

THE MAN OF GALILEE

Introduction to the Millennium Edition

By William Haygood Shaker

“Who and What was Jesus of Nazareth? In this question and its answer is involved the whole of what we mean by Christianity.” So begins The Man of Galilee, by Bishop Atticus G. Haygood. It provides the clear answer to this most fundamental of all questions. Originally published in English, Spanish and Japanese, Haygood's piercing devastation of the writings that attack the doctrines of Jesus is as timely for the beginning of the Second Millennium, as it was when The Man of Galilee was published in 1889. Its publication generated such a clamor for Dr. Haygood that he was elected MECS Bishop in 1890 by the largest majority of votes in Church history.

This little book is a must read for the agnostic, can strengthen the faith of believers, and explains to all why Jesus is a thousand times worth dying for and following forever, through time and eternity. An April, 1996 article in Newsweek summarizes recent attacks on the Historic and Risen Jesus: “Over the past five years, scholars have published more than a dozen books and scores of footnoted articles, ‘initiating a fierce debate’(sic) over the Risen Jesus . . . [they] argue that the Gospel stories of the empty tomb and post-resurrection appearances are fictions devised long after his death to justify claims of his divinity . . . [they] argue that the early Christians applied to Jesus all the myths that had accumulated about the expected Messiah: Rethinking the Resurrection Newsweek Magazine April 8, 1996.

And, from a recent issue of Life Magazine, “To some, Jesus is the son of God, born to a virgin . . . to others, he’s a myth, a novelistic invention of the Gospel writers, who required a charismatic anchor for their nascent churches.” He is they say, an idea. Other critics of the Risen Jesus (such as Syed Nasr, professor of Islamic Studies at George Washington University) say he was only a man, “[but] see him as the greatest prophet before the prophet of Islam (Mohammed). [for Muslims], He is the prophet of inward spiritual life.” [some say] “there is no such person in the history of the world as Jesus Christ. There was no historical, living, breathing, sentient human being by that name. Ever! The Bible is a fictional, non-historical narrative.” Life Special -- Who was Jesus Life Magazine December, 1994 Take the whole of agnostic literature--from pre-Twentieth Century writers, such as: Voltaire, who ridicules the Bible; Paine; Hume; and Strauss, who published The Life of Jesus Critically Examined, and who argued that Jesus was an early Christian myth. Continue with recent authors, such as: Episcopal Bishop John Spong (Resurrection: myth or Reality?), and Gerd Ludemann (What Really Happened to Jesus: A Historical Approach to the Resurrection). Both are among the modern writers who argue that the resurrection is a myth. And then there is the small band of agnostic “scholars” who have been meeting semi-annually for years to vote on

which parts of the new testament should be kept and which parts should be thrown out. This group, dubbed the Jesus Seminar, uses the so-called “critical historical method” to attack the Risen Jesus. This Alice in Wonderland analysis, which has nothing to do with history, picks and chooses bible passages and event sequences to allow this band of self-appointed “experts” too reconstruct the life of Christ, rejecting his divinity. For example, John Funk, the founder of the Jesus Seminar, suggests that the Gospel of John was a figment of the evangelist’s imagination. He says in his opening statement to his Jesus Seminar in 1985: “Our fictions, though deliberately fictive (fictitious) . . . we recognize as fictive.” The Man of Galilee lays these attacks--all of them--to waste. According to the April 1966 Newsweek article, many of the recent attacks on the historical Jesus are not based on disinterested historical investigation, but scholarship with a frankly missionary purpose: [B]y reconstructing the life of Jesus, they hope to show that belief in the bodily resurrection of Jesus is a burden to the Christian faith and deflects attention from his role as a social reformer. As a reading of The Man of Galilee will make clear, these writers understand neither! If it could be proved that there never existed such a person as the Risen Jesus, Christianity as a living force, would cease from the earth. The Man of Galilee sets out to prove the divinity of Jesus, while shattering the arguments of those who contradict his doctrines—which seek to overthrow them. Nothing will be assumed:

- It will not be assumed that the little books called the “Gospels” were inspired at all.
- You will not be asked to consider any miracle said to have been performed by Jesus, as making proof of his divinity.
- Proof text will not be quoted to prove that Jesus is divine.
- And you will not be asked to accept anything on faith. You will be asked to carefully and fairly view the information presented. If it be reasonable, you may accept it as true. However, there is nothing in the teachings of Jesus that calls on you to profess to believe what to you is not true.

Jesus says and acts in many ways and in many places that he, in origin and character, is more than a man; that he is supernatural. He says, “I and my father are one.” He says that he is divine--that he is God. If Jesus was only a man such claims cannot be reconciled with his sanity or his sincerity. As Augustine said, “Christ, if he not be God, he is not good.” In other words, if Jesus is not divine, he is the greatest liar the world has ever known. Either way, doctrines such as those proposed by Professor Nasr, which reject his divinity, which do not accept that he was crucified, died, and was then resurrected; but nonetheless proclaim Jesus as the “second greatest profit,” are an oxymoron--a self-contradiction. And so are the theories of writers, such as Kazantzakis, author of The Last Temptation of Christ, who deny his divinity, but say he was a great teacher, who led an exemplary life—who say is the supreme model for humankind. I think you’ll conclude that The Man of Galilee clearly proves the critics of the Historical

and Risen Jesus to be wrong, and demonstrates that he is indeed, the Risen Lord—the Son of the Living God! My copy of The Man of Galilee was given to me by Bishop Haygood's daughter, my grandmother, many years ago. The following is handwritten on the inside of the back cover of the book: "A man living across the street from us in Los Angeles in 1892 read this book—he had been a confessed infidel—was converted and joined the church—I was 17 then." My original idea was to re-publish The Man of Galilee for family members, relatives and close friends. However, as I began to examine the recent literature attacking the divinity of Jesus, I decided it would be useful to make this book available to people everywhere, because Bishop Haygood's message rings just as true today, as it did more than a century ago. So be transported across space and time and hear Dr. Haygood in his lecture room at the old Emory college at Oxford in the year 1880. If you will, let his writing be your companion on your journey of faith—with each reading giving you a clearer understanding of The Man of Galilee. Hopefully, as we head into the 21st century, this little book will strengthen the faith of believers; and for scoffers, atheists, and agnostics—infidels as my beloved grandmother termed them—may His Light fill their hearts.

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