By CHARLES WILLIAMS

"King of Kings" is to the New Testament what "The Ten Commandments" was to the Old Testament, almost. All that is missing are "big name" Hollywood stars, Cecil B. de Mille, the fiery hand of God and good critical reviews.

According to those that should know, the film is "historically and scripturally inaccurate." According to those that should know better, the film is "incontestably the corniest, phoniest, iciest and most monstrously vulgar of all the big Bible stories Hollywood has told in the last decade."

We will not quarrel with the experts, but we would point out for the unenlightened and uneducated that the meagre records we have of Christ are so fragmentary and contradictory that it is impossible to produce a dramatization of the life of Christ that will not subject the producers to unceasing damnation from all sides.

FIRST OF ALL, we will not try to pass judgment on the moral or spiritual value of the film since the concept of our imagination is not sufficient to enable us to proclaim that Samuel Bronson's interpretation of the life of Christ is "phony" or "unrealistic," as some have alleged.

We will confess that this interpretation does not mirror that which this reviewer carries in his own heart, but then Christ is all things to all people that is the glory of His love.

It would be fair to point out that Brounston, probably in an attempt to appease the average movie fan, has cast Christ in the image of our American culture, as has been done by all the cultures of the world since the Crucifixion.

In addition, it was observed that most of the cast was not particularly Jewish or Roman in appearance, as we would imagine that they should be.

THE ACTING, in general, is barely adequate, with only Frank Thring, as Herod Antipas, and Ron Randell, as the Roman captain, turning in outstanding performances.

The tightly drawn narrative covers all the major episodes in His life, tactfully leaving out most of the miracles, which would have appeared absurd if presented like those in "The Ten Commandments" and which would try the patience of those who do not happen to believe that Christ was the Son of God.

Along the same lines is the handling of sex and violence by the director—generally it is done with good taste and it avoids the excesses so common to the Hollywood Biblical spectaculars.

Don't go see the movie if you expect to see Salome "take-it-off," or see John the Baptist's head roll in the dust, or see them actually drive the spikes into His body—you'll be disappointed.

ON THE OTHER hand, don't go see the movie if you are seeking a spiritual uplifting or an insight into the true meaning of Christ; Samuel Brounston does not pretend to be God, and he most assuredly would not expect the theatregoers to be so naive to believe that he was prompted to spend $4,000,000 of MGM's money for any reason except to make more money.

However, the fact that he and his cast will probably not corner the market in Oscars next spring should not deter the average movie patron seeking first-class entertainment from seeing the movie.

As for individual scenes, the Crucifixion is somewhat disappointing, mainly because it just isn't the way that we imagined it happened. The same is true of the Baptism and the Last Supper scenes, which is not to condemn them, but to reaffirm that He is seen differently by different people, including Hollywood directors and producers.

THE SERMON on the Mount is easily the most powerful scene in the movie, with only our over-familiarity with the "lines" preventing it from being one of the most powerful Biblical scenes we have ever witnessed in any production.

As most of the critics admit that it was impossible to cast or play the role, they also agree that it's worth attempting; and as Brounston does do a creditable job, he should be applauded for attempting to recreate an inspiring story about almost legendary people told in an archaic translation of a dead language.