

Review: Killing a Messiah

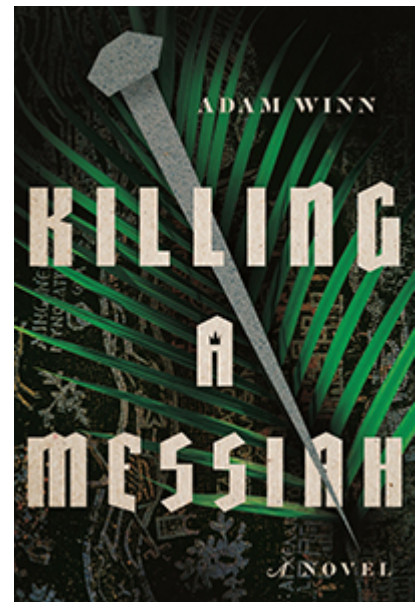
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Killing a Messiah: A Novel

By Adam Winn (IVP Academic)

In *Killing a Messiah*, Adam Winn has created a compelling fictional narrative of the events leading to Jesus' crucifixion. Like all historical fiction, he combines fact and fiction, which he addresses in a concluding note.

Winn's cast of characters—both biblical and fictitious—are involved in a grand conspiracy that wraps in all sides. The priesthood, Pilate, militant zealots, a shop owner and families close to these people all are involved.



Part of what makes Winn's narrative a page-turner is how he tells the story from the perspective of the main cast members. Though he writes in third-person throughout, the reader gets the sense of being closer to the characters than being a mere observer. Winn draws the reader in to the characters, making each one relatable in a way the brisk biblical narratives don't. As a result, the reader can imagine his or her own complicity in the

events.

One might wish for a more robust treatment of Jesus' resurrection and the events surrounding it as they relate to the priestly establishment and the Roman presence in Jerusalem. For Christians, this is the most exciting part of the entire story. After such an engaging lead up to Jesus' crucifixion, the last chapter is anticlimactic. Perhaps a sequel is in order.

Acknowledging his novel could be taken as adding to the biblical narrative, Winn is careful to explain his approach in a concluding note. He lists questions skeptics ask about the historicity of the biblical accounts of Jesus' crucifixion. He also explains the plausibility for the kind of conspiracy he envisions in his novel, and it certainly is plausible.

Winn, assistant professor in the College of Christian Studies at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, includes another concluding note on anti-Semitism and his efforts in *Killing a Messiah* to combat it. The importance of his message in these last few pages warrants careful reading.

Eric Black, Editor

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