

gnostic bible

gnostic bible refers to a collection of ancient texts that reveal the hidden teachings and mystical perspectives of early Gnostic Christianity. These scriptures offer unique insights into spiritual knowledge, the nature of divinity, and the human quest for enlightenment. In this comprehensive article, you will discover what the gnostic bible is, its historical significance, the core beliefs of Gnosticism, and the key texts that comprise these remarkable writings. We will also explore how the gnostic bible differs from traditional Christian scriptures and its influence on modern spirituality. Whether you are a student of religious history, a seeker of hidden wisdom, or simply curious about alternative spiritual paths, this guide will provide you with an authoritative overview and deepen your understanding of these ancient mysteries. Continue reading to uncover the origins, teachings, and legacy of the gnostic bible.

- Understanding the Gnostic Bible
- Historical Origins of Gnostic Texts
- Core Beliefs and Themes in Gnostic Scripture
- Key Texts in the Gnostic Bible
- Differences Between Gnostic and Canonical Christian Scriptures
- Modern Relevance and Influence

Understanding the Gnostic Bible

The term "gnostic bible" is commonly used to describe a compilation of texts central to the Gnostic tradition, an esoteric movement that flourished in the early centuries of Christianity. Unlike the canonical Bible, the gnostic bible comprises writings that were often excluded or suppressed by orthodox Christian authorities. These scriptures emphasize direct spiritual knowledge, or "gnosis," as the path to salvation. The gnostic bible is not a single book but a collection of manuscripts, including gospels, revelations, and philosophical treatises that reveal alternative narratives about creation, divinity, and human destiny.

Gnostic texts were written in Greek, Coptic, and other ancient languages, reflecting the diverse origins of Gnostic thought. Today, these writings are studied for their unique spiritual perspectives and their challenges to conventional religious doctrines. The gnostic bible serves as a window into the beliefs, rituals, and cosmologies of early Gnostic communities and provides valuable insight into the evolution of Christian theology.

Historical Origins of Gnostic Texts

The Emergence of Gnosticism

Gnosticism emerged in the first few centuries CE, during a time of vibrant spiritual exploration in the Mediterranean world. Influenced by Platonic philosophy, Jewish mysticism, and early Christian teachings, Gnostic communities developed their own distinct doctrines and scriptures. The gnostic bible reflects this rich tapestry of influences, blending myth, allegory, and mystical symbolism to convey its teachings.

Discovery of the Nag Hammadi Library

One of the most significant discoveries in the study of Gnostic texts was the Nag Hammadi library, unearthed in Egypt in 1945. This collection of thirteen leather-bound codices contained over fifty texts, many of which were previously unknown. The Nag Hammadi manuscripts include foundational writings such as the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Philip, and the Apocryphon of John. These texts have greatly expanded scholarly understanding of Gnostic beliefs and the diversity of early Christian thought.

Preservation and Transmission

Gnostic texts were often preserved in secret, circulated among initiates, and copied by hand. Many were destroyed or lost due to persecution by orthodox Christian authorities who viewed Gnosticism as heretical. Despite these challenges, a significant number of Gnostic writings survived, allowing modern readers to explore their teachings and philosophies.

Core Beliefs and Themes in Gnostic Scripture

Knowledge (Gnosis) as Salvation

Central to the gnostic bible is the concept of "gnosis," or direct spiritual knowledge. Gnostics taught that salvation comes not through faith alone, but through profound inner realization of divine truths. This knowledge enables the soul to transcend the material world and return to its spiritual source.

The Divine Realm and the Demiurge

Gnostic cosmology often describes a complex hierarchy of divine beings, including the ineffable source known as the "Monad" or "Godhead." A key figure is the "Demiurge," a lesser creator god responsible for the flawed material world. The gnostic bible presents the Demiurge as ignorant or even antagonistic, contrasting sharply with orthodox Christian views of creation.

The Role of Jesus in Gnostic Thought

In Gnostic scripture, Jesus is portrayed primarily as a revealer of hidden wisdom rather than a sacrificial savior. His teachings are intended to awaken spiritual awareness and guide souls toward

gnosis. The gnostic bible contains numerous dialogues and sayings attributed to Jesus that differ markedly from those found in the canonical New Testament.

- Emphasis on spiritual rather than material reality
- Belief in a divine spark within each person
- Rejection of blind faith and dogmatic authority
- Allegorical interpretation of scripture and myth

Key Texts in the Gnostic Bible

The Gospel of Thomas

The Gospel of Thomas is one of the most famous texts in the gnostic bible. Composed of 114 sayings attributed to Jesus, it focuses on inner enlightenment and personal transformation. Unlike the canonical gospels, it lacks narrative structure and instead presents a collection of spiritual teachings.

The Gospel of Mary Magdalene

This gospel provides a unique perspective on the role of Mary Magdalene, portraying her as a prominent disciple and spiritual guide. It discusses themes of vision, resurrection, and the soul's journey, challenging traditional views of apostolic authority.

The Apocryphon of John

The Apocryphon of John offers a detailed account of Gnostic cosmology, describing the emanation of divine beings and the creation of the material world by the Demiurge. This text is central to understanding Gnostic metaphysics and its reinterpretation of Genesis.

Other Significant Writings

Additional texts in the gnostic bible include the Gospel of Philip, the Pistis Sophia, the Gospel of Truth, and the Treatise on Resurrection. Each of these writings contributes to the rich diversity of Gnostic thought and spiritual practice.

Differences Between Gnostic and Canonical Christian

Scriptures

Contrasting Views of Salvation

The gnostic bible emphasizes spiritual knowledge and personal revelation as the path to salvation, while canonical Christianity focuses on faith in Jesus, the sacrament of the Church, and communal worship. This fundamental difference shapes the theology and spiritual practices of each tradition.

Alternative Narratives and Myths

Gnostic texts often present alternative versions of biblical stories, offering new interpretations of creation, the fall of humanity, and the role of divine beings. These myths challenge orthodox doctrines and encourage readers to seek deeper meanings beneath the surface of scripture.

Authority and Spiritual Practice

Gnosticism rejects the authority of the institutional Church, advocating for individual spiritual experience and direct connection to the divine. The gnostic bible encourages personal exploration and the cultivation of inner wisdom, contrasting with the hierarchical structure of traditional Christianity.

1. Gnostic bible emphasizes personal knowledge; canonical Bible emphasizes faith and tradition.
2. Gnostic texts offer alternative cosmologies and myths.
3. Gnostic spirituality is inward and mystical; orthodox Christianity is outward and communal.

Modern Relevance and Influence

Rediscovery and Contemporary Interest

The gnostic bible has experienced renewed interest in recent decades, as scholars and spiritual seekers explore its teachings for insight into early Christianity and alternative paths to enlightenment. Translations and compilations of Gnostic texts are widely available, making these ancient writings accessible to a global audience.

Influence on Modern Spirituality

Gnostic ideas have influenced contemporary spiritual movements, including New Age thought, mystical Christianity, and integrative religious studies. The emphasis on personal experience, inner divinity, and transcending dogma resonates with those seeking a more individualized approach to

spirituality.

Academic and Cultural Impact

Research into the gnostic bible has deepened understanding of religious diversity in the ancient world. Its themes are reflected in literature, art, and popular culture, inspiring debates about the nature of knowledge, faith, and the quest for meaning.

Key Takeaways for Modern Readers

- Gnostic texts offer alternative perspectives on Christian origins
- Emphasize personal spiritual growth and discovery
- Challenge conventional religious authority and dogma
- Continue to inspire seekers and scholars worldwide

Questions and Answers About the Gnostic Bible

Q: What is the gnostic bible?

A: The gnostic bible is a collection of ancient religious texts that embody the teachings and beliefs of early Gnostic Christianity, emphasizing spiritual knowledge and personal enlightenment.

Q: How does the gnostic bible differ from the canonical Bible?

A: The gnostic bible contains texts that were excluded from the traditional Christian canon; it focuses on mystical knowledge and alternative cosmologies, whereas the canonical Bible centers on faith, church authority, and orthodox doctrine.

Q: What are some key texts found in the gnostic bible?

A: Important texts include the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Mary Magdalene, the Apocryphon of John, the Gospel of Philip, and the Pistis Sophia.

Q: Why were gnostic texts suppressed by the early Church?

A: Gnostic writings were considered heretical because they challenged orthodox beliefs, questioned church authority, and promoted alternative views of salvation and divinity.

Q: What is "gnosis" in the context of the gnostic bible?

A: "Gnosis" refers to direct, experiential knowledge of the divine, which Gnostics believed was essential for spiritual liberation and salvation.

Q: Where were many gnostic texts discovered?

A: Many gnostic manuscripts were discovered in Egypt, most notably in the Nag Hammadi library found in 1945.

Q: Who was the Demiurge in Gnostic belief?

A: The Demiurge is a lesser creator god in Gnostic cosmology who is responsible for the material world and is often depicted as ignorant or antagonistic.

Q: How is Jesus portrayed in gnostic literature?

A: In gnostic texts, Jesus is depicted as a revealer of hidden wisdom, guiding individuals toward spiritual awakening rather than serving solely as a sacrificial savior.

Q: Is the gnostic bible used in any modern religious practices?

A: While not part of mainstream Christian worship, the gnostic bible influences various spiritual movements and is studied for its mystical teachings and historical significance.

Q: Can anyone read the gnostic bible today?

A: Yes, translations and compilations of the gnostic bible are widely available, allowing anyone interested to explore its unique perspectives and spiritual insights.

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The Gnostic Bible: Uncovering Hidden Texts and Diverse Teachings

Are you intrigued by the esoteric, the hidden, the path less traveled? Have you ever wondered about the rich tapestry of beliefs that existed alongside, and sometimes in opposition to, early Christianity? Then you're likely curious about the "Gnostic Bible," a term that encompasses a vast and diverse collection of ancient texts. This isn't a single book like the Christian Bible, but rather a body of writings offering alternative interpretations of Christianity and revealing a fascinating spiritual landscape. This blog post will delve into the world of Gnostic texts, exploring their key themes, historical context, and significance for understanding early Christianity and its diverse interpretations. We'll unpack what makes these texts unique and address common misconceptions surrounding this often misunderstood branch of religious thought.

What is Considered the "Gnostic Bible"?

Unlike the unified canon of the Christian Bible, the "Gnostic Bible" is a collection of diverse texts discovered over centuries, predominantly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These writings, often found in Coptic (the language of ancient Egypt) and other languages, weren't considered canonical by mainstream Christianity and were largely suppressed or lost to history. Key texts often included under the umbrella term "Gnostic Bible" include:

The Gospel of Thomas: A collection of sayings attributed to Jesus, offering a different perspective on his teachings than the canonical Gospels.

The Gospel of Judas: Infamously known for portraying Judas Iscariot in a more nuanced light, challenging traditional portrayals.

The Pistis Sophia: A lengthy text containing dialogues and mystical visions.

The Apocryphon of John: A mystical narrative detailing the creation of the world and the nature of divine beings.

The Hypostasis of the Archons: A cosmological text describing the creation of the world by malevolent archons.

These are just a few examples; many other Gnostic texts exist, each offering unique insights into Gnostic cosmology, theology, and spiritual practices.

Key Themes within Gnostic Texts

Gnostic writings share several common themes, though individual texts vary significantly:

Gnosis and Salvation:

Central to Gnosticism is the concept of gnosis, meaning "knowledge." This isn't simply intellectual understanding but a direct, experiential knowledge of the divine, often achieved through spiritual illumination or revelation. Salvation in Gnosticism is attained through acquiring this gnosis, leading to liberation from the material world and union with the divine.

Dualism and the Material World:

Many Gnostic texts present a dualistic worldview, distinguishing between a transcendent, spiritual realm and an imperfect, material world created by a lesser deity (often called the Demiurge). The material world is seen as a prison or illusion, and escape from it is a primary spiritual goal.

The Divine Spark:

Gnostics believed that a divine spark, often called a pneuma or spirit, resides within each individual. This spark is a fragment of the divine, and its liberation is the ultimate aim of spiritual practice.

Secret Knowledge:

Gnostic teachings were often considered esoteric, revealed only to initiated individuals. This secrecy fostered a sense of community and exclusivity, contributing to their marginalization by mainstream Christianity.

The Historical Context of Gnostic Texts

Gnostic ideas flourished in the early centuries of Christianity, existing alongside and often in tension with orthodox Christian beliefs. The exact origins of Gnosticism are debated, but its influence can be traced to various philosophical and religious traditions, including Jewish mysticism, Hellenistic philosophy, and early Christian movements. The suppression of Gnostic texts by the early Church played a significant role in shaping the development of Christian orthodoxy and obscuring the diversity of early Christian beliefs.

The Significance of Studying Gnostic Texts

Studying Gnostic texts offers valuable insights into the history of Christianity, revealing a rich tapestry of beliefs and practices that existed alongside the orthodoxy that eventually prevailed. They provide a window into the intellectual and spiritual ferment of the early centuries CE, challenging conventional narratives and illuminating the diverse ways in which people sought spiritual understanding. Their exploration prompts critical reflection on the nature of religion, authority, and the search for truth itself.

Conclusion

The "Gnostic Bible" isn't a single book but a multifaceted collection of texts that challenges our understanding of early Christianity. By exploring these ancient writings, we gain a deeper appreciation for the diversity of religious thought in the ancient world and the complex interplay of ideas that shaped the development of religious traditions. These texts continue to fascinate and inspire, reminding us that the search for spiritual truth often takes many paths.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Are Gnostic texts part of the Christian Bible? No, Gnostic texts were not included in the canon of the Christian Bible and were largely rejected by mainstream Christian authorities.
2. What languages were Gnostic texts written in? Many Gnostic texts were written in Coptic, Greek, and other ancient languages.
3. Where were Gnostic texts discovered? Many significant Gnostic texts have been discovered in Egypt, particularly in the Nag Hammadi library.
4. How do Gnostic beliefs differ from mainstream Christianity? Gnosticism differs significantly in its cosmology, its view of the material world, and its understanding of salvation. While some Gnostic texts reference Jesus, their interpretation of his teachings and role differs substantially from orthodox Christianity.
5. Are Gnostic beliefs still practiced today? While not a widespread religion, Gnostic ideas continue to influence various spiritual and philosophical traditions, and some contemporary groups identify with Gnostic thought.

gnostic bible: *The Gnostic Bible* Willis Barnstone, Marvin W. Meyer, 2006 The most comprehensive collection of gnostic literature ever published, this volume is the result of a unique collaboration between a renowned poet-translator and a leading scholar of early Christian texts.

gnostic bible: *The Gnostic Gospels* Elaine Pagels, 2004-06-29 Selected by the Modern Library as one of the 100 best nonfiction books of all time *The Gnostic Gospels* is a landmark study of the long-buried roots of Christianity, a work of luminous scholarship and wide popular appeal. First published in 1979 to critical acclaim, winning the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award, *The Gnostic Gospels* has continued to grow in reputation and influence over the past two decades. It is now widely recognized as one of the most brilliant and accessible histories of early Christian spirituality published in our time. In 1945 an Egyptian peasant unearthed what proved to be the Gnostic Gospels, thirteen papyrus volumes that expounded a radically different view of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ from that of the New Testament. In this spellbinding book, renowned religious scholar Elaine Pagels elucidates the mysteries and meanings of these sacred texts both in the world of the first Christians and in the context of Christianity today. With insight and passion, Pagels explores a remarkable range of recently discovered gospels, including the Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of Mary Magdalene, to show how a variety of "Christianities" emerged at a time of extraordinary spiritual upheaval. Some Christians questioned the need for clergy and church doctrine, and taught that the divine could be discovered through spiritual search. Many others, like Buddhists and Hindus, sought enlightenment—and access to God—within. Such explorations raised questions: Was the resurrection to be understood symbolically and not literally? Was God to be envisioned only in masculine form, or feminine as well? Was martyrdom a necessary—or worthy—expression of faith? These early Christians dared to ask questions that orthodox Christians later suppressed—and their explorations led to profoundly different visions of Jesus and his message. Brilliant, provocative, and stunning in its implications, *The Gnostic Gospels* is a radical, eloquent reconsideration of the origins of the Christian faith.

gnostic bible: *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* James McConkey Robinson, 1984

gnostic bible: *The Gnostic Gospels* Alan Jacobs, Vrej N. Nersessian, 2016-11-15 This eye-opening collection of texts sheds light on the esoteric knowledge of Gnosticism, revealing

intimate conversations between Jesus and his Disciples In 1945, several gospels, hidden since the first century, were found in the Egyptian Desert at Nag Hammadi. This discovery caused a sensation as the scrolls revealed the mysteries of the Gnostics—a movement which emerged during the formative period of Christianity. 'Gnosis', from the Greek, broadly meaning 'hidden spiritual knowledge', was associated with renouncing the material world, and focusing on attaining the life of the Holy Spirit. Many Christian sects are derived from the esoteric knowledge of Gnosticism. The gospels selected here by Alan Jacobs reveal intimate conversations between Jesus and his Disciples. The Gospel of Mary Magdalene sheds new light on his relationship with his favorite follower, while the Gospel of Thomas consists of mini-parables of deep inward and symbolic meaning—many of which are not found in the New Testament. The wisdom in this inspiring collection of texts is wholly relevant to our lives today, addressing the questions of good and evil, sin and suffering, and the path to salvation.

gnostic bible: The Secret Teachings of Jesus , 1986-05-12 In December 1945, two Egyptian fellahin, digging for natural fertilizer in the Nile River valley unearthed a sealed storage jar. The jar proved to hold treasure of an unexpected sort: a collection of some fifty-two ancient manuscripts, most of which reflect the teachings of a mystical religious movement we call Gnosticism (from the Greek word gnosis, knowledge). The texts are also, with few exceptions, Christian documents, and thus they provide us with valuable new information about the character of the early church, and about the Gnostic Christians within the church. In this volume, Marvin W. Meyer has produced a new English translation for general readers of four of the most important and revealing of these early Christian texts -- the Secret Book of James, the Gospel of Thomas, the Book of Thomas, and the Secret Book of John.

gnostic bible: The Gnostic Bible: The Pistis Sophia Unveiled Samael Aun Weor, 2011-02-24 "It came to pass, when Jesus had risen from the dead, that he passed eleven years discoursing with his disciples, and instructing them." The Apostles wrote down what Jesus taught them during those eleven years, resulting in The Pistis Sophia, the most important Gnostic scripture. Includes an extensive commentary by Samael Aun Weor.

gnostic bible: The Secret Book of John , 2005 The Secret Book of John: The Gnostic Gospel - Annotated & Explained decodes the principal themes, historical foundation, and spiritual contexts of this challenging yet fundamental Gnostic teaching. Drawing connections to Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, kabbalistic Judaism, and Sufism, Davies focuses on the mythology and psychology of the Gnostic religious quest. He illuminates the Gnostics' ardent call for self-awareness and introspection, and the empowering message that divine wholeness will be restored not by worshiping false gods in an illusory material world but by our recognition of the inherent divinity within ourselves.--BOOK JACKET.

gnostic bible: The Gnostic Gospels of Jesus Marvin W. Meyer, 2009-09-15 For all those readers curious to read the actual texts of the Gnostic Gospels, here is the definitive collection of all the Gnostic Gospels and Gospel-like texts. o Marvin Meyer, premier scholar of Gnostic and other Christian literature outside the New Testament, presents every Gnostic Gospel and Jesus text with a brilliant overall introduction, introductions to each text, and notes that explain everything the reader needs to know to understand the text. He includes his latest translations of not only the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Philip, the Gospel of Mary, but other texts such as the Secret Book of John, which some scholars regard as the second part of the New Testament Gospel of John. The material is largely from the discovery at Nag Hammadi, freshly translated and introduced, but also includes texts found elsewhere. The texts, especially taken together, present an image of Jesus as the ultimate wisdom teacher, a kind of mysterious Jewish Zen master, who scandalized listeners by his radical egalitarianism (regarding women, slaves, the poor, the marginalized as of equal status, or more, with establishment male believers) and his insistence on living the message, spiritual experience, vs. outer observance only. o For those wanting to learn more after reading The Da Vinci Code. This book provides the definitive next book for those looking for expert presentation of the alternative Gnostic stream of Christianity, in which there is no talk of crucifixion and Mary

Magdalene is presented as the disciple that Jesus loved best. Marv is one of the original secret gospels scholars who has done an enormous amount of work to bring these texts to light. All of his research on the Nag Hammadi texts is having an incredible impact on our knowledge of early Christian history—it is virtually redefining it. --Dr. Elaine Pagels, Princeton University

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gnostic bible: The Essential Gnostic Gospels Alan Jacobs, 2006 The Gnostics were early Christians whose beliefs and practices put them at odds with the orthodox Church; indeed, the Church considered Gnostics to be heretics and made a concerted effort to destroy their writings. However, in 1945, a remarkable discovery was made in Nag Hamadi, in the Egyptian desert: a jar containing 13 papyrus documents, dating back to the fourth century ad, with genuine Gnostic texts in the original Greek. In addition, this manuscript included four gospels that offered accounts of Jesus and His times that are strikingly different from the New Testament. Alan Jacobs brings his unrivalled scholarship to bear on these illuminating and eye-opening works, offering inspiring and poetic translations that capture the verses' uplifting spiritual message and beauty.

gnostic bible: The Everything Gnostic Gospels Book Meera Lester, 2007-02-12 The books of the Bible are not the only ancient writings to tell the stories of Jesus and his followers - other Gnostic texts have also been found as well. The Everything Gnostic Gospels Book provides an overview of Gnosticism and the historical figures who are believed to be the authors: Thomas, James, Mary Magdalene, and others. This accessible guide explores the following questions: What do Gnostics believe? Who were the authors of the Gnostic Gospels? How are the Bible scriptures and Gnostic Gospels different? How are they the same? How were official Christian texts chosen? Learn about the different versions of Christianity that battled for supremacy in the first centuries after the death of Jesus. This entertaining and educational book describes each of the Gnostic Gospels, providing insight into the turbulent times of early Christianity as well as the renewed contemporary interest in these mysterious writings.

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Thomas, the Gospel of Mary, and the recently discovered Gospel of Judas, as well as other Gnostic gospels and sacred texts. This volume also includes introductory essays, notes, tables, glossary, index, etc. to help the reader understand the context and contemporary significance of these texts which have shed new light on early Christianity and ancient thought. The compilation of ancient manuscripts that constitute The Nag Hammadi Scriptures is a discovery that challenges everything we thought we knew about the early Christian church, ancient Judaism, and Greco-Roman religions.

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gnostic bible: *Reading Judas* Elaine Pagels, Karen L. King, 2007-03-06 The instant New York Times bestseller interpreting the controversial long-lost gospel The recently unearthed Gospel of Judas is a source of fascination for biblical scholars and lay Christians alike. Now two leading experts on the Gnostic gospels tackle the important questions posed by its discovery, including: How could any Christian imagine Judas to be Jesus' favorite? And what kind of vision of God does the author offer? Working from Karen L. King's brilliant new translation, Elaine Pagels and King provide the context necessary for considering its meaning. Reading Judas plunges into the heart of Christianity itself and will stand as the definitive look at the gospel for years to come.

gnostic bible: *The Gnostic Paul* Elaine Pagels, 1992-03-01 In this highly original work, Elaine Pagels demonstrates how evidence from gnostic sources may challenge the assumption that Paul writes his letters to combat gnostic opponents and to repudiate their claims to secret wisdom. Drawing upon evidence from the gnostic exegesis of Paul, including several Nag Hammadi texts, the author examines how gnostic exegetes cite and interpret key passages in the letters they consider Pauline-1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Hebrews. Besides offering new insight into controversies over Paul in the second century, this analysis of gnostic exegesis suggests a new perspective for Pauline study, challenging students and scholars to recognize the presuppositions-hermeneutical and theological-involved in their own reading of Paul's letters. Elaine H. Pagels is the Harrington Spear Paine Professor of Religion at Princeton University. She is the author of *The Gnostic Gospels*, which won the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award, *The Johannine Gospel in Gnostic Exegesis*, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent*, and the best-selling *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas*.

gnostic bible: *The Gnostic Scriptures* Joseph Lumpkin, 2006-01-01 To understand some of the basic beliefs of Gnosticism, let us start with the common ground shared between Gnosticism and modern Christianity. Both believe the world is imperfect, corrupt, and brutal. The blame for this, according to mainstream Christianity, is placed squarely on the shoulders of man himself. With the fall of man (Adam), the world was forever changed to the undesirable and harmful place in which we live today. However, Gnostics reject this view as an incorrect interpretation of the creation myth. According to Gnostics, the blame is not in ourselves, but in our creator. The creator of this world was himself somewhat less than perfect and in fact, deeply flawed and cruel, making mankind the children of a lesser God....The parallel between Sophia and Mary Magdalene in Gnostic theology cannot be overstated. Sophia was the handmaiden of the Supreme God, carrying the life force, which was the emanation of God. She carried the truth within her, which she offered to Adam. The truth was offered up to set him free. Mary was the consort of Jesus, carrying the imparted knowledge and

possibly his life force in the form of a child. She revealed to the apostles the truth Jesus personally and intimately gave to her alone. We will see this stated clearly in The Gospel of Mary Magdalene later in this book.

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gnostic bible: The Gospel of Judas, Second Edition Rodolphe Kasser, Marvin Meyer, Gregor Wurst, Francois Gaudard, 2008-06-17 For 1,600 years its message lay hidden. When the bound papyrus pages of this lost gospel finally reached scholars who could unlock its meaning, they were astounded. Here was a gospel that had not been seen since the early days of Christianity, and which few experts had even thought existed—a gospel told from the perspective of Judas Iscariot, history's ultimate traitor. And far from being a villain, the Judas that emerges in its pages is a hero. In this radical reinterpretation, Jesus asks Judas to betray him. In contrast to the New Testament Gospels, Judas Iscariot is presented as a role model for all those who wish to be disciples of Jesus and is the one apostle who truly understands Jesus. Discovered by farmers in the 1970s in Middle Egypt, the codex containing the gospel was bought and sold by antiquities traders, secreted away, and carried across three continents, all the while suffering damage that reduced much of it to fragments. In 2001, it finally found its way into the hands of a team of experts who would painstakingly reassemble and restore it. The Gospel of Judas has been translated from its original Coptic to clear prose, and is accompanied by commentary that explains its fascinating history in the context of the early Church, offering a whole new way of understanding the message of Jesus Christ.

gnostic bible: The Secret History of the Gnostics Andrew Phillip Smith, 2015-11-24 Learn more about the myths, practices, history, and recent resurgence of Gnosticism as a Gnostic scholar seeks to answer why this Christian mystical movement has inspired the likes of Dan Brown and Philip Pullman The Secret History of the Gnostics offers long-awaited illumination on the mystical movement that teaches 'gnosis'—knowledge of God as opposed to unquestioning faith. Acclaimed author Andrew Phillip Smith delves into the myths and practices of this ancient movement, exploring its popularity during 2nd century AD, its subsequent decline under the weight of orthodoxy in the Church, and its present-day resurgence. Gnosticism has travelled a fascinating path—from the Manichaeans in Modern Persia between the 3rd and 7th centuries AD, to the triumphs and tragedies of the Cathars in Southern Europe between the 12th and 14th centuries, to, finally, today's Mandaean in Iraq. However, as the author points out, the revival of Gnosticism extends further than these narrow sects, offering inspiration to a legion of literary figures, including Dan Brown and Philip Pullman. Gnosticism's emphasis on personal over organized religion—in keeping with the doctrine of the early Christian era during which it thrived—has found particular resonance with today's multicultural world. In addition to discussing the Gnostic gospels and the sect's practical beliefs and customs, The Secret History of the Gnostics is also, in effect, a manifesto, an appeal to those inspired by or drawn to the Gnostic faith not to forget its origins.

gnostic bible: The Gnostic New Age April D. DeConick, 2016-09-27 Gnosticism is a countercultural spirituality that forever changed the practice of Christianity. Before it emerged in the second century, passage to the afterlife required obedience to God and king. Gnosticism proposed that human beings were manifestations of the divine, unsettling the hierarchical foundations of the ancient world. Subversive and revolutionary, Gnostics taught that prayer and mediation could bring human beings into an ecstatic spiritual union with a transcendent deity. This

mystical strain affected not just Christianity but many other religions, and it characterizes our understanding of the purpose and meaning of religion today. In *The Gnostic New Age*, April D. DeConick recovers this vibrant underground history to prove that Gnosticism was not suppressed or defeated by the Catholic Church long ago, nor was the movement a fabrication to justify the violent repression of alternative forms of Christianity. Gnosticism alleviated human suffering, soothing feelings of existential brokenness and alienation through the promise of renewal as God. DeConick begins in ancient Egypt and follows with the rise of Gnosticism in the Middle Ages, the advent of theosophy and other occult movements in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and contemporary New Age spiritual philosophies. As these theories find expression in science-fiction and fantasy films, DeConick sees evidence of Gnosticism's next incarnation. Her work emphasizes the universal, countercultural appeal of a movement that embodies much more than a simple challenge to religious authority.

gnostic bible: Gnosis Kurt Rudolph, 2001-06-20 Translated by R. McL. Wilson A full-scale study based on the documents of the Coptic Gnostic library found at Nag Hammadi providing a comprehensive survey of the nature, the teachings, the history and the influence of this religion.

gnostic bible: The Hidden Messages of Jesus Larry A. Angus, 2012-03-01 Do you believe other gospels, contemporary with those in the Bible, ought to be heard? Do you question certain articles in the Apostles' Creed, such as the virgin birth and bodily resurrection? Do you believe other religions other than Christianity have validity? Do you accept that women have the right to be clergy? Is your personal relationship to God more important than believing what you are told to believe? Is your way of faith honestly seeking what is true for the world and God? Do you believe Christ's call was to a dynamic faith rather than to any system of beliefs? If you answered yes to a majority of these questions, you will find that the Gnostic Gospels support a different way to be Christian. These long lost, hidden, writings, as do the gospels in the Bible, lift up the power and love of Christ. This book explains how and why!

gnostic bible: *The Gnostics* Sean Martin, 2012-02-03 Gnosticism - derived from the Greek word gnosis, to know - is the name given to various religious schools that proliferated in the first centuries after Christ and, at one time, it almost became the dominant form of Christianity. Yet some Gnostic beliefs derive from the older Mystery traditions of Greece and Rome, and the various Gnostic schools came to be branded as heretical by the emerging Christian church. Indeed, although some Gnostic beliefs are close to mainstream Christianity Gnosticism also held that the world is imperfect as it was created by an evil god who was constantly at war with the true, good God; that Christ and Satan were brothers; that reincarnation exists; and that women were the equal of men As a result, the Gnostics held the Feminine Aspect of God - whom they addressed as Sophia, or Wisdom - in very high regard. They also stressed that we each have a spark of the Divine inside us which, when recognised and developed, will ultimately liberate us from the prison of the material world. Although largely stamped out by the Church by the sixth century, Gnosticism survived underground through groups such as the Bogomils and the Cathars, and influenced the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the psychologist Carl Jung, the Existentialists, the New Age movement and writers as diverse as William Blake, W.B. Yeats, Albert Camus and Philip K. Dick. In this book, Sean Martin recounts the long and diverse history of Gnosticism, and argues for its continued relevance today.

gnostic bible: The Gnostic Gospels of Philip, Mary Magdalene, and Thomas Joseph Lumpkin, 2006 And the companion (Consort) was Mary of Magdala (Mary Magdalene). The Lord loved Mary more than all the other disciples and he kissed her often on her mouth (the text is missing here and the word mouth is assumed). The others saw his love for Mary and asked him: - Why do you love her more than all of us? The Savior replied, - Why do I not love you in the same way I love her? - (The Gospel of Philip) - Peter said to Mary; -Sister we know that the Savior loved you more than all other women. Tell us the words of the Savior that you remember and know, but we have not heard and do not know. Mary answered him and said; -I will tell you what He hid from you. - (The Gospel of Mary Magdalene) - Seizing on the texts above, writers of both fiction and non-fiction allowed their pens to run freely amidst conjecture and postulation of marriage and children between Jesus and Mary

Magdalene. The writers of *The Da Vinci Code* and *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* took these passages and expanded them into storylines that have held readers captive with anticipation. Did Jesus take Mary to be his wife? Could the couple have produced children? Gnostic theology leaves open the possibility.

gnostic bible: *Lost Books of the Bible and The Forgotten Books of Eden* Rutherford Hayes Platt, 2020-02-12 2020 Reprint of 1926 Editions. Full facsimile of the original editions and not reproduced with Optical Recognition software. This edition includes two titles published into one bound volume. Rutherford Hayes Platt, in the preface to his 1963 reprint of this work, states: First issued in 1926, this is the most popular collection of apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature ever published. The translations were first published, under this title, by an unknown editor in *The Lost Books of the Bible* Cleveland 1926, but the translations had previously been published many times. The book is, essentially, a combined reprint of earlier works. The first half, *Lost Books of the Bible*, covers the New Testament. The second half of the book, *The Forgotten Books of Eden*, includes a translation originally published in 1882 of the *First and Second Books of Adam and Eve*, translated first from ancient Ethiopic to German and then into English by Solomon Caesar Malan, and a number of items of Old Testament pseudepigrapha, such as reprinted in the second volume of R.H. Charles's *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1913).

gnostic bible: *Santa Muerte* Warlock Asylum, 2020-11-18 The Mexican folk saint adorably known as *Nuestra Señora de la Santa Muerte* (Our Lady of the Holy Death) has become the object of a growing spiritual tradition and global movement. The mysteries and devotional practices that constitute the fabric of *Santa Muerte*'s legacy run as deep as its indigenous origins. Although the worship of *Santa Muerte* has been condemned by the Catholic Church and other clergies, it has become an intrinsic part of Mexican culture. Today, people from all walks of life and religious paradigms have found prosperity under the cloak of Holy Death's protection and miraculous gifts of loving-kindness. *Santa Muerte: The Gnostic Bible of Holy Death* reveals the unknown beginnings and deeply rooted alchemical principles that are embedded in the veneration of *La Santísima Muerte*. The science of Holy Death has ancient roots and a profound cosmology that is an important part of understanding *Santa Muerte*'s gnosis. This text includes an English rendering of the Gospel of *Santa Muerte* and additional esoteric and ritual practices are included.

gnostic bible: *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Gnostic Gospels* J. Michael Matkin, 2005 The founding of the early Christian Church had as much to do with politics and intrigue as it did with theology and religion. This history and the documents uncovered at the Nag Hammadi site in Egypt have formed the basis of some of the most interesting and mysterious questions today. Was Mary Magdalene a disciple of Jesus? What role did Jesus mother Mary play? What does the Gospel of Thomas tell us? Enter *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Gnostic Gospels*. Expert author J. Michael Matkin has provided easy and understandable overviews to all these major works and more. With chapters discussing each of the major and minor documents found at Nag Hammadi, the book also includes an overview of Gnosticism and its most influential people. Readers get an easy, understandable view of the early Church, these relatively new documents, and their meaning to modern religion and philosophy today.

gnostic bible: *Inner Christianity* Richard Smoley, 2002-10-08 An eye-opening introduction to the complex world of esoteric Christianity—perfect for the general reader This guide to mystical and esoteric Christianity speaks from a nonsectarian point of view, unearthing insights from the whole of the Christian tradition, orthodox and heretical, famous and obscure. The esoteric tradition has traditionally searched for meanings that would yield a deeper inner knowledge of the divine. While traditional Christianity draws a timeline from Adam's Fall to the Day of Judgment, the esoteric often sees time as folding in on itself, bringing every point to the here and now. While the Church fought bitterly over dogma, the esoteric borrowed freely from other traditions—Kabbalah, astrology, and alchemy—in their search for metaphors of inner truth. Rather than basing his book around exponents of esoteric doctrine, scholar Richard Smoley concentrates on the questions that are of interest to every searching Christian. How can one attain direct spiritual experience? What does the

Fall really tell us about coming to terms with the world we live in? Can we find salvation in everyday life? How can we ascend, spiritually, through the various levels of existence? What was Christ's true message to humankind? From the Gospel of Thomas to A Course in Miracles, from the Jesus Prayer to alchemy and Tarot, from Origen to Dante to Jung, Richard Smoley sheds the light of an alternative Christianity on these issues and more.

gnostic bible: Why Catholic Bibles Are Bigger Gary Michuta, 2017-09-15 Some differences between Catholicism and Protestantism can be tricky to grasp, but one of them just requires the ability to count: Catholic bibles have seventy-three books, whereas Protestant bibles have sixty-six - plus an appendix with the strange title Apocrypha. What's the story here? Protestants claim that the medieval Catholic Church added six extra books that had never been considered part of the Old Testament, either by Jews or early Christians. Catholics say that the Protestant Reformers removed those books, long considered part of Sacred Scripture, because they didn't like what they contained. In *Why Catholic Bibles Are Bigger*, Gary Michuta presents a revised and expanded version of his authoritative work on this key issue. Combining the historical record from pre-Christian times to the Patristic era to the Reformation and its aftermath, he traces the canon controversy through the writings and actions of its major players.

gnostic bible: What is Gnosticism? Karen L. King, 2003 A study of gnosticism examines the various ways early Christians strove to define themselves in a pluralistic Roman society, while questioning the traditional ideas of heresy and orthodoxy that have previously influenced historians.

gnostic bible: Cold-Case Christianity J. Warner Wallace, 2013-01-01 Written by an L. A. County homicide detective and former atheist, *Cold-Case Christianity* examines the claims of the New Testament using the skills and strategies of a hard-to-convince criminal investigator. Christianity could be defined as a "cold case": it makes a claim about an event from the distant past for which there is little forensic evidence. In *Cold-Case Christianity*, J. Warner Wallace uses his nationally recognized skills as a homicide detective to look at the evidence and eyewitnesses behind Christian beliefs. Including gripping stories from his career and the visual techniques he developed in the courtroom, Wallace uses illustration to examine the powerful evidence that validates the claims of Christianity. A unique apologetic that speaks to readers' intense interest in detective stories, *Cold-Case Christianity* inspires readers to have confidence in Christ as it prepares them to articulate the case for Christianity.

gnostic bible: The Origin of Satan Elaine Pagels, 1996-04-30 From the National Book Award-winning and National Book Critics Circle Award-winning author of *The Gnostic Gospels* comes a dramatic interpretation of Satan and his role on the Christian tradition. Arresting...brilliant...this book illuminates the angels with which we must wrestle to come to the truth of our bedeviling spiritual problems. —The Boston Globe With magisterial learning and the élan of a born storyteller, Pagels turns Satan's story into an audacious exploration of Christianity's shadow side, in which the gospel of love gives way to irrational hatreds that continue to haunt Christians and non-Christians alike.

gnostic bible: Judas and the Gospel of Jesus Nicholas Thomas Wright, 2006 N.T. Wright, an ancient historian, biblical scholar, and bishop, offers a Christian response to the discovery (and the sensation surrounding that discovery) of the Gospel of Judas.

gnostic bible: Living Gnosis Tau Malachi, 2005 Gnostic revival is growing in the United States and Europe as people are discovering the mystical roots of their own Western Tradition. This easy-to-read, deeply spiritual introduction to Gnostic Christianity helps beginners down the Gnostic path to esoteric insights and wisdom. Focusing primarily on Sophian Gnosticism, Tau Malachi explains the origins, teachings, and nature of this living tradition. Readers also learn how to apply Gnostic practices, such as affirmation, positive thought, and creative visualization, in daily life. More than a practical guide, this text invites everyone to embark on a spiritual quest toward Spirit-connection and self-realization by way of Gnostic wisdom.

gnostic bible: Ancient Gnosticism Birger Albert Pearson, 2007 * A brief and accessible introduction to Gnosticism

gnostic bible: Christless Christianity Michael Horton, 2008-11-01 Is it possible that we have left Christ out of Christianity? Is the faith and practice of American Christians today more American than Christian? These are the provocative questions Michael Horton addresses in this thoughtful, insightful book. He argues that while we invoke the name of Christ, too often Christ and the Christ-centered gospel are pushed aside. The result is a message and a faith that are, in Horton's words, trivial, sentimental, affirming, and irrelevant. This alternative gospel is a message of moralism, personal comfort, self-help, self-improvement, and individualistic religion. It trivializes God, making him a means to our selfish ends. Horton skillfully diagnoses the problem and points to the solution: a return to the unadulterated gospel of salvation.

gnostic bible: The Other Bible Willis Barnstone, 2005-09-20 A new edition of our classic, *The Other Bible*, including a new index, new cover, and a new introduction from the author to bring *The Other Bible* up to date. *The Other Bible* gathers in one comprehensive volume ancient, esoteric holy texts from Judeo-Christian tradition that were excluded from the official canon of the Old and New Testaments, including the Gnostic Gospels, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Kabbalah, and several more. *The Other Bible* provides a rare opportunity to discover the poetic and narrative riches of this long-suppressed literature and experience firsthand its visionary discourses on the nature of God, humanity, the spiritual life, the world around us, and infinite worlds beyond this one. This new edition will include a full index and a new introduction from editor Willis Barnstone. o The interest in Gnostic texts begun with *The Da Vinci Code* has spread to include many of the other suppressed early texts of Judaism and Christianity, and this book contains many of them in one volume.

gnostic bible: Gnosticism Stephan A Hoeller, 2012-12-13 Gnosticism developed alongside Judeo-Christianity over two thousand years ago, but with an important difference: It emphasizes, not faith, but direct perception of God--Gnosticism being derived from the Greek word *gnosis*, meaning knowledge. Given the controversial premise that one can know God directly, the history of Gnosticism is an unfolding drama of passion, political intrigue, martyrdom, and mystery. Dr. Hoeller traces this fascinating story throughout time and shows how Gnosticism has inspired such great thinkers as Voltaire, Blake, Yeats, Hesse, Melville, and Jung.

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