

New Testament Apocrypha

These writings include:

A. Epistle of 'Barnabas'

1. Written c. 70-79 and widely circulated. It is found in Codex Sinaiticus (a) and mentioned in the table of contents of Codex Bezae (D).
2. It was also quoted as Scripture by Clement of Alexandria and Origen.
3. It is attributed to Barnabas, companion of Paul, though is almost certainly written by another.
4. It shares similarities to the New Testament book of Hebrews, warning believers of the dangers of returning to Judaism.

B. 1st Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians

1. Written c. 96 by Clement of Rome and sent to believers in Corinth.
2. It is found in Codex Alexandrinus (A).
3. Although certainly not canonical, it provides useful insight into the development of belief and practice among early believers.
4. It contains clear references to Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, along with several quotations from the book of Hebrews.

C. Ancient Homily or 2nd Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians

1. Written c. 120-160 by an anonymous writer.
2. It is found in Codex Alexandrinus (A) after Revelation and with 1st Clement.
3. The author quotes sayings of Jesus from an uncertain document. The book is essentially a message on self-control, repentance, and judgment.

D. The Shepherd of Hermas

1. Written c. 100-140, possibly by Hermas, and probably in Rome.
2. It appears to have been the most popular of all New Testament apocryphal writings.
3. It is found in Codex Sinaiticus (a), mentioned in the table of contents of Codex Bezae (D) and was translated into both Latin and Coptic dialects.
4. It was quoted as Scripture by Irenaeus and Origen, and highly esteemed by Eusebius.
5. It is allegorical, ethical and devotional and is concerned with practical questions of righteousness and forgiveness.

E. The Didache or Teaching of the Twelve

1. Written somewhere between the late first to early second centuries AD by an anonymous writer, but held in high regard by many early believers.
2. It was also quoted as Scripture by Clement of Alexandria and listed by Athanasius among sacred writings.
3. It is something of a manual of practical instruction, teaching of the 'two ways', Christian disciplines and rites, and roles of leaders.

F. Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians

1. Written c. 108, by Polycarp who was a student of the apostle John.
2. There is relatively little 'original' material here, borrowing much from the writings of the New Testament Scriptures – particularly from Paul's letter to Philippi. In this respect it provides useful testimony.

G. Seven Letters of Ignatius

1. Written c. 110, by Ignatius of Antioch who was martyred in Rome by wild beasts in the amphitheatre – probably during the reign of Trajan.
2. On his way to Rome he wrote a series of seven letters to: congregations in Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, Rome, Philadelphia, and Smyrna; and a letter to Polycarp.
3. They address matters such as martyrdom, the unity of believers and the centrality of ecclesiastical governance.