

J. D. Atkins

The Doubt of the Apostles and the Resurrection Faith of the Early Church

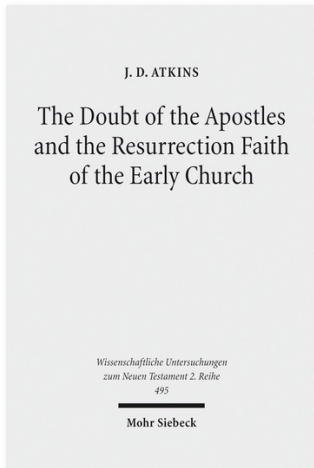
The Post-Resurrection Appearance Stories of the Gospels in Ancient Reception and Modern Debate

[Die Zweifel der Apostel und der Auferstehungsglaube der frühen Kirche. Die Erzählungen von den Erscheinungen des auferweckten Jesus in den Evangelien in antiker Rezeption und moderner Debatte.]

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In this work, J. D. Atkins employs a combination of reception-history analysis and redaction criticism to challenge modern theories that Luke 24 and John 20 are apologetic responses to incipient docetism. He subjects second-century parallels used to support these theories to the same redaction-critical scrutiny as the Gospels and finds that the editorial and apologetic concerns of the evangelists differ fundamentally from those of antidocetic writers: neither Luke nor John aims to prove the physicality of the resurrection. Both instead draw attention to the fulfilment of prophecy. The author also argues that the apostles' doubt was not an apologetic device and that the bodily demonstrations of touching and eating predate docetism. Early docetists appeal to the Gospels as apostolic testimony but insist on a non-literal hermeneutic in which Christ performs physical actions »in appearance only.«

J. D. Atkins Born 1976; 1999 BS in Economics, University of Pennsylvania; 1999 BSE in Systems Engineering, University of Pennsylvania; 2006 MDiv, Westminster Theological Seminary; 2009 ThM in New Testament; 2017 PhD in New Testament and Early Christianity, Marquette University; part-time instructor in New Testament and Greek at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and Nashotah House Theological Seminary.



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