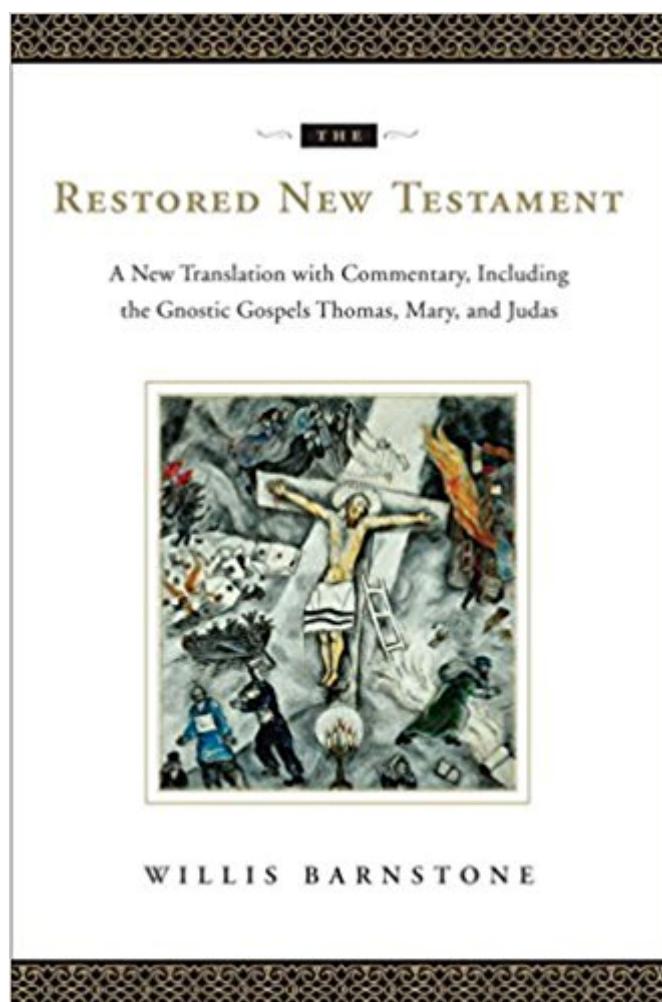


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The Restored New Testament: A New Translation With Commentary, Including The Gnostic Gospels Thomas, Mary, And Judas



Synopsis

From acclaimed scholar Willis Barnstone, *The Restored New Testament*—newly translated from the Greek and informed by Semitic sources. For the first time since the King James Version in 1611, Willis Barnstone has given us an amazing literary and historical version of the New Testament. Barnstone preserves the original song of the Bible, rendering a large part in poetry and the epic Revelation in incantatory blank verse. This monumental translation is the first to restore the original Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew names (Markos for Mark, Yeshua for Jesus), thereby revealing the Greco-Jewish identity of biblical people and places. Citing historical and biblical scholarship, he changes the sequence of texts and adds three seminal Gnostic gospels. Each book has elegant introductions and is thoroughly annotated. With its superlative writing and lyrical wisdom, *The Restored New Testament* is a magnificent biblical translation for our age.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. In an achievement remarkable by almost any standard, and surely one of the events of the year in publishing, renowned poet and scholar Barnstone has created a new and lavish translation almost transformation of the canonical and noncanonical books associated with the New Testament....The high bar Barnstone has set for himself is the creation of an English-language Scripture that will move poets much as the 1611 King James Version moved Milton and Blake. Only time will tell if Barnstone has achieved his goal, but his work is fascinating, invigorating, and often beautiful. Essential. "This heroic enterprise, an expansive single-handed

edition of the New Testament, is a substantial addition to the sixty-odd publications of the poet and translator Willis Barnstone. --Frank Kermode"

Praise for The Restored New Testament: "Barnstone's new English version of the core texts of Christian scripture is almost startling in its freshness. Scraping away many centuries of stylistic fussiness and supersessionist distortion, he gives us a set of Gospel narratives that are bold and direct in their simplicity and that show how steeped the first Christians were in the Jewish world from which they derived." Robert Alter "Willis Barnstone's The Restored New Testament is both an eloquent, fresh translation of the Four Gospels and of Revelation, and also a superb act of restoration, in which these Christian scriptures are returned to their Judaic origins and context. The introductory material is wise and poignant, and makes an authentic contribution to the common reader's understanding of the Gospels." Harold Bloom "Willis Barnstone's The Restored New Testament is breathtaking, new, astounding. It is a courageous, a daring book; but, by some magic, it appears not nouveau and experimental but deeply rooted and ancient. Did you think Jerome or Tyndale or James' "Song of the Sparrows" from Matthew was thrilling? Look at Barnstone's. Or look at his version of Paul's heartbreaking lines of love in Corinthians 13. If Barnstone, through a long life of poetry, translation, story, and memoir, in language after language, had nothing else but this book, it would be a lifetime of extraordinary achievement. We are blessed by it." Gerald Stern "Much will always remain obscure about the humane and undogmatic rabbi Yeshua, who may or may not have aspired to be his people's prophesied Messiah. Indeed, there is no uncontested evidence that he ever lived. Nevertheless, he is the protagonist of narratives as powerful as The Iliad in their quite opposite spirit. What we learn from Willis Barnstone is that the gentle teacher who can still be discerned in those stories had little in common with the man-god whose cult, over two millennia, has licensed the persecution of Yeshua's own folk. The always amazing Barnstone has outdone even himself in this beautiful, scholarly, yet profoundly subversive book." Frederick Crews

I am not an academic scholar as in some of the critiques posted. Simply, I feel this important New Translation to be vibrant, sensitive and poetic. The passages that I am familiar with have new illumination. The footnotes add to the dynamics in identifying the Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew names giving color and new vision to historical literature. I love saying and thinking Yeshua,

Yohanan, Loukas and Shaul; there is such beauty in the authentic. Marc Chagall's powerful symbolism in The White Crucifixion chosen for the jacket, connects beautifully with Willis Barnstone's translation - and the favorite painting of Pope Francis - This is a book I'll treasure, share, pass on. I understand and appreciate the simple clarity within the depth of each passage... A brilliant book.

I have been looking for a new testament which will explain the various flaws in other translations. I have read widely and have ordered almost every known bible translation. Very recently I was trying to reconcile Hebrews 10:5 and Psalm 40:6 and emailed a bible and Hebrew scholar, who has translated the bible recently for help and he could not shed much light on the issue. I read Mr Barnstone's translation - in the new testament and I realized what the discrepancy was. I use his translation as my new testament... while I carry around another book for the old testament:-) Best translation, I have had access to. It may not sound like an average bible; but based on translation history, with issues with lost manuscripts etc. this translation is the best. Mr. Barnstone is a Gifted Translator - I see him as one of G-d's Gift to His Body....

In his 1,500-page book, **THE RESTORED NEW TESTAMENT: A NEW TRANSLATION WITH COMMENTARY, INCLUDING THE GNOSTIC GOSPELS THOMAS, MARY, AND JUDAS** (2009), Willis Barnstone gives us poetic translations of the New Testament and of three non-canonical gospels. His various introductory essays are short, sharply focused, accessible, and well informed, as are his various annotations throughout the text. Was there, or was there not, a historical first-century Jew named Yeshua who became the central character in the greatest story ever told? If there was no such historical person, then the greatest story ever told is not fact, but fiction. But if the greatest story ever told is not fact but fiction, then what prompted the first-century Jews who made up this fictional story, to make it up? If it were a fictional story, the central character would appear to be all the more improbable. If we were to assume for the sake of discussion that there may have been a historical Jew named Yeshua who became the central character in the greatest story ever told, then we would have to allow that he appears to be an improbable character, and his story as recounted in the four narrative canonical gospels is an improbable story. For example, consider the story about his death by crucifixion under the Roman Empire. As the story goes, the local authority of the Roman Empire was Pontius Pilate. Pilate supposedly ordered the execution of Yeshua on the charge that he was supposedly claiming to be King of the Jews. The Roman Empire had a no tolerance policy regarding insurrection. But if Pilate ordered the execution of Yeshua because he

suspected him to be an insurrectionist, then why didn't Pilate have Yeshua's followers rounded up and executed? But if we assume that Pilate just used the trumped-up charge as a pretext for executing Yeshua, then we would probably assume that the real reason Pilate had Yeshua executed was crowd control in Jerusalem at the time of the Passover. Basically, Barnstone agrees with Paula Fredriksen's main argument in her book JESUS OF NAZARETH: KING OF THE JEWS (1999). On page 15 of his book, he quotes her main argument on page 8 of her book: "The single most solid fact about Jesus' life is his death: he was executed by the Roman prefect Pilate, on or around Passover, in the manner Rome reserved particularly for political insurrectionists, namely, crucifixion. Construction of Jesus primarily as a Jewish religious figure, one who challenged the authority of Jerusalem's priests, thus sit uncomfortably on his very political, Imperial death: Pilate would have known little and cared less about Jewish religious beliefs and intra-Jewish religious controversy." No doubt Pilate would have known little and cared less about Jewish religious beliefs and intra-Jewish religious controversy. No doubt the historical Yeshua would have been an implausible insurrectionist, and his followers would also have been implausible insurrectionists. However, even if we were to assume that Pilate may have been extremely nervous about crowd control, we would still have to wonder how Yeshua became the patsy to be executed as a symbolic warning to the crowd that further crucifixions might be ordered against others. After all, nothing in the gospel stories that have come down to us show Pilate's soldiers arresting Yeshua on the spot for any alleged disturbance of the crowd. To be sure, we learn of an alleged disturbance of the crowd by Yeshua, but Pilate's soldiers do not arrest him on the spot. In addition, we are told of Yeshua supposedly triumphal entry into Jerusalem at an earlier time. But of course Pilate's soldiers are not portrayed as arresting him at that time. In any event, at some juncture, Pilate's soldiers were somehow able to locate Yeshua in crowded Jerusalem and bring him before Pilate. Think about it. Jerusalem was crowded. But Pilate's soldiers were somehow able to find Yeshua and arrest him, even though they most likely had never seen him before. Wouldn't Pilate's soldiers have needed the help of someone who had seen Yeshua before and had some idea of where to look for him in the crowded city? Wouldn't such a guide have to have been a Jew to have been familiar enough with Yeshua to be able to point him out to Pilate's soldiers as the one to arrest? Wouldn't such a Jewish guide have to have had access to Pilate and his circle to get Pilate to dispatch soldiers to look for and locate and arrest Yeshua? Wouldn't Pilate have to have been extremely nervous about the crowd in Jerusalem to order his soldiers to locate Yeshua in the crowded city and bring him in? For soldiers who had presumably never seen Yeshua, wouldn't that search have been like looking for the proverbial needle in a haystack? But what would it take to move Pilate to order his soldiers to

arrest Yeshua? Now, if a Jewish informant who knew that earlier the crowd had yelled out something about Yeshua being like King David or being like the prophesied future king, would Pilate have been alarmed enough by the report of such yells to order his soldiers to arrest Yeshua? Remember that Pilate would have been hearing the report(s) about such yells when Jerusalem was very crowded. What would happen in the crowded city if certain enthusiasts began making such yells in the crowd? Wouldn't telling Pilate about such yells be like telling President George W. Bush that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction in Iraq? Pilate may have thought that executing Yeshua would be an effective pre-emptive crowd-control measure. As far as we know, there were no crowd disturbances in Jerusalem following the crucifixion of Yeshua. Following the crucifixion of Yeshua, his grief-stricken Jewish followers eventually constructed the greatest story ever told - with him as the central character. They figured that he had been set up by a fellow Jew (or Jews) in Jerusalem. To avoid any possible misunderstanding here, I want to say that I claim no originality for the line of reasoning that I have just set forth here. I am just reporting the line of reasoning that I have heard certain New Testament scholars present - a line of reasoning that Barnstone evidently is not familiar with. Finally, I want to mention Sherry Salman's book **DREAMS OF TOTALITY** (2013). No doubt the greatest story ever told with Yeshua as the central character involves a dream of totality. Salman urges us to give up our dreams of totality, if we can.

Rich in attention to detail, historical accuracy and contextualization. This book is a work of love that resets the New Testament into its Judaic origins, and what likely did and did not happen. The cultural practice of circumcision created a major impediment to messianic Judaism's (later Christianity's) spread to Hellenistic civilizations. The mental gymnastics conveyed in the writing of Paul are astonishing, and probably for obvious practical reasons. It's not light reading, but its faithfulness is profound and it puts new light on an oft told story that has affected us for 2000 years.

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