

The influence of the Apocrypha Books on the life of Jesus

Charmaine French

Bi 103 Synoptic Gospels

October 12, 2017

Beulah Heights University

Dictionary.com define the Apocrypha Books as a group of 14 books, not considered canonical included in the Septuagint and the Vulgate as part of the Old Testament¹, but usually omitted from Protestant editions of the Bible. Apocrypha is a specific term used to refer to the books that are considered Scripture by the Roman Catholic Church. They are early Christian writings that contain accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus that did not make it into the New Testament. The primary reason for rejecting the Apocrypha as Scripture is that there is no claim within the books that they are inspired by God. These writings along with Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John provided ancient Christians with their information about Jesus. Some of the Apocrypha writings were once accepted by various early Christians groups as sacred Scripture; they contain writings of Jesus in His early years.

Matthew's gospel records that Mary, Joseph, and the child Jesus escaped King Herod's annihilation of infant boys by fleeing to Egypt (2:14)²; but neither Matthew, Mark, Luke nor John gave an account of Jesus' childhood in their Gospels. But the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew³, also called; Infancy Gospel of Matthew an Apocrypha Books whose authorship is indicated with 'pseudo' because early theologians came to refuse the idea that it was written by the disciple Matthew himself. This book gives the bearing of the life of Jesus; it contains some account of Jesus childhood before He was 12 years old. The first part of this gospel tells the story of Joachim and Anna, Mary's parents. It tells about the barrenness of Anna, the eventual birth of Mary, how Mary entered the service as a temple virgin, the choosing of Joseph as her husband, her pregnancy, the test of both Mary and Joseph to prove their innocence in the pregnancy. It also

1 "Dictionary.com." Dictionary.com. Accessed October 12, 2017. <http://www.dictionary.com/>.

2 Matthew 2:14

3 "The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew," The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, accessed October 12, 2017, <http://gnosis.org/library/psudomat.htm>.

contributed to the shared ideas of there been an ox and an ass in the stable where Jesus was born. Other accounts found in this book about the Child Jesus is of Baby Jesus and the dragons in the cave, of the lion and panthers' adoration for Him, of the palm tree obeying Him, He accelerating time, and the idols in Egypt bow down to Him.

Many dragons that were in a cave came and adore Jesus; as Mary and Joseph journey with four children and Jesus. The children were terrified of the dragons. Jesus went down from the bosom of His mother, and stood on His feet before the dragons; He commanded them not to hurt anyone. Mary and Joseph were very afraid that Jesus would be hurt by the dragons. But Jesus told them not to be afraid or consider Him to be a little child; for He has always been perfect and all the beasts of the forest must be tame before Him (Chapter 18).⁴

As Jesus, His parents, and cattle walked in the desert, the lions and panthers went before them showing them the way. They adored Him with great reverence, they bow their head wagged their tails and were submissive to Jesus. At first, Mary was very fearful when she saw the wild animals coming towards them; but Jesus looked at her with a joyful countenance and told her not to be fearful because they came to serve them. They carried their baggage and walked alongside their sheep and rams they brought with them from Judaea (Chapter 19).⁵

The palm tree obeys Jesus and gave His parents food and water. As they continue to journey through the desert, Mary was fatigued by the excessive heat of the sun, and seeing a palm tree she told Joseph to let them rest under the shade of it. As she was sitting under it she looked up to the foliage of the palm, and saw it full of fruit, and told Joseph she wishes she could get some fruit from its palm. Joseph replied that the tree was too high. He told her he was

4 "The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew," The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, Chapter 18, accessed October 12, 2017, <http://gnosis.org/library/psudomat.htm>.

5 "The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew," The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, Chapter 19, accessed October 12, 2017, <http://gnosis.org/library/psudomat.htm>.

thinking more about getting some water to refresh themselves and the cattle. The child Jesus told the tree to bend its branches and refresh His mother with its fruit. At His words, the tree immediately bent its top down to the feet of Mary, and they gathered from its fruit, and they were all refresh. The palm tree remained bent down until Jesus told it to raise and stand strong and open from its roots and let water flow from its vein so they may be satisfied form it. It opens its roots and spring of clear, cool, and sparkling water came forth. They rejoiced with great joy and were satisfied, them and all their cattle and beast. They gave thanks to God (Chapter 20).⁶

The Child Jesus accelerated time while they were going on their journey. Joseph said to Him, "Lord, it is a boiling heat; if it pleases You, let us go by the sea-shore, that we may be able to rest in the cities on the coast." Jesus told him not to fear; He will shorten the way for him. so, what he would have taken thirty days to go over, he shall accomplish in one day. And while they were still speaking, behold, they looked forward and began to see the mountains and cities (Chapter 22).⁷

The idols in the Egyptian temple bow down to the Child Jesus. When He and His parents enter in Sotinen, a city of Egypt, because they knew no one there from whom they could ask hospitality, they went into a temple which was called the Capitol of Egypt. In that temple, there had been set up three hundred and fifty-five idols, to each of which on its own divine honors and sacred rites were paid. The Egyptians belonging to that city entered the Capitol, and the priests told them how many sacrifices to offered each day, regarding the honor in which the god was held. When Mary enters the temple with the Child Jesus all the idols prostrated themselves on the ground so that all of them were lying on their faces shattered and broken to pieces; 1 Samuel 5:3

6 "The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew," The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, Chapter 20, accessed October 12, 2017, <http://gnosis.org/library/psudomat.htm>.

7 "The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew," The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, Chapter 22, accessed October 12, 2017, <http://gnosis.org/library/psudomat.htm>.

and thus they plainly showed that they were nothing.⁸ This fulfilled Isaiah 19:1, Behold, the Lord will come upon a swift cloud and will enter Egypt, and all the handiwork of the Egyptians shall be moved at His presence⁹ (Chapter 23).¹⁰

8 1 Samuel 5:3

9 Isaiah 19:1

10 "The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew," The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, Chapter 23, accessed October 12, 2017, <http://gnosis.org/library/psudomat.htm>.

References

"Dictionary.com." Dictionary.com. Accessed October 12, 2017. <http://www.dictionary.com/>

"HolyBible.com." HolyBible.com. Accessed October 12, 2017. <https://holybible.com/>.

"The Canon of Scripture - Study Resources." Blue Letter Bible. Accessed October 12, 2017.
<https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/canon.cfm>.

"The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew," The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, accessed October 12, 2017,
<http://gnosis.org/library/psudomat.htm>.