“BANNED FROM THE BIBLE”
The Stories That Were Deleted From Biblical History

NEW YORK, Dec. 19 /PRNewswire/ -- When Jesus was a boy, did he kill another child? Was Mary Magdalene a prostitute -- or an apostle? Did Cain commit incest? Will there be an apocalypse or is this God's trick to scare us? The answers to these questions aren't found in the Bible as we know it, but they exist in **scriptures banned when powerful leaders deemed them unacceptable for reasons both political and religious**. BANNED FROM THE BIBLE reveals some of these alternative tales and examines why they were "too hot for Christianity." The two-hour world premiere BANNED FROM THE BIBLE airs on Christmas, Thursday, December 25 at 9 pm ET/PT.
Attacks on the Canon
“More than eighty gospels were considered for the New Testament, and yet only a relative few were chosen for inclusion – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John among them… Fortunately for historians… some of the gospels that Constantine attempted to eradicate managed to survive. The Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the 1950s hidden in a cave in Qumran in the Judean desert. And of course, the Coptic Scrolls in 1945 at Nag Hammadi. In addition to telling the true Grail story, these documents speak of Christ’s ministry in very human terms… The scrolls highlight glaring historical discrepancies and fabrications, clearly confirming that the modern Bible was complied and edited by men who possessed a political agenda – to promote the divinity of the man Jesus Christ and use His influence to solidify their own power base.”

” (p. 231-34)
Elaine Pagels’ *Beyond Belief*

- **B&N:** “Attention, *Da Vinci Code* fans! This marvelous book, by noted religious scholar Elaine Pagels, shows thriller writer Dan Brown wasn't imagining things when he wrote about the "pick and choose" history of the early Christian Church. Here, Pagels uses the gospel of Thomas to show how Church leaders culled from early Christian writings those texts that supported certain beliefs and rejected the rest as ‘heretical.’”
# How We REALLY Got Our New Testament Canon

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<th>Apostolic Period</th>
<th>Persecuted Church</th>
<th>Imperial Church</th>
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<td>Authority Recognized but Canon Incomplete</td>
<td>Canon Complete and Recognized in Fact</td>
<td>Canon Complete and Recognized in Law</td>
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The Apostolic ex cathedra “Canon”

- with the full authority of office (especially that of the Pope).
- ORIGIN Latin, ‘from the teacher’s chair’.
Paul Calls His Own Letters the Lord’s Commandment

• 1 Corinthians 14:37

• If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord’s commandment.
Paul Calls His Own Writings the Word of God

• 1 Thes. 2:13

• “For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.”
Paul Calls Luke/Acts Scripture

• 1 Tim. 5:18

• “For the Scripture says, ‘YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING’ [Deut 25:4], and ‘The laborer is worthy of his wages’” [Luke 10:7].
Peter Calls Paul’s Letters Scriptures

• 2 Pet. 3:15-16

• “...and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.”
The Persecuted Church’s *de facto* Canon

- in fact, whether by law or not.
- Often contrasted with DE JURE.
- existing in fact: *a de facto one-party system*.
- ORIGIN Latin, ‘of fact’.
c. 95 AD, Clement Cites 93% Of The New Testament

- wrote a single letter to the Corinthians around AD 96
- Quotes from 21/27THS
  Mt, Mk, Lk, Rom, 1Cor, Gal, Eph, Phil, Heb
- Alludes to 4/27THS
  John, Acts, James, 1 Peter

John 7:32, 2nd Century Papyrus
c. 100 AD, Polycarp Cites 74% of the New Testament

- Quotes from 15 of the 27 books
- Alludes to 5 more

James Ch 1
c. 110 AD, Ignatius Cites 44% of the NT

- Quotes 9/27THS
  - Mt, Jn, Rom, 1Cor, Gal, Eph, Phil, Col, 1Thes
- Alludes to 3/27THS
  - Lk, Heb, 1 Peter

Matthew 6:9-13 in Greek 2nd Cen Papyrus
c. 160 AD, Justin Martyr Cites, 63% of the New Testament

- cites all four Gospels and Revelation, Titus, others
- Quotes from 17 of the 27 books

Jesus raising Lazarus (catacomb painting)
Marcion’s Heretical “Canon”

- Rejected the Old Testament for Christians
  - Old Testament presents a violent/savage God
- Anti-Semitic
- Accepted:
  - 10 of Paul’s letters
  - Gospel of Luke (Gentile author)
- Removed “Jewish material”
c. 170 AD
Irenaeus Cites 85% Of The NT

• Quotes from 23 of the 27 books
  – Eventual books of the New Testament
    • Recognized “4 Gospels”
    • Didn’t use Philemon or 3rd John
• Affirmed the authority of the Hebrew Bible
  – 1st to speak of an “Old” and “New” Testament
• Established his canonical criteria
  – Apostolic Connection
  – Apostolic Age
  – Practicality
180-200 AD
Muratorian “Canon” 81% Of The NT

• Discovered in 1700’s
• Contained: 24 books
• Lacked Philemon, Hebrews, James, I Peter, II Peter, and III John
• Included Wisdom of Solomon and Revelation of Peter
• The canon consists of no mere list of the Scriptures, but of a survey, which supplies at the same time historical and other information regarding each book.
• Probably a response to Marcion
c. 190 AD
Tertullian Cites 81% Of The NT

• Formed the apostolic writings into *Novum Testamentum*.
• His chief criteria was apostolic authorship.
• He quoted from 22 books of the 27.

Hebrews 4:2, 2nd Century Papyrus
c. 240 AD, Origen Cites, 100% Of The New Testament

• Cites all present N.T. books
• Said some books were disputed by some (Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2 & 3 John, Jude).
"And Peter... has left one acknowledged epistle; perhaps also a second, but this is doubtful... John, who has left us one Gospel... also the Apocalypse... He has left also an epistle of very few lines; perhaps also a second and third; but not all consider them genuine, and together they do not contain hundred lines."

405 AD
OT translated from Origen’s Hexapla (Gk)
So too our Lord Jesus Christ...sent his apostles as priests carrying well-wrought trumpets. First Matthew sounded the priestly trumpet of his Gospel. Mark also, and Luke, and John, each gave fourth a strain on their priestly trumpets. Peter moreover sounds with the two trumpets of his Epistles; James also and Jude. Still the number is incomplete, and John gives forth the trumpet sound through his Epistles and Apocalypse; and Luke, while describing the deeds of the apostles. Latest of all, moreover, that one comes who said, “I think that God has set us forth as the apostles last of all”, and thundering on the fourteen trumpets of his Epistles he threw down, even to their very foundations, the walls of Jericho, that is to say, all the instruments of idolatry and the dogmas of the philosophers (Hom. In Jos. VII, 1).
Diocletian persecutions (c. 302-305)

- caused the Christians to be more attentive to establishing the definite canon.

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And though a section of the church may not yet have been satisfied of the apostolicity of a certain book or of certain books; and though afterwards doubts may have arisen in sections of the church as to the apostolicity of certain books (as e.g. of Revelation): yet in no case was it more than a respectable minority of the church which was slow in receiving, or which came afterward to doubt, the credentials of any of the books that then as now constituted the Canon of the New Testament accepted by the church at large ...we must not mistake the historical evidences of the slow circulation and authentication of these books over the widely-extended church, evidence of slowness of the "canonization" of these books by the authority or taste of the church itself.

Formation of the New Testament Canon
The Imperial Church’s *de jure* Canon

- legal, official, by right. Often contrasted with *de facto*.
- ORIGIN Latin, ‘of law’.
2 Logical Reasons for a Formally Adopted *de jure* Canon

- To confirm *which texts are authoritative* for doctrine.
- To exclude those works *which are not authoritative* for doctrine.
2 Historical Reasons for a Formally Adopted *de jure* Canon

- **Address Charismatica**
  - Has the period of revelation ended?
  - Montanists

- **Counter heretical sources**
  - Gnostics
Final Impetus for Finalizing the Canon

“...I have thought it expedient to instruct your Prudence to order 50 copies of the Sacred Scriptures, the provision and use of which you know to be the most needful for the instruction of the church, to be written on prepared parchment, in a legible manner, and in a commodious and portable form, by transcribers thoroughly practiced in their art.”

Constantine
4th Cen. “Canon” of Eusebius of Caesarea

- 260 - 340 A.D
- The Father of Church History
- Head of the library in Caesarea
- Classifies all writings into four categories based on the record of ancient witnesses
  - Recognized - 4 Gospels, Acts, Epistles of Paul, 1 John, 1 Peter, Revelation
  - Disputed - James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 & 3 John
  - Spurious - the Acts of Paul, the Shepherd, the Apocalypse of Peter; the Epistle of Barnabas, the Didache, the Gospel of the Hebrews
  - Heretical - The Gospels of Peter, Thomas, Matthias, The Acts of Andrew and John and the Other Disciples
“Canon” of Athanasius
293 – 373 AD

• Writes “Easter Letter” in 367 A.D.
• Mentions the 27 writings he considers to be authoritative
• Same 27 books that are in today’s New Testament
• Chief defender of the faith against Arianism
• Abandons Eusebius’s categories
• Reading of Didache & Shepherd of Hermes allowed
• Against the OT apocrypha
I also, having been urged by true brethren and having investigated the matter from the beginning, have decided to set forth in order the writings that have been put in the canon, that have been handed down and confirmed as divine, in order that every one who has been led astray may condemn his seducers, and that every one who has remained stainless may rejoice, being again reminded of that.

...there are also other books besides these, which have not indeed been put in the canon, but have been appointed by the Fathers as reading-matter for those who have just come forward and which to be instructed in the doctrine of piety: the Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Sirach, Esther, Judith, Tobias, the so-called Teaching [Didache] of the Apostles, and the Shepherd.
“Canon” of Codex Sinaiticus

- Discovered in 1859
- Dated to the 4th century
- N.T. portion well preserved
- Includes The Letter of Barnabas and The Shepherd of Hermes

The Lord's Prayer (Luke xi, 2-4) from the Codex Sinaiticus. In the margin, the petition 'and deliver us from evil' originally omitted, was inserted by a corrector.
Two Church Councils Make *De Facto* Canon *De Jure* Canon

- **393 AD, Synod of Hippo**
  - affirmed that the 27 books of our NT were the only books of apostolic origin and were to be accepted as Scripture.

- **397, AD, Council of Carthage**
  - affirmed our current N.T. canon. Forbid any from claiming any other writing as Scripture.
Council Criteria: Apostolic Authority

- Was it written by an apostle or one closely acquainted with an apostle?
- **Apostolic Authorship**
  - Matthew, John, 13 Paul’s epistles,
  - 1 & 2 Peter, 1-3 John, Revelation
- **Authority by association**
  - Luke-Acts, Mark, James, Jude
- **Rejected**
  - Epistle of Clement For lack of claim to divine authority
  - Didache for lack of clear authorship
Council Criteria: Antiquity

• **When was it written?**
• For a writing to be the work of an Apostle or of someone closely associated with an Apostle it must belong to the first century.
• Writings of later date, whatever their merit, could not be included among the canonical books.
• **Rejected**: Gnostic Gospels, etc.
Council Criteria: Traditional Use

• Was the book in use by the churches from the earliest period?
  – If it wasn’t good enough to be read next to the OT in a church service context, it cannot be part of the canon.
Council Criteria: Universal Use

- Was the book widely accepted by the Church?
- The writings must be accepted universally.
- They often began with merely local acceptance, such as epistles to the churches, but gained widespread recognition.
Council Criteria: Inspiration

• Does it have a self-authenticating nature?
  – There must be evidence of activity of the Holy Spirit contained within the context of the writings.

• Had the book evidenced power in the lives of believers?
Council Criteria: Non-Contradiction

- Did it contradict known Scripture?
- Consistent with OT
- Consistent with Paul?
- Rejected for Incompatibility (heretical positions)—Apocryphal gospels
J. I. PACKER

• “The church no more gave us the New Testament than Isaac Newton gave us gravity.”
Our Team: Canon