

Chapter 1 : Encyclopedia of the Historical Jesus - Google Books

This Encyclopedia brings together the vast array of historical research into the reality of the man, the teachings, the acts, and the events ascribed to him that have served as the foundational story of one of the world's central religions.

Jesus; " Name means:: He came to earth as a man, yet being both fully Man and fully God, to provide salvation and reconciliation by His death for the sins of mankind. He was born in the reign of Augustus Caesar about Born:: He was executed by crucifixion in about Died:: Jesus of Nazareth, a Jew from rural first-century Galilee, is without doubt the most famous and most influential human being who ever walked the face of the earth. The followers of Jesus live in every country of the globe. They read and speak of him in a thousand tongues. He animates their cultures, creeds and aspirations. The criteria are applied to certain claims and statements made within the New Testament. The method does not attempt to prove a negative about the life of Christ, it should not be applied to prove something not historical about the life of Christ. If a tradition of Jesus that is mentioned in several independent documents, as in more than one author wrote the same thing about the same person, the traditions is probably historical. If it is independently attested it is unlikely it has been made up. If a tradition about the life of Jesus is at the same time different from Judaism that preceded and the later Christian movement that came after, than it is probably historical and originated from within the life and actions of the historical Jesus. If a tradition or saying about the life and death of Jesus is something that is embarrassing for the early Christian movement than it is more likely historical. Traditions about Jesus that cohere well with already established facts about Jesus and his culture and background of Palestinian Judaism have a good probability of being historically reliable. Minimal facts method The minimal facts approach is a particular argument that uses agreed upon facts by the majority of critical scholars that publish scholarly work surrounding the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Although its origin is in historical Jesus studies, the approach can be a fundamental guide to help deduced historicity surrounding not just the controversial life and death of Jesus Christ but also history within ancient secular literature as well. By using specific passages of the New Testament and other relevant literature, granted by even the most liberal of scholars, the goal of the approach is to present the historical bedrock of facts about the life of Christ. It is considered within specifically historical apologetics as a scholarly approach to establish specific reliability in the Bible showing the central doctrine of Christianity as historical fact. Five Views by Beilby, James K. Review written by Pieter F. Craffert for the Review of Biblical Literature.

Chapter 2 : Euangelion: Encyclopedia of the Historical Jesus

The term "historical Jesus" refers to Jesus of Nazareth in so far as the course of his earthly life can be reconstructed by historical critical methods. The use of historical critical methods has led biblical scholars to recognize the character of the Gospels as theological interpretations of Jesus.

Bring fact-checked results to the top of your browser search. Although eschatology is the doctrine of last things, the Jews who anticipated future redemption did not expect the end of the world. Instead, they thought that God would intervene in human history and make the world perfect: Many Jews, including John, expected final judgment to precede this golden age, and he taught that people should repent in view of its imminence Matthew 3: The clearest expression of this belief is offered by Paul, whose earliest letter indicates that the Lord will return before most of the people then alive die 1 Thessalonians 4: If Jesus began his career by being baptized by an eschatological prophet and if after his Crucifixion his followers expected him to return to save them 1 Thessalonians 1: That Jesus shared this view is indicated by his call of 12 disciples , who apparently represented the 12 tribes Matthew Moreover, he proclaimed the arrival of the kingdom of God; he predicted the destruction of the Temple Mark It is no surprise that after his death his disciples formed a small community that expected Jesus to return and inaugurate a kingdom in which the world would be transformed. In this light, Jesus can be seen as an eschatological prophet, grouped historically in the same general category as John the Baptist and a few other 1st-century Jewish prophets, such as Theudas. Moreover, his teaching was rich and multifaceted and was not limited to eschatological expectation. One is that the kingdom of God exists in heaven and that individuals may enter it upon death Mark 9: The parable that the kingdom is like yeast that gradually leavens the entire loaf Matthew These other ways of viewing the kingdom do not, however, dominate the teaching of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels. The Hebrew Bible laid the foundation for this teaching in two ways. Second, Daniel 7 describes various kingdoms that are represented by four fantastic beasts, all of which are destroyed. These passages seem to have led Jesus to depict the arrival of the Son of Man from heaven as initiating the coming judgment and the redemption of Israel. The theme appears in numerous passages in the Synoptic Gospels see Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5. Son of Man comes like lightning or the great flood Matthew Son of Man, glory of Father, angels, some will not taste death Matthew Cosmic distress, Son of Man, angels, gather elect Matthew For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the appearance of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a command, with the voice of an archangel, and with a trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air. Inclusion in the kingdom Several passages indicate that following Jesus was highly desirable for those who wished to be included in the coming kingdom. Jesus called on some people to give up everything in order to follow him Mark 1: It cannot be said, however, that Jesus viewed personal loyalty as a prerequisite for inclusion in the kingdom. Often he simply urged all to fix their attention on the kingdom, not on material possessions Matthew 6: The majority of his teaching in the Synoptic Gospels is about God and the value of returning to him. Perhaps faith in God and treating other people with love Matthew This seems to be indicated by the study of children, the childlike, the poor, the meek, the lowly, and the sinners, whom Jesus especially called and favoured. In the coming kingdom, moreover, the last would be first Mark This emphasis probably rests in part on his sympathy for those of his own socioeconomic class or below it. Significantly, Jesus and his disciples were not themselves from the very bottom of society. His message had a social dimension in two respects. He thought that in the kingdom there would be social relationships, not a collection of disembodied spirits floating on the clouds. He also believed that the disadvantaged of the present world would be in some sense or other advantaged in the new age Matthew 5: It is possible that the promise of houses and lands in Matthew He wanted sinners to accept him and his message, and he promised inclusion in the kingdom if they did so. This acceptance doubtless included moral reformation, but Jesus probably did not mean that they had to conform precisely to the standards of righteous Jewish society, which demanded repayment of money or goods obtained dishonestly, the addition of

one-fifth as a fine, and the presentation of a guilt-offering in the Temple Leviticus 6: Instead, Jesus called people to follow him and to be like his disciples. He evidently expected more people to be like him accepting sinners, loving even enemies than to join the small band that followed him. Although Jesus specifically called several followers, he seems not to have viewed personal faith in and commitment to him as absolute necessities though faith in him became the standard requirement of early Christianity. Whether he made this particular requirement or not, Jesus certainly attached great importance to his own mission and person. Jesus sometimes called himself the Son of Man, though perhaps not meaning the heavenly Son of Man, and according to two passages he indirectly accepted the epithets Messiah or Christ and Son of God Matthew In both cases, however, the parallel passages Mark 8: In any case, Jesus apparently did not make an issue of titles. He called people to follow him and to devote themselves entirely to God, not to accord him a particular appellation. If he was preoccupied with titles, the evidence is so scant that it cannot be known what those titles meant to him or others. If, however, this uncertain evidence is overlooked, a clearer picture of his self-conception emerges: He may also have believed that inclusion in the kingdom would be granted to those who loved their neighbours and were meek and lowly of heart.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS Download *Encyclopedia Of The Historical Jesus* ebook PDF or Read Online books in PDF, EPUB, and Mobi Format. Click Download or Read Online button to *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS* book pdf for free now.

Hermann Samuel Reimarus "studied the historical Jesus. The scholarly effort to reconstruct an "authentic" historical picture of Jesus was a product of the Enlightenment skepticism of the late eighteenth century. Reimarus had left permission for his work to be published after his death, and Lessing did so between and , publishing them as *Die Fragmente eines unbekanntes Autors* *The Fragments of an Unknown Author*. Reimarus distinguished between what Jesus taught and how he is portrayed in the New Testament. According to Reimarus, Jesus was a political Messiah who failed at creating political change and was executed. His disciples then stole the body and invented the story of the resurrection for personal gain. While textual analysis of biblical sources had taken place for centuries, these quests introduced new methods and specific techniques in the attempt to establish the historical validity of their conclusions. The second quest began in and introduced a number of new techniques, but reached a plateau in the s. Criterion of multiple attestation , Criterion of embarrassment , Criterion of dissimilarity , and Koine Greek The first quest , which started in , was almost entirely based on biblical criticism. This took the form of textual and source criticism originally, which were supplemented with form criticism in , and redaction criticism in Redaction criticism may be viewed as the child of source criticism and form criticism. Taken from other areas of study such as source criticism, the "criteria of authenticity" emerged gradually, becoming a distinct branch of methodology associated with life of Jesus research. These criteria are primarily, though not exclusively, used to assess the sayings and actions of Jesus. The criteria developed within this framework, therefore, are tools that provide arguments solely for authenticity, not inauthenticity. It was often applied unevenly with a preconceived goal. Streeter provided the foundation for multiple attestation. The second Quest introduced the criterion of embarrassment. Polkow lists 25 separate criteria being used by scholars to test for historical authenticity including the criterion of "historical plausibility". Simply put, the method looks for commonalities in multiple sources with the assumption that, the more sources that report an event or saying, the more likely that event or saying is historically accurate. Burkitt claimed he found 31 independent sayings in Mark and Q. Within Synoptic Gospel studies, this was used to develop the four-source hypothesis. Multiple sources lend support to some level of historicity. New Testament scholar Gerd Theissen says "there is broad scholarly consensus that we can best find access to the historical Jesus through the Synoptic tradition. Dodd, it focuses on the sayings or deeds of Jesus found in more than one literary form. Bible scholar Andreas J. He says it is found in an "aphorism Mat. In the first-century Roman empire, only criminals were crucified. The early church referred to death on the cross as a scandal. It is therefore unlikely to have been invented by them. For example, criticisms of Jesus go against the tendency of the early church to worship him, making it unlikely the early church community invented statements such as those accusing Jesus of being in league with Satan Matthew Theissen and Winter sum this up with what can also be referred to as enemy attestation: The "Son of Man" sayings are an example. Judaism had a Son of Man concept as indicated by texts like 1 Enoch The conclusion is that, by the process of elimination of all other options, it is likely historically accurate that Jesus used this designation for himself. This criterion holds that a saying or action attributed to Jesus may be accepted as authentic if it coheres with other sayings and actions already established as authentic. While this criterion cannot be used alone, it can broaden what scholars believe Jesus said and did. In other words, a Semitism is Greek in Hebrew or Aramaic style. Meier , a Catholic priest and a professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame , has stated " It must be asserted most strongly that to discover that a particular writer has a bias tells us nothing whatever of the value of the particular information he or she presents. It merely bids us be aware of the bias and of our own for that matter , and to assess the material according to as many sources as we can. Haskell explains, "even a polemicist, deeply and fixedly committed" can be objective "insofar as such a person successfully enters into the thinking of his or her rivals and produces arguments potentially compelling, not

only to those who potentially share the same views, but to outsiders as well. For example, the question of whether dissimilarity or multiple attestation should be given more weight has led some scholars exploring the historical Jesus to come up with "wildly divergent" portraits of him, which would be less likely to occur if the criteria were prioritized consistently. Sherwin-White "noted that approaches taken by biblical scholars differed from those of classical historians. Licona says biblical scholars are not trained historians for the most part. He asks, "How many have completed so much as a single undergraduate course pertaining to how to investigate the past? Wright, James G. Dunn, and Dale Allison have written substantive historically minded works using hermeneutics, but even so, there remains "no carefully defined and extensive historical method He has stated that there is an unhealthy reliance on consensus for propositions which should otherwise be based on primary sources, or rigorous interpretation. He also identifies a peculiar downward dating creep, and holds that some of the criteria being used are faulty. Herzog has stated that: Josephus, the first-century Romano-Jewish scholar, mentions Jesus twice. He also points out that Christian non-New Testament sources, such as the church fathers, rely on the New Testament for much of their data and cannot therefore be considered as independent sources. Christ myth theory The Christ myth theory is the proposition that Jesus of Nazareth never existed, or if he did, he had virtually nothing to do with the founding of Christianity and the accounts in the gospels. For example, Earl Doherty has written that Jesus may have been a real person, but that the biblical accounts of him are almost entirely fictional. Sanders and Gerd Thiessen have traced elements of Christianity to diversity in First-century Judaism and discarded nineteenth century views that Jesus was based on previous pagan deities. Price an atheist who denies the existence of Jesus agrees that this perspective runs against the views of the majority of scholars. I have to say that I do not know any respectable critical scholar who says that anymore. Historical reliability of the Gospels, Historicity of Jesus, Sources for the historicity of Jesus, Josephus on Jesus, Mara bar Serapion on Jesus, and Tacitus on Christ Literary criticism has revealed three texts within the New Testament that critics have identified as remnants of oral creeds used by the early church. Textual indications are that they were received by Paul, recorded by him in his epistles, but not authored by him. This book likewise was lost, but not before one of its citations of Thallo was taken up by the Byzantine historian Georgius Syncellus in his Chronicle ca. The general scholarly view is that while the longer passage, known as the Testimonium Flavianum, is most likely not authentic in its entirety, it is broadly agreed upon that it originally consisted of an authentic nucleus, which was then subject to Christian interpolation. AD, book 15, chapter The Talmud speaks in some detail of the conduct of criminal cases of Israel whose texts were gathered together from 400 CE. Bart Ehrman says this material is too late to be of much use. Ehrman explains that "Jesus is never mentioned in the oldest part of the Talmud, the Mishnah, but appears only in the later commentaries of the Gemara. Ehrman writes that few contemporary scholars treat this as historical.

Chapter 4 : The Routledge Encyclopedia of the Historical Jesus - Google Books

Jesus Christ (c. 6/4 BCE - c. 30 CE), also called Jesus son of Joseph, Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus of Galilee or simply "Christ", was a Jewish religious leader who became a central figure in Christianity, regarded by most Christian branches as God himself.

It has a constituency of more than two billion believers. Thus, in his lifetime Jesus was called Jesus son of Joseph Luke 4: After his death he came to be called Jesus Christ. Passages such as Acts of the Apostles 2: Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus Romans 1: He was born to Joseph and Mary sometime between 6 bc and shortly before the death of Herod the Great Matthew 2; Luke 1: According to Matthew and Luke, however, Joseph was only legally his father. Joseph is said to have been a carpenter Matthew Stained-glass window depicting Joseph, Mary, and the baby Jesus. As a young adult, he went to be baptized by the prophet John the Baptist and shortly thereafter became an itinerant preacher and healer Mark 1: In his mid 20s Jesus had a short public career, lasting perhaps less than one year, during which he attracted considerable attention. Sometime between ad 29 and 33"possibly ad 30"he went to observe Passover in Jerusalem , where his entrance, according to the Gospels, was triumphant and infused with eschatological significance. While there he was arrested, tried, and executed. His disciples became convinced that he still lived and had appeared to them. They converted others to belief in him, which eventually led to a new religion , Christianity. The Preaching of St. John the BaptistThe Preaching of St. Rome had legions in both countries but not in Palestine. That end was achieved for a long time by permitting Herod to remain king of Judaea 37"4 bc and allowing him a free hand in governing his kingdom, as long as the requirements of stability and loyalty were met. Both sons were given lesser titles than king: Archelaus was ethnarch, and Antipas was tetrarch. That minor Roman aristocrat later called a procurator was supported by a small Roman army of approximately 3,000 men. The soldiers, however, came not from Italy but from nearby Gentile cities, especially Caesarea and Sebaste; presumably, the officers were from Italy. Although nominally in charge of Judaea, Samaria, and Idumaea, the prefect did not govern his area directly. Instead, he relied on local leaders. They came to Jerusalem only to ensure peace during the pilgrimage festivals" Passover , Weeks Shabuoth , and Booths Sukkoth "when large crowds and patriotic themes sometimes combined to spark unrest or uprisings. On a day-to-day basis Jerusalem was governed by the high priest. Assisted by a council, he had the difficult task of mediating between the remote Roman prefect and the local populace, which was hostile toward pagans and wanted to be free of foreign interference. His political responsibility was to maintain order and to see that tribute was paid. Since he and Pilate were in power together for 10 years, they must have collaborated successfully. Judaea including Jerusalem was nominally governed by Pilate, but the actual daily rule of Jerusalem was in the hands of Caiaphas and his council. Relations between Jewish areas and nearby Gentile areas Galilee and Judaea, the principal Jewish areas of Palestine, were surrounded by Gentile territories i. There also was some exchange of populations: Jewish merchants and traders could probably speak some Greek , but the primary language of Palestinian Jews was Aramaic a Semitic language closely related to Hebrew. On the other hand, the Jews resisted paganism and excluded temples for the worship of the gods of Greece and Rome from their cities, along with the Greek educational institutions the ephebeia and gymnasium, gladiatorial contests, and other buildings or institutions typical of Gentile areas. Because Jewish-Gentile relations in the land that the Jews considered their own were often uneasy, Jewish areas were usually governed separately from Gentile areas. The reign of Herod the Great was the exception to that rule, but even he treated the Jewish and the Gentile parts of his kingdom differently, fostering Greco-Roman culture in Gentile sectors but introducing only very minor aspects of it in Jewish areas. In the 1st century Rome showed no interest in making the Jews in Palestine and other parts of the empire conform to common Greco-Roman culture. A series of decrees by Julius Caesar, Augustus, the Roman Senate, and various city councils permitted Jews to keep their own customs, even when they were antithetical to Greco-Roman culture. Neither did Rome colonize Jewish Palestine. Few individual Gentiles from abroad would have been attracted to live in Jewish cities, where they would have been cut off from their customary worship and cultural activities. The Gentiles who lived in Tiberias and other Jewish cities were probably

natives of nearby Gentile cities, and many were Syrians, who could probably speak both Aramaic and Greek. Economic conditions Most people in the ancient world produced food, clothing, or both and could afford few luxuries. Most Palestinian Jewish farmers and herdsmen, however, earned enough to support their families, pay their taxes, offer sacrifices during one or more annual festivals, and let their land lie fallow in the sabbatical years, when cultivation was prohibited. Galilee in particular was relatively prosperous, since the land and climate permitted abundant harvests and supported many sheep. There were, of course, landless people, but the Herodian dynasty was careful to organize large public works projects that employed thousands of men. Desperate poverty was present too but never reached a socially dangerous level. At the other end of the economic spectrum, few if any Palestinian Jews had the vast fortunes that successful merchants in port cities could accumulate. However, there were Jewish aristocrats with large estates and grand houses, and the merchants who served the Temple supplying, for example, incense and fabric could become very prosperous. The gap between rich and poor in Palestine was obvious and distressing to the poor, but, compared with that of the rest of the world, it was not especially wide. Page 1 of 8.

Chapter 5 : Download [PDF] Encyclopedia Of The Historical Jesus Free Online | New Books in Politics

Article. There is the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith. This statement alerts us to the ongoing tension between history and faith. Few topics in theology have created such tension as the debate about the historical Jesus.

Download eBook The projected thirty-volume Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception EBR is intended to serve as a comprehensive guide to the current state of knowledge on the background, origins, and development of the canonical texts of the Bible as they were accepted in Judaism and Christianity. The EBR is also available online. Further information on „The Bible and Its Reception". The series of essays extends nearly columns 50 pages and could easily be a book in their own right. Dozens of authors have contributed and evaluated so many fascinating facets of the historical Jesus and his reception that one is left, after reading the entry, stunned and amazed. Whilst this is not a lengthy entry it nonetheless includes everything relevant to any modern discussion of the Revolt that saw the destruction of Jerusalem in the First Century CE. His treatment of this important thinker at least in the minds of those in some quarters of the Church is precise and informative without being dull or plodding. John the Baptist I. New Testament Knut Backhaus; Munich, Germany Backhaus begins his survey of John the Baptist by suggesting that "Ever since Hermann Samuel Reimarus, research on John the Baptist has often been a "forerunner" of historical Jesus research and shared its methodological development. Within the "third quest" John is no longer viewed as a somewhat isolated predecessor, who prepares the way for Jesus, but as a prophet of eschatological restoration in the context of Second Temple Judaism. He was and has been a polarizing figure and the authors of the subsections of his entry are able to overcome bias and present him - as he has been presented in Judaism, Christianity, literature, and the visual arts - with equity and charity. To be exact, there are six persons of that name, and Landolt discusses all of them. Jubilee, Year of IV. It has to be said that this is one of the more interesting ancient festivals which, apparently, was never actually celebrated. Its appearance in the Old and New Testaments as well as in Hellenistic Judaism and rabbinic Judaism and Christianity makes up the extent of the article. Indeed, the essay goes so far as to discuss the Jubilee in American Christianity. We read "Beginning with the premise that the biblical Jubilee was a year in which slaves were freed and debts were forgiven, America especially experienced two distinct movements viewed as manifestations of the Jubilee. Judah Son of Jacob VI. Film Free Content Peter T. Chattaway; Vancouver, BC, Canada. Judah both the persons and the place are investigated and explicated. The eight persons named Judah in the biblical text and the land taking its name from the Patriarch receive thorough historical investigation. Even if that means turning to Iranian television and its treatment of Jacob and Joseph in the entry on Judah Son of Jacob: Farajollah Salahshoor, , Prophet Joseph tells the story of Joseph and his brothers in a way that reflects modern Middle Eastern tensions.

Chapter 6 : Historicity of Jesus - Wikipedia

This Encyclopedia brings together the vast array of historical research into the reality of the man, the teachings, the acts, and the events ascribed to him that have served as the foundational story of one of the world's central religions. This kind of historiography is not biography. The.

We shall study the three in succession. Pagan sources The non-Christian sources for the historical truth of the Gospels are both few and polluted by hatred and prejudice. A number of reasons have been advanced for this condition of the pagan sources: It is at least certain that neither Jews nor Gentiles suspected in the least the paramount importance of the religion, the rise of which they witnessed among them. These considerations will account for the rarity and the asperity with which Christian events are mentioned by pagan authors. But though Gentile writers do not give us any information about Christ and the early stages of Christianity which we do not possess in the Gospels, and though their statements are made with unconcealed hatred and contempt, still they unwittingly prove the historical value of the facts related by the Evangelists. We need not delay over a writing entitled the "Acts of Pilate", which must have existed in the second century Justin , "Apol". Tacitus We possess at least the testimony of Tacitus A. Tacitus, moreover, describes some of the horrible torments to which Nero subjected the Christians Ann. The Roman writer confounds the Christians with the Jews , considering them as an especially abject Jewish sect ; how little he investigated the historical truth of even the Jewish records may be inferred from the credulity with which he accepted the absurd legends and calumnies about the origin of the Hebrew people Hist. It has been noted that Suetonius considered Christ Chrestus as a Roman insurgent who stirred up seditions under the reign of Claudius A. In his life of Nero he regards that emperor as a public benefactor on account of his severe treatment of the Christians: The Roman writer does not understand that the Jewish troubles arose from the Jewish antagonism to the Messianic character of Jesus Christ and to the rights of the Christian Church. On the one hand, their lives were confessedly innocent; no crime could be proved against them excepting their Christian belief , which appeared to the Roman as an extravagant and perverse superstition. On the other hand, the Christians could not be shaken in their allegiance to Christ, Whom they celebrated as their God in their early morning meetings Ep. Christianity here appears no longer as a religion of criminals, as it does in the texts of Tacitus and Suetonius; Pliny acknowledges the high moral principles of the Christians , admires their constancy in the Faith *pervicacia et inflexibilis obstinatio* , which he appears to trace back to their worship of Christ *carmenque Christo, quasi Deo, dicere*. Other pagan writers The remaining pagan witnesses are of less importance: In the second century Lucian sneered at Christ and the Christians , as he scoffed at the pagan gods. Before the end of the second century, the logos alethes of Celsus, as quoted by Origen *Contra Celsus* , *passim* , testifies that at that time the facts related in the Gospels were generally accepted as historically true. However scanty the pagan sources of the life of Christ may be, they bear at least testimony to His existence, to His miracles , His parables, His claim to Divine worship, His death on the Cross, and to the more striking characteristics of His religion. Jewish sources Philo Philo , who dies after A. Eusebius *Church History II*. Peter in Rome during his mission to the Emperor Caius; moreover, that in his work on the contemplative life he describes the life of the Christian Church in Alexandria founded by St. Mark , rather than that of the Essenes and Therapeutae. But it is hardly probable that Philo had heard enough of Christ and His followers to give an historical foundation to the foregoing legends. Two passages in his "Antiquities" which confirm two facts of the inspired Christian records are not disputed. In the one he reports the murder of "John called Baptist" by Herod Ant. Seeing, also, that he records events of minor importance in the history of the Jews , it would be surprising if he were to keep silence about Jesus Christ. Consideration for the priests and Pharisees did not prevent him from mentioning the judicial murders of John the Baptist and the Apostle James; his endeavour to find the fulfilment of the Messianic prophecies in Vespasian did not induce him to pass in silence over several Jewish sects , though their tenets appear to be inconsistent with the Vespasian claims. One naturally expects, therefore, a notice about Jesus Christ in Josephus. About this time appeared Jesus , a wise man if indeed it is right to call Him man; for He was a worker of astonishing deeds, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with joy , and He

drew to Himself many Jews many also of Greeks. This was the Christ. And when Pilate , at the denunciation of those that are foremost among us, had condemned Him to the cross, those who had first loved Him did not abandon Him for He appeared to them alive again on the third day, the holy prophets having foretold this and countless other marvels about Him. The tribe of Christians named after Him did not cease to this day. A testimony so important as the foregoing could not escape the work of the critics. Their conclusions may be reduced to three headings: Those who regard the passage as spurious First, there are those who consider the whole passage as spurious. The principal reasons for this view appear to be the following: Josephus could not represent Jesus Christ as a simple moralist, and on the other hand he could not emphasize the Messianic prophecies and expectations without offending the Roman susceptibilities; the above cited passage from Josephus is said to be unknown to Origen and the earlier patristic writers; its very place in the Josephan text is uncertain, since Eusebius Church History II. The reasons assigned for this opinion may be reduced to the following two: Josephus must have mentioned Jesus , but he cannot have recognized Him as the Christ; hence part of our present Josephan text must be genuine, part must be interpolated. Again, the same conclusion follows from the fact that Origen knew a Josephan text about Jesus , but was not acquainted with our present reading; for, according to the great Alexandrian doctor, Josephus did not believe that Jesus was the Messias "In Matth. Whatever force these two arguments have is lost by the fact that Josephus did not write for the Jews but for the Romans; consequently, when he says, "This was the Christ", he does not necessarily imply that Jesus was the Christ considered by the Romans as the founder of the Christian religion. Those who consider it to be completely genuine The third class of scholars believe that the whole passage concerning Jesus , as it is found today in Josephus , is genuine. The main arguments for the genuineness of the Josephan passage are the following: Second, it is true that neither Tertullian nor St. Writers of the age of Tertullian and Justin could appeal to living witnesses of the Apostolic tradition. IV, , St. Fourth, the complete silence of Josephus as to Jesus would have been a more eloquent testimony than we possess in his present text; this latter contains no statement incompatible with its Josephan authorship: All this does not necessarily imply that Josephus regarded Jesus as the Jewish Messias ; but, even if he had been convinced of His Messiahship, it does not follow that he would have become a Christian. A number of possible subterfuges might have supplied the Jewish historian with apparently sufficient reasons for not embracing Christianity. Other Jewish sources The historical character of Jesus Christ is also attested by the hostile Jewish literature of the subsequent centuries. His birth is ascribed to an illicit "Acta Pilati" in Thilo, "Codex apocryph. The last work in its final edition did not appear before the thirteenth century, so that it could give the Panthera myth in its most advanced form. Rosch is of opinion that the myth did not begin before the end of the first century. The later Jewish writings show traces of acquaintance with the murder of the Holy Innocents Wagenseil, "Confut. Toldoth", 15; Eisenmenger op. Wagenseil, 19 repeats the Jewish fiction that the body of Jesus had been stolen from the sepulchre. Christian sources Among the Christian sources of the life of Jesus we need hardly mention the so called Agrapha and Apocrypha. For whether the Agrapha contain Logia of Jesus , or refer to incidents in His life, they are either highly uncertain or present only variations of the Gospel story. The chief value of the Apocrypha consists in their showing the infinite superiority of the Inspired Writings by contrasting the coarse and erroneous productions of the human mind with the simple and sublime truths written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Paul that are of the highest importance for the construction of the life of Jesus. At the same time, these four great Epistles bear witness to all the most important facts in the life of Christ: His Davidic descent, His poverty, His Messiahship, His moral teaching, His preaching of the kingdom of God , His calling of the apostles, His miraculous power , His claims to be God , His betrayal, His institution of the Holy Eucharist , His passion, crucifixion, burial, resurrection , His repeated appearances Romans 1: However important the four great Epistles may be, the gospels are still more so. Not that any one of them offers a complete biography of Jesus , but they account for the origin of Christianity by the life of its Founder. Questions like the authenticity of the Gospels, the relation between the Synoptic Gospels, and the Fourth, the Synoptic problem, must be studied in the articles referring to these respective subjects. About this page APA citation. Early Historical Documents on Jesus Christ. In The Catholic Encyclopedia. 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Dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The term historical Jesus refers to attempts to "reconstruct the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth by critical historical methods".

Judea Province during the 1st century All extant sources that mention Jesus were written after his death. The Christian Testament represents sources that have become canonical for Christianity, and there are many apocryphal texts that are examples of the wide variety of writings in the first centuries AD that are related to Jesus. These sources are compared to Christian sources, such as the Pauline letters and synoptic gospels, and are usually independent of each other; that is, the Jewish sources do not draw upon the Roman sources. Similarities and differences between these sources are used in the authentication process. The general scholarly view holds that the longer passage, known as the Testimonium Flavianum, most likely consists of an authentic nucleus that was subjected to later Christian interpolation or forgery. Feldman states that "few have doubted the genuineness" of the reference found in Antiquities 20, 9, 1 to "the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James". He writes that founder of the sect was named Christus the Christian title for Jesus; that he was executed under Pontius Pilate; and that the movement, initially checked, broke out again in Judea and even in Rome itself. Historical reliability of the Gospels The historical reliability of the gospels refers to the reliability and historic character of the four New Testament gospels as historical documents. Little in the four canonical gospels is considered to be historically reliable. There are different hypotheses regarding the origin of the texts because the gospels of the New Testament were written in Greek for Greek-speaking communities, [69] and were later translated into Syriac, Latin, and Coptic. Historians often study the historical reliability of the Acts of the Apostles when studying the reliability of the gospels, as the Book of Acts was seemingly written by the same author as the Gospel of Luke. To answer this question, scholars have to ask who wrote the gospels, when they wrote them, what was their objective in writing them, [73] what sources the authors used, how reliable these sources were, and how far removed in time the sources were from the stories they narrate, or if they were altered later. Scholars may also look into the internal evidence of the documents, to see if, for example, a document has misquoted texts from the Hebrew Tanakh, has made incorrect claims about geography, if the author appears to have hidden information, or if the author has fabricated a prophecy. Events generally accepted as historical[edit] Main articles: Historical Jesus, Quest for the historical Jesus, and Christ myth theory There is widespread disagreement among scholars on the details of the life of Jesus mentioned in the gospel narratives, and on the meaning of his teachings, [15] and the only two events subject to "almost universal assent" are that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and was crucified by the order of the Roman Prefect Pontius Pilate. Meier views the crucifixion of Jesus as historical fact and states that based on the criterion of embarrassment Christians would not have invented the painful death of their leader. Some assume that there are eight elements about Jesus and his followers that can be viewed as historical facts, namely: His activities were confined to Galilee and Judea. He was baptized by John the Baptist. He had a controversy at the Temple. Jesus was crucified by the Romans near Jerusalem. Some of his disciples were persecuted. While there is widespread scholarly agreement on the existence of Jesus, [54] [56] and a basic consensus on the general outline of his life, [80] the portraits of Jesus constructed in the quests have often differed from each other, and from the image portrayed in the gospel accounts. Christ myth theory The Resurrection of Christ by Noel Coypel The Christ myth theory is "the view that the person known as Jesus of Nazareth had no historical existence.

In this encyclopedia, some entries address "all of the areas involved in the study of the historical Jesus." The discussion Divorce and remarriage serves as a good illustration of what this reference work seeks to accomplish.

Directly, then, the Gospels document the beliefs of the 1st-century Christian communities for which they were composed; they are not historical biographies in the modern sense of the term. Thus a question arises: The "Old Quest" for the Historical Jesus. The discipline of critical history itself emerged within the context of the Enlightenment, and those who first urged the distinction between the Gospels as articulations of Christian belief and what can be known about Jesus on historical grounds exploited that difference in the service of various agendas. Albert Schweitzer conducted a magisterial survey of the first phase of historical Jesus research in *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. Among the writings he reviewed, three tendencies were operative. At one extreme were authors who, representing an emerging fundamentalist rejection of modernity, persisted in reading the Scriptures as simply true in every respect. Opposite them were writers like H. On their respective accounts, Jesus was either 1 a failed messianic revolutionary whose followers spiritualized his message, clumsily concocted the story of the resurrection, and on this fraudulent basis kept his movement alive Reimarus ; 2 the human being whose personality inspired the myth of God-manhood recounted in the Gospels Strauss ; or 3 an hypothesis rendered superfluous to explain the origin of Christianity, since the earliest Gospel, that of Mark, can be accounted for as the result of the confluence of Jewish and Hellenistic religious streams Bauer. Between these two extremes were Protestant liberals like A. For Schweitzer, Jesus believed that all this was imminent and that he himself had a role in its occurrence. The Decline of Historical Jesus Research. There followed a hiatus in historical Jesus research that lasted until The interim period saw, theologically, the dominance of the neo-orthodox theology introduced by Karl Barth in , and, with respect to historical method, the introduction of form criticism into NT studies with the practically simultaneous publication in and of works by Rudolf Bultmann, M. These two developments conspired to reinforce the skepticism regarding the possibility of knowledge of Jesus by historical means already articulated in W. Wrede had argued that the notion of the messianic secret around which the Gospel of Mark is organized was an apologetic device invented by the author, so that even Mark, the earliest of the Gospels, offers data not on Jesus but on the community for which it was written. Wrede thus challenged the common-sense assumption that because Mark was the earliest Gospel, it must be closest to the facts and thus historically most reliable. On this view the religious beliefs animating the Gospels formed an impenetrable barrier blocking any attempt at historical reconstruction of Jesus and his ministry. The "new quest" differed from its predecessor in two major respects. But if the goal was more positive, the "new quest" also assumed a far more critical attitude toward its sources than did its predecessor. From the vantage point of form criticism, nothing in the Gospels is to be acknowledged as historical simply by its presence in the texts. Rather, only those sayings and deeds ascribed to Jesus that meet a set of stringent criteria are to be accorded historical probability. This first major contribution to the "new quest" established the contours of an historical image of Jesus that would enjoy consensus status for almost three decades. Whereas prophets spoke a word of the Lord that came to them, Jesus spoke on his own authority: Jesus, however, possesses no scholarly credentials, he chooses his disciples, not they him, and there is no notion that they might someday equal, much less surpass, him. In the content of his teaching, Jesus contradicts the normative interpretation of the Law, making light, for example, of the Sabbath obligation to abstain from work. Even more audaciously, he proceeds to contradict the letter of the Law itself, abrogating the dietary regulations in favor of interior purity. Unique in addressing God with filial tenderness and familiarity as *abba*, Jesus stands in sharp contrast to the casuistic legalism and ritualistic formalism of his contemporaries. That same implicit claim was, Christians believe, vindicated when God raised Jesus from the dead, and its meaning becomes explicit when they resort to titles like *messiah*, *son of god*, *Son of Man*, or *lord* to articulate his significance. In time this image of Jesus became the object of severe critique and ongoing revision. The critique, laid out by scholars like E. Sanders in *Jesus and Judaism* and Paula Fredriksen in *From Jesus to Christ*, uncovered first of all a theological bias operative in the historical

portrait of Jesus that draws his features into focus by heightening the contrast between him and the Judaism of his day. That negative stereotype of Judaism unfortunately contributes to the continuance of anti-Semitism. Beyond this critique of the theological bias operative in the "new quest," several sources fed an ongoing process of revision of the historical image of Jesus. Archeological investigations combined with literary findings like the dead sea scrolls to yield a considerably nuanced picture of Second Temple Judaism. Geographical differences also now assumed significance: Jesus was born to and exercised his ministry among Galilean villagers remote from the influence of both Temple and pharisees and not kindly disposed to an urban center that imposed and benefitted from a crushing burden of taxation. They highlighted his affinities with Pharisaism, denied the uniqueness of his Abbausage, and argued that his intensification of the demands of Torah and declarations of the forgiveness of sin lie well within the parameters of Judaism. Vermes used a social scientific category when he focused on Jesus as a charismatic, and thus he reflects the interdisciplinary turn biblical studies took with the addition of sociology and anthropology to their resources. Much of the ferment fostered by these developments came to a head in the work of the Jesus Seminar organized within the Society of Biblical Literature in The novel approach taken by this group of scholars to determine the historicity of sayings attributed to Jesus in the NT and other early Christian documents has received notoriety. They voted on each saying, casting colored beads coded according to degree of probability. They published the results, again colorcoded: The Jesus Seminar also takes a novel approach to historical Jesus research by expanding the core of what it takes as basic data. In addition to the four canonical gospels, members of the Jesus Seminar argue, some of the gnostic material discovered at Nag Hammadi in ought also to be taken into account. Maintaining that documents like the Gospel of Peter, the Apocryphon of James, and especially the collection of sayings known as the Gospel of Thomas enshrine early and independent data on the formation of the Christian tradition, seminar members particularly prize the latter document as preserving authentic sayings of Jesus. Some of these sayings are unknown to the gospels while, for others, the Gospel of Thomas provides the more original version. Seminar members also greatly expand the significance of the Q-source, the hypothetical collection of sayings of Jesus, the existence of which is deduced from the occurrence of these sayings in both Matthew and Luke but not Mark. Indeed, the wisdom sayings of Q-source are found to bear marked similarities to contemporary traditions of Greco-Roman Cynicism. This was the Kingdom of God, which Jesus acted out in an itinerant ministry to the villages of Galilee. His journeys were similar to the counter-cultural wanderings of the Cynics, whom Crossan likens to the hippies of the Greco-Roman world. What Jesus offered was healing, and, in a context where much illness both physical and mental was attributable to the poverty and systemic violence imposed to maintain the hegemony of the Temple and the Romans, such healing had political significance. In the eyes of the Jerusalem establishment, whose control over the definition of illness and over the means of relief Jesus challenged, his healings and exorcisms cast him in the role of magician or sorcerer. On one point Jesus differs from the Cynics: By this stratagem Jesus ensured the dependence of his itinerant ministry on the hospitality of those who would receive him. Offering healing, he sought the practice of open-table fellowship, by which he again subverted the social rankings of the day and acted out the egalitarianism consonant with the presence of the Kingdom. All of this set Jesus and his socially revolutionary movement on a collision course with the power structure of the day, centered in the Temple. Centering his message on the symbol of Kingdom of God, Jesus both announced the futurity of the coming of the Kingdom and also claimed that it was in some sense already present in his own ministry, a claim that he acted out by performing not magic but miracles, especially healings and exorcisms. Jeremias responded with a Kingdom which was for Jesus both already and not-yet. In similar fashion, E. On all their accounts, however, Jesus is to be understood historically as a 1st-century Jew concerned in some fashion with the renewal of his people, and none would deny that such renewal involved more than a purely religious realm; for Jesus, as for the ancient world generally, religion, society, and politics formed a seamless garment. Beyond the question of the historical Jesus lies the further question of the theological significance of the results of historical Jesus research. The very nature of that research sheds some light on the issue. Inquiry into Jesus by historical means involves the historian in a subtle interplay between initial interpretive hypothesis and data, the factual status of which is to be determined; the outcome will be a set of more or less probable

facts rendered coherent and intelligible by some more or less comprehensive master image or hypothesis. Historical constructs of Jesus thus involve both degrees of probability in their various components and perspectival definition of their unifying hypotheses; hence, such constructs are in principle always subject to revision. The results of historical Jesus research become significant for Christian faith in at least two ways. Most generally, they counter recurring temptations to docetism by presenting Christians with images of Jesus as fully human and historically situated. Second, when the perspectives from which historical data on Jesus are evaluated and interpreted includes Christian faith, that faith may, among other things, illumine the significance those data hold for the present. From this enlarged perspective an interpreter may move beyond a strictly historical account to produce a historically informed theological narrative. Such theological readings of historical interpretations of Jesus are distinctively modern artifacts that continue the christological process from which the Gospels emerged; they may function for contemporary Christians much as the gospels did for their original addressees, even while they serve the ongoing proclamation of those same gospels. Rethinking the Historical Jesus, Volume One:

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The historical character of Jesus Christ is also attested by the hostile Jewish literature of the subsequent centuries. His birth is ascribed to an illicit ("Acta Pilati" in Thilo, "Codex apocryph. His birth is ascribed to an illicit ("Acta Pilati" in Thilo, "Codex apocryph.