I'm human



Book of longings christian review

Is the book of longings true. Is the book of longings religious. Review of the book of longings. Christian perspective on the book of longings.

I recently participated in a virtual book club at Georgetown University, where we read Sue Monk Kidd's "The Book of Longings" (2020). As part of the discussion, I'd like to share my thoughts on this fascinating book. The connections I made while reading it to feminist biblical scholars inspired me, as they also influenced Kidd's writing. Her notes mention that feminist theology was a driving force behind her work. This book explores the recovery of women's voices in a society that often silences them. The story revolves around Ana, Jesus' wife, and is told from her perspective. It begins with Ana introducing herself and describing her marriage to Jesus. The narrative shifts between Sepphoris and Nazareth, where Ana lives with Jesus' family. Throughout the book, Ana writes stories about women in the Old Testament and shares her own experiences. One excerpt from a poem called "The Thunder: Perfect Mind" resonated with me, emphasizing that God is present in all humans and that we have access to the divine through our relationships with others. This idea also parallels the Last Judgment passage I had read recently, highlighting the importance of treating everyone with kindness and respect. The divine presence within humans is a profound concept that transcends gender barriers. One participant astutely noted that love provides access to this divine essence, in line with 1 John 4:8's declaration that "God is love." Recently, I explored Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's work on feminist historical theology and its connections to The Book of Longings. Her findings on the silencing of women's voices in early Christian history resonated deeply. Our moderator sparked an intriguing discussion by posing a question: what if Jesus had been married? Sue Monk Kidd, the author, reflected on this idea, emphasizing the need for a missing feminine presence within religion. I believe that even without a wife, the suppression of women's voices would still be a significant issue in a patriarchal culture. The Book of Longings presents a humanized Jesus, with Ana's narrative exploring the gap between this portrayal and the Christian depiction of Jesus. The absence of a wife allows for a focus on Jesus' humanity and leaves room for a deeper exploration of how his story evolved into the Christian beliefs we know today. The novel hints at stories that will appear in the Bible, such as the wedding at Cana, where the miraculous event of Jesus turning water into wine is reported in John's Gospel. Wine plays a significant role in Sue Monk Kidd's novel "The Book of Longings", where Jesus' sister Salome gets married. However, Ana, the protagonist, must flee to Alexandria for safety, skipping the wedding altogether. Before this, Jesus shares his plans with Ana, mentioning his intentions to announce himself at the synagogue in Nazareth and then travel to Capernaum with Judas. Ana returns to Jerusalem after a threat to Jesus, noting that Lazarus appears healthier, which hints at Jesus' ability to raise him from the dead (John 11:1-44). Some readers might be upset by the portrayal of a fully human Jesus, but I enjoyed this aspect - an imagining of what the human Jesus would have been like. Arian Jesus is another term used to describe this depiction. As I read the story, I wondered if Kidd saw Jesus as entirely human or if there was a divine element that allowed for miracles despite them not being explicitly described. There's also a hint at something happening during Jesus' baptism that could indicate recognition of his divine nature, though it's never confirmed in the story. Ana is present at the baptism and describes it thus: I spotted him out in the river, standing before John with his back to me, descending into the water... He bounded up, shaking his head, creating a swirling spray... A bird, a dove, flew out of the glare. The novel begins by introducing Ana as Jesus' wife, challenging traditional Christian narratives. Kidd's "Book of Longings" is an ambitious fourth novel that reimagines the life of the Messiah and early Christianity through Ana's story. As Ana attends her first meeting with Nathaniel, she unexpectedly encounters Jesus, a humble stonemason and peasant. Though they don't exchange words, their connection is palpable, tinged with a deep emotional resonance. The sensation of his gaze lingers on her skin, making her feel an inexplicable smoldering in her thighs. When Nathaniel's sudden death spares Ana from an unwanted marriage, Antipas announces his intention to claim her as his concubine, prompting her refusal and narrowly avoiding her stoning. Jesus intervenes once more, this time promising to marry Ana, sparing her life. Kidd's feminist retelling of Jesus' lost years humanizes him, portraying a kind, humorous, and loving individual who prioritizes compassion above holiness. As the narrative unfolds, Ana's journey from a pampered young woman to the wife of a peasant is rendered in vivid detail. Her creative spirit initially wanes as she adapts to her new life, but it rekindles after a personal tragedy. Jesus becomes increasingly fascinated with John the Immerser and Judas, leaving his family to follow the radical figure for months. As the setting shifts to Egypt, Ana finds herself forced to flee Galilee once more, this time with her aunt Yaltha, who is searching for her long-lost daughter. The two eventually settle in a monastic community on the outskirts of Alexandria, where Ana finally has the time and space to write her stories, chronicling not only Biblical women but also those she knows, including her aunt, whose child was taken from her by an abusive husband. In the novel, a woman named Ana returns to Jerusalem after years apart, only to witness Jesus's crucifixion. Her story revolves around her desire for recognition and a voice, which is given to her by the author. This narrative highlights the long-standing silence of women like Ana, who could have existed but were overlooked for centuries. The story suggests that there may be untold tales hidden away, waiting to be discovered.