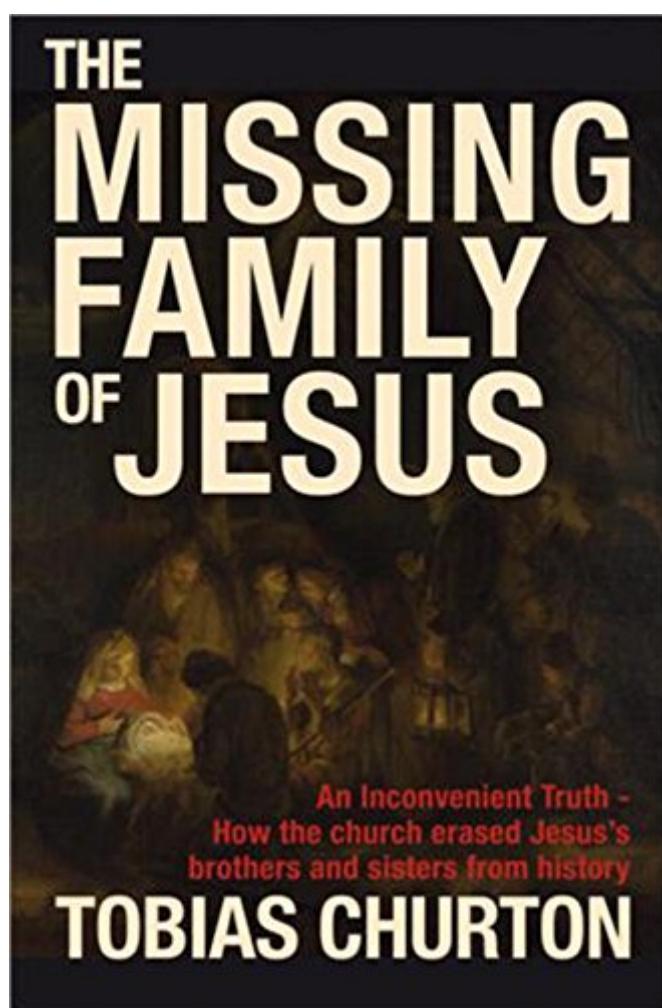


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The Missing Family Of Jesus: An Inconvenient Truth - How The Church Erased Jesus's Brothers And Sisters From History



Synopsis

The Holy Family of Jesus as commonly depicted in religious art is a myth fabricated by the early Christian church. Explaining this assertion, Tobias Churton leads the reader on a fascinating and highly readable quest to discover all that is to be found in the historical sources about Jesus' family background, parentage and siblings and the possibility of his having descendants. When Romanized Christianity decided to bend the historical facts about true early Christianity, Jesus was required to be the only son of God and to have been the product of a virgin birth, so that he could avoid the taint of original sin. Any inconvenient siblings had to be written out of history to prevent them from muddying the theological waters. Even today, in Catholic encyclopedias of the saints, St James the Just (the 'Zadokite'), while regarded as Jesus' brother by the majority of Church Fathers, is instead called the 'son of Alphaeus', deliberately obscuring any theologically compromising family relationship. This investigation is based on a thorough examination of a broad range of sources: the canonical evidence (Gospels and Epistles); apocryphal evidence including the Gnostic gospels and rejected works of early Christianity (including the Dead Sea Scrolls and the works of Josephus, Hegesippus and Eusebius); and myths and legends about 'heirs', known as the Desposynoi, who either travelled to France or remained in Palestine centuries after Jesus. 'It must be the case that behind both the historical and the legendary evidence there exists a missing, truthful picture of the family of Jesus. The task of the book is to establish as much of that truth as is historically possible within the bounds of reasonable probability.' (Churton)

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Customer Reviews

good book

The book is based on the Dead Screen Roll and the editing that has occurred in the development and authoring of the bible we see. There is some very important data which would require major re-writing the bible.

If you are looking for any valuable insights regarding the subject of Jesus' blood relatives, don't waste your time or money on this book. All you will get are a lot of useless speculations punctuated by the same old theme that the New Testament and the Church got it all wrong. The author has a lot of opinions on the subject but no real answers. Churton spends an inordinate amount of time expounding upon the sensational Dead Sea Scroll theories of Robert Eisenman, the apocryphal gospels, and Baigent and Leigh's Holy Blood/Holy Grail garbage. While I commend the author for not buying into a lot of this nonsense, none of it adds anything to a real understanding of the topic. Most serious New Testament scholars, out of academic politeness, don't give Eisenman the time of day. Even his former co-author, Michael Wise, abandoned him. The author can't seem to understand why the New Testament doesn't focus more attention on Jesus' family, as if there was a big conspiracy behind it. I got a kick out of "The New Testament is Christocentric" (p.19). NO KIDDING!!! First of all, prophets and messianic leaders were not known as family men who stayed on the farm and regularly attended family reunions and barbecues. We don't know much about Jesus' family for the same reason we don't know much about Elijah's family. The author likes to put his own spin on history and make his own additions to the Bible. Here are just a few examples: (p.36) "Nazareth was unknown as a city before its appearance in the Gospels". (WHY? SIMPLY BECAUSE JOSEPHUS DOESN'T MENTION IT.) (P.23) "According to Matthew, Joseph and Mary shared a house in Bethlehem." (WHAT VERSION OF MATTHEW DID THAT COME FROM?) (p.155) "If James teaches another doctrine, let him be accursed (Galatians

1:8-9)." (WHERE IS "JAMES" MENTIONED IN THOSE VERSES?)(p.72) "That Pauline thought has heavily influenced gospel theology is well established" (ESTABLISHED BY WHO? EVEN THOUGH PAUL'S LETTERS ARE OLDER, THE GOSPELS WERE WRITTEN BEFORE PAUL'S LETTERS WERE PUBLISHED AND WIDELY DISSEMINATED. IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT THE GOSPELS WERE INFLUENCED BY THEM.)(p.44) "No wonder some of Jesus' followers took oaths vowing not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul (Acts 23:12)". (WHERE DOES IT SAY "JESUS' FOLLOWERS" IN THAT VERSE?)(p.154) According to Acts..."Paul was the Roman's friend; their enemies were his enemies." (IT'S STRANGE HOW ACTS MENTIONS PAUL AND SILAS BEING BEATEN AND IMPRISONED BY ROMANS.)(p.10) "Paul saw James as a pain and the Church agreed with Paul."(p.288) "Paul was no friend of the family."(IN BASHING THE APOSTLE PAUL, CHURTON HAS NEVER BOTHERED TO READ PAUL'S OWN WORDS IN THEIR ENTIRETY. IN ROMANS 11, PAUL REFERS TO GENTILE BELIEVERS AS WILD BRANCHES GRAFTED ONTO THE VINE OF ISRAEL. IN ROMANS 15, PAUL ENCOURAGES HIS CONVERTS TO PAY TITHES TO THE SAINTS IN JERUSALEM BECAUSE THE GENTILES ARE SPIRITUALLY INDEBTED TO THEM. IN THE BOOK OF ACTS, PAUL MAKES A HAZARDOUS JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM TO DELIVER THE TITHE AND PLACES HIMSELF UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF JAMES AND AT THE MERCY OF JAMES. IF PAUL WAS PREACHING A GOSPEL WHICH WAS SO MUCH AT ODDS WITH THE GOSPEL OF JAMES AND THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL, IT'S AMAZING HOW TWO MISSIONARIES CHOSEN BY THE JERUSALEM CHURCH, BARNABAS AND SILVANUS/SILAS ACCOMPANIED PAUL WHILE HE WAS PREACHING THIS GOSPEL TO THE GENTILES.)(p.70) "I really can't see what the 'twelve' thing is really all about in the gospel accounts." (CHURTON SHOULD CONSULT A REAL SCHOLAR ABOUT "THE TWELVE (DISCIPLES) THING" AND WHY IT WAS SO SYMBOLIC OF JESUS' MINISTRY.) Churton makes his grand finale by claiming that the price for rejecting Jesus' family has been the dislocation of spiritual civilization and the fragmentation of the world (p.232). In other words' the world would have been a much better place if Christianity had remained thoroughly Jewish and under the control of Jesus' blood relatives. That's a nice thought, but regardless of the big bad Church, that never would have happened. I will admit that the Church eventually created a kingdom which was totally out of sync with the vision of Jesus, his family, the original apostles, and, yes, even Paul. However, regardless of the gentile church, Constantine, the Nicean Council, or the Vatican, Christianity could never have survived as a Jewish sect. After the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, the overwhelming majority of Jews could no longer accept Jesus as their messiah and the rabbis made sure of it by excommunicating Jewish Christians from the synagogue. The breach between Judaism and

Christianity occurred long before the gentile church had any real power. Until Constantine, gentile "Pauline" Christianity was the subject of brutal persecution by the Pax Romana... ie Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, and Justin Martyr to name a few. According to church tradition, Paul himself was martyred by Rome. I hardly think that would have been made up if "Pauline" Christianity was so pro-Roman. For anyone who is really interested in an in-depth and scholarly account of Jesus' family and the impact they had on the early Church, I highly recommend JUDE AND THE RELATIVES OF JESUS IN THE EARLY CHURCH by RICHARD BAUCKHAM (see my review). Bauckham is a serious scholar who has done his homework on the subject. He provides valuable and interesting insights without wasting time on useless and vain speculations. In regard to Churton's book, I really don't see how stuff like this gets published.

The analysis in this book is intriguing and thought provoking. One of the difficulties of reconstructing the factual history of the early Christian Church and Jesus earthly life, is that so few records exist: 1) After the second rebellion against Rome, every book in Israel was destroyed and every tree was cut down. No ancient texts of Israel survived, except the ones that were buried in the ground or hidden in caves prior to this destruction. The only Jews that survived this calamity were the Pharisees, whose beliefs had already been "Romanized." The Old Testament itself was written after the destruction of Jerusalem, by Elders working with the permission and approval of Rome. This work was not completed until 200AD, and until that time, there was no Old Testament; there was no Hebrew Bible. Although, the Torah (the first five books of the Bible) had been in existence since 600 B.C. when they were miraculously discovered during the reconstruction of the Temple. 2) Once the Roman Church consolidated its power, it began a program of persecution that lasted for over two hundred years. Every single text from the Greek and Roman pagan world was destroyed. The only texts that have survived from that time were preserved in areas outside the control of Rome. All the Universities of higher learning were destroyed and all classical knowledge was lost. All knowledge of engineering, medicine, physics, science, philosophy, botany, geology, and mathematics was destroyed. All hospitals were destroyed and the practice of medicine was forbidden. Instead, the sick were interred in Hospices, where the pious would pray for their recovery, but the practice of medicine was forbidden. All bathing and sanitation was forbidden and the public baths were destroyed. Exercise and maintenance of the body was disgraced, and outlawed. For over a thousand years after these events, not a single person in Europe bathed, or practiced personal hygiene. Literacy, which was common in the Roman world, became rare and not even the Royal families of the middle ages could read and write. 3) Given these facts, it is not surprising that the

New Testament contains contradictions, and missing information about events that transpired in the time of Jesus. For example: The Essenes were a major philosophical and cultural influence in Israel, and they are not even mentioned anywhere in the New Testament. It is common knowledge that six of the Letters attributed to Paul could not have been written by Paul and were written by another person instead. James was the first bishop of the Christian Church for many years before Peter became the first bishop of Rome. The Christian Church was founded with James "the Just" at the head as the first Bishop. James was also a priest in the temple. If you read Acts critically as literature, you will see that a large section of the story is missing from the middle of the book. The Jewish rebellion against Rome is not even mentioned in the New Testament and yet it took place at the same time as the events in the Acts of the Apostles. 4) New insights provided by archaeology, and statistical literary analysis, reveal concrete truths about the time of Jesus, and the writing of the New Testament, that are difficult to logically refute. 5) Although this book is not particularly well written from a literary standpoint, the ideas the author presents appear to be genuine and are presented with integrity and thoughtfulness. The central thesis of the book presents some important questions: Who were the members of the nuclear family of Jesus? What is their story? Why have they been left out of the official historical record of the New Testament? 6) This is a fascinating book and the author has done a good job of collecting material and presenting some intriguing and captivating explanations. 7) Aside: In ancient Rome it was common practice to give every female member of the same clan the same name. For example: All of Julius Caesar's female relatives were named Julia. It is perhaps similar in ancient Israel that all female members of the same tribe were given the same name. This would explain why there are so many different women with the same name of Mary in the New Testament.

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