

**THE MIRACLES AND
MYTHS OF THE NEW
TESTAMENT: WITH OTHER
ESSAYS AND SERMONS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649649556

The Miracles and Myths of the New Testament: With Other Essays and Sermons by Joseph May

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOSEPH MAY

**THE MIRACLES AND
MYTHS OF THE NEW
TESTAMENT: WITH OTHER
ESSAYS AND SERMONS**

THE MIRACLES *and* MYTHS
OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

WITH OTHER ESSAYS AND SERMONS

BY

JOSEPH MAY, LL.D.



BOSTON
AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
1908

~~III. 12172~~



The Author.

COPYRIGHT, 1908
BY GEORGE M. ELLIS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE sermons here collected are reprinted at the suggestion of several friends who have kindly assumed the trouble, and provided for the expense of their publication in this form.

They are a few out of many of like tenor, delivered in the ordinary course of pastoral instruction and with a very simple purpose. Of widely different dates, they have only the logical connection involved in a common aim.

Throughout the writer's active ministry it pressed upon him as a weighty obligation to do whatever he might discover and to illustrate the real historical character and quality of Jesus.

Probably what is often called negative in this effort is the chief substance of it. Since light will shine of its own brightness, if unobstructed, it might be enough if we could relieve a great and highly unique personality from the encumbering associations with which the cre-

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

dulity of the ages and misdirected piety have so overloaded it as deeply to conceal its true lineaments, distort its suggestions, and profoundly impair its moral and spiritual effectiveness.

The task of rehabilitation must still be a long one, and its results may never be so distinct and definite as one might earnestly desire. But our recent time has made a hopeful beginning, and fidelity in appropriating the results of our best scholarship and candor in uttering them would rapidly promote it.

If those who have proposed and furthered the reissue of these discourses are not too much mistaken in their estimate of their possible utility, it will be a profound satisfaction to their author to hope that the efforts of his past days may still, in some very small measure, contribute to the unveiling of the true historical Jesus and the work of making him known to a world which has laboriously worshipped, but has most imperfectly understood, and still less faithfully followed him.

J. M.

FLORENCE, ITALY,
October. 1901.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE NEW TESTAMENT MIRACLES	1
II. THE ORIGIN OF BELIEF IN MIRACLES . .	27
III. THE MYTH OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS,	58
IV. THE MYTH OF THE DEITY OF JESUS . . .	91
V. JESUS AS HE WAS	116
VI. INSPIRATION	136
VII. THE FRASIBILITY OF SINLESSNESS . . .	154
VIII. THE CHRIST IDEAL	170

4

5

6

7

8

9

I.

THE NEW TESTAMENT MIRACLES.

"Jesus of Nazareth; a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs."—ACTS II. 22.

THE miraculous stories of the New Testament, while not essentially different from those of the Old Testament or of other ancient chronicles, receive a peculiar importance from the fact that they are intimately connected with a biography which is at once most interesting, in many of its features unique, and justly the object of the most venerating loyalty among Christian peoples. They are supported in the popular mind by the supernatural claims set up for the character of Jesus, which claims have been almost universally conceded until near the present time. Moreover, it may fairly be admitted that they are, for the most part, less weird and more dignified in their form than most others, and therefore to that extent more probable (although the argument from verisimilitude is of very