

## The Jesus Of History And The Christ Of Faith

The assumption that Jesus existed as a historical person has occasionally been questioned in the course of the last hundred years or so, but any doubts that have been raised have usually been put to rest in favor of imagining a blend of the historical, the mythical and the theological in the surviving records of Jesus. Carrier re-examines the whole question and finds compelling reasons to suspect the more daring assumption is correct. He lays out extensive research on the evidence for Jesus and the origins of Christianity and poses the key questions that must now be answered if the historicity of Jesus is to survive as a dominant paradigm. Carrier contrasts the most credible reconstruction of a historical Jesus with the most credible theory of Christian origins if a historical Jesus did not exist. Such a theory would posit that the Jesus figure was originally conceived of as a celestial being known only through private revelations and hidden messages in scripture; then stories placing this being in earth history were crafted to communicate the claims of the gospel allegorically; such stories eventually came to be believed or promoted in the struggle for control of the Christian churches that survived the tribulations of the first century. Carrier finds the latter theory more credible than has been previously imagined. He explains why it offers a better explanation for all the disparate evidence surviving from the first two centuries of the Christian era. He argues that we need a more careful and robust theory of cultural

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syncretism between Jewish theology and politics of the second-temple period and the most popular features of pagan religion and philosophy of the time. For anyone intent on defending a historical Jesus, this is the book to challenge.

Large numbers of atheists, humanists, and conspiracy theorists are raising one of the most pressing questions in the history of religion: "Did Jesus exist at all?" Was he invented out of whole cloth for nefarious purposes by those seeking to control the masses? Or was Jesus such a shadowy figure—far removed from any credible historical evidence—that he bears no meaningful resemblance to the person described in the Bible? In *Did Jesus Exist?* historian and Bible expert Bart Ehrman confronts these questions, vigorously defends the historicity of Jesus, and provides a compelling portrait of the man from Nazareth. The Jesus you discover here may not be the Jesus you had hoped to meet—but he did exist, whether we like it or not.

*Historical Jesus* asks two primary questions: What does historical mean? and How should we apply this to Jesus? Anthony Le Donne begins with the unusual step of considering human perception how sensory data from sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell are interpreted from the very beginning by what we expect, what we've learned, and how we categorize the world. In this way Le Donne shows how historical memories are initially formed. He continues with the nature of human memory and how it interacts with group memories. Finally, he offers a philosophy of history and uses it to outline three dimensions from the life of Jesus: his dysfunctional family, his politics, and his

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final confrontation in Jerusalem. This little book is ideal for those with no background in religious studies even those with no faith who wish to better understand who Jesus was and how we can know what we do know about him.

The introduction to this new guide sets out the sources (Graeco-Roman, Jewish and Christian), noting the problems connected with them, paying particular attention to the nature of the gospels, and the Synoptic versus the Johannine tradition. A substantial section will discuss scholarship on Jesus from the nineteenth century to the explosion of works in the present day, introducing and explaining the three different 'quests' for the historical Jesus. Subsequent chapters will analyse key themes in historical Jesus research: Jesus' Galilean origins; the scope of his ministry and models of 'holy men', particularly that of prophet; Jesus' teaching and healing; his trial and crucifixion; the highly contentious question of his resurrection; and finally an exploration of the links between the Jesus movement and the early church. Throughout, the (often opposing) positions of a variety of key scholars will be explained and discussed (eg. Sanders, Crossan, Dunn, Wright, Brown).

The earliest substantive sources available for historical Jesus research are in the Gospels themselves; when interpreted in their early Jewish setting, their picture of Jesus is more coherent and plausible than are the competing theories offered by many modern scholars. So argues Craig Keener in *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels*. In exploring the depth and riches of the material found in the Synoptic Gospels, Keener

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shows how many works on the historical Jesus emphasize just one aspect of the Jesus tradition against others, but a much wider range of material in the Jesus tradition makes sense in an ancient Jewish setting. Keener masterfully uses a broad range of evidence from the early Jesus traditions and early Judaism to reconstruct a fuller portrait of the Jesus who lived in history.

Confronts the "legendary Jesus" case, showing how the Synoptic Gospels are the most historically probable representation of the actual Jesus of history.

A textbook study of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

The Historical Jesus in Context is a landmark collection that places the gospel narratives in their full literary, social, and archaeological context. More than twenty-five internationally recognized experts offer new translations and descriptions of a broad range of texts that shed new light on the Jesus of history, including pagan prayers and private inscriptions, miracle tales and martyrdoms, parables and fables, divorce decrees and imperial propaganda. The translated materials--from Christian, Coptic, and Jewish as well as Greek, Roman, and Egyptian texts--extend beyond single phrases to encompass the full context, thus allowing readers to locate Jesus in a broader cultural setting than is usually made available. This book demonstrates that only by knowing the world in which Jesus lived and taught can we fully understand him, his message, and the spread of the Gospel. Gathering in one place material that was previously available only in disparate sources, this formidable book provides innovative insight into matters

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no less grand than first-century Jewish and Gentile life, the composition of the Gospels, and Jesus himself.

Combining the faith-development theory of James Fowler with the psychodynamics of Viktor Frankl, and utilizing many of the insights of contemporary biblical scholarship, the author has here proposed a unique and provocative interpretation of the life of Jesus as described in the Epistle to the Hebrews as the "leader and perfecter of faith." No doubt, many will find this approach to a "life of Christ" to be novel, even disturbingly "unorthodox". Yet it has been written in the conviction that the faith of most Christians, for the most part, has fallen into the heresy of "monophysitism", if not in theory, at least in practice amounting to a denial of Jesus as a human being and, as a result, a person of faith. In addition, in his "Christological Postscript", the author has sketched out the beginnings of a new, more evolutionary approach to understanding how Jesus might be understood to be divine, even while remaining the fully human character depicted in this book.

Millions of readers have thrilled to bestselling authors Bill O'Reilly and historian Martin Dugard's *Killing Kennedy* and *Killing Lincoln*, page-turning works of nonfiction that have changed the way we read history. Now the iconic anchor of *The O'Reilly Factor* details the events leading up to the murder of the most influential man in history: Jesus of Nazareth. Nearly two thousand years after this beloved and controversial young revolutionary was brutally killed by Roman soldiers, more than 2.2 billion human beings attempt to follow his teachings and believe he is God. *Killing Jesus* will take readers inside Jesus's life, recounting the seismic political and historical events that made his death inevitable - and changed the world forever.

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In this Spanish bestseller, now available in English for the first time, the famous Biblical scholar Jose Antonio Pagola reconstructs the historical Jesus with a scholarly exegetical and theological approach. He addresses basic questions about who Jesus was; how he understood his life; what was the originality of his message; how the vision of the Kingdom of God centered his life; and why he was executed and who intervened in the process. The author presents a lively and passionate narrative of Jesus of Nazareth within the milieu of the first century, locating him in his social, economical, political and religious contexts based on current and accepted research. He also analyzes the perspectives and conclusions of the most important scholars in this research and presents a profound and extensive scholarly theological reflection about Jesus.

Essential reading for anyone interested in the historical Jesus debate, this volume offers a comprehensive and balanced account of research into the person of Jesus.

A biography of the historical figure of Jesus. The book studies the relationship between Judaism and Christianity, distinguishing the certain from the improbable, and assessing the historical and religious context of Christ's time. The spread of Christianity is also discussed. This book is the result of the author's involvement with the Jesus Seminar. The premise is that the quest for the historical Jesus has always been closely related to the Christian search for God, and that this is both good and necessary, provided that one properly understands the relationship between history and theology and does not confuse the two. Patterson develops a theology that might properly be called a "Jesus Theology" and it is here that his contribution to the discussions of and about Jesus makes it a most distinctive contribution.

Historian John Dickson examines what can be trusted as reliable history in order to answer the

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question: is Jesus fact or fiction? More importantly, he asks: if Jesus really did exist and was who he claimed to be, what does that mean for you today? Great to give away to people interested in the evidence for Christianity.

Professor Wells argues that there was no historical Jesus, and in thus arguing he deals with the many recent writers who have interpreted the historical Jesus as some kind of political figure in the struggle against Rome, and calls in evidence the many contemporary theologians who agree with some of his arguments about early Christianity. The question at issue is what all the evidence adds up to. Does it establish that Jesus did or did not exist? Professor Wells concludes that the latter is the more likely hypothesis. This challenge to received thinking by both Christians and non-Christians is supported by much documentary evidence, and Professor Wells carefully examines all the relevant problems and answers all the relevant questions. He deliberately avoids polemic and speculation, and sticks so far as possible to the known facts and to rational inferences from the facts.

Illuminating the life of Jesus - his historical context, his religious teachings, and the changing perceptions of him over the centuries--this lavishly illustrated volume offers one of the most comprehensive and authoritative accounts available of this great and charismatic man.

Featuring some 180 illustrations (including 20 full-color maps) and numerous boxed and sidebar features that shed light on interesting facets of the story, Jesus Christ paints a vivid portrait of Christ's life from the Nativity to the Ascension. Drawing on the Gospels and other evidence, J. R. Porter disentangles many of the mysteries and confusions surrounding the life of the historical Jesus--such as the role of women in his career and the political issues surrounding his trial--and paints a detailed background portrait of all aspects of society in first-

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century Palestine, from the fishing communities of Lake Galilee to life under Roman rule. Porter also explores the teachings of Christ, looking at his use of parable, his view of Hebrew Scriptures and his attitude toward the law, and his thinking about the Kingdom of God. And the book assesses the many interpretations of Christ down through the ages, from his immediate impact on the early Church, to the changing image of Jesus in art and illustration, to his perceived role as apocalyptic preacher, revolutionary, mystic, and prophet. A marvelous gift on any holy day or for a child's confirmation, this attractive, informative volume gives us an inspiring portrait of one of the most complex figures in world history.

The story of Jesus of Nazareth, as recounted in the New Testament, has always been understood by the church to be historically true. It is an account of the life, death, and resurrection of a real person, whose links with history are firmly signalled in the creeds of the early church, which affirm that Jesus 'suffered under Pontius Pilate'. Contemporary historical scholarship has, however, called into question the reliability of the church's version of this story, and thereby raised the question as to whether ordinary people can know its historical truth. This book argues that the historicity of the story still matters, and that its religious significance cannot be captured by the category of 'non-historical myth'. The commonly drawn distinction between the Christ of faith and Jesus of history cannot be maintained. The Christ who is the object of faith must be seen as historical; the Jesus who is reconstructed by historical scholarship is always shaped by commitments of faith. A reconsideration of the Enlightenment epistemologies that underlie much historical scholarship shows that historical knowledge of this story is still possible. Such knowledge can be inferential, based on historical evidence. A careful look at contemporary New Testament studies, and the philosophical and



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literary assumptions upon which it rests, shows that this scholarship should not undermine the confidence of lay people who believe that they can know that the church's story about Jesus is true.

In this cultural and intellectual history, David Burns contends that the influence of biblical criticism in America was more widespread than has been thought. Burns proves this point by uncovering the hidden history of the radical historical Jesus, a construct created and sustained by freethinkers, feminists, socialists, and anarchists during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. The result of this exploration is a new narrative revealing that Cyrenus Ward, Caroline Bartlett, George Herron, Bouck White, and other radical religionists had an impact on the history of religion in America rivaling that of recognized religious intellectuals such as Shailer Mathews, Charles Briggs, Francis Peabody, and Walter Rauschenbusch. The methods utilized by radical religionists were different from those employed by elite liberal divines, however, and part of a larger struggle over the relationship between religion and civilization. There were numerous reasons for this conflict, but Burns argues that the primary cause was that key radical religionists used Ernest Renan's *The Life of Jesus* to create an imaginative brand of biblical criticism that struck a balance between the demands of reason and the doctrines of religion. And this measured approach allowed Robert Ingersoll, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Eugene Debs, and other secular-minded thinkers who sought to purge Christianity of its supernatural dimensions to still find something wonderful in the religious imagination and make common cause with an ancient peasant from Galilee. This provocative blend of reason and religion produced a vibrant countercultural movement that spanned communities, classes, and creeds and makes *The Life and Death of the Radical Historical Jesus* a book that deserves a

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wide readership in an era when public intellectuals and politicians on both the left and right draw rigid lines between the secular and the sacred.

Rev. ed. of: Ancient evidence for the life of Jesus. Includes bibliographical references and index.

Answers to critical questions regarding the study of the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith. The conclusions of the quest for the historical Jesus, which casts the majority of Christ's life as a myth, are a stark contrast to the orthodox view of Christ as presented in the Bible. Pate demonstrates that a critical analysis of the gospel text along with historical and cultural methods of investigation actually point toward an orthodox view of Christ. This work argues that the canonical Gospels are the most trustworthy information we have about the gospel writers as well as the life and ministry of Jesus, including his death, visit to hades, resurrection, and ascension. Readers will be encouraged by the reliability of the Gospel writers, the reality of Jesus' humanity and deity, and the inferiority of the apocryphal gospels.

A natural sequel to "The Historical Jesus Quest", this book provides commentary on the work and significance of the classic writers presented in that volume: Spinoza, Strauss, Schweitzer, Troeltsch, Bultmann, Kasemann, and others.

Examines contradictions and discrepancies that come to light when the New Testament is studied from a historical perspective, including varying views of Jesus and salvation and forgeries in the names of the apostles.

An informed, scholarly approach to the study of the historical Jesus that takes the Gospels seriously as a source of historical information.

In *Jesus and the Chaos of History*, James Crossley looks at the way the earliest

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traditions about Jesus interacted with a context of social upheaval and the ways in which this historical chaos of the early first century led to a range of ideas which were taken up, modified, ignored, and reinterpreted in the movement that followed. Crossley examines how the earliest Palestinian tradition intersected with social upheaval and historical change and how accidental, purposeful, discontinuous, contradictory, and implicit meanings in the developments of ideas appeared in the movement that followed. He considers the ways seemingly egalitarian and countercultural ideas co-exist with ideas of dominance and power and how human reactions to socio-economic inequalities can end up mimicking dominant power. In this case, the book analyzes how a Galilean "protest" movement laid the foundations for its own brand of imperial rule. This evaluation is carried out in detailed studies on the kingdom of God and "Christology," "sinners" and purity, and gender and revolution.

In *Did Jesus Exist?* historian and Bible expert Bart Ehrman confronts the question, "Did Jesus exist at all?" Ehrman vigorously defends the historical Jesus, identifies the most historically reliable sources for best understanding Jesus' mission and message, and offers a compelling portrait of the person at the heart of the Christian tradition. Known as a master explainer with deep knowledge of the field, Bart Ehrman methodically demolishes both the scholarly

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and popular “mythicist” arguments against the existence of Jesus. Marshaling evidence from within the Bible and the wider historical record of the ancient world, Ehrman tackles the key issues that surround the mythologies associated with Jesus and the early Christian movement. In *Did Jesus Exist?: The Historical Argument for Jesus of Nazareth*, Ehrman establishes the criterion for any genuine historical investigation and provides a robust defense of the methods required to discover the Jesus of history.

*The Historical Jesus: Five Views* provides a venue for readers to sit in on a virtual seminar on the historical Jesus. Beginning with a scene-setting historical introduction by the editors, prominent figures in the Jesus quest set forth their views and respond to their fellow scholars. For both the classroom and personal study, this is a book that fascinates, probes and engages.

This book has grown out of lectures upon the historical Jesus given in a good many cities of India during the winter of 1915-16. Here and there are incorporated passages (rehandled) from articles that have appeared in the *Conservative quarterly*, the *Nation*, the *Expositor*, and elsewhere. cf. Pref. *The Jesus of History*

In this book, Dale Allison addresses ongoing historical-theological questions concerning Jesus Christ. What should one think of the modern quest for the

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historical Jesus when there is such enduring discord among the experts, and when personal agendas play such a large role in the reconstructions? How much history is in the Gospels, and how much history does Christian theology require that there be? How does the quest impinge on conventional Christian beliefs, and what might it contribute to contemporary theological reflection? --From publisher's description.

Many books are available on the historical Jesus, but few address issues that are critically central to Christian faith--namely, Jesus as resurrected Lord, Christ, and Son of God. This comprehensive introduction to the study of the historical Jesus takes both scholarship and Christian faith seriously. Leading New Testament scholar Lee Martin McDonald brings together two critically important dimensions of the story of Jesus: what we can know about him in his historical context and what we can responsibly claim about his significance for faith today. McDonald examines the most important aspects of the story of Jesus from his birth to his resurrection and introduces key issues and approaches in the study of the historical Jesus. He also considers faith issues, taking account of theological perspectives that secular historiography cannot address. The book incorporates excerpts from primary sources and includes a map and tables.

The search for the historical Jesus is a hot topic in both popular and academic

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circles today and has drawn a lot of attention from national magazines, such as Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report. Further, the media has given an undue amount of attention to the Jesus Seminar's outlandish statements, a self-selected liberal group representing a tiny percentage of New Testament scholarship. Dr. Gary Habermas will address the questions surrounding the debate over the historical Jesus and show a significant number of historical facts about Jesus in secular and non-New Testament sources that prove that the Jesus of history is the same Jesus of the Christian faith. The author of EVIDENCE FOR THE HISTORICAL JESUS is Dr. Gary Habermas, author of the book, The Historical Jesus and about twenty other volumes. He received his Ph.D. from Michigan State University. Dr. Habermas is chairman of the Department of Philosophy at Liberty University. He has written more than 100 articles, mostly on the life of Jesus, which have appeared in scholarly journals and elsewhere. Herein you will learn why Jesus is one of the most historically verified lives of ancient times.

In recent years, a number of New Testament scholars engaged in academic historical Jesus studies have concluded that such scholarship cannot yield secure and illuminating conclusions about its subject, arguing that the search for a historically "authentic" Jesus has run aground. Jesus, Skepticism, and the

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Problem of History brings together a stellar lineup of New Testament scholars who contend that historical Jesus scholarship is far from dead. These scholars all find value in using the tools of contemporary historical methods in the study of Jesus and Christian origins. While the skeptical use of criteria to fashion a Jesus contrary to the one portrayed in the Gospels is methodologically unsound and theologically unacceptable, these criteria, properly formulated and applied, yield positive results that support the Gospel accounts and the historical narrative in Acts. This book presents a nuanced and vitally needed alternative to the skeptical extremes of revisionist Jesus scholarship that, on the one hand, uses historical methods to call into question the Jesus of the Gospels and, on the other, denies the possibility of using historical methods to learn about Jesus. Papers presented at an international symposium held at the University of Michigan in April 1985 on Jesus and the gospels.

"He comes as yet unknown into a hamlet of Lower Galilee. He is watched by the cold, hard eyes of peasants living long enough at a subsistence level to know exactly where the line is drawn between poverty and destitution. He looks like a beggar yet his eyes lack the proper cringe, his voice the proper whine, his walk the proper shuffle. He speaks about the rule of God and they listen as much from curiosity as anything else. They know all about rule and power, about kingdom

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and empire, but they know it in terms of tax and debt, malnutrition and sickness, agrarian oppression and demonic possession. What, they really want to know, can this kingdom of God do for a lame child, a blind parent, a demented soul screaming its tortured isolation among the graves that mark the edges of the village?" — from "The Gospel of Jesus," overture to *The Historical Jesus*

The Historical Jesus reveals the true Jesus—who he was, what he did, what he said. It opens with "The Gospel of Jesus," Crossan's studied determination of Jesus' actual words and actions stripped of any subsequent additions and placed in a capsule account of his life story. The Jesus who emerges is a savvy and courageous Jewish Mediterranean peasant, a radical social revolutionary, with a rhapsodic vision of economic, political, and religious egalitarianism and a social program for creating it. The conventional wisdom of critical historical scholarship has long held that too little is known about the historical Jesus to say definitively much more than that he lived and had a tremendous impact on his followers. "There were always historians who said it could not be done because of historical problems," writes Crossan. "There were always theologians who said it should not be done because of theological objections. And there were always scholars who said the former when they meant the latter.' With this ground-breaking work, John Dominic Crossan emphatically sweeps these notions aside. He



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demonstrates that Jesus is actually one of the best documented figures in ancient history; the challenge is the complexity of the sources. The vivid portrayal of Jesus that emerges from Crossan's unique methodology combines the complementary disciplines of social anthropology, Greco–Roman history, and the literary analysis of specific pronouncements, anecdotes, confessions and interpretations involving Jesus. All three levels cooperate equally and fully in an effective synthesis that provides the most definitive presentation of the historical Jesus yet attained.

In this New Studies in Biblical Theology volume, Historian Paul W. Barnett presents clear, careful and convincing evidence that the Christ of orthodox Christianity is the same as the Jesus of history.

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