

“THE DAVINCI CODE” – AN ANALYSIS

[Dan Brown, **The Da Vinci Code**. (Great Britain: Bantam Press, 2003), 593 pages.]

A Summary – This is a most riveting mystery novel replete with hidden codes, murder, sex and intrigue. Any lover of mystery would find this, a captivating novel. The theme of the book is to debunk the common notion that the Holy Grail is the cup of Christ’s Last Supper. One of the evidences mentioned by Brown was the painting of Leonardo Da Vinci, the Last Supper. Brown’s proposition is that the Holy Grail actually refers to Mary Magdalene who is the wife of Jesus Christ. Not only that, this lineage of Christ and Mary Magdalene continues to this very day. Mary Magdalene is said, by Brown, to be pregnant when she was with Christ at His resurrection. So-called factual evidence is used profusely throughout this book to prove that Brown is right and the Church is wrong. The conspirator behind this lie is the Roman Catholic Church, says Brown. This thesis of the book is made extremely believable because it is cloaked in murder, deception, hidden codes and the fast pace writing of Brown.

If this is merely a mystery novel with no claim to truth and does not attack the Bible, then it would probably be grouped with the rest of the millions of mystery novels out there earning a fast buck. The problem is that it claims accuracy when in reality it is filled with hypothesis after hypothesis with no shred of genuine evidence to prove the many claims found throughout the novel. Brown states as fact: “All description of artwork, architecture, documents and secret rituals in this novel are accurate (page 16).” In other words Brown’s attack on the veracity of the Word of God and the deity of Christ are real albeit it masked cleverly behind the cloak of a mystery novel. Perhaps this is the potency of his attack. Thus far, many of the attacks on God’s Word and Christ have been in theological books and the four walls of Bible Colleges and Seminaries. But Brown’s direct assault on the Son of God and the Bible is through a novel! He wants to mess up the mind of the ordinary Christian in the street. The fear is that the unsuspecting might be stumped by this book because of the manner in which Brown has presented it.

This novel has to be exposed for what it is, a satanic inspired book for the purpose of destroying the veracity of the Bible, Christ as the Son of God and the faith of believers.

- A. **Direct Attack on the Doctrine of Canonicity** – “The Bible is a product of *man*, . . . 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. . . . More than eighty gospels were considered for the New Testament, and yet only a relative few were chosen for inclusion – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John among them. . . . The Bible, as we know it today, was collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine the Great. (pages 311-315).” Also on the Bible books, Brown in his novel says, “No more so than they can confirm the authenticity of the Bible (page 343).”

By these words Brown asserts that the New Testament of the Bible is the fabrication of sinful man. Man manipulated them to deceive the world for the

past 2,000 years. Brown says that there is no authoritative Word of God from God but only the words of mere mortal men. This is a blatant assault on Christianity.

The word “canon” means “rule.” It is a rod by which things were kept physically straight. It is used metaphorically in 2 Corinthians 10:12-18 to designate God’s rule to evaluate our labour and God’s providence over our lives.¹ The canonicity of the Bible is “the quality or character of the Scriptures by which they are our rule of faith and life, as the infallible Word of God. Canonicity thus is equivalent to authority, the divine authority of the Scripture.”² The church did not make the words of man to become the words of God as Brown asserts. The church did not decree them at all. The Word of God stands on its own. It declared itself the Word of God and therefore it is so. There is no higher authority than the Word of God itself to appeal to that is worthy of this claim. Therefore this is an acceptable tautological argument. In defense of this truth, Buswell has stated correctly that, “all factual existential statements may be regarded as circular. Why is a fact a fact, and why is it regarded as a fact? The only answer is, because it is a fact.”³

The Westminster Confession of Faith clearly states in Chapter One, paragraph 4 and 5 that “The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof; and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.”

The Word of God was already canon the moment it was written. The church at that time received them as the very Word of God and not the words of man. 1 Thessalonians 2:13 states, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." When false doctrines like Marcionism and Montanism arose, the leaders of the early church realized the

¹J. Oliver Buswell, **A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion**, vol. 1, (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, reprint 1994, first printing by Zondervan in 1962), pages 193-4. 2 Corinthians 10:12-18, "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule(*canon*) which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ: Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line (*canon*) of things made ready to our hand. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." [italics and bold added]

²Ibid, 194.

³Ibid, 196.

need for the doctrine of canonization. The Council of Laodicea (AD 363) mentions the present collection of 27; Athanasius mentions 27 in his Easter letter of AD 367 and these are the recognized canon at the local Council of Hippo (AD 393) and the Third Synod of Carthage (AD 397). From then onwards these 27 books were the only accepted New Testament Canon. The Old and New Testaments apocrypha and New Testament Pseudepigrapha were all rejected as spurious and not as Holy Scripture.

The Old Testament was already well accepted by Christ and the apostles in its present 39 books. The criteria adopted by the church for the recognition of the New Testament Books included: apostolic authority, acceptance by the church, internal witness where the books authenticate themselves and “In the final analysis it was the oversight of Christ for His Church through the Spirit of God that directed them in the collection of the Canon.”⁴

The doctrine of Canonicity has its foundation in the doctrine of Inspiration. 2 Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

- B. **Factual and Fatal Errors** – Brown’s trust in the high doubtful hidden claims of men like Leonardo Da Vinci is the foundation of his novel. Brown appeals to “evidence” that he claims are factual are his irrefutable proofs against the veracity of the Bible. Brown favours the theory of a Roman Catholic Church conspiracy. Much of what Brown claims to be factual is really a lie.

“Originally, . . . Christianity honoured the Jewish Sabbath of Saturday, but Constantine shifted it to coincide with the pagan’s veneration day of the sun. (page 314).” This is not the case. Constantine has nothing to do with it for he was not even born yet. It was the apostles who changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday not because it is the worship of the sun but because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Acts 20:7 says, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." And also in 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 says, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The “first day of the week” is the Sunday.

Another error in the novel is that Brown wrote that the Bible portrayed Mary Magdalene as a prostitute. “Magdalene was recast as a whore in order to

⁴<http://www.prestoncibible.org/doctrines/CD/canonicity.htm>

erase evidence of her powerful family ties.”⁵ Brown claims that Mary Magdalene was from the tribe of Benjamin. He further claimed that she was of royal decent as the first king of Israel, King Saul, was from the tribe of Benjamin. This is not substantiated at all by any reference but merely the conjecture of Brown. This is not only poor penmanship but utterly irresponsible. The Bible did not say that Mary Magdalene was a whore. What the Bible said was that she was healed by Christ having been possessed by 7 demons.⁶ Based upon this erroneous premise, Brown wrote that the church called her a whore to hide her royal identity! This is deception.

- C. **Blasphemous Statements** – Brown said that “it was not Mary Magdalene’s royal blood that concerned the Church so much as it was her consorting with Christ . . . the legend of the Holy Grail is a legend about royal blood. When Grail legend speaks of ‘the chalice that held the blood of Christ’ . . . it speaks, in fact, of Mary Magdalene – the female womb that carried Jesus’ royal bloodline. . . . Not only was Jesus Christ married, but He was a father. . . . 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, and the vine from which the sacred fruit sprang forth!”⁷ No substantiated evidence was produced other than some highly interpretive hidden codes and symbols and the painting of Leonardo Da Vinci. Brown’s interpretation of these hidden “truths” is highly speculative and dubious to say the least. These statements directly attack the deity of Christ and His person and character as the perfect Son of God. To be married and have children is blasphemy. Brown is reckless in his writing for he provides no proofs but his own imagination. Brown’s quotation of the gospel of Philip and the so-called gospel of Mary Magdalene has no reference for the reader to check for authenticity. Even so the brief quotations of these gospels by Brown did not state anything about the marriage of Mary Magdalene to Christ at all. Brown’s claims are fallacious and extremely speculative.

Brown wrote, “. . . the 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 also His powerful female equal, Shekinah. Men seeking spiritual wholeness came to the Temple to visit priestess . . . with whom they made love and experienced the divine through physical union. The Jewish tetragrammaton YHWH --- the sacred name of God – in fact derived from Jehovah, an androgynous physical union between the masculine *Jah* and the pre-Hebraic name Eve, *Havah* [italics original].”⁸ To call the Shekinah glory of God the female consort of God is blasphemy.

⁵Brown, 335.

⁶See Luke 8:1-3.

⁷Brown, 335-6.

⁸Ibid, 411.

Brown's irresponsible claims are quite laughable if not for the poison it contains to undermine the faith of the believers. His attacks on God's Holy and Perfect Word is merely an addition to the plethora of lies woven by Satan since the time of the Fall of man in the Garden of Eden. "The Shekinah is a non-biblical term that appeared in the Targums and was used in the Talmud to describe the presence of God in the world and His relationship to Israel."⁹ Brown's irresponsible writing is clearly depicted here by his blasphemous assertion that this word "Shekinah" which does not even appear in the Bible and he calls it "the female consort of YHWH."

"YHWH" is the unique Name of the God of His covenant people Israel. It first appeared in the Bible in Genesis 2:4 together with the word Elohim, (God).¹⁰ God in Exodus 3:15 introduced Himself as the YHWH (translated as LORD in the King James Bible) the God (elohim) of the people of Israel. Exodus 3:15 says, "And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." YHWH is a unique term for the Name of the God of Israel.

- D. **Erroneous definitions** – Brown wrote, "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 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 literally in our own metaphors."¹¹

Brown's sweeping statements is arrogant and presumptuous. His use of "every" presumes that Brown has gone through "every" religion of the world from those that existed in the past to the present? Faith is not "an imagination" or "make belief" or "living in a dream world without reality" as Brown has portrayed. This is a definition from a man who has no hope outside of the world that he exists in. Brown is either an atheist or a deist. The Bible describes faith in Hebrews 11:1 as, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is to trust in every Word of God because God who is all powerful and all present and all knowing has

⁹Merrill C. Tenny , general editor, **The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible**, vol. 5, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), 388.

¹⁰Genesis 2:4, "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,"

¹¹Brown, 451.

spoken the words. The present life of the Christian is lived in light of God's revealed truth. The Christian has hope in God and his future. This faith is so crucial in the believers' life that without it, it is impossible to please God. Hebrews 11:6 teaches that, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

The use of metaphor and imagery and other figures of speech is part and parcel of the literal method of understanding the Bible. It is also part of our daily speech to use metaphors and hyperboles. We call someone as thin as a pencil or he eats like a pig. Just because there are parables and metaphors in the Bible, it is wrong for Brown to say that this is the only way that God has communicated to man. Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Genesis 1:1 is the clearest and simplest and most direct statement you can find in the Bible.

When Jesus says in John 15:1 that He is the true vine, it is ridiculous to believe that every vine a Christian sees is Christ. This is a metaphor where Christ used to describe who He is in relation to the genuine believers. The believers are the branches. Just as the branches are attached to the vine to survive, Christian must be attached to Christ in order to live. This is part and parcel of day to day communication. On the other hand when Jesus says in John 14:6, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." This means that the only way to the one living and true God is through the LORD Jesus Christ. This is the literal understanding of the Bible not wooden literalism where the figurative is rejected and replaced by the wrong usage.

Conclusion

Brown's claims to accuracy are spurious. He is presumptuous and his claims are without proper documentary evidence and highly speculative and inaccurate. The Bible student must see through the folly in Brown's novel and not allow his attacks on God's Word and Christ to succeed. Brown's blasphemous attack on God's Holy Word and the Deity of Christ is not new. It is the old lie of Satan dressed in a modern day novel. Marcion as far back as the 2nd century attacked the canonicity of the Bible with his wealth to buy churches. Marcion rejects the Old Testament and rejects Christ as the Messiah. Marcion believes that Christ was not born but he just appeared. Marcion sincerely believed that the apostles including Paul had Judaized the truth of God and Marcion had to restore the "true" readings,¹² which is precisely what Brown's novel is all about. Dan Brown is a modern day Marcion. The warning from God's Word concerning the last days is very clear. 1Timothy 4:1-2 warns, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;" Let every

¹²Walter A. Elwell, editor, **Evangelical Dictionary of Theology**, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 685.

born again Christian not be fooled by Brown. To every discerning Christian the Bible says in 1 Timothy 4:16, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Brown writes like the Devil himself. Follow God by believing and obeying His Holy Word. Follow Brown and we died. AMEN.