



Two Women of Galilee

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Seeking to restore health to her lungs, Joanna, wife to Herod's chief steward, approaches her cousin Mary, mother of the healer Jesus. Though their families were estranged when Joanna's parents adopted Roman ways, Mary welcomes her graciously. Jesus indeed heals Joanna's body...and her soul blossoms through her friendship with Mary and with her work as one of his disciples. But as word of Jesus' miracles reaches King Herod's court, intrigue, treachery and murder cast shadows onto Joanna's new path, changing her life forever.

Two Women of Galilee Details

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From Reader Review Two Women of Galilee for online ebook

Deb says

the two woman are mary, the mother of jesus, and joanna, the wife of the herod's chief steward chuza. joanna only gets a brief mention in the bible, but here the author has her tell her story in detail. along the way she does a great job of capturing the historial feel of the first century. joanna is also a believable character, from her motivation to meet jesus because of a personal illness to her subsequent support of his ministry. her life changes drastically, but she finds something she was missing along the way. [return]the only quibble i had with this book was the words the author put in jesus' mouth (always a risky proposition). i wasn't sure about the message she seemed to be trying to push there, that it was a genuine "jesus" message. but of course that is a matter of my own opinion, the rest of the story was wonderful and i would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys historical/biblical fiction.

Joan Horkey says

Mediocre.

Margaret says

The author is a journalist who has a Master's Degree in Religion from Yale Divinity School and Art History degree from Queens College.

This is a very fast read. It lightly covers the history of the Hebrews who choose to align with the Romans for the wealth and give up their religion. It is set in the time when Jesus was just begining his ministry as an adult. It very beautifully tells about Mary, Jesus's mother and the political scene. It is beautifully told and gave the reader a realistic detailed picture of how things probably were. The book covers the horror of Herod and Pilate, the intrigue, treachery and murder in King Herod's court and those brave souls who choose to follow the Savior. It takes you right up to the Crucifixion. The author points out the inherent value of women in biblical times. In First Century Palestine, as well as elsewhere in the Middle East, the role of a mother was one of honor. We see this in the way people flock to Mary. There were more women followers of Jesus than men and the fact that women were the first witnesses to the Resurrection. Very nice little book to read at Easter.

Jenny says

Man, I wanted to like this, I really did. Alas, no. Essentially biblical fanfic, this novel tells the story of Joanna, one of the women healed by Jesus who comes over to follow him in the time leading up to the crucifixion. As such, I thought it had incredible potential, but it falls short, mostly because of the writing. Someone did not sit Ms. Rourke down at an early age and say to her, "Show, not tell." The narration is bland, and the emotions described feel forced. There is none of the passion one would expect from someone coming to know and love Christ, and his mother Mary, while enigmatic, lacked any real depth.

Am disappointed. (At least it was a quick read.)

Ruth Bonetti says

I wanted to like this more. An interesting concept, and attempt to recreate the Biblical world, but let down by less than gripping writing.

M.M. Strawberry Reviews says

I wasn't sure quite what to expect after finding this book in a bargain bin at the store. It looked intriguing enough, So I picked it up. It's a nice story told in first-person perspective by a woman briefly mentioned in the Bible. Since this is entirely in her POV, much of what led to Jesus' death is omitted, so if you're looking for a book about Jesus, look elsewhere. It was a fairly quick but enjoyable read for me, though I wish this book could have gone with a bit more description, some of the parts felt dry and it was hard for me to actually imagine their surroundings or what they were wearing due to the sparseness of description.

Kristin says

This book was only ok. The writing was bad, but it was a good idea. I almost stopped reading it halfway through. It's the author's first novel, and you can totally tell! Her sentences don't always go together well, and there isn't much flow. I don't recommend it.

Nancy Mills says

This is the story of Mary and her cousin Joanna. Mary is, obviously, from the Hebrew culture and Joanna is from the Roman culture. The book gives an interesting insight into the Roman culture and the people's view on healers and superstitions. However, I did enjoy the view of Mary in this book. It talks shows her struggles as Jesus' mother--how much she continued to care for Him, even though He led a life that she could not control.

Good book for one that was picked up at Goodwill!

Heather Hare says

Joanna suffered from poor health until the healer Jesus cured her. Jesus is the son of her cousin Mary, with whom she develops a closer relationship over the course of the book. A quick, interesting read. It doesn't retell biblical events as differently as in *The Red Tent*, but does provide more insight into what life was like at that time. This particularly resonated with me right now because I spent a few days traveling in the area of Galilee last fall, including a visit to Capernaum which was a headquarters, of a sort, for Jesus.

Tamar says

- "Two Women of Galilee is a daring book indeed. Mary Rourke has been bold enough to trespass to the very edges of "the greatest story ever told" and she returns with a novel that is beautifully written, original and emotionally resonant. In the spirit of The Red Tent, Rourke has pondered the lives of the women of the gospels, and from a half line reference here and there has skillfully evoked an entrancing world."

--Geraldine Brooks, author of 2006 Pulitzer Prize winning March

- "What was Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward, doing among the followers of Jesus? Thereon hangs Mary Rourke's tale, and what a tale it is! Rourke takes the fleeting mention of a minor character in the Gospel as her launching pad for a vivid and suspenseful flight back to first-century Galilee and Judaea -- as seen, this time, through the eyes of a daring woman."

--Jack Miles, Pulitzer Prize winning author of
CHRIST: A Crisis in the Life of God

- "Fresh and affecting" *

--Booklist *(starred review)

- "Engaging and poignant"

--Bookreporter.com

- "The conclusion puts a new spark into Joanna's life and is sure to put a smile on the face of readers fond of cozy historicals."

--Publishers Weekly

- "Compelling... A fascinating blend of imagination and historical characters and events--I couldn't put it down."

--Lauraine Snelling, bestselling author of Amethyst

Marissa says

The novel takes a look at a lesser known portion of Jesus's tale... one of his young female followers, Joanna, who is his mother's cousin. Joanna is suffering from an illness that is progressively worsening. Consequently, when she learns of a healer in the area, she decides to go see him. It turns out to be Jesus, and Joanna appeals to his mother, Mary, to go to him on Joanna's behalf. Mary recognizes Joanna, although Joanna does not recognize Mary: they are cousins. It was an interesting way to look at an otherwise relatively well-known story. The focus is mainly on Joanna and her relationships, especially with her husband and her cousin, but the well-known elements of Jesus's story also appear throughout.

Michal says

this was not as compelling as it could have been. the premise is that joanna, the wife of herod's steward, is healed by christ and becomes a convert. she has more of a relationship with mary (the mother of jesus) than with him. there was nothing that i really objected to in the way this was told, but i expected it to be a better story than i found it to be. perhaps it is because i believe that being converted makes you change your behavior and not just your thoughts.

this was not as good as orson scott card's books about the wives of the patriarchs or the red tent.

Deb says

The two woman are Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Joanna, the wife of the Herod's chief steward Chuza. Joanna only gets a brief mention in the Bible, but here the author has her tell her story in detail. Along the way she does a great job of capturing the historial feel of the first century. Joanna is also a believable character, from her motivation to meet Jesus because of a personal illness to her subsequent support of his ministry. Her life changes drastically, but she finds something she was missing along the way. [return]The only quibble I had with this book was the words the author put in Jesus' mouth (always a risky proposition). I wasn't sure about the message she seemed to be trying to push there, that it was a genuine "Jesus" message. But of course that is a matter of my own opinion, the rest of the story was wonderful and I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys historical/Biblical fiction.

Nancy says

An interesting look at a facet of the life of Jesus that we seldom read about--his mother and other women of the time.

Elizabeth says

This was a very fast read, which is what I needed right now as I can't seem to get into anything lately. I enjoy historical fiction and am fascinated by biblical fiction. This book was okay. It was good for an afternoon read. I feel the book is entirely lacking in depth - especially when the character was someone she could have created so much about with so little to go on from the bible. It felt like an opportunity lost. Again, good for a good superficial read on a cold day under your blankie.
