

Non-Canonical Gospels



P.Oxy. I 1

Early Christian Gospels		
AD 50	Mark (?)	Q – Sayings Gospel (?)
AD 70	Matthew (?)	Luke (?)
AD 90	John (?)	
AD 110	Gospel of Thomas (?)	
AD 130	Gospel of the Hebrews (?)	Gospel of the Ebionites (?) Gospel of the Nazoreans (?)
	Gospel of the Egyptians (?)	Gospel of Luke (Recension of Marcion ?)
AD 150	Dialogue of the Savior (?)	Gospel of Judas Gospel of Truth
	Gospel of Peter (?)	Infancy Gospel of Thomas (?) Protevangelium of James (?)
AD 180	Gospel of Mary (?)	Secret Gospel of Mark (?)
AD 200	Secret Gospel of James (?)	Gospel of Philip (?)

Gospel of the Hebrews, Gospel of the Ebionites Gospel of the Nazoreans, Gospel of the Egyptians

■ Gospel of the Hebrews

- Only known from Patristic citations: Clement, Origen, Didymus the Blind, Jerome
- Appears to have been principally used and composed by Jewish Christians

■ Gospel of the Ebionites

- Only known from Patristic citations in Epiphanius
- Appears to have been principally used and composed by Jewish Christians

■ Gospel of the Nazareans

- Only known from Patristic citations: Origen, Eusebius, Jerome
- Appears to have been principally used and composed by Jewish Christians

■ Gospel of the Egyptians

- Only known from Patristic citations in Clement of Alexandria
- Maybe so named to distinguish it from the Gospel of the Hebrews

Marcionite Recension of Luke

“Marcion expressly and openly used the knife, not the pen, since he made such an excision of the Scriptures as suited his own subject-matter.”

Tertullian, *Praescr.* 38.9

- Written in Rome c. A.D. 140
- No longer extant, only known through Patristic writers: Tertullian, Adamantius, Epiphanius
- Epiphanius gives the most detailed explanation in *Pan.* 42
- Marcion excised many passages from Luke, it started where Luke 3:1 currently is: “Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar . . .”

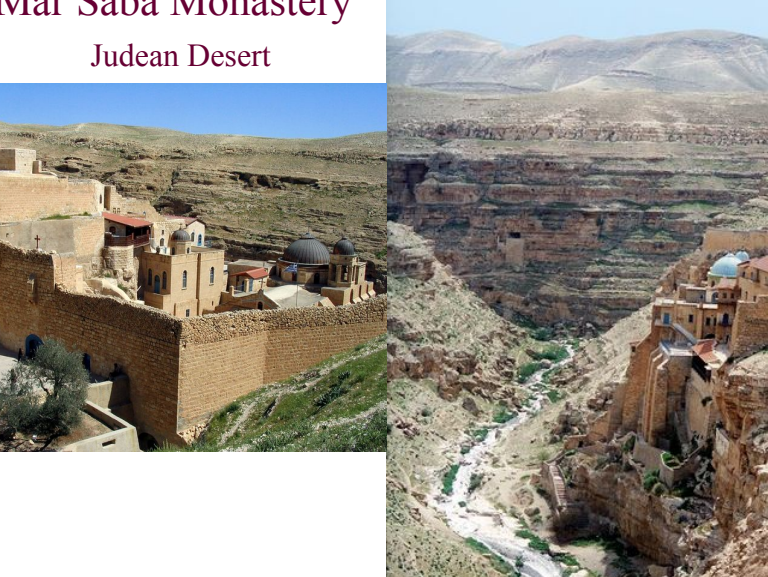
Beyond that, he circumcised the Gospel according to Luke, taking out everything written about the birth of the Lord and removing many passages from his teaching, those in which he plainly acknowledged the Creator of this world as his Father. Thus Marcion persuaded his disciples that he was more truthful than the apostles who transmitted the gospel, . . .

Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.27.2

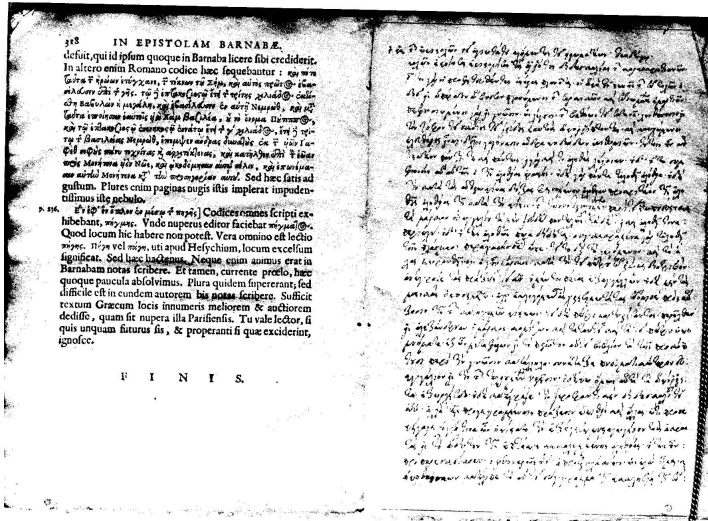
Secret Gospel of Mark

Mar Saba Monastery

Judean Desert

The image consists of two photographs of the Mar Saba Monastery. The left photograph is a close-up view of the monastery's stone walls and domes, showing the intricate masonry and the surrounding desert landscape. The right photograph is a wide-angle view of the monastery built into a cliff overlooking a deep canyon, with a river flowing through the valley below. The monastery's architecture is a blend of traditional and modern styles, featuring stone walls and domes. The surrounding landscape is arid and hilly, with a clear blue sky.

Secret Gospel of Mark



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE TEXT. Plate I: folio 1 recto.

+ καὶ τὴν ἐπιστάμην τοῦ ἀγνώστου κλήματος τοῦ στροματισμοῦ θεοδόρου
καὶ ἀπορίας ἐπιστάμους τὰς ἀρίστης διδασκαλίας τῶν κορυφαίων
οὐτοὶ γὰρ οἱ προφητευθέντες ἀστέρες πλατῆναι ἐν τῇ σφετέρᾳ τῇ ἐκστάσει δι-
1 ὅπου καὶ ἀπαιτοῦν ἀπαιτοῦν πλάσιμον τὸν σαρκατικὸν καὶ ἐνοσημὸν ἀμαρτανῶν
2 πεφωτισμένων εἰς τὴν γνῶσιν· οὗ λέγονται· τὸν βαβυλὸν τοῦ σαυαῖ· λαυθινοὶν γὰρ
ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ σκότους τοῦ φεσθῆναι αὐτοὺς ἀποφωτισμένους· καὶ καυχόμενοι
3 ἀνεκρίβου· εἰνα· δοῦλοι γαργάνου ἀναρροδοῦντες ἐνθυμῶν τοῖσιν οὐκ ἐν
τοῦτον πύττει τὰ καὶ πύττει· εἰ γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἀλγὺς λέγονται· οὐδ' οὕτω μα-
4 φωνοῦν ἀνὰ αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀλγῆτι ἀφαιρῆ· οὐδὲ γὰρ πάντα τὰ ἀλγῆτι ἀλγῆτι· οὐδὲ
5 τὴν κατὰ τὴν ἀφαιρῆτις δοξῆς φανερῶν τὴν ἀλγῆτι προκρινῶν τῇ ἀλγῆ
6 τοῦ ἀλγῆτι τῇ κατὰ τὴν πίστιν τὴν τῶν τῶν θνητοῦσιν καὶ περὶ τοῦ θεοῦτοῦ καὶ
7 τὰ μάρκοι εὐαγγέλιον· τὰ μὲν φέρεται παυλαῖ· τὰ δὲ εἰ καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς πίστεως
8 περὶ τῆς ἀλγῆτις παραδοξῆς· σινγκρινῶν γὰρ τὰ ἀλγῆτι
9 τὸ πλάσιμον παρακαρσοῦται οὕτω· τοῦτο δὴ τὸ λέγονται· καὶ τὸ δὲ
10 15 λὰς μεταρῶν· οἱ γοῦν μάρκοι· κατὰ τὴν τὸν πῆρτον ἐν διαρῇ μαρτυρίας
ἀνέγραψε τὰς πράξεις τοῦ κυρίου· οὐ μόνον πιστὰς ἐκτελέζων· οὐδὲ γὰρ τὴν
11 μυστικὰν ὑποσημαίνων· ἀλλ' ἐκτελέζωντες δὲ χρησιμότητας δοῦμαι πρὸς αὐ-
12 ξηγὰν τῆς τῶν κατηχουμένων πίστεως· τοῖς δὲ πῆρτον μαρτυροῦσιν· παρῶν
13 καὶ ἀνεξήτῶν· οἱ μάρκοι· κοῖνους καὶ ταυτοῖς καὶ τὸ τὸ πῆρτον οὐ
14 μόνιμα· ἔξ ἐν μεταρῶν εἰς τὸ πρῶτον αὐτὸν βιβλίον καὶ τὸς πρῶτος
15 20 τῶν περὶ τὴν γνῶσιν κατάλληλα· συνάξας πνευματικῶν καὶ εἰ·
αρχαῖος ἐκ τῆς τῶν τελειομένων χρήσιν οὐδένα ὅμως αὐτὰ τὰ ἀπὸρῆ·
τὰ ἐξωφωτιστῶν· οὐδὲ κατέγραψε τὴν ἐκφωτισμένην διδασκαλίαν τοῦ
16 κυρίου ἀλλὰ τὰς προσηγορευμένας πράξεις ἐπιτέλει καὶ ἀλλὰς ἐν πρῶ-
21 25 πῆρτον λέγει τὰ ἐν ἱστορίᾳ τῇ ἐξήρτων μυστηριωδῶν τῶν δοκῶν
τὰς εἰς τὸ ἀδύνατον τῆς ἐπίστασις ἐκκαλυμμένης ἀληθείας· οὕτως οὐκ
προσηγορευμένους· οἱ φανεροὶ οὐδ' ἀποφωτισμένοι· οὗ ἐγὼ οὐκ· καὶ
ἀποφωτιστῶν κατεῖλε τοῦ αὐτοῦ σύγγραμματος τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ ἐν·

16 κυρίου: MS $\overline{\kappa\upsilon\iota}$, so again in 24 and II.18 (*his*)
 26 ἐπτάκις: sic
 27 κας: sic (without accent)
 19 ταυταυτοῦ: sic
 23 ἀροφανταῖν: MS perhaps ἰ
 27 ἀποθήσκων: *νησ* written over other letters now illegible

[illegible]

Clement and the Secret Gospel of Mark

Now of the things they keep saying about the divinely inspired Gospel according to Mark, some are altogether falsifications, and others, even if they do contain some true elements, nevertheless are not reported truly. For the true things being mixed with inventions, are falsified, so that, as the saying goes, even the salt loses its savor.

As for Mark, then, during Peter's stay in Rome he wrote an account of the Lord's doings, not, however, declaring all of them, nor yet hinting at the secret ones, but selecting what he thought most useful for increasing the faith of those who were being instructed. But when Peter died a martyr, Mark came over to Alexandria, bringing both his own notes and those of Peter, from which he transferred to his former books the things suitable to whatever makes for progress toward knowledge. Thus he composed a more spiritual Gospel for the use of those who were being perfected. Nevertheless, he yet did not divulge the things not to be uttered, nor did he write down the hierophantic teaching of the Lord, but to the stories already written he added yet others and, moreover, brought in certain sayings of which he knew the interpretation would, as a mystagogue, lead the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of truth hidden by seven veils. Thus, in sum, he prepared matters, neither grudgingly nor incautiously, in my opinion, and, dying, he left his composition to the church in Alexandria, where it even yet is most carefully guarded, being read only to those who are being initiated into the great mysteries.

Mark 10:32–34

³² They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him,

³³ saying, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles;

³⁴ they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again."

Pericope from the Secret Gospel of Mark (follows Mark 10:34)

And they come into Bethany, and a certain woman, whose brother had died, was there. And coming, she prostrated herself before Jesus and says to him, "Son of David, have mercy on me." But the disciples rebuked her. And Jesus, being angered, went off with her into the garden where the tomb was, and straightway a great cry was heard from the tomb. And going near Jesus rolled away the stone from the door of the tomb. And straightway, going in where the young man was, he stretched forth his hand and raised him, seizing his hand.

But the young man, looking upon him, loved him and began to beseech him that he might be with him. And going out of the tomb, they came into the house of the young man, for he was rich. And after six days, Jesus told him what to do and in the evening the young man comes to him, wearing a linen cloth over [his] naked [body]. And he remained with him that night, for Jesus taught him the secret of the kingdom of God. And thence, arising, he returned to the other side of the Jordan.

Mark 10:35

³⁵ James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you."

Early Christian Gospels		
AD 50	Mark (?)	Q – Sayings Gospel (?)
AD 70	Matthew (?)	Luke (?)
AD 90	John (?)	
AD 110	Gospel of Thomas (?)	
AD 130	Gospel of the Hebrews (?)	Gospel of the Ebionites (?) Gospel of the Nazoreans (?)
	Gospel of the Egyptians (?)	Gospel of Luke (Recension of Marcion ?)
AD 150	Dialogue of the Savior (?)	Gospel of Judas Gospel of Truth
	Gospel of Peter (?)	Infancy Gospel of Thomas (?) Protevangelium of James (?)
AD 180	Gospel of Mary (?)	Secret Gospel of Mark (?)
AD 200	Secret Gospel of James (?) Gospel of Philip (?)	

Protevangelium of James



Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 10.17

But some say, basing it on a tradition in the Gospel according to Peter, as it is entitled, or “The Book of James,” that the brethren of Jesus were sons of Joseph by a former wife, whom he married before Mary. Now those who say so wish to preserve the honor of Mary in virginity to the end, so that that body of hers which was appointed to minister to the Word which said, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee,” might not know intercourse with a man after that the Holy Ghost came into her and the power from on high overshadowed her.

Prot. Jas. 16:1

“ . . . I will give you both to drink the water of the conviction of the Lord,
and it will make your sins manifest in your eyes . . . ”

Numbers 5:11–29

¹¹ The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹² Speak to the Israelites and say to them: If any man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him, ¹³ if a man has had intercourse with her but it is hidden from her husband, so that she is undetected though she has defiled herself, and there is no witness against her since she was not caught in the act; ¹⁴ if a spirit of jealousy comes on him, and he is jealous of his wife who has defiled herself; or if a spirit of jealousy comes on him, and he is jealous of his wife, though she has not defiled herself; ¹⁵ then the man shall bring his wife to the priest. And he shall bring the offering required for her, one-tenth of an ephah of barley flour. He shall pour no oil on it and put no frankincense on it, for it is a grain offering of jealousy, a grain offering of remembrance, bringing iniquity to remembrance. ¹⁶ Then the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD; ¹⁷ the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water. ¹⁸ The priest shall set the woman before the LORD, dishevel the woman's hair, and place in her hands the grain offering of remembrance, which is the grain offering of jealousy. In his own hand the priest shall have the water of bitterness that brings the curse. ¹⁹ Then the priest shall make her take an oath, saying, "If no man has lain with you, if you have not turned aside to uncleanness while under your husband's authority, be immune to this water of bitterness that brings the curse. ²⁰ But if you have gone astray while under your husband's authority, if you have defiled yourself and some man other than your husband has had intercourse with you," ²¹ -- let the priest make the woman take the oath of the curse and say to the woman-- "the LORD make you an execration and an oath among your people, when the LORD makes your uterus drop, your womb discharge; ²² now may this water that brings the curse enter your bowels and make your womb discharge, your uterus drop!" And the woman shall say, "Amen. Amen." ²³ Then the priest shall put these curses in writing, and wash them off into the water of bitterness. ²⁴ He shall make the woman drink the water of bitterness that brings the curse, and the water that brings the curse shall enter her and cause bitter pain. ²⁵ The priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy out of the woman's hand, and shall elevate the grain offering before the LORD and bring it to the altar; ²⁶ and the priest shall take a handful of the grain offering, as its memorial portion, and turn it into smoke on the altar, and afterward shall make the woman drink the water. ²⁷ **When he has made her drink the water, then, if she has defiled herself and has been unfaithful to her husband, the water that brings the curse shall enter into her and cause bitter pain, and her womb shall discharge, her uterus drop, and the woman shall become an execration among her people. ²⁸ But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, then she shall be immune and be able to conceive children. ²⁹ This is the law in cases of jealousy, when a wife, while under her husband's authority, goes astray and defiles herself,**

Zacharias Slain



22.3. But Elizabeth, when she heard that John was sought for, took him and went up into the hill-country. And she looked around to see where she could hide him, and there was no hiding-place. And Elizabeth groaned aloud and said, 'O mountain of God, receive a mother with a child.' For Elizabeth could not ascend. And immediately the mountain was rent asunder and received . And a light was shining for them; for an angel of the Lord was with them and protected them.

23.1 Herod was searching for John, and sent officers to Zacharias saying, 'Where have you hidden your son?' And he answered and said to them, 'I am a minister of God and serve in the temple of the Lord. I do not know where my son is.' 2. And the officers departed and told all this to Herod. Then Herod was angry and said, 'His son is to be king over Israel!' And he sent to him again saying, 'Tell the truth. Where is your son? You know that you are at my mercy.' And the officers departed and told him these things. 3. And Zacharias said, 'I am a witness of God. Pour out blood! But the Lord will receive my spirit, for you shed innocent blood at the threshold of the temple of the Lord.' And about daybreak Zacharias was slain. And the children of Israel did not know that he had been slain.

Matthew 23:34–35 ³⁴ Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and <i>some of them ye shall kill and crucify</i>; and <i>some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues</i>, and <i>persecute them from city to city</i>: ³⁵ That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.		
2 Chronicles 24:20–22 ²² And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you. ²¹ And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD. ²² Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon <i>it</i>, and require <i>it</i>.		
Zechariah 1:1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo, saying:	TaNaK	
	<u>Torah (Torah/Pentateuch)</u> Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	<u>Historical Books (Former Prophets)</u> Joshua Judges Ruth 1-2 Samuel 1-2 Kings <u>Historical Books (Latter Prophets)</u> Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel <u>Historical Books (Minor Prophets)</u> Hosea Joel Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum
		<u>Writings</u> Psalms Proverbs Job Song of Sol. Ruth Ecclesiastes Esther Daniel Ezra-Nehemiah 1-2 Chronicles

Context of the Protevangelium of James
... he [Jesus] fabricated the story of his birth from a virgin; ... he came from a Jewish village and from a poor country woman who earned her living by spinning ... she was driven out by her husband, who was a carpenter by trade, as she was convicted of adultery ... after she had been driven out by her husband and while she was wandering about in a disgraceful way she secretly gave birth to Jesus ... because he was poor he hired himself out as a workman in Egypt, and there tried his hand at certain magical powers on which the Egyptians pride themselves; he returned full of conceit because of these powers, and on this account gave himself the title of God. Cels. 1.28 ... Turned out by the carpenter who was betrothed to her, as she had been convicted of adultery and had a child by a certain soldier named Panthera. Cels 1.32
Matthew 1: 22–23 22 All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 23 "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." 22 τοῦτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος· 23 ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἑμμανουήλ, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεύμενον μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.

“Yeshua ben Pantera” or “Yeshu ben Pantiri”

He [R. Eliezer] said to him, “By Heaven! You remind me. Once I was strolling in the camp of Sepphoris. I bumped into Jacob of Kefar Sikhnin, and he told me a teaching of *minut* in the name of Jesus ben Pantiri, and it pleased me.”

t. Hullin 2.24

Virginal birth is discussed four times in the Justin’s *Dialogue with Trypho*, 43, 50, 63, 67

“Yeshua ben Pantera” or “Yeshu ben Pantiri”

He [R. Eliezer] said to him, “By Heaven! You remind me. Once I was strolling in the camp of Sepphoris. I bumped into Jacob of Kefar Sikhnin, and he told me a teaching of *minut* in the name of Jesus ben Pantiri, and it pleased me.”

t. Hullin 2.24

Virginal birth is discussed four times in the Justin’s *Dialogue with Trypho*, 43, 50, 63, 67

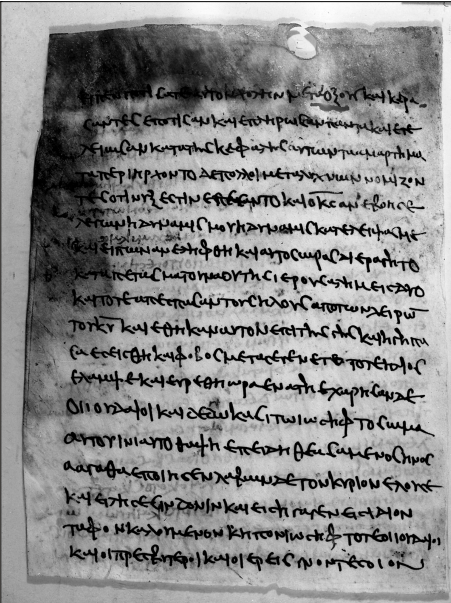
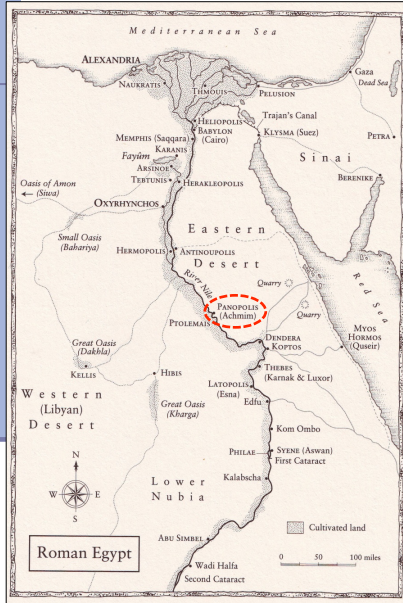
Epiphanius, *Pan.* 78.7.5

7,1 For I have heard from someone that certain persons are venturing to say that she had marital relations after the Savior’s birth. And I am not surprised. The ignorance of persons who do not know the sacred scriptures wen and have not consulted histories, always turns them to one thing after another, and distracts anyone who wants to track down something about the truth out of his own head. (2) To begin with, when it fell to the Virgin’s lot to be entrusted to Joseph 15 she was not entrusted to him for marriage, since he was a widower. . . . 7,5 For how could such an old man, who had lost his first wife so many years before, take a virgin for a wife? Joseph was the brother of Cleopas but the son of Jacob surnamed Panther; both of these brothers were the sons of the man surnamed Panther. (6) Joseph took his first wife from the tribe of Judah and she bore him six children in all, four boys and two girls, as the Gospels according to Mark and John have made clear.

Eusebius, *Ecl. Proph.* 3.10

Argued that the Panthera story was a misunderstanding of the scriptures and was a slanderous statement by “those of the circumcision”

Gospel of Peter



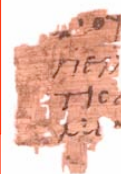
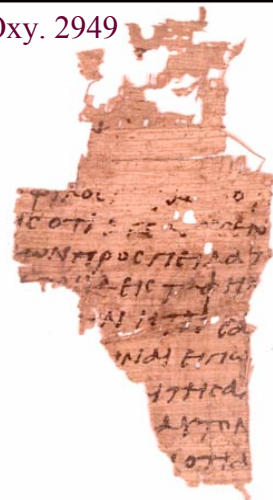
“... and another book has been composed by him [Serapion bp. of Antioch (c. 190–203)] *Concerning what is known as the Gospel of Peter*, which he has written refuting the false statements in it, because of certain in the community of Rhossus, who on the ground of the said writing turned aside into heterodox teachings. It will not be unreasonable to quote a short passage from this work, in which he puts forward the view he held about the book, writing as follows: “For our part, brethren, we receive both Peter and the other apostles as Christ, but the writings which falsely bear their names we reject, as men of experience, knowing that such were not handed down to us. For I myself, when I came among you, imagined that all of you clung to the true faith; and, without going through the Gospel put forward by them in the name of Peter, I said: If this is the only thing that seemingly causes captious feelings among you, let it be read. . . . By others who studied this very Gospel, that is, by the successors of those who began it, whom we call Docetae (for most of the ideas belong to their teaching)—using [the material supplied] by them, were enabled to go through it and discover that the most part indeed was in accordance with the true teaching of the Saviour, but that some things were added, which also we place below for your benefit.”

Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.12.1–16

“Of Peter, one epistle, that which is called his first, is admitted, . . . On the other hand, of the Acts bearing his name, and the Gospel named according to him and Preaching called his and the so-called Revelation, we have no knowledge at all in Catholic tradition, for no orthodox writer of the ancient time or of our own has used their testimonies.”

Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.3.1–2

P.Oxy. 2949



Gospel of Peter

Gos. Pet. 10

Καὶ ἔνεγκον δύο κακούργους καὶ ἐσταύρωσαν ἀνὰ μέσον αὐτῶν τὸν Κύριον· αὐτὸς δὲ ἐσιώπα ὡς μηδὲν πόνον ἔχων·

Gos. Pet. 19

Καὶ ὁ Κύριος ἀνεβόησε λέγων· “Ἡ δύναμίς μου, ἢ δύναμις, κατέλειψάς με”· καὶ εἰπὼν ἀνελήφθη.