

## **SALOME, MOTHER OF JAMES OF JOHN**

### **INTRODUCTION.**

- A. Scripture text: **Matthew 20:20; 27:56; Mark 16:1-8**. From Roy H. Enoch (12-05-1993).
- B. It has been said that next to His own mother, the most notable woman in Jesus' life was the mother of James and John.
  - 1. To be so close to her sons, he must also have been close to her.
  - 2. Yet, we are told very little about her.
    - a. Matthew refers to her as "the mother of Zebedee's children" (Mt. 20:20; 27:56).
    - b. Mark calls her Salome.
      - 1) At the crucifixion (Mk. 15:40).
      - 2) At the resurrection (Mk. 16:1).
    - c. But she is best known, not as Salome, or the wife of Zebedee, but as "the mother of James and John."
  - 3. It seems from the different accounts that list the names of women at the crucifixion, that she was the sister of Mary, mother of Jesus (Mt. 27:56; Mk. 15:40; Jn. 19:25).
    - a. Most scholars conclude that "Mary the mother of James and Joseph" is the same as "Mary the wife of Clopas" and that "the mother of Zebedee's sons" is "His mother's sister."
    - b. This would explain some of the closeness that Jesus showed for "Peter, James and John." (Peter was their partner in fishing.) See Lk. 5:10.

### **I. IT WAS NOT UNUSUAL FOR A WOMAN TO BE IDENTIFIED BY FAMILY RELATIONS.**

- A. This is still true today (especially if they were well known).
- B. In the region of Capernaum Zebedee and his sons, James and John were fisherman in partnership with Simon, called Peter.
  - 1. It would be natural for many to know the father/sons and not know his wife, Salome.
  - 2. When the gospel accounts were written, James and John had been apostles of Jesus for decades and natural to refer to Salome as their mother.
  - 3. Matthew, Mark and Luke are thought to have written their "gospels" around 60-65AD, and John wrote from 85-96AD. This would make it even more understandable for Salome to be identified with her well-known sons.

### **II. IN THE SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO SALOME, SHE SHOWS SPIRITUAL GROWTH.**

- A. The first mention of her seems to be in Mt. 20:20.
  - 1. It may be that the incident recorded in Mk. 10:35-40 was an earlier request by the sons on their own, but most scholars seem to believe that it is a briefer description of the same occasion.
  - 2. Her request was for prominence for her two sons (Mt. 20:21).
- B. Her request was inappropriate because of the nature of the kingdom.
  - 1. It first showed she did not understand that the kingdom was to be spiritual, not political.
    - a. This misunderstanding was widespread among the Jews.
    - b. They expected an earthly, political kingdom like David had enjoyed at Jerusalem.
    - c. Many are still worldly minded and look for an earthly kingdom when Jesus returns.
    - d. They consider the church to be a temporary substitute for the earthly kingdom, but Paul says that it was God's eternal purpose (Eph. 3:10,11).
  - 2. Jesus had always described a spiritual kingdom.
    - a. The kingdom was to come w/power (Mk. 9:1).
    - b. The power was to come when the HS came upon the apostles (Ac. 1:5-8).
    - c. They were to stay in Jerusalem until they received that power (Lk. 24:46-49).
  - 3. The kingdom is never referred to as being in the future after the HS came upon the apostles at Pentecost (Ac. 2).

- a. Those whom God delivered from the power of darkness were placed into the kingdom of X (Col. 1:13).
  - b. John speaks of being in the kingdom with other Christians (Rev. 1:9; 5:10).
- C. Salome's request was inappropriate because it was selfish.
  - 1. Personal ambition is a natural desire that we must overcome to mature spiritually.
  - 2. It is a struggle that we all must face constantly.
  - 3. The Lord lovingly showed that it was not appropriate (Mt. 20:23).
  - 4. It was not something to be "given" but something for which we must make preparation to qualify (Mt. 20:25-28).
- D. She did not turn away from the Lord because her request was denied.
  - 1. She was with the other women at the Cross when all of the apostles except John seemed to have left Him.
  - 2. She came to the tomb at dawn on the first day of the week to with the other women to prepare the body with spices.
  - 3. Her devotion and dedication was not dependent upon getting what she wanted.
    - a. This is an excellent example for us.
    - b. We do ask for things at times that are not appropriate.
    - c. James says that, thus is why we do now get what we pray for (Jas. 4:3).
    - d. We should have enough trust in the Lord to pray as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mt. 26:39).

#### IV. HER FAMILY WAS A GREAT TRIBUTE TO HER.

- A. Her sons developed from "sons of thunder" to the first apostle to be martyred and the "apostle of love."
  - 1. Jesus had named Simon, Cephas (Aramaic) or Peter (Greek) for a stone and named the sons of Zebedee Boanerges (Aramaic), which Mark translates into Greek as "sons of thunder" or a "fiery disposition" or as some have suggested, "a hot temper."
  - 2. Two incidents may illustrate why they were so named (Lk. 9:54-56; Mk. 9:38).
- B. Their spiritual maturing reflected that of their mother's.
  - 1. They too became loving and concerned about others.
  - 2. We need to mature in the same ways.

#### CONCLUSION.

- A. Salome always seemed concerned about her family and dedicated to the Lord's service.
- B. She did not always understand what was best for her sons.
- C. But she always remained faithful and dedicated to the Lord.