

Yeshua

The King The Demon & The Traitor: Ancient Mysteries Retold

by G.P.Taylor & Paula K. Parker

publ by Authentic Media

in Paperback

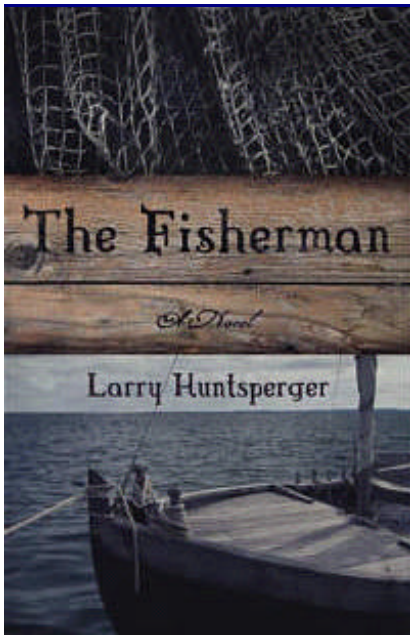
at £7.99

(978-1-860-24829-0)

Feb 2012

This is a wonderful collection of short stories that form the story of the life and teaching of Yeshua, or as we more commonly know him Jesus. Each chapter is short, each story revealing a known story in a way that makes you think a little, if for no other reason than that the names used are all using more Jewish spellings and pronunciation, thus somehow causing you to think more. The blend of stories is excellent, containing almost hints of magic, mystery and horror at times, suspenseful and intriguing, they read in some ways as short and choppy, each one leaving me feeling like I've just entered a slightly different reality or am perhaps looking at something I know but seeing it through a fun house mirror that slightly distorts it. This I think though is what makes this book so very good. The last time I enjoyed and found such insight in a book of short stories was Trevor Dennis' - *Imagining God* - – and that is still one of my favourite books to this day. This book will likely live happily beside that one, and will find much use in future Sunday school sessions I have no doubt!

Notes by [Melanie Carroll](#)

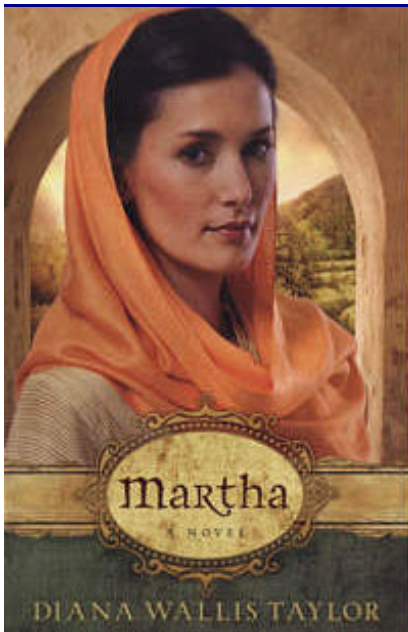


The Fisherman

by Larry Huntsperger
publ by Revell imprint of Baker Pub from Lion
in Paperback
at £9.99 (978-0-800-75844-8) Jul 2011

A fictionalised retelling of the gospel story through the eyes of Peter, as he tries to correct the misinterpretations and distortions that have grown up between Jesus' death and his own death, which is imminent. The story begins when his brother, Andrew, first tells him about the prophet from Nazareth and ends in his prison cell as he awaits execution. No liberties are taken with either the actions or the words of Christ, Who speaks straight from the Bible. Everyone else thinks and speaks, sometimes jarringly, as a modern American – the resurrected son of the widow of Nain awakes crying, "Hey Mom, I'm hungry!" I suspect this is done in an attempt to give the story immediacy for the modern reader, as the author's stated aim is to create a frame through which he hopes his audience "will be able to see history with a new clarity." Certainly the central message is in no way trivialised or sugar-coated – Simon Peter's struggles as he finds out what Christ is about and how to relate to Him are the struggles of us all. Very readable.

Notes by [Diane Morrison](#)



Martha

by Diana Wallis Taylor
publ by Revell imprint of Baker Pub from Lion
in Paperback
at £8.99 (978-0-800-73465-7)

Aug 2011

Of course anything not in the Bible is a figment of someone's imagination, but there has always been serious study of background information to make the story as plausible as possible, and this is what has been done here. -

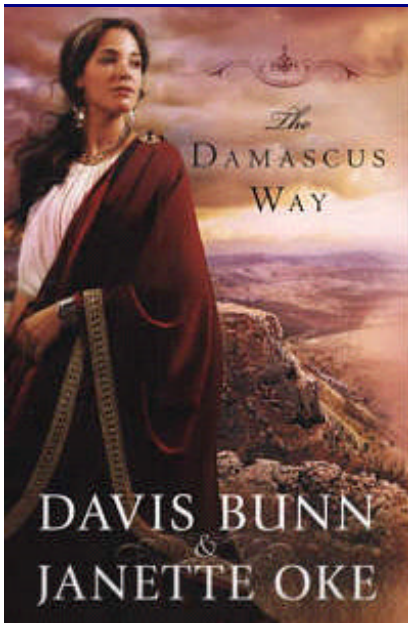
Incidents recorded in the Gospels have been woven together to make a story of Martha that just could be true. It really doesn't matter. It probably didn't happen this way – but it might have done! -

What the book does well is to describe what it was like for a family living in Bethany at that time. The day to day routine, the way the community behaved, and what befriending Jesus meant for them when the Temple authorities were intent to kill Jesus and wipe out any support for him. -

I had never seriously considered what this would mean for Lazarus, or the healed leper who returned to thank Jesus. A book like this makes us stop and think of these people and how their lives will have been changed. Yes, Lazarus was raised from the dead. Yes, the leper was now able to return home, but what then? -

I thoroughly enjoyed this.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



The Damascus Way

Acts of Faith Book 3

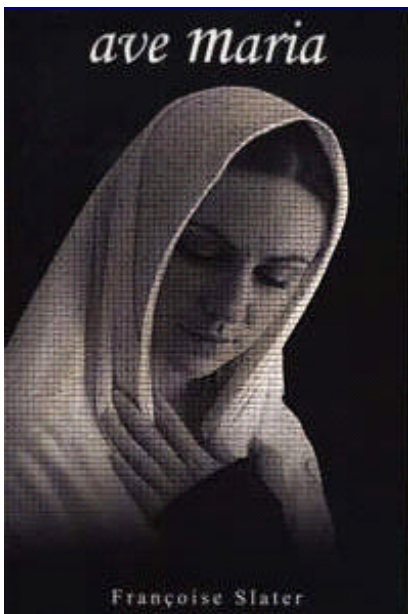
by Davis Bunn & Janette Oke
publ by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion
in Paperback
at £8.99 (978-0-764-20866-9) Feb 2011

I have so enjoyed this series. Each one I have thought could not be bettered, but I was wrong, my enjoyment has increased with each book. The historical research that lies behind any fictional re-telling of Bible times, means you can learn a great deal, and this is certainly so with this trilogy. The fear among the Christians in Jerusalem after the stoning of Stephen and the appearance of Saul with his mission to destroy them is palpable, and that fear follows them as many flee the city into remote parts of Judea and Samaria. Here they find others of like persuasion who are willing to help them, and in this story we follow Stephen's widow and child to a new life at a trading post on the edge of the desert. The description of a journey through a sand storm in this desert and many other incidents in the story help us to understand more fully, the background to this part of the Gospel story. -

We meet with many familiar characters and new story lines and characters are introduced which makes for a thoroughly good read. - -

A boxed set of these books is available for £25, ISBN 978-0-764-29509-6

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)

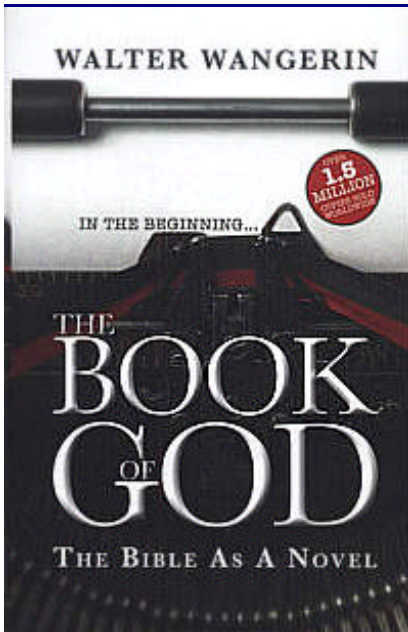


Ave Maria

by Françoise Slater
publ by Austin Macauley from Gardners Books
in Paperback
at £6.99 (978-1-849-63055-9) Nov 2010

This book is described as "a fictional tale", in other words, a novel. It covers the whole Gospel story from the Annunciation to the birth of Jesus on that first Christmas. Much research went into the preparation of the novel and the bare facts of the Gospel story are fleshed out with dialogue, background and the day-to-day life of the characters. The central character is Mary. Her home and family life are intimately described and the importance of Joseph as protector and as Jesus' earthly father is emphasised. What are just names in Scripture - Zebedee, Zechariah, Hannah, Salome and many others - become real flesh-and-blood people and are given individuality and personality. It is a retelling in a new way of the greatest story ever told. It is a bold undertaking and it works.

Notes by [John Irvine](#)



The Book of God

The Bible as a Novel

by Walter Wangerin
publ by Lion Hudson
in Paperback
at £9.99

(978-0-745-95539-1)

20/05/2011

Originally published in 1996, now re-issued yet again, and very welcome it is too. - Because it is described as a novel, it appears in the Fiction section, but it is hardly that! This is the Bible told as a story, starting with Genesis and on through the Old and New Testaments. I first read this book when it came out in hardback, and was hooked. Because the story moves quickly from generation to generation, I gained a greater understanding of how the Old Testament fits together. The Story of the New Testament too, is told with a great deal of imagination, but in no way, does it detract from the Bible. Well worth reading and lending to friends! - My review as written in 2001. -

This book made a great impression upon me at that time, and memories of it have remained fresh since that reading. I welcome the chance for more people to enjoy it, and learn from it. It is no wonder that it is already a 'best seller'. Highly recommended.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)