prepared' (Luke 23:56). The disciples were 'scattered' and the women, including Magdalen and the second Mary (Mark 15:47) were present and 'saw how his body was laid' (Luke 23:56). A three-day 'burial' has been proposed as part of the baptismal initiation rite (Wilson I 131). The only shred of credibility to the bizarre doctrine of the 'resurrection of the body' is the direct biological one - that the Passion was precisely what it represents Dionysian sacred theatre.

Various authors have suggested that Jesus may have survived the crucifixion. With varying degrees of credibility, Hugh Schonfield (1965) and Barbara Thiering (1993) have suggested that he recovered. Certain metabolic toxins are known to induce a death-like state as exemplified by the tetrodotoxin of the Zombies and it has been suggested the Essenes drugged him into a death-like coma. It is true that both the heritage of Joseph's bloodstained coat and many of the Psalms of David which from Crucifixion prophecies are tales of men who suffered persecution and

mortal danger, but survived. But in both these cases they clearly lived on in their greatness and strength physically. Jesus' resurrected visitations are so brief as to be easily consistent with transient visionary experiences of his aggrieved followers, fish-eating and wound-touching included.

Graves and Podro (1957) note two oblique references to the possibility that Jesus survived the Crucifixion. One is Suetonius's statement "The Jews, who were raising constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus ['simple or good man', rather than 'anointed one'] he [Claudius] drove from Rome." (38). However this name stands of behalf of one of many groups of Jewish Zealots who sought support from the Jews of the Diaspora (Schonfield 197). Another is a comment in the Talmud (Sanhedrin 98a) to the effect that the messiah sat at the gate of the 'Great city' (Rome) with the poor and sick (52). There is also an apocryphal tomb of Yus Asaf in Kashmir also associated with Yeshua (68).

The Qur'an also suggests the same thing 4.157 "And their saying: Surely we have killed the Messiah, Isa son of Marium, the apostle of Allah; and they did not kill him nor did they crucify him, but it appeared to them so (like Isa) and most surely those who differ therein are only in a doubt about it; they have no knowledge respecting it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for sure."

### **Jesus, Magdalen and Peter: The Schism of the Sacred Marriage**

In the anointings there were already signs of gender differences. These were pivotal to the crucifixion itself, for in every case but one they precipitate the betrayal.

In each of the gospels it was the women, and particularly Mary Magdalen who were first to see the risen Christ, but as is typical of the male disciples, they do not believe her. Mark 16:10 "And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not." Likewise in Luke, the women are not believed 24:11 "And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." Such attitudes may find their source in the Essene perspective of gender.

The initial group which gathers before Pentecost still contains the women, although Peter in particular is clearly chauvinistic: Acts 1:13 "And when [the disciples were come in, they went up into an upper room... These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and omits the females: "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled".

This continues to the Pentecostal revelation, which is a prophecy based on sons and daughters prophesying together: Acts 2:1 "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.... And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.... For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in

those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy'.”

However from this early time on, in orthodox Christianity, women have been barred from the Church, ostensibly because they represent the earthly principle of ‘original sin’ through which Eve’s wiles drew Adam into a ‘life of death’ (p 760), despite Christ’s redeeming act. The gnostic Christians professed to carry the inner teaching of Jesus’ path of gnosis. Some took their tradition directly from Magdalen, Martha and Salome (p 563) and were notable for the equal status accorded to the genders. By 200 AD Irenaeus was complaining that women were still celebrating the eucharist with the gnostic teacher Marcus (p 760).

Signs of a division are apparent in the Gospel of Thomas of the tension between Peter representing the orthodox) and Mary Magdalen (the gnostic): 114: Simon Peter said to them, “Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life.” Jesus said, “I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven.” This emphasis on making male emphasizes the gnostic attitude that the physical being is regarded as flawed or evil by comparison with the Kingdom of the spirit, similar to the Manichaeans. However there was such complexity within gnosticism that some gnostics believed rather in a female principle of Sophia and regarded the Yahweh of the Garden as an egotistical demiurge. Jesus also suggested Thomas “when the two are made one” the Kingdom would come in an androgynous merging of the genders.

It has even been suggested that such ‘making male’ of Magdalen has occurred through redaction and that the ‘gnostic’ Gospel of John was written by Mary Magdalen (Ramon K. Jusino), placing the ‘beloved disciple’ as female, eliminating the homosexual implication: “The Fourth Gospel was initially accepted by ‘heterodox’ rather than ‘orthodox’ Christians. The oldest known commentary on the Fourth Gospel is that of the Gnostic Heracleon (d. 180)... Brown’s research reveals that there was a schism early in the history of the Johannine Community... The majority of the community, whom Brown refers to as the Secessionists, defended the community’s high christology and moved toward Docetism, Montanism, and Gnosticism (Brown R 1979: 149). The rest of the community, whom Brown refers to as the Apostolic Christians, were amalgamated into the emerging institutional church... The originating group (50-80 AD) of the community is led by Mary Magdalen. She is highly esteemed as the primary witness to the Resurrection of Christ. She is recognized as such even by believers who do not belong to this particular community. She is known, very early on, as the ‘companion of Jesus’ Later (c 90-100 AD) “The claim that a female disciple of Jesus had been their community’s first leader and hero quickly becomes an embarrassment... A redactor in this community reworks their Gospel to make it consistent with this obscuration. The result of this redaction is the canonical Fourth Gospel as we have it today.”

The Dialogue of the Saviour, which like the Gospel of Thomas, contains traditional sayings in archaic form and has a possible date of origin in the first century. In the Dialogue are several passages which emphasize the key role of Mary in terms of her depth of understanding and revelation of his inner message: (53) Mary said “Thus with respect to the wickedness of each day, and the labourer deserves his food and the disciple resembles his teacher” And she said this as one who had understood completely. (60) Mary said: “Tell me Lord why have I come to this place, to profit or to forfeit” The Lord said “You make clear the abundance of the

revealer!” (69) Mary said “I want to understand all things just as they are”. The Lord said “He who will seek out life! For this is their wealth...” While the disciples are asking what will be their heavenly garments and being told they will become blessed when they strip themselves, like the Albigenses did later to their doom, Mary utters the truth of cosmic gnosis “There is but one saying I will speak to the Lord concerning the mystery of truth: In this we have taken our stand and to the cosmic we are transparent” (Robinson 252-3).

The tension between Mary and Peter continues in the later Gospel of Mary: Peter said to Mary, “Sister, we know that the Savior loved you more than the rest of women. Tell us the words of the Savior which you remember - which you know (but) we do not, nor have we heard them.” Mary answered and said, “What is hidden from you I will proclaim to you.” And she began to speak to them...expounding the gnostic aeons. When Mary had said this, she fell silent, since it was to this point that the Savior had spoken with her. But Andrew answered and said to the brethren, “Say what you (wish to) say about what she has said. I at least do not believe that the Savior said this. For certainly these teachings are strange ideas.” Peter answered and spoke concerning these same things. He questioned them about the Savior: “Did he really speak with a woman without our knowledge (and) not openly? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did he prefer her to us?” Then Mary wept and said to Peter, “My brother Peter, what do you think? Do you think that I thought this up myself in my heart, or that I am lying about the Savior?” Levi answered and said to Peter, “Peter, you have always been hot-tempered. Now I see you contending against the woman like the adversaries. But if the Savior made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Savior knows her' very well. That is why he loved her more” than us (Robinson 524).

In the Gospel of Philip, Magdalen is called Christ's ‘companion’ (Gk *koinonos* partner) the most important of the three women “who were always with the Lord”. “But Christ loved her more than all the disciples and used to kiss her often on the mouth. ... They said to him, why do you lover her more than all of us? ... Jesus said ‘when the light comes, he who sees will see the light, but he who is blind will remain in darkness’” (Robinson 148, Haskins 40).

In the Pistis Sophia Mary likewise warns “Peter makes me hesitate, I am afraid of him because he hates the female race” (Walker 791, Haskins 42). When she asks him if she may speak in boldness Jesus replies: “Mariham Mariham, the happy, this shall I complete in all the mysteries of ... the Height. Speak in boldness because thou art she whose heart straineth toward the Kingdom of the heavens more than all thy brothers.” When she says she has comprehended every word, he wonders at her because she has become spirit quite pure, assigning to her a key place in the Millennium (Haskins 50-1).