

I am about ready now (I think!) to dig more deeply into a thread on the Invention of the Afterlife - the tentative title of the book that I \*hope\* will be my next one. I've been putting off starting the thread in earnest because, in fact, I don't feel particularly ready for it. I'm just at the preliminary stage of my reading and have many dozens of books I need to work through before I can even think about sketching out how I want to broach the subject in my book (I have about a hundred unread books on various aspects of the matter sitting on my shelf now, as we speak, and I'm collecting more virtually every day).

But I think that I will be doing this book differently from others I've done - at least with respect to the blog. I'm thinking about using the blog as a way to think out loud about some of the topics I'm covering in my reading. I'm not sure that everything I read about will make it into the book. I won't know until I read it, and only later can I decide. That means that I will be reading a lot of stuff that might be interesting, but that ends up not making the cut.

As I indicated in a previous post, one of the things I'm interested in - and have been for a long time - are the Christian accounts of guided tours through heaven and hell. The one I've dealt with the most in the past is a book called the Apocalypse of Peter. I talk about this work in several of my earlier books. Here is what I say about it in my book Forged.

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I will not be talking at length in this book about we got our twenty-seven books of the New Testament, that is, how the canon was formed, so that some writings came to be included and others were left out. There are plenty of other books that describe this process at length. I can say, though, that there were some writings that were a "close call," that nearly made it in but did not, just as there were others that nearly were left out but finally made it in. One of the books that nearly made it in is called the Apocalypse of Peter.

From authors such as Eusebius, we know that there were...

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