

the Flying Spaghetti Monster did it in his noodly omniscience. Open your heart to the FSM and It will fill you with rich red sauce and yummy garlic bread.

The FSM party is a pot-luck, so bring food & beverage to share, but a minuscule door fee (\$1, pocket change) will cover all hall costs & dining supplies. Especially welcome, for obvious reasons: pasta. Celebrate the Grand Designer with 'sketti.

This year the event will include singing, games, pirate cosplay and a pirate costume contest. So wear pirate garb if you wish (optional) or something piratey. (Piratish, piratesque? Arr, blast this spellchecker anyway!) Pirates are sacred to the Flying Spaghetti Monster. Why? It is a *mystery*.

Learn more about the Flying Spaghetti Monster at <http://www.venganza.org/about/>. Or see photos from the 2014 and 2013 FSM parties.

Location: Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A, Sacramento. Map: <https://goo.gl/iVQL8z>.

Contact: Rachael or David, SacramentoCOR@gmail.com or 916-572-7020, especially if you can help with setup!



The Obscure Origins of the Gospels

It's said that Papias referred in some letters (since lost), written in the first half or middle of the second century, to St. Mark's "Memoirs of Jesus," which Papias stated were derived from St. Peter, and to some "Sayings of Jesus" written by St. Matthew in Aramaic, which Papias said that "each one of us has translated as best he could." Papias was Bishop of Hierapolis, and none of his writings survive except in the form of alleged quotations made by Eusebius about 150 years later. It should be noted that, even if the testimony of Eusebius is accepted as accurate, these "Memoirs" and these "Sayings" are first heard of only when at least one hundred years have elapsed after the date assigned to Jesus, and that assuming the latest possible dates for the deaths of the disciples—no eye-witness of the events related could have been alive at the time when the first mention of these books was made. It can hardly be claimed that a three-generation-old tradition is absolutely reliable.

There is no evidence of any kind for any earlier existence of any books resembling the Gospels; so, even if we give full credit to this second-hand evidence of Eusebius, there was, in the middle of the first half of the second century, no trace of any gospel story except some short Memoirs, upon which the present Mark was based, and those "Logia" or " Sayings of Jesus," written in Aramaic, which were afterwards used as the basis of the Greek Matthew.

So the orthodox Christian Hegesippus appears, on the evidence of the Church Father, Eusebius, to have been unacquainted with any of our Canonical Gospels, or certainly—if he did know of them—not to have regarded them as authoritative or important, since, although he freely quotes the Apocrypha in support of his doctrines, he does not ever mention one of our Canonical Gospels— a most extraordinary omission on his part if these Gospels were in existence and were believed to have been written by the persons whose names they now bear. Unwritten tradition, though 150 years had elapsed since the events of which he writes were alleged to have taken place, Hegesippus regards as being of the utmost importance; written stories of very little.

Justin Martyr, writing about 150 A.D., mentions some "Memoirs of the Apostles," but gives no names to show us to which of the Apostles he is referring. He, too, appears not to have been acquainted with any of our Canonical Gospels.

Taking into consideration these and many other similar facts, most commentators are agreed that our present Gospels were unknown until the second century was well advanced. A few theologians still maintain that they were first published at the end of the first century and the beginning of the second; but by far the greater number of critics assign their first appearance to the period between the years 120 and 150, or still later.

According to the Gospels themselves, the disciples who actually heard the message given were frequently rebuked by Jesus himself in his lifetime, because they misunderstood the words he uttered; and, even if the gospel story itself is an absolutely accurate record of events and speeches, these disciples altogether misunderstood the Messianic idea, and expected the Hebrew prophecies to be fulfilled and the return of Jesus as a King to reign over Israel and all other nations. When Jesus returned, in the immediate future, to set up this kingdom upon earth, they would—they expected—be his ministers, great officials governing part of his dominions. And the generation that succeeded the disciples were certainly mistaken about some matters, notably about this second coming which they so confidently expected in their own lifetime. How much more liable to error must the authors of these Gospels, written so long after the events they relate, have been! We are not, however, at present concerned with the possibility of error so much as with the questions of dates and authorship of these books.



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AOF President: Brad Clark. Vice-president: Mynga Futrell. Editor: Fran Evanisko. And their many little minions.

“The purpose of Atheists and Other Freethinkers (AOF) is to promote the civic understanding of atheism and the acceptance of atheists in our community. Through educational programs, projects, and publications, AOF will extend secular perspectives, including the separation of religion and government and the right to think and speak freely on these perspectives.”

I promise not to get in any religious arguments.

3 drinks later

