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# The Man Born To Be King



Dorothy L. Sayers



## Synopsis

C.S Lewis read this twelve play-cycle every year during Holy Week! Miss Sayers, I've finished The Man Born to Be King and think it a complete success... I shed real tears (hot ones) in places: since Mauriac's Vie de Jesus nothing has moved me so much... Yours sincerely C.S. Lewis (Collected Letters, II, 577f)

The Man Born to Be King, published toward the end of Dorothy Sayers' prolific career (1943), is peerless. This famous play-cycle, a faithful account of the four gospels in dramatic form, was written first for broadcasting and was performed on BBC Home Service. Sayers is completely true to the eyewitness material in the New Testament but, as a great literary artist, she brings us into direct contact with the living text and the reality of the life of Christ. She adds character introductions, minor characters, stage directions, dialogue "all the details that help us to remember that, like us, these people breathed and lived messy lives together and yet they supped with Christ over a meal they had caught and grilled themselves. Through these plays, the incarnation newly dawns on us as readers and we remember that real oxygen circulated in those pairs of lungs. The play-cycle is an excellent source for down-to-earth literary reading, devotional reflection, school and homeschool production, and theological discussion. Classical Academic Press is delighted to bring this classic and unmatched text back into print. Sayers was an honorary member of the Inklings, a group of writers which included J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis. Like them, she graduated from Oxford but had the distinction of being one of the first women to do so. Many letters (now published) passed between Sayers and Lewis. Lewis was so taken with this twelve-play collection that he read it each year in preparation for Lent. Sayers' work also included translating Dante and writing smart, popular mystery novels as well as incisive essays, such as "The Lost Tools of Learning" which have launched an educational movement in the United States.

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## Customer Reviews

Dorothy Sayers is one of the gifted writers of the 20th century, known by most for her Peter Wimsey novels. This series of plays, written for public broadcast by the BBC in the early 1940s, gives us a fully dimensional understanding of the public ministry, trial, and execution of Jesus of Nazareth. And His resurrection . If you have puzzled over the "flat" accounts in the Biblical gospels, it is because, Sayers would tell us, they are densely packed. Dorothy Sayers unpacks them for us with her true writer's skill. You will not put this book down. You will read it through and want to start all over again. (As C.S. Lewis did each year in Lent.)

This is an amazing, beautiful, deep, heart-rending, uplifting work, based completely on the Bible but with a bit of dramatic license in order to present the life of Christ in the format of a radio play. Every page brings new insights into events which are almost overly familiar to me. I would love to see it performed by, say, a youth group or speech-and-debate club. I was already a huge fan of Dorothy Sayers from some of her other books, and I regret waiting so long to read this work. I have been buying copies for many of my friends who I know would enjoy it as much as I do. FYI: the original BBC broadcasts of this play from the 1940s can be found online, and I am enjoying listening to them as I read the text.I am more than halfway through this book, and unfortunately there are some truly awful typos, the result (I assume) of the text having been scanned; for example, in the list of characters for the first play, Herod's name is given as "Heard," and elsewhere "carriage" becomes "carnage." The book should have been proofread before publication! I will be sending the publishers a list of errata as soon as I am done. I \*am\* grateful to Classical Academic Press for bringing this work back into print, and with such a beautiful cover; I hope they will incorporate the corrections into a new edition soon.UPDATE 18 Feb. (Ash Wednesday): Yes! Rob at CAP (see the comments on

the reviews) asked for my list of errata, and says there may be a new edition as early as next month! Kudos to CAP for their commitment to excellence, and to the integrity of this work.

I heard The Man Born to be King as a radio play when it was broadcast by the ABC in the mid nineteen forties and I read it in 1947. Since then , I have read it many times and it has greatly strengthened my Christian faith. The two copies I purchased from were the eighth and ninth I have bought ; they are to be given to two of my grand-children. This is a wonderful play.

Deeply insightful and moving. Make sure you read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest Sayers' introductions and production notes. Her use of the Gospel of John as the organizing text (and her reasons for doing so) is brilliant and very satisfying.

An Outstanding Radio Drama by Dorothy Sayers with deep insight into the characters involved, especially Judas Iscariot.I would love to see this radio play presented (and recorded) again.

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