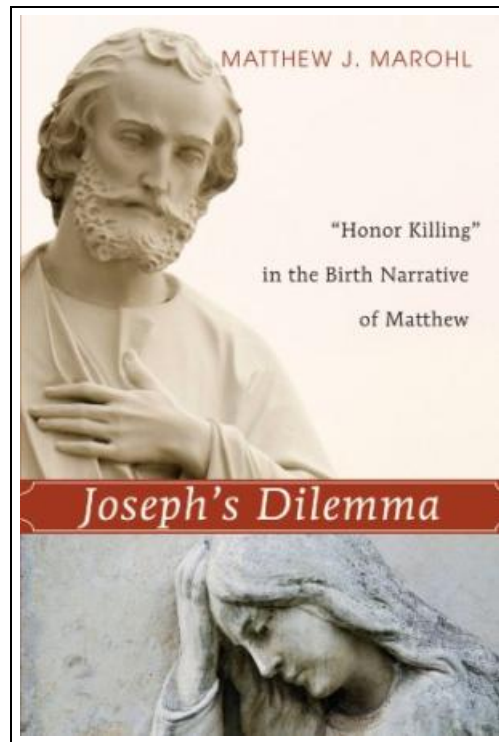


Joseph s Dilemma: Honor Killing in the Birth Narrative of Matthew



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Wipf Stock Publishers, United States, 2009. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 224 x 150 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Description: The story of the birth of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew is told in eight verses. Embedded in this short narrative is Joseph s dilemma. Listeners are told that, When Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit (1:18). What happens next has long been debated. We are made to assume that Joseph discovers that Mary is pregnant, but that he does not know that she is with child from the Holy Spirit. This information is made known to Joseph later by an angel of the Lord who appeared to him in a dream. In the meantime, Joseph must decide what he will do with Mary. We are told, Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly (1:19). The discussion of this verse generally focuses on two questions. First, did Joseph suspect Mary of adultery? Second, if he did suspect Mary of adultery, what were his options? While there is some diversity in the way that these questions are answered, the majority of modern interpreters envision only one option--that of divorce. The dilemma, then, is whether Joseph will divorce Mary publicly or privately. While these questions are important, neither adequately addresses Joseph s dilemma. In this book, Matthew J. Marohl argues that early Christ-followers understood Joseph s dilemma to involve an assumption of adultery and the subsequent possibility of the killing of Mary. Worded differently, Joseph s dilemma involves the possibility of an honor killing. If Joseph reveals that Mary is pregnant she will be killed. If Joseph conceals Mary...

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