Closing the 'Book of Gemstone'

McBride's dark televangelist comedy ends after four seasons

By Dana Simpson
TV Media

Those who worship the Family Gemstone will be happy to hear the good news: they are back at the pulpit again. Donning their best, sparkliest apparel — and, from the looks of the trailer, some feathered angel wings to boot! — the snazzy, southern televangelists return for one final installment of their HBO comedy series as spring arrives. Season 4 of "The Righteous Gemstones" premieres Sunday, March 9, on HBO and Max.

A dark, religion-centered comedy, "The Righteous Gemstones" was conceived by Danny McBride and his industry friends when they moved back to Charleston, South Carolina, in 2017. An American actor and filmmaker best known for the baseball comedy series "Eastbound & Down," the so-called "stoner comedy" "Your Highness" (2011) and most recently for contributing to John Carpenter's Halloween franchise as a writer, McBride was born in Statesboro, Georgia, and grew up in Fredericksburg, Virginia. And although televangelists existed in his periphery as a child, the multi-talented actor says the intricacies and illegalities surrounding much of that world only became apparent to him in adulthood.

"I grew up going to church every Sunday, so I'd been to church for years and years of my life," McBride told CNN near "The Righteous Gemstones'" Season 2 release in 2022. "I know the Bible, I know all the apostles and I know all the stories, and it was a big part of my childhood growing up. ... And when I moved back to Charleston, I saw all the churches here and it just really kind of got me thinking about church again."



Danny McBride stars in "The Righteous Gemstones"

The series follows the Gemstones, a family who has gained wealth, status and (possible) salvation by way of their world-famous megachurch in the southern United States. Dedicating their lives to swindling, scamming and preaching the Lord's word in all manner of ridiculous ways, the Gemstones are quite contrarian in their approach: greedy but charitable, cutthroat but kindhearted.

At the head of the Gemstone family dynasty is Dr. Eli Gemstone, played by Primetime Emmy-winning actor John Goodman ("Rosanne"). The founding father and former head pastor of Gemstone Ministries, Eli is expected to spend much of the series' fourth and final season aboard his boat as he tries to find the best way forward following the events of Season 3.

"We meet [Eli] in a much, much different place than we've ever seen him in seasons past," McBride told GQ in a January 2025 interview. "He's definitely going through some things in his life and trying to figure out how to take the next steps into whatever lays ahead for him, but because he's a Gemstone and because his kids are psychopaths, that will not be as easy as it should be."

Speaking of his psychopath children, Jesse, Kelvin and Judy are played by McBride, Adam Devine ("Workaholics") and Edi Patterson ("Knives Out," 2019), respectively. While Jesse, the eldest of Eli's adult children, has taken on the bulk of the pastoral duties at Gemstones Ministries, his temper and foul mouth have yet to be impacted by his preaching.

Kelvin and Judy, meanwhile, often play second fiddle to Jesse's brash and boisterous personality. Whereas Kelvin's inability to be taken seriously is largely due to his being the baby of the family, his liberal sexuality also works to ostracize him from his conservatively minded kin. Judy is also often overlooked as she is the immediate family's only woman, but her inadvertent camouflage may also be a side effect of middle child syndrome.

Of course, other familiar faces will be returning in for the series' last season, including Walton Goggins ("Justified") as Baby Billy Freeman, who this season is launching his own TV venture called "TeenJus," a young adult show about a teenaged Jesus Christ; Tony Cavalero ("School of Rock") as Keefe Chambers, who has a closer bond than ever with Kelvin in Season 4; Tim Baltz ("Shrink") as Judy's husband, BJ; and Cassidy Freeman ("Smallville") as Amber, Jesse's faithful wife and mother to his three sons: Gideon (Skyler Gisondo, "The Resort"), Pontius (Kelton DuMont, "Logan," 2017) and Abraham (Gavin Munn, "Raising Dion").

Don't miss what HBO calls the "final chapter in the Book of Gemstone" when Season 4 premieres Sunday, March 9, on HBO and Max.

The Late Show With Stephen Colbert (R)

The weather is disrupting travel everywhere. More than 3,000 flights have been canceled or delayed and Amtrak announced over 40 trains were canceled. And Amtrak only cancels trains for very good reasons, like, when they feel like it.

I have shocking news. CBS is working on a new "FBI" spinoff with a CIA twist called "FBI: CIA." OMG! This is the perfect addition to the extended FBI-verse: There's "FBI: International," "FBI," "FBI: Most Wanted," "FBI: True" and the sexy adult spinoff, "FBI: BBL: DTF."

Remember over the summer when those two NASA astronauts went to the International Space Station but then they got stuck up there and they're still up there and we forgot about them until I asked you if you remembered it. Well, their return has now been delayed until at least late March, which will be 10 months after they left. I'm guessing the games of "I Spy" are getting a little predictable. "A hatch. A hatch. It's always the hatch."

The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon

Well, the ratings for the Super Bowl are in, and a record 126 million people watched. That's crazy. I mean, imagine how high they would have been if the game wasn't over after the first quarter.

Apparently, President Trump's new tariffs could be to blame for delayed shipments from Temu. I'm not sure what's worse — telling your wife her Valentine's Day gift is delayed or that you got it off Temu.

Jimmy Kimmel Live!

Thank you for joining us here in Los Angeles on a very dark and stormy Valentine's Eve. Tomorrow [Feb. 14] is Valentine's Day, and if you're just learning that, you're probably in a lot of trouble.

What a game that wasn't yesterday [Feb. 9]. The game was boring, but I have to say the food at my house — I ate so much yesterday. I ate, for real, I had a turkey, I had part of a cow, I had chicken in both wing and fried form. I had lamb and a pig. I ate all the animals on Old McDonald's farm.

Here in [Los Angeles] last night [Feb. 10] the Lakers gave out 19,000 No. 77 T-shirts to celebrate the arrival of Luka Doncic. You could see the chemistry between Luka and LeBron right off the bat. Luka got a huge L.A. welcome in front of a sold-out crowd. It was a big night, not only from an NBA trade standpoint. It was also the first time a Slovenian arrived in L.A. without getting to first base with our governor.

Late Night With Seth Meyers

The pizza chain Papa John's has announced it will offer a limited edition garlic dipping sauce bath bomb. It's the perfect thing to put in your bath if you're working your way up to toaster.

According to a new report, some Apple Watch users have been wearing the device around their ankles rather than their wrists to more accurately track their steps. So now they know exactly how far it is from their house to their Virgins Anonymous meeting.