



Man in White

By Johnny Cash

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Johnny Cash. The Apostle Paul.

Passionate. Controversial. Fiery. Destructive. Redeemed.

Two legendary men. Two thousand years apart-yet remarkably similar.

Both struggled with a "thorn in the flesh." And both had powerful visions from God.

Paul's encounter with the Man in White knocked him to the ground and struck him blind. It also turned him into one of the most influential men in history.

Johnny Cash's vision was of another man entirely-his recently deceased father-a vision that helped spark his imagination to write this historical novel about the amazing life of the intriguing figure with whom Cash identified so deeply-the Apostle Paul.

See Paul as you've never seen him before--through the creative imagination of one of the greatest singer-songwriters America has ever known. Subsequently see Johnny Cash, the man in Black, as you've never seen him before--as a passionate novelist consumed with the *Man In White*.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

YA Covering a six-year period in the life of St. Paul in Roman-ruled Judea, Cash weaves a fascinating story of Saul's (Paul's) single-minded, zealous persecution of the early Christians through his conversion on the road to Damascus. Saul is portrayed as a man driven by what he sees as his "divine" mission, the extermination of this despicable Nazarene sect. However, with his conversion, all his fanaticism and energies turn to the spreading of "the word" to the gentiles. This well-researched novel breathes life into Paul, High Priest Annas, the pharisees, apostles, and the other characters who populate Jerusalem and the surrounding area. Readers will experience their fears and doubts, aspirations and triumphs as Cash probes the motivations behind their actions. While the repetition of religious phrases and doctrine tends to slow the last third of the book, Cash's interpretation and writing style make the characters and times come alive. John Lawson , Fairfax County Public Library, Va.

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About the Author

Johnny Cash had one of the most recognizable voices in American music. His talent and likeability created a fanbase with diverse musical tastes and allowed him to work with recording artists in a variety of musical genres. His career spanned over 50 years and included writing, acting, and music recording. Johnny Cash released over 70 albums in his lifetime, and won 17 Grammy Awards and 9 CMA awards.

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The Vow, ad 37

Sometime just before dawn, Saul was awakened by a sound in his room. He heard nothing at first, then, again a *crunch, crunch*, like feet walking on straw. Then it stopped. He looked around the room in the dim light and saw that he was alone. *Maybe it was my imagination*, he thought and dozed off into a light sleep again. Then he heard the sound again and a light bumping noise. He looked slowly and silently around his room, first at the wall and the window, then, straining to see his door, he noted that it was still bolted. Nothing there. He looked at the back wall where the loom stood. He saw nothing unusual, yet there was the sound again. It was coming from the area of the room where the cubical stood that held his scrolls of Scripture. His eyes remained on the spot as the morning light slowly revealed the scene. The velvet covering had fallen to the floor. His scrolls were all in their place, except for one. It was pulled out a few centimeters and was being gnawed and eaten by a large rat.

A low moan started in Saul's throat, and as the sound became audible, the rat stopped eating and raised its head, turning its black eyes upon Saul. Saul got up slowly. The rat didn't move. Saul reached down to the floor and picked up one of his sandals. He raised it over his head and with a grunt threw it at the rat. The rat leaped to the floor and disappeared. The sandal knocked another one of the scrolls to the floor.

The rat was under the loom now, and Saul crept across the floor, pushed the loom over, and leaped with his bare feet down on the hard rock floor where the rat had been. He looked around the room, trying to decide where the rat had hidden. His cloak lay on the floor by the bed. He danced upon it, but the rat wasn't there. Embarrassed at himself, he turned again to survey the room. The vile rodent had to be near the basket and spindle. He slowly crept up and kicked the basket. The rat jumped out, but out with it came a mass of fibers its feet had become entangled in. The rat leaped left and right, sideways and upside down in a frenzy to free

itself, but it only succeeded in entangling itself more. Saul watched it squirm as it bound itself in a web of cotton. He slipped on a sandal and pressed the rat down on the floor with his foot. The monster shrieked and clawed, trying to free itself. He looked down at his head with hatred, deciding just how to kill it.

Just as he was about to take its life, he remembered. "The filthy thing has shreds of the sacred Scriptures in its stomach," Saul said aloud to himself. He paused. *It must die*, he thought, but still he couldn't crush it, thinking of the precious scroll. "What a horrible visitation upon me," he whispered, standing on one foot and holding the rat down with the other. "What, O Lord, is the meaning of this?" he moaned. "I spend all my waking hours on your holy Word, and a messenger of Satan, a . . . a veritable demon of hell steals in while I sleep."

He stood thinking for a long time, then finally reached down and put his thumb and fingers firmly behind the rat's head. He picked it up and broke it and its wrapping free from the rest of the mass. He opened the door and flung the live rat, tied just as it was, far out into the street. He didn't watch to see if the rat escaped from its bondage; he just closed the door and bolted it.

The room was a shambles. First Saul picked up the scroll that had fallen to the floor and examined it in the light under the window. It was the book of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling its two rollers, he discovered that there was a bend and a small rip in the parchment where his sandal had hit it. *I could have it repaired by a Torah scribe*, he thought. He had copied the scrolls himself years ago, writing with a stylus on parchment. The ink he had made by mixing cypress with lamp black. If he had only remembered to use oil of wormwood in the ink mixture, the bitterness would have discouraged rodents and insects from eating the scrolls.

He examined the other damaged scroll carefully and saw that the rodent had indeed eaten a part of it. He opened up the scroll of Chronicles and laid it across the table. Even though some of the text was missing, Saul knew the passage well. The words were a thousand years old--God's promise to Solomon--"If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

God made these promises to Israel during the Feast of Tabernacles at the dedication of the Temple Solomon had built, the first great Temple that had stood where the greater Temple now stood. Accompanying these promises was a warning: "If you observe my statutes and my judgments, I will establish the throne of your kingdom . . . But if you turn away . . . and serve other gods . . ."

The rat had done more damage than he thought as he unrolled the scroll further, gently pushing the parchment across the table. "This house which I have sanctified for my name will I cast out of my sight. And it will be a proverb and a byword among all nations . . . Because they have forsaken the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt . . ."

He moaned at the desecration of the Holy Scriptures, the horrid toothmarks on the scroll.

"The holy Temple of the Most High shall never fall," he said. "His service and his house are my life, my daily portion, my daily service."

He rolled the scroll back up and placed it carefully and lovingly back in the cubicle. It took awhile to put the loom, basket, and spindle back in order. Having done this, he went to the basin and washed himself all over, brushed his hair and his beard, and put on a clean loincloth and tunic. He faced in the direction of the Temple, where the sun rising over Mt. Nebo was beginning to bathe its pinnacles in a golden glow. Then he began his morning prayers. It was to be a long, troubled day.

Jonathan ben Annas, the high priest, looked down at the young Pharisee who stood before him. He was a small man; his hair and short curly beard were auburn, but his dark eyes under heavy black eyebrows were alive and piercing. Saul of Tarsus had brought before the Sanhedrin another prisoner charged with blasphemy. Only forty-two members of the Sanhedrin were present. Many had excused themselves, claiming other business rather than hearing the case against and deciding the fate of yet another follower of the crucified Nazarene.

Since the last days of Herod, the Temple at Jerusalem was watched over by what the Jews called "the evil eye in the sky"--the perpetual presence of Roman guards who stood watch atop the fortress Antonia at the northwest corner of the Temple complex. This fortress could barrack as many as a thousand soldiers. Adjacent to one side of the fortress were stables for the soldiers' Syrian horses. The Roman governor, Marcellus, was afforded every luxury that his office and position allowed. His hall of justice was on the main floor under the tower with business offices and chambers around it. Underneath the justice hall was the prison, a dark, musky, vile-smelling nightmare almost as large as the barracks itself. Into this dungeon were thrown the rabble of Jerusalem, the drunks, thieves, and rebels, anyone who wouldn't bow to Roman law, and captured Zealots, those awaiting trial for active organized resistance to Roman rule in Judea.

On a balcony on the side of the great hall that touched the Temple wall were two huge iron doors at which ten Roman soldiers always stood guard. Beyond these doors was a hallway through the wall, a no-man's-land forty cubits long that led to another pair of huge iron doors that opened into the Temple area. The hall through the Temple wall was cut by Herod, and the pious spat in disgust at the sound of his name. They could never forget that the holy Temple of God was defiled on the northwest corner by the presence of the hated Romans. Their tower could even be seen from a portion of the open sacrificial court. Inside the second pair of iron doors was a large balcony from which seventy wide steps descended into the Court of the People and onto the Temple complex.

On feast days and other holidays, this giant Temple rectangle accommodated enormous throngs of pilgrims. Its outside walls were eight hundred cubits long. Made of precision-cut white stone blocks, the walls were eighty cubits high and forty cubits thick. The Temple in Jerusalem was the center of worship and sacrifice, yet very few people were ever in the area of the steps that led up to the guarded doors. A Jew would consider himself unclean if he set foot on the pavement of the fortress Antonia.

The Temple building nearest to these steps was the hall Gazith, the Palace of Hewn Stone, or the council chamber of the Sanhedrin. The Jews wanted to believe that the Sanhedrin was the highest court of all, but there was no denying that Roman officials had supreme power, even over routing Jewish affairs if they chose to become involved. The installation of a high priest as head of this council was automatically approved by the Roman governor if the man elected was willing to adhere to Roman military and civil policy.

The Sanhedrin sat in session daily except on the Sabbath and holy days, governing the religious order of Jews; its decisions and pronouncements were adhered to not only by the Jews of Judea but by those dispersed throughout the empire as well. In this chamber the seventy-two members voted to, or not to, allocate funds from the Temple treasury for various projects and charities. Malefactors were judged before this body of men; suits were decided and judgment pronounced.

Behind Saul stood a man called Stephen. He was barefoot, and apparently the only garment he had on was the rough goat-hair robe he wore. He stood perfectly still, and though his beardless chin was caked with dried blood and a large blue bruise was evident on his cheek, ...

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Wayne Santiago:

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