



St Catherine's Seminary is the name of the internal study and training program of the Old Catholic Apostolic Church

Scripture Outside the Canon

The collection of scripture that the Jewish Sanhedrin at Jamnia in AD90 decided was scripture (our Old Testament) and the scripture included in the New Testament by the (Roman Catholic) council of Trent makes up our Bible. Those scripture which were not favourable to their points of view or the prevailing backdrop were omitted from the 'canon'. That is not in itself wrong. However as times have changed, outlooks are different maybe we should study those scripture which were not originally included. I'm not advocating that the existing Bible should be replaced with a larger, or different Bible. What we are saying is that these scriptures were written with the same insight and intention of the others, they were in many cases just as 'inspired' by God. It is wrong to just ignore them. Some bring very little to our understanding, others are very profound indeed. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the late 1960's there was much interest (and some disdain) because there were new approaches to conventional understandings. Much of our understanding was confirmed, but many interesting questions arose. As part of this we should continue, by studying if only for interest, the scriptures and sources hidden from common view. It is impossible to include every writing as scripture, so there will always be other candidates, of varying quality and importance. It is worth noting that many of these writings have been the subject of much debate and some heated dispute. That should not stop us looking at them for interest and forming our own opinions....

Missing Writings - Old Testament era

Testament of Levi Dead Sea Scroll. Period covered: approx 000 to 000BC

Testament of Naphtali Dead Sea Scroll. Period covered: approx 000 to 000BC

Enoch Dead Sea Scroll

Jubilees Dead Sea Scroll. Period covered: approx 000 to 000BC

Psalms of Joshua Dead Sea Scroll. Period covered: approx 000 to 000BC

Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs Dead Sea Scroll. Period covered: approx 000 to 000BC

Damascus Document Dead Sea Scroll. Period covered: approx 000 to 000

Missing Writings - New Testament era

Mary Magdelene Continues the story of . Period covered: approx 30 to 60AD

Simon of Cyrene This. Period covered: approx 000 to 000BC

Pseudo-Jesus apocrypha
The Epistles of Jesus to Abgarus

Pseudo-apostolic apocrypha
Teachings of the Twelve Apostles (Didache)
Epistle of the Apostles

Andrew
Acts of Andrew
Acts of Andrew and Matthias*

Barnabas
Acts of Barnabas*
Epistle of Barnabas
Gospel of Barnabas

Bartholomew
Gospel of Bartholomew
Martyrdom of Bartholomew*

James
Apocryphon of James
Book of James (protevangelium)
First Apocalypse of James
Second Apocalypse of James

John
Acts of John
Acts of John the Theologian*
Apocryphon of John (long version)
Book of John the Evangelist
Revelation of John the Theologian*

Mark
Secret Gospel of Mark

Matthew
Acts and Martyrdom of St. Matthew the Apostle*
The Martyrdom of Matthew

Nicodemus

Gospel (Acts) of Nicodemus (aka The Acts of Pontius Pilate)

Peter

Acts of Peter

Acts of Peter and Andrew

Apocalypse of Peter - version 1

Apocalypse of Peter - version 2

Gospel of Peter

Letter of Peter to Philip

Philip

Acts of Philip

Gospel of Philip

Thaddeus

Acts of Thaddeus (Epistles of Pontius Pilate)*

Teaching of Thaddeus

Thomas

Acts of Thomas

Apocalypse of Thomas

Book of Thomas the Contender

Consummation of Thomas

Gospel of Thomas

Pseudo-Pauline apocrypha

3 Corinthians

Acts 29

Acts of Paul

Acts of Paul and Thecla

Acts of Peter and Paul*

Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena

Apocalypse of Paul

Apocalypse of Paul - other version

Epistle to the Laodiceans

Revelation of Paul*

Paul and Seneca

Infancy Gospels apocrypha

Arabic Infancy Gospel

First Infancy Gospel of Jesus Christ

Infancy Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew

Infancy Gospel of Thomas - Greek A

Infancy Gospel of Thomas - Greek B

Infancy Gospel of Thomas - Latin

Relatives of Jesus apocrypha

Gospel of Mary

Gospel of the Nativity of Mary

Book of John concerning the dormition of Mary (transitus mariæ)*

History of Joseph the Carpenter*

Narrative of Joseph of Arimathea

Sub-canonical (disputed canon) apocrypha

Shepherd of Hermas

II Clement

Diatession

Gospel of the Lord (Marcion)

Other Epistles, pseudonymous writings and apocrypha

I Clement

Avenging of the Saviour

Epistles of Pontius Pilate

Letter of Aristeas

Sentences of the Sextus

Alexandrians

Revelations of Stephen

Muratonian Canon (fragment)

Fragments of lost apocryphal books

Gospel of the Ebionites

Gospel of the Egyptians

Egerton Gospel (Egerton Papyrus 2)*

Gospel of the Hebrews

Traditions of Mattias

Gospel of the Nazaraeans

Preaching of Peter

Apostolic Constitutions (Didascalia Apostolorum)

Book 1

Book 2

Book 3

Book 4

Book 5

Book 6

Book 7

Book 8

Pseudo-Sibylline Oracles

Preface

Chapter I

Chapter II

Chapter III

Chapter IV

Chapter V

Chapter VI

Chapter VII

Chapter VIII

Chapter XI

Chapter XII

Chapter XIII

Chapter XIV

Appendices - Fragments

* these works are subject to some form of copyright.

Nag Hammadi Library

The Nag Hammadi library (also known as The Gnostic Gospels) is a collection of early Christian texts discovered near the town of Nag Hammâdi in 1945. Twelve leather-bound papyrus codices buried in a sealed jar were found by a local peasant. These writings comprised fifty-two tractates (treatises), three works belonging to the Corpus Hermeticum and a partial translation (or possibly a re-writing) of Plato's Republic. James Robinson in his Introduction to The Nag Hammadi Library, suggests that these codices may have belonged to a nearby Pachomian monastery, and were buried after Bishop Athanasius condemned the use of non-canonical writings in his Festal Letter of 367 AD.

The contents of the codices as found were written in Coptic: the works were probably all translations from Greek. The best-known of these works is probably the Gospel of Thomas, and the Nag Hammadi codices contain the only complete text. Sayings attributed to Jesus in this 'gospel' also appear in manuscripts discovered at Oxyrhynchus in 1898, matching quotations are present in other early Christian material. So a 1st or 2nd century date of composition circa 80 AD for the lost Greek originals of the Gospel of Thomas has been suggested, though this is disputed by many. This would make the Gospel of Thomas contemporary with the Gospel of John and therefore not synoptic. The manuscripts themselves date from the 3rd and 4th centuries.

The Nag Hammadi codices are housed in the Coptic Museum in Cairo, Egypt.

Discovery at Nag Hammadi

The story of the discovery of the Nag Hammadi library in 1945 has been described as 'exciting as the contents of the find itself' (Markschies, *Gnosis: An Introduction*, 48). Q In December of that year, two Egyptian brothers found several papyri in a large earthenware vessel while digging for fertilizer around limestone caves near present-day Habra Dom in Upper Egypt. The find was not initially reported by either of the

brothers, who sought to make money from the manuscripts by selling them individually at intervals. It is also reported that the brothers' mother burned several of the manuscripts, worried, apparently, that the papers might have 'dangerous effects' (Markschies, *Gnosis*, 48). As a result, what came to be known as the Nag Hammadi library (owing to the proximity of the find to Nag Hammadi, the nearest major settlement) appeared only gradually, and its significance went unacknowledged until some time after its initial uncovering.

In 1946, the brothers became involved in a feud, and left the manuscripts with a Coptic priest, whose brother-in-law in October that year sold a codex to the Coptic Museum in Old Cairo (this tract is today numbered Codex III in the collection). The resident Coptologist and religious historian Jean Dorese, realising the significance of the artifact, published the first reference to it in 1948. Over the years, most of the tracts were passed by the priest to a Cypriot antiques dealer in Cairo, thereafter being retained by the Department of Antiquities, for fear that they would be sold out of the country. After the revolution in 1956, these texts were handed to the Coptic Museum in Cairo, and declared national property.

Meanwhile, a single codex had been sold in Cairo to a Belgian antique dealer. After an attempt was made to sell the codex in both New York and Paris, it was acquired by the Carl Gustav Jung Institute in Zurich in 1951, through the mediation of Gilles Quispel. There it was intended as a birthday present to the famous psychologist; for this reason, this codex is typically known as the Jung Codex, being Codex I in the collection.

Jung's death in 1961 caused a quarrel over the ownership of the Jung Codex, with the result that the pages were not given to the Coptic Museum in Cairo until 1975, after a first edition of the text had been published. Thus the papyri were finally brought together in Cairo: of the 1945 find, eleven complete books and fragments of two others, 'amounting to well over 1000 written pages' (Markschies, *Gnosis: An Introduction*, 49) are preserved there.

Translation

The first edition of a text found at Nag Hammadi was from the Jung Codex, a partial translation of which appeared in Cairo in 1956, and a single extensive facsimile edition was planned. Due to the difficult political circumstances in Egypt, individual tracts followed from the Cairo and Zurich collections only slowly.

This state of affairs changed only in 1966, with the holding of the Messina Congress in Italy. At this conference, intended to allow scholars to arrive at a group consensus concerning the definition of gnosticism, James M. Robinson, an expert on religion, assembled a group of editors and translators whose express task was to publish a bilingual edition of the Nag Hammadi codices in English, in collaboration with the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity at the Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, California. Robinson had been elected secretary of the International Committee for the Nag Hammadi Codices, which had been formed in 1970 by UNESCO and the Egyptian Ministry of Culture; it was in this capacity that he

oversaw the project. In the meantime, a facsimile edition in twelve volumes did appear between 1972 and 1977, with subsequent additions in 1979 and 1984 from publisher E.J. Brill in Leiden, called The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices, making the whole find available for all interested parties to study in some form.

At the same time, in the former German Democratic Republic a group of scholars - including Alexander Bohlig, Martin Krause and New Testament scholars Gesine Schenke, Hans-Martin Schenke and Hans-Gebhard Bethge - were preparing the first German translation of the find. The last three scholars prepared a complete scholarly translation under the auspices of the Berlin Humboldt University, which was published in 2001.

The James M. Robinson translation was first published in 1977, with the name The Nag Hammadi Library in English, in collaboration between E.J. Brill and Harper & Row. The single-volume publication, according to Robinson, 'marked the end of one stage of Nag Hammadi scholarship and the beginning of another' (from the Preface to the third revised edition). Paperback editions followed in 1981 and 1984, from E.J. Brill and Harper respectively. A third, completely revised edition was published in 1988. This marks the final stage in the gradual dispersal of gnostic texts into the wider public arena - the full complement of codices was finally available in unadulterated form to people around the world, in a variety of languages.

A further English edition was published in 1987, by Yale scholar Bentley Layton, called The Gnostic Scriptures: A New Translation with Annotations (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1987). The volume unified new translations from the Nag Hammadi Library with extracts from the heresiological writers, and other gnostic material. It remains, along with The Nag Hammadi Library in English one of the more accessible volumes translating the Nag Hammadi find, with extensive historical introductions to individual gnostic groups, notes on translation, annotations to the text and the organisation of tracts into clearly defined movements.

scriptures found in Nag Hammadi Texts

Codex I (also known as The Jung Foundation Codex):

The Prayer of the Apostle Paul

The Apocryphon of James (also known as the Secret Book of James)

The Gospel of Truth

The Treatise on the Resurrection

The Tripartite Tractate

Codex II:

The Apocryphon of John

The Gospel of Thomas a sayings gospel

The Gospel of Philip a sayings gospel

The Hypostasis of the Archons

On the Origin of the World

The Exegesis on the Soul

The Book of Thomas the Contender

Codex III:

The Apocryphon of John
The Gospel of the Egyptians
Eugnostos the Blessed
The Sophia of Jesus Christ
The Dialogue of the Saviour

Codex IV:

The Apocryphon of John
The Gospel of the Egyptians

Codex V:

Eugnostos the Blessed
The Apocalypse of Paul
The First Apocalypse of James
The Second Apocalypse of James
The Apocalypse of Adam

Codex VI:

The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles
The Thunder, Perfect Mind
Authoritative Teaching
The Concept of Our Great Power
Republic by Plato - The original is not gnostic, but the Nag Hammadi library version is heavily modified with current gnostic concepts.
The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth - a Hermetic treatise
The Prayer of Thanksgiving (with a hand-written note) - a Hermetic prayer
Asclepius 21-29 - another Hermetic treatise

Codex VII:

The Paraphrase of Shem
The Second Treatise of the Great Seth
Gnostic Apocalypse of Peter
The Teachings of Silvanus
The Three Steles of Seth

Codex VIII:

Zostrianos
The Letter of Peter to Philip

Codex IX:

Melchizedek
The Thought of Norea
The Testimony of truth

Codex X:

Marsanes

Codex XI:

The Interpretation of Knowledge

A Valentinian Exposition, On the Anointing, On Baptism (A and B) and On the Eucharist (A and B)

Allogenes

Hypsiphron

Codex XII

The Sentences of Sextus

The Gospel of Truth

Fragments

Codex XIII:

Trimorphic Protennoia

On the Origin of the World

The so-called "Codex XIII" is in fact not a codex, but rather the text of Trimorphic Protennoia, written on "... eight leaves removed from a thirteenth book in late antiquity and tucked inside the front cover of the sixth." (Robinson, NHLE, p.10)

Only a few lines from the beginning of Origin of the World are discernible on the bottom of the eighth leaf.

References in popular culture

Interest in the Gnostic Gospels increased dramatically in 2003, with the publication of the bestselling fiction novel *The Da Vinci Code*. Events in the story suggest that the Gnostic Gospels had just as much validity as the accepted New Testament gospels, and that it was just an arbitrary decision by church leaders in the time of Emperor Constantine that excluded them from official status. Scholars generally agree that many of the Gnostic Gospels, by comparison, were not written until generations later, during or after the second century AD although there are a number of well-known exceptions such as the Gospel of Thomas which has been dated as early as 50 AD.

Nevertheless, the oldest manuscripts of the complete New Testament, such as Codex Sinaiticus, are from no earlier than the fourth century AD. Such a fact of course is irrelevant to the case of the antiquity and preeminence given by Biblical scholars to the New Testament texts, since canonical text collections post-date actual composition. Also almost complete or proto-canon exist such as Papyrus 46, the harmony gospel Diatessaron and Marcion canon before fourth century AD. Along with the New Testament Canon's evolution being partially driven by the need to clarify traditionally accepted text from fraudulent and or Declamatio text. Text that was created in order to legitimize otherwise heretical or nontraditional teachings.

See also

Biblical archaeology

Old Catholic Apostolic Church – Scripture Training Program

Black Iron Prison
Gospel of Mary Magdalene

Draft A