



**The Infancy Gospels of Jesus: Apocryphal Tales
from the Childhoods of Mary and
Jesus—Annotated & Explained (SkyLight
Illuminations)**

Stevan Davies

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Early Christian legends of divine power, miraculous events, fear and admiration can inform your own spiritual journey.

The three principal infancy gospels—the Infancy Gospel of James, the Gospel of the Infancy, and the Infancy Gospel of Thomas—are accounts of the births and early lives of Mary the Virgin Mother, and Jesus. Originating in the second through fifth centuries, these apocryphal stories are fictions but nevertheless of great historical interest in terms of the beliefs and storytelling of early Christians, for they are the sources of well-known Christian legends as well as of some of Christianity's beloved heroes and heroines.

This fascinating and accessible exploration of formative influential narratives takes you deep into the early Christian religious thinking that provides the basis for Mary's biography, ideas about her purity, as well as the prayers, feasts, and iconic representations that celebrate her life. These extraordinary folktales also provide some shocking imagery of the young Jesus, the incarnation of God—equally human and divine—as he learns to control his supernatural powers and apply them for good.

Now you can experience the mystery and amusement of these charming folktales without any previous knowledge of early Christian history or thought. This SkyLight Illuminations edition offers insightful yet unobtrusive commentary that explains references and philosophical terms, shares inspiring interpretations, and gives you a deeper understanding of the sources of devotion Christians feel for Mary and the holy infant Jesus.

Stevan Davies is professor of religious studies at Misericordia University and has studied the non-canonical gospels and acts for over thirty years. Among his books are *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, *The Secret Book of John: The Gnostic Gospel—Annotated and Explained* (both SkyLight Paths) and *The Revolt of the Widows: The Social World of the Apocryphal Acts*. He has also published books about the canonical Christian scriptures including *New Testament Fundamentals* and *Jesus the Healer: Possession, Trance and the Origins of Christianity*. His website (www.misericordia.edu/users/davies/thomas/thomas.htm) is a leading Internet resource on the Gospel of Thomas.

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