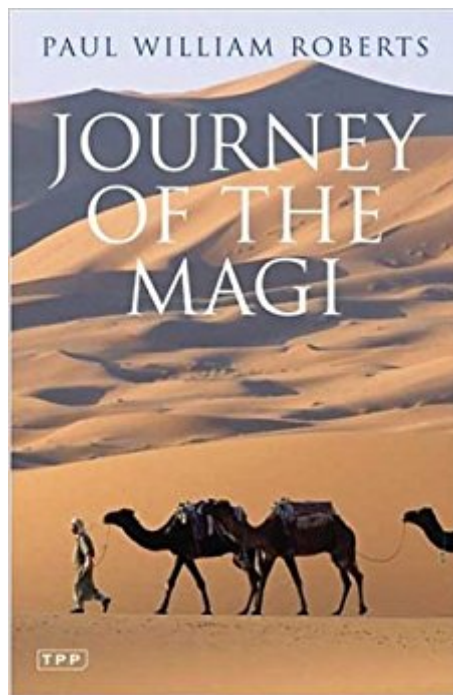




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# **Journey Of The Magi: Travels In Search Of The Birth Of Jesus; New Edition**



## Synopsis

In this classic travel narrative, journalist Paul Williams Roberts visits the Middle East to trace the Magi's legendary journey through Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Jordan to Bethlehem. Chasing clues from Marco Polo's Travels and the Dead Sea Scrolls to the stories of King Solomon and the Crusader Knights, Roberts seeks the historical truth behind Matthew's account in the New Testament. Filled with encounters with eclectic characters, from smugglers to Zoroastrian priests, Journey of the Magi is the story of an extraordinary adventure and an illuminating voyage of discovery into the truth behind the Magi and the birth of Jesus. This latest edition includes a new introduction by Roberts.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

â œl cannot recommend this book too highly: it is not only an outrageously funny travel narrative but also a work of radical scholarship that challenges and enlarges our readings of the gospels. Rare is the book that works so well on so many different levels all at once.â --Pico Iyer, TimeÂ \*The book is full of observation, beginning with a flight from Frankfurt to Tehran, when passengers emerge as different people to those that originally climb aboard.\* --CNN TravelerÂ \*Too many travel books hype the amusement value to make up for their lack of scholarly content, but this one is learned, informative, inquiring - and seriously funny.\*Â --GeographicalPraise for earlier editions:\*An instructive and entertaining travel book, a high comedy of cultural dissonance and a profound exploration of the evolution of the three great modern religions.\*--The New York Times\*Thought-provoking, laugh-provoking.\*--Martin Amis\*What a valuable book! At the very least, it is an engaging travelogue, and Roberts' account of his journey through Iran, Iraq, and Syria to

retrace the steps of the Magi will easily hold an audience from beginning to end. But, more than travelogue, it is a provocative invitation to reexamine the Zoroastrian background of Christianity, providing an occasion for serious reflection on the intersection of religion and politics in one of the most troubled regions on the planet.\*--Booklist

Paul William Roberts is a journalist, producer and filmmaker and a scholar of Jewish and Arabic history and religions. He is the author of many books including *A War against Truth*. Awarded the inaugural PEN Canada/Paul Kidd Courage Award in 2005, he lives in Toronto.

Roberts adventure attempting to follow the journey of the Magi to the birthplace of Jesus is one of the most significant books I've read to date. All rolled into one, this book is an honest look at the modern day Middle East, a very humorous and exciting adventure story complete with illegal border crossings and trusting some most dubious guides and an excellent recap of the history of Persia and the Christian religion. Beyond all that though, this book makes the case that modern organized religions have it all wrong. The message Jesus brought and the effort to preserve it was lost ages ago in the dogmas and doctrines of competing religious organizations, all claiming to possess the truth. Paul Whiting

Great books! Thanks.

The Magi were Persian priests - The word "Magi" or "Mogh" in Persian is a Zoroastrian Priest, at the time, the religion of Iran. They feature very strongly in Persian culture and poetry - "Hafez" the Shakespeare of Persian literature, regularly goes to the "tavern of the Magi" for wisdom. This book dedicating much to Iran was refreshing. These men were Iranian, and a Magi is itself a Persian word. The West is lost in biased narratives - for example, how many of those who want to bomb Iran in the name of Christianity, know that it was the birthplace of the Magi. We live in extremely ignorant times - and this book was a breath of fresh air.

Agree completely with Thinkerthinker. This book is an eye-opener. Most western "Christians" seem to believe that religion started with Christianity and haven't a clue that it was a spin-off of an ancient teaching and was turned into an instrument of control of the masses. I first stumbled on this book sometime in the late 1990s and what Paul William Roberts shared felt like something I could finally build on as a belief system and philosophy for living. It can be read on many different levels. I'm

re-reading it for the 4th time this holiday season and with each re-reading and drilling down I'm uncovering amazing insights that I'd earlier overlooked. It's particularly conforming to read at this moment in this nation.

Loved this book ("In Search of the Birth of Jesus") and I must say I disagree with the one review that has been posted. Contrary to what the above reviewer has stated, the author doesn't make claims for knowing the truth, not at all! On the contrary, he takes us along on his journey spurred on by his own curiosity. He theorizes--and, once again, is always clear that he is theorizing--as he attempts to put pieces together. His ideas and his theories are fascinating and left this reader wanting to learn more (and more). I've had an interest in world religions for decades and all the new research out there is a treasure trove! This book took me off on an entirely new tangent in my own explorations, explorations that has been extremely fruitful. I feel like I have hit gold! And, if nothing else, as a travelogue, the book is interesting, well-written, and sometimes really hilarious. I had tears rolling down my cheeks a number of times (lots, actually) when reading it. Thoroughly enjoyed the book and look forward to hearing more about what the author has learned in subsequent years.

I vacillated between one and two stars. Not a book to read if you want to know more about the Magi. If you want to read about the Gnostic "Bible" texts and have them presented as all truth, then Paul W. Roberts is your man. Very misleading title for a very misleading book. Funny at times, but not the serious inquiry the title would lead you to believe. The crude humor and multiple f words in the dialogue also are further of indications how presumptuous the title is, things which you will find very early in the book. At that point you should simply put the book away, and move on. It gets worse from there. I didn't do that, I read all the way through, and was slathered near the end with proclamations like this: "Father Cornelious, an affable young Greek Orthodox priest, said he regarded Jesus as more mythology than history. He also said, 'Some Pope-- one of the Alexanders, I think, remarked in an unguarded moment, 'How well we've done with this myth of Christ'." From the middle to the end of the book the author raises more questions than he answers, and uses very carefully chosen examples, like the "affable young" Priest mentioned above, to discredit the Bible, the Roman Catholic Church, and Christianity as a whole. Save your money and your time and avoid this book.

This book, part travel journal-part theological discourse, is certainly an interesting read. It provides a unique look at several middle eastern countries, giving an uncommon window into their culture and

people. Roberts has unabashed affection for most of the countries in the middle east and he seems intent on trying dispel some of the myths Westerners have of their religions, customs and politics. However, he is also equally intent on basically dismantling all of the key stories of the Bible and presenting Christianity as a complete farce. He makes many accurate connections between the origins of Christianity and other ancient religions, specifically Zoroastrianism, but he also makes many huge assumptions and presents lots of theories as though they are fact (simply because they are the theories he prefers). He has no trouble viewing all of the canonical scriptures as flawed and carrying a hidden agenda, yet any other ancient text not part of the canon he is more than willing to accept as unadulterated fact. It seems the only requirement of authenticity and value Roberts needs for ancient texts is that they not be found in the Bible. Like most journalists, he likes to pretend that as a journalist he is giving us the "truth" as we've never seen it before, but really this book would be more aptly titled, The World and Religion According to Paul William Roberts. Read this book and be entertained, and even inspired to look more closely at a fascinating ancient religion (Zoroastrianism), but I would encourage all to read Roberts' theories with a critical eye.

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