



The Jefferson Bible, Smithsonian Edition: The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth

By Thomas Jefferson

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The Jefferson Bible, Smithsonian Edition: The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth By Thomas Jefferson

The Jefferson Bible, or *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth* as it is formally titled, was Thomas Jefferson's effort to extract what he considered the pertinent doctrine of Jesus by removing sections of the New Testament containing supernatural aspects as well as perceived misinterpretations he believed had been added by the Four Evangelists. Using a razor, Jefferson cut and arranged selected verses from the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in chronological order, mingling excerpts from one text to those of another in order to create a single narrative. After completion of *The Life and Morals*, about 1820, Jefferson shared it with a number of friends, but he never allowed it to be published during his lifetime. The most complete form Jefferson produced was inherited by his grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, and was published in 1895 by the National Museum in Washington.

Once published in black-and-white facsimile by the Government Printing Office in 1900 as a gift for new members of Congress, the Jefferson Bible has never before been published in color in its complete form. *The Jefferson Bible, Smithsonian Edition* is an exact facsimile reproduction based on the original copy in the Smithsonian collections. *The Jefferson Bible, Smithsonian Edition* is as beautiful an object as was so painstakingly crafted by Thomas Jefferson himself.

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The Jefferson Bible, Smithsonian Edition: The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth By Thomas Jefferson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

LIBRARY JOURNAL, Starred Review

This is a painstakingly produced full-color facsimile of the original volume that Jefferson created, now at the Smithsonian, where it received top-level conservation treatment prior to its high-resolution reproduction here. Jefferson created his version of the New Testament by cutting and pasting from Greek, Latin, French, and English printed texts of the Gospels, which he placed in four parallel columns and accompanied with his marginal notes. This edition also contains two essays: "The History of the Jefferson Bible," in which curators at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History explain Jefferson's intent and his methods, and an essay on the volume's extensive conservation. The passages that Jefferson selected and pasted together present a much-edited, single chronological account of Jesus's life, teachings, and death—ending with Jesus's burial and avoiding redundancies. The passages are those that Jefferson deemed to be supportable by reason. The "History" essay draws parallels between the way Jefferson revised Virginia's laws and the way he revised the Bible. VERDICT Jefferson's Bible has been published before, but never in full facsimile with all its contents. With great cultural importance for all readers from preteens through scholars in American studies, biblical studies, or the Enlightenment, as well as general readers. Also a handsome gift.—Carolyn M. Craft, formerly with Longwood Univ., Farmville, VA

BOOKLIST

The most famous single book in America was recently taken apart and put back together to retard its further deterioration. In the process, it was digitally photographed cover to cover, which is why this edition exists. Better than those based on normal photography, this full-color reproduction of *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth Extracted Textually from the Gospels in Greek, Latin, French & English*, as its compiler, Thomas Jefferson, calls it on the handwritten title page, shows what it really looks like. As the three authors of the accompanying essays on the history and the conservation of the DIY parallel-text edition concur, its tidiness is a tribute to the third president's steady hand and keen eye at age 77. Intellectually, it embodies his rationalist respect for Christianity as a moral system, not a religion. Excluding everything miraculous in the Gospels, thereby sifting, Jefferson said, "diamonds" from "a dunghill," it establishes that one Founding Father, at least, was not a biblical inerrantist. A lovely addition to thoroughgoing Americana collections.—
Ray Olson

CHOICE

In 1820, former president Thomas Jefferson completed *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth*. Popularly known as "Jefferson's Bible," it comprises 82 pages, each with the Greek, Latin, French, and English texts of the New Testament passages that Jefferson viewed as authentic purveyors of Jesus's life and ethical teachings. Jefferson literally cut and pasted this material onto blank sheets of paper. Casting out all passages that were, in his opinion, contrary to reason, he ended up with the one form of religion in which he believed. The largest part of this 2011 book is an exquisitely reproduced full-color facsimile of this older work--the result of painstaking efforts by conservators at the Smithsonian and elsewhere, described in considerable detail in a chapter titled "Conservation." A preceding chapter, "History of the Jefferson Bible," puts this work within the context of Jefferson's life and the lives of contemporaries such as Benjamin Rush, Thomas Paine, and Joseph Priestley. Everything in this volume shows great care and erudition, and it deserves a place

in almost every library. Nonetheless, readers might wish that more attention had been paid to the overall teachings of Jefferson's Bible and their influence on subsequent generations upto today. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower-level undergraduates through researchers/faculty; general readers. --L. J. Greenspoon, Creighton University

About the Author

THOMAS JEFFERSON, third president of the United States, most wanted to be remembered as the author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and father of the University of Virginia. The author lives in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Darlene Trevino:

Hey guys, do you wants to finds a new book to learn? May be the book with the subject The Jefferson Bible, Smithsonian Edition: The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth suitable to you? The particular book was written by well known writer in this era. The actual book untitled The Jefferson Bible, Smithsonian Edition: The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazarethis one of several books that everyone read now. That book was inspired many people in the world. When you read this reserve you will enter the new shape that you ever know before. The author explained their thought in the simple way, and so all of people can easily to comprehend the core of this book. This book will give you a lots of information about this world now. So that you can see the represented of the world with this book.

Ethel Fung:

The actual book The Jefferson Bible, Smithsonian Edition: The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth will bring you to definitely the new experience of reading some sort of book. The author style to clarify the idea is very unique. In case you try to find new book to read, this book very ideal to you. The book The Jefferson Bible, Smithsonian Edition: The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth is much recommended to you to see. You can also get the e-book from your official web site, so you can more readily to read the book.

Laura Dumas:

Spent a free the perfect time to be fun activity to do! A lot of people spent their leisure time with their family, or their own friends. Usually they performing activity like watching television, about to beach, or picnic in the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your own free time/ holiday? Can be reading a book is usually option to fill your totally free time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of reserve that you should read. If you want to try look for book, may be the publication untitled The Jefferson Bible, Smithsonian Edition: The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth can be good book to read. May be it can be best activity to you.

Barry Altman:

The book untitled The Jefferson Bible, Smithsonian Edition: The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth contain a lot of information on that. The writer explains her idea with easy approach. The language is very easy to understand all the people, so do not worry, you can easy to read this. The book was published by famous author. The author brings you in the new period of time of literary works. You can easily read this book because you can continue reading your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book with anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can open up their official web-site as well as order it. Have a nice study.

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