

Understanding the Bible

What are the Scriptures for?

One of the purposes of God's Word is to give us hope. Romans 15:4 says, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

The Scriptures make us wise unto salvation. They show us the plan of salvation and how we can appropriate its benefits to ourselves, and become reconciled unto God, and someday live in the earth made new ([2 Timothy 3:15](#)).

The Scriptures reveal Jesus as Saviour. "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). The Scriptures referred to here is the Old Testament. Those who teach that these Scriptures are not applicable to us do not understand what Jesus is saying.

If we want to find more about Jesus, we need to not restrict ourselves only to the Gospels or Paul's books. The entire Bible will reveal the beauty of God's character.

How Do We Study the Scriptures?

#1: Ask for God's help. When we study the Scriptures, we need to study wisely and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

We do not naturally understand spiritual things ([1 Corinthians 2:14](#)). In order for us to understand the Bible, we need to have our minds enlightened by the renewing effects of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:23,24). This is a very important principle that many forget. People think that they can just open the Bible and start figuring things out all by themselves. That is one reason why so many denominations, factions, and differing opinions exist in Christendom. The opinions or deductions of man of God's Word are seen as sufficient to understand Scripture. But it isn't. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned and we require help from the Inspiration behind the written Word.

The Holy Spirit guides us as we study. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). As we open our hearts to the Spirit's influence and compare spiritual things with spiritual, God will guide us. Before studying the Bible, we should always ask the Holy Spirit to be with us so that we can rightly discern what the Word is trying to tell us.

#2: Compare Scripture with Scripture. When studying the Bible, we must compare Scripture with Scripture, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line: here a little and there a little" (Isaiah 28:10). We must remember that the Bible is not one book but 66 books written over a period of 1500 years. That very fact allows us to use the Bible to interpret itself. When we do this, we will discover truth.

As we study the Bible, we need to approach it with an open mind, willing to follow what it shows us. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17).

God does not desire us to be ignorant. He has caused His Word to be written so that anyone can understand it if they want to. When studying prophecy, the Bible is its own interpreter, giving definitions for the symbols it uses. We don't need to guess or make wild assumptions.

#3: Use *all* of the Bible. We must not ignore parts of the Bible that don't suit us, or discard portions of the Bible as not applicable, or add our own words to it.

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book (Revelation 22:18-19).

If we come across a text that seems to contradict other texts, we can safely assume that we do not have a complete understanding of the doctrine that is being studied. Reading the text in context is important. But equally important is to look at the verse in context with all other verses on the same subject. God's Word never changes, and certainly never contradicts itself. If we believe this, then we can have parameters for interpreting Scripture. God cannot lie. If He says one thing in one part of the Bible, He cannot be saying something else elsewhere. Only one understanding can be the right one.

As you open up your mind to the Word of God, be sure to ask God for His Spirit to enlighten you as you study. With an earnest willing heart, free of preconceived ideas and interpretations, God can and will show you the true understanding of what you are studying.

Scripture is Inspired By God

There are many Old Testament Scriptures that speak of inspiration and preservation, such as Isaiah 40:8, which says, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever" (see also [Psalm 19:7-11](#); [Psalm 119:89](#); and [Isaiah 55:10-11](#)).

The New Testament also contains passages that prove God's work in preserving His Word to us. The fact that the New Testament quotes Old Testament passages is evidence that the Scriptures were preserved up until Christ's time and afterward. Here are several examples of the Word of God verifying itself:

- In Matthew 5:17-18, Jesus tells us that Scripture is to be preserved:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

- In [John 10:31-38](#) Jesus Himself quotes [Psalm 82:6](#) as proof of His own claims to divinity.
- In [1 Peter 1:22-25](#), Peter quotes [Isaiah 40:8](#) and applies it to the Gospel, saying, "the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
- [Micah 5:2](#) is quoted in [Matthew 2:5-6](#), showing that this Old Testament prophetic book was still valid at the time of writing. The name "Bethlehem" was preserved through the centuries, in order to refer specifically to Christ.
- Paul says this in Galatians 3:16:

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. His argument in this passage hinges entirely on the preservation of the singular form of the word "seed" [14 times in Genesis](#) in order for it to refer not to many, but specifically to Christ. Note [Galatians 3:29](#) links all individual Christians to Abraham's "seed" (singular).

- In [2 Peter 3:15-16](#), Peter calls Paul's writings Scripture:

Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you...as they do also the other scriptures.

- In 1 Timothy 5:18, "For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward," Paul quotes [Deuteronomy 25:4](#) and [Luke 10:7](#) and calls both Scripture.

The New Testament also lays claim to its own authenticity. In 2 Peter 1:21, we read this:

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Here we see that the Bible claims that its writers were not merely speaking of their own accord, but were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write what they did:

- 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that "All scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that many of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
- [Matthew 24:35](#) tells us God's word is eternal and [Psalm 119:160](#) tells us that God's Word is true from the beginning.
- Psalm 12:6-7 tells us that God has preserved His word through the centuries:

The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.

The Purpose of Scripture

One of the purposes of God's word is to give us hope. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

Another purpose of the Scriptures is to reveal Jesus as Saviour:

Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me (John 5:39).

The Scriptures were intended to teach us how to become saved and live eternally (2 Timothy 3:15). It is God's desire to give every human eternal life and save them from the results of sin.

The inspiration and preservation of Scripture fit into the loving character of God.

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:3-4).

As we study Scripture, we must rightly divide the Word ([2 Timothy 2:15](#)) and ask for the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. That is what the Holy Spirit was sent to do ([John 16:13](#)). As we open our hearts to the Spirit's influence, God will guide us ([2 Corinthians 2:13](#)).

When we approach God's Word with an open mind, He will guide us. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17). We are assured repeatedly in the Bible that truth is contained in God's Word. In fact, in more than 3000 places the Bible declares itself

inspired. It does not contradict itself. It is either inspired by God or a brilliant fraud. Certainly it is inconceivable that a Book so accurate through the centuries could be considered anything less than inspired by God.

The Lost Books of the Bible

The phrase “lost books of the Bible” fills our minds with romantic images of dusty parchments and scrolls found by an Indiana Jones-style archeologist in an ancient tomb. However, in reality all the “lost books” can be readily named and have been known by the Church for centuries. They shouldn’t really be called lost at all.

There are three main categories of lost books, as follows:

The Pseudepigrapha

Some of the books are called the *Pseudepigrapha*. The *Oxford American Dictionary* notes the word originated in the 17th century from the Greek *pseudepigraphos*, which literally means “with false title.” [Read a list of pseudepigraphical books](#)

Some people who doubt the validity of the Bible feel that these books pose a valid counter to the present makeup of the Bible. They say that because the Pseudepigrapha contains content that counters the existing canon, the decision to exclude the lost books is biased.

Some books have strong support from modern sources, such as the support the “Gospel of Judas” recently enjoyed from *National Geographic*. Yet all of them were written long after the original New Testament canon had been closed. These books were never accepted as genuine by the early Church fathers. [Read about how early believers chose what to include in the canon](#)

The Didache

Another “lost book” was written just after the time of Christ and is known as the *Didache* or “The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.” It is thought to have been written between 65 and 80 AD.

The *Didache* is a catechism or handbook of Christian procedures. Many of the instructions in the *Didache* are based on Biblical concepts but are added to with rituals and direction that are not supported in the Word of God, as we can see from the section on baptism:

And concerning baptism, baptize this way: Having first said all these things, baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Matthew 28:19 in living water. But if you have not living water, baptize into other water; and if you can not in cold, in warm. But if you have not either, pour out water thrice upon the head into the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit. But before the baptism let the baptizer fast, and the baptized, and whatever others can; but you shall order the baptized to fast one or two days before.

Jesus gave no instruction in the Gospels about how or where to be baptized.

Although He did encourage fasting, nothing was said about fasting as a prerequisite to baptism. In fact, [Acts 8](#) tells the story of a man who wanted to be baptised as soon as he understood the good news. Philip, the man who was helping him understand Scripture, did not tell him to fast first, but instead baptized him immediately in the nearby river:

And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him (Acts 8:36-38).

All the other books of the Bible intertwine and support each other. This book cannot be included as it is not endorsed by the rest of Scripture.

The Apocrypha

Another group of books often called “lost books” is the *Apocrypha*. While the pseudepigraphal books were written within 200 years of the time of Christ (centered on the New Testament time period), the apocryphal books were written during the period of the Old Testament, but long after the original Old Testament Scriptures were completed. [Read a list of apocryphal books](#)

The apocryphal books are rejected by both Jewish and Protestant scholars, but widely accepted by Roman Catholic scholars. The books include portions that support justification for both suicide and assassination, lying if the end justifies the means, prayers for the dead, belief in purgatory, and worship of idols. These and many other doctrines are acceptable to Roman Catholic theologians largely because the Roman Catholic Church accepts [tradition as having equal authority with Scripture](#). Protestants, who respect only Scripture as the ground for belief, do not accept these writings.

None of these books call themselves inspired by God. Also, the suggested authors often did not live in the same era the books came about. Even the early Church believed these books to be fraudulent, and did not give them same authority as the inspired Scriptures.

Clashing Canons

Many Catholic doctrines are supported by [the writings of the Gnostics and by the Apocrypha](#). The Apocrypha is a collection of books that are included in Catholic Bibles but excluded from Protestant Bibles.

The Apocrypha is based on mysticism and supposedly contains secret doctrines. At

the Catholic Council of Trent, this was decreed:

Whoever shall not receive as sacred and canonical all these books and every part of them, as they are commonly read in the Catholic Church, and are contained in the old Vulgate Latin edition, or shall knowingly and deliberately despise the aforesaid traditions, let him be accursed.ⁱ

The Apocryphal books were not considered part of Scripture by the Bible compilers, because they clearly contradict Biblical truths, as can be seen in the following examples:

Bewitching Art

The Apocrypha says this:

Open the fish, and take the heart and liver and the gall...if a devil or an evil spirit trouble any, we must make a smoke thereof before the man or the woman, and the party shall no more be vexed. As for the gall, it is good to anoint a man that hath witness in his eyes, and he shall be healed (Tobias 6:4-8).

But the Bible says this:

And signs will follow to those believing these things: in My name they will cast out demons (Mark 16:17). But being distressed, and turning to the demonic spirit, Paul said, I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her! And it came out in that hour (Acts 16:18).

Salvation by Works

The Apocrypha says this:

For alms doth deliver from death, and shall purge away all sin (Tobias 12:9).

But the Bible says this:

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers (1 Peter 1:18-19).

Prayer for Dead

The Apocrypha says this:

For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead...Whereupon he made reconciliation for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin (2 Maccabees 12:43-46).

But the Bible says this:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin (1 John 1:7).

Errors in the Vulgate

The Bible translations that lean heavily on Catholic documents are highly problematic in some of their renditions. Some examples from the Vulgate Bible and translations based on the Vulgate pave the way for relic worship and question the level of God's inspiration.

2 Timothy 3:16 KJV says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."
The Douay Version says, "All Scripture inspired of God is profitable."

Hebrews 11:21 KJV says, "Jacob worshipped leaning upon the top of his staff."
The Vulgate says, "Jacob adored the top of his rod."

Revelation 22:14 KJV says, "Blessed are they that do his commandments."
The Codex Vaticanus says, "Blessed are they that wash their robes."

How did the Early Church Choose?

Today bestselling books such as *The Da Vinci Code* tell us that early Christians deliberately chose books for the Bible based their political agenda. The rest of the books were said to have been destroyed, save a few copies of which survived as the "[lost books](#)." But this scenario is totally false.

The Church believes that Jewish and Christian writers were [guided by the Holy Spirit](#) (as [2 Peter 1:20-21](#) states) in the selection of the Scriptures that became the Old and New Testaments. Beyond this guidance, there were other factors that helped determine the validity of a book:

- The book had to be written by a prophet (someone with the gift of prophecy, such as David, Solomon, and Ezra) or an apostle (someone who actually witnessed the risen Christ). The book would have the authenticity and authority its author had.
- Early Church fathers such as Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, Athanasius, Jerome, and Augustine lead in the slow careful acceptance of a book as Scripture. Contrary to popular bestsellers (such as *Da Vinci Code*) the Church never had a meeting where the Scriptures were autocratically decided upon and then forced upon the rest of the Church. [Read what the ancient theologian Josephus has to say about the validity of the Old Testament](#)

Instead, the books belonging to Scripture were determined by long and continuous use by both Church leaders and members. Many books were accepted due to the great influence the book was shown to have over the lives of the people. Some books were accepted because the Church members themselves could testify how God used the book to draw many to Him and change their lives.

- Many books were rejected because they supported pagan doctrines denounced by the early Church as unBiblical. Many taught strange doctrines that promoted the Gnostic concept of salvation through "hidden knowledge." Some books taught that Christ was not really human and did not really die on the cross. Such books could not be accepted by the Church because they were contrary to evidence.

The early churches circulated letters of theology to use for teaching. Although some of these letters were from the apostles, often spurious letters were circulated as well:

Gradually the need to have a definite list of the inspired Scriptures became apparent. Heretical movements were rising, each one choosing its own selected Scriptures, including such documents as the Gospel of Thomas, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Apocalypse of Peter, and the Epistle of Barnabas.ⁱⁱ

The apostle Paul noticed that the Enemy was at work, trying to confuse the believers with false doctrines ([2 Thessalonians 2:7-8](#)).

Thus, the Church asked five main questions about a book to determine its validity as Scripture:

1. Does the book have a "thus saith the Lord"?
2. Was it written by a prophet or apostle (or those who claimed to be inspired)?
3. Was it accepted and used extensively by the Church fellowship?
4. Did it transform lives, bringing people to know Christ and salvation?
5. Did its doctrine agree with the other established Scriptures?

One of the important factors for determining the inclusion of the a book is its agreement with the rest of the books. The Bible cannot contradict itself. If it did, it couldn't be trusted. One of the basic principles when studying the Bible is being able to trust that the Bible is a cohesive work that doesn't contradict itself.

The 44 authors who wrote the Bible over the period of 1500 years did not contradict each other. That alone is one of the miracles of the Word. Any other book written over the same time period would be hard pressed to achieve such coherence and continuity.

Anyone suggesting another book should be added to the canon of Scripture needs to ensure that the new book upholds the existing information and retains the coherence and continuity of the Bible.

Let's use the five tests above against two popular pseudepigraphical books:

Testing the Gospel of Thomas

The [Gospel of Thomas](#) is a popular lost book. Let's apply the [five testing questions](#) to see if it qualifies as a book of Scripture:

1. Does the book have a "thus saith the Lord"?

Supposedly, Jesus is talking to His disciples in this book, and especially to Thomas who is claimed to be the author. But in this book, Jesus is reported to say things like, "If you fast, you will give rise to sin for yourselves; and if you pray, you will be condemned; and if you give alms, you will do harm to your spirits" (Thomas 14).

Does that advice sound like it came from Jesus? Here is what the true Gospel says:

...when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly...when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly...when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly (Matthew 6:3-6, 17-18).

2. Was it written by a prophet or apostle (or those who claimed to be inspired)?

Although it is claimed to be written by the disciple Thomas, the actual author is unknown. The book opens by naming the author: "These are the secret sayings that the living Jesus spoke and Didymos Judas Thomas recorded."

But no one is clear who Didymos Judas Thomas really was. The word *didymos* means "twin" in Greek. The word *Thomas* means "twin" in Aramaic.

Whoever this man was, he could not have been one of the twelve because his theology was questionable. We know this already just from his use of the word "secret" in the opening address.

The Gnostics, who were gaining strength during the early Christian era, believed that secret or hidden knowledge was needed for believers to be saved. This gospel is preached not only by Gnostics, but also by secret societies and in New Age mysticism. This belief was expressed in the first verse of the Gospel of Thomas:

And he said, "Whoever discovers the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death (Thomas 1).

However, the truth is that the Bible makes itself available to all who would read it, because God desires the salvation of all. Obviously, this mystical gospel is not the true Gospel.

3. Was it accepted and used extensively by the Church fellowship?

The Gospel of Thomas was discovered in Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945, and was unknown before that time.

4. Did it transform people's lives, bringing them to know Christ and salvation?

The kind of salvation offered in this strange gospel was rather bizarre, as can be seen in the following excerpt:

Jesus said: This heaven shall pass away, and that which is above it shall pass away; and they that are dead are not alive and they that live shall not die. In the days when you were eating that which is dead, you were making it alive. When you come in the light, what will you do? On the day when you were one, you became two (Thomas 11).

5. Did it agree with the other established Scriptures in doctrine?

This gospel is one of many Gnostic books relying on secret knowledge for salvation. There are many disagreements between this gospel and the doctrines of the true Scriptures. Here is just one example:

Simon Peter said to them: Let Mary go forth from among us, for women are not worthy of the life. Jesus said: Behold, I shall lead her, that I may make her male, in order that she also may become a living spirit like you males. For every woman who makes herself male shall enter into the kingdom of heaven (Thomas 14).

As a *New York Times* article about false gospels observed, "Gnostics believed in a secret knowledge of how people could escape the prisons of their material bodies and return to the spiritual realm from which they came."ⁱⁱⁱ

If the doctrine of this book does not agree with other established Scriptures, which have already been [proven inspired](#), the Gospel of Thomas cannot be considered authentic.

Testing the Gospel of Judas

As we did for the [Gospel of Thomas](#), let's test the Gospel of Judas with [five questions](#) used to validate books of Scripture:

1. Does the book have a "thus saith the Lord"?

This book claims to be an account of secret conversations between Judas and Jesus, but does not align with the character of Jesus we see in the true Gospels.

2. Was it written by a prophet or apostle (or those who claimed to be inspired)?

The book claims to have been written by Judas Iscariot, a disciple of Jesus. However, the contents of the book is consistent with Gnostic thinking. It portrays Judas as having secret knowledge and instructions from Jesus and becoming a heroic martyr. The Gospel of Judas begins with these words: "The secret account of the revelation that Jesus spoke in conversation with Judas Iscariot during a week three days before

the celebrated Passover." We see here the Gnostic belief in secrets.

Irenaeus (130-202 AD), a second-century Greek Christian who served as a pastor in the early Church, mentions the book of Judas in his work *Against Heresies*:

Others again declare that Cain derived his being from the Power above, and acknowledge that Esau, Korah, the Sodomites, and all such persons, are related to themselves. On this account, they add, they have been assailed by the Creator, yet no one of them has suffered injury. For Sophia was in the habit of carrying off that which belonged to her from them to herself. They declare that Judas the traitor was thoroughly acquainted with these things, and that he alone, knowing the truth as no others did, accomplished the mystery of the betrayal; by him all things, both earthly and heavenly, were thus thrown into confusion. They produce a fictitious history of this kind, which they style the Gospel of Judas.^{iv}

Because nothing in the book of Judas coincides with the content of the rest of the Bible, it can be considered a heretical forgery, and part of the spurious writings that circulated in the late second century.

3. Was it accepted and used extensively by the Church fellowship?

The Gospel of Judas was unearthed in Egypt during the 1950s or 1960s. Prior to this time it was unknown. *National Geographic* promoted it as a great historic find. [Read the New York Times article "How the Gospel of Judas Emerged" from April 13, 2006](#)

4. Did it transform people's lives, bringing them to know Christ and salvation?

The salvation spoken of by this "gospel" is not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but the false gospel of the Gnostics. Here is an example of the confusing and twisted gospel presented in this document:

*The next morning, after this happened, Jesus [appeared] to his disciples again. They said to him, "Master, where did you go and what did you do when you left us?" Jesus said to them, "I went to another great and holy generation." His disciples said to him, "Lord, what is the great generation that is superior to us and holier than us, that is not now in these realms?" When Jesus heard this, he laughed and said to them, "Why are you thinking in your hearts about the strong and holy generation? Truly [I] say to you, no one born [of] this aeon will see that [generation], and no host of angels of the stars will rule over that generation, and no person of mortal birth can associate with it, because that generation does not come from [...] which has become [...]. The generation of people among [you] is from the generation of humanity [...] power, which [... the] other powers [...] by [which] you rule." When [his] disciples heard this, they each were troubled in spirit. They could not say a word (Judas 36-38, from *National Geographic*).*

The Gospel of Judas confuses readers and makes the truth more difficult to discern rather than bringing them closer to God. The Bible on the other hand has helped millions find salvation and peace in Jesus.

5. Did it agree with the other established Scriptures in doctrine?

The Gospel of Judas disagrees with Scripture in several places. Here is an example of the falsifying of [Creation](#). It tells us that there are two creations: one with luminary beings and one with chaos and a god of rebellion:

The multitude of those immortals is called the cosmos— that is, perdition—by the Father and the seventy-two luminaries who are with the Self-Generated and his seventytwo aeons. In him the first human appeared with his incorruptible powers. And the aeon that appeared with his generation, the aeon in whom are the cloud of knowledge and the angel, is called El. [...] aeon [...] after that [...] said, 'Let twelve angels come into being [to] rule over chaos and the [underworld].' And look, from the cloud there appeared an [angel] whose face flashed with fire and whose appearance was defiled with blood. His name was Nebro, which means 'rebel'; others call him Yaldabaoth. Another angel, Saklas, also came from the cloud. So Nebro created six angels—as well as Saklas—to be assistants, and these produced twelve angels in the heavens, with each one receiving a portion in the heavens (Judas 50-51, from National Geographic).

This book counters Scripture, and therefore cannot be considered a part of it.

Are the Lost Books Really Lost?

Whether a book is considered “lost” depends on how we define the Bible. If it is a supernatural book inspired by God and preserved by God, then there cannot be any “lost books.”

Obviously, if God inspired His Word it would be up to Him to [preserve His Word](#) so that human beings would be able to read it and benefit from it. It would be counter to His character that God would produce a supernatural message for all humankind, and then allow parts of that message to be lost. The idea of “lost books” is not valid if we accept that God inspired and preserved His Word.

What if we think the Scriptures are merely a human invention of the early Church? Then the so-called “lost books” would be excluded by the early Church—but the early Church would be those who have the most right to define what Christianity is, because they are the original believers. So from a purely human perspective, if the early Church rejected a book from Scripture, it would have to be because that book does not teach what the early Church believed.

If the Bible is a purely human invention, then those who assembled it have every right to include or exclude whatever books they felt would express what they truly believed. The idea of “lost books” is not valid if we accept that the early Church assembled the Bible according to their beliefs.

So our inescapable conclusion is simply this: there are no such things as truly “lost books.” Both according to faith or logic, the concept cannot be supported. The books that are being uncovered and promoted today as “lost” books usually support the heretical doctrines of various groups.

The Lord has inspired and preserved His Word down through the centuries, and continues to do so. The “lost books” are lost for good reason—they should never have been considered in the first place.

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i Council of Trent, fourth session.

ii "How were the books of the Bible chosen?" from [Biblica Online](#)

iii [Laurie Goldstein and John Wilford, "In Ancient Document, Judas, Minus the Betrayal," *New York Times* \(April 7, 2006\).](#)

iv Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*: 31.