

New Testament Apocrypha

The Old Testament in the Weird



Apocryphas

- Difference in definition of “apocrypha”
 - Catholic
 - Protestant

New Testament Apocrypha

- Acts
- Apocalypses
- Writings
- Gospels

NT Apocryphal Acts

- Extra biblical stories about what the apostles did
- Stories about other NT personalities
- Church traditions often have roots in these books

NT Apocryphal Apocalypses

- Revelations attributed to Biblical personalities
 - 3 are Old Testament
 - Remainder are attributed to the apostles
- Many retellings of the creation story

NT Apocryphal Writings

- Additional Pseudepigrapha writings and epistles
 - Some books also classified as Acts books
 - Some considered for NT inclusion

NT Apocryphal Gospels

- Pseudepigrapha Gnostic Gospels about Jesus
- “Fill in the Blank” Gospels
 - Infancy Gospel of Thomas
 - Arabic Infancy Gospel
 - The Gospel of the Nativity of Mary

“Fill in the Blank” Gospels

- Addresses “blank spots” in the NT
 - What was Jesus’ childhood like?
 - What did Jesus do as a child?
 - Did he know he was God’s Son before his baptism?
 - Who were Mary’s parents?
 - Why did God choose Mary?

“Fill in the Blank” Gospels

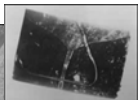
- Follow Jewish tradition of Midrashic questions and answers on issues where the Torah was silent

Nag Hammadi Documents

- Discovered in December 1945 near Nag Hammadi in Upper Nile Valley in Egypt



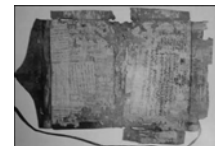
Nag Hammadi Documents



- 13 Codices
- Preserved in leather pouches
- All texts are in Coptic

Nag Hammadi Documents

- Each codex is a mixture of NT Apocrypha, Gnostic, and philosophical works



Irregularities

- Many writings are no longer extant
- Irregularities of classifying works
- Disagreement on dating of works
- Differing numbers of works considered NT Apocrypha

Extra-Christian Writings

- Islam – Qur'an & Hadiths
 - Virgin birth
 - Bodily Ascension
 - Parousia to Judge the world
- BUT ...
- Jesus was NOT crucified or resurrected
 - Jesus is a prophet BUT Jesus is NOT God

OT Connections

- Mostly retelling the creation story
 - Some with roots in OT, others clearly pagan
- Some appearances of Moses
 - Moses' bodily assumption into heaven
- Angelology & Heavenly Realm stories
- Islamic works have much with Jesus, Moses and Elijah

New Testament Apocrypha Resources

Web Sites

- **Early Christian Writings** – www.earlychristianwritings.com
- **Wesley Center** - wesley.nnu.edu
- **Christian Classics Ethereal Library** - www.ccel.org
- **New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia** – www.newadvent.org
- **Christian History Institute** – chi.gospelcom.net
- **Into the Light** (Muslim Christian Dialog) - islam.itl.org.uk
- **Dr. Alan Godlas' Islam and Islamic Studies** site at the University of Georgia - <http://www.uga.edu/islam/jesusdif.html>

Books

- *Nag Hammadi, Gnosticism, and Early Christianity* – ed. Charles W. Hedrick & Robert Hodgson, Jr.
- *New Testament Apocrypha, Gospels and Related Writings* – Wilhelm Schneemelcher
- *New Testament Apocrypha, Vol. 2: Writings Relating to the Apostles, Apocalypses and Related Subjects* – Wilhelm Schneemelcher
- *Lost Scriptures : Books that Did Not Make It into the New Testament* – Bart Ehrman
- *The Muslim Jesus* – ed. Tarif Khalidi