

## **“THE DA VINCI CODE”**

### **THE PLOT**

An art curator at the Louvre Museum is found murdered after leaving behind several clues. Robert Langdon, an expert in ancient symbols and the book’s hero, is called in to make sense of those clues. He and the curator’s granddaughter, a cryptologist, hunt for the murderer while trying to elude the police (who suspect Langdon of the murder) as well as an albino assassin working for Opus Dei (a reclusive Roman Catholic sect).

The couple solicits the expertise of historian Leigh Teabing, who reveals that the curator’s murder is part of a grand conspiracy stretching back 2000 years to the founding of Christianity. He explains that Jesus was merely a mortal descendant of King David trying to claim his rightful throne over Israel and inaugurate a religion of the “sacred feminine” (which views the female body as holy, and worship practices would include ritual sex).

Though Jesus was thwarted in his attempt, he was survived by his wife, Mary Magdalene, and their children. Leonardo Da Vinci was one of Jesus’ descendants, who concealed in his artwork the truth about Jesus’ marriage to Mary, and the goddess religion they had founded; thus the title of the book, “The Da Vinci Code.”

It is explained that the 4<sup>th</sup> century church sought to suppress the feminist message of early Christianity and began persecuting all who professed the “true” message of the “sacred feminine.” To avoid the persecutions of the patriarchal and marriage-hating Roman Catholic Church, the descendants of Jesus and Mary, as well as certain others entrusted with the truth, formed a secret society called the Priory of Sion, which survives to the present day – with the Masonic Lodge being one of its present-day cells.

The Priory of Sion passed down the truth of Jesus and Mary through the legend of the Holy Grail, which isn’t about the chalice Jesus used at the Last Supper, but about Mary Magdalene herself, whose womb is the “chalice,” or receptacle of the royal blood. The murdered curator turns out to belong to the Priory of Sion and was a descendant of Jesus and Mary. The clues left behind by the murdered curator, including the interpretive key to da Vinci’s paintings, were intended to convey to his granddaughter that she, too, belonged to the lineage of Jesus and Mary.

### **BASIC PREMISES OF THE BOOK**

The Bible, as we have it today, is a product of a 4<sup>th</sup> Century attempt to suppress the truth of early Christianity by destroying all the other gospels about Jesus as a man, and used only four Gospels that were altered to portray Him as God.

Christianity originally worshipped the goddess, and Jesus was establishing a “Matriarchal” religion that was later hijacked and made into a “Patriarchal” religion.”

Sacred sex, or temple prostitution, was practiced by both Jews in Solomon's Temple, and by early Christians in order to experience God.

Jesus and Mary Magdalene were married, had children, and their descendants are among us today.

The Church (esp. Roman Catholicism) ruthlessly tried to destroy these "facts" in order to devalue the female and elevate the male. This persecution led the descendants of Jesus and their followers to go underground and develop a code to instruct those "in the know" regarding the truth of Jesus.

Jesus' divinity was a product of a "relatively close" vote in the Council of Nicea in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, in order to unify the Roman Empire and consolidate Vatican power. Before then, the church always understood that Christ was merely a man.

The Holy Grail was not a legend about the chalice used by Christ at the Last Supper, but a symbol for Mary Magdalene's womb.

**According to Dan Brown in a PBS interview in 2003 "The only thing fictional in my book is the characters."** He asserts, both in his book and in subsequent interviews, that there was a massive cover-up by the church and that the lack of evidence for the existence of the Gnostic Gospels in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century is "proof" of the cover-up. Brown alleges that the Gnostic Gospels are older than Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and are superior to them. According to a review in the New York Daily News, {Dan Brown's} research is impeccable."

In truth, Dan Brown's research relies entirely on Gnostic scriptures, occult literature and the writings of the most radical of modern day feminist theologians. In every point of Scripture and history he gets it exactly wrong!

## **SOME QUOTES FROM THE BOOK**

"The Bible did not arrive by fax from heaven...the Bible is a product of man, my dear, not of God. The Bible did not fall magically from the clouds. Man created it as a historical record of tumultuous times, and it has evolved through countless translations, additions, and revisions. History has never had a definitive version of the book...The Bible, as we know it today, was collated by the pagan Roman emperor, Constantine the Great."

"More than 80 gospels were considered for the New Testament, and yet only a relative few were chosen for inclusion – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John among them. "Who chose which gospels to include?" Sophie asked...The bible, as we know it today was collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine the Great...Because Constantine upgraded Jesus' status almost four centuries after Jesus' death, thousands of documents already existed chronicling his life as a mortal man...Constantine commissioned and financed a new Bible, which omitted those gospels which spoke of Christ's human traits

and embellished those gospels that made him godlike. The earlier gospels were gathered up, and burned.”

“Powerful men in the early church ‘conned’ the world by propagating lies that devalued the female and tipped the scales in favor of the masculine... convert[ing] the world from matriarchal paganism to patriarchal Christianity by waging a campaign of propaganda that demonized the sacred feminine, obliterating the goddess from modern religion forever.”

“Admittedly, the concept of sex as a pathway to God was mindboggling at first. Langdon...told [his students] that early Jewish tradition involved ritualistic sex. In the temple, no less. Early Jews believed that the Holy of Holies in Solomon’s temple housed not only God but His powerful female equal Shekinah...The Jewish, sacred name for God (YHWH) in fact derived from Jehovah, an androgenous physical union between the masculine Jah and the pre-Hebraic name for Eve, Havah.”

“‘My dear,’ Teabing declared, ‘until that moment in history, Jesus was viewed by his followers as a mortal prophet...a great and powerful man, but a man nonetheless. A mortal...Jesus’ establishment as the ‘Son of God’ was officially proposed and voted on by the Council of Nicea.’ ‘Hold on. You’re saying Jesus’ divinity was the result of a vote?’ ‘A relatively close vote at that,’ Teabing added. ‘Nonetheless, establishing Christ’s divinity was critical to the further unification of the Roman empire and the new Vatican power base. By officially endorsing Jesus as the Son of God, Constantine turned Jesus into a deity who existed beyond the scope of the human world, an entity whose power was unchallengeable. This not only precluded further pagan challenges to Christianity, but now the followers of Christ were able to redeem themselves only via the established sacred channel – the Roman Catholic Church...the early church literally stole Jesus from his original followers, hijacking his human message, shrouding it in an impenetrable cloak of divinity and using it to expand their own power.’”

“Teabing clarified, ‘The early church needed to convince the world that the mortal prophet Jesus was a divine being. Therefore any gospels that described earthly aspects of Jesus’ life had to be omitted from the bible’...’But how could Jesus have a bloodline unless?’ ‘,,She paused and looked at Langdon. Langdon smiled softly, ‘Unless they had a child.’ Sophie stood transfixed. ‘Behold,’ Teabing proclaimed, ‘The greatest cover-up in human history. Not only was Jesus Christ married, but he was a father. My dear, Mary Magdalene was the holy vessel. She was the chalice that bore the royal bloodline of Jesus Christ. She was the womb that bore the lineage from which the sacred fruit sprang forth.’”

## **THE ACTUAL FACTS**

***(DaVinci Code) “The bible as we know it today was collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine...[who] upgraded Jesus status almost four centuries after Jesus’ death, ...omitting those gospels which spoke of Christ’s human traits and embellished those gospels that made him godlike. The earlier gospels were gathered and burned.”***

1. The “Canon” of the Old Testament, divided into three sections (Law, Prophets, and The Writings) subdivided into 24 books (which includes all 39 books of our present Old Testament). This Canon was based on “prophetic authorship,” i.e. that the books must be indisputably written by a prophet, who spoke by Divine inspiration. The Old Testament Canon was officially formalized at the Rabbinical Council of Jamnia in A.D. 90 (A.D. means *Anno Domini*, that is, “*In the Year of Our Lord*”). Yet these books were recognized as Scripture long before, understanding that the last book was written by Malachi 400 years before Christ. Books written after then, and before the books of the New Testament appeared, were not deemed by Jews as Scripture, were not included in the canon of Scripture, and were kept in a separate volume known as The Apocrypha. When Dan Brown references the Dead Sea Scrolls in connection with the New Testament, he is fabricating facts, as all of the Dead Sea Scrolls were related to Old Testament writings and times.
2. The New Testament Canon, which Brown says was compiled by Constantine in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, were actually written in the second half of the first century, by various apostles and evangelists (14 in all). Brown asserts that over 80 gospels were rejected and burned, and were actually earlier than Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In reality, here are the approximate dates for the books of the NT:
  - a. A.D. 45 James
  - b. A.D. 48 Galatians
  - c. A.D. 50 1&2 Thess.
  - d. A.D. 56 1&2 Cor.
  - e. A.D. 56 Romans
  - f. A.D. 59-61 Col. Phil. Eph. Phil.
  - g. A.D. 50-60 Matthew
  - h. A.D. 60 Mark
  - i. A.D. 61-62 1 Pet.
  - j. A.D. 62-63 1 Tim
  - k. A.D. 62 2 Peter
  - l. A.D. 63 Titus
  - m. A.D. 65-67 2 Timothy
  - n. A.D. 65-69 Luke, Acts
  - o. A.D. 65-70 Hebrews
  - p. A.D. 60-70 Jude
  - q. A.D. 90-100 John I John 2 John 3 John
  - r. A.D. 95 Revelation
3. Many of these books were written to be widely read by the 1<sup>st</sup> century churches, and those writings claimed divine authority. Acceptance of this apostolic word was the basic standard of church membership. History clearly shows that the formation of the New Testament canon was not a process or pattern of human selection, but rather the Word of God authenticated itself. **“The church did not create the Bible; the Bible created the church.”** Thus, the 27 books of the NT are not authoritative because they are in the canon, they are in the canon because

they are authoritative. These books were recognized as having an intrinsic worth before being assembled, and their authority was grounded in their nature and source.

4. The criteria used to determine the authenticity of any proposed book was the following:
  - a. Apostolicity – the book in question had to be undeniably written by one of the 14 apostles, or one working closely with them and under their supervision, such as Mark (Peter) and Luke (Paul).
  - b. Orthodoxy – The content of the book in question had to have been completely consistent with the historic doctrines of the faith. There was no room for innovation or deviation.
  - c. Catholicity – the book in question had to have been widely used and recognized throughout the church as authoritative.
5. The apostolic fathers in the first generation after the apostles were unanimous on the majority of the NT books, clearly demonstrating in their writings that what would become the books of the New Testament were already widely distributed and acknowledged as authoritative throughout the early decades of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. These authors freely quoted from these books in their writings – Letter of Clement (A.D. 95-96), Ignatius (A.D. 110), Polycarp (A.D. 115). Hundreds of references to Scripture appeared in these various writings.
6. One of the earliest lists we have of the NT canon comes from a document called the Muratorian Canon, composed A.D. 180-200. What we see from this is that already by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (A.D. 200), the four Gospels, along with a great majority of the books of the NT as we know it today were already firmly established throughout the Christian Church as the only authoritative account of the life and teaching of Christ. The Canon of Origin (A.D. 250) strongly reinforces this view. He was among the first to call this canon The New Testament. The Canon of Athanasius (A.D. 367) was published as a response to the growing number of Gnostic books available. This list is necessary to warn “ignorant and simple people” from being misled by the “fabricated books” of false teachers.
7. The NT Canon was formally approved by the Council of Hippo (A.D. 393) and Carthage (A.D. 419).

**(DaVinci Code) “More than 80 gospels were considered for the New Testament, and yet, only a relative few were chosen for inclusion – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John among them...Constantine commissioned and financed a new Bible which omitted those gospels which spoke of Christ’s human traits and embellished those gospels that made him (Jesus) godlike. The early gospels were outlawed, gathered up and burned.”**

1. Contrary to Brown’s assault on the authenticity and reliability of the Biblical canon, especially the four Gospels, which he claims were late in origin and earlier (Gnostic) gospels were more accurate accounts of Jesus’ humanity and sexuality, history shows quite the opposite.

2. The four canonical Gospels had already been composed and widely circulated throughout the church by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century (A.D. 100). Tertullian acknowledges this fact in a letter written around A.D. 210. He writes, “We lay it down as our first position that the Evangelical Testament has apostles for its authors, to who was assigned by the Lord Himself this office of publishing the gospel.” Since John, the last of the apostles died in the 90’s, no genuine gospel could possibly have been written after that time.

3. The Magdalen College Papyrus, fragments of Matthew’s gospel, date back to the mid 1<sup>st</sup> Century, perhaps as early as A.D. 60, and are even thought to be part of the original autograph of Matthew’s Gospel. Even so, there are multitudes of papyrus manuscripts in existence dating to the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (A.D. 100-150) which authenticates the antiquity of all four Gospels.

4. Justin Martyr, in his defense of Christianity in (A.D. 150) refers to the crucial role the Gospels played in the worship of the earliest Christian congregations. Irenaeus, writing around A.D. 180, affirms “It is not possible for the Gospels to be either more or fewer than they are (which is four).” Origen of Alexandria writes at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were viewed as “the only indisputable ones in the Church of God under heaven.” There are numerous other early “proofs” for the canon of Scripture having only those four Gospels, and no others.

5. Thus, the four Gospels were written, and widely circulated in the church, which recognized them as inspired and authoritative, by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century. In contrast, Dan Brown would have us believe those four gospels were relative late-comers, and the numerous Gnostic gospels were actually earlier, and more accurate accounts of the life of Jesus.

6. Paul Maier states: “The Gnostic gospels which the church rejected were not written earlier, but actually much later than the Biblical Gospels. The earliest Gnostic gospel, the so-called Gospel of Thomas, was written at least 100 years after Christ’s ascension – and certainly not by the apostle Thomas.”

7. Ironically, contrary to Brown’s charge that Constantine had all the “earlier gospels” outlawed and burned, most of our knowledge of those Gnostic writings come from the writings of the early church fathers, who copiously quoted them in their writings in order to refute their falsehoods. So Constantine, who ruled in the 300’s, missed the boat then, if he destroyed those Gnostic gospels that supposedly existed from the 1<sup>st</sup> century, but left in existence those “copies” from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, as well as the quotes from them in the writings of the early church fathers. The reality is that the Gnostic writings were late products, written after the 1<sup>st</sup> century, and after the four gospels, and continued to be known and refuted by the church. Constantine had nothing to do with it at all.

8. Irenaeus writes about the dangers of gnosticism in his book “Against Heresies:” “These men falsify the oracles of God, and prove themselves evil interpreters of the good word of revelation. They also overthrow the faith of many by drawing them away under a pretense of superior knowledge from Him who founded and adorned the universe; as if they had something more excellent and sublime to reveal, than the God who created the heaven and the earth and all things that are therein. By means of specious and plausible words, they cunningly allure the simple-minded to inquire into their system; but they initiate them into their

blasphemous and impious opinions respecting the Demiurge and these simple ones are unable, even in such a matter, to distinguish falsehood from truth.” This same thing could be said of Dan Brown and those who believe his assertions in “The Da Vinci Code.”

9. To summarize: All four Gospels were written between A.D. 60-90, within the lifetimes of the apostles. The very earliest date assigned to one of the Gnostic gospels in A.D. 150, for the Gospel of Thomas. Even that early date is disputed by many scholars. Many of the other Gnostic writings were not composed until 100 years after that, and were certainly not written by the apostles claimed by the titles of those Gnostic writings. In contrast, long before most of the Gnostic gospels had been written, by A.D. 200 the four gospels had already been recognized throughout the church as the foundation documents of what would become known as The New Testament. The four Gospels are 1<sup>st</sup> century eyewitness accounts; the Gnostic gospels are late 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century fabrications, using Jesus’ and the apostles’ names as characters to convey Gnostic teachings

**(DaVinci Code: “Langdon smiled. ‘Sophie, every faith in the world is based on fabrication. That is the definition of faith – acceptance of that which we imagine to be true, that which we cannot prove. Every religion describes God through metaphor, allegory, and exaggeration, from the early Egyptians through modern Sunday School. Metaphors are a way to help our minds process the unprocessable. The problems arise when we begin to believe our own metaphors.’”**

1. Dan Brown’s “god” is not the transcendent Creator of the universe and Author of the Scriptures. God, to him, is simply the personal divinity within every individual. Seen together with another of his books, “Angels and Demons,” we see that faith and God are simply mankind’s quest for meaning in life and making the creation itself into divinity.
2. The classic Gnostic view is expressed in Brown’s writings, and illumined by a quote from “The Gospel of Phillip”: “God created humanity, but now human beings create god. That is the way it is in the world – human beings make gods and worship their creation. It would be appropriate for the gods to worship human beings.”
3. Nothing is objectively true, according to this view. The contradictory beliefs of Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, etc. are equally true and valid for the people who believe them. The god, or gods, of every religion exist only as a projection of the needs and desires of those who believe in them.
4. On the other hand, the Bible repudiates all of this. As there is only one God and one God alone, so also there is one truth and one truth alone. That truth is objective, that is, it is true no matter one’s acceptance or recognition of it.

**(DaVinci Code) “Jesus was viewed by his followers as ... a great and powerful man, but a man nonetheless. Jesus’ establishment as the ‘Son of God’ was officially proposed and voted on by the Council of Nicea.’ The early church literally stole**

**Jesus from his original followers, hijacking his human message, shrouding it in an impenetrable cloak of divinity and using it to expand their own power.”**

1. This direct attack on the divinity of Christ is an overt attack on the heart of Christianity itself. If Brown is right, that the doctrine of Jesus being both true God and true man is false – an invention of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, and foisted upon the church for political reasons by Constantine – then Christianity is nothing more than a fraud.
2. But Brown, in his view, is simply mimicking what occult theorists have been saying for years. One of Brown’s primary sources for his views is “The Templar Revelation – Secret Guardians of the True Identity of Christ” which concludes that Jesus was a magician and a missionary of the Egyptian goddess Isis. According to the authors of this book, “Jesus was not the son of God and neither was he of the Jewish religion – although he may have been ethnically a Jew. The evidence points to his preaching a foreign message to the land in which he mounted his campaign and began his mission. Certainly his contemporaries thought of him as being an adept of Egyptian magic...Mary Magdalene was a priestess who was Jesus’ partner in sacred marriage...”

*Uffda!*

#### **CONCLUSION:**

While Christians may choose to read this book (or see the movie) as simply an exciting work of fiction, one must be aware – as you would with the Tim LaHaye “Left Behind” series of novels – that the theology of the author is absolutely paramount to the book and can, through dialog and action, work its way into our own view of Truth.

Both Brown’s and LaHaye’s “theology” are false and corrupting, so in spite of the fact that these novels might be entertaining and interesting, they must always be read with discernment, and with a basic knowledge of what really is the Truth of God’s Word, especially embodied “in Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from all eternity, and also true Man, born of the virgin Mary, [who] is my Lord who has redeemed me . . .”

Pr. Kenneth D. Lueke  
Our Savior Ev. Lutheran Church  
Bad Axe, MI.