

Who Prepared the Feast?
Women Disciples Prepare the Passover

A Study of Mark 14:12-17

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Translation of Mark 14:12-17

12) *And on the first day of the Unleavened feast, when they killed the Passover (lamb), his disciples said to him, 'Where do you wish that we should go prepare, in order that you can eat the Passover?'*

13) *And he sent out two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city and a man carrying a pitcher of water will meet you. Follow him, wherever he may go in. 14) Say to the master of the house, 'The teacher says where is my guestroom, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' 15) And he will show you a large, already furnished upper room. There prepare for us."*

16) *And the disciples went out and came into the city and found it even as he had said to them, and they prepared the Passover.*

17) *And when it was evening, he came with The Twelve.*

In Mark 14:12-17 we find the Passover Feast pericope in which two disciples are sent ahead of Jesus and the twelve in order to make ready for this important Jewish religious obligation. Who were these disciples who prepared the feast? If, as I will argue, there is significant evidence for the preparation of the feast to be attributed to the women, then this pericope takes on the special hermenutical significance as one of the rare synoptic examples of women being named as disciples.

What are the various types of evidence for the women being the disciples responsible for the Passover feast preparation? The first is the manner in which Mark in particular and the synoptics in general use the terms "disciple" and "the twelve". The second is the Markan and synoptic evidence in which the women are specifically mentioned in the context of providing food, and the third is the historical context of the time, in which it was the responsibility of the women to prepare for the Paschal supper. This argument is supported by Mark's complete silence to the uniqueness of the event, which would undoubtedly needed explanation if there were an unorthodox occurrence of men preparing the Passover Feast. Finally, after examining this pericope in the other synoptics, I will specifically address why the Lucan bias of glorifying the role of Peter while diminishing the

role of women would finally explain why Luke names Peter and John as the disciples who prepared the feast rather than the women, who are the most likely candidates for this work.

I. The use of “the twelve” and “the disciples” in Mark and the Synoptics

Mark never uses the phrase, “twelve disciples” to denote the followers of Jesus. Instead in Mark the word, “μαθητητης”, “disciple, pupil, follower” is used forty-two times.¹ Mark uses it in a general sense to refer to those following Jesus (Mark 6:1),² and to those Jesus was teaching (Mark 9:31).³ “Disciple” is not a title that is bestowed by the Markan Jesus. In fact, in Mark, Jesus names no one as a disciple. Rather being a disciple is a designation that Mark uses for those people following Jesus. This is further evidenced by the fact that the designation, “disciple” is used six times⁴ by Mark for the followers of Jesus before “The Twelve” were appointed to be a subgroup of those disciples in Mark 3:13.

It is only when referring to this subgroup of disciples, that Mark uses the words, “δωδεκα / των δωδεκα” (Twelve / The Twelve). This rare instance happens **only ten times**⁵ in the Gospel of Mark. Of those ten times, it is used three times to identify a specific person, (Judas as, “One of The Twelve”).⁶ Two other times Jesus is portrayed as, “calling The Twelve” (to him);⁷ and once Jesus “appointed Twelve”.⁸ Mark uses “The Twelve” as an identifying phrase to delineate the twelve from the rest of the disciples.

For example, in Mark 4:10 we have the confusing verse:

“And when he was alone, **those who were around him along with the twelve** asked him concerning the parables.”

¹ Search of the RSV on Olivetree.com.

² “He went away from there and came to his own country; and his disciples followed him.”

³ “... for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he will rise.”

⁴ Mark 2:15, 2:16, 2:18, 2:23, 3:7, and 3:9.

⁵ Search of the RSV on Olivetree.com (There is an eleventh time which is questionable in Mark 3:16.) See Appendix One.

⁶ Mark 14:10, 14:20 and 14:43.

⁷ Mark 6:7 and Mark 9:35.

⁸ Mark 3:14. (And the questionable Mark 3:16).

And in Mark 10:32: “And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, **and those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve** aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him.”

Again, in both these instances there seems to be those around who are not called “The Twelve”, since the twelve need to be taken aside or referred to separately from the rest of the group the group of disciples.

To summarize this argument, Mark seems to use the word, “Disciple” to refer to Jesus’ followers in a general way. However, the use of the term, “The Twelve” seems to be used by Mark specifically to separate out a particular subgroup of Jesus followers. From these verses, the strong argument can be made that within the Markan context there were more than twelve people who bear the designation disciple.

A similar argument on this matter is made by John P. Meier.⁹ He points out that Levi the toll collector is called to follow Jesus in Mark 2:13-15, in the same way that Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John are called in Mark 1:16-20. However, Levi is not listed among “The Twelve” that were appointed as a subgroup in Mark 3:14-19. Here we have Markan evidence of a disciple who is not among “The Twelve”! Furthermore, in comparing the lists of the names of “The Twelve” from Matthew, Mark, Luke and Acts¹⁰; there are a total of fourteen names listed. Meier argues that what was important to the authors was the **symbolic number** of “The Twelve” (and not the names), “Whose very number symbolized, promised ...the regathering of the twelve tribes.”¹¹ In conclusion, Meier summarizes that there is strong textual evidence of the existence of more than twelve disciples.

The most recent version of the BDAG revised by Frederick Danker also supports this view. In the definition of μαθητης Danker reports that it is doubtful that a passage

⁹ John P. Meier, *The Circle of the Twelve: Did it Exist During Jesus’ Public Ministry?*, Journal of Biblical Literature 116/4, (Chicago: Scholars Press, 1997), 635-672.

¹⁰ Mark 3:16-19, Matthew 10:2-4, Luke 6:14-16, Acts 1:13.

¹¹ Ibid. Meier, 657.

concerning the disciples really means “The Twelve” and not a larger or smaller circle. He also goes on to define μαθητης as being Jesus’ disciples, male and female.¹²

What criteria should be used for naming someone a disciple in Mark? If we use the criterion of the existence of an actual “call” story, then eight of “The Twelve” would not qualify as disciples. If we use the criterion of a person’s prominence in the Markan story, we would still have no evidence for eight of “The Twelve”. But if we use as a criterion someone who followed Jesus, it is then that we have a criterion that includes all of “The Twelve”. – A criterion that would also include the women who followed Jesus from Galilee.

Should maleness be used as a criterion for a disciple? The book of Mark never refers to the disciples as “the men”. Therefore there is no textual evidence for the disciples being an exclusively male group and thus it cannot be used as a criterion of a disciple. In fact, Mark identifies no single person –male or female as a disciple.¹³

“The Twelve Disciples”

Since Mark never uses the phrase, “**Twelve Disciples**” where does this linguistically limiting designation come from? The only gospel author who uses this phrase is **Matthew** – and then for certain **only three times**. Of those three times, two instances clearly use this distinction in the context of separating the twelve disciples out from the other disciples. These are found in Matt. 20:17 when Jesus, “Took the twelve disciples aside”. And in Matthew 10:1, when Jesus, “Called to him his twelve disciples”.¹⁴ The final use of this term is found in Matthew 11:1, “And when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples” which can be interpreted in the context of Jesus finishing his speech to the same twelve that are referred to in Matthew 10:1. From this analysis the argument can be made that the

¹² Frederick W. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd Ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 609-610.

¹³ As in the phrase, “Peter, a disciple of Jesus.”

¹⁴ See Appendix 3.

common description of the disciples as being limited to twelve men is a modern anachronism that does not have its basis in the scriptural record. It speaks more to the lens of patriarchal scriptural interpretation than to any balanced hermeneutic. Further extra-canonical evidence in support of women being disciples is found in the Gospel of Thomas verse 61, where Salome is identified as a disciple; and in the Gospel of Peter verse 12, where Mary Magdalene is called, “a disciple of the Lord”.

II. The role of the women disciples and their association with food preparation

In the book of Mark, the women disciples are specifically associated with food and its preparation. In Mark 15:40 we find that not only are women described as following Jesus, but they are described as providing for him in Galilee.¹⁵

“There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. These used to follow him and **provided** (διακονεο) **for him** when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.”¹⁶

Other women are also described as providing food to Jesus. In Mark 1:31 when Jesus was in Capernum¹⁷ he was fed at the home of Simon Peter’s Mother in Law. “He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.”¹⁸ While it can be argued what the extent of her service to the Rabbi and the disciples was, within the first century context the duty of hospitality and the offering of food to guests would have been the first service that would have been expected.

In Mark 11:11-14, the passage with the most interesting Markan use of the term, “The Twelve” we have the story of Jesus going off alone with this subgroup of twelve men to Bethany. Note what happens when Jesus goes off alone with the twelve: “On the following

¹⁵ Jane Schaberg, “Luke” *Women’s Bible Commentary*, Ed. Newsom, Ringe, (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1992.) 281-288.

¹⁶ The women are also referred to as “providing for him” in Matthew 27:55.

¹⁷ Mark 1:21.

¹⁸ The same story is recorded in Matthew 8:14 and Luke 4:38-39.

day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry.” --This is the only time in Mark that Jesus himself is characterized as being hungry.¹⁹ It is possible that Jesus was hungry because he was off alone with the twelve men, and that there were no women with their provisions nearby with food to offer them. Hungry, Jesus spots a fig tree in the distance and goes to it looking for figs. But when Jesus discovers that figs were not in season, he curses the tree.²⁰ This behavior is unprecedented in the gospels. In any case, this is the only instance of Jesus going off alone with “The Twelve” in Mark.

Mark 7:24 also offers us the story of the Syrophenician woman and her request to have Jesus cast a demon out of her daughter. It is especially important to note the metaphor that Jesus uses in communicating with her. Of all of the metaphors that Jesus has used in his ministry, he chooses one that is completely unique but seemingly especially suited to the context. When Jesus compares his healing with the work of feeding children and dogs; the woman immediately responds with an insight that shows how familiar she is with the practice of providing food and the resulting crumbs that can still be useful provisions.

In other synoptic evidence of women associated with food and discipleship, in Luke 10:38-41 Martha of Bethany is complaining of her sister Mary being a disciple of Jesus and shirking the culturally appropriate work, which was food preparation.²¹ Jesus defends Mary’s actions as a disciple, and even asserts that it (discipleship) will not be taken away from her!

The Samaritan woman at the well in John 4 is another example of Jesus soliciting provisions from a woman. In this case, Jesus asks for a drink of water; a commodity

¹⁹ In Mark 2:25 The disciples are hungry and eat grain, and Jesus defends them before the Pharisees. And in Mark 8:3, the crowds are hungry and Jesus is concerned about them.

²⁰ For a detailed discussion of this topic, see “For it was not the season for figs” Catholic Biblical Quarterly. 48 #1.1986 62-66.

regularly obtained by women for their households. A final example of the women taking responsibility for the provisions is at the wedding at Cana in John 2, where Jesus' mother takes the initiative to see that the guests get enough wine.

III. The historical context of food preparation by women

The complexity of Jewish dietary laws and the Passover preparation are well documented. The initial Passover preparation instructions are listed in Exodus 12:5-10:

“Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the house in which they eat it. They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn.”

While the initial instructions were given in Exodus, the actual practices of preparation of the Passover Feast became so complex within the dietary restrictive laws of the Talmud,²² that pages of detailed information are listed in the Mishnah regarding Passover preparation.

Here are some brief examples:

Herbs “And these are the herbs by eating which at Passover a man fulfils his obligation: lettuce, chicory, pepperwort, snakeroot, and dandelion. He fulfils it whether they are fresh or dried, but not if they are pickled, stewed or cooked. And these may be included together to make up [the prescribed quantity of] an olive’s bulk. He can fulfil his obligation if he eats but their stalks, or if they are demai-produce, or First Tithe from which Heave-offering has been taken, or Second Tithe or dedicated produce which have been redeemed.”²³

Unleavened Bread “If dough remained in the cracks of the kneading-trough and there was an olive’s bulk in any one place, it must be removed. If there was less than this it is negligible in its scantness. So, too, in a manner of uncleanness [if a dead creeping thing touched an olive’s bulk of the dough]; one that is scrupulous about it must make a partition; if one wishes it to remain it can be reckoned as [one with] the kneading-trough. Dough that is still ‘dumb’ [signs of fermentation not yet apparent] is forbidden if other dough like to it has already fermented.”

²¹ Martha of Bethany also waits on Jesus and prepares a dinner for him in John 12:2

²² While the Talmud is later than the New Testament, these laws may reflect the general situation of either Mark’s or Jesus’ time since these laws are constantly being refined within the Hebrew culture.

²³ Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1949),138.

“Rabban Gamaliel says: Three women may knead dough at the same time and bake it in the same oven one after the other. [He means that the delay will not suffice to make the dough ferment]. But the Sages say: Three women may occupy themselves [at the same time] with the dough, one kneading, one rolling it out, and one baking. Rabbi Akiba says: All women and all kinds of wood and all ovens are not equal. [Some women are idle, some wood is damp, and some ovens heat slowly, so even so there is danger that delay will give time for fermentation.]”²⁴

Even with all of the written Talmudic laws describing the restrictions that are needed to prepare for the Passover and other festivals, much of what Jewish women consider correct practice is not written down, but rather passed on orally from mother to daughter.²⁵

“Many rabbis over the centuries have been known to consult their wives on matters of Jewish law relating to the woman's role, such as laws of kashrut²⁶ and women's cycles.”²⁷ “Keeping kosher extends holiness to food preparation and eating and makes Jewish women the guardians of this commandment. One of women's most important duties continues to be preparing for home-centered holidays. The three most likely to be observed are the Sabbath, Passover, and Chanukah.”²⁸

Even today, Jewish women continue to instruct other women on correct practice using internet web sites: “For Jewish women, preparing for Passover means a lot of hard work — but it's worth it. Most of the work revolves around centuries-old customs forbidding the use of leavening agents (chametz) in Passover foods. This means not only getting rid of all foods with leavening but also changing dishes, pots, and silverware that have touched leavened food. Scrubbing starts with the kitchen cupboards and often extends to the rest of the house.”²⁹

²⁴ Ibid., 139.

²⁵ I was fortunate to discover some of these oral traditions by visiting Jewish Women's websites. All of the following quotations are taken from those sources.

²⁶ Pertaining to abiding by the dietary restrictions. From a root meaning "fit," "proper" or "correct." Jewish dietary laws. Tracey Rich, *Judaism 101 Website*, (<http://www.jewfaq.org/women.html>, 2000).

²⁷ “Niddah” The state of being impure during menstruation. Ibid., Rich, <http://www.jewfaq.org/women.html>.

²⁸ Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest, (<http://www.jewishwomenexhibit.org>, 2000).

²⁹ Ibid, Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest, (<http://www.jewishwomenexhibit.org>).

“Mother whitewashed all the walls and scoured the floors. She made the utensils kosher for Passover with scalding hot water. A stone was first heated in the range until it was red hot. It was then put into a very large pot of boiling water, making the water sizzle and hiss. The utensils were boiled for some time in this water.”³⁰

“When we got ready for Passover we even washed the doorknobs... [M]y mother would make me go through every book, shake them out. God forbid someone would be reading a book and a crumb would fall out. I was fifteen years old before I saw the end of a Seder because I was so dead tired by the time the first Seder came along.”³¹

Because the work of Passover feast preparation was and still is almost completely within the realm of Jewish women’s responsibility, the correct contextual interpretation of this passage would be to assume that two female disciples were sent ahead to fulfill this normal cultural role. The fact that Mark is silent when other unusual practices are thoroughly explained by him³² lends evidence that the normal cultural roles were being followed.³³ However transference in interpretation from Luke 22:7-14, in which Peter and John are named as the disciples who prepare the Passover feast³⁴ have disguised the work of the women preparing the Passover and their being named as disciples.

³⁰ Sophie Turnoy Trupin, *Dakota Diaspora, 1984*. Ibid, Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest, (<http://www.jewishwomenexhibit.org>). The Turnoy family farmed near Wilton, North Dakota, in the 1910’s.

³¹ Anne Rothenberg Zabel, *oral history, 1994*, Ibid, Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest, (<http://www.jewishwomenexhibit.org>). The Rothenberg family lived in Sioux City, Iowa, in the early part of the century.

³² In Mark 14:12, Mark explains when the Passover lambs were slaughtered, and in Mark 7:3, he refers to some of the requirements of Jewish food preparation law. Among these are the required the special washing of meat from the market, and the special purification laws that required women to have two sets of kitchenware: one for meat, and the other for dairy.

³³ Because the Priests and the Levites were the ones to slaughter the Passover lamb in the temple (2 Chron. 30:15, 35:3, Ezra 6:19) anyone who had purified themselves could bring a lamb for sacrifice. (See: Henry Barclay Sweet, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (New York: MacMillan, 1898), 598.) Thus the women’s gender would not have been a hindrance in obtaining an appropriately sacrificed lamb for the Passover Feast.

IV. Viewing this pericope in the other synoptics

Working within the two-source hypothesis, we can notice the various approaches that both Luke and Matthew have in their later versions of this pericope. Both of them change it slightly in their subsequent versions. The fact that their versions disagree proves that they were editing and trying to reshape the story.³⁵

This Pericope in Matthew 26:17-20

17) On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" 18) He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" 19) So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal. 20) When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve.³⁶

In the Matthean account of this pericope, there are two key differences that revise the Markan account. The first thing to note is that the account has been abbreviated. No longer is there the unusual feature of a man carrying a water jar. Second, instead of two disciples going ahead to prepare, (which names some people as disciples other than The Twelve), the Matthean account seems to say that all of the disciples prepared the Passover Feast together. This is completely astonishing! If the traditional view of the disciples as being limited to a group of twelve men is held here, then all twelve would have had to have extensive training in Kosher culinary practices, and all twelve would have had to work very closely together to fulfill all of the detailed requirements of Passover Feast preparation.³⁷ A more likely explanation is the one that follows the Markan account –that only some of the disciples did the actual work of the Passover Feast preparation.

³⁴ The idea that two male disciples could have hired someone to prepare the meal according to Jewish law goes against the mandate in Exodus that this was a family event. Furthermore, the text declares that "They (the disciples themselves) prepared the Passover feast."

³⁵ Look especially at the words of Jesus.

³⁶ NRSV.

³⁷ This picture gets very interesting when you include Judas Iscariot, who was planning a betrayal of Jesus.

This Pericope in Luke 22:7-14

7) Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. 8) So Jesus sent **Peter and John**, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us, that we may eat it." 9) They asked him, "Where do you want us to make preparations for it?" 10 "Listen," he said to them, "when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters, 11) and say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks you, 'Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' 12) He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there" So they went, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal. When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him.³⁸

There are four major differences between the Markan and the Lukan account of this pericope. The first is the naming of Peter and John as the disciples who prepared the Passover Feast.³⁹ The second is that Jesus initiates the conversation about the Passover, and the third difference is that no other people are named here as disciples in addition to the twelve. And the last is that Luke is careful to use the word "apostles" instead of "the twelve".⁴⁰

Could Peter and John have had the expertise to prepare a Passover Feast? Only if we ignore the strong argument that this culinary expertise would be discontinuous with the rest of Luke. Peter is depicted as a fisherman. In Luke 5:5 he is described as working all night long but catching nothing. James and John sons of Zebedee, are called Simon Peter's partners in Luke 5:10; and we assume that they were the partners referred to in Luke 5:7 who came and helped Peter haul in Jesus' catch. (And therefore were also working all through that night with Peter.) These men worked very hard to earn a living by the sea. Therefore, they were probably not responsible for learning and practicing the details of maintaining of a kosher home life.

³⁸ NRSV.

³⁹ Jim Kelhoffer, quote on Nov. 20, 2000. "There is a tendency in the later gospels to add names."

⁴⁰ The Byzantine and the Textus Receptus both use the phrase "twelve apostles". This may have been an attempt by early authors to harmonize Luke's account with Matthew and Mark.

Simon Peter's house is referred to by Luke in 4:38, when Jesus heals Simon Peter's Mother-in-law. It is very important to note that Peter does not serve Jesus and the rest of the disciples when they are in his house. Even when his mother-in-law is sick with a fever, Peter does not provide his guests with food and drink. Instead, Jesus and the rest of the disciples ask Simon Peter about his Mother-in-law. When Jesus discovers that she is sick, he heals Peter's Mother-in-law, and she gets out of bed and begins to serve them.⁴¹ Peter is not described as helping or serving during this circumstance when it could have been deemed appropriate for him to do so. Therefore on a historical level, it is highly unlikely that Peter would have been chosen by Jesus to be responsible for a full Passover celebration, which required a great degree of familiarity with Jewish dietary and cooking restrictions.

The disciple John in the same way is shown as being a busy fisherman. In Mark 1:19-20 he and his brother not only leave their fishing boat, but their father as well. This close connection with their father would make it likely that these two brothers were not far isolated from a family network, whose role it was to see that they were properly fed.

V. Peter's role strengthened in Luke while women's roles are diminished

Why would Luke have named Peter and John as the disciples that prepared the Passover feast? Ann Graham Brock in her recently released studies⁴² analyzes the Lucan bias to glorify Peter while diminishing the role of the women disciples. This is the key to understanding the Lucan rendering of this pericope. According to Brock, the Lucan author goes to great lengths to bestow apostolic authority to Peter, while diminishing the apostolic authority of Mary Magdalene. Brock systematically lays out that Peter's claim to apostolic authority is strengthened in Luke, while Mary Magdalene's is stronger in the other synoptics.

⁴¹ Note also how Luke's version differs from the original Mark. In Mark Jesus takes her by the hand and lifts her up. In Luke Jesus stands over her and rebukes the fever. Luke changes the Markan story.

⁴² Ann Graham Brock, *Mary Magdalene, The First Apostle: The Struggle for Authority* (Cambridge:Harvard University Press; *Harvard Theological Studies* 51:2003, 39-40.)

To ensure that the reader does not miss that Peter and John are given apostolic authority, in the Lukan version of this pericope, Luke is the only author to change “twelve” to “apostles”. This significant change paired with the addition of the names of Peter and John can only be attributed to a powerful motive to bolster Peter’s claim of apostolic authority.⁴³

Conclusion

In conclusion, because Mark does not equate “των δωδεκα” with “μαθητης”, and because women are recorded as being followers of Jesus, the current understanding is that the women were included in Mark’s definition of disciples along with the males. Through the association of women with food preparation in Mark and in the synoptics we can see that the preparations for the Passover feast were, (and still are) very much the domain of women. The fact that the Gospel of Mark does not count these Passover preparations as unusual also lends an argument from silence for this being the women’s work. Finally, the known Lukan bias toward giving additional roles to Peter, as well as the synoptic evidence about the skills of Peter and John also greatly diminishes the possibility that these two men were actually the ones to follow the intricate Passover preparation requirements as recorded in Luke. Therefore because Mark asserts that two of Jesus’ disciples prepared the Passover Feast, we too should deeply consider the theological implications of women not only as being named as disciples who prepared the Passover feast but also the apostolic implications of them being sent out with a message from Jesus.

⁴³ This strengthening of the Peterine authority in Mark 14:12-17 may also be due to the influence of Acts 6:1-6. In Acts, we find the account of the seven who are appointed to “wait on tables” and to ensure the feeding of the Hellenist widows. These seven “men” were appointed to this humble task of feeding people but were prayed over by the apostles who laid hands on them, the historical way of denoting an appointment to an office.⁴³ There however is no account of these men ever waiting on tables or serving widows. We have instead accounts of their preaching and their martyrdom, particularly that of Stephen. Thus in Luke-Acts, there is another example of a situation in which providing food becomes an occasion for the bestowing of authority.

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Appendix 1

**The ten occurrences of “Twelve/ The Twelve ” in Mark (in reference to people)
With the doubtful occurrence in Mark 3:16**

<p>Mark 3:14 And he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach</p>
<p>Mark 3:16--doubtful occurrence-- So he appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter)</p>
<p>Mark 4:10 And when he was alone, those who were about him with the twelve asked him concerning the parables.</p>
<p>Mark 6:7 And he called to him the twelve, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.</p>
<p>Mark 9:35 And he sat down and called the twelve; and he said to them, "If any one would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."</p>
<p>Mark 10:32 And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him,</p>
<p>Mark 11:11 And he entered Jerusalem, and went into the temple; and when he had looked round at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.</p>
<p>Mark 14:10 Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them.</p>
<p>Mark 14:17 And when it was evening he came with the twelve.</p>
<p>Mark 14:20 He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me.</p>
<p>Mark 14:43 And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.</p>

Appendix 2

The three occurrences of “Twelve Disciples” in the four Gospels, with the doubtful fourth occurrence used in Matt. 26:20.

Matthew 10:1	And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity.
Matthew 11:1	And when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples , he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.
Matthew 20:17	And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them,
Matthew 26:20 --doubtful occurrence	When it was evening, he sat at table with the twelve (disciples);