



# The Gnostic Scriptures: Ancient Wisdom for the New Age

*Bentley Layton*

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This definitive introduction to the gnostic scriptures provides a crucial look at the theology, religious atmosphere & literary traditions of ancient Christianity & Hellenistic Judaism. Included are maps, tables & index.

## The Gnostic Scriptures: Ancient Wisdom for the New Age Details

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### **Adam says**

Bentley Layton's translation of gnostic scriptures provides a great supplement to Robinson's Nag Hammadi Library. He presents one of the best and most concise general introductions to the extremely complicated gnostic mythology of anything I have yet to read. His collection of scriptures includes tractates that are not in Nag Hammadi such as the Hermetic text "Poimandres." Furthermore, each text is introduced with a summary of it's contents, the literary background, a breakdown of it's mythic characters, and a narrative outline of the myth itself. The actually text includes footnotes that provide helpful elucidation of obscure content and there are marginal references that direct the reader's attention to other passages that can contribute to an understanding of the text. This is definitely an indispensable source for those who wish to understand gnosticism and the development of early Christianity.

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### **Christine says**

not sure if this is the 'right' version

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### **Inder says**

I finished the Gospel of Thomas, and I'm generally baffled. Lots of it sounds very familiar, and echoes the canonical gospels. Other sayings are basically nonsense. I'm not a scholar, but I don't think that this adds anything to the canonical gospels.

So I'm putting this back on my to-read list in case I decide to read any of the other non-canonical texts.

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### **Evelyn R says**

Fun subway reading. Fun to see where all that mysticism in Aeon Flux came from, and I was also genuinely interested in early Christian schisms and heresies. A definite need-to-read for people interested in Gnosticism and who read English.

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### **Janus says**

The definitive translation/introduction of any anthology of Gnostic Scripture, Bentley Layton has allowed us to hear what Valentinus had heard when questioning the abandoned babe: "I am the word." We are the word, and our word is God. This is the central premise of Gnosticism and the Gnostic religion in general. It is not self-worship, but the discovery of previously unknown regions of the self more vital and more informing than their predecessors; it is what Emerson would later call "the god within," or the "deep force," i.e what is within that is part of the divine. From a more secular perspective, one may also consider it as an extended

metaphor that, through its employment extends consciousness, or as Thomas Mann would deem it in the twentieth century, "The romance of the soul." Whatever your ideological-cognitive stance, if Gnosticism is an interest, then this is the book to buy.

-J

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