

Midrashic writing

Mary and Martha

Jesus was very tired and had been traveling all day to get to his friends' village where he was sure to finally be able to relax comfortably away from any nosy folks noticing a stranger was in town. As soon as he got near the house of Mary and Martha, Martha spotted him and swung the door wide for his entry. She dusted him off, took his sandals and made water ready for his washing and excitedly told him how glad she was that he had come for Mary had been very distracted, distraught and depressed in recent weeks. She explained to Jesus that she had taken it upon herself to do all the preparations herself and let Mary be quiet. She said that soon Mary would be down to see him soon.

When Mary came in she sat down softly near Jesus feet and listened to Jesus regarding his ministry. She did not offer any assistance to her sister's preparations. She did not even offer to set the table to help Martha. Martha's knees were really hurting her by now from all the cleaning and cooking and would have welcomed Mary's help. Feeling hurt she asked Jesus why he did not ask Mary to help her. He said that it was more important that they both hear his words than to be worried about food.

Jesus said that everything would be looked after, Martha's concern about the dinner and Mary's anxiety would both be healed. He said that they would be mended by his comforting words of forgiveness and redeeming and everlasting love in order that both of them would be witnesses to the world in his name and be useful witnesses of His Love. Just as in the story of the Prodigal Son this similar event shows that it is not only the hard workers and committed believers that are welcome to the Kingdom of God, but to all those who believe.