

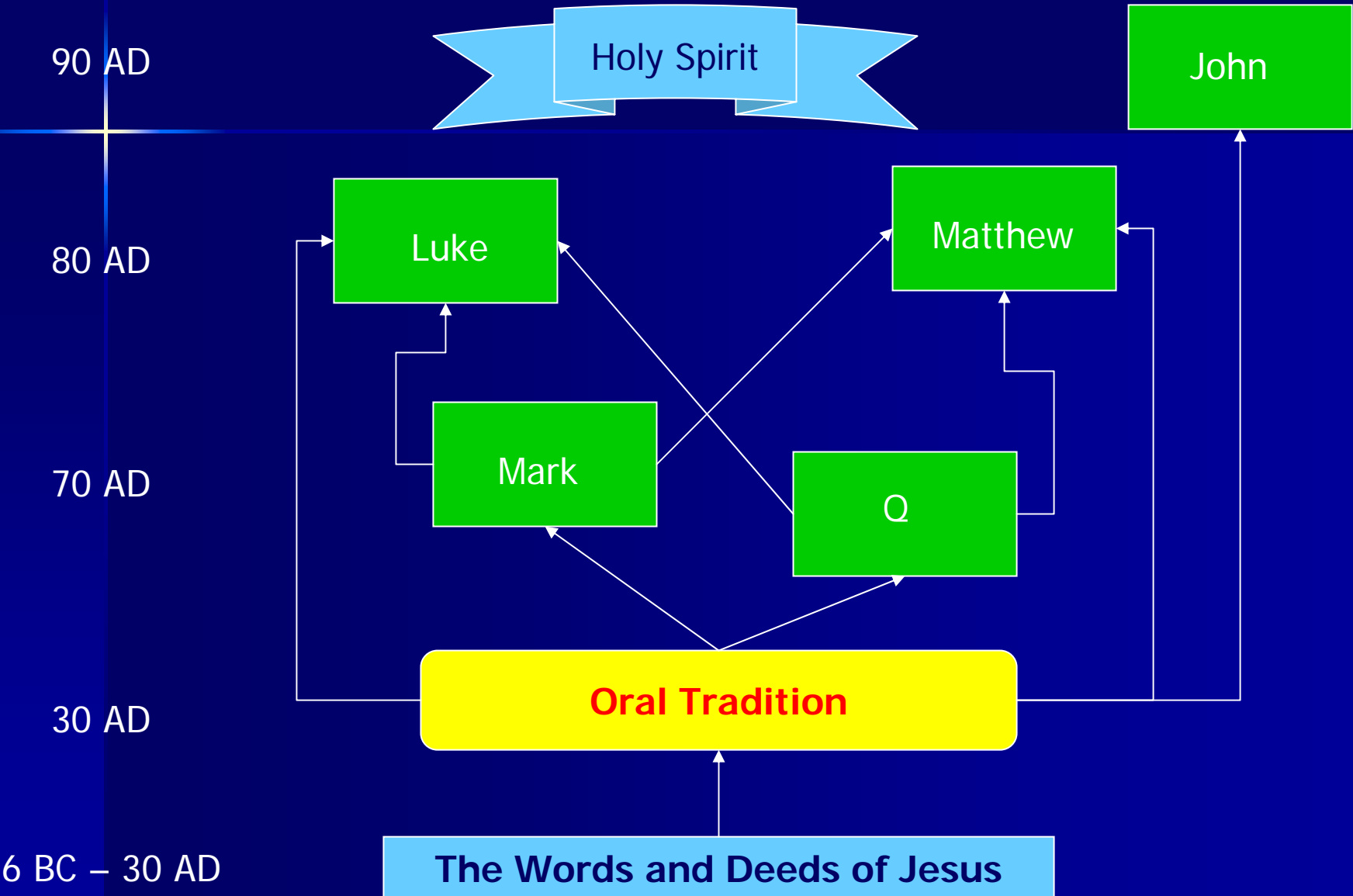
Mary Magdalene



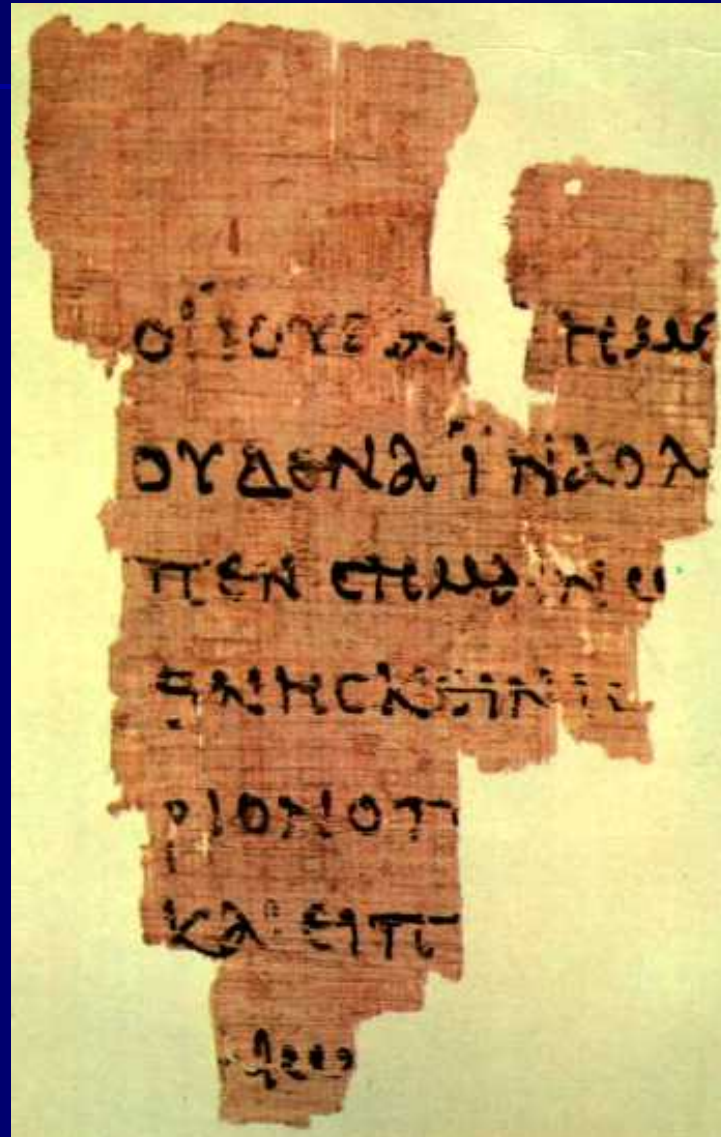
“ . . . The marriage of Jesus and Mary Magdalene is part of the historical record.”

--Teabing, *The Da Vinci Code*, 245.

Formation of the Gospels



P52 (ca. 125 AD)
John 18:31-33, 37-38



Mary Magdalene in the NT

- Her surname indicates that she was from the town of Magdala on the SW shore of the Sea of Galilee
- Along with other women, Mary accompanied Jesus and the twelve on their journeys and provided money for his mission (Luke 8:2)
- Jesus had cast "seven demons" from her (Luke 8:2, Mark 16:9)
- With other women, she was present at the crucifixion (Matt 27:56, Mark 15:40, Luke 23:55, John 19:25)

Mary Magdalene in the NT

(cont'd)

- With other women (alone in John), she was the first to discover the empty tomb (Matt 28:1, Mark 16:1, Luke 24:1, John 20:1)
- With other women (alone in John), she told the disciples about the missing body (Matt 28:10, Luke 24:10, John 20:2)
- With other women (alone in Mark and John), she saw the Risen Jesus (Matt 28:9, Mark 16:9, John 20:11ff)
- She told the disciples she had seen the Risen Lord (John 20:18)

The twelve were with Jesus, as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: **Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out**, and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources.

Luke 8:1b-3

There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were **Mary Magdalene**, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. These used to follow him and provided for him when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

Mark 15:40-41

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him."

When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?"

John 20:11ff

Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher).

Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

John 20:15bff

Mary Magdalene in Non-Canonical Writings

And the companion of the [...] Mary Magdalene. [...] loved her more than all the disciples, and used to kiss her often on her mouth. The rest of the disciples [...]. They said to him "Why do you love her more than all of us?"

The Savior answered and said to them, "Why do I not love you like her? When a blind man and one who sees are both together in darkness, they are no different from one another. When the light comes, then he who sees will see the light, and he who is blind will remain in darkness."

Gospel of Philip 63-64

Gospel of Philip

- Scholars agree it was written in the third century, two centuries after the four canonical Gospels
- It is not a Gospel, but a collection of reflections by an unknown author, which occasionally attributes otherwise unknown words to Jesus
- It quotes directly from I Cor, John, Matt, Mark and 1 Peter
- It is laced with *Gnostic* theology, which mixes Greek Platonism with Christian teachings

The world came about through a mistake. For he who created it wanted to create it imperishable and immortal. He fell short of attaining his desire. For the world never was imperishable, nor, for that matter, was he who made the world.

When Eve was still in Adam death did not exist. When she was separated from him death came into being. If he enters again and attains his former self, death will be no more.

The Gospel of Philip 75, 68

Philip the apostle said, "Joseph the carpenter planted a garden because he needed wood for his trade. It was he who made the cross from the trees which he planted. His own offspring hung on that which he planted. His offspring was Jesus, and the planting was the cross."

But the Tree of Life is in the middle of the Garden. However, it is from the olive tree that we got the chrism, and from the chrism, the resurrection.

The Gospel of Philip 73

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 I will proclaim to you" . . . [Gnostic teaching] . . .

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 and 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?"

—Gospel of Mary 10, 17-18

Gospel of Mary

- Scholars agree it was written in the late second century, a century after the four canonical Gospels
- We currently possess a fragment in which Mary Magdalene presents the “teaching” she received from Jesus to the other Apostles, who (except for Levi) reject it.
- The “teaching” of Jesus is Gnostic Theology.

Definition of Gnosticism

- A collection of various worldviews which hold that salvation is achieved through a knowledge of divine secrets which is reserved for an elite group
 - Has roots in first century Judaism & Christianity, but incorporates Greek mythologies and Platonism
 - Became highly prominent in the second century

Elements of Gnosticism

■ Dualism

- Between matter (bad) and spirit (good)

■ Creation

- Begins with an absolute **transcendent God**
- A **Demiurge** or “Foolish Creator” appears
 - He creates the world without permission from the highest God, who remains unknown
 - This was a “non-spiritual” creation.
- **Angels or lower beings**
 - Assisted Demiurge in creating the world.
- **The Absolute God responds**
 - He plants a divine spark inside humans
 - This is variously *soul*, *spirit* or *spark*
 - This enables humanity to realize its divine nature, and to free it to make its return

The Goal of Gnosticism

■ The Return

- The Sparks of light make a return through the spheres to the highest heaven
 - These number either **seven** (the seven then-known planetary bodies)
 - Or **four** (the four primal elements)
- The return often involves becoming spiritually male (Adam) or androgynous

■ The Divine Revelation

- The Gnosis of one's divine nature is made known through a divine revealer (usually Christ)

My soul came to the third power, which is called ignorance. The power questioned the soul saying, "Where are you going? In wickedness are you bound. But you are bound; do not judge!" And the soul said, "Why do you judge me although I have not judged? I was bound though I have not bound. I was not recognized. But I have recognized that the All is being dissolved, both the earthly things and the heavenly. . . ."

. . . When the soul had overcome the third power, it went upwards and **saw the fourth power**, which took **seven forms**. The **first form is darkness**, the **second desire**, the **third ignorance**, the **fourth is the excitement of death**, the **fifth is the kingdom of the flesh**, the **sixth is the foolish wisdom of the flesh**, the **seventh is the wrathful wisdom**. These are the seven powers of wrath.

They ask the soul, "Whence do you come, slayer of men, or where are you going, conquerer of space?" The soul answered and said, "What binds me has been slain and what surrounds me has been overcome, and my desire has been ended, and ignorance has died. In a world I was released from a world and in a type from a heavenly type, and from the fetter of oblivion which is transient. From this time on will I attain to the rest of the time, of the season, of the aeon, in silence."

--The Gospel of Mary

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."

--The Gospel of Thomas

“ . . . Jesus as a married man makes infinitely more sense than our standard biblical view of Jesus as a bachelor.”

--Teabing, *The Da Vinci Code*, 245.

Celibacy In Judaism

■ The Norm

- Marriage was the norm among the Jewish masses, as well as among Pharisees and Sadducees

■ Examples of Celibacy in Judaism

- Jeremiah was commanded to remain unmarried because of the impending judgment on Judah (Jer 16:1ff)
- For this reason, John the Baptist was probably celibate
- The most pious religious sect, the Essenes, exercised celibacy
- Jewish Religious hermits, such as a certain Bannus, exercised celibacy (Josephus, *Vita* 11)
- Paul exercised celibacy, justifying this because of the urgency of the Gospel (1 Cor 7:7)
- Jesus' unmarried state fits this religious pattern

"... The Church needed to defame Mary Magdalene [as a prostitute] in order to cover up her dangerous secret—her role as the Holy Grail."

--Teabing, *The Da Vinci Code*, 244.

Mary Magdalene in Church Tradition

- From early times Mary was identified with the unnamed woman who anointed Jesus' feet in Luke 7:37-50
 - This was done because Mary is first mentioned by name in Luke 8:2, just after this episode.
 - Early commentators did not make this connection between the two passages to castigate Mary, but to show both the depth of her love, as well as the fullness of her healing (of seven demons)
 - While not beyond the realm of possibility, this connection is more a sermonic speculation.

“The disciples therefore, went away again to their home. But Mary remained standing at the tomb, weeping.”

“At this point we must stop and reflect upon the ardent love in the heart of this woman who would not leave the Lord’s grave even after his own disciples had gone away. She continued seeking him whom she could not find; in tears she kept searching; and, afire with love, she yearned for him whom she believed had been removed. Thus it happened that she alone saw him, she who had remained behind to seek him, simply because a truly good act involves the virtue of perseverance.”

--Pope Gregory the Great (540-604 AD), *Hom.* 25:102.

Mary Magdalene in Church Tradition (Cont'd)

- Mary Magdalene was revered throughout the history of Christianity
 - She was given the title “The Apostle of the Apostles” and held to be equal to the apostles.
 - Significant churches and communities (including the Greek monastery on Mt. Athos) made her their patron saint.
 - July 22 has been her feast day since antiquity.

Mary Magdalene

