I hope I am not beating a dead horse by going at some length into this discussion of James, the brother of Jesus, in response to the Mythicists, who have a very real stake indeed in saying that he wasn’t really Jesus’ brother, since that would mean Jesus existed. I’m pursuing the matter in part because it is such a key issue and as well to show that it would be possible to argue to all eternity with Mythicists on point after point after point. Some of them are truly inexhaustible. If I wanted to spend my entire life and career doing nothing but answering Mythicists rejoinders to my replies to their responses to my comments on their claims - it could occupy my next twenty years!

I am giving a taste of what it involves here. The short story: The historical man Jesus from Nazareth had a brother named James. Paul actually knew him. That is pretty darn good evidence that Jesus existed. If he did not exist he would not have had a brother.

Yesterday I explained that in the New Testament “brother” can mean either a literal “blood brother” or a “spiritual brother” – that is, someone who is connected by common bonds of affection or perspective to another, a person who is sympatico with another. The simplest Mythicist solution to the claim that James was Jesus’ brother is to say that this is what it means. James was in tune with the heavenly Christ so much that he was his “brother.”

I’ve shown why that doesn’t work in Galatians 1:18-19, where James is called Jesus’ brother. It’s because the term is used to *differentiate* James from Cephas, to identify him in a way that clarified his distinctive relationship with Jesus, indicating what he was that Cephas was not. But no one can think that Cephas / Peter was not also Jesus’ “brother” in this spiritual sense. So the interpretation doesn’t work.

Some Mythicists have realized this and so come up with other explanations for how to explain the passage. They have to explain it away, because otherwise they don’t have a case that Jesus didn’t exist. If you want to see some rather imaginative attempts, I give them in my book *Did Jesus Exist*, and explain why they simply don’t work. Here I’ll take an explanation that has been given by Richard Carrier in his response to the debate I had with Robert Price a couple of weeks ago

Carrier wrote a very long and detailed response which was meant to show, as is his wont, that I don’t know what I’m talking about. I have been asked several times by several people to respond to his response, but I know where that will go – it will take a response twice as long as his to show why his views are problematic, he will reply with a reply that is four times as long to show I don’t know what I’m talking about, I will respond with a response twice as long as that to show that I do, he will rejoin with ….

So I’m not going to do that. I’m simply going to respond to this one key point. Carrier …

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