

THE POLITICS OF “JESUS’ WIFE”



Bill Donohue comments on the politics of “Jesus’ wife”:

In 2007, the media were agog over the claim by “Titanic” director James Cameron and TV-director Simcha Jacobovici that the Jesus family tomb had been found. Cameron declared that it had been determined “beyond any reasonable doubt” that the tomb of Jesus and his family had been found. It didn’t take long before it was revealed to be a hoax.

In 2012, the media were hyperventilating over the claim by Harvard Divinity School professor Karen King that Jesus may have had a wife. Speaking of the papyrus fragment that is the basis of her claim, King said at the time, “If it’s a forgery, it’s a career breaker.” Now that it has been revealed to be a hoax, neither King nor Harvard are speaking.

Why are the media so easily seduced by such tales? To be sure, such extraordinary claims from apparently credible sources cannot be ignored. But there is something else going on as well.

Quite frankly, there is an ideological need to discredit the history of Christianity. If anyone doubts this to be true, all that needs to be done is to examine what happens almost every Easter season: TV, Internet, newspaper, and magazine stories abound with questions over the “real” Jesus. Was he divine? Or was he just a happy carpenter? Sowing the seeds of doubt is the name of the game, making understandable why claims about Jesus’ family tomb and/or his wife are irresistible. But don’t look for similar stories on the “real” Muhammad.

On September 29, 2012, an editorial in the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, called the papyrus fragment an "inept forgery." Last month, three Coptic experts, Christian Askeland, Mark Goodacre, and Alin Suciu, independently concluded that the fragment was a fake. So have several Egyptologists from the U.S. and Europe.

It's just a matter of time before someone else claims that Jesus had a wife, or the Resurrection never happened. The politics involved are weighty, and the fanaticism of the players is palpable.