

Ekaterini Tsalamponi

Ekaterini Tsalamponi is an Assistant Professor of the New Testament at the School of Social and Pastoral Theology at the Faculty of Theology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She received her PhD in New Testament from the Faculty of Theology of the AUTH in 1999, after which she worked as an assistant lecturer at the Institute of Orthodox Theology at Ludwig-Maximilian University of Munich, Germany (2006-2009) and as a lecturer at the School of Social and Pastoral Theology at the Faculty of Theology of the Aristotle University. She is a member of several societies, like the Society of Biblical Literature, the European Association of Biblical Studies, the European Society of Women in Theological Research, the Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum, and the Hellenic Bible Society. She has served as the treasurer of the European Association of Biblical Studies and the Vice President of the European Society of Women in Theological Research. She is also a member of the Board of the Volos Academy of Theological Studies. Some of her publications are *Macedonia in New Testament Times* (2000), *Ecological Interpretation of the New Testament* (2013), *Exegetical Studies* (2013) and she has also published several exegetical studies as well as studies on ecological hermeneutics and on the Graeco-Roman background of the New Testament.

«Blessed are you when people persecute you on my account» (Mt 5,11).

Jesus' Sayings about Persecution

In the first part of the paper, Jesus' sayings about persecution and martyrdom, especially in the synoptic gospels, will be presented. The exegetical discussion will focus on tracing the early Christian tradition of martyrdom that is founded upon the dominical sayings and reflects the social situation in the early Christian communities that preserved it. Its theological implications, as well as its relation to the eschatological reality of the Kingdom of God, will be investigated in the second part of the paper. Consequently, the reception and adaptation of this tradition in the context of early Christian discourse on martyrdom will be briefly discussed. Finally, conclusions will be drawn regarding the theological significance of this tradition as well as its relevance to contemporary Christianity.

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