

THE GNOSTIC BIBLE is by far the most comprehensive compilation of gnostic texts ever published - and the first aimed at rendering the texts in poetic, readable prose. The gnostics were religious thinkers engaged in the quest for wisdom and knowledge, and they proclaimed a salvation to be found through mystical knoweldge and intuition. As the Gospel of Thomas puts it, "Know whatis in front of your face and what is hidden from you will be disclosed. There is nothing hidden from you that will not be revealed." Dating from the first to the thirteen centuries, these gnostic texts represent Jewish, Chritian, Hemetic, Mandaean, Manichaeen, Islamic and Cathar forms of gnostic spirituality, and they derive from Egypt, the Greco-Roman world, the Middle East, Syria, Iraq, China, France and elsewhere. These texts show that gnosticism was a world religion that sought truths in a wide variety of religious traditions and expressed those truths in powerful and provocative mystical poetry and prose. The impact of gnosticism upon other religions of the world was considerable, and the influence of gnosticism continues to the present day. This volume represents the first time that such a diverse collection of gnostic texts is published in a single volume and some of the texts are translated into English for the first time here. The texts are accompanied bu introductions and notes and additional study aids describe gnosticism, elucidate gnostic terms and suggest further readings.

Discusses the concepts of original sin and the historical meaning of Christianity.

Explores the New Testament book of Revelation in a historical first-century context, reinterpreting the book as a scathing attack on the decadence of Rome that was subsequently adopted by early Christians as a weapon against heresy.

Gnostic Trends in the Local Church lays out the basic tenets of ancient and modern Gnosticism. Though there are various authors who have written about Gnosticism over the past two decades, many of them deal with New Age teaching, or in a more limited manner, to answer the momentary surge of The Da Vinci Code and the Gospel of Judas. Instead of going in those directions, Gnostic Trends in the Local Church focuses on the more likely place one will meet Gnosticism: in their own home congregation. Michael W. Philliber shows what the trends look like within a congregation and offers ways to remedy them, while abstaining from alarmism. This is an important book for pastors and other congregational leaders for providing them with tools (modern, ancient, and biblical) that will help them guide their people more firmly into the historic Christian faith.

This new collection of fourteen integrated, original essays by prominent scholars and experienced teachers provides a comprehensive and accessible entree to current research on women and the origins of Christianity. Engaging for both the interested reader and the specialist in religion, Women and Christian Origins is sensitive to feminist theory and attentive to distinctions between the (re)construction of women's history in early Christian churches and ancient constructions of gender difference

A study of the Gnostic texts, which describe the same people and events portrayed in the New Testament but from a different perspective, reveals why their suppression was essential to the development of the Christian church

Evaluates the meaning of the controversial, newly-discovered Gospel of Judas, illustrating how the text offers an understanding of Judas's betrayal, the apostles' understanding of Jesus's death, and God's role in the crucifixion.

This book demonstrates that ancient Christian Gnosticism was an ancient form of cultural criticism in a mythological garb. It establishes that, much like modern forms of critical theory, including the Frankfurt School and queer theory, ancient Gnosticism was set on deconstructing mainstream discourses and cultural premises.

A study of the role of the devil in biblical and modern times theorizes that dissident social gorups that resisted Christianity, such as pagans and Jews, were typically portrayed as demons and therefore established as threats. Reprint. 60,000 first printing.

This study applies the reading strategies associated with Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault to the four Gospels and Paul. The result avoids jargon and obfuscation while bringing traditional questions about these texts to a new level of clarity and sharpness.

This volume gathers contributions from both junior and senior scholars whose studies have developed in dialogue with Elaine Pagels' work on Nag Hammadi literature and ancient heresiology. Published initially in 1979, Pagels' The Gnostic Gospels represents a landmark of scholarship in religious studies. It not only made the Nag Hammadi writings and Gnosticism popular topics in modern culture, it also invited scholars to rethink early Christianity from new perspectives. What were previously seen as dry theological arguments and intricate Gnostic mythologies received new interpretations in the Gnostic Gospels as echoes of political debates about orthodoxy and heresy, clerical authority, martyrdom and gender. After The Gnostic Gospels, Elaine Pagels extended her research in various directions, from perceptions of sexuality in early Christianity and identity politics in the Christian creation of the "Satan figure" to ancient biblical interpretations, ritual in Nag Hammadi texts, and, recently, the Gospel of Judas and ancient apocalypses. The studies included in this volume engage each stage of Pagels' vast trajectory, and provide critical evaluations of the field of "Gnosticism studies" as it has developed over the past four decades, in the subfields of the "Sethian" and "Valentinian" schools, and beyond. The studies include new interpretations of the Nag Hammadi texts and fresh analyses of ancient heresiological literature. A study on the role of the devil in biblical and modern times theorizes that dissident social groups that resisted Christianity, such as Jews and Pagans, were typically portrayed as demons and therefore established as threats. 35,000 first printing.

In this monograph, Carl Johan Berglund reassesses Origen's references to the second-century philologist Heracleon, without presuming that Heracleon's exegesis is determined by views described in heresiological sources or that every reference is equivalent to a verbatim quotation. The author uses variations in Origen's attribution formulas to categorize almost two hundred references as either verbatim quotations, summaries, explanatory paraphrases, or mere assertions. Heracleon's views are assessed by considering the over fifty quotations and seventy summaries so identified in a context of literature to which Heracleon refers - John, a gospel similar to Matthew's, a collection of Pauline epistles, and the Preaching of Peter. The author concludes that Origen is likely to have inferred views he knew from his exegetical opponents (the heterodox and "those who bring in the natures") that were never expressed by Heracleon.

The Gnostic GospelsVintage

Focusing on dialogue gospels and the 'Gospel of Mary', this book highlights the complexity and diversity of early Christian literature.

Debunks the claims that recently discovered texts such as the Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of Mary undermine the historical validity of the New Testament.

Certain theological issues aroused controversy that divided different Valentinian teachers and distinguished their schools from one another. I have limited the scope here to sketch out patterns that seem to be consistent and fundamental to Valentinian exegesis in general. - Preface.

In this work Jobling argues that religious sensibility in the Western world is in a process of transformation, but that we see here change, not decline, and that the production and consumption of the fantastic in popular culture offers an illuminating window onto spiritual trends and conditions. She examines four major examples of the fantastic genre: the Harry Potter series (Rowling), His Dark Materials (Pullman), Buffy the Vampire Slayer (Whedon) and the Earthsea cycle (Le Guin), demonstrating that the spiritual universes of these four iconic examples of the fantastic are actually marked by profoundly modernistic assumptions, raising the question of just how contemporary spiritualities (often deemed postmodern) navigate philosophically the waters of truth, morality, authority, selfhood and the divine. Jobling tackles what she sees as a misplaced disregard for the significance of the fantasy genre as a worthy object for academic investigation by offering a full-length, thematic, comparative and cross-disciplinary study of the four case-studies proposed, chosen because of their significance to the field and because these books have all been posited as exemplars of a 'postmodern' religious sensibility. This work shows how attentiveness to spiritual themes in cultural icons can offer the student of theology and religions insight into the framing of the moral and religious imagination in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries and how this can prompt traditional religions to reflect on whether their own narratives are culturally framed in a way resonating with the 'signs of the times'.

The Gospel of Judas: On a Night with Judas Iscariot presents a fresh translation of the Gospel of Judas, with introduction, commentary, and notes. Originally published with considerable international fanfare in 2006, the Gospel of Judas has prompted a vibrant discussion among scholars and other interested readers about the meaning of the text and the place of Judas Iscariot in the story of Jesus and the history of the church. Meyer, a member of the original research team assembled by the National Geographic Society to edit, translate, and publish the Gospel of Judas and the remaining texts in what is now called Codex Tchacos, here offers an up-to-date and thoroughly accessible translation of the Gospel of Judas, expanded with new fragments of the text and informed by the latest scholarship. He adds reminiscences of the work on the Coptic text when it first was coming to light in 2005 and 2006. This book also includes reflections on the extensive literature, beyond the Gospel of Judas, on the figure of Judas Iscariot, with suggestions for a literary interpretation of Judas--an interpretation that may have a dramatic impact upon our understanding of the role of Judas Iscariot in the story of Jesus's passion. An examination of ordained women and those that failed to achieve ordination exposes the sexism, both subtle and overt, that women face on their path to ministry and suggests ways in which the church can overcome this inequality.

Valentinianism: New Studies offers fresh contributions by leading experts on the history of the Valentinian "Gnostic" church, on contested aspects of Valentinian doctrine, and on the use and interpretation of the New Testament by the Valentinians.

The Gospels of the Marginalized provides an exciting new study of three of the most maligned figures in the New Testament story of Jesus: Thomas, usually considered the quintessential doubter among the disciples; Mary Magdalene, characterized as a repentant prostitute during much of the history of the church; and Judas Iscariot, presented as the despicable disciple of Jesus who betrayed his master for money. In this book Marvin Meyer, one of the most prominent of the scholars of gnostic texts and other early Christian literature, offers fresh and accurate translations of the Gospels of Thomas, Mary, and Judas, with their proclamation of the good news of the wisdom of Jesus, and he uses these gospels as the occasion to reexamine the place of Thomas, Mary Magdalene, and Judas Iscariot in the Jesus movement. His striking analysis suggests that Thomas was no doubter, that Mary Magdalene was a beloved disciple in the inner circles of disciples around Jesus, and that the tale of Judas Iscariot as betrayer of Jesus is a piece of fiction. Meyer adds a "Gospel of the Redeemed" as a vivid illustration of how the gospel story of Jesus might read with Jesus as a Jewish teacher of wisdom and Thomas, Mary, and Judas restored as loyal followers of the teacher from Nazareth.

In this study, Anne Jensen provides an exhaustive account of the many roles that women played in the early church and their subsequent marginalization by the later church. This book is required reading for anyone interested in the history of the church and its impact on the lives of women throughout the ages.

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