



“Lost Gospels”— Lost No More

THE NEW TESTAMENT, A 27-BOOK COLLECTION OF TEXTS written within a century of Jesus’ crucifixion, is typically thought of as the one-stop source for all information about the origins of Christianity and for the answers to pressing moral and ethical questions. But these texts were not automatically declared scripture after their writers had put down their pens. It took some time, centuries in fact, for Christians to determine which texts were important enough and popular enough to be added to the Jewish Tanakh as a reflection of the “new covenant” ushered in by Jesus.

Tony Burke

By the time that decision was reached, Christianity had gone through a period of intense literary activity, leaving the church with an embarrassment of riches from which to choose their sacred texts.

THE NON-BIBLICAL JESUS. The Christian apocrypha (which means “secret,” but came to be understood pejoratively as “false” or “spurious”) depict many diverse images of Jesus and early Christian theology that are different from those found in the New Testament. Many of these texts were written to adapt the Jesus movement to the writer’s particular context. This fourth-century opus sectile (stone inlay) floor mosaic of the head of Jesus from a building near Porta Marina, Ostia, Italy, is contemporary with many of the apocryphal gospels and reflects one artistic interpretation of Jesus.

The considerable literature that did not make the cut constitutes the Christian apocrypha.

The word “apocrypha” means “secret,” but by the end of the second century the term had taken on the pejorative meaning of “false” or “spurious.” Christians were urged to avoid reading these rejected texts

Betraying Judas

Originally looted from a tomb in Egypt, the Tchacos Codex containing the *Gospel of Judas* arose on the Egyptian antiquities market without much interest, probably because of the high asking price of three million dollars. During this period the codex spent 16 years in a Long Island bank vault. Eventually the Coptic papyrus came into the possession of Zurich antiquities dealer Frieda Tchacos Nussberger. She showed it to Yale Professor Bentley Layton, who identified one of the texts within it as the *Gospel of Judas*. Yale was too fearful of the legalities to purchase the codex, however.

At this point the National Geographic Society entered the drama as the financial backer. With the Maecenas Foundation of Ancient Art in Basel conserving the text and the National Geographic Society committed to publishing the critical edition, all should have been well for the *Gospel of Judas*. It wasn't.

In moves that reminded some scholars of the publication process of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the National Geographic Society under a veil of secrecy contracted three Gnosticism experts to prepare a critical edition of the text; all other scholars were denied access to the manuscript. Things got worse when the marketing strategy deployed for the critical edition “sold” the gospel as a possibly authentic historical account with a heroic Judas who was rewarded with ascension into

the divine realm. The resulting publication was highly criticized for its translation and sensationalism.

Less than two years after the release of the first edition, National Geographic announced a substantially revised edition that responded to the plethora of scholarly criticism. Despite this controversy, the *Gospel of Judas* (a page depicted left) is still a significant apocryphal text for understanding Gnosticism.

because, as bishop Athanasius of Alexandria wrote (c. 367 C.E.), they “are used to deceive the simple-minded.” Once Athanasius and other church leaders decided on the official canon (meaning “standard” or “rule”) of Christian scripture, the rejected texts were apparently “lost” for centuries until the beginning of the Renaissance, when scholars journeyed to the East in search of old manuscripts gathering dust in monastery libraries, and more recently by archaeologists, who pulled tattered scraps of papyrus out of tombs and ancient garbage dumps.

Today scholars of the Christian apocrypha are challenging this view of the loss and rediscovery of apocryphal texts. It has become increasingly clear that the Christian apocrypha were composed and transmitted throughout Christian history, not just in antiquity. And they were valued not only by “heretics” who held views about Christ that differed from normative (or “orthodox”) Christianity, but also by writers within the church who did not hesitate to promote and even create apocryphal texts to serve their own interests.¹

To some extent Christian apocrypha have been with us for as long as the texts of the New Testament. Ancient literature is difficult to date precisely, but arguments have been made, particularly by North American scholars, for dating some of the Christian apocrypha to the first century. Such is the case for several “lost” Jewish-Christian gospels—the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, the *Gospel of the Nazareans* and the *Gospel of the Ebionites*—known today only through quotations from these gospels made by early church writers such as Jerome and Origen. The *Gospel of Thomas*, a collection of sayings of Jesus, may have been assembled within a few decades of Jesus’ death.

Other early apocrypha are preserved in part within the New Testament. The gospel that scholars refer to simply as Q is a hypothetical document that consists of sayings of Jesus, some of which have been included in the canonical texts of both Matthew and Luke.* However, Q itself was not accepted for inclusion in the New Testament canon. We know it only from common quotations in Matthew and Luke.

Canonical texts hint of other written sources, such as the “Signs Source” in the Gospel of John and the “Passion Narrative” incorporated into the Gospel of Mark.

By the mid-second century, the four Gospels now included in the New Testament had become widely accepted as authoritative. But many Christians

*See these articles regarding Q: Eta Linneman, “Is There a Gospel of Q?” *Bible Review*, August 1995; Stephen J. Patterson, “Yes Virginia, There Is a Q,” *Bible Review*, October 1995.



DON'T BE DECEIVED and simple-minded was the message that Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria gave regarding the non-canonical gospels. In his annual Easter letter (39th Festal Letter, c. 367 C.E.), Athanasius lists the 27 standard books of the New Testament canon. This icon of Athanasius dates to 1728 C.E. and is part of the Roger Cabal Collection.



PAUL'S PEN PAL. One of the rediscovered apocryphal texts details a conversation between the Roman philosopher Seneca and the apostle Paul. The stoic statesman Seneca, famous for his works of philosophy and drama, is also known for being forced by Roman Emperor Nero to commit suicide. The famous Spanish *purismo* artist Eduardo Rosales's original painting of Seneca philosophizing is part of a private collection

considered them incomplete accounts of the life of Jesus. Gaps left by the gospel writers were filled in with such texts as the *Birth of Mary* (sometimes referred to as the *Protevangelium of James*), containing details of Mary's conception and birth, and the *Childhood of Jesus* (more commonly known as the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*), featuring stories of Jesus performing miracles between the ages of 5 and 12. Both of these texts were extremely popular throughout the Middle Ages and can be found in

numerous manuscripts dating from the fourth to the sixteenth centuries.

Other texts recount teachings of the adult Jesus, sometimes in the form of dialogue gospels—such as the *Dialogue of the Savior* and the *Apocryphon of James*—in which Jesus appears to the apostles after the resurrection and instructs them about the origins of humanity and how to achieve salvation. These particular texts did not share the popularity of the childhood gospels; indeed, scholars did not even know they existed until recently, when fourth-century copies of the texts were found in Egypt.

Internal disagreements led to division within Christianity, with various groups coalescing around charismatic teachers, such as Valentinus (100–160 C.E.) and Marcion (85–160 C.E.). Texts became arenas of conflict between the groups; their followers composed new gospels in which early Christian figures outside of the 12 apostles vied with the other apostles over points of Christian teaching and practice. The *Gospel of Judas*, for example, portrays Judas alone as the one who understood who Jesus was and condemns the 12 for leading others astray.*

The variety was vast and included more than just gospels. Each apostle was featured in his own book of “acts” documenting his missionary efforts. And additional apocalypses and letters were composed. Paul is said to have written a third letter to the Corinthians, and there is a correspondence between Paul and the first-century Roman philosopher Seneca. There is even a correspondence between Jesus and a Syrian king named Abgar.

All of these texts (and more) circulated in the first three centuries after Jesus' crucifixion, some more widely than others, some achieving more esteem than others. But no formal decision could be made about which texts were to be considered authoritative for all Christians until after the emperor Constantine issued the Edict of Milan in 313 C.E., allowing Christianity and other religions to be practiced freely throughout the empire. A consensus then emerged in the newly institutionalized church over which texts were to be included in their New Testament. The final shape of the canon was seemingly settled by 367 C.E. when Athanasius of Alexandria issued his annual letter for Easter. This 39th Festal Letter lists the 27 books of the New Testament as we have it today.²

It is often assumed that Athanasius's letter had a devastating effect on the Christian apocrypha. Those who valued the rejected texts either hid them away or destroyed them for fear of excommunication, or

*Birger A. Pearson, “Judas Iscariot Among the Gnostics,” *BAR*, May/June 2008.

MIRACLE AND MANDYLION. Known from Eusebius's *Church History*, the correspondence between Jesus and King Abgar recounts Abgar's petition for Jesus to heal him and Jesus' response that although he cannot come to him (because he has an appointment with crucifixion), he will send an apostle to heal Abgar because of his faith. The tradition goes on to state that the apostle Thaddeus was sent to Abgar after Jesus' ascension. An even later development stated that Thaddeus not only brought Abgar a letter from Jesus, but also his facial imprint, miraculously transferred to cloth. This cloth image became known as the Mandylinion. Here (right) King Abgar holds the Mandylinion after it has been presented by Thaddeus on an eighth-century panel painting from St. Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai (the site where Codex Sinaiticus was rediscovered by Constantine Tischendorf).

worse, execution. Thereafter Christians of all nations focused their attentions entirely upon the texts of the canon.

According to this prevailing view, the Christian apocrypha were lost to history until Renaissance scholars, enamored with literature from Greek and Roman antiquity, traveled to eastern lands and returned with manuscripts of long-lost texts, which they could now disseminate widely thanks to the recent invention of the printing press.

The best-known of these travelers is Constantine Tischendorf, the German scholar who recovered the Codex Sinaiticus from St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai.** Incidentally, Codex Sinaiticus includes two works that also did not become part of the New Testament canon: the *Shepherd of Hermas* and the *Epistle of Barnabas*. Manuscripts of other apocryphal texts were found at the monastery, and Tischendorf drew upon these manuscripts for his critical editions of Christian apocrypha, editions that remain influential to this day.

Scholars naturally prefer to work with manuscripts of the texts as close to their time of origin as possible. So you can imagine their delight in finding early manuscripts in archaeological excavations. In 1886–1887, a French archaeological team digging in a cemetery in Akhmîm in Upper Egypt excavated a portion of what appears to be the *Gospel of Peter*, which recounts the trial and crucifixion of Jesus using elements from the canonical gospels as well as some never-before-seen features, along with sections of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and the Jewish pseudepigraphon 1 Enoch.

This discovery was soon followed by excavations in Oxyrhynchus, Egypt. The Oxyrhynchus papyrus

**Stanley E. Porter, "Hero or Thief? Constantine Tischendorf Turns Two Hundred," *BAR*, September/October 2015; "Who Owns the Codex Sinaiticus?" *BAR*, November/December 2007.



GIANNI DAGLI ORTI / THE ART ARCHIVE AT ART RESOURCE, NY

scraps included numerous Christian, Jewish and pagan texts.*** Three pages were found from three separate copies of the *Gospel of Thomas* dating from the late second to the third century. The *Thomas* fragments were by far the most dramatic find at Oxyrhynchus, but this ancient garbage dump also yielded fragments of several other apocryphal texts: the *Gospel of Mary*, the *Gospel of Peter*, the *Acts of*

***Stephen J. Patterson, "The Oxyrhynchus Papyri," *BAR*, March/April 2011.



COURTESY OF ST. CATHERINE'S MONASTERY

SAVED IN SINAI. According to ancient Bible hunter Constantine Tischendorf, he saved the precious Codex Sinaiticus from ending up as fire kindling during a chance encounter at St. Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai. His delight over discovering the manuscript raised the suspicions of the monks, but they allowed him to remove 43 pages of the codex for further study and return to Leipzig, Germany, with them. It took multiple petitions and several trips, but eventually Tischendorf, with the aid of the Russian government, was able to remove the majority of the manuscript, which made its way to Russia and was eventually sold to Britain. Great controversy surrounded the removal of the manuscript and Tischendorf's role in the process. Today parts of Codex Sinaiticus can be found in London, Leipzig, St. Catherine's Monastery (from a later secondary discovery) and Russia, but the complete manuscript has been placed in a virtual online museum. The significance of Codex Sinaiticus is manifold, but not least of which is the preservation of two apocryphal texts, the *Shepherd of Hermas* and the *Epistle of Barnabas*. The page on the left is one of the few that remain at the monastery in Egypt.

the *Gospel of Thomas*, the *Gospel of Philip* and the *Gospel of the Egyptians*, as well as dialogues, acts, letters and apocalypses.

The Nag Hammadi Library was a goldmine of apocryphal literature that, to some scholars, redrew the history of Christianity.⁵ It has become increasingly clear that Christianity began as a multitude of voices, each one declaring itself right and others wrong. One, led by the Roman Church, emerged as the victor. It was the Roman Church that determined the canon of the New Testament, effectively silencing contrary beliefs and casting itself as the true heir to the teachings of Jesus.

This revision of Christian history understood the Nag Hammadi Codices, and other manuscripts of apocrypha, as hidden away in order to safeguard them from confiscation by church officials looking to root out heresy. The Christian apocrypha were thus "lost" for over a thousand years. But scholars in the field are now challenging this narrative and demonstrating that the "lost gospels" were not so lost after all.⁶

First, the shape of the 27-book New Testament canon was not settled in the fourth century after all. The Bible took on different shapes in parts of the world outside of Roman influence. The Eastern Orthodox Church, centered originally in Constantinople, separated from Rome in the fifth century. Their New Testament did not include Revelation until the 10th century. Farther east, the Syrian Orthodox Church, established in 451 C.E., until recently read from a New Testament that lacked five of the 27 texts (those still debated in the fourth

John, the *Acts of Paul*, the *Acts of Peter* and several unidentified gospel narratives.³

Apocryphal works have also come into scholarly hands via the antiquities market. In 1954 the Bodmer Library in Geneva began publication of a horde of manuscripts from the third to fifth centuries, apparently discovered by peasants near the Egyptian town of Dishnâ and sold through middlemen to several European and American libraries.⁴ Among the finds were a complete Greek copy of the *Birth of Mary* and portions of the *Acts of Paul* in Greek and Coptic.

Coptic is the language also of a number of other Egyptian discoveries originating, it would seem, from ancient Christian tombs.* These include the fifth-century Berlin Codex, containing a large portion of the *Gospel of Mary*, and the recently-published Tchacos Codex from c. 300, containing the one and only copy of the *Gospel of Judas* and several other texts.

The most famous discovery of Christian apocrypha is the Nag Hammadi Codices, a cache of over 50 texts discovered by Bedouin in 1945 in a mountainous area dotted with caves near the town of Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt.** The 13 codices contain 14 apocryphal texts, including a complete copy of

*Leo Depuydt, "Coptic: Egypt's Christian Language," *BAR*, November/December 2015.

**Charles W. Hedrick, "Liberator of the Nag Hammadi Codices," *BAR*, July/August 2016.



ONE PERSON'S TRASH is another person's amazing archaeological discovery. While excavating a garbage dump in Oxyrhynchus, Egypt, archaeologists discovered a cache of apocryphal texts, including three partial copies of the *Gospel of Thomas*, the *Gospel of Mary* (depicted above), the *Gospel of Peter*, the *Acts of John*, the *Acts of Paul*, the *Acts of Peter* and other as-yet-unidentified gospels.

century: 2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John, Jude and Revelation) and once included 3 Corinthians. So enamored was Syrian Christianity with apocryphal texts that monasteries throughout Turkey and Iraq have become a major source for manuscripts of Christian apocrypha.

Still farther east, the Bible of the Armenian Church included 3 Corinthians and the *Martyrdom of John*. And the Bible of the Ethiopian Church today includes not only additional Old Testament texts, including Enoch and Jubilees, but a New Testament canon with several texts related to church organization and practice along with the *Book of the Covenant*, the *Book of the Rolls* and others.

In sum, what constitutes the canon of the New Testament has varied over time and space. The line between canonical and non-canonical texts has often been blurry, and texts we believed “lost” were not lost to everyone.

Second, even after efforts to settle the New Testament canon in the fourth century, writers in the church continued to create entirely new apocryphal texts. After Constantine's triumph, the once-outlawed religion now had to construct churches, inaugurate festivals and enshrine its heroes. From its beginnings, Christianity was a religion of texts, of story, and in this new environment they used story again for “inventing” Christianity.⁷ New apocryphal acts were written, such as the *Acts of the Centurion*



DISCOVERED NEAR NAG HAMMADI, Egypt, in 1945, the codices equaled a treasure trove of apocryphal literature. Over 50 texts were uncovered, from dialogues to letters to apocalypses. One of the most significant finds was a complete copy of the *Gospel of Thomas*, a page of which is depicted above.

Cornelius and the *Acts of Titus*,⁸ each telling the life of the saint using a combination of canonical and non-canonical traditions and ending with a story of the discovery and internment of the saint's relics in his or her very own church.

The Coptic Church was particularly effective in composing such texts. A veritable cottage-industry of writings—known in scholarship as “pseudo-apostolic memoirs”—were created to institute feast days for early Christian saints.⁹

The Western Church worked at compiling and translating Greek texts for Latin readers, such as the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew*, which combines the birth of Mary with additional stories of the holy family in Egypt, and the Greek *Acts of Pilate*, which was

CONTINUES ON PAGE 64

Babylonian Exile

continued from page 54

² A.K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), p. 102.

³ E. Weidner, "Jojachin, König von Juda, in babylonischen Keilschrifttexten," in *Mélanges syriens offerts à M. René Dussaud* (Paris: Paul Geunther, 1939), pp. 923–935.

⁴ David Vanderhooft, *The Neo-Babylonian Empire and Babylon in the Latter Prophets* (Harvard Semitic Monographs 59; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), pp. 149–152.

⁵ Now housed in the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, the Museum of the Ancient Orient at the Istanbul Archaeological Museums in Istanbul, the Frau Professor Hilprecht Collection of Babylonian Antiquities at the University of Jena in Germany, The Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, and the British Museum, London.

⁶ F. Joannès and A. Lemaire, "Trois tablettes cunéiformes à l'onomastique ouest-sémitique," *Transeuphratène* 17 (1999), pp. 17–34.

⁷ Pearce and Wunsch, *Documents*, p. 28; Cornelia Wunsch, with collaboration of Laurie Pearce, *Judeans by the Waters of Babylon. New Historical Evidence in Cuneiform Sources from Rural Babylonia in the Schøyen Collection*, *Babylonische Archive* 6 (Dresden:

ISLET, forthcoming).

⁸ Pearce & Wunsch, *Documents*, p. 28; Wunsch, *Judeans*.

⁹ R. Zadok, "The Nippur Region During the Late Assyrian, Chaldean and Achaemenian Periods Chiefly According to Written Sources," *Israel Oriental Studies* 8 (1978); I. Eph'al, "The Western Minorities in Babylonia in the 6th–5th Centuries B.C.: Maintenance and Cohesion," *Orientalia* 47 (1978), pp. 74–90.

¹⁰ There is no cuneiform evidence of such a proclamation in the reign of Cyrus or of any other Achaemenid king. Claims that the Cyrus Cylinder [BM 90920+NBC 2504] does so are unfounded. As a typical building inscription, the barrel-shaped document touts the work authorized by Cyrus for the restoration of ancient shrines in the eastern and northern regions of Mesopotamia. For a recent translation, and a discussion of the place of the Cyrus Cylinder in the historiographic program of the Achaemenid empire, see P. Michalowski, "The Cyrus Cylinder," in M. Chavalas, ed., *Historical Sources in Translation: The Ancient Near East* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 426–430. For an important, earlier study on the programmatic nature of the cylinder, see A. Kuhrt, "The Cyrus Cylinder and Achaemenid Imperial Policy," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 25 (1983), pp. 83–97.

Lost Gospels

continued from page 47

repurposed and expanded as the *Gospel of Nicodemus*. Both Nicodemus and Pseudo-Matthew were widely copied in the West, and elements of their stories appear in art, literature and theater throughout the medieval period.

Not everyone in the churches valued the new texts, and certainly none of them was esteemed highly enough to become canonical, but they demonstrate that even after the formation of the canon, writers within the church were willing to create apocryphal texts—in effect, to create forgeries—when it suited their needs.

Third, if the churches were willing to write apocrypha and sometimes incorporate them in their liturgies, then it can hardly be true that they were vigorous in their efforts to suppress apocryphal texts, even particularly heretical texts. Recent re-evaluations of the story of the

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discovery of the Nag Hammadi Library suggest that the codices were not hidden in order to safeguard them from confiscation after all.¹⁰ The Bedouin who found the codices claimed to have discovered them in a large jar while digging for fertilizer, but there is good reason to believe they invented the story as a cover for grave robbery. Like the Akhmîm Codex, and the Berlin and Tchacos codices, the Nag Hammadi Codices were probably buried with the monks or collectors who valued them; likely they read (or heard) the standard texts of the Bible, just as everyone else, but saw something of value also in these non-canonical texts despite the occasional call for their destruction.

The canon of the New Testament has not been stagnant, as demonstrated by the Christian apocrypha. Whether a text is canonical or non-canonical has not always been clear, and the so-called “lost” texts were not lost to all. We are also aware that the modern interest in Christian apocrypha, occasioned in part by the attention paid to Dan Brown’s 2004 novel *The Da Vinci Code*, is far from new; Christians today read texts outside of the canon for the same reasons as their forebears: because the New Testament does not satisfy their needs for knowledge about the origins of Christianity nor for answers to all of their metaphysical and theological questions. The notion that “lost gospels” have been rediscovered makes for fascinating reading, but the history of the composition and transmission of the Christian apocrypha is far more complex than is usually told. Far from lost, these texts have always been with us and will be there whenever they are needed. ☞

¹ For an accessible collection of the early (first–fourth-century) texts discussed in this article, see Bart D. Ehrman, *Lost Scriptures: Books That Did Not Make It into the New Testament* (Oxford and New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2003). Late-antique and medieval apocrypha receive far less attention, but the forthcoming collection edited by Tony Burke and Brent Landau (*New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans]) is a step toward remedying this problem. For a comprehensive overview of the primary and secondary

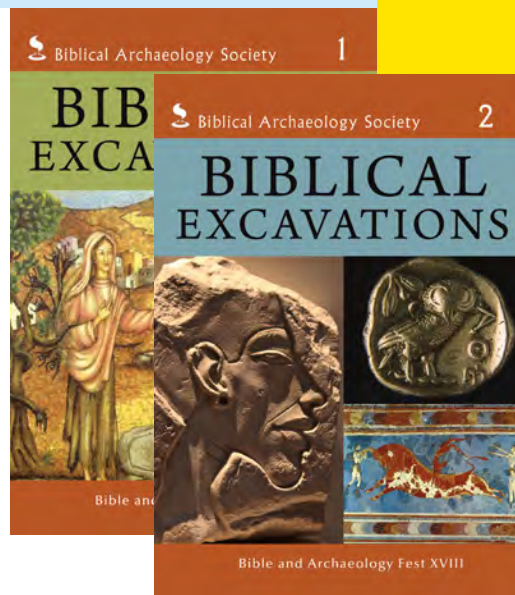
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literature, see the two volumes by Hans-Josef Klauck (*Apocryphal Gospels: An Introduction*, Brian McNeil, trans. [London and New York: T&T Clark, 2003] and *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction*, Brian McNeil, trans. [Waco, TX: Baylor Univ. Press, 2008]) or the shorter treatment by Tony Burke (*Secret Scriptures Revealed: A New Introduction to the Christian Apocrypha* [London: SPCK and Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013]).

² For further details about the formation of the canon, as well as challenges to the notion of the settling of the canon in the fourth century, see the work of Lee Martin McDonald, including *The Biblical Canon: Its Origin, Transmission, and Authority*, 3rd ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007) and *The Formation of the Bible: The Story of the Church's Canon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2012).

³ The Oxyrhynchus and other early apocrypha manuscripts are available, with photographs, in Thomas A. Wayment, *The Text of the New Testament Apocrypha (100–400 C.E.)* (New York and London: Bloomsbury, 2013).

⁴ See James Robinson, *The Story of the Bodmer Papyri* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2011).

⁵ Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels* (New

York: Vintage Books, 1979) was an early and prominent voice in this discussion.

⁶ This re-evaluation has been brought to wider attention lately by Philip Jenkins in *The Many Faces of Christ: The Thousand-Year Story of the Survival and Influence of the Lost Gospels* (New York: Basic Books, 2015).

⁷ Paul C. Dilley examines this phenomenon particularly for the Western church in “The Invention of Christian Tradition: ‘Apocrypha,’ Imperial Policy, and Anti-Jewish Propaganda,” *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 50 (2010), pp. 586–615. Interest in this area of study has led to the creation of a new series from Penn State University Press called *Inventing Christianity*, edited by L. Stephanie Cobb and David L. Eastman.

⁸ These two texts will appear in Burke and Landau, *New Testament Apocrypha*.

⁹ Alin Suciu has become an expert on this literature. His Ph.D. dissertation, *Apocryphon Berolinense/Argentoratense (Previously Known as the Gospel of the Savior). Reedition of P. Berol. 22220, Strasbourg Copte 5–7 and Qasr el-Wizz Codex ff. 12v–17r with Introduction and Commentary* (Université Laval, 2013), includes a comprehensive survey of all the pseudo-apostolic memoirs (see pp.

75–91). The thesis will soon be published in E.J. Brill’s series Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae.

¹⁰ See Nicola Denzey Lewis and Justine Ariel Blount, “Rethinking the Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 133 (2014), pp. 399–419 and Mark Goodacre, “How Reliable Is the Story of the Nag Hammadi Discovery?” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 35 (2013), pp. 303–322.

Q&C

continued from page 10

full of dishes waiting to be washed, and my health was even endangered as I was so wrapped up in the DVD that I forgot to catch my transportation to the grocery store.

I recently had my 86th birthday. Mr. Shanks, I believe we were born in the same year, 1930, which must have been a vintage year.

HERBERT H. BECKWITH
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Pastor Won't Renew

I am not renewing our church's subscription to **BAR**. We all want to go where true archaeology leads us and let the findings be what they are, but when people start sharing their opinions about the Bible without evidence, it becomes too much to take. What evidence proves that Eve was taken from Adam's penis (“Creating Woman,” **BAR**, March/April 2016)? I have learned that you can always find someone somewhere who is willing to say, “This Hebrew word means this or that,” without any proof!

REV. TOM BUTLER
RESERVOIR BIBLE CHURCH
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CORRECTION

Photo Credit

The photographs of the jug and silver hoard in Archaeological Views: “A Silver Lining at Abel Beth Maacah” (**BAR**, July/August 2016) should have been credited to archaeological photographer Gabi Laron. Additionally, Hazor is located 30 kilometers (18.6 mi) south of Abel Beth Maacah, not 30 miles.

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