



# THE ANCIENT WORD

**30** HISTORIC ARTIFACTS SPANNING 3,000 YEARS

AN UNPRECEDENTED COLLECTION.  
NOW OFFERED FOR THE FIRST TIME.

COVER IMAGE:  
MAGNIFIED VIEW OF  
A FRAGMENT OF THE  
DEAD SEA SCROLLS  
WITH THE TEXT OF  
EXODUS 12:3-5 —  
THE FIRST PASSOVER.

# THE ANCIENT WORD

30 HISTORIC ARTIFACTS SPANNING 3,000 YEARS

In the years it took to assemble this unique collection one key objective remained constant: To find items of biblical, cultural, historical and spiritual significance. The quest has involved extensive travels, innumerable conversations, fortuitous connections, thrilling discoveries and not a few dead-ends. The cost in dollars has been considerable; the cost in time and energy is incalculable. It has been a labor of love, enthusiasm and dogged determination to ferret out items that pass the test of true significance.

Each item on its own is fascinating; but all the pieces assembled create an amazing mosaic that tells an array of amazing stories. These rare and compelling objects span more than 3,000 years and a vast territory—from Mesopotamia to Byzantium to Alexandria to Qumran and beyond.

Virtually all of these artifacts are sensational. Several are one-of-a-kind. These treasures of *The Ancient Word* capture the imagination and stir the heart in profound and memorable ways as they bring alive the world of antiquity.





# Artifacts from the Origins of Writing

## Cuneiform Tablets

### Mesopotamia, circa 2000 BC

It is said that more is known about the days of Abraham in Ur than about the days of Abraham Lincoln in Kentucky. This is true, in great measure, because of the emergence of writing in the ancient Near East—the cradle of civilization. Thousands of clay tablets have survived from that era—artifacts that tell us about life and customs in the world of that day. These texts contextualize the Bible, confirm details found in its pages and affirm the historical reliability of Holy Scripture.

#### Examined and Identified by an Acclaimed Scholar

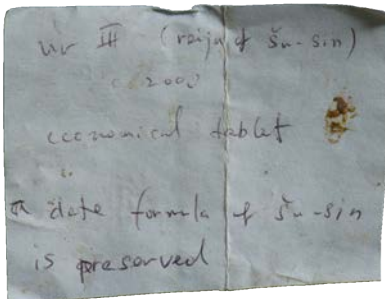
These ancient objects were studied by Dr. Wilfred G. Lambert, renowned Assyriologist of the British Museum. Written approximately 2000 BC, these cuneiform tablets are from the Bronze Age world of Abraham. Dr. Lambert dated both tablets to the Ur III period. According to his handwritten notes that were, per his custom, affixed to the objects with rubber bands, one tablet is described as an economical tablet from the reign of Su-Sin (king of Sumer and Akkad, and last ruler of the Ur III dynasty). Lambert notes that a date formula of Su-Sin is preserved in the writing. His description of the second tablet identifies it as a record of taxes or temple offerings. One tablet has the seal of the moon god Sin who was sacred to the city of Ur, Abraham's home.



CUNEIFORM TABLET  
C. 2000



CUNEIFORM TABLET  
C. 2000



HANDWRITTEN DESCRIPTIVE NOTE  
BY DR. WILFRED LAMBERT

## A Treasure Extracted from Mummy Cartonnage

An Extensive Document from the Reign of  
the King Who Commissioned the Septuagint  
Manuscript Fragment in Greek, on Papyrus  
Egypt, 253 BC



### Hidden for Centuries

This extraordinary papyrus manuscript was extracted from mummy cartonnage in which it was embedded for centuries. It has traces of plaster and red, white and blue paint on the verso. Twenty-six lines of text are preserved on the recto and ten partial lines from the outer ends of lines are preserved on the verso.

### References to the Great Kings of Egypt

Based upon a dating formula in the text itself, this papyrus was written in the 3rd century BC—in 253 BC precisely. The text records advance payment as a loan in earnest of the sesame harvest in the vicinity of Memphis. In the beginning of the agreement the papyrus mentions the great kings of Egypt,



Ptolemy Soter I (founder of the Library of Alexandria) and his son Ptolemy Philadelphus II (benefactor of the Septuagint translation) and his celebrated sister-wife, Arsinoe. The papyrus provides important dated evidence for writing at this time, early and rather extensive evidence for Greek writing from cartonnage, and a royal connection to the very first of all translations of the Bible.

Encased in archival glass and housed in a custom archival case.



## A Face from Antiquity

Polychrome and Gilt Mummy Mask with Papyrus Infrastructure  
Egypt, Late Egyptian Period, circa 7c–4c BC

Some mummy coverings have an infrastructure of discarded papyri that were used as papier-mâché. These substructures were covered with plaster (or gesso), then painted and gilded. Because blank papyrus was a costly commodity, the mortuary priests of ancient Egypt gathered unwanted papyri for this process.

### Masking History Itself

Papyrus extracted from mummy cartonnage occasionally yields extraordinary and early texts, including several pieces in this collection. This beautifully preserved mask measures 17 inches in length by 13 inches in width; the gilded face conveys a royal elegance. The headpiece is fashioned like a lotus, with geometric patterns in red, beige and blue gracing the remnant border and gown.

### Out of Egypt

This mask was acquired in Egypt by a European family in the 1930s when such objects were sold on the open market. Many decades later it was sold to the owner of this collection of rarities.





# The Earliest Known Manuscript of Aesop's Fables

Aesop's Fable 71, *The Farmer and the Sea*  
Manuscript Fragment in Greek, on Papyrus  
In Iambic Verse, Version of Babrius  
Egypt, circa 1c BC to AD 1c

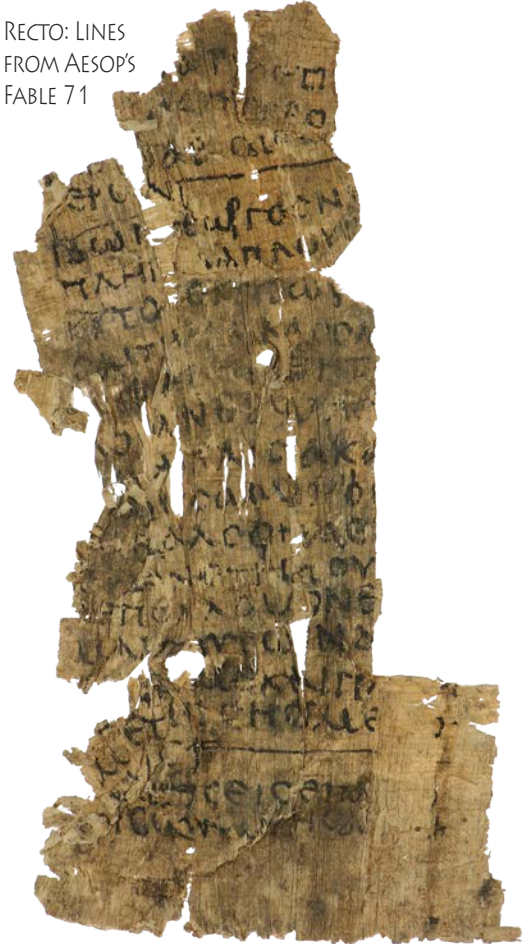
This is part of a papyrus roll in Greek preserving an abridged version of the text of Aesop's Fables in the Greek iambic verse version of Babrius, Fable 71. The fable begins: "A farmer, seeing a ship fully manned with sailors, and about to sink under the waves...." The text of Fable 71 is preceded by and followed by the texts of unidentified fables. It is a medium sized papyrus roll preserving the remains of a single column of 21 lines measuring 153 x 82 mm. The top, bottom and left margins are preserved intact with 2-4 letters missing at the line-ends. The papyrus is written in a semi-literary hand of the first century BC or, at the latest early first century AD. It has paragraphoi dividers and other readers' marks indicating that it was a formally produced book. This papyrus is unique to the market: There is no record of a text of Aesop before the age of medieval manuscripts having been sold. The papyrus is exceptionally rare, preserving the earliest examples both of Aesop and of Babrius.

Not much is known about Babrius, but he has long been associated with Aesop. There is no mention of him in ancient writers before the beginning of the 3c AD, but his date of birth has been surmised to be as far back as the 3c BC. As appears from surviving papyrus fragments, his work is to be dated to roughly the time of this papyrus. His language and style seem to show that he belonged to that period. It thus appears that this papyrus of Fable 71 is nearly contemporaneous with the date of the author.

## Received Text

Ἰδὼν γεωργὸς νῆα ναυτίλων πλήρη  
βάπτουσαν ἤδη κῦμα κυρτὸν ἐκ πρόρης,  
"ὦ πέλαγος" εἶπεν "εἴθε μήποτ' ἐπλεύσῃς,  
ἀνηλεὲς στοιχεῖον ἐχθρὸν ἀνθρώποις."  
ἤκουσε δ' ἡ θάλασσα, καὶ γυναικείην  
λαβοῦσα φωνὴν εἶπε "μή με βλασφήμει·  
ἐγὼ γὰρ ὑμῖν οὐδὲν αἰτίη τούτων,  
ἄνεμοι δὲ χειμάζοντες, ὧν μέση κεῖμαι.  
τούτων δὲ χωρὶς ἦν ἴδης με καὶ πλεύσης,  
ἐρεῖς με τῆς σῆς ἡπιωτέραν γαίης."  
[Ὅτι πολλὰ φύσει χρηστὰ πράγμαθ' αἱ κακαὶ χρήσεις  
τρέπουσιν εἰς τὸ χεῖρον, ὥς δοκεῖν φαῦλα.]

RECTO: LINES  
FROM AESOP'S  
FABLE 71



### Transcription:

Unknown Fable:

] αρ[υ]επ[

] . ν . η . . ρο

. ]αεοι . . . [

. ] ερον

Fable 71:

Ιδω[νγ]εωργοσν[η

πλη[ρη . . ]πλου [ . .

κυρτο[ . ]εκπρω[ρ

σαιτη[ . θα]λασσα[

. ] φωνηνβητ[

λ]ο[ . . ]νεβω . . . [

. ]θαλασ.α . κα[

] . . . σα . ορφ[ .

] . . . αλοφ[η] . ε[ .

]σ . . . νοτη . ου[

] . επολλομονε[

]ων[ . ο]υτο[ . ]νδ[

] [ . . . . . ] . . καιγρ[

]μετ . . . ηουμε

] . . ις

Unknown Fable:

] . . . . σεισεπο[.

] . σωνω . ησα

### Translation: Aesop's Fable 71, *The Farmer and the Sea*

A farmer saw a ship and her crew about to sink into the sea as the ship's prow disappeared beneath the curl of a wave. The farmer said, "O sea, it would have been better if no one had ever set sail on you! You are a pitiless element of nature and an enemy to mankind." When she heard this, the sea took on the shape of a woman and said in reply, "Do not spread such evil stories about me! I am not the cause of any of these things that happen to you; the winds to which I am exposed are the cause of them all. If you look at me when the winds are gone, and sail upon me then, you will admit that I am even more gentle than that dry land of yours."

Note: An epimythium probably added by a later editor reads: "This fable shows that the wrong application can often turn things which are useful by nature into something worse, so that they seem to be useless."

VERSO: BLANK,  
AS THIS IS A  
SCROLL FORMAT



### Manuscript Tradition

One papyrus possibly containing fables by Aesop dates to the 1c AD, as does a school exercise. Nineteen other papyri and ostraca preserving Aesop's Fables, the majority of them school texts, date from 2/3c AD to the 7c AD. One papyrus preserves Babrius' Fables 25, 43, 110, and 118 dating to the 2c AD. Four papyri, ostraca and wax tablets contain school exercises of Babrius dating between the 2-6c AD.

1c AD (Aesop)

TM 59038 = P. Ryl. Gr. 3 493 = Manchester, John Rylands Library Gr. 493; Greek; literary text, Aesopus?: Fables, papyrus; Egypt.

1c AD (Aesop)

TM 59245 = Gallo, Frammenti biografici da papiri 2 p. 325-340, 433-445 = Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library P. 25 + Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library P. 41 + Oslo, University Library P. 84; Greek; collection of chreiai (progymnasmata): Aristippus Cyrenaicus, Aesopus: sententiae of Aristippus, Aesopus and Diogenes Cynicus (alphabetic?), papyrus; Egypt; AD01

2-3c AD (Babrius)

TM 59333 = P. Oxy. 10 1249 = Cambridge, University Library Add. Ms. 5901; Greek; literary text, Babrius: Fables 43, 110, 118, 25, papyrus; Egypt; AD02 - AD03

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## **The First Passover** **An Authentic Fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls**

Exodus 12:3-5

Manuscript Fragment in Hebrew, on Leather

Qumran, circa 100 BC to AD 68

This unique fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls, with the text of Exodus 12:3-5, is beyond extraordinary. It records part of God's instructions to His Chosen People for the very first Passover.

### **An Unbroken Provenance**

The text has been paleographically authenticated by one of the world's most renowned and well-published authorities on the Dead Sea Scrolls. This amazing artifact was discovered in Cave Four at Qumran and dates circa 100 BC to AD 68. It came directly from Khalil Iskander Shahin, the antiques dealer to whom the Bedouin sold the very first Dead Sea Scrolls shortly after their discovery in 1947.



The leather of the fragment is darkened, as is typical, although parts of the text can be distinguished under natural light. Via enhanced imaging the text comes alive in all its power.

### **“A Sensation in the Field of Dead Sea Scrolls Scholarship”**

The scholar of record for this fragment is presently preparing the text for publication. A scan of his scholar's summary is provided on the following pages of this catalogue. He has described this find as “astoundingly important.” He adds: “There is a variant in the text—‘the sons of Israel’—that is found also in the Septuagint translation and the Syriac rendering. The Masoretic Text, however, has ‘Israel’ without the phrase ‘sons of’. This helps prove that the Septuagint is not only a translation but sometimes preserves a Hebrew vorlage that is previously unknown and is behind the rendering in the Septuagint and the Peshitta. This previously unidentified fragment will be a sensation in the field of Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship.”

The fragment has been recently photographed at a prominent university by specialists employing the very latest in multi-spectral imaging and textual mapping.

### **The Greatest of All Discoveries of Rare Scriptures**

The Dead Sea Scrolls constitute the greatest discovery ever made in the field of biblical textual studies. This discovery transported the manuscript tradition of the Hebrew Bible over a thousand years further back into ancient history and ended doubts about the accuracy of the textual transmission of the Hebrew Scriptures from antiquity to the medieval world. The Dead Sea Scrolls have been very reassuring on this point as the ancient beginnings of the Bible have been indisputably set in a secure context. Before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the earliest known Hebrew Bible manuscripts were from AD 10c and the earliest complete Hebrew Bible [*Codex Leningradensis*] was from about the year AD 1000 — whereas the Dead Sea Scrolls can be accurately dated to 250 BC to AD 68. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls effectively put to rest arguments against certain Old Testament prophecies, such as the contention that the Books of Isaiah and Daniel were written after the lifetime of Jesus. These theories attacking the veracity of Scripture were definitively proven to be false.

### **An Extraordinary Text**

Of all the fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls now in the United States, few if any would compare with the extraordinary text found on this one that records the most significant and memorable event in the millennia-spanning history of the Jewish people. And perhaps no other text is so filled with meaning to Christians, who believe that the “Lamb” mentioned on this very fragment alludes to Jesus Himself.



CAVES OF QUMRAN IN THE JUDEAN DESERT, WHERE THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS WERE DISCOVERED.



## 4QX: Unknown Fragment

Ex 12:3b-5

This fragment preserves parts of Exodus 12:3b-5. In line 1 of the fragment, there is a variant which is against the text of the Masoretic Text. Line 1 reads: [ע]דת בני ישראל and the equivalent in the MT reads: אֶל כָּל עֲדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל.<sup>1</sup> The reading of בני is also found in 4QpaleoGen-Exod<sup>1</sup> ([עדת] בני ישראל), but the בני is not clear and “Israel” must be restored. The variant is witnessed in the Samaritan Pentateuch (“to all the congregation of the sons of Yishraael”<sup>2</sup>), the LXX (πρὸς πᾶσαν συναγωγὴν υἱῶν Ἰσραηλ<sup>3</sup>), the Peshitta<sup>4</sup>, the *Vetus Latina* (*ad om nem synagogam [f]iliorum istrahel*<sup>5</sup>) and the *Vulgate* (*ad universum coetum filiorum Israhel*).<sup>6</sup>

The full form, בני ישראל, is found in Qumran or Essene sectarian compositions (CD 4.1 [cf. CD 4.3-4]; 14.4, 5; 1QS 1.23; 4Q267 frg. 9 5.7; 4Q513 frg. 10 2.2, <sup>87</sup> [it is partially restored in 4Q256 2.6 and 4Q503 frg. 79 line 4<sup>8</sup>]). It is also found in other sectarian compositions (4Q365 frg. 6a 1.4; 23.3, 4; 4Q365a frg. 2 1.2; 4Q366 frg. 4 1.8; 4Q385 frg. 2 line 4; frg. 4 line 3; 4Q385a frg. 18 1a-b.6; frg. 18 2.7; 4Q386 frg. 1 1.3; 4Q387 frg. 2 2.10; frg. 4 1.3; 4Q389 frg. 8 2.2; 4Q391 frg. 36 line 5; 4Q524 frg. 14 line 4; 11Q19 21.8; 22.11; 26.11; 27.2, 4; 29.5; 37.5, 12; 39.6-7, 12; 40.3; 42.14; 45.14; 46.7; 51.6, 8; 57.2; 58.19; 64.6, 10 [it is partially restored in 1Q22 frg. 1 1.3, 2.11, 4.5; 4Q200 frg. 6 line 7; 4Q216 1.4; 4Q221 frg. 4 line 3; frgs. 8-9 lines 1, 2; 4Q248 line 10; 4Q299 frg. 39 line 1; frg. 68 line 2; 4Q364 frg. 15 line 5; frg. 25a-c line 2; frg. FF line 2; 4Q365 frg. 6a 1.5-6; frg. 12b 3.12, 13; frg. 26a-b lines 1, 5; frg. 31a-c line 6; frg. 35 2.3; 4Q367 frg. 3 lines 13-14; 4Q378 frg. 14 lines 1, 3; 4Q380 frg. 1 2.3; 4Q385a frg. 12.6; 4Q385c frg. F line 2; 4Q481d frg. 5 line 2; 4Q524 frg. 14 line 1; 11Q20 6.9; 10.3; 12.20; possibly 4Q528 line 3; see also PAM 43.691]).

In CD MS A 4.1, בני ישראל is used polemically to refer to the priests in the Temple. It is typical that polemics beget polemics and being referred to as בני ישראל in a negative connotation might have caused the deletion of בני in the MT of Exodus 12. The polemic against the priests in the Temple as the בני ישראל begins in CD MS A column 3:

But out of those who held fast to God's ordinances, who remained of them, God established his covenant with Israel forever, revealing to them hidden things in

<sup>1</sup> The MT of Ex 12:6 also does not contain בני while the Samaritan Pentateuch, the LXX, the Peshitta, and the Vulgate does contain “sons.”

<sup>2</sup> Benyamim Tsedaka with Sharon Sullivan, *The Israelite Samaritan Version of the Torah: First English Translation Compared with the Masoretic Version* (Grand Rapids and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> John William Wevers, *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum* vol. II, 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991).

<sup>4</sup> *The Old Testament in Syriac: According to the Peshitta Version* part I, fascicle I (Leiden: Brill, 1977).

<sup>5</sup> Bonifatius Fischer, “Palimpsestus Vindobonensis” in *Beiträge Zur Geschichte Der Lateinischen Bibeltexte* (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 1986), pp. 308-438.

<sup>6</sup> See also Martin Abegg, et al., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English* (San Francisco: Harper, 1999).

<sup>7</sup> The provenience of 4Q513 is not certain; however, it is possibly a Qumran creation since multiple “halakhic” details present in 4Q513 are found in other Qumran compositions (PTSDSSP vol. 1, p. 148).

<sup>8</sup> While 4Q503 does not contain specific Qumran *termini technici*, there is a relationship with the vocabulary which is used in 4Q503 and other Qumran compositions (see PTSDSSP vol. 4A, pg. 236).

which all Israel had strayed: his holy Sabbaths, the glorious appointed times, his righteous testimonies, his true ways, and the desires of his will, which a person shall do and live by them. (These) he opened before them and they dug a well of abundant water. But those who scorn them will not live. Rather, they wallowed in human sin and the ways of impurity, and said, "For it is ours." But God in his wonderful mysteries atoned for their iniquity and forgave their sin and built them a sure house in Israel, such as never stood from the earliest times until now. Those who hold fast to it are to have eternal life and all (human) glory (is) theirs. As God swore to them through the hand of Ezekiel, the prophet, saying, "The priests and the Levites and the Sons of Zadok, who kept the watch of my sanctuary when the children of Israel strayed from me, they shall present to me fat and blood." "The priests" are the penitents of Israel who depart(ed) from the land of Judah, ("the Levites" are those) who accompany them, and "the Sons of Zadok" are the chosen ones of Israel, those called by name, who stand in the end days.<sup>9</sup>

The בני ישראל are contrasted against the בני צדוק (CD MS A 4.3). The בני צדוק are those who are the שבי ישראל (CD MS A 4. 2) and the בחירי ישראל (CD MS A 4.3-4), while the בני ישראל "strayed from" God (during which time the בני צדוק remained faithful; CD MS A 3.21-4.2) and are ensnared by Belial within the three nets of "unchastity," "arrogance," and "defilement of the sanctuary" (CD MS A 4.15-18).

בני ישראל is a polemical term used at Qumran to curse the priest who controls the cult in the Temple. This curse was repeated each year when they renewed the covenant at Qumran and elsewhere. Note the opening of the *Rule of the Community*: "Then the Levites shall enumerate the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their guilty transgressions and their sins during the dominion of Belial" (1QS 1.22-24).

### Codicology and Orthography notes

- The writing is a Late Herodian script which is obvious by the left foot on the third stroke of the 'aleph which turns to the right.<sup>10</sup>
- The leather is coarse and represents periodization.
- The right margin is visible and the holes from the stitching are elongated. The left margin of the preceding column is visible, but no writing is preserved. However, the leather from the preceding column overlaps at the top the column in focus.
- There are three holes in the bottom-center of the manuscript and a tear in the left-center part of the manuscript. The three holes and the tear are in a line with each other. On the reverse side of the fragment, it is clear that the holes and tear occurred in a "valley" in the leather.
- The fragment has neither vertical nor horizontal lining.

<sup>9</sup> CD MS A 3.12-4.4, translation from PTSDSSP vol. 2. The polemic continues and increases in intensity through the rest of col. 4ff. by expounding upon what was said in 3.12-4.4.

<sup>10</sup> See Frank M. Cross' paleographical chart on Plate 10, line 8 (which is from 4QPs<sup>b</sup> which is dated to ca. 50 CE to 68 CE) in *DSSAFY*. Ctr. Ada Yardeni who places this hooked foot on the 'aleph as an example of an early Herodian book-hand represented in 1QM (*The Book of Hebrew Script: History, Palaeography, Script Styles, Calligraphy & Design* [Jerusalem: Carta 1991], p. 175).



- There is obvious spacing between words.
- Some of the letters run together (see בני [line 1] and the בת in אבת [line 2]).
- There are smudges of ink which were probably left by another manuscript which was lying on top of this manuscript. These smudges are extant on the column with writing and the preceding column without writing (and possibly also on the backside).
- Only one final consonant is preserved; it is the final *mem* in line 5.
- *Yodh* and *waw* are easily distinguishable. The *yodh* is shorter and has a more pronounced triangular top.
- The column from which this fragment comes is roughly the same size as 1QS col. 1.

[Provenience: From Iskando Kando]

### Transcription 1 (Restoration Based on 4QpaleoGen-Exod)<sup>11</sup>

- 1 [אל כל ע]דת בני ישראל לאמר בעשר לחדש הזה ויקחו
- 2 [לבית אבת] ואם ימעט הבית מהית
- 3 הוא ושכני הקרב [אל ביתו במכסת<sup>12</sup> נפשות איש
- 4 על השה שה ת]מים זכר בן שנה יהיה לכם מן הכשבים
- 5 העזים ת]קחו

### Transcription 2 (Restoration Based on MT)<sup>13</sup>

- 1 [אל כל ע]דת בני ישראל לאמר בעשר לחדש הזה ויקחו להם
- 2 [איש שה] לבית אבת] שה לבית ואם ימעט הבית מהית משה ולקח
- 3 הוא ושכני הקרב [אל ביתו במכסת<sup>14</sup> נפשת איש לפי אכלו תכסו]
- 4 על השה שה ת]מים זכר בן שנה יהיה לכם מן הכשבים<sup>15</sup> ומן
- 5 העזים ת]קחו

<sup>11</sup> The right margin is preserved in lines 3, 4, and 5.

<sup>12</sup> Possibly: במכסות, based on the Samaritan Pentateuch.

<sup>13</sup> The right margin is preserved in lines 3, 4, and 5.

<sup>14</sup> Possibly: במכסות, based on the Samaritan Pentateuch.

<sup>15</sup> Possibly: הכשבים, based on the Samaritan Pentateuch.

### Translation 1 (Restoration Based on 4QpaleoGen-Exod<sup>1</sup>)

1. [to all the con]gregation of *the sons of* Isr[ael, saying, in the tenth of this month, and they will take ...]
2. [...] to the house of their fathers [and if the house is too small ...]
3. he and his near neighbor [to his house in covering the persons, a man ...]
4. for the lamb. The lamb w[hole, a male, a son of a year it will be. For them, from the sheep ...]
5. the goats t[...]

### Translation 2 (Restoration Based on MT)

1. [to all the con]gregation of *the sons of* Isr[ael, saying, in the tenth of this month, and they will take for them,]
2. [(each) man, a sheep] to the house of their fathers, [a lamb for a house, and if the house is too small for a lamb, then he will take,]
3. he and his near neighbor, [to his house in covering the persons, a man according to his eating,<sup>16</sup> you will divide]
4. for the lamb. The lamb w[hole, a male, a son of a year it will be. For them, from the sheep or from]
5. the goats you [may take it ...]

This Qumran fragment, probably from Cave IV, is directly from the Kando family. It is invaluable to all scholars as it preserves a reading that is superior to that in the Bible used by Jews and Christians today.

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<sup>16</sup> Lit. "a man to his mouth his eating."



# The First and Greatest of All Classical Works

Homer's Masterpiece, *The Iliad*

Book Two, Lines 719-746

Manuscript Fragment in Greek, on Papyrus

Egypt, circa AD 1c

This spectacular manuscript is a passage from the “Bible” of the classical world, Homer’s *Iliad*. This rare papyrus fragment came to light—literally—just a few years ago when paleographers scientifically extracted it from a piece of cartonnage that had been owned by the same European family for five generations.

## Treasure from a Trunk

Since being legally purchased in the early 20th century, the family’s large cache of cartonnage had been for the most part left in its original state—a substantial trove that for decades had been packed in large trunks. When scholars began to examine various pieces of the collection they soon recognized that the cartonnage could yield significant finds. They were proven correct with the discovery of this literary treasure from Homer’s epic work, *The Iliad*.

## An Impressive Exception

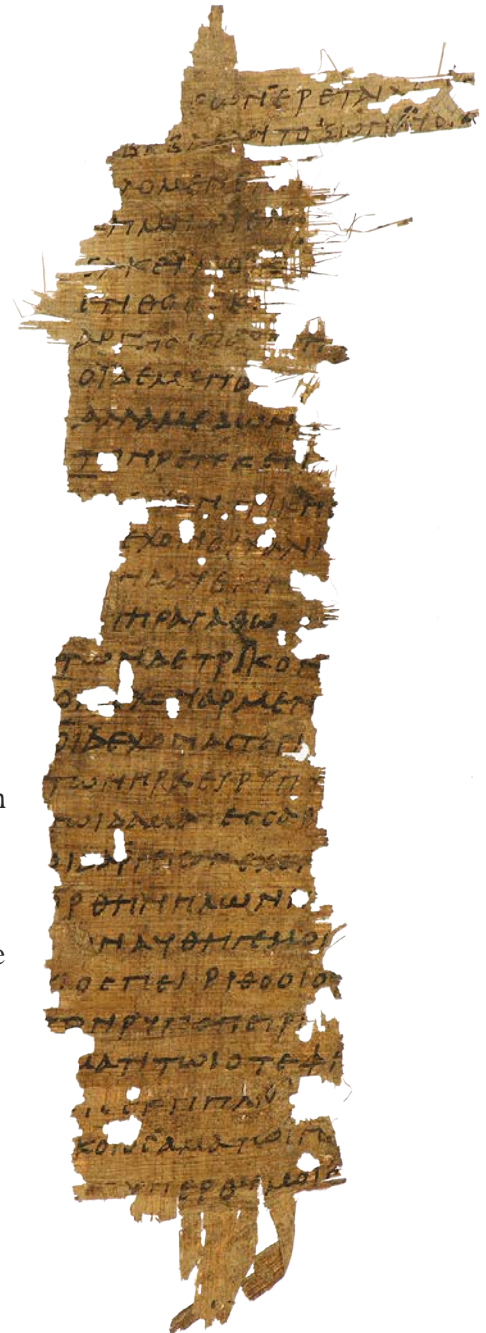
The *Iliad* was without question the most important literary work in the classical world. Of the surviving manuscripts on papyrus, the majority are extremely fragmentary and/or severely darkened. This papyrus, however, is a substantial and impressive exception. It is an early surviving record of this passage, preserving an extensive portion of the text in a distinctive hand. Remarkably, this papyrus did not exist as a distinct object for nearly two millennia. What was long hidden has been revealed in dramatic fashion—a highly legible 1c AD fragment preserving lines from *Iliad* Book 2.

This papyrus roll in Greek preserves roughly 1/3 of a complete column with 28 lines of text. The top and bottom margin are preserved along with much of the inner (left) margin. The papyrus measures 171 x 85 mm. There are traces of punctuation and other critical signs indicative of a professionally produced copy that circulated for use by students and learned readers. The papyrus dates to the time of Christ and provides the earliest witness to much of the passage preserved (as discussed below).

## A Great Catalogue of Greek Kings, Heroes and Ships

The lines on this papyrus provide a portion of the great catalogue of the Greek kings, heroes, and ships that have come to Troy. This listing of warriors, countries, and other items is a common epic device.

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**Transcription:**

]εῶν• ἐρέται δ' ἐ[ν ἐκ (719)  
 ]βέβασαν τόξων εὖ εἰδό[  
 ]λ' ὁ μὲν ἐν ν[ . . .  
 Λ]ήμυνφ . ἐ[ν ἡγ .  
 ἔ]λκεϊ μοχ[ . .  
 ἔνθ' ὁ γε κ[εῖ  
 Ἀργ[ε]ῖοι παρὰ [ν (725)  
 οὐδὲ μὲν ο[  
 ἀλλὰ Μέδων [ .  
 τόν ρ' ἔτεκεν [P  
 ]εῖχ]ον Τρίκη[ν  
 ]ἔχον Οἰχαλί[η (730)  
 . ]ν αὖθ' ἡγ[ε  
 . ]τῆρ' ἀγαθῶ[ . .  
 ]τῶν δὲ τριήκον[  
 ] Οἱ δ' ἔ]χον Ἀρμέν[  
 οἱ δὲχον Ἀστέρι[ (735)  
 ]τῶν ἥρχ' Εὐρύπυ[  
 ]τῶ δ' ἅμα τεσσαρ[  
 ]Οἱ δ' Ἀργισσαν ἔχον[  
 Ὀ]ρθην Ἠλών[η  
 ὦ]ν αὖθ' ἡγεμό[ν (740)  
 υ]ῖος Πειριθόοιο[ .  
 τ]όν ρ' ὑπὸ Πειρι[ .  
 ]ματι τῶ ὅτε Φῆ[  
 . . . ἐ]κ Πηλίο[υ  
 ]κ οἶος, ἅμα τῶ γ[ε  
 . ]ς ὑπερθύμιοι[ . (746)

**Translation:**

And they that dwelt in Methone and Thaumacia, and that held  
 Meliboea and rugged Olizon, these with their seven ships were  
 led by Philoctetes, well-skilled in archery, [720] and on each ship  
 embarked fifty oarsmen well skilled to fight amain with the bow.  
 But Philoctetes lay suffering grievous pains in an island, even in  
 sacred Lemnos, where the sons of the Achaeans had left him in  
 anguish with an evil wound from a deadly water-snake. There he  
 lay suffering; [725] yet full soon were the Argives beside their  
 ships to bethink them of king Philoctetes. Howbeit neither were  
 these men leaderless, though they longed for their leader; but  
 Medon marshalled them, the bastard son of Oileus, whom Rhene  
 bare to Oileus, sacker of cities. And they that held Tricca and  
 Ithome of the crags, [730] and Oechalia, city of Oechalian Eury-  
 tus, these again were led by the two sons of Asclepius, the skilled  
 leeches Podaleirius and Machaon. And with these were ranged  
 thirty hollow ships. And they that held Ormenius and the foun-  
 tain Hypereia, [735] and that held Asterium and the white crests  
 of Titanus, these were led by Eurypylus, the glorious son of Eu-  
 aemon. And with him there followed forty black ships. And they  
 that held Argissa, and dwelt in Gyrtone, Orthe, and Elone, and  
 the white city of Oloösson, [740] these again had as leader Poly-  
 poetes, staunch in fight, son of Peirithous, whom immortal Zeus  
 begat—even him whom glorious Hippodameia conceived to  
 Peirithous on the day when he got him vengeance on the shaggy  
 centaurs, and thrust them forth from Pelium, and drave them to  
 the Aethices. [745] Not alone was he, but with him was Leon-  
 teus, scion of Ares, the son of Caenus' son, Coronus, high of  
 heart. And with them there followed forty black ships.

**Manuscript Record**

This papyrus, containing *Iliad* 2.719-746, provides the earliest witness to the text with exception to one other manuscript dating to the 1c AD containing *Iliad* 2.719-722 (number 1 below). There are three papyri dating between the 1c-2c AD that contain portions of the passage (numbers 2-4 below).

1. 1c AD *Iliad* 2.717-722. TM 60234 = Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale (BIFAO) 46 (1947), p. 71 = Cairo, IFAO P. 326; Greek; literary text, papyrus; Egypt.
2. 1c-2c AD *Iliad* 2.720-730. TM 121925 = P. Tebt. inv. fr. 21 ined. (information website) = Berkeley, Bancroft Library Frag. 21013 + Berkeley, Bancroft Library Frag. 21018 b + Berkeley, Bancroft Library Frag. 21138; Greek; literary text, papyrus; Egypt.
3. 1c-2c AD *Iliad* 2.724-737 (754-762). TM 68100 = West, Studies in the text of the Iliad p0877 = Oxford, Sackler Library, Papyrology Rooms 46 5B 49/G(1-3)a; Greek; literary text, papyrus; Egypt.
4. 1c-2c AD *Iliad* 2.745-764. TM 60319 = P. Oxy. 1 21 = Chicago, Haskell Oriental Institute 2058; Greek; literary text, papyrus; Egypt.



# An Ancient Amulet Etched with the Names of God

Bronze Lamella Amulet with Divine Names

Text Transliterated from Hebrew to Greek

Egypt, circa AD 3c–5c



This unique phylactery on lamella (bronze foil) contains 11 lines of Greek uncial (capital) text and an etching that depicts the Exodus. It dates between the 3c and 5c AD. Phylacteries such as this one were intended to deliver the possessor from evil, often relating to exorcism. It was most certainly produced by a Greek Jew. Folded in fourths, measuring 68 mm (h) by 40 mm (w), it was rolled and most likely worn in a necklace. Further imaging will clarify the text and aid understanding in a few small places. In some places the inscription is more legible on the back and there are indications of a few small corrections.

## Divine Names from the Hebrew Bible

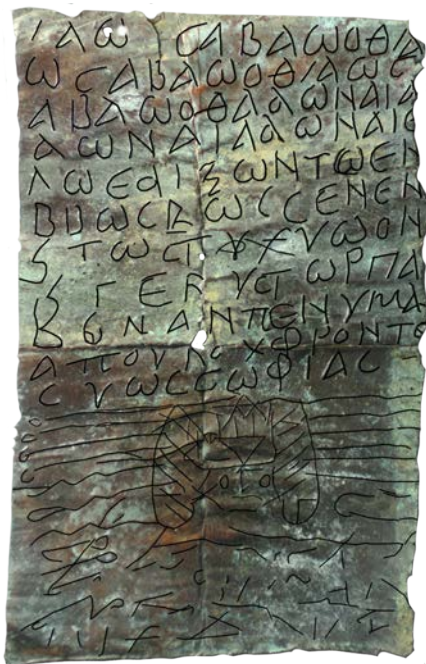
The text begins with a series of Divine Names from the Hebrew Bible in Greek transliteration. This is interesting as it relates to the question of the translation of the Hebrew names for God into Greek. Like the reference to Jewish exorcists using powerful names in the Acts of the Apostles, these names functioned as a powerful plea for Divine intervention. This fascinating artifact refers three times to ΙΑΩ ΣΑΒΑΩΘ (for תועבצ הוהי); three times to ΑΔΩΝΑΙ (for יהודה); and ΕΛΩΕΑΙ (for יהלע) all together in repetition, which is very rare. The following also appear: ΖΩΝΤΕΣ (ζων) Living (God); ΩΡΤΙΑ (οργια) secret rites; ΠΕΝΥΜΑ (πνευμα) spirit; ΣΩΦΙΑΣ (σοφια) wisdom or perhaps the proper name *Sophia*. Instructions from ancient texts on what should happen after an exorcism state: “Having cast out the demon, tie a protective charm around the person’s neck after the demon is cast out. Write power names on bronze foil to protect the person.”

## The Image of a Drowning Pharaoh

The text is followed by a unique feature that fills the lower half of the surface. It depicts watery torrent-like waves with magical oval eyelets. These features are common on magic symbols and effectively convey an added force to the written contents of the amulet along with the power of God recorded in the Bible. The waves drown a pharaonic figure—commemorating God’s miraculous

deliverance of His people from Egypt, a central focus of Jewish life and faith. Here the wearer of the phylactery is reminded of God’s power, care and desire to deliver. This phylactery preserves a rare combination of features: Hebrew names of God in Greek and other biblical terms of interest and imagery from the Exodus to affirm God’s power and desire to deliver from evil.

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# Preliminary Transcription:

ΙΑΩ ΣΑΒΑΩΘ ΙΑ

Ω ΣΑΒΑΩΘ ΙΑΩ Σ

ΑΒΑΩΘ ΑΔΩΝΑΙ Α

ΔΩΝΑΙ ΑΔΩΝΑΙ Ε

ΛΘΕΑΙ ΖΩΝΤΕΣ Ω ΕΝ

[?ΒΒΩΣ ΒΩΣ ΣΕΝΕΝ

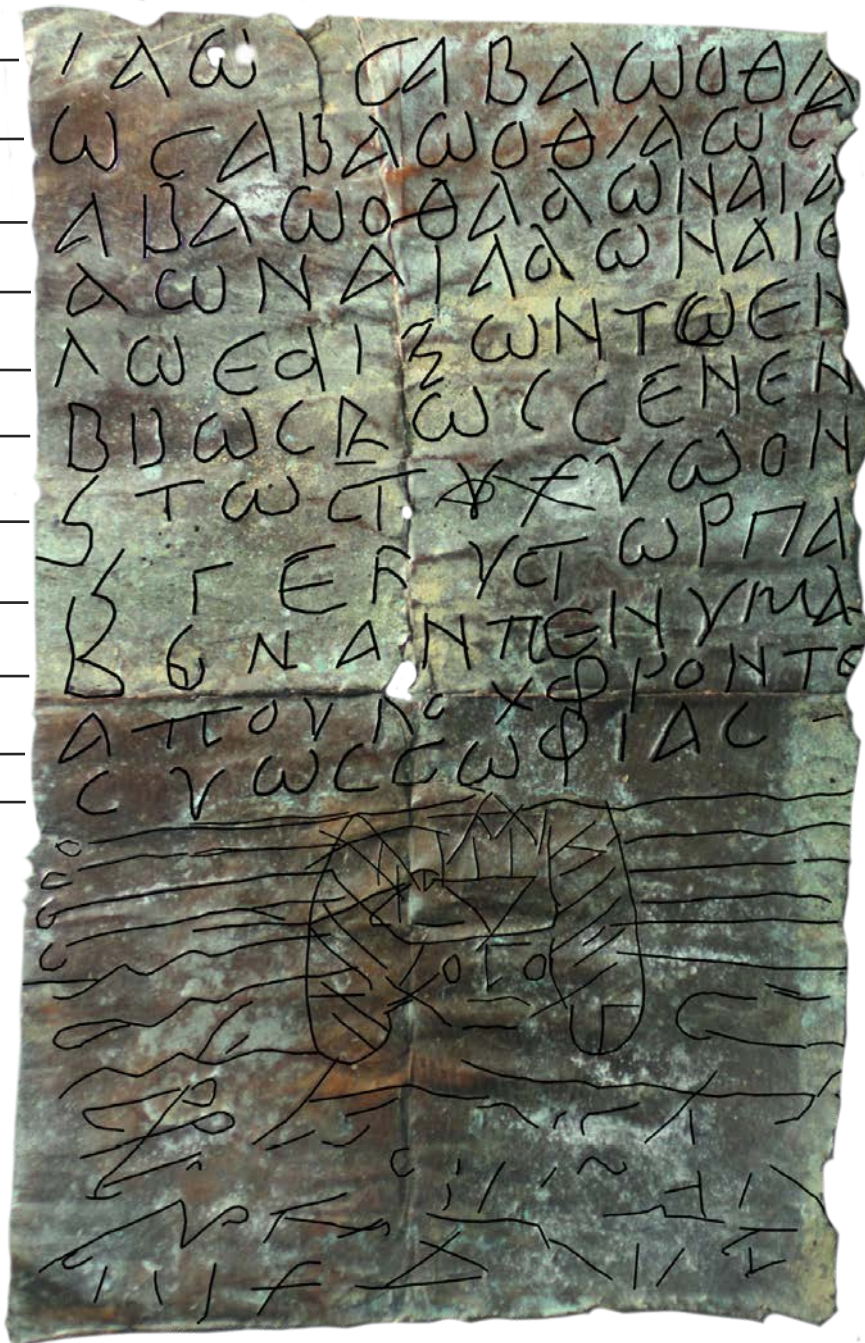
? ΤΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΧΕΥΩΝ

? ΓΕ ? ΥΣΤ ΩΡΓΙΑ

Β ? ΝΑΝ] ΠΕΝΥΜΑ

ΑΠΟΥΛΣ . ΥΦΡΟΝΤΟ

Σ Υ(Ι)ΩΣ ΣΩΦΙΑΣ



## Preliminary Translation:

*Iao Sabaoth, Iao Sabaoth,  
Iao Sabaoth, Adonai,  
Adonai, Adonai, Eloai, the  
Living (God), who, oh he  
who is in.....spirit deliver  
Euphrontos son of Sophia.*



## Jezebel and the Dogs

Second Kings 8:23; 9:9-10

Manuscript Fragment in Coptic, on Parchment

Egypt, circa AD 4c



RECTO: TEXT  
OF 2 KINGS 8:23



VERSO: TEXT  
OF 2 KINGS 9:9-10

This text measuring 45 mm (h) by 30 mm (w) is the surviving fragment of a codex of the First and Second Books of Kings. The fragment preserves eight partial lines from the middle of the page. It is worn on the recto, here the hair side, which is typical. It preserves 2 Kings 8:23 and 9:9-10. The name *Jezebel* is clearly visible in line 6 on the verso. The verso preserves Elisha's prophecy of the dogs devouring wicked Jezebel: *As for Jezebel, dogs will devour her...*

### An Early Form of the Biblical Uncial

The handwriting dates to the middle half of the 4c, characterized by an early form of the biblical uncial, best-known with the *Codex Sinaiticus*. It was most likely produced in one of the monasteries of Upper Egypt, perhaps the famed White Monastery, shortly after the legalization of Christianity. Along with *Codex Sinaiticus*, this text is the earliest surviving record of this passage describing wicked Jezebel's demise. The Dead Sea Scrolls 6Q4 preserves 17 small fragments from the First and Second Books of Kings dating between 150-100 BC, but from Second Kings only 7:20-8:5 and 9:1-2 are preserved.

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## **The Two Covenants Papyrus**

### **An Early Christian Manuscript of Monumental Importance**

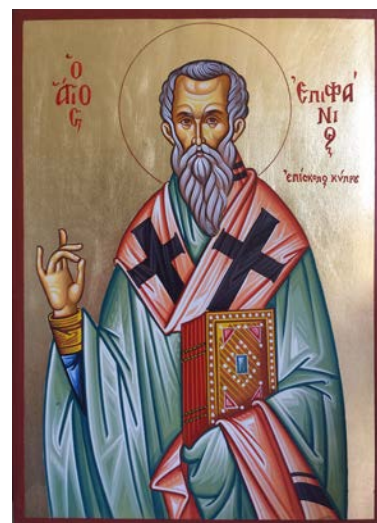
Manuscript Fragments in Greek, on Papyrus  
Egypt, circa AD 4c/5c

This substantial manuscript is from a Christian codex with exceedingly important theological content. It follows in the tradition of Galatians 4, where the idea of the Two Covenants is first articulated. This text, now identified by scholars as The Two Covenants Papyrus, is not known elsewhere. This is a uniquely significant manuscript with parallels in the language and phraseology of 4th century church father, St. Epiphanius. His treatise, *The Panarion* ("medicine chest") presented a book of antidotes for those bitten by the serpent of heresy, a handbook for dealing with the arguments of heretics, written around 374. Epiphanius compared the various heretics to different venomous beasts, going so far as to describe in detail the animal's characteristics, how it produces its poison, and how to protect oneself from the animal's bite or poison. The primary emphasis of this manuscript, however, is on the contrast of the Two Covenants.



## Description of an Ancient Church

Of the six fragments, the largest measures 180 mm x 110 mm. A top and side margin survive. The other side margin is slightly discernable, and fragments 1+3+4 indicate the continuous text. The script of the papyrus is a polished bookhand datable to the 4th or 5th century. Punctuation is employed. Taking both sides together (translation of the major pieces is below), it appears to be a description of the ornaments of a church, either an actual church, or what should be in one. One side apparently speaks of the consecration of the Eucharist over the relics of saints: "...as from the fleshly bodies of just and righteous men, over which we shall offer up, as our incense, (and as) a sweet smelling savor, the prayer of the saints...." This may speak of relics of saints themselves or objects which saints touched, in the tradition of Acts 19:12, where it is recorded that handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched Paul were efficacious in healing the sick and driving out demons. The other side speaks of an altar whose "two sides" announce (depict ?) something "as if the two Testaments, of Moses and the Gospels, through which the whole altar is supported from both sides...."



AN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ICON  
OF SAINT EPIPHANIUS

## Worship at a Christian Altar

It is plainly a Christian altar which is being described, and the altar is understood to be supported by angels (some patristic sources speak of this). It was at the altar of incense that Zechariah served when the angel of the Lord appeared to him. Since the word "altar" can refer to the entire chancel, it is possible that the "two sides" referred to could be the two sides of the sanctuary in a frescoed church—such as the synagogue at Dura Europus, with the Old Testament types and New Testament fulfilments on facing walls—or two sides of the same wall. We should probably understand the author of this text to be from the period 350-450 AD. The concept of the Two Covenants has its origins in Galatians 4, with Hagar and Sarah allegorically interpreted there; and there is a long and important history of interpretation of the Two Covenants, to which this papyrus will make a key contribution. The text on another fragment (#2) refers to the placement of the book of the law "beside the Ark of the Covenant"—referring to Deuteronomy 36:21. No doubt more text can be recovered from this unique and important papyrus.

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## Transcription and Translation:

Recto: Fragments 4+3+1

ἵπτων ὡς ἐκ δικαίων(ν)  
σαρκίων καὶ ἀφθάρτων• ἐφ' οἷς ἀ-  
νοίσομεν τὸ θυμίαμα ὁσμήν ευ-  
ωδίας τὴν εὐχὴν τῶν ἁγίων ἱε-  
ρωῶν ἐκ τετρ. α. . . [ . ] . . . πηχεὸς λε.

Verso: Fragments 4+3+1

δυὸ πλευρὰ ρ. [ . ] . . . [ . ] ἀγγ[ε]-  
λῶν ὡς δυὸ δια[θήκη]//κας• μωϋσῶν καὶ  
εὐαγγελίων• δι' ὧν παντ[ό]ν θυσια-  
στήριον βαττάζεται ἐνκειμένω(ν)[  
. . . . . τὰς δυὸ [ . . . ] ἀφ' ὧν . . . π[α]

Recto: Fragments 4+3+1

"(from) ..., as from the bits of flesh from righteous and incorruptible men, over which we shall offer up, as our incense, (and as) a sweet smelling savor, the prayer of the saints . . . from four(fold) (?)"

Verso: Fragments 4+3+1

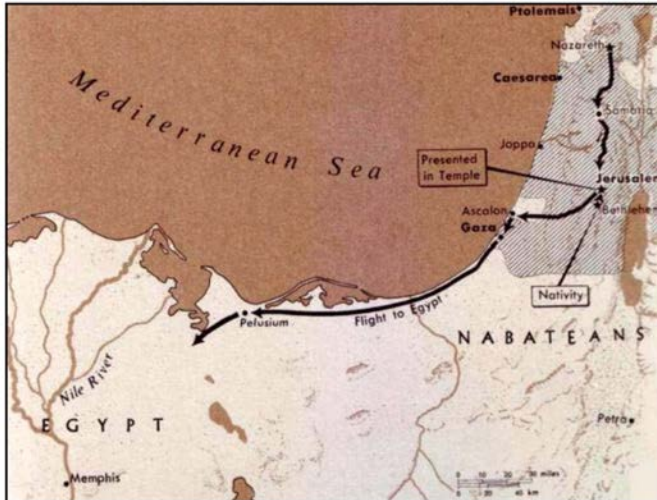
"the two sides announce (?), so to speak, two covenants of Moses and the Gospels, through which all the altar (i.e. considered as a composite) is supported"

# The Flight of the Holy Family into Egypt

The Gospel of Matthew 2:11-16

Manuscript Fragment in Coptic, on Parchment

Egypt, circa AD 400



Among the most enduring and endearing of all stories is the account of the Holy Family's flight into Egypt. This fragment of a bifolio codex leaf preserves a key record of that event—four near-complete pages of Matthew 2:11-16 from a small personal copy of the Gospel. The manuscript dates to AD 5c. Among extant texts it is the earliest known evidence for two of these verses and the second earliest for the remainder of the passage. It also preserves the earliest evidence in Coptic for this vital event in the life of Jesus.

The small folio was folded to form four pages. The inner and upper margins are preserved. There are

approximately ten letters per line (fluctuations dictated by the convention to end the line with a complete word or syllable), with the widest lines preserving almost a complete column width. There are

eleven partially preserved lines of text on each page.

The original composition appears to have had 14 lines of text in a single column, the single-column format being the earliest and most basic format for the earliest codices. Three lines of text are missing on the bottom of the leaf.

There are stitching holes in the fold for the gathering of folios.

## From a Small Book for Personal Use

Given the number of lines per page and the primitive style of composition, it is unlikely that the book

consisted of more than the Gospel of Matthew, doubtless for handheld personal use. Given the format above, the entire Gospel could be written on 170 bifolios or 680 pages, which would make for a thick, cumbersome book. Alternatively, the Gospel may have been divided in half or this manuscript may have contained only the events of the early life of Jesus (a particular interest of the Coptic faithful).



RECTO: TEXT  
OF MATTHEW  
2:11-14



The text is written in Sahidic Coptic in dark brown ink in a biblical uncial hand lacking decorative flourishes that regularly occur in later manuscripts. The shape of the letters and the format indicate that the manuscript was composed in the first half of the fifth century. The manuscript is slightly soiled on the verso, which can be removed in conservation. The manuscript measures 127 mm (w) by 102 mm (h).

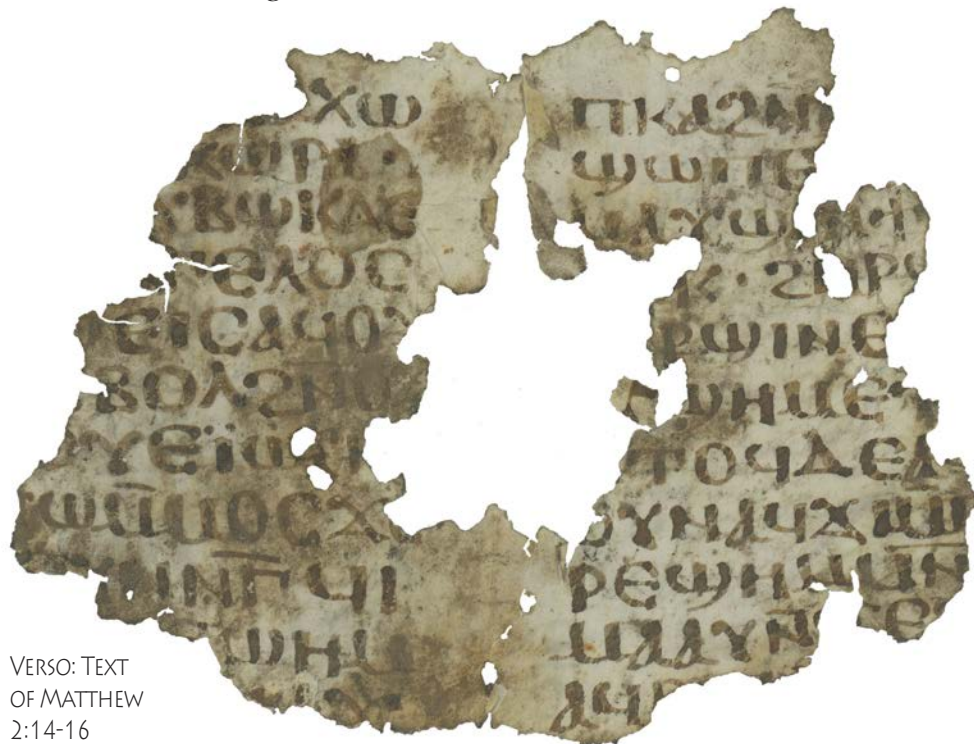
**Notated Translation of the Passage** [Actual text on fragment in bold]:

<sup>11</sup>On coming to the house, they saw the small **child** with Mary his **mother**; **they** bowed down; they **worshiped** him; they **opened** their treasures; **they brought** to him **gifts**: gold, and incense and myrrh.

<sup>12</sup>**Having been warned by means of a dream** not to return to Herod, by another road they returned to their **country**. <sup>13</sup>When they had **gone**, behold an angel of the Lord **appeared by means of a dream to Joseph**. He **said to him**, “Get **up**, carry the small **child** and his **mother**, go up to the **land of Egypt**, stay in place **there until I say to you**, for Herod **seeks** after the small **child** to destroy him.” <sup>14</sup>So he **got up**, he **took** the small **child** and his **mother in the night**, he went up to Egypt. <sup>15</sup>And he stayed in the place **there until Herod died**. And so was **fulfilled** that which **the Lord spoke through the prophet**. He **said to him**, “**I called my son out of Egypt**.” <sup>16</sup>Then Herod, when he realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

There are 23 known published manuscripts of Matthew. Only one preserves any portion of Matthew 2 and that one is small and highly fragmentary. The text is also preserved in the Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus and Vaticanus codices that date between the mid-4c and the late-4c.

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MANUSCRIPT SHOWN  
AT ACTUAL SIZE.

VERSO: TEXT  
OF MATTHEW  
2:14-16

# Revival and Riot at Ephesus

## Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 19:25-27

### Manuscript Fragment in Coptic, on Parchment

Egypt, circa AD 500

This fragment measuring 130 mm (h) by 130 mm (w) is the sole surviving piece of a very small codex which likely consisted of only the Acts of the Apostles, given the minuscule page dimensions.

#### Similarities to *Codex Sinaiticus*

The text consists of 10 lines from the middle of the page and is slightly worn on the recto (hair) side, which is typical. The upper margin is preserved. Only a few letters are missing in each line as well as a few lines at the bottom of the leaf. The fragment preserves Acts 19:25-27. The handwriting dates to the middle or second half of the 4c, when the biblical uncial became predominant. The writing is very similar to the *Codex Sinaiticus*. It was most likely produced in one of the monasteries of Upper Egypt.



#### The Description of a Famous Encounter

This passage is the famous encounter between Paul and Demetrius, the silversmith at Ephesus, and the latter's speech inciting the riot. On the verso, Demetrius accuses Paul of saying, "they are not gods which are made with hands"—an allusion to the Septuagint reading of Psalm 115:4-7; 135:15-17 and Isaiah 44:9. This fragment, preserving portions of the speech, is textually significant and would make for a fascinating display.

There are 14 recorded Greek papyri of Acts. P38 contains Acts 18:27-19:6; 19:12-16 and dates to circa 300. Among extant papyri, this Coptic fragment contains the earliest record of the passage and is near-contemporaneous with *Codex Sinaiticus*. Further, this is one of the earliest texts of the Acts of the Apostles (five being slightly earlier and two being contemporaneous).

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## A 5th Century Manuscript Rescued from a 15th Century Bookbinding

Second Corinthians 7:1 | 7:14

Manuscript Fragments in Greek, on Parchment  
Egypt, circa AD 5c

This manuscript contains a partial leaf preserving 2 Corinthians 7:1 and 7:14 in Greek. The manuscript consists of six adjoining parchment fragments, each fragment measuring roughly 27 x 83 mm. The six reunited manuscripts measure 161 x 243 mm. There are two blank fragments that preserve the top margin. Two fragments contain one half line of vertical text on both the recto and verso. Two fragments contain three and one-half lines of vertical text on both the recto and verso.

### A Text with Interesting Anomalies

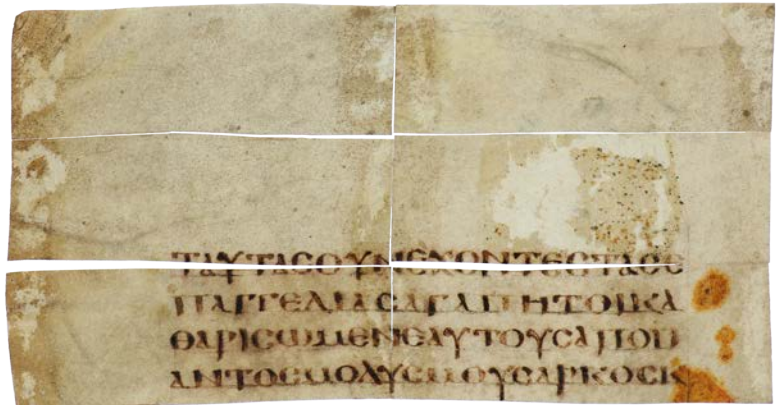
The fragments were recovered from a fifteenth century binding in which they were used as reinforcements to the spine. The glue residue is visible at the centers on the verso. The remains of the leaf date from the late fifth or early sixth century. The leaf may have come from a codex originally from the Southern Mediterranean (Crete? Cyprus? Alexandria?) or Constantinople, surviving in a Western book binding. There are no textual variations in the manuscript; however, there are several very interesting anomalies in the splitting of words and the punctuation.

### Text of the Passages:

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

<sup>14</sup>I had boasted to him about you, and you have not embarrassed me. But just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting about you to Titus has proved to be true as well.

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RECTO: TEXT OF 2 CORINTHIANS 7:1



VERSO: TEXT OF 2 CORINTHIANS 7:14



# Words from the Book of Wisdom

Wisdom of Solomon, Chapter 7:12-17; 20-24  
Manuscript Fragment in Coptic, on Parchment  
Egypt, circa AD 600

This codex leaf dating between the late 6c and early 7c contains a passage from the important Deuterocanonical work, Wisdom of Solomon. The manuscript records eleven verses of the seventh chapter.

## The Only Apocryphal Work Quoted in Jewish Liturgy

Written in Greek in the 1st century BC, most likely by an Alexandrian Jew, Wisdom of Solomon urges Jews to be faithful during a time of [Roman] persecution. It incorporates Haggadic traditions and is the only Apocryphal work to be quoted in Jewish liturgy. One of the central features of the book is the personification of Wisdom—imbued with divine characteristics and made to be an emanation of God and a co-creator of the world. Christians later equated this personified Wisdom to Jesus. The author of Hebrews transforms Wisdom of Solomon 7:26 to describe the relationship between Jesus and God the Father. Because of its age, rarity, unique variations and the text preserved, this fragment is of tremendous interest and importance.

## The Earliest Surviving Coptic Manuscript of This Book

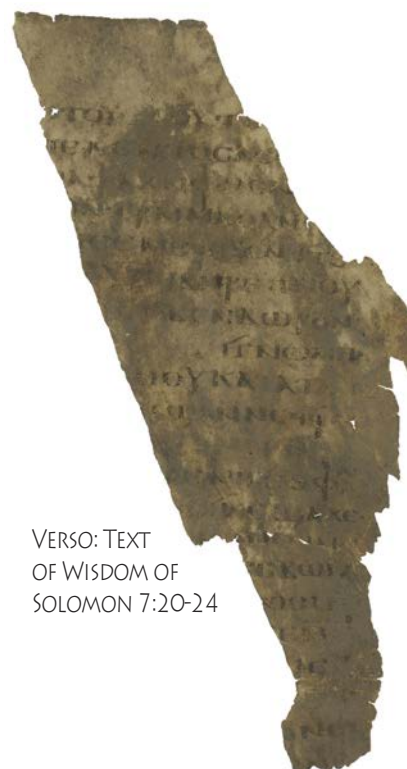
Only six early Greek manuscripts of this work survive, dating between 4c and 7c. One additional Greek manuscript dating to the same period has been lost. Only two of the surviving Greek manuscripts preserve Wisdom of Solomon 7, and both date to the same time as this manuscript. This fragment is the earliest surviving Coptic manuscript of Wisdom of Solomon by over a century.

The manuscript measures a maximum of 100 mm (h) by 50 mm (w). There are 21 lines of text on each side. Portions of the upper and outer columns are preserved, with nearly half of the text of the original manuscript leaf. Several lines are near complete. The manuscript consists of two pieces that are cleanly joined. It is written in a dark brown ink, the verso a bit faded and soiled but legible. The text contains a number of notable variations.

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RECTO: TEXT  
OF WISDOM OF  
SOLOMON 7:12-14



VERSO: TEXT  
OF WISDOM OF  
SOLOMON 7:20-24

# Jonah and the Reality of God's Deliverance

Jonah, Chapters 2-4

Manuscript Fragment in Coptic, on Parchment

Egypt, circa AD 700

This impressive manuscript fragment is from a large bifolium vellum leaf of a Bible written in Sahidic Coptic. It is exceptionally, early, dating to around AD 700. The Sahidic dialect, which developed in Upper Egypt, was the leading Coptic idiom in pre-Islamic Egypt. The Sahidic Old Testament was translated from the Septuagint and provides an important early witness to the text of the Bible. The manuscript preserves portions of the Book of Jonah, chapters 2 to 4. The leaf, measuring approximately 289 x 188 mm, contains the lower margin and much of the outer margin of the page. A significant part of a single column of 30 lines is preserved, with traces of a second column. The text is written in black ink in uncial script, with decorated capitals in red and gold. The verso shows the end of the book with the title [I]WNAS in the colophon in the lower margin.

## Exceptionally Rare Manuscript Evidence

Manuscript evidence for Jonah is exceptionally rare. Aside from three manuscripts with fragments in the Dead Sea Scrolls there is only one early parchment preserving the Septuagint Jonah 1-4 dating to the 5c (PSI 10.1164 + PBerlin/BKT 8.18). There is also one Sahidic Coptic manuscript containing Jonah dating to the 3c (MS 193, The Crosby-Schøyen Codex). This underscores the importance of this fragment.

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RECTO: TEXT  
OF JONAH 2-3



VERSO: TEXT  
OF JONAH 3-4



## The End of the Psalms

Psalms 147-149 [148-150]

Manuscript Fragment in Coptic, on Arabic Paper

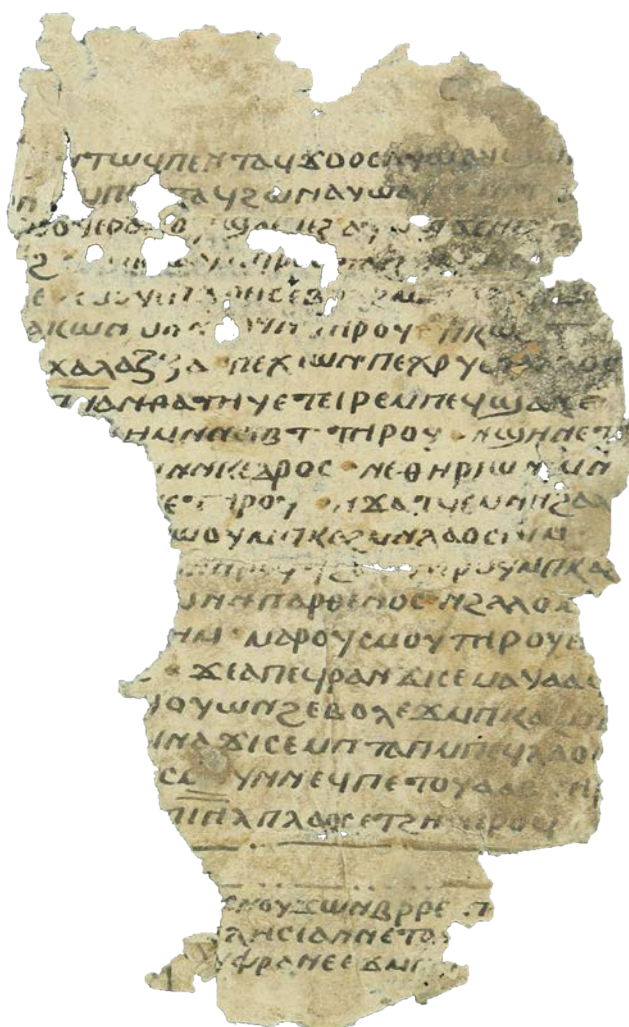
Egypt, circa AD 900

This near-complete Sahidic Coptic codex leaf contains Psalms 147-149 [148-150] on early Arabic paper. Dating to the early 10th century, the manuscript measures 140 x 80 mm and consists of 25 lines and rubricated headings. The top, outer, and bottom margins are preserved. Only a portion of the outer margin has not survived. The leaf is a bit thumbed and worn. A faded capital opens Psalm 149 [150]. A trace of a pagination number can be made out on the verso outer top margin. This manuscript leaf was once part of an elegant codex of Psalms. Given its format it was likely intended for private use. It was produced when Arabic paper such as this was replacing papyrus and even parchment. The text was composed during a period when Coptic was being repressed in Egypt and Christians were being forced to use Arabic.

Encased in archival glass and housed in a custom archival case.



RECTO: TEXT OF PSALMS 147-148 [148-149]



VERSO: TEXT OF PSALMS 148-149 [149-150]



# Noah and the Great Flood

Genesis 6:14 – 7:19

Manuscript Fragment in Coptic, on Parchment  
Egypt, circa AD 900

This very large but fragmentary manuscript leaf contains portions of Genesis 6:14 to 7:19, with references to the Ark and the Great Flood. Approximately 365 x 280 mm, 36 lines in two columns written in black ink in uncial script, capitals in red (worn, losses to margins, loss affecting eight lines of text in one column, some soiling and a few letters overpainted). It is the Sahidic Coptic translation of the Septuagint (for the text, see ed. Melvin K. Peters, *A Critical Edition of the Coptic Pentateuch*, Volume 1, *Genesis, Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series*, No. 19, 1985). Sahidic was originally the dialect spoken around Thebes; after the 5th century it was the standard Coptic of all of Upper Egypt. It is one of the best-documented and well-known dialects and is to this day the liturgical language of the Coptic Orthodox Church. Formerly in the collection of financier Malcolm Forbes.



RECTO: TEXT  
OF GENESIS 6:14  
TO 7:8



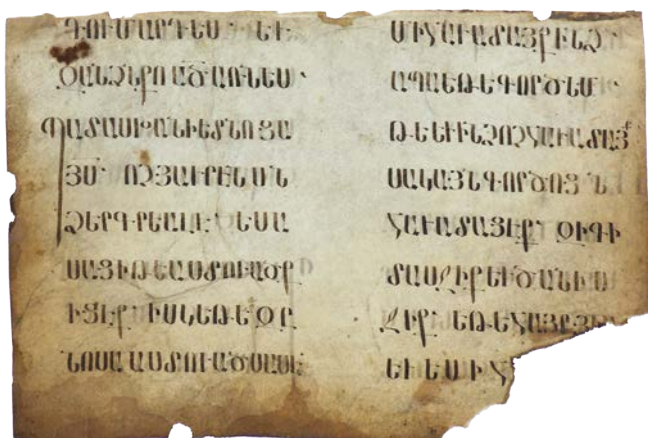
VERSO: TEXT  
OF GENESIS 7:9 TO  
7:19

**Leaves from an Ancient Gospel of John**  
Portions of the Gospel of John, Chapters 10 and 11  
Jesus the Good Shepherd, and the Raising of Lazarus from the Dead  
Manuscript Fragments in Armenian, on Parchment  
Armenia, circa AD 900

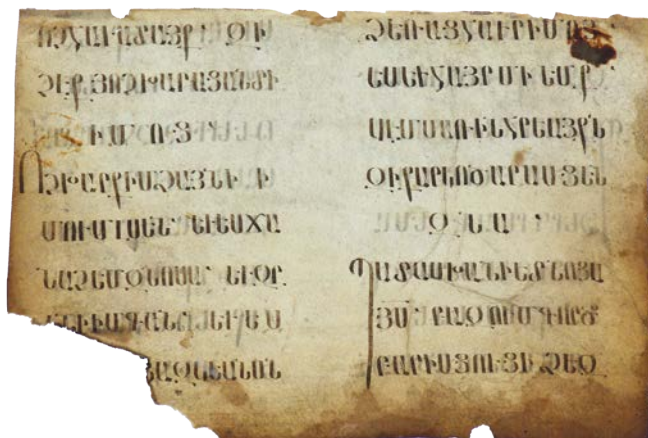
These manuscript fragments in early Armenian include one and one half parchment leaves from an early biblical codex. The text is from the Gospel of John, chapters 10 and 11, the accounts of Jesus as the Good Shepherd and Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead.

**Iron Writing, the Earliest Armenian Script**

Produced in Armenia in the ninth or tenth century, the text is in monumental *erkat'agir* majuscules—the so-called Iron Writing, the earliest Armenian script to survive in manuscript—with capitals with long trailing descenders, similar to British Library, Add. MS.21932, trimmed to the edges of the text. There are some minor stains, small holes and losses at edges with damage to a few lines (all from reuse in a much later binding), else very good. The half leaf with a portion of John 10 measures 233 x 157mm. The full leaf with the text of John 11 measures 233 x 314 mm.



RECTO: TEXT OF JOHN 10



VERSO: TEXT OF JOHN 10

**From the First Nation to Officially Adopt Christianity**

In the early fourth century, Armenia became the first nation to officially adopt Christianity, and the Bible was the first text translated into that language in characters reportedly created by the scholar-translator St. Sahak (d.439) specifically for the task. Few Armenian manuscripts predate the present example; indeed, only a handful of writings survive from the later ninth and tenth century (see *Sacred: Books of the Three Faiths*, 2007, p. 74). Texts in Armenian are not common until the thirteenth century.

When Armenia became the first nation to adopt Christianity as a state religion it was amidst a long-lasting geo-political rivalry over the region. The church that was established exists today independently of both the Eastern Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches, having become independent in 451 after rejecting the Council of Chalcedon. The Armenian Apostolic Church is a part of the Oriental Orthodox communion, not to be confused with the Eastern Orthodox communion. The first head of the Armenian church, Saint Gregory the Illuminator, was so named because he illuminated the spirits of Armenians by introducing Christianity to them. Before this, the dominant religion amongst the Armenians was Zoroastrianism.

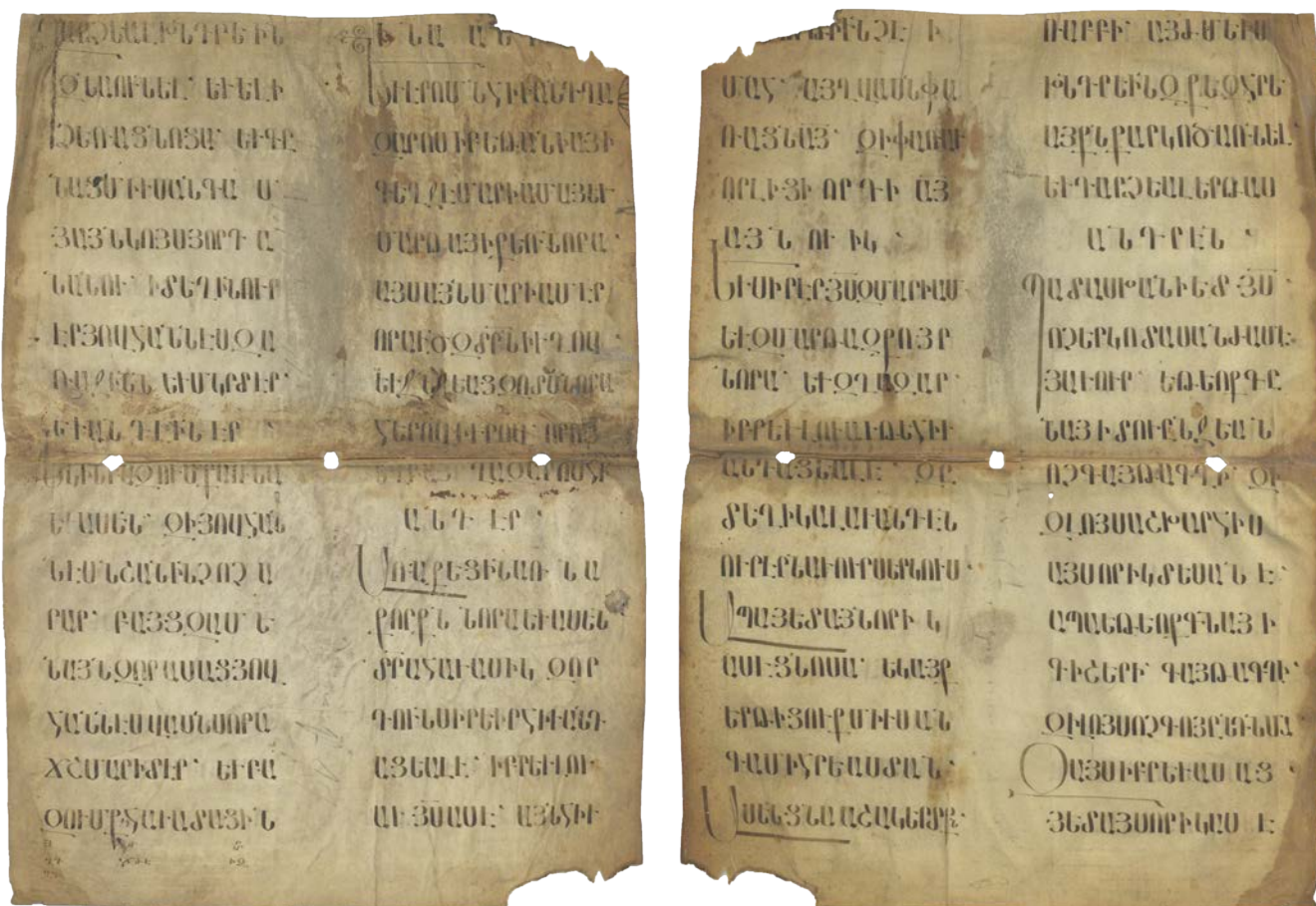


## Ushering in a Golden Age of Armenian Culture and Literature

In 405-06, Armenia's political future seemed uncertain. With the help of the King of Armenia, Mesrop Mashtots, a unique Armenian alphabet was created. This ushered in a new Golden Age of Armenian culture and literature and strengthened Armenian national identity. Evolving as a feudal kingdom in the 9th century, Armenia experienced a brief cultural, political and economic renewal under the Bagratuni Dynasty. Bagratid Armenia was eventually recognized as a sovereign kingdom by the two major powers in the region: Baghdad and Constantinople. Ani, the new Armenian capital, was constructed at the kingdom's apogee in 964. It was in this era that this remarkable Gospel of John manuscript was produced.

## The Armenian Genocide

In our generation, Armenians are perhaps best known for the horrors inflicted upon them in the first part of the 20th century when the Ottoman Empire attempted to annihilate them. In 1915, when global attention was fixated on the First World War, the Turks began to massacre Armenians in what became known as the Armenian Genocide. Under the pretext that Armenian Christians were allied with Russian Christians, the Ottomans treated the entire Armenian population as an enemy within their empire. The killings continued for more than a decade, and the events are now regarded by Armenians and the majority of Western historians to have been state-sponsored mass killings. Turkish authorities, however, maintain that the deaths were the result of a civil war coupled with disease and famine, with casualties incurred by both sides. It is estimated by many sources that a million and a half Armenians perished. These events are commemorated on April 24, the Armenian Christian Day of the Martyrs.



RECTO: TEXT OF JOHN 11

VERSO: TEXT OF JOHN 11



# A Homily by the Patron Saint of Armenia

## A Beloved Message from Saint Gregory the Illuminator

### Manuscript Leaves in Armenian, on Parchment

#### Armenia, circa AD 900

Saint Gregory the Illuminator (c. 257 – c. 331) is the patron saint and first official head of the Armenian Apostolic Church. He is credited with converting Armenia from paganism to Christianity in 301. Armenia thus became the first nation to adopt Christianity as its official religion.

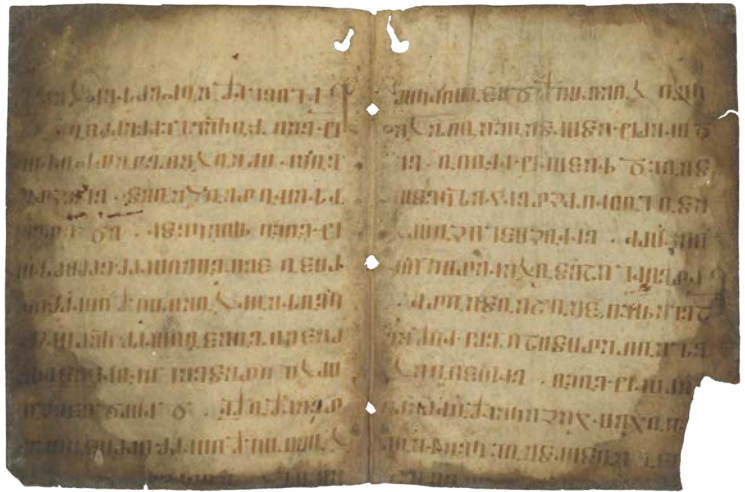
#### Rescued in Childhood, Raised in Devotion

Gregory was the son of the Armenian Parthian nobles Anak the Parthian and Okohe. When Anak was put to death by the ruler of the Arsacid dynasty, Gregory narrowly escaped execution with the help of his caretakers. He was taken to Caesarea in Cappadocia where he was given to the Christian Holy Father Phirmilianos (Euthalius) to be educated and brought up as a devout Christian.

Upon coming of age, Gregory married a woman named Miriam, the daughter of a Christian Armenian prince in Cappadocia. Miriam bore Gregory two sons. At some point Miriam and Gregory separated in order that Gregory might take up a monastic life. Gregory left Cappadocia and went to Armenia in the hope of atoning for his father's sins by evangelizing his homeland.

#### Called to Restore Sanity

When Gregory arrived, Tiridates III was ruler of Armenia. Tiridates' father, the late King Khosrov II, had been an enemy of Gregory's father, Anak. Influenced partly by that fact, Tiridates ordered Gregory imprisoned for twelve years in a pit on the Ararat Plain. Gregory was eventually called forth from his pit in 297 to restore the king to sanity, for he had lost all reason after he was betrayed by the Roman emperor Diocletian who had invaded western provinces of Greater Armenia and turned them into protectorates of Rome. The newly-restored king appointed Gregory as his primary advisor, and followed his counsel in establishing Armenia as the first nation to adopt the Christian faith en masse. A number of prayers, and about thirty of the canonical hymns of the Armenian Church are ascribed to St. Gregory the Illuminator. Homilies of his appeared for the first time in a work called *Haschacnapadum* at Constantinople in 1737.



# Bel and the Dragon

Daniel 14:27

Manuscript Fragment in Coptic, on Parchment

Egypt, circa AD 900

This Sahidic Coptic parchment codex fragment contains traces of five lines on both the recto and the verso. The manuscript preserves the middle of the single column and the outer margin of each side. The writing is a highly skilled book hand that dates between the mid 4c and the later 4c AD. The text preserves Bel and the Dragon 27 [also identified by scholars as Daniel 14:27].



FRAGMENT SHOWN ACTUAL SIZE

The text of Bel and the Dragon is likely based on a Hebrew or Aramaic original that no longer exists. The medieval Aramaic manuscript of the Chronicle of Jerahmeel might contain a descendent of the Hebrew Vorlage. No Jewish writer quotes from Bel and the Dragon; neither was the text found at Qumran.

The Greek text of Bel and the Dragon exists in two versions: The LXX or OG (Old Greek), and a version ascribed to Theodotion. The Septuagint [LXX] version is only preserved in the 2c AD Papyrus 967 (Chester Beatty IX/X) and the *Codex Chisianus* 45 from the 10th century. In the early church, the Theodotion translation became more prevalent and is the version that is quoted by the early church fathers. It is found in both *Codex Alexandrinus* and *Codex Vaticanus*.

One manuscript containing a portion of the Coptic Bel and the Dragon in the British Museum is mentioned by Ernest A. Wallis Budge, *Miscellaneous Coptic Texts in the Dialect of Upper Egypt*. Volume 5, Part 1 (London: British Museum, 1915), Bel and the Dragon verses 23ff, 33, 38-39 p. 757.

This extraordinary manuscript preserves the very moment when Daniel slays the dragon by baking pitch, fat, and hair to make barley-cakes that cause the dragon to burst open upon consumption. The context reads: "Then Daniel took pitch, fat, and hair, and boiled them together and made cakes, which he fed to the dragon. The dragon ate them, and burst open. And Daniel said, 'See what you have been worshiping!'"

## A Fragmentary but Significant Manuscript

The story of Bel and the Dragon is deemed canonical by the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches, and deuterocanonical by the remainder of Christendom. This rare witness was discovered in binding cartonnage. It is a Sahidic Coptic fragment, 85 x 25 mm. It preserves portions of four lines on both sides, and also the outer margin. The word *dragon* can be clearly seen in the text. Based on the paleography, the manuscript dates between the middle to late 4c — 500 years earlier than the only other known text of this intriguing story. This manuscript of course also provides an historic link to the Book of Daniel.

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**Tribute to a Martyr**  
Encomium on the Martyr Theodore the General  
Manuscript Fragment in Coptic, on Parchment  
Egypt, circa AD 1000

These two fragments on parchment are written in the Sahidic dialect of Coptic, the literary language of Upper Egypt in the first Christian millennium. Paleographical features suggest that the fragments came from manuscripts which were produced in the scriptorium of Touton, situated in Middle Egypt, in the Fayyum oasis. They belonged to an encomium on the martyr Theodore the General, attributed to Theodore of Antioch (*Clavis Coptica* 0381). This text was published according to a Bohairic manuscript in the Vatican by Eric Otto Winstedt, and republished by Giuseppe Balestri and Henri Hyvernat in their collection of Coptic Acts of the Martyrs.

**From the Same Codex as Fragments in the Vatican and the Rijksmuseum**

A fragment kept today in the Vatican (Vat copt. 111, f. 119) and several others which are in the Rijksmuseum in Leiden (F1976/4.5-8) belonged to the same codex as these fragments. Interestingly, one of the fragments attaches to one of the Leiden fragments. The Rijksmuseum in Leiden purchased the fragments decades ago from the respected Dutch antiquities dealer Karl Johannes Möger.

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Jeffrey Fish, Associate Professor of Classics, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

Wilfred G. Lambert [deceased], Historian, Archaeologist, Specialist in Assyriology and Near Eastern Archaeology, British Museum, London, England.

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