

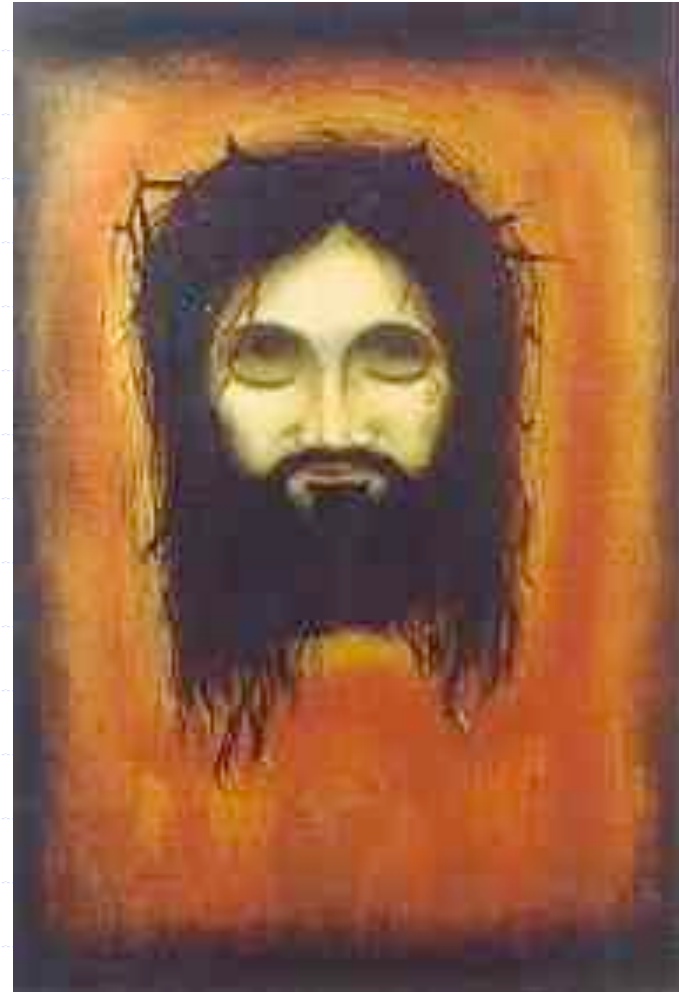
The Historical Jesus

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Introduction

- ◆ People have enormously diverse views about Jesus.
- ◆ Some motivated by their religion or worldview.
- ◆ Others claim to be trying to grapple honestly with the historical data.

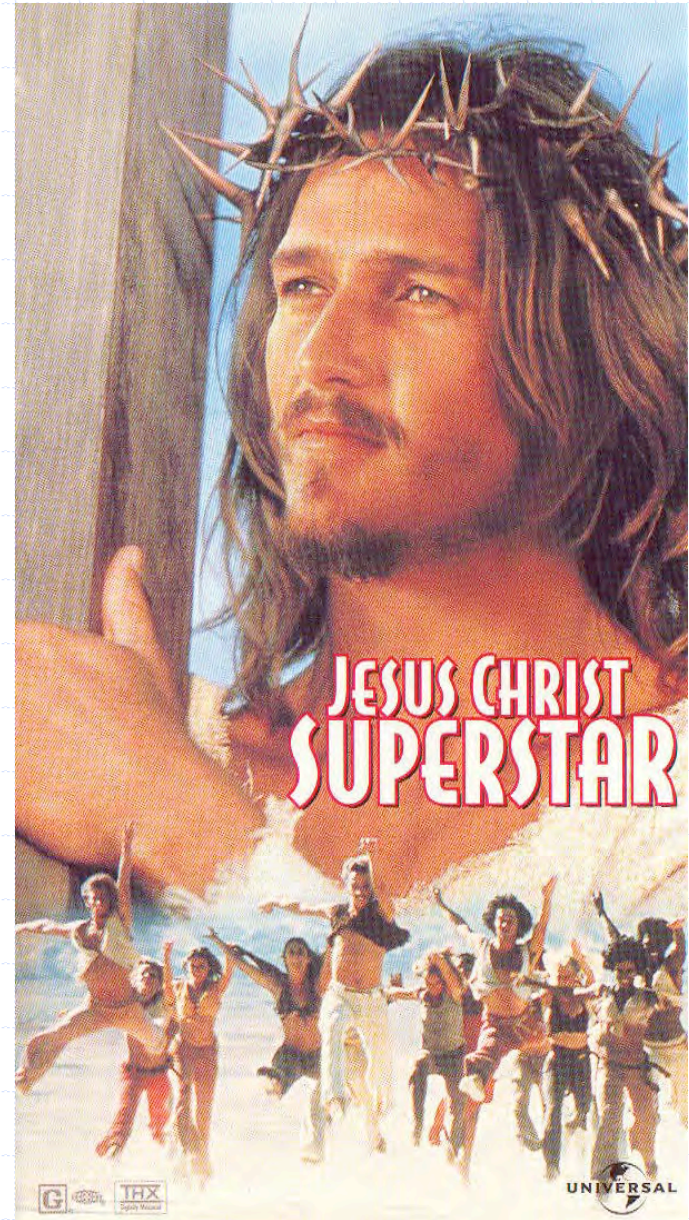


Basically Religious Views

- ◆ The biblical data point to a Jesus who is somehow fully God and fully human.
- ◆ Other religious views divide into two alternative categories:
 - Jesus is only human, not God in any real sense.
 - Jesus is divine in some sense, but not in the biblical sense.

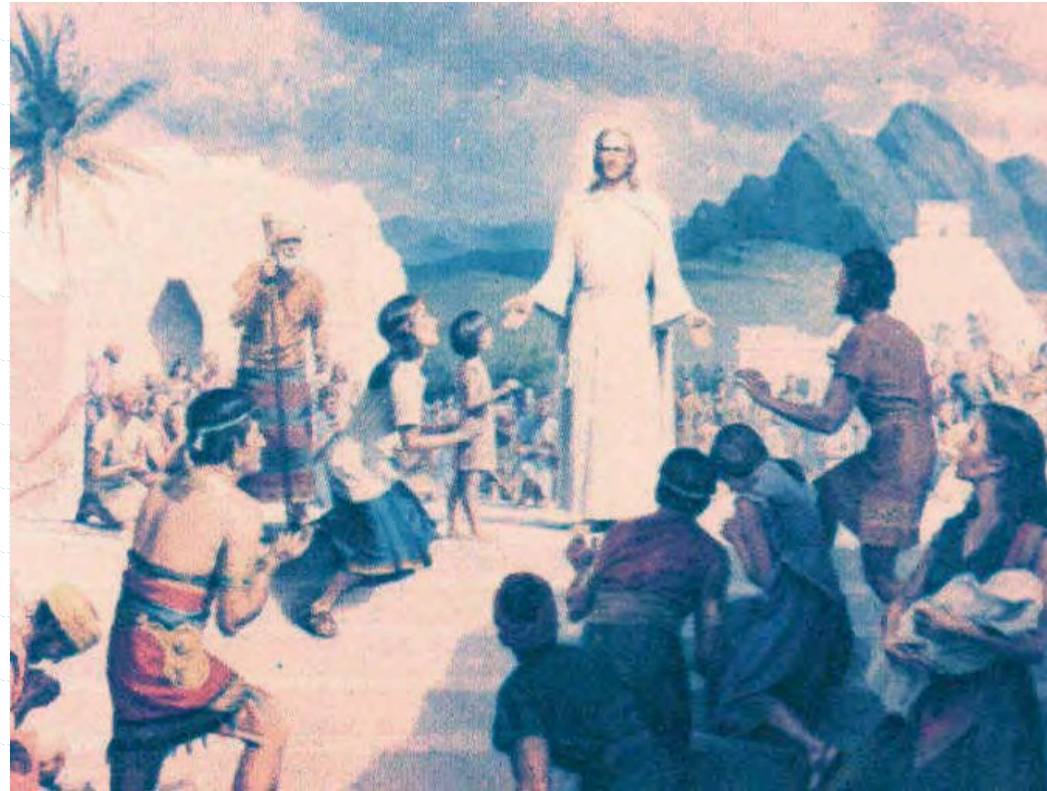
Jesus only Human

- ◆ Atheism
- ◆ Islam
- ◆ Old Liberalism
- ◆ Neo-Orthodoxy
- ◆ This view has had considerable influence on pop culture.



Jesus divine in some sense

- ◆ Jehovah's Witnesses
- ◆ Mormonism
- ◆ New Age Movement



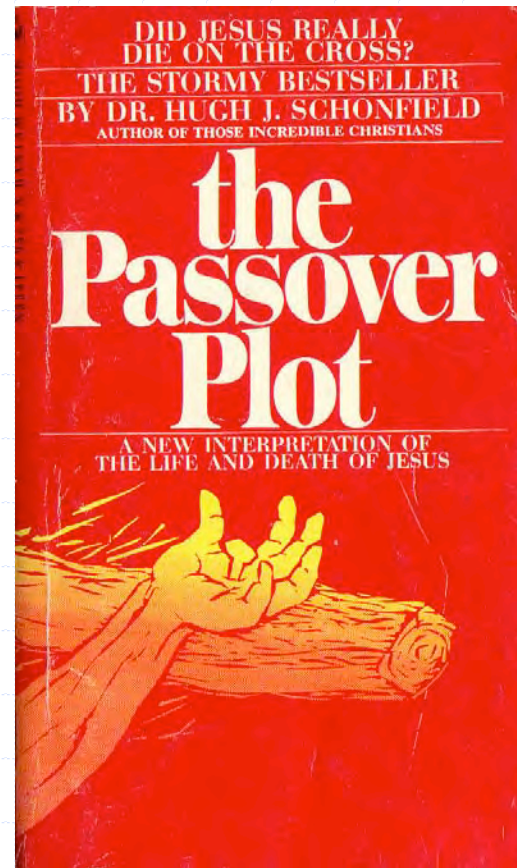
Allegedly Historical Views

- ◆ Reimarus – Deism
- ◆ Paulus – Rationalism
- ◆ Strauss – Idealism
- ◆ Renan –
Romanticism
- ◆ Wrede – Scepticism



The Present Situation

- ◆ The Post-Bultmannians
– Paradox
- ◆ Schonfield – *Passover Plot*
- ◆ Allegro – *Sacred Mushroom and the Cross*
- ◆ Smith – *The Secret Gospel*
- ◆ The Jesus Seminar



Responses to the Jesus Seminar

- ◆ Blomberg, *Historical Reliability of the Gospels*
- ◆ Boyd, *Cynic Sage or Son of God?*
- ◆ Craig, *Reasonable Faith*
- ◆ McDowell & Wilson, *He Walked Among Us*
- ◆ Strimple, *The Modern Search for the Real Jesus*

Summary on Liberal Lives

- ◆ Guiding principle is rejection of miracle
- ◆ Resulting attitude progressive skepticism
- ◆ Jesus becomes an enigma
 - If Jesus never existed, where data come from?
 - If fraud, where moral teaching come from?
 - If gentle teacher, why the opposition?
 - How reconcile moral teaching with claims?
 - If Jesus not supernatural, doesn't make sense.

Are the arguments against miracle valid?

◆ Deductive argument

- Is miracle really a contradictory idea?

◆ Inductive arguments:

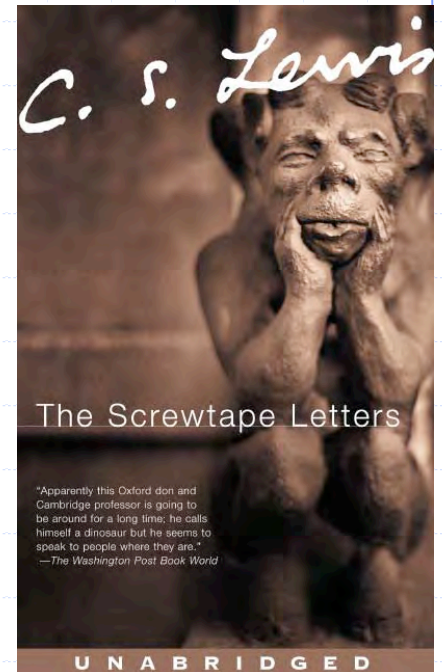
- Hume shifts definition from rare to impossible.
- Harnack plays on ignorance of ancients.
- Bultmann assumes universe cannot be penetrated.

What does miracle do to science & history?

- ◆ It makes an enormous difference in ultimate explanation.
- ◆ It may or may not make a big difference on a local scale.
- ◆ It adds another variable to explanations.
- ◆ Miracle is not irrational in a biblical worldview, but is the action of a person.
- ◆ It solves a lot of problems in biblical history and natural pre-history.

What are we to make of liberal reconstructions?

- ◆ They are Satan's work!
 - See CS Lewis, *Screwtape Letters*, chap 23
- ◆ Why does God permit this?
 - See Deut 13:1-5 re/ God allowing false prophets
- ◆ Re/ reality of miracles, see Geivett and Habermas, *In Defense of Miracles*



Not the End!

We can expect more of this until Jesus comes again.

