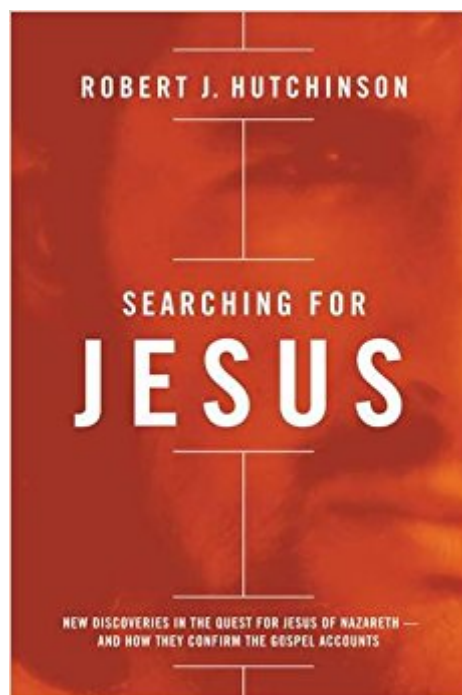




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# **Searching For Jesus: New Discoveries In The Quest For Jesus Of Nazareth---and How They Confirm The Gospel Accounts**



## Synopsis

Searching for Jesus: In this exhaustively researched new life of Jesus, award-winning writer Robert J. Hutchinson argues that Jesus was not an "apocalyptic prophet" who thought the world was about to end. Jesus was not a "zealot" revolutionary who wanted to kill the Romans. Jesus was not a Greek Cynic philosopher. Jesus was not an orthodox rabbi who accidentally got himself killed by causing a disturbance in the Temple. Jesus was not a world-hating Gnostic. Jesus was not a delusional fanatic who tricked his followers into following him. Instead, Jesus was just as the Gospels describe him: a fiery, courageous, charismatic populist who drew crowds by the tens of thousands and electrified all of Palestine with his strange and exhilarating announcement of God's kingdom in their midst. Jesus reached out to the most wretched and despised people in society -- the demon-possessed, the deformed, those afflicted with horrible contagious diseases, prostitutes, even soldiers of an occupation army. Hutchinson shows that many of the negative ideas about Jesus paraded in the media every Christmas and Easter are increasingly obsolete. These obsolete portraits of Jesus, the author says, are based on assumptions, theories and unproven hypotheses that are more than a century old and that have been discredited by more recent research. Written for skeptics and believers alike, Searching for Jesus reveals how the Gospels are truer than many people have been led to believe. He asks the question: "What if everything the Gospels say about Jesus... his words, his deeds, his plans... actually turn out to be... true?"

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This entertaining book, setting its scenes with plenty of local color, demonstrates just how far the

modern skepticism about Jesus has overreached itself. Questions remain, but Robert Hutchinson reminds us that we do not need to be browbeaten by those who say that only negative answers are available." - N. T. Wright, Ph.D., University of St. Andrews "Robert Hutchinson's new book -- Searching for Jesus: New Discoveries in the Quest for Jesus of Nazareth --is a significant and very welcomed contribution to the discussion about the 'Historical Jesus.' In his book, Hutchinson reviews recent archaeological finds and new directions in New Testament scholarship that challenge some of the older theories. He does it with great clarity and in a lively and intriguing way."

- Israel Knohl, Ph.D., The Hebrew University, Jerusalem "Searching for Jesus is an excellent, informed, up-to-date review of biblical research presented in clear, engaging prose for the average reader. Robert Hutchinson shows how recent historical and archaeological investigations have overturned many of the bias-laden and unverified conclusions of biblical scholarship in the past century. I highly recommend Searching for Jesus to anyone who is seeking the truth--about Jesus of Nazareth and about the historical accuracy of the Gospels." - Mark D. Roberts, Ph.D., author of Can We Trust the Gospels? "For most of those involved in the modern 'search for the historic Jesus,' it was really a search to debunk the Biblical Jesus. But, as Robert Hutchinson demonstrates in this charming book, their efforts were not up to that task -- the 'new' evidence turns out to be more compatible with the Biblical account." Â - Rodney Stark, Ph.D., author of The Triumph of Christianity: How the Jesus Movement Became the World's Largest Religion and co-director of the Institute for Studies of Religion, Baylor UniversityÂ "Searching for JesusÂ offers the reader a readable and accessible overview to the complex field of biblical studies, archaeology, and history related to the life of Jesus. Although I do not share many of the presuppositions or conclusions of Hutchinson, he does attempt to navigate the minefield of disputes, discoveries, and controversies in the field of Jesus studies and offers, particularly in his extensive notes, a useful introductory guide for general readers who wonder what is the latest in historical Jesus research."Â Â - James D. Tabor, Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Charlotte "Searching for Jesus manages to combine some of the latest (and often technical) scholarly research with a highly readable and accessible styleâ "no mean feat! All of this is infused with relevant anecdotes which make the book a pleasure to read. Hutchinsonâ s book is an ideal for anyone wanting to discover the controversies surrounding the historical figure of Jesus and will hopefully make more people realize why this is such a fascinating area of research."- James G. Crossley, Ph.D., University of Sheffield "Robert Hutchinson's Searching for Jesus reviews the evidence, the theories, and the proposals in an informed and engaging way. Students and veteran scholars alike will profit from reading this well written book. And don't skip the footnotes; they are a trove of famous quotations from primary and

secondary literature."- Craig A. Evans, Ph.D., John Bisagno Distinguished Professor of Christian Origins, Houston Baptist University "An excellent conversation starter for study groups, perfect for public and seminary library collections." -- Library Journal "Robert Hutchinson's Searching for Jesus provides a wonderful introduction to some of the issues and debates about the Jesus of history. Hutchinson shows that the Gospels remain our best sources of information about Jesus. Searching for Jesus is a great place to beginning learning about Jesus, the Gospels, and history." " Michael F. Bird, Ph.D., Lecturer in Theology at Ridley College, Melbourne, Australia.

This is a book about new discoveries in the search for Jesus of Nazareth. It's an overview of recent archaeological finds and new developments in Biblical scholarship that are calling into question much of what skeptical scholars have assumed and asserted about Jesus over the past two centuries. It argues that many of the "scientific" or scholarly ideas about Jesus paraded in the media every Christmas and Easter are increasingly obsolete, based on assumptions, theories and unproven hypotheses that are, in some cases, more than a century old and which have been superseded by more recent research. Among the recent developments discussed in this book are: the 2012 announcement of the discovery of seven previously unknown New Testament papyri--one of which, from the Gospel of Mark, that may date to the first century; the 2009 discovery of a first-century stone house in Nazareth that refutes one of the key arguments used by those who say Jesus never existed; a young secular scholar in the UK who recently argued that the Gospel of Mark was written not forty or fifty years after Jesus' death, as many scholars have claimed for at least a century, but more like five or ten; recent excavations in Israel that have uncovered archaeological proof of the existence of key figures mentioned in the New Testament, including the high priest Caiaphas and possibly James the Just; new research that suggests belief in Jesus as a divine savior arose very early, within a year or two of the Crucifixion, not fifty to one hundred years as academic researchers used to claim in the twentieth century; the recently discovered Hebrew-language tablet dating back to the early first century that speaks about a messiah who would suffer, die, and perhaps rise again in three days; Jewish experts who insist that the gospels show Jesus was not an "illiterate peasant," as some historians and popular writers have claimed, but was likely a highly trained and knowledgeable rabbi; leading New Testament researchers who challenge the notion that Jesus was a "zealot" who sympathized with efforts to overthrow Roman rule; a top New Testament scholar in the UK who insists that the gospel accounts are based on eyewitness testimony tied to named individuals, not based on anonymous reports that circulated over decades as scholars once thought; new studies that argue the gospels' version of the

crucifixion--that Jesus was arrested on trumped-up charges of sedition because he openly challenged Temple authorities--may be far more historically accurate than previously believed; and the growing recognition that the Gnostic gospels the Christian church allegedly suppressed were actually written one hundred to three hundred years after Jesus, and are in some cases openly misogynistic. In the end, these new discoveries are causing some experts to wonder if the basic portrait of Jesus in the gospels is far more plausible than the elaborate reconstructions created by academic skeptics over the past 150 years. In other words, the New Testament may be truer than we thought... and Jesus of Nazareth, rather than being smaller than the gospels portray him, may actually be much bigger... and far more interesting.

This is an accessible, informed read perfect for anyone wanting to stay up to date on the recent scholarship surrounding the historical Jesus debate and where it's headed. Specifically, this book offers counterpoints to many of the views espoused by the popular works of Ehrman, Aslan, et al. It's an easy and enjoyable read that leaves one refreshed by the sense that the case is not as closed as some scholars might have you think when it comes to the current standing of modern scholarship on Jesus and what he stood for. This work covers a lot of ground in just 275 pages, so the argumentative brushstrokes can be quite wide and certainly lacking the depth that a much longer work would provide, but it certainly provides a laudable starting point in exploring the other side of the current argument on the historical Jesus. In fact, for anyone interested in the topic, this would be a great place to start on such a fascinating topic.

Yes, it is true. Every eight decades or so, we should dust off the word "Boffo" and re-use it. When I first ordered this book from , it was on a Friday -- Dec 5, I think. When I saw delivery was for Sunday Dec 7, I thought "computer error. No one gets mail on Sunday." Was I wrong!!! Fortunately, they do not rely on those drones I have heard about. I could just "picture" this package landing in the trees somewhere! But, arrive it did. Really, . I could have waited a week or ten days. But well done, nonetheless. I ordered this book title on the strength of various quotes from other known names -- quotes used in the advertisement that came my way via email. And then -- after ordering -- I had second thoughts. I have read quite a few of this sort of book. Would it be repetitious? There is probably a certain format to a book that seeks to introduce readers to a subject, and then to defend or explain that subject in light of various primary areas of concern, or objection. "Did Jesus Have a Secret Message?" is one of the chapter titles. "Is there Eyewitness Testimony in the Gospels?" is another chapter. These highlight areas of concern (or suspicion) that have probably been lurking on

the edges of biblical conversations for decades -- or a century or more. So, while they may sound like "the same old thing" in terms of subject matter, they may not be Same or Old to many readers. And the author does a great job of mining all the LATEST books that touch on these issues -- e.g., Aslan's book *The Zealot* -- and responding to them or referencing them in other ways. And that is the book's subtitle, after all: --"NEW Discoveries in the Quest for Jesus of Nazareth--and How They Confirm Gospel Accounts." Since the focus of each chapter is on a different area, some chapters will be of more interest than others. I was really excited -- that's the word!! -- by chapter 1, "Is There Eyewitness Testimony in the Gospels?" That was surprising enough since, actually, I have read on that elsewhere. In it, he did a nice job of summarizing the Four Source Theory, issues like "Was the Author of John an Eyewitness?" ... "Eyewitness Testimony Hidden in the Gospels"...and others. I also like that at the end of this chapter, and subsequent chapters, he included a list "For Further Study" -- which suggests more in-depth options on a particular issue. I also liked the "Selected Bibliography" (starts page 279) and "Notes" section at the end of the book (starts page 285 hardback) both of which provide the reader with direction to his sources -- and also to websites that he used. This Notes section has led me on a great journey, as I have selected and acquired (via the InterLibrary Loan program) quite a number of the books Hutchinson referenced throughout his text. By reading these books, I have gotten a different "take" on some of his points, and certainly learned some additional things. For example, the assertions of Robinson's *Redating the New Testament* -- cited by Hutchinson -- seem to be rejected by all (so far) of those other authors whose books I have read as a result of following the Notes section of this text. I may yet read Robinson, but will not be sure how much credence it deserves. Or, at least, I will be able to give it a fair hearing and then move on. Would never have found the works by Boyarin or Levine or probably Meier or Witherington if they had not showed up in the Notes. And have some of Ehrman and Crossan and certainly Aland on my "in the near future" list as well. Will check the various websites he referenced -- soon!!! So the best I can say is that this book is a great read, will deepen your knowledge, and maybe even whet your appetite for more information and further reading.

way more here than what I expected. Author does an outstanding job of introducing more than locating old ruins & lost cities but goes into detail about different historical interpretations of the Gospels & the new testament & how they have influenced our thinking over the years. He addresses things I have always wondered about that make absolutely no sense when you read & learn & understand bible but helps you understand how they did come about. He points out how many of these radical notions that Jesus was just a nice guy if he existed at all is a very historically

recent view & how new discoveries are proving completely false. These false ideas started about same time progressives in US did & were all part of trying to take God out of society.

Hutchinson is up front about his beliefs as the book begins. It doesn't prevent him from presenting a pretty thorough look of the material. I've read many of the authors he cites/quotes. He represents their views fairly accurately. What's refreshing is reading a well conceived construct of "primitive" Christianity that uses many of the same sources as 20th and 21st century writers and develops a reasonable alternative view.

Hutchinson has written a book which is full of useful facts for showing that what we have in the Bible truly the truth from God. To gleam information one must stay focused and not read when tired. It's amazing to know more and more digs are producing evidence to verify the Bible's claims.

The author is knowledgeable on the landscape and history of Israel. He is also a biblical scholar. The main thrust of the book concerns the dating of the four gospels, and new proofs that at least two of them are convincingly eye witness accounts. He uses rational arguments backed by ancient written sources, his knowledge of the landscape of Israel, his acquaintance with Israeli archaeologists, and his own expertise in biblical studies. This book flows well. The chapters are logically arranged so that the reader easily follows the point that he is making. I enjoyed reading this book, which is something that doesn't happen that often. It changed my ideas about Jesus. My ideas were founded in old scholarship, which after reading this book, I now realize have very little basis in hard facts.

Robert Hutchinson's love for Jesus and religious truth is evident on every page. He utilizes his first hand knowledge of the land of Israel throughout this volume. The value of the book lies in his up-to-the-minute knowledge of contemporary thought and knowledge of Jesus research. This aids immensely to the efforts of Christian apologists.

This is not a skim over lightly book. It is thought provoking and gives much background that gives understanding of how things were and how they could have been. Much research has gone into this book making it interesting and enlightening. Wonderful book.

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