

## The New Testament Canon

### New Testament Books Treated as Traditional Scripture by Early Writers

*Italic type indicates that the writer either does not mention the book or expressed some doubt about the status of the book.*

<b>Athanasius (b. 296)</b>	<b>Origen (b. 185)</b>	<b>Irenaeus (b. 130)</b>	<b>Marcion* (b. 85)</b>
Matthew	Matthew	Matthew	
Mark	Mark	Mark	
Luke	Luke	Luke	Luke
John	John	John	
Acts	Acts	Acts	
Romans	Romans	Romans	Romans
1 Corinthians	1 Corinthians	1 Corinthians	1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians	2 Corinthians	2 Corinthians	2 Corinthians
Galatians	Galatians	Galatians	Galatians
Ephesians	Ephesians	Ephesians	Ephesians
Philippians	Philippians	Philippians	Philippians
Colossians	Colossians	Colossians	Colossians
1 Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians	2 Thessalonians	2 Thessalonians	2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy	1 Timothy	1 Timothy	
2 Timothy	2 Timothy	2 Timothy	
Titus	Titus	Titus	
Philemon	Philemon	Philemon	Philemon
Hebrews	Hebrews	<i>Hebrews</i>	
James	<i>James</i>	<i>James</i>	
1 Peter	1 Peter	1 Peter	
2 Peter	<i>2 Peter</i>	<i>2 Peter</i>	
1 John	1 John	1 John	
2 John	<i>2 John</i>	<i>2 John</i>	
3 John	<i>3 John</i>	<i>3 John</i>	
Jude	<i>Jude</i>	<i>Jude</i>	
Revelation**	Revelation	Revelation	

\*Marcion's views were peculiar to his sect. He was aware of the fact that many of the other books were read as scripture in most churches.

\*\*The Revelation of John was first received and then rejected by many churches in Asia Minor.

## **Early Christian Authorities**

An early Christian authority is included in this survey if he or it gives important evidence on the development of the canon of the New Testament (perhaps even having some influence on it) and did so before ~400 CE, when the first complete manuscripts of the [Vulgate](#) were issued. The early 'authorities' fall into these categories:

- early Church fathers (Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, Didymus the Blind)
- early heretics and their followers (Marcion and Marcionites, Valentinus and the Valentinians)
- lists of canonical books (Muratorian Canon, Athanasius' Festal Epistle)
- a single manuscript collection (codex Sinaiticus)
- series of manuscripts (Peshitta, Vulgate)

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Date CE</b>	<b>Form of evidence provided on the development of the canon of the New Testament</b>
<a href="#">Ignatius of Antioch</a>	~110	7 letters with quotations and allusions to Christian writings as scripture. There are no citations by name.
<a href="#">Polycarp of Smyrna</a>	~110	1 letter with ~100 quotations and allusions to Christian writings as scripture. There are no citations by name.
<a href="#">Marcion</a>	~140	founded a sect with its own "New Testament" collection. There was one Gospel, based mostly on the Gospel according to Luke
<a href="#">Valentinus</a>	140-150	Valentinus and his followers - Heracleon, Ptolemy, Marcus - were Gnostic heretics so their doctrines mostly survive in the writings of the orthodox, such as <a href="#">Irenaeus</a> , who summarized the Valentinian views before attacking them. The <a href="#">Gospel of Truth</a> from Nag Hammadi probably derives from the Valentinians, but this is not certain.
<a href="#">Justin Martyr</a>	150-160	many of his writings survive; he was the most prolific Christian writer up to his time.
<a href="#">Irenaeus</a>	~180	two of his writings survive in translations (Latin and Armenian). There are quotations and allusions to Christian writings as scripture, and citations by name.
<a href="#">Clement</a>	180-200	many of his writings survive; in them are about 8000 citations - over 1/3 of them from pagan sources. There are citations by name.
<a href="#">Tertullian</a>	200-210	Tertullian was the most prolific writer of the Latin Fathers in pre-Nicene times (before 325 CE). There are citations by name.

<a href="#">Muratorian Canon</a>	200-300	a manuscript discovered in the Ambrosian Library in Milan with a catalogue (in Latin) of the New Testament writings with comments
<a href="#">Origen</a>	220-350	only a small part of his works survives, but this fills volumes There are citations by name.
<a href="#">Eusebius</a>	300-330	much of the works of Eusebius survives, but here we only use his famous classification in <a href="#">[Eusebius]</a>
<a href="#">codex Sinaiticus</a>	~350	a manuscript discovered in 1859 containing a 4th-century New Testament
<a href="#">Athanasius</a>	~367	his 39th Festal Epistle of 367 CE has a list of canonical books
<a href="#">Didymus the Blind</a>	350-398	some of his exegetical writings have survived, including six commentaries discovered in 1941
<a href="#">Peshitta</a>	~400	a series of manuscripts of the Bible in Syriac including 22 New Testament books
<a href="#">Vulgate</a>	~400	a series of manuscripts (over 10,000) of the Bible in Latin, whose New Testament coincides (more or less) with the present one

**<http://www.ntcanon.org/authorities.shtml>**

## **Cross Reference Table: Writings and Authorities**

Each symbol in the large table below corresponds to a specific authority and a specific writing.

The symbols summarize the opinion of the authority about the writing.

If the symbol is blue, select it with the mouse to jump to the evidence.

The symbols have this meaning:

### **Symbol**

### **Opinion of Authority**

- ✓ accepted; true; scriptural; or quoted from very approvingly
- ✓ possible approving quotation or allusion
- ✗ acceptable, but only with changes
- ? dubious; disputed; or useful for inspiration
- ✘ spurious (in the classification of Eusebius)
- ✘ false; heretical; heterodox; quoted from very disapprovingly
- not mentioned or quoted from; opinion unknown

	Ig	Po	M	Va	JM	Ir	C	T	MC	O	E	CS	A	D	P	V
<a href="#">Gospel according to Matthew</a>	✓	✓	✘	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Gospel according to Mark</a>	·	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Gospel according to Luke</a>	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Gospel according to John</a>	·	·	✘	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Acts</a>	✓	✓	✘	·	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Romans</a>	✓	✓	✗	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">I Corinthians</a>	✓	✓	✗	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">II Corinthians</a>	·	✓	✗	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Galatians</a>	·	✓	✗	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Ephesians</a>	✓	✓	✗	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Philippians</a>	·	✓	✗	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Colossians</a>	✓	·	✗	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">I Thessalonians</a>	✓	✓	✗	·	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">II Thessalonians</a>	·	✓	✗	·	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">I Timothy</a>	·	✓	✘	·	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">II Timothy</a>	·	✓	✘	·	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Titus</a>	·	·	✘	·	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Philemon</a>	·	·	✗	·	·	·	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	·	✓	✓
<a href="#">Hebrews</a>	·	✓	·	·	·	✓	✓	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">James</a>	·	·	·	·	·	✓	·	·	·	?	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">I Peter</a>	·	✓	·	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

<u>II Peter</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	?	?	✓	✓	✓	.	✓
<u>I John</u>	.	✓	.	✓	.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<u>II John</u>	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	✓	?	?	✓	✓	×	.	✓
<u>III John</u>	.	✓	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	?	?	✓	✓	×	.	✓
<u>Jude</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	.	✓
<u>Revelation of John</u>	.	.	.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	.	✓
<u>Gospel of Thomas</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	×	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Gospel of Truth</u>	.	.	.	✓	.	×	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Gospel of the Twelve</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	.	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Gospel of Peter</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	?	×	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Gospel of Basilides</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	×	.	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Gospel of the Egyptians</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	×	.	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Gospel of the Hebrews</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	?	×	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Gospel of Matthias</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	×	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Traditions of Matthias</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Preaching of Peter</u>	.	.	.	✓	.	.	✓	.	.	×	.	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Acts of Andrew</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Acts of Paul</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	.	?	×	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Acts of John</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	.	.	.	.	.
<u>Epistle to the Laodiceans</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	?	.	.	.	.	.	.	✓
<u>I Clement</u>	.	.	.	.	.	✓	✓	.	.	?	.	.	.	✓	.	.
<u>Epistle of Barnabas</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	?	×	✓	.	✓	.	.
<u>Didache</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	?	×	.	?	✓	.	.
<u>Shepherd of Hermas</u>	.	.	.	.	.	✓	✓	?	?	?	×	✓	?	✓	.	.
<u>Apocalypse of Peter</u>	.	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	✓	.	×	.	.	.	.	.
	<u>Ig</u>	<u>Po</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Va</u>	<u>JM</u>	<u>Ir</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>MC</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>CS</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>V</u>

<http://www.ntcanon.org/table.shtml>

# Disputed Books of the New Testament

The table below shows which of the disputed New Testament books and other writings are included in catalogs of canonical books up to the eighth century. **Y** indicates that the book is plainly listed as *Holy Scripture*; **N** indicates that the author lists it in a class of *disputed* books; **M** indicates that the list *may* be construed to include the book as Holy Scripture; **X** indicates that the book is *expressly rejected* by the author. An **S** indicates that the author does not mention the book at all, which implies its rejection. See notes on the authorities and books following.

## KEY TO BOOKS

Shep. - [Shepherd of Hermas](#)  
 Apoc. - [Apocalypse of Peter](#)  
 Barn. - [Epistle of Barnabas](#)  
 Clem. - [Epistle of Clement](#)

1. Greek & Latin	Date	Heb.	Jas.	Jn.	Pet.	Jude	Rev.	Shep.	Apoc.	Barn.	Clem.
<a href="#">Muratorian Fragment</a>	170	S	S	M	S	Y	Y	X	N	S	S
<a href="#">Origen</a>	225	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	S	S	S	S
<a href="#">Eusebius of Caesarea</a>	324	Y	N	N	N	N	N	X	X	X	S
<a href="#">Cyril of Jerusalem</a>	348	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	S	S	S
<a href="#">Cheltenham list</a>	360	S	S	Y	Y	S	Y	S	S	S	S
<a href="#">Council of Laodicea</a>	363	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	S	S	S
<a href="#">Athanasius</a>	367	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	S	S	S
<a href="#">Gregory of Nazianzus</a>	380	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	S	S	S
<a href="#">Amphilocius of Iconium</a>	380	Y	N	N	N	N	N	S	S	S	S
<a href="#">Rufinus</a>	380	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	S	S	S
<a href="#">Epiphanius</a>	385	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	S	S
<a href="#">Jerome</a>	390	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	S	S
<a href="#">Augustine</a>	397	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	S	S
<a href="#">3rd Council of Carthage</a>	397	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	S	S

<a href="#">Codex Claromontanus</a>	400	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S
<a href="#">Letter of Innocent I</a>	405	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	X	S	S
<a href="#">Decree of Gelasius</a>	550	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	S	S	S
<a href="#">Isadore of Seville</a>	625	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	S	S
<a href="#">John of Damascus</a>	730	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	S	S
<b>2. Syrian</b>	Date	Heb.	Jas.	Jn.	Pet.	Jude	Rev.	Shep.	Apoc.	Barn.	Clem.
<a href="#">Apostolic Canons</a>	380	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	S	S	Y
<a href="#">Peshitta Version</a>	400	Y	Y	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<a href="#">Report of Junilius</a>	550	Y	N	N	N	N	N	S	S	S	S

## NOTES

The most satisfactory treatment in English of the Church's New Testament canon is Bruce Metzger's *The Canon of the New Testament: its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987). Still useful is the earlier study by B.F. Westcott, *A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament* (London: MacMillan, 1855; 6th edition 1889; reprinted, Grand Rapids, 1980). For a popular conservative survey see Norman Geisler and William Nix, *General Introduction to the Bible* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986).

**Muratorian Fragment.** The oldest known list of New Testament books, discovered by Muratori in a seventh century manuscript. The list itself is dated to about 170 because its author refers to the episcopate of Pius I of Rome (died 157) as recent. He mentions only two epistles of John, without describing them. The Apocalypse of Peter is mentioned as a book which "some of us will not allow to be read in church." [See English text.](#)

**Origen.** An influential teacher in Alexandria, the chief city of Egypt. His canon is known from the compilation made by Eusebius for his *Church History* (see below). He accepted Hebrews as Scripture while entertaining doubts about its author. [See English text.](#)

**Eusebius of Caesarea.** An early historian of the Church. His list was included in his *Church History*. He ascribed Hebrews to Paul. [See English text.](#)

**Cyril of Jerusalem.** Bishop of Jerusalem. The omission of Revelation from his list is due to a general reaction against this book in the east after excessive use was made of it by the Montanist cults. [See English text.](#)

**Cheltenham list.** A catalog of uncertain date contained in a tenth-century Latin manuscript of miscellaneous content, probably from Africa. [See English text.](#)

**Council of Laodicea.** The authenticity of this list of canonical books has been doubted by many scholars because it is absent from various manuscripts containing the decrees of the regional (Galatian) Council. The list may have been added later. On the omission of Revelation see *Cyril of Jerusalem* above. [See English text.](#)

**Athanasius.** Bishop of Alexandria. His list was published as part of his *Easter Letter* in 367. After the list he declares, "these are the wells of salvation, so that he who thirsts may be satisfied with the sayings in these. Let no one add to these. Let nothing be taken away." [See English text.](#)

**Gregory of Nazianzus.** Bishop of Constantinople from 378 to 382. On the omission of Revelation see *Cyril of Jerusalem* above. [See English text.](#)

**Amphilocius of Iconium.** Bishop of Iconium in Galatia. [See English text.](#)

**Rufinus.** An elder in the church in Aquileia (northeast Italy), and a friend of Jerome. The Latin text is given in Westcott, appendix D. [See English text.](#)

**Epiphanius.** Bishop of Salamis (isle of Cyprus) from 367 to 402. The Greek text is given in Westcott, appendix D. [See English text.](#)

**Jerome.** Born near Aquileia, lived in Rome for a time, and spent most of his later life as a monk in Syria and Palestine. He was the most learned churchman of his time, and was commissioned by the bishop of Rome to produce an authoritative Latin version (the *Vulgate*). The Latin text is given in Westcott, appendix D. [See English text.](#)

**Augustine.** Bishop of Hippo (in the Roman colony on the northern coast of western Africa). The Latin text is given in Westcott, appendix D. [See English text.](#)

**Third Council of Carthage.** Not a general council but a regional council of African bishops, much under the influence of Augustine. [See English text.](#)

**Codex Claromontanus.** A stichometric catalog from the third century is inserted between Philemon and Hebrews in this sixth century Greek-Latin manuscript of the epistles of Paul. The list does not have Hebrews, but

neither does it have Philipians and 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and so many scholars have supposed that these four books dropped out by an error of transcription, the scribe's eye jumping from the end of the word *ephesious* (Ephesians) to the end of *ebraious* (Hebrews). Besides the books indicated on the table the list includes the apocryphal *Acts of Paul*. [See English text.](#)

**Letter of Innocent I.** A letter from the bishop of Rome to the bishop of Toulouse. The Latin text is given in Westcott, appendix D. [See English text.](#)

**Decree of Gelasius.** Traditionally ascribed to Gelasius, bishop of Rome from 492 to 496, and thought to be promulgated by him as president of a council of 70 bishops in Rome, but now regarded by most scholars as spurious, and probably composed by an Italian churchman in the sixth century. The Latin text is given in Westcott, appendix D. [See English text.](#)

**Isadore of Seville.** Archbishop of Seville (Spain), and founder of a school in that city. His list appears in an encyclopedia he compiled for his students. The Latin text is given in Westcott, appendix D.

**John of Damascus.** An eminent theologian of the Eastern Church, born in Damascus, but a monk in Jerusalem for most of his life. His list is derived from the writings of Epiphanius. The Greek text is given in Westcott, appendix D. [See English text.](#)

**Apostolic Canons.** One of many additions made by the final editor of an ancient Syrian book of church order called *The Apostolic Constitutions*. The whole document purports to be from the apostles, but this imposture is not taken seriously by any scholar today. Nevertheless, the work is useful as evidence for the opinions of a part of the Syrian churches towards the end of the fourth century. The list of canonical books was probably added about the year 380. On the omission of Revelation see *Cyril of Jerusalem* above. [See English text.](#)

**Peshitta Version.** The old Syriac version did not include the four disputed books indicated on the table. These were not generally received as Scripture in the Syrian churches until the ninth century.

**Report of Junilius.** An African bishop of the sixth century. After visiting the Syrian churches he wrote a work describing their practices, in which his list is given. See Latin text in Westcott, appendix D.

## Sub-Apostolic Literature

*For a brief survey of works of this class and their place in the early Church, see Metzger, ch. 7*

**The Shepherd of Hermas.** A autobiographical tale about a certain Hermas who is visited by an angelic Pastor (Shepherd), who imparts some legalistic teaching to him in the form of an allegory. Written probably in Rome around A.D. 100.

**The Apocalypse of Peter.** This work expands upon the Olivet discourse (Mat. 24-25) with descriptions of the last judgment and vivid scenes of heaven and hell. Written about A.D. 130.

**The Epistle of Barnabas.** A legalistic but anti-Jewish discourse on Christian life falsely ascribed to Barnabas, the missionary companion of Paul. Written probably about A.D. 120 in Italy.

**The Epistle of Clement.** A letter written about A.D. 100 to the church in Corinth from the church in Rome, and traditionally ascribed to Clement of Rome. The author has heard that the disorderly Corinthians have now ousted their elders, and in this letter he urges them to repent of the action.

# Ancient Heretical Literature

Much of the heretical literature of the second century was produced by the Gnostic sects. The teaching of the Gnostics was deeply heretical. Their Christology is called *Docetic*, because they asserted that Christ only seemed (Greek, *docein*) to have a body of flesh, but that he was entirely a spirit being, like the angels. They made this assertion because they were much influenced by certain Greek philosophers, who taught that material things were necessarily corrupt, and that matter itself was either illusory or always at odds with spiritual realities. The Gnostics saw Jesus only as a divine revealer of spiritual truths, and believed that salvation was attained by those few who were able to understand his mysterious teachings and actions; they believed in a spiritual resurrection through the attainment of wisdom. The Gnostic cults died out during the fourth century, and their literature was almost entirely lost. Before the middle of the twentieth century, modern scholars were dependent upon descriptions and quotations of this literature in the writings of the orthodox Church Fathers who opposed it in ancient times. But around 1945 a substantial collection of ancient Gnostic literature came to light in several Coptic manuscripts discovered in the neighborhood of Nag Hammadi, Egypt. The following extracts are from published English translations of these manuscripts, and they illustrate the typical themes of Gnostic teaching.



## ***The Gospel According to Thomas***

Below is an English translation of the first 28 lines of the Gospel According to Thomas, from the edition *The Gospel According to Thomas: Coptic Text Established and Translated by A. Guillaumont, H.-Ch. Puech, G. Quispel, W. Till, and Yassah 'Abd Al Masih* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1959), pp. 3-5.

"These are the secret words which the living Jesus spoke and Didymos Judas Thomas wrote. And he said, Whoever finds the explanation of these word will not taste death. Jesus said: Let him who seeks, not cease seeking until he finds, and when he finds, he will be troubled, and when he has been troubled, he will marvel

and he will reign over the All. Jesus said: If those who lead you say to you: 'See, the Kingdom is in heaven,' then the birds of the heaven will precede you. If they say to you: 'It is in the sea,' then the fish will precede you. But the Kingdom is within you and it is without you. If you will know yourselves, then you will be known and you will know that you are the sons of the Living Father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you are in poverty and you are poverty. Jesus said: The man old in days will not hesitate to ask a little child of seven days about the place of Life, and he will live. For many who are first shall become last and they shall become a single one. Jesus said: Know what is in thy sight, and what is hidden from thee will be revealed to thee. For there is nothing hidden which will not be manifest. His disciples asked Him, they said to Him: Wouldst thou that we fast and how should we pray and should we give alms and what diet should we observe? Jesus said: Do not lie; and do not do what you hate, for all things are manifest before Heaven. For there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed and there is nothing covered that shall remain without being uncovered. Jesus said: Blessed is the lion which the man eats and the lion will become man; and cursed is the man whom the lion eats and the lion will become man."

### ***The Gospel of Phillip***

The following lines from *The Gospel of Phillip* illustrate the typical *Docetic* Christology of the Gnostic sects. The English translation is by Wesley W. Isenberg, in James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library in English, translated and introduced by members of the Coptic Gnostic Library Project of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, Claremont, California*, third edition (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988), pp. 144-45.

"Jesus took them all by stealth, for he did not appear as he was, but in the manner in which they would be able to see him . . . He appeared to the angels as an angel, and to men as a man. Because of this his word hid itself from everyone . . . When he appeared to his disciples in glory on the mount . . . he made the disciples great that they might be able to see him in his greatness."

### ***The Second Treatise of the Great Seth***

The following portion of *The Second Treatise of the Great Seth* illustrates how the Gnostics viewed the Old Testament. The words *Hebdomad*, meaning "the seventh god," and *Archon*, "the ruler," are epithets they used in reference to the God of Israel. English translation by Roger A. Bullard and Joseph A. Gibbons, in James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library in English, translated and introduced by members of the Coptic Gnostic Library Project of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, Claremont, California*, third edition (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988), pp. 368-69.

"Adam was a laughingstock, since he was made a counterfeit type of man by the Hebdomad, as if he had become stronger than I and my brothers .

. . . Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were a laughingstock . . . David was a laughingstock . . . the prophets were laughingstocks . . . they came into being as counterfeits . . . Moses, a 'faithful servant,' was a laughingstock, having been named 'The Friend' since they perversely bore witness concerning him who never knew me . . . the Archon was a laughingstock because he said, 'I am God, and there is none greater than I. I alone am the Father, the Lord, and there is none other beside me. I am a jealous God, who brings the sins of the fathers upon the children for three and four generations,' as if he had become stronger than I and my brothers. Thus he was in an empty glory . . . I did not succumb to them as they had planned. But I was not afflicted at all . . . I did not die in reality but in appearance . . . I removed the shame from me . . . It was another . . . who drank the gall and the vinegar . . . who bore the cross . . . upon whom they placed the crown of thorns. But I was rejoicing in the height over all . . . I was laughing at their ignorance. I am Christ, the Son of Man."



The Nag Hammadi Codices