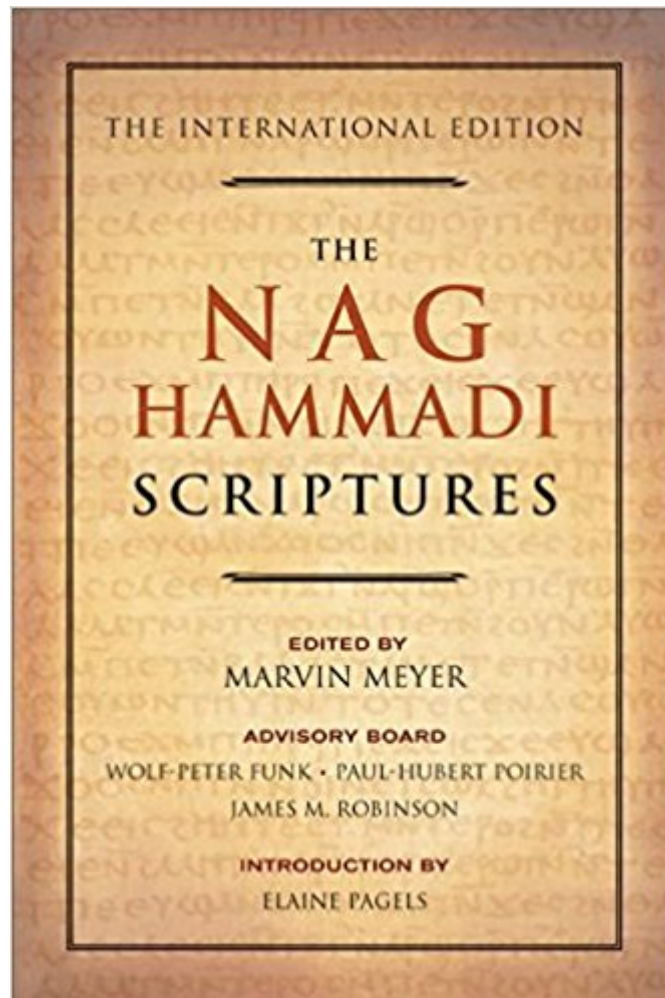




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The Nag Hammadi Scriptures: The International Edition



Synopsis

The Definitive Collection of Gnostic Writings The year is 1945. At the foot of a cliff along the Nile River, near the city of Nag Hammadi, an Egyptian peasant unearths a large storage jar containing ancient manuscripts. The discovery turns out to be one of the greatest archaeological discoveries of the past century. A treasure of fourth-century texts, the manuscripts are the scriptures of the ancient mystical tradition commonly called Gnosticism, from the Greek *gnosis*, that is, secret knowledge. It is a discovery that challenges everything we thought we knew about the early Christian church, ancient Judaism, and Greco-Roman religions. The Nag Hammadi Scriptures is the most complete and up-to-date English-language edition of these sacred texts from Egypt. It is full of treatises, testimonies, and secret books that had been lost for centuries. In addition to gospels purportedly by the apostles Thomas and Philip, and the revelations of James, Peter, and Paul, this collection also includes the Gospel of Mary and the controversial Gospel of Judas. The documents have been newly translated by a team of prominent international scholars. This volume also features introductory essays and extensive notes to help readers understand the context and significance of these texts that have revolutionized the study of early Christianity and ancient religious thought.

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Customer Reviews

Marvin Meyer is one of the foremost scholars on early Christianity and texts about Jesus outside the New Testament. He is Grisct Professor of Bible and Christian Studies at Chapman University in Orange, California. Among his recent books are *The Gospel of Judas*, *The Gnostic Gospels of Jesus*, *The Gospels of Mary*, *The Gospel of Thomas*, and *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*. James M.

Robinson, consultant for this collection, is widely known for his groundbreaking contribution as the permanent secretary of UNESCO's International Committee for the Nag Hammadi codices, and his many published works on Gnostic texts and the Sayings Gospel Q.

First, in the interest of full disclosure, let me state my views on translation. A translator's job is to translate. Not to improve. Not to bring in accordance with current ideas, values, or prejudices. Not to make choppy style clean. Not to make complex ideas (apparently) simple. A translator's job is to present a text as accurately as possible in the target language. I realize that there are other approaches to translation - but this is the one that I feel best serves both the original author and the reader. This is not an approach taken by the Late Dr. Meyer in this translation. It is clear from the introduction - and on every following page - that Dr. Meyer's primary commitment was to making the Nag Hammadi library palatable to modern readers - rather than presenting the text accurately. This is demonstrated throughout - and, to give credit, and least Dr. Meyer and the other translators make no excuses for their choices. They make it clear that they have consistently changed the meaning of the text to make the language fit current ideas. He says, very directly, "We have given special attention to issues of gender in our translations, and we employ inclusive language where the spirit of the Coptic text recommends it and where it does not compromise the accuracy of the translations." The spirit of the Coptic text? I'm not clear that Dr. Meyer - or anyone else, for that matter - was qualified to make that determination. His job - and that of the other translators - is to communicate what the text says. Not what they may believe the spirit recommends. And I can only disagree with Dr. Meyer that his changes do not compromise the accuracy of the translations. Putting in something that isn't there, based on a sense of the "spirit" of a text is, by definition compromising accuracy. When the text says "Son of Man" that should not - in my view - be mistranslated as "Child of Humanity." When the text says "Father," that should not become "Parent." When the text says, "He," that should not be transformed into "It." The text says what it says. It's the job of the translators to present that. Modern values may - or may not - be more advanced. But those ideas are not what's in the text. And - as a reader - I want to see what is there. Not what the Late Dr. Meyer and his colleagues felt should be there. In addition, the annotation adds very little value. To give credit - again - where deserved - many notes to mention that the translators have changed the clear meaning of the text. But, too often, the notes are simply Dr. Meyer's digressions on other similar mythologies which may or may not have any relevance to the text. Like another reviewer, I look forward to a digitized version of the original, 1977 translation. That translation is not without challenges - it's harder to read, and significantly less clear in many places. But, since it was

published before Gnosticism became hip - and profitable - the original translation demonstrates a clear and consistent commitment to the text. I wish that were also the case with this important - but deeply flawed - work.

Excellent book, Somewhat challenging to read some documents but worth the effort. Provides an interesting insight to the dynamics of early Christianity and their understanding of the Christ event. Recommend using with Lost Christianities. Both books help provide a broad understanding of Gnostic Christian thought. An excellent complimentary tool to use when studying the canonical scriptures. Helpful to be in a study group when using these books.

The late great Marvin Meyer was my go-to guy for all things scriptures. I bought one for our home and enjoyed it so much, bought for a friend as well. This is the most complete volume of Gnostic manuscripts including the Gospel of Mary as well as other Gnostic gospels and sacred texts. This volume also includes notes, tables, glossary, index, etc. for further study and understanding. Incredibly thick and over 850 pages of fascinating information written in everyday language for easier comprehension.

Perhaps the greatest Gnostic scriptures ever published and this revised edition is very well interpreted and easy to read. A must for anyone with an interest in Gnostic Christianity.

still working on this one fine book thanks AADeL

Excellent read if you want to look deeper into what was left out of present day scripture.

Very interesting book.

While reading this you will notice that the author- or I should say Meyer, the one responsible for transcribing and translating it- did not add words to areas lost as the Papacy did to the various codices written from the Council of Nicaea and onward. I am very happy that people who transcribed the Nag Hammadi codices or scrolls hid them away in jars by burial- this of course is a good strategy for any scholar who witnesses tyranny in the likeness of the early Papacy, former Nazi Germany, the former USSR, etcetera. God bless the people who wrote this and those who continue to publish it. I might bury myself with this book and a couple others just in case it happens

again. I am still studying this bible, and probably will continue studying it for the rest of my life. I will note that there are some dead metaphors and some metaphors that are obscure; however, with a little rest and meditation on such verses one becomes more enabled to grasp at their meaning.

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