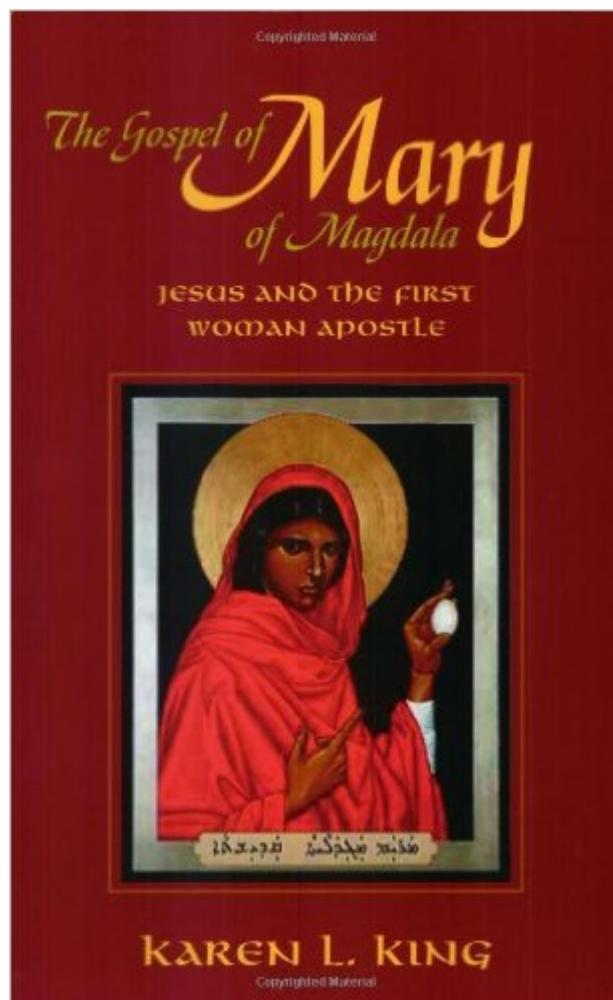


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The Gospel Of Mary Of Magdala: Jesus And The First Woman Apostle



Synopsis

Lost for more than fifteen hundred years, the Gospel of Mary is the only existing early Christian gospel written in the name of a woman. Unlike the controversial Jesus' Wife gospel fragment, the Gospel of Mary does not claim Mary was married to Jesus. But it does show her to be an important disciple to whom Jesus' male disciples turn for advice and wisdom. Indeed, the apostle Peter specifically asks Mary to interpret the words of Jesus. Karen L. King tells the story of the recovery of this remarkable gospel and offers a new translation. This brief narrative presents a radical interpretation of Jesus' teachings as a path to inner spiritual knowledge. It rejects his suffering and death as a path to eternal life and exposes the view that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute for what it is - a piece of theological fiction. The Gospel of Mary of Magdala offers a fascinating glimpse into the conflicts and controversies that shaped earliest Christianity.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Karen L. King is a Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Harvard University Divinity School. In "The Gospel of Mary of Magdala: Jesus and the First Woman Apostle," she turns her attention to deciphering the importance of this early piece of Christian literature. The Gospel of Mary was written early in the second century A.D. but then "disappeared for over fifteen hundred years until a single, fragmentary copy . . . came to light in the late nineteenth century." Additional fragments were discovered in 1917 and 1983. The first six pages and an additional four pages from the middle of the gospel are missing. The few pages that have been found provide a very different picture of early Christianity than that which has come down to us through the established canon. King's purpose in

publishing this work is not to undermine the tradition of scripture, but rather to provide a better understanding of the forces at work that helped shape early Christianity. The entire gospel takes place after the resurrection of Jesus. He has appeared to the disciples one last time, instructing them regarding the nature of sin. Jesus tells them that sin comes from people not recognizing their true spiritual nature and instead focusing on the things of this world. After this final teaching, he directs them to go out and preach his word, and then he departs. The disciples are left, but instead of rushing out to preach, they fear for their lives. Mary Magdalene is the only one who remains steadfast and she seeks to comfort the others. Peter asks her to share any of Jesus' teaching that she alone might possess. Mary relates a vision that she had in which Jesus described the soul's departure from this world and the powers that would attempt to stop it from ascending to its final resting place.

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