

NOTES FOR *FABRICATING JESUS*

Chapter 1: Misplaced Faith and Misguided Suspicion: Old and New School Skeptics

¹FOR THE QUOTATION FROM FUNK: See Robert W. Funk, *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996), pp. 4-5. The title of Funk's book recalls the title of Bishop John Robinson's *Honest to God* (London: SCM Press, 1963).

²FOR THE QUOTATIONS FROM ROBINSON: James M. Robinson, "Theological Autobiography," in *The Craft of Religious Studies*, ed. Jon R. Stone (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's, 1998), pp. 117, 121, 145; reprinted in James M. Robinson, *The Sayings Gospel Q: Collected Essays*, BETL 189 (Leuven: Peeters and Leuven University Press, 2005), pp. 3, 7, 31.

³ON ROBINSON'S ASSESSMENT OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS: See James M. Robinson, *The Gospel of Jesus: In Search of the Original Good News* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2005).

⁴BOOKS BY ROBERT PRICE: Robert M. Price, *Deconstructing Jesus* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2000); *The Incredible Shrinking Son of Man: How Reliable Is the Gospel Tradition?* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2003).

⁵ON EHRMAN'S VIEWS OF SCRIPTURE: See Bart D. Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005), pp. 5, 11, 12. See also the discussion on pp. 210-12. For an earlier, more learned version of this book, see Bart D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

⁶FOR A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF BART EHRMAN'S INTERPRETATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE: See J. Ed Komoszewski, M. James Sawyer and Daniel B. Wallace, *Reinventing Jesus: What the Da Vinci Code and Other Speculations Don't Tell You* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006).

⁷ON NOT RESTING ON THE FAITH OF PETER AND THE FAITH OF PAUL: See Funk, *Honest to Jesus*, p. 304.

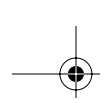
⁸ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN WITNESSES: See Richard J. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006).

Chapter 2: Cramped Starting Points and Overly Strict Methods:

The Question of Authenticity

¹ON THE MINIMALIST RESULTS OF THE JESUS SEMINAR: See Robert W. Funk and Roy W. Hoover, eds., *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge; New York: Macmillan, 1993); Robert W. Funk, ed., *The Acts of Jesus: What Did Jesus Really Do? The Search for the Authentic Deeds of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1998). The Seminar caught the attention of the press with its system of color-coding the sayings of Jesus in the fol-





lowing manner: red = something Jesus said; pink = something approximating what Jesus said; gray = doubt that Jesus said it; black = something that Jesus very probably or definitely did not say.

²FOR RECENT PUBLICATIONS ARGUING THAT JESUS WAS ILLITERATE: See Funk and Hoover, *Five Gospels*, p. 27; John Dominic Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994), p. 25; Robert W. Funk, *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996), p. 158; Pieter F. Craffert and Pieter J. J. Botha, "Why Jesus Could Walk on the Sea but He Could Not Read and Write," *Neot* 39 (2005): 5-35.

³FOR RECENT PUBLICATIONS ARGUING THAT JESUS WAS LITERATE: See Rainer Riesner, *Jesus als Lehrer: Eine Untersuchung zum Ursprung der Evangelien-Überlieferung*, WUNT 2.7, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), p. 227; Craig A. Evans, "Context, Family and Formation," in *The Cambridge Companion to Jesus*, Cambridge Companions to Religion, ed. Markus Bockmuehl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 11-24; Paul Foster, "Educating Jesus: The Search for a Plausible Context," *JSHJ* 4 (2006): 7-33. Foster's study shows mastery of the relevant primary and secondary literature and is argued with precision and nuance.

⁴ON JOHN 7:53-8:11: Most Bibles recognize that this passage was probably not original to John's Gospel. For example, prior to John 7:53, the NIV says, "The earliest and most reliable manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not have John 7:53-8:11," and NASB says, "John 7:53-8:11 is not found in most of the old mss."

⁵ON LITERACY IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND ISRAEL IN LATE ANTIQUITY: See William V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), who concludes that literacy rates were very low; and Alan R. Millard, *Reading and Writing in the Time of Jesus* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), who concludes that literacy rates were higher, especially among Jewish men.

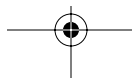
⁶ON THE TERMINOLOGY OF "TEACHER" AND "DISCIPLE": For examples of "rabbi" see Mk 9:5; 11:21; 14:45. For examples of "rabbouni" see Mk 10:51; Jn 20:16. For examples of "teacher" see Mt 8:19; 9:11; 12:38; Mk 4:38; 5:35; 9:17; 10:17, 20; 12:14, 19, 32; Lk 19:39; Jn 1:38; 3:2. For examples of "disciples" see Mk 2:15, 16, 18, 23; 3:7, 9; 4:34; 5:31; Lk 6:20; 10:23; 12:22; 14:26, 27 (all with parallels in Matthew).

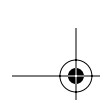
⁷ON JESUS' USE OF SCRIPTURE: See the helpful tabulation in R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament: His Application of Old Testament Passages to Himself and His Mission* (London: Tyndale, 1971), pp. 259-63. For a more recent investigation, see Bruce D. Chilton and Craig A. Evans, "Jesus and Israel's Scriptures," in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research*, NTTs 19, ed. B. D. Chilton and C. A. Evans (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 281-335.

⁸THE PROPHETS AND WRITINGS QUOTED OR ALLUDED TO BY JESUS: *Prophets*: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Jonah, Micah, Zephaniah, Zechariah and Malachi. *Omitted* are Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Haggai. *Writings*: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Daniel and Chronicles. *Omitted* are Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezra and Nehemiah.

⁹ON JESUS' "CANON" OF SCRIPTURE: See Craig A. Evans, "The Scriptures of Jesus and His Earliest Followers," in *The Canon Debate*, ed. Lee Martin McDonald and James A. Sanders (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2002), pp. 185-95.

¹⁰QUOTATIONS OF SCRIPTURE IN THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS: In the nonbiblical scrolls of Qumran and the region of the Dead Sea, the book of Deuteronomy is quoted some 22 times, Isaiah





some 35 times, and the Psalter some 31 times. See James C. VanderKam, "Authoritative Literature in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 5 (1998): 382-402; idem, "Question of Canon Viewed through the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Canon Debate*, ed. Lee Martin McDonald and James A. Sanders (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2002), pp. 91-109.

¹¹ON THE JESUS SEMINAR'S UNDERSTANDING OF ESCHATOLOGY AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD: See Burton L. Mack, "The Kingdom Sayings in Mark," *Forum* 3 (1987): 3-47; James R. Butts, "Probing the Poll: Jesus Seminar Results on the Kingdom Sayings," *Forum* 3 (1987): 98-128. Butts asserts, "For Jesus, the kingdom of God was *not* an eschatological nor an apocalyptic phenomenon" (*ibid.*, p. 112). This, of course, is quite mistaken and rests on an egregious misunderstanding of eschatology and the kingdom of God. Mack's attempt to interpret the expression "kingdom of God" without reference to Hebrew and Aramaic sources is especially misleading.

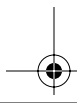
¹²ON THE VIEWS OF BORG AND CROSSAN: See Marcus J. Borg, *Conflict, Holiness, and Politics in the Teachings of Jesus* (1984; reprint, Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 1998); idem, "A Temperate Case for a Non-Eschatological Jesus," *Forum* 2 (1986): 81-102; John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: Harper-Collins, 1991).

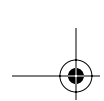
¹³ON THE JESUS SEMINAR'S PROFOUND MISUNDERSTANDING OF ESCHATOLOGY AND THE MEANING OF THE EXPRESSION "KINGDOM OF GOD": See Bruce Chilton, "The Kingdom of God in Recent Discussion," in *Studying the Historical Jesus*, NTTS 19, ed. Bruce D. Chilton and Craig A. Evans (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 255-80.

¹⁴ON JESUS AS THE SON OF MAN FIGURE IN DANIEL 7: Here again the Jesus Seminar is confused. Not only does the Seminar translate "son of man" (Greek: *ho huios tou anthropou*) as "son of Adam," which is anything but clarifying, the Seminar denies that the historical Jesus was alluding to Daniel 7. Jesus' consistent reference to the "son of man" as "*the* Son of Man" indicates that he has in mind a specific figure. The only figure that will serve is the figure of Daniel 7. When this is recognized, many important features in Jesus' teaching and activities fall into place.

¹⁵FOR ASSESSMENTS OF THE CRITERIA OF AUTHENTICITY: See Craig A. Evans, "Authenticity Criteria in Life of Jesus Research," *Christian Scholars Review* 19 (1989): 6-13; John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 1: *The Roots of the Problem and the Person*, ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1991), pp. 167-95.

¹⁶ON THE MISAPPLICATION OF THE CRITERION OF DISSIMILARITY: Long ago in a doctoral seminar on the historical Jesus I questioned the historical validity of "double dissimilarity" as a criterion of authenticity. James Robinson, who was leading the seminar, responded that the criterion was necessary to rule out sayings that may have originated in either Jewish or Christian circles. I found this puzzling. This thinking was greatly at odds with my studies in history (in which I had majored). Eventually I learned that many scholars engaged in the study of the historical Jesus have studied Bible and theology, but not history. These Jesus scholars *are not historians at all*. This lack of training is apparent in the odd presuppositions, methods and conclusions that are reached. I dare say that if all New Testament scholars were properly trained in history, there would have been no need to write this book.





Chapter 3: Questionable Texts—Part I: *The Gospel of Thomas*

¹ON THE USE OF EXTRACANONICAL SOURCES FOR NEW TESTAMENT INTERPRETATION: See Craig A. Evans, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies: A Guide to the Background Literature* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2005); and Darrell L. Bock and Gregory J. Herrick, *Jesus in Context: Background Readings for Gospel Study* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005). On the contribution of the Dead Sea Scrolls to New Testament interpretation, see John J. Collins and Craig A. Evans, eds., *Christian Beginnings and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, *Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006).

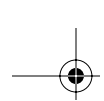
²ON ISSUES OF DATING CANONICAL AND EXTRACANONICAL SOURCES: See Donald Harman Akenson, *Saint Paul: A Skeleton Key to the Historical Jesus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 89-94. Akenson, professor of history at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, insightfully exposes this dubious procedure. With reference to members of the Jesus Seminar and its friends and allies Akenson states, "This is particularly true of those who keep declaring that this-or-that previously-unappreciated second- or third-century 'Gospel' is pre-70 and thus, unlike the New Testament, provides a direct entry into the world that (Jesus) lived in" (p. 89). See also the perceptive comments by Philip Jenkins, distinguished professor of history and religious studies at Pennsylvania State University, in *Hidden Gospels: How the Search for Jesus Lost Its Way* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 90-106.

³ON PRIVILEGING EXTRACANONICAL SOURCES: D. Moody Smith, retired George Washington Ivey Professor of New Testament at Duke Divinity School said, "I think it is not unfair to suggest that we are seeing now a willingness or propensity to credit the independence and antiquity of the apocryphal Gospels that is somewhat surprising in view of what is allowed in the case of the canonicals" ("The Problem of John and the Synoptics in Light of the Relation Between Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels," in *John and the Synoptics*, BETL 101, ed. Adelbert Denaux [Leuven: Peeters and Leuven University Press, 1992], p. 151). One should recall the opinion of Rudolf Bultmann, a pioneer of Gospel form criticism and no conservative in Gospel criticism, who regarded the extracanonical Gospels as nothing more than "legendary adaptations and expansions" (*The History of the Synoptic Tradition* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1968], p. 374).

⁴ON THE RESULTS OF THE JESUS SEMINAR: See Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge; New York: Macmillan, 1993). The Jesus Seminar became notorious for "color-coding" the Jesus tradition. Words thought to derive, accurately, from Jesus are printed in red; words approximating Jesus' statements are printed in pink; doubtful words are printed in gray; words felt not to derive from Jesus are printed in black. Only 18 percent of the words attributed to Jesus in the New Testament Gospels are given red or pink ratings. See also Robert W. Funk, ed., *The Acts of Jesus: What Did Jesus Really Do? The Search for the Authentic Deeds of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1998). The Seminar's results here are similar to their earlier results. For further discussion of the Jesus Seminar, see app. 3.

⁵THE HISTORICAL JESUS BOOKS BY CROSSAN AND MEIER: John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991); John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1991). Meier's is the first of four volumes. The first volume deals with sources and historical context. The second and third volumes deal with the life and ministry of Jesus. The fourth volume is





still in preparation. Crossan has written a more popular version in *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994).

⁶ON MEIER'S ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTRACANONICAL SOURCES: See Meier, *Marginal Jew*, pp. 140-41 (full assessment, pp. 112-66).

⁷ON HELMUT KOESTER'S ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTRACANONICAL SOURCES: See Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 2: *History and Literature of Early Christianity* (New York: de Gruyter, 1982), p. 13; and Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990). Koester believes that some of the extracanonical sources do indeed contain traditions that can be traced back to the very origins of Christianity.

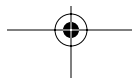
⁸ON REFERENCES TO THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS IN EARLY CHURCH FATHERS: See Hippolytus, *De Haeresibus* 5.7.20; Origen, *Homiliae In Lucam* 1.5.13-14; Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew*, prologue; and Ambrose, *Expositio evangelii Lucae* 1.2.10.

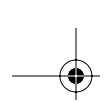
⁹ON BEING PROPERLY ATTIRED IN GNOSTIC THOUGHT: See *Gospel of Thomas* 21 ("They will undress in their presence"); *The Dialogue of the Savior* 51-52 ("the garments of life"); *Manichaean Psalm Book* 54.19-30 ("they wore me as a garment upon them").

¹⁰SCHOLARS WHO BELIEVE THAT THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS CONTAINS PRIMITIVE, PRE-SYNOPTIC TRADITION: Gilles Quispel, "The Gospel of Thomas and the New Testament," *VC* 11 (1957) 189-207; Helmut Koester, "Q and Its Relatives," in *Gospel Origins & Christian Beginnings*, ed. James E. Goehring et al., (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1990), pp. 49-63; R. D. Cameron, "The Gospel of Thomas: A Forschungsbericht and Analysis," *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1988): 4195-251. Stevan L. Davies makes the astonishing claim that the *Gospel of Thomas* "may be our best source for Jesus's teachings" ("Thomas: The Fourth Synoptic Gospel," *BA* 46 [1983]: 9; see also Stevan L. Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom* [New York: Seabury, 1983]. Davies dismisses too quickly the possible Gnostic orientation of many of the sayings; it is surely inaccurate to report that scholars have concluded that the *Gospel of Thomas* is Gnostic only because it was found among Gnostic documents (my emphasis). Most scholars are persuaded that the *Gospel of Thomas* is Gnostic in its final form, though to what degree is debated.

¹¹FOR A SYNOPSIS OF PARALLELS BETWEEN THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS AND THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS: See Craig A. Evans, Robert L. Webb and Richard A. Wiebe, *Nag Hammadi Texts and the Bible: A Synopsis and Index* NTTS 18 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), pp. 88-144. Scholars who think *Thomas* is dependent on the New Testament writings include Craig L. Blomberg, "Tradition and Redaction in the Parables of the Gospel of Thomas," in *The Jesus Tradition Outside the Gospels*, *Gospel Perspectives* 5, ed. David Wenham (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), pp. 177-205; Raymond E. Brown, "The Gospel of Thomas and St John's Gospel," *NTS* 9 (1962-1963): 155-77; Boudewijn Dehandschutter, "L'évangile de Thomas comme collection de paroles de Jésus," in *Logia. Les Paroles de Jésus—The Sayings of Jesus*, BETL 59, ed. Joel Delobel et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 1982), pp. 507-15; Joel Delobel, "Recent Research on the Gospel of Thomas," in *The Four Gospels, 1992: Frans Neiryck Festschrift*, BETL 100, ed. Frans van Segbroeck et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), pp. 2257-62; Michael Fieger, *Das Thomasevangelium: Einleitung, Kommentar und Systematik*, NTAbh 22 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1991).

¹²SEVERAL SCHOLARS HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS DRAWS UPON THE NEW TESTAMENT GOSPELS: See Robert M. Grant, *The Secret Sayings of Jesus* (Garden City, N.Y.: Double-





day, 1960), p. 113; B. Gärtner, *The Theology of the Gospel According to Thomas* (New York: Harper, 1961), pp. 26-27, 34, 42-43; E. Haenchen, *Die Botschaft des Thomas-Evangeliums* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1961), pp. 67-68; R. Kasser, *L'Évangile selon Thomas: Présentation et commentaire théologique* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1961); Ménard, *L'Évangile selon Thomas*; A. Lindemann, "Zur Gleichnis-interpretation im Thomas-Evangelium," *ZNW* 71 (1980): 214-43; W. Schrage, *Das Verhältnis des Thomas-Evangeliums zur synoptischen Tradition und zu den koptischen Evangelienübersetzungen*, BZNW 29 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1964), pp. 1-11. Similar conclusions have been reached by H. K. McArthur, "The Dependence of the Gospel of Thomas on the Synoptics," *ExpT* 71 (1959-1960): 286-87; W. R. Schoedel, "Parables in the Gospel of Thomas," *CTM* 43 (1972) 548-60; K. R. Snodgrass, "The Gospel of Thomas: A Secondary Gospel," *SecCent* 7 (1989-1990): 19-38; Tuckett, "Thomas and the Synoptics," p. 157; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, pp. 130-39. According to C. E. Carlston, "Many readings of the Gospel of Thomas and a considerable amount of time spent with the secondary literature . . . have not yet convinced me that any of the parabolic material in Thomas is clearly independent of the Synoptic Gospels" (*The Parables of the Triple Tradition* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975], p. xiii).

¹³ON THE VIEW THAT THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS 65 REPRESENTS AN OLDER FORM OF THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED TENANT FARMERS: See John Dominic Crossan, "The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen," *JBL* 90 (1971): 451-65; and his *Historical Jesus*, pp. 351-52.

¹⁴ON THE VIEW THE VERSION IN THOMAS IS AN EDITED AND ABRIDGED FORM OF LUKE'S VERSION: See Boudewijn Dehandschutter, "La parabole des vigneronniers homicides (Mc., XII, 1-12) et l'évangile selon Thomas," in *L'Évangile selon Marc: Tradition et rédaction*, BETL 34, ed. M. Sabbe (Leuven: Peeters, 1974), pp. 203-19; Sevrin, "Un groupement de trois paraboles," pp. 433-34.

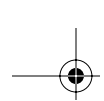
¹⁵ON THE APOSTLE THOMAS IN SYRIAN CHRISTIAN TRADITION: See H.-C. Puech, "The Gospel of Thomas," in *The New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1: *Gospels and Related Writings*, ed. E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), pp. 278-307; John Dominic Crossan, *Four Other Gospels* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1992), pp. 9-11; Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1993), pp. 118-20; and Patterson "Understanding the Gospel of Thomas Today," in *The Fifth Gospel*, ed. Stephen J. Patterson, James M. Robinson and Hans Gebhard Bethge (Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 2000), pp. 37-40.

¹⁶ON THE PROPOSAL THAT THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS DATES TO THE FIRST CENTURY: See Davies, *Gospel of Thomas*, pp. 146-47; Crossan, *Historical Jesus*, 427-30; Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 118-20; idem, "Understanding the Gospel of Thomas Today," pp. 40-45. The editors of the Greek fragments of *The Gospel of Thomas* (i.e., P.Oxy. 1, 654, 655) suggested that the original Greek text probably dated to A.D. 140, a date that Crossan, Patterson and others find too late and based on untested and unwarranted assumptions.

¹⁷ON THE ARGUMENT THAT THERE IS NO COMPOSITIONAL ORDER TO *THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS*: See Crossan, *Four Other Gospels*, pp. 11-18.

¹⁸ON TATIAN'S DIATESSARON: The *Diatessaron* (from Greek, meaning "through the four [Gospels]") blends together the four New Testament Gospels, plus some material from a fifth Gospel source. See S. Hemphill, *The Diatessaron of Tatian: A Harmony of the Four Holy Gospels*





Compiled in the Third Quarter of the Second Century (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1888); William L. Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron: Its Creation, Dissemination, Significance and History in Scholarship*, VCSup 25 (Leiden: Brill, 1994); idem, "Tatian's Diatessaron," in *Ancient Christian Gospels*, by Helmut Koester (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), pp. 403-30. The latter essay provides a very helpful overview. In a comprehensive study Gilles Quispel observed that, in comparison with the Greek New Testament Gospels, *The Gospel of Thomas* and Tatian's *Diatessaron* share a large number of textual variants. Indeed, almost half of the sayings in *Thomas* give evidence of at least one such variant. See G. Quispel, *Tatian and the Gospel of Thomas: Studies in the History of the Western Diatessaron* (Leiden: Brill, 1975). Tatian (c. 120-185), a disciple of Justin Martyr (c. 100-165), composed the *Diatessaron*, probably in Syriac and probably in Syria, sometime between 172 and 185. The *Diatessaron* relies heavily on Matthew and may have been inspired by the earlier harmony of the Synoptic Gospels produced by Justin Martyr.

¹⁹ON CATCHWORDS IN *THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS* AND SYRIAC AS THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE: See Nicholas Perrin, *Thomas and Tatian: The Relationship Between the Gospel of Thomas and the Diatessaron*. Academia Biblica 5 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002); idem, "NHC II,2 and the Oxyrhynchus Fragments (P.Oxy 1, 654, 655): Overlooked Evidence for a Syriac Gospel of Thomas," VC 58 (2004): 138-51.

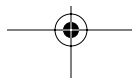
²⁰ON THE WORK CALLED *RECOGNITIONS*: Several apocryphal writings circulated in the second, third and fourth centuries attributed to Clement of Rome (who flourished in the late first century). Among these are the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the *Clementine Homilies*, the *Clementine Recognitions*, an *Apocalypse of Clement* and other writings. The *Clementine Recognitions* originated in Greek in the first half of the third century. The Greek is lost, but the work survives in Latin and Syriac translation.

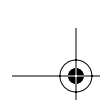
²¹ON CROSSAN'S ANALYSIS OF THE BEATITUDE IN THE *GOSPEL OF THOMAS* 54: See Crossan, *Four Other Gospels*, p. 19 (see pp. 18-19). See also the analysis in Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, pp. 42-44. The source-critical and exegetical arguments of Crossan and Patterson lose all force in view of the Syrian evidence.

²²ON THE ARGUMENT THAT THE SAYINGS GENRE OF THE *GOSPEL OF THOMAS* IS EVIDENCE OF AN EARLY DATE: See J. M. Robinson, "LOGOI SOPHON: On the Gattung of Q," in *Trajectories through Early Christianity*, by J. M. Robinson and H. Koester (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), pp. 71-113; idem, "On Bridging the Gulf from Q to the Gospel of Thomas (or vice versa)," in *Nag Hammadi, Gnosticism, and Early Christianity*, ed. C. W. Hedrick and R. Hodgson Jr. (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1986), pp. 127-55; Davies, *Gospel of Thomas*, p. 145; Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, pp. 113-18.

Chapter 4: Questionable Texts—Part II: The Gospel of Peter, the Egerton Gospel, the Gospel of Mary and the Secret Gospel of Mark

¹ON THE PUBLICATION OF THE NINTH-CENTURY AKHMIMIC GREEK TEXT: The Gospel fragment was published five years after its discovery, in Urban Bouriant, "Fragments du texte grec du livre d'Enoch et de quelques écrits attribués à Saint Pierre," in *Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission archéologique française au Caire* 9.1 (Paris: Librairie de la Société asiatique, 1892), pp. 137-42. Edited and corrected editions of the text can also be found in J. Armitage





Robinson and Montague Rhodes James, *The Gospel According to Peter, and The Revelation of Peter* (London: C. J. Clay, 1892); H. von Schubert, *Das Petrus-evangelium* (Berlin: Reuther & Reichard, 1893); idem, *The Gospel of St. Peter* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1893); and more recently in M. G. Mara, *Évangile de Pierre*, Sources chrétiennes 201 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1973). The Greek text of the *Gospel of Peter* is also found in Kurt Aland, ed., *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1985), pp. 479-80, 484, 489, 493-94, 498, 500, 507.

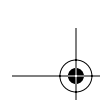
²ON THE DIVERGENT ASSESSMENTS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ALLEGED *GOSPEL OF PETER* AND THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS: Those who argue that the newly discovered Gospel fragment depends on the Synoptic Gospels include T. Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Petrus* (Erlangen: Deichert, 1893); H. B. Swete, *Euangelion kata Petron: The Akhmim Fragment of the Apocryphal Gospel of St. Peter* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1893), pp. xiii-xx. Robinson speaks of “the unmistakable acquaintance of the author with our Four Evangelists. . . . He uses and misuses each in turn” (*Gospel According to Peter*, pp. 32-33). Those who argue that the fragment is independent of the Synoptic Gospels include Adolf Harnack, *Bruchstücke des Evangeliums und der Apokalypse des Petrus*, TU 9 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1893); Adolf Harnack and H. V. Schubert, “Das Petrus-evangelium,” *TLZ* 19 (1894): 9-18; Percival Gardner-Smith, “The Gospel of Peter,” *JTS* 27 (1925-1926): 255-71; idem, “The Date of the Gospel of Peter,” *JTS* 27 (1925-1926): 401-7.

³ON THE OXYRHYNCHUS FRAGMENTS THAT MIGHT BE PART OF THE *GOSPEL OF PETER*: For reconstruction of P.Oxy. 2949 (vo. 41) see R. A. Coles, “Fragments of an Apocryphal Gospel(?)” in *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, ed. G. M. Browne et al. (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1972), pp. 15-16 (+ pl. II). See also D. Lührmann, “POx 2949: EvPt 3-5 in einer Handschrift des 2./3. Jahrhunderts,” *ZNW* 72 (1981): 216-22. P.Oxy. 2949 may date as early as the late second century. The second fragment, P.Oxy. 4009, also probably dates to the second century. See D. Lührmann and P. J. Parsons, “4009. Gospel of Peter?” in *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vol. 60, ed. P. J. Parsons et al. (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1993), pp. 1-5 (+ pl. D); D. Lührmann, “POx 4009: Ein neues Fragment des Petrus-evangeliums?” *NovT* 35 (1993): 390-410. For the proposal that the Fayyum Fragment also belongs to the *Gospel of Peter*, see D. Lührmann, with E. Schlarb, *Fragmente apokryph gewordener Evangelien in griechischer und lateinischer Sprache*, MTS 59 (Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 2000), pp. 80-81.

⁴ON RECENT SCHOLARLY SUPPORT OF THE ANTIQUITY OF THE *GOSPEL OF PETER*: See Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 2: *History and Literature of Early Christianity* (New York: de Gruyter, 1982), p. 163; cf. idem, “Überlieferung und Geschichte der frühchristlichen Evangelienliteratur,” *ANRW* 2.25.2 (1984): 1463-1542, esp. 1487-88, 1525-27; Ron D. Cameron, ed., *The Other Gospels: Non-Canonical Gospel Texts* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), p. 78. Another Koester student, Benjamin A. Johnson, has argued that Peter’s empty tomb tradition is not based on the canonical Gospels, but on an older tradition (*The Empty Tomb Tradition in the Gospel of Peter*, Ph.D. dissertation [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1966]).

⁵ON THE THEORY THAT AN EARLY FORM OF THE *GOSPEL OF PETER* LIES BEHIND THE PASSION NARRATIVES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT GOSPELS: John Dominic Crossan says, “This book has argued for the existence of a document which I call the *Cross Gospel* as the single known source for





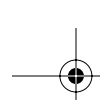
the Passion and Resurrection narrative. It flowed into Mark, flowed along with him into Matthew and Luke, flowed along with the three synoptics into John, and finally flowed along with the intracanonical tradition into the pseudepigraphical *Gospel of Peter*. I cannot find persuasive evidence of anything save redactional modification being added to that stream once it departs its *Cross Gospel* source" (*The Cross That Spoke: The Origins of the Passion Narrative* [San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988], p. 404).

⁶CITING THE GOSPEL FRAGMENT: The division of the Akhmîm fragment (a.k.a. *Gospel of Peter*) into sections is anomalous. One scholar divided the work into fourteen paragraphs (or chapters) and another scholar divided it into sixty verses. It is conventional to cite both systems together. This is done in the translation that has been provided.

⁷ON THE LATE AND SECONDARY NATURE OF THE AKHMÎM GOSPEL FRAGMENT (OR *GOSPEL OF PETER*): See L. Vaganay, *L'évangile de Pierre*, EBib (Paris: Gabalda, 1930), pp. 83-90; T. W. Manson, "The Life of Jesus: A Study of the Available Materials," *BJRL* 27 (1942-1943): 323-37; C. H. Dodd, "A New Gospel," in *New Testament Studies*, by C. H. Dodd (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University, 1953), pp. 12-52; K. Beyschlag, "Das Petrus-evangelium," in *Die verborgene Überlieferung von Christus* (Munich: Siebenstern Taschenbuch, 1969), pp. 27-64; and É. Massaux, *The Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew on Christian Literature Before Saint Irenaeus*, NGS 5.1-3, ed. A. J. Bellinzoni (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1990-1993), 2.202-14. Dodd concludes that the Akhmîm fragment (which he accepts as the *Gospel of Peter*) "depends on all four canonical Gospels, and probably not on any independent tradition" (p. 46). Beyschlag opines that the Akhmîm fragment presupposes all four canonical Gospels (pp. 62, 64). On the secondary nature of the guard tradition in the Akhmîm fragment, see S. E. Schaeffer, "The Guard at the Tomb (*Gos. Pet.* 8:28—11:49 and *Matt* 27:62-66; 28:2-4, 11-16): A Case of Intertextuality?" in *Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers*, ed. E. H. Lovering, SBLSP 30 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1991), pp. 499-507; and Massaux, *Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew*, 2.202-4.

⁸ON THE FANTASTIC ELEMENTS IN THE AKHMÎM GOSPEL FRAGMENT: The Akhmîm Gospel fragment describes the risen Jesus as so tall that his head extended above the heavens and that the cross on which Jesus had been crucified exited the tomb with him. These are the details of late, not early, tradition. On the great height of Jesus, see *Shepherd of Hermas Parables* 83.1 ("a man so tall that he rose above the tower"). The *Shepherd of Hermas* was composed sometime between A.D. 110 and 140. The mid-second century addition to 4 Ezra (i.e., 2 Esdras 1-2) describes the "Son of God" as possessing "great stature, taller than any of the others" (2:43-47). The Akhmîm Gospel fragment's description of Jesus' head extending *above the heavens* probably represents a further and much later embellishment of these traditions. The Akhmîm Gospel fragment's description of the cross that exits the tomb with the risen Jesus, accompanied by angels, parallels late Ethiopic tradition, attested in two works, whose original Greek compositions probably dated no earlier than the middle of the second century. According to the *Epistula Apostolorum* (or *Letter of the Apostles*) 16, Jesus assures his disciples "I will come as the sun which bursts forth; thus will I, shining seven times brighter than it in glory, while I am carried on the wings of the clouds in splendor with my cross going on before me, then to earth to judge the living and the dead" (J. K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993], p. 566). This tradition, with some variation, is repeated in





the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* 1: “with my cross going before my face will I come in my majesty; shining seven times brighter than the sun will I come in my majesty with all my saints, my angels” (ibid., p. 600).

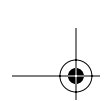
⁹MORE INDICATIONS OF THE LATENESS AND SECONDARY NATURE OF THE AKHMİM GOSPEL FRAGMENT: See P. Vielhauer, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur: Einleitung in das Neue Testament, die Apokryphen und die Apostolischen Vätern* (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1975), pp. 645-46. Vielhauer finds Synoptic elements elsewhere in the Akhmım Gospel fragment, in the material that falls outside of Crossan’s putative *Cross Gospel*. See also Beyschag, “Das Petrus-evangelium,” pp. 53-59; Jerry W. McCant, “Gospel of Peter: Docetism Reconsidered,” *NTS* 30 (1984): 258-73; David F. Wright, “Apocryphal Gospels: The ‘Unknown Gospel’ (Pap. Egerton 2) and the *Gospel of Peter*,” in *The Jesus Tradition Outside the Gospels*, Gospel Perspectives 5, ed. D. Wenham (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), pp. 207-32, esp. 221-27; Raymond E. Brown, “The Gospel of Peter and Canonical Gospel Priority,” *NTS* 33 (1987): 321-43; Joel B. Green, “The Gospel of Peter: Source for a Pre-Canonical Passion Narrative?” *ZNW* 78 (1987): 293-301; Frans Neiryck, “The Apocryphal Gospels and the Gospel of Mark,” in *The New Testament in Early Christianity: La réception des écrits néotestamentaires dans le christianisme primitif*, BETL 86, ed. J.-M. Sevrin (Leuven: Peeters, 1989), pp. 123-75; S. E. Schaeffer, *The Gospel of Peter, the Canonical Gospels, and Oral Tradition*, Ph.D. dissertation (New York: Union Theological Seminary, 1991); John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1991), pp. 117-18; Chester L. Quarles, “The Gospel of Peter: Does It Contain a Precanonical Resurrection Narrative?” in *The Resurrection of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and N. T. Wright in Dialogue*, ed. Robert B. Stewart (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), pp. 106-20; D. Moody Smith, “The Problem of John and the Synoptics in Light of the Relation Between Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels,” in *John and the Synoptics*, BETL 101, ed. Adelbert De-naux (Leuven: Peeters and Leuven University Press, 1992), p. 150.

¹⁰ON ALLEGED DOCETIC GnosticISM IN THE AKHMİM GOSPEL FRAGMENT: In 4.10 it says that Jesus “himself was silent, as having no pain.” This does not say that Jesus in fact felt no pain; it implies that he was silent even though the experience was indeed painful. Also the cry from the cross—“My power, [my] power, you have abandoned me!” (5.19)—is taken by some to indicate docetism. But what we have here is probably no more than influence from a variant form of Ps 22:1, where one of the Greek recensions reads “strength” (or “power”), instead of “God.” For further discussion on this issue, see McCant’s “Gospel of Peter.” There really is no compelling basis for seeing docetic tendencies in the Akhmım Gospel fragment.

¹¹ON THE PROBLEM OF IDENTIFYING THE EARLY GREEK FRAGMENTS WITH THE AKHMİM GOSPEL FRAGMENT: See Paul Foster, “Are There Any Early Fragments of the So-Called *Gospel of Peter*?” *NTS* 52 (2006): 1-28. Foster shows that it is far from certain that the small Greek fragments P.Oxy. 2949, P.Oxy. 4009 and P.Vindob. G 2325 are from the *Gospel of Peter* mentioned by Bishop Serapion. Foster rightly warns of the circular reasoning in the interpretation of the evidence, where the ninth-century Akhmım fragment is assumed at the outset to be the *Gospel of Peter* and then the early third-century papyri are reconstructed on the basis of the Akhmım fragment, which in turn confirms the assumption that the Akhmım fragment is indeed the *Gospel of Peter*.

¹²FOR THE GREEK TEXT OF THE LONDON FRAGMENTS OF EGERTON PAPYRUS 2: See H. Idris Bell





and T. C. Skeat, *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel and Other Early Christian Papyri* (London: British Museum, 1935), pp. 8-15, 26; idem, *The New Gospel Fragments* (London: British Museum, 1951), pp. 29-33. A critical edition has been prepared by G. Mayeda, *Das Leben-Jesu-Fragment Papyrus Egerton 2 und seine Stellung in der urchristlichen Literaturgeschichte* (Bern: Haupt, 1946), pp. 7-11. See also Aland, *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*, pp. 60, 323, 332, 340, 422.

The superscript numbers in the English translation indicate approximate line breaks. The text of the more recently discovered Köln fragment (vol. 6) has been made available in M. Gronewald, "Unbekanntes Evangelium oder Evangelienharmonie (Fragment aus dem Evangelium Egerton)," in *Kölnner Papyri (P Köln)*, Sonderreihe Papyrologica Coloniensia 7 (Cologne: Bibliothéque Bodmer, 1987), pp. 136-45, and in D. Lührmann, "Das neue Fragment des PEgerton 2 (PKöln 255)," in *The Four Gospels 1992*, BETL 100, ed. F. Van Segbroeck et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 3.2239-55.

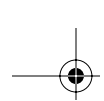
¹³ON ENUMERATING THE LINES IN THE EGERTON AND KÖLN PAPYRI: Lines 22a and 23a, which are based upon Papyrus Köln 255, are so designated, in order to distinguish them from lines 22 and 23 of Papyrus Egerton 2, frag. 1 recto. The same is done with lines 42a-44a, which also are based on Papyrus Köln 255, at the end of the same fragment, in order to distinguish them from lines 42-44 of Papyrus Egerton 2, frag. 2 recto.

¹⁴ON CLAIMS THAT THE EGERTON PAPYRUS IS EARLY AND INDEPENDENT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT GOSPELS: See John Dominic Crossan, *Four Other Gospels* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1992), p. 183. Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), p. 207; cf. idem, "Überlieferung und Geschichte," pp. 1488-90, 1522; Jeremias, "Papyrus Egerton 2," in *The New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1: *Gospels and Related Writings*, ed. E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 96; Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, p. 215. Crossan argues that Mark is actually "directly dependent on the [Egerton] papyrus text (*Four Other Gospels*, p. 86).

¹⁵ON THE INFANCY GOSPEL OF THOMAS: The translation is from Montague R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1953), p. 63. The *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* may have originated as early as the late second century; cf. Oscar Cullmann, "Infancy Gospels," in *The New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1: *Gospels and Related Writings*, ed. E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 419. The *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* should not be confused with the *Gospel of Thomas*, found complete at Nag Hammadi and in three fragments at Oxyrhynchus. See also J. K. Elliott, *A Synopsis of the Apocryphal Nativity and Infancy Narratives*, NTTS 34 (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

¹⁶ON THE EXTANT GOSPEL OF MARY MANUSCRIPTS: The *Gospel of Mary* is preserved in the Rylands Papyrus 463 (Greek; published in 1938), Berlin Gnostic Papyrus 8052,1 (Coptic; published in 1955), and P.Oxy. 3525 (Greek, published in 1983). The Berlin Gnostic Papyrus (or Berolinensis Gnosticus) was discovered in 1896. Besides the *Gospel of Mary*, this manuscript also included the *Apocryphon of John*, the *Sophia of Jesus Christ* and the *Act of Peter*. It was first published in W. C. Till, *Die gnostischen Schriften des koptischen Papyrus Berolinensis 8502, TU 60* (Berlin: Akademie, 1955; rev. ed., ed. H.-M. Schenke, 1972). See G. W. MacRae and R. McL. Wilson, "The Gospel According to Mary. BG 1:7.1—19.5," in



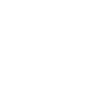


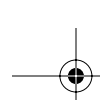
Nag Hammadi Codices V 2-5; VI with Pap. Berol. 8502, 1 and 4, NHS 11, ed. D. M. Parrott (Leiden: Brill, 1979), pp. 453-71. For P.Rylands 463, see C. H. Roberts, *Catalogue of the Greek Papyri in the John Rylands Library* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1938), 3:18-23. For P.Oxy. 3525 see *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vol. 50 (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1983), pp. 12-14. See also Dieter Lührmann, with Egbert Schlarb, *Fragmente apokryph gewordener Evangelien* (Marburg: Elwert Verlag, 2000), pp. 62-71. For English translations of the Greek and Coptic fragments, see H.-C. Puech, "The Gospel of Mary," in *The New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1: *Gospels and Related Writings*, ed. E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), pp. 392-95; Karen L. King, "The Gospel of Mary," in *The Complete Gospels*, ed. R. J. Miller (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1992), pp. 355-60.

¹⁷FOR SCHOLARLY TREATMENTS OF THE GOSPEL OF MARY: See R. Atwood, *Mary Magdalene in the New Testament Gospels and Early Tradition* (Bern and New York: Peter Lang, 1993); E. A. de Boer, *Mary Magdalene: Beyond the Myth* (London: SCM Press; Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 1997), pp. 74-117; A. G. Brock, *Mary Magdalene, the First Apostle: The Struggle for Authority*, HTS 51 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003); Karen L. King, *The Gospel of Mary of Magdala: Jesus and the First Woman Apostle* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 2003); H. E. Hearon, *The Mary Magdalene Tradition: Witness and Counter-Witness in Early Christian Communities* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2004); M. W. Meyer, with E. A. de Boer, *The Gospels of Mary: The Secret Tradition of Mary Magdalene, the Companion of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2004); B. Chilton, *Mary Magdalene: A Biography* (New York: Doubleday, 2005).

¹⁸ON THE DATE OF THE GOSPEL OF MARY: The Gnosticizing orientation of the *Gospel of Mary*, among other things, suggests a date no earlier than mid-second century. Nevertheless, scholars will sometimes attempt to smuggle the *Gospel of Mary* or its tradition into the first century. An early date of the tradition lying behind Mary seems to be implied in this statement: "the reader may well agree with Andrew's complaint that Mary's teachings are strange. Strange to us, perhaps. But in the first and second centuries, they were firmly embedded in Christian debates about the meaning of Jesus' teaching" (cf. King, "The Gospel of Mary," p. 351, emphasis added). There is no evidence that the teachings of Mary Magdalene, as presented in the *Gospel of Mary*, "were firmly embedded in Christian debates" as early as the first century. Debates about the role of women in the church no doubt took place in the first century, especially if the Pastoral Letters date to the first century. But the perspectives distinctive to the *Gospel of Mary* reflect a much later time. Hans-Josef Klauck remarks: "The contents point to a date in the second half of the second century. An early date between 100 and 150 has been proposed by some scholars, but is not convincing" (*Apocryphal Gospels* [London: T & T Clark, 2004], p. 160).

¹⁹FOR A SAMPLING OF SCHOLARSHIP CONCERNED WITH THE SECRET GOSPEL OF MARK: See Morton Smith, *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973); idem, *The Secret Gospel: The Discovery and Interpretation of the Secret Gospel According to Mark* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973); F. F. Bruce, *The Secret Gospel of Mark*, Ethel M. Wood Lecture (London: Athlone, 1974); Marvin W. Meyer, *Secret Gospels: Essays on Thomas and the Secret Gospel of Mark* (Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 2003).





For two recent monographs, see E. Rau, *Das geheime Markusevangelium: Ein Schriftfund voller Rätsel* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 2003); and Scott G. Brown, *Mark's Other Gospel: Rethinking Morton Smith's Controversial Discovery* (Waterloo, Ont.: Canadian Corporation for the Studies in Religion, 2005). An early and outstanding critical review of Smith's books was written by Quentin Quesnell, "The Mar Saba Clementine: A Question of Evidence," *CBQ* 37 (1975): 48-67. Quesnell's probing review raised many troubling questions about the authenticity of the Clementine letter.

²⁰FOR GOOD QUALITY COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE CLEMENTINE LETTER: See Charles W. Hedrick, "Secret Mark: New Photographs, New Witnesses," *The Fourth R* 13, no. 5 (2000): 3-16. Hedrick thought that his photographs supplied evidence supporting the authenticity of the Clementine letter. As it turns out, they had the opposite effect.

²¹FOR CONVINCING EVIDENCE THAT THE CLEMENTINE LETTER THAT CONTAINS QUOTATIONS AND DISCUSSION OF SECRET MARK IS A HOAX: See Stephen C. Carlson, *The Gospel Hoax: Morton Smith's Invention of Secret Mark* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2005).

²²AN "OUTSIDER'S" ASSESSMENT OF THE HIGH VALUE PLACED BY SOME ON THE EXTRACANONICAL GOSPELS: Philip Jenkins, *Hidden Gospels: How the Search for Jesus Lost Its Way* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 105-6.

Chapter 5: Alien Contexts: The Case Against Jesus as Cynic

¹ON THE DIVERSE PORTRAITS OF JESUS IN ANCIENT WRITINGS: See Craig A. Evans, *Life of Jesus Research: An Annotated Bibliography*, NTTS 24 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp 278-300; Robert E. Van Voorst, *Jesus Outside the New Testament: An Introduction to the Ancient Evidence, Studying the Historical Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).

²ON THE DIVERSE PORTRAITS OF JESUS IN MODERN SCHOLARSHIP: See Claude G. Montefiore, *Some Elements of the Religious Teaching of Jesus* (London: Macmillan, 1910); Joseph Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth: His Life, Times, and Teaching*, 3rd ed. (1925; reprint, London and New York: Macmillan, 1952); Asher Finkel, *The Pharisees and the Teacher of Nazareth* (1964; reprint, Leiden: Brill, 1974); Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* (London: Collins, 1973); idem, *Jesus in His Jewish Context* (London: SCM Press, 2003); Morton Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978); Hyam Maccoby, *Jesus the Pharisee* (London: SCM Press, 2003).

³ON COMPARING JESUS WITH BUDDHA: See the remark in John Dominic Crossan, *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), p. 77: "But it must be emphasized that Jesus' use of proverbs and parables is far closer to that of Zen Buddhism than it is to conventional Hebrew wisdom." This is very misleading. Jesus' use of proverbs and parables is far closer to that of the early rabbis, who in turn derived much of their material and style from Hebrew Scripture itself. For parallels between Jesus and the proverbs and parables of the rabbis, see Craig A. Evans, *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies*, AGJU 25 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 251-97. For a convenient presentation of the parallels between Jesus and the Buddha, see Marcus Borg, *Jesus and Buddha: The Parallel Sayings* (Berkeley, Calif.: Ulysses Press, 1997).

⁴ON JESUS AS JEWISH CYNIC: See John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), p. 421.



⁵ON THE DRESS AND BEHAVIOR OF CYNICS: See the comments in ancient writers, such as Epictetus 3.22.50; cf. Lucian *Peregrinus* 15; Diogenes Laertius *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* 6.13; Pseudo-Diogenes 30.3. The quotation is from Epictetus.

⁶ON THE CYNIC LIVING ACCORDING TO NATURE: See Julian *Orationes* 6.193D.

⁷ON CYNIC CRUDENESS: See Cicero *De officiis* 1.128; Diogenes Laertius *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* 6.69; Epictetus *Discourses* 2.20.10: Cynics “eat and drink and copulate and defecate and snore.”

⁸FOR THE QUOTATION ON WHICH END THE NOISE COMES FROM: See Seneca *Moral Epistles* 91.19.

⁹FOR STUDIES BY SCHOLARS WHO FIND THE CYNIC HYPOTHESIS UNCONVINCING: See David E. Aune, “Jesus and Cynics in First-Century Palestine: Some Critical Considerations,” in *Hillel and Jesus: Comparisons of Two Major Religious Leaders*, ed. James H. Charlesworth and Loren L. Johns (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), pp. 176-92; Hans Dieter Betz, “Jesus and the Cynics: Survey and Analysis of a Hypothesis,” *JR* 74 (1994): 453-75; Christopher M. Tuckett, “A Cynic Q?” *Bib* 70 (1989): 349-76; idem, *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies on Q* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), pp. 368-91; Ben Witherington III, *Jesus the Sage: The Pilgrimage of Wisdom* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), pp. 123-43.

¹⁰FOR A COLLECTION OF PARALLELS BETWEEN JESUS AND CYNICS: See F. Gerald Downing, *Christ and the Cynics: Jesus and Other Radical Preachers in First-Century Tradition*, JSOT Manuals 4 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988).

¹¹ON THE LACK OF PIG BONES IN PRE-A.D. 70 SEPPHORIS: According the Old Testament law, pigs are unclean animals that are not to be eaten by Jews.

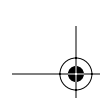
¹²ON THE JEWISH CHARACTER OF GALILEE AND SEPPHORIS IN THE TIME OF JESUS: See James F. Strange, “First Century Galilee from Archaeology and from the Texts,” in *Archaeology and the Galilee: Texts and Contexts in the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine Periods*, ed. Douglas R. Edwards and C. Thomas McCollough (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), pp. 39-48; Mark A. Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee*, SNTSMS 118 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); idem, *Graeco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus*, SNTSMS 134 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

¹³ON JEWISH REVOLTS AND ZEAL FOR THE JEWISH LAW AND WAY OF LIFE: See Martin Hengel, *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I until 70 A.D.* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989).

¹⁴ON THE SABBATH IN THE TEACHING OF THE RABBIS: See *Mekilta* (an old commentary on Exodus), where it comments on Ex 31:12-17 (in *Mekilta's* tractate *Shabbath* part 1). For English translation, see J. Z. Lauterbach, *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1933), 3:198.

Chapter 6: Skeletal Sayings: Maxims Without a Context

¹FOR EXAMPLES OF WORK IN WHICH THE GOSPEL CONTEXTS OF THE SAYINGS OF JESUS ARE DISCOUNTED: See John Dominic Crossan, *In Fragments: The Aphorisms of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983); idem, *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973); and, representative of the work of the Jesus Seminar, Robert W. Funk and Roy W. Hoover, eds., *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge; New York: Macmillan, 1993).



²ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE SAYINGS OF JESUS MEAN MANY THINGS: Some scholars speak of the polyvalent (or multimeanings) dimension of Jesus' sayings. This, they say, is actually a good thing. There was no single, original meaning but an almost unlimited range of meanings. What we have here is modern (or, better, postmodern) theory, not the reality of teaching and communication in the world of Jesus and his contemporaries.

³ON THE FACTS OF JESUS' LIFE AND MINISTRY: See E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM Press, 1985). The list of facts is found on p. 11.

⁴ON THE FAITHFUL PRESERVATION OF JESUS' TEACHING IN THE EARLY CHURCH: See especially Birger Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity*, Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis 22 (Lund: Gleerup, 1961); reprinted in The Biblical Resource Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); idem, "Narrative Meshalim in the Synoptic Gospels," *NTS* 34 (1988): 339-63; idem, "If We Do Not Cut the Parables Out of Their Frames," *NTS* 37 (1991): 321-35; idem, "Illuminating the Kingdom: Narrative Meshalim in the Synoptic Gospels," in *Jesus and the Oral Gospel Tradition*, JSNTSup 64, ed. Henry Wansbrough (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), pp. 266-309; and Rainer Riesner, "Jesus as Preacher and Teacher," in *Jesus and the Oral Gospel Tradition*, ed. Henry Wansbrough (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), pp. 185-210.

See also Shemaryahu Talmon, "Oral Tradition and Written Transmission, or the Heard and the Seen Word in Judaism of the Second Temple Period," in *Jesus and the Oral Gospel Tradition*, ed. Henry Wansbrough (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), pp. 121-58, with quotation from p. 158. The quoted phrase, "contradictory and mutually exclusive," comes from Werner Kelber, in his *The Oral and Written Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983). There are many problems with Kelber's understanding of orality. See Larry W. Hurtado, "Greco-Roman Textuality and the Gospel of Mark: A Critical Assessment of Werner Kelber's *The Oral and the Written Gospel*," *BBR* 7 (1997): 91-106.

⁵ON THE PROPOSAL THAT THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED VINEYARD TENANTS DOES NOT DERIVE FROM JESUS AND THAT ITS CONTEXT IN MARK 12 IS NOT ORIGINAL: See Charles E. Carlston, *The Parables of the Triple Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), pp. 178-90.

⁶ON THE CLAIM THAT THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED VINEYARD TENANTS PROVIDES NO IDENTIFICATION: See Bernard Brandon Scott, *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), pp. 252-53.

⁷ON THE PROPOSAL THAT THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED VINEYARD TENANTS IS A WARNING TO LANDOWNERS EXPROPRIATING AND EXPORTING THE PRODUCE OF THE LAND: See Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), p. 255.

⁸ON THE JESUS SEMINAR'S INTERPRETATION OF THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED VINEYARD TENANTS: See Funk and Hoover, *Five Gospels*, p. 101.

⁹ON THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED VINEYARD TENANTS AS A STORY OF MURDER: See Crossan, *In Parables*, p. 96. In the course of his work on the parable, Crossan has put forward a number of interpretations. Nothing seems to work.

¹⁰ON THE "BLESSSED IDIOTCY OF GRACE": See Carlston, *Parables of the Triple Tradition*, p. 185.

¹¹FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED VINEYARD TENANTS DUE TO THE ABSURDITY OF THE CHARACTERS: See *ibid.*, pp. 183-84.



Chapter 7: Diminished Deeds: A Fresh Look at Healings and Miracles

¹ON THE SUBJECT OF MIRACLES IN TODAY'S THINKING: See Colin Brown, *Miracles and the Critical Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984).

²ON THE JESUS SEMINAR'S ASSESSMENT OF JESUS' ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING HIS MIGHTY DEEDS: See Robert W. Funk, ed., *The Acts of Jesus: What Did Jesus Really Do? The Search for the Authentic Deeds of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1998). Note the odd assertion on p. 34: "stories in which Jesus is represented as other than a laconic sage are not likely to be historical."

³ON CROWDS FOLLOWING JESUS BECAUSE OF HIS MIRACLES OF EXORCISM AND HEALING: See E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM Press, 1985), pp. 157-73. There are aspects of Sanders's discussion with which I disagree. But I think he is basically correct in reasoning as follows: "The more natural [view] seems to be that Jesus found that he could heal; that he thus attracted crowds and special followers; that he complemented his healing of the needy in Galilee by promising the kingdom to the poor and the outcasts" (*ibid.*, p. 164). Sanders does not engage in a philosophical or scientific discussion of what constitutes "miracles" or how Jesus performed them.

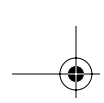
⁴ON SAYINGS OF JESUS IN THE Q SOURCE THAT PRESUPPOSE MIRACLES IN JESUS' MINISTRY: See Mt 11:2-6 = Lk 7:18-23; Mt 10:8 = Lk 10:9; Mt 11:21-23 = Lk 10:13-15; Mt 13:16-17 = Lk 10:23-24; Mt 12:43-45 = Lk 11:24-26.

⁵ON THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF JESUS' MIRACLES: See Anton Vögtle, "The Miracles of Jesus Against Their Contemporary Background," in *Jesus in His Time*, ed. Hans Jürgen Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), pp. 96-105; and Colin Brown, "Synoptic Miracle Stories: A Jewish Religious and Social Setting," *Forum* 2, no. 4 (1986): 55-76.

⁶FOR RECENT STUDIES THAT SUPPORT THE HISTORICITY OF THE ACCOUNTS OF JESUS' MIRACLES: See David Wenham and Craig Blomberg, eds., *The Miracles of Jesus*, Gospel Perspectives 6 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986); Graham H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist: A Contribution to the Study of the Historical Jesus*, WUNT 2/54 (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1993; reprint, Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993); *idem*, *Jesus the Miracle Worker: A Historical and Theological Study* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1999); Barry Blackburn, "The Miracles of Jesus," in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research*, ed. Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans, NTTS 19 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 353-94.

⁷FOR RECENT STUDIES ON THE LINK OF EXORCISM AND HEALING WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RULE OF GOD: See Craig A. Evans, "Defeating Satan and Liberating Israel: Jesus and Daniel's Visions," *JSHJ* 1 (2003): 161-70; *idem*, "Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan," *BBR* 15 (2005): 49-75; *idem*, "Jesus' Exorcisms and Proclamation of the Kingdom of God in the Light of the Testaments," in *The Changing Face of Judaism, Christianity, and Other Greco-Roman Religions in Antiquity*, Studien zu den Jüdischen Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer 2, ed. Ian H. Henderson and Gerbern S. Oegema (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2006), pp. 210-33.

⁸FOR STUDIES ON 4Q521: See John J. Collins, "The Works of the Messiah," *DSD* 1 (1995): 98-112; Craig A. Evans, "Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature 1, ed. Craig A. Evans and Peter W. Flint (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), pp. 91-100, esp. pp. 96-97; *idem*, "The New Quest for Jesus and the New Research on the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Jesus, Mark, and Q: The*



Teaching of Jesus and Its Earliest Records, JSNTSup 214, ed. Michael Labahn and Andreas Schmidt (Sheffield, U.K.: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), pp. 16-83, esp. pp. 171-73.

⁹FOR MORE ON THE DEEDS OF JESUS AND THE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY: See Ben F Meyer, "Appointed Deed, Appointed Doer: Jesus and the Scriptures," in *Authenticating the Activities of Jesus*, NTTs 28/2, ed. Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans (Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp. 155-76. Meyer states: "Jesus is saying that his own public activity in Israel must be read as the super-abundant fulfillment of eschatological promises" (ibid., p. 159).

¹⁰ON THE FAME OF SOLOMON AS HEALER AND EXORCIST: In the time of Jesus, King Solomon was famous as healer and exorcist. The fictitious *Testament of Solomon*, probably composed at the end of the first century, is dedicated to Solomon's legendary skills in thwarting evil spirits.

¹¹FOR NOTES AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRUS: See Hans Dieter Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells*, vol. 1: *Texts*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 96.

Chapter 8: Dubious Uses of Josephus: Understanding Late Antiquity

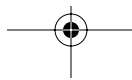
¹ON THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF JOSEPHUS: See H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus: The Man and the Historian* (New York: Jewish Institute of Religion Press, 1929); Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome: His Vita and Development as a Historian*, Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1979); Tessa Rajak, *Josephus: The Historian and His Society* (London: Duckworth, 1983; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984); Louis H. Feldman, *Josephus and Modern Scholarship* (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1984); Bruce D. Chilton, *The Temple of Jesus: His Sacrificial Program within a Cultural History of Sacrifice* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 69-87; Steve Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1992); Cleon L. Rogers Jr., *The Topical Josephus: Historical Accounts That Shed Light on the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992); Louis H. Feldman, *The Importance of Jerusalem as Viewed by Josephus* (Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University, 1998).

²ON JOHN THE BAPTIST: See Charles H. H. Scobie, *John the Baptist* (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964); Walter Wink, *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition*, SNTSMS 7 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968); Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet: A Socio-Historical Study*, JSNTSup 62 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991); Carl R. Kazmier-ski, *John the Baptist: Prophet and Evangelist* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1996); Joan E. Taylor, *The Immerser: John the Baptist Within Second Temple Judaism*, Studying the Historical Jesus (Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1997).

³ON THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND MARRIAGE: See also other Dead Sea Scrolls, such as 4Q416 frag. 2, col. 4, line 5; and 4Q524 frags. 15-22, line 2.

⁴ON HEROD ANTIPAS: See Arnold H. M. Jones, *The Herods of Judaea* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), pp. 176-83; Harold W. Hoehner, *Herod Antipas: A Contemporary of Jesus Christ*, SNTSMS 17 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972); Christiane Saulnier, "Hérode Antipas et Jean le Baptiste: Quelques remarques sur les confusions chronologiques de Flavius Josèphe," *Revue biblique* 91 (1984): 362-76.

⁵ON THE THESIS THAT THE GOSPELS PORTRAY PILATE INACCURATELY: See John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), pp. 373-83; idem, *Who Killed Jesus? Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel*



Story of the Death of Jesus (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995), pp. 147-59.

⁶ON PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA: See David T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature*, CRINT 3.3 (Van Gorcum: Assen; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993); Peder Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria: An Exegete for His Time*, NovTSup 86 (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Francesca Calabi, *The Language and the Law of God: Interpretation and Politics in Philo of Alexandria*, SFSHJ 188 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998); Maren Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture*, TSAJ 86 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001).

⁷ON PILATE'S VIOLENCE AGAINST HIS SUBJECTS: See James S. McLaren, *Power and Politics in Palestine: The Jews and the Governing of Their Land 100 BC-AD 70*, JSNTSup 63 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), pp. 81-87; Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave*, ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 1:698-705; Helen K. Bond, *Pontius Pilate in History and Interpretation*, SNTSMS 100 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 24-93. Brown provides a convenient summary of six incidents involving Pilate and his Jewish subjects.

⁸ON PILATE'S BEHAVIOR AS CONSISTENT WITH THE PORTRAIT FOUND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT GOSPELS: See Brian C. McGing, "Pontius Pilate and the Sources," *CBQ* 53 (1991): 416-38; Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, p. 704. Brown concludes that the Gospels' portrait of Pilate is not inconsistent with what we know of the former governor of Judea, especially in reference to the incident of the standards. See also Bond, *Pontius Pilate*, pp. 119, 205.

⁹FOR RESEARCH THAT SUPPORTS THE HISTORICITY OF PILATE'S OFFER OF A PASSOVER PARDON: See C. B. Chaval, "The Releasing of a Prisoner on the Eve of Passover in Ancient Jerusalem," *JBL* 60 (1941): 273-78; Robert L. Merritt, "Jesus Barabbas and the Paschal Pardon," *JBL* 104 (1985): 57-68. Bond remarks that "Pilate, and possibly other governors, may have occasionally released lesser criminals as a gesture of Roman goodwill, especially during such a potentially volatile festival as the Passover" (*Pontius Pilate*, p. 199). For concise summaries of the scholarly positions on the pardon, see Bond, *Pontius Pilate*, pp. 199-200; and McLaren, *Power and Politics*, p. 93 n. 2.

¹⁰ON MOCKERY OF THE CONDEMNED IN ANTIQUITY: See Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, pp. 873-77.

Chapter 9: Anachronisms and Exaggerated Claims: Christianities Lost and Otherwise

¹ON THE IDEA THAT THERE WERE MANY "CHRISTIANITIES": See Bart D. Ehrman, *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); idem, *Lost Scriptures: Books That Did Not Make It into the New Testament* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); idem, *The New Testament and Other Early Christian Writings: A Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

²ON THE DATE OF JESUS' DEATH: Most historians opt for either A.D. 30 (perhaps April 7) or 33 (perhaps April 3). For further discussion of the date of Jesus' death, see Harold W. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), pp. 65-93; and Jack Finegan, *Ancient World and Problems of Chronology in the Bible*, rev. ed. (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998), pp. 353-69.

³ON LUKE 24:12: Verse 12 in Luke's resurrection narrative reads: "But Peter arose, and ran to the tomb; and stooping and looking in, he sees the linen cloths by themselves; and he returned to his home, wondering at what had happened." This verse is found in most old Greek

texts (but it is omitted in some). Scholars suspect that it is an early addition to Luke's Gospel, inspired by John 20:3-10.

⁴ON THE NAMES OF SIMON PETER: Jesus gave to Simon the name "Rock" (Mk 3:16; cf. Mt 16:18). In Greek the name is *Petros* (or Peter), while in Aramaic it is *Kepha*⁴ (or Cephas).

⁵ON THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME CHRISTIAN: The first Christians were not, in fact, called "Christians." Initially they were simply followers of or believers in Messiah Jesus, and their movement (or "sect") was called "The Way" (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 24:14, 22), probably alluding to Is 40:3 ("Prepare the way of the Lord"). We are told that some years later, in the city of Antioch, believers in Jesus began to be called "Christians" or Messianists (Acts 11:26).

⁶ON THE LIST OF WITNESSES WHO SAW THE RISEN JESUS: See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), pp. 728-34.

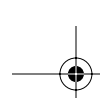
⁷ON THE CONVERSION OF JAMES, THE BROTHER OF JESUS: According to Jn 7:5, the brothers of Jesus did not believe in him. Hints in Mk 3:20-35 of strained relations with family and in Mk 6:1-6 of a less-than-welcome reception in hometown Nazareth probably also reflect this lack of belief and support in Jesus and his ministry. James suddenly appears in Acts (see Acts 12:17: "tell this to James and the brothers"; 15:13: "Brothers, listen to me") not only as a believer but as leader of the church. Interpreters plausibly surmise that it was the appearance of the risen Jesus to James (and to his brother Jude also?) that led to the conversion of James.

⁸ON WOMEN AS APOSTLES IN THE FIRST GENERATION OF THE CHURCH: Experts in the study of the Greek New Testament, Greek manuscripts and the early Greek church fathers believe that Junia (not Junias) in Rom 16:7 is a woman's name. The verse reads: "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me." Unfortunately, some versions translate this verse as though only men are in view. On the contrary, the name Junia in the first two or three centuries of the church was always a female name. There is no justification for reading the masculine form Junias in Rom 16:7 (as in the RSV). Accordingly, at least one woman was numbered among the apostles. For more on this issue, see Eldon Jay Epp, *Junia: The First Woman Apostle* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005).

⁹ON THE DATE OF PAUL'S CONVERSION TO CHRISTIAN FAITH: See Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998), pp. 395-96; Bo Reicke, *The New Testament Era: The World of the Bible from 500 B.C. to A.D. 100* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968), p. 191.

¹⁰ON THE ROLE OF THE "PILLARS" IN THE JERUSALEM: The role of the "pillars" of the early church in Jerusalem was to examine and validate new developments in the rapidly expanding Christian community. For example, "Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John" (Acts 8:14). In Acts 10-11 Peter witnesses and testifies to the conversion of the Roman centurion and his family, thus showing that Gentiles, as well as Samaritans, can be saved.

¹¹ON THE CLAIM THAT PAUL'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE DIFFERED SIGNIFICANTLY FROM THE TEACHING OF JESUS' FIRST FOLLOWERS: This claim has found a new voice in James D. Tabor, *The Jesus Dynasty* (New York and London: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pp. 259-71. In my view Tabor is not fair to Paul, suggesting that he was dishonest and disingenuous in his communications with the pillars of the Christian community in Jerusalem. What



Paul states in his letters, especially in Galatians, a circulating and therefore very public letter, makes quite clear his position. Paul held nothing back.

¹²ON THE CONTINUITY OF JESUS' TEACHING BEFORE EASTER AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY AFTER EASTER: See James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, Christianity in the Making 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), esp. pp. 210-54. Dunn plausibly concludes that the process of remembering and assembling the teaching and actions of Jesus began during Jesus' lifetime itself. This activity did not spring into action years after Easter, as some critics have assumed. Dunn also rightly argues that the reason the sayings source Q, used by Matthew and Luke, does not emphasize Jesus' death and resurrection, is because it represents the teaching of Jesus before Passion week. On this also see James D. G. Dunn, *A New Perspective on Jesus: What the Quest for the Historical Jesus Missed*, Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), p. 121: "The character [of Q] was already impressed in and on the Jesus tradition as it was orally circulated already during the mission of Jesus."

¹³ON PAUL'S TURNING TO NON-JEWS: In his letters Paul says that he takes the gospel message "to the Jew first then to the Greek" (e.g., Rom 1:16). We see this in the book of Acts. When Paul enters a city, he preaches the gospel first in the synagogue. As long as he is welcome, he continues in the synagogue. When the welcome is withdrawn, he preaches to the Gentiles. When he enters another city, he repeats the process.

¹⁴ON THE PHARISEES: See Anthony J. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society: A Sociological Approach* (Wilmington: Glazier, 1988); Steve Mason, *Flavius Josephus on the Pharisees: A Composition-Critical Study*, SPB 39 (Leiden: Brill, 1991); and Stephen Westerholm, "Pharisees," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight and I. Howard Marshall (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1992), pp. 609-14.

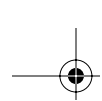
¹⁵ON PLURAL "CHRISTIANITIES" AND "JUDAISMS": In recent years it has become quite fashionable in academic circles to speak of "Christianities" and "Judaisms." Perhaps this is a reflection today of the West's preoccupation with multiculturalism and other aspects of political correctness. Apart from the awkwardness of this language, I think it reflects a misunderstanding of the reality of diversity that normally occurs within any given system of belief and practice. Though not all Jews or Christians think the same way or follow the same practices, this does not justify speaking of Judaisms or Christianities. The real question is: Is it Christian or is it not? If the distinctive core is missing (or much of it is missing), then it is not. But if the core is present, then it is. Christian theologians and church historians have given this a lot of thought, especially in reference to "Christian cults."

¹⁶ON THE PROBLEM OF THE ROLE OF THE LAW OF MOSES IN CHURCH CONGREGATIONS THAT WERE PRIMARILY MADE UP OF NON-JEWISH PEOPLE: See Markus N. A. Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches: Halakhah and the Beginning of Christian Public Ethics* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000).

¹⁷ON THE AUTHENTICITY AND ANTIQUITY OF THE LETTER OF JAMES: See Peter H. Davids, *The Epistle of James*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982); Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Letter of James*, AB 37A (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1995); William F. Brosend II, *James and Jude*, New Cambridge Bible Commentary (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

¹⁸ON JAMES AND HIS RELATIONSHIP TO PETER AND PAUL: See Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans,





eds., *James the Just and Christian Origins*, NovTSup 98 (Leiden: Brill, 1999); Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans, eds., *The Missions of James, Peter, and Paul: Tensions in Early Christianity*, NovT-Sup 115 (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

Chapter 10: Hokum History and Bogus Findings: Jesus Between the Lines

¹ON READING THE SCROLLS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT AS CODE: Thiering bases her method of interpretation on the model of *peshet* interpretation found in some of the Scrolls (such as the commentaries on the Prophets and Psalms) and in a few passages in the New Testament. *Peshet* is an Aramaic word (also used in Hebrew) that means “solution” or “meaning.” As practiced in the Scrolls it can be a very subjective, allegorical-like method of interpretation. Thiering takes this method to new levels and applies it to Scrolls and New Testament writings where there is no reason at all to think hidden meaning, in any form, is present.

²ON BARBARA THIERING’S METHODS AND CONCLUSIONS: Most scholars have ignored Barbara Thiering’s work because it is so subjective and idiosyncratic. Fortunately, one scholar has given her work the criticism it deserves; see N. T. Wright, *Who Was Jesus?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), pp. 19-36. At this point brief mention needs to be made of Robert Eisenman, who in *James the Just in the Habakkuk Peshet* (1986) and other writings has argued that James the brother of Jesus is Qumran’s Teacher of Righteousness. So here we have another theory that argues that the Dead Sea Scrolls are either Christian writings or refer to the Christians. Virtually no one has followed Eisenman, but compared to Thiering’s views, Eisenman’s are pretty tame.

³ON THE INTERPRETATION OF RENAISSANCE ART: Jeannine O’Grody, the curator of European art at the Birmingham Museum of Art, in Alabama, lectured on “*The Da Vinci Code* and Renaissance Art” at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, in Halifax, on June 2, 2006. She commented: “The long hair and lack of beard was how Renaissance artists portrayed youth.” Later she said that the figure to the right of Jesus in Leonardo’s *Last Supper* is not Mary Magdalene but the Beloved Disciple, a youthful man. Because Brown has so much wrong about art, O’Grody added, she doubts the accuracy of much of his church history.

⁴ON THE ROLE OF MARY MAGDALENE AS A DISCIPLE OF JESUS: See Karen L. King, *The Gospel of Mary of Magdala* (Santa Rose, Calif.: Polebridge, 2003), pp. 55-56.

⁵FOR BOOKS THAT DEBUNK *THE DA VINCI CODE*: See Richard Abanes, *The Truth Behind the Da Vinci Code* (Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 2004); Darrell L. Bock, *Breaking the Da Vinci Code* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004); Carl E. Olson, *The Da Vinci Hoax: Exposing the Errors in the Da Vinci Code* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004); Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel Code: Novel Claims About Jesus, Mary Magdalene and Da Vinci* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2004). There are many others.

⁶ON THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS: There are fourteen stations of the cross, a tradition established in the Middle Ages. The stations are based on details from the Gospels, as well as later traditions, and depict Jesus’ progress from Pilate’s hall of judgment to the cross and to the tomb. These stations are marked in Jerusalem, along the Via Dolorosa, and are depicted in paintings and stone reliefs in many churches, such as the church at Rennes le Château.

⁷ON THE PLACE OF EGYPT IN THE LIFE OF JESUS: Matthew’s story of the holy family fleeing to Egypt has occasioned a great deal of speculation through the ages. Besides Baigent’s *Jesus Pa-*



pers, we also have Anne Rice, of vampire fame, guessing what Jesus might have done in Egypt, in her *Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2005).

⁸ON PAPYRI SURVIVING OUTSIDE OF ARID CLIMATES: Technically speaking, there are a few exceptions. Papyri from Greece, Italy (i.e., Pompeii and Herculaneum) and a few other places have been recovered, but in carbonized form. Had these papyri not been subjected to intense heat, they would have decomposed and been lost.

⁹ON DOUBTS ABOUT THE PANTERA LEGEND: Scholars who have studied the inscription doubt that Pantera was old enough to have impregnated Mary or anyone else in 5 or 6 B.C. Pantera may have been born no earlier than 10-12 B.C.

¹⁰FOR CRITICISM OF *THE JESUS DYNASTY*: See the appendix in Ben Witherington III, *What Have They Done with Jesus? Beyond Strange Theories and Bad History* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006).

¹¹ON HARPUR: See Tom Harpur, *The Pagan Christ: Recovering the Lost Light* (Toronto: Thomas Allen, 2004); reprinted as *The Pagan Christ: Is Blind Faith Killing Christianity?* (Toronto: Thomas Allen, 2005).

¹²ON THE IDEA THAT THE JESUS OF THE GOSPELS DERIVES FROM EGYPTIAN TRADITIONS: Harpur, *Pagan Christ*, p. 10. Much of what Harpur claims on this page is simply not true.

¹³FOR TRENCHANT CRITICISM OF *THE PAGAN CHRIST*: See Stanley E. Porter and Stephen J. Bedard, *Unmasking the Pagan Christ* (Toronto: Clements, 2006).

Chapter 11: Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up? Unfabricating His Aims and Claims

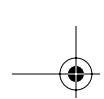
¹FOR A NEW LOOK AT JESUS IN THE CONTEXT OF JUDAISM: See E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985). For an earlier and broader criticism of Christian misinterpretation of first-century Judaism, see Sanders's, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977).

²ON JESUS AND THE SYNAGOGUE: See Bruce Chilton, *A Galilean Rabbi and His Bible: Jesus' Use of the Interpreted Scripture of His Time*, GNS 8 (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1984).

³ON THE TEXT AND MEANING OF 4Q521: See See John J. Collins, "The Works of the Messiah," *DSD* 1 (1994): 98-112.

⁴ON JESUS SITTING ON THE DIVINE THRONE: In later Christian tradition the idea of Jesus sharing God's throne is expressed explicitly, as seen in Rev 3:21: "He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne."

⁵ON THE QUESTION OF WHAT CONSTITUTED CAPITAL BLASPHEMY IN THE TIME OF JESUS: Whether or not it was blasphemous in the technical sense of the discussion of capital blasphemy in the Mishnah tractate *Sanhedrin* 6—7, where the name of God has to be pronounced and in a vain or obscene context, is an open question. Even if Jesus had uttered the divine name ("You will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Yahweh"), it is not clear that that in itself would have constituted blasphemy according to *Sanhedrin* 6—7. But in the first century the word *blasphemy* was used in a more informal sense and could apply much more broadly than what is allowed in the Mishnah. On this topic, see Darrell L. Bock, *Blasphemy and Exaltation in Judaism and the Final Examination of Jesus*, WUNT 2/106 (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1998; reprinted, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000).



⁶FOR AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF SOME OF REIMARUS'S WORK: See Charles H. Talbert, ed., *Reimarus: Fragments* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970).

⁷FOR THE CLASSIC SURVEY OF THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY "OLD QUEST" OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS: See Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of Its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede* (London: Black, 1910).

⁸ON THE THIRD QUEST OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS: See N. T. Wright, *Who Was Jesus?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992); Ben Witherington III, *The Jesus Quest: The Third Search for the Jew of Nazareth* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1995).

⁹ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE WORDING OF THE PLACARD: Most scholars accept the placard (or titulus) as authentic. They reason, and I think cogently, that if Christians had invented the titulus, the wording would have been different. Christians did not regard Jesus as the "King of the Jews." They regarded him as the Lord of the church, as the Savior of the world, as the Son of God and as the Messiah.

¹⁰ON THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS: See N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 3 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003); and Dale C. Allison Jr., *Resurrecting Jesus: The Earliest Christian Tradition and Its Interpreters* (London and New York: T & T Clark, 2005).

Appendix 1: Agrapha: Free-Floating Sayings of Jesus

¹ON THE AGRAPHA ATTRIBUTED TO JESUS: See Joachim Jeremias, *The Unknown Sayings of Jesus*, 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 1964); Wilhelm Schneemelcher, ed., *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1: *Gospels and Related Writings*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: James Clarke; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991), pp. 88-91; J. K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation Based on M. R. James* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 26-30; William D. Stroker, *Extracanonial Sayings of Jesus*, SBLRBS 18 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1989); idem, "Agrapha," *ABD* 1 (1992): 92-95; Marvin W. Meyer, *The Unknown Sayings of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1998). In *Extracanonial Sayings* Stroker provides the text of 266 sayings attributed to Jesus. Meyer assembles 200 sayings and provides brief but very useful commentary.

²ON THE CONCLUSIONS OF JEREMIAS AND HOFIUS: See Jeremias, *Unknown Sayings*, pp. 44; Otfried Hofius, "Unknown Sayings of Jesus," in *The Gospel and the Gospels*, ed. Peter Stuhlmacher (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), pp. 336-60.

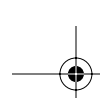
³ON THE LIMITED VALUE OF THE AGRAPHA: See Hofius, "Unknown Sayings of Jesus," p. 357. Hofius has quoted Joachim Jeremias, "Die Zuverlässigkeit der Evangelien-Überlieferung," *Junge Kirche* 6 (1938): 580. See also Robert H. Stein, "A Critique of Purportedly Authentic Agrapha," *JETS* 18 (1975): 29-35.

Appendix 2: What Should We Think About the Gospel of Judas?

¹ON THE COPTIC LANGUAGE: Coptic is the Egyptian language, which in the time after Alexander's fourth-century-B.C. conquest of the Middle East, came to adopt the Greek alphabet (along with a few additional letters). The Nag Hammadi books are also written in Coptic.

²ON THE DISCOVERY OF THE CODEX CONTAINING THE GOSPEL OF JUDAS: The convoluted and fascinating history of the codex, now called Codex Tchacos, is narrated by Herb Krosney in his





richly documented and insightful book *The Lost Gospel: The Quest for the Gospel of Judas Iscariot* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2006). The story is also featured in Andrew Cockburn, "The Judas Gospel," *National Geographic* 209, no. 9 (2006): 78-95.

³FOR THE PUBLISHED *GOSPEL OF JUDAS*: See Rodolphe Kasser, Marvin Meyer and Gregor Wurst, *The Gospel of Judas*, with additional commentary by Bart D. Ehrman (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2006). The English translation and photographs of the Coptic text are available on National Geographic's website <www.nationalgeographic.com/lostgospel>.

⁴ON THE WORD *GOSPEL*: The word translated "Gospel" is actually the Greek loan word *euangelion*. We should also note that the explicit text reads "Gospel of Judas," not "Gospel according to Judas," as we have in the New Testament Gospels and in many of the Gospels outside the New Testament. The composer of the Gospel of Judas may be implying that Judas should not be understood as the author of the Gospel; rather, the Gospel of Judas is about Judas.

⁵ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE *GOSPEL OF JUDAS*: The translations are based on Kasser, Meyer and Wurst, *Gospel of Judas*.

⁶ON THE ORIGIN OF GNOSTICISM: For more on this interesting hypothesis, see Carl B. Smith II, *No Longer Jews: The Search for Gnostic Origins* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2004).

⁷ON ROBINSON'S NEGATIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE VALUE OF THE *GOSPEL OF JUDAS*: See James M. Robinson, *From the Nag Hammadi Codices to the Gospel of Mary and the Gospel of Judas*, Institute for Antiquity and Christianity Occasional Papers 48 (Claremont, Calif.: Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, 2006).

⁸ON THE MOTIVES OF JUDAS ISCARIOT: The motives of Judas for handing Jesus over to the authorities are not clear. Was it greed (as in Matthew and John), or was it Satan (as in Luke and John)? But were these the primary factors or only contributing factors? Indeed, the New Testament provides two accounts of Judas's fate (see Mt 27:3-10, where Judas commits suicide and the priests buy the field of blood, and Acts 1:15-20, where Judas buys the field and then suffers a fatal fall). Judas is indeed a man of mystery.

⁹A CORRECTION: I need to offer a correction to what otherwise I think is a fine piece of journalism. In Andrew Cockburn's "Judas Gospel," the author summarizes my assessment of the *Gospel of Judas* in these words: "this tale is meaningless fiction" (p. 91). No, it is not meaningless fiction; far from it. The *Gospel of Judas* is loaded with meaning, especially for second-century mystics and Gnostics, who understood the world and mission of Jesus in very different terms. My point, given in my words, which Cockburn faithfully records, is summed up here: "There is nothing in the *Gospel of Judas* that tells us anything we could consider historically reliable" (also p. 91). I stand by that statement, but not by Cockburn's interpretation of my comment. What I have suggested in this brief study is that the imaginative tale in *Judas* may in fact reflect an authentic tradition, in which it was remembered that Judas was an important disciple and that Jesus had given him a private assignment of some sort. This is what may be hinted at in Jn 13. The *Gospel of Judas* alerts us to this possibility, even if we judge its narrative to be wholly fictional.

