

# **1. Bible Manuscripts**

Most ancient New Testament manuscripts were found in Egypt.

Kept in good condition by the dry heat.

## **Papyrus Manuscripts**

### **Early Christian Greek manuscripts**

- John Rylands papyrus – Fragment of John's Gospel (c.125)
- Chester Beatty papyrus – Epistles of Paul (c.200)
- Bodmer papyrus – Luke, John, Acts, General Epistles, I & II Peter, Jude (c.200).

## **John Rylands papyrus – P<sup>52</sup> Fragment of John's Gospel (c.125)**

**P<sup>52</sup>** is the oldest known manuscript fragment of the New Testament.  
Found: Egypt in 1920

Dated: c.125 –150.

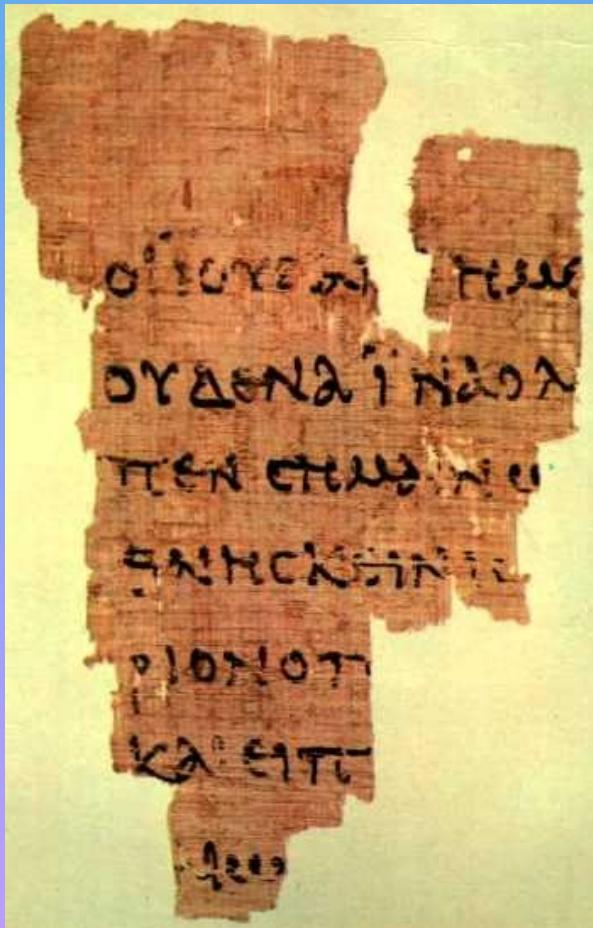
Front side: Fragments from John 18:31-33

Reverse: Fragments from John 18:37-38

Kept: John Rylands University Library of Manchester.

# John Rylands papyrus – P<sup>52</sup> Fragment of John's Gospel (c.125)

Front side : John 18:31-33

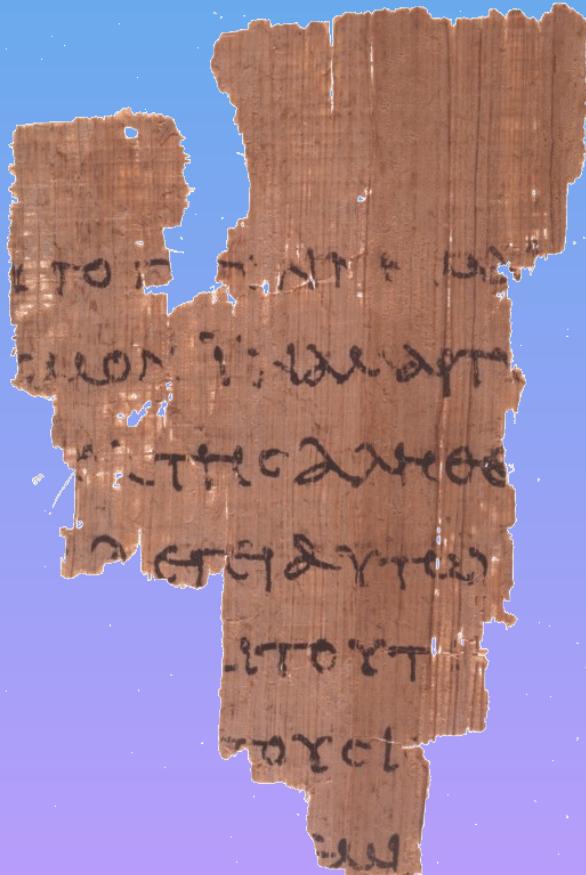


ΚΑΤΑ ΤΟΝ ΝΟΜΟΝ ΥΜΩΝ ΚΡΙΝΑΤΕ ΑΥΤΟΝ ΕΙ  
ΠΟΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΟΙ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ ΗΜΙΝ ΟΥΚ ΕΞΕΣΤΙΝ Α  
ΠΟΚΤΕΙΝΑΙ ΟΥΔΕΝΑ ΙΝΑ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΙΗΣΟΥ  
ΠΛΗΡΩΘΗ ΟΝ ΕΙΠΕΝ ΣΗΜΑΙΝΩΝ ΠΟΙΩ ΘΑΝΑ  
ΤΩ ΗΜΕΛΛΕΝ ΑΠΟΘΝΗΣΚΕΙΝ ΕΙΣΗΛΘΕΝ ΟΥΝ  
ΠΑΛΙΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΠΡΑΙΤΩΡΙΟΝ Ο ΠΙΛΑΤΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ε  
ΦΩΝΗΣΕΝ ΤΟΝ ΙΗΣΟΥΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΙΠΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΣΥ Ε  
Ι Ο ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΤΩΝ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΩΝ

It is not lawful for us to put to death  
No one; that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled;  
Which he spoke signifying by what death  
He was about to die. Entered therefore into the  
Praetorium again Pilate and called  
Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of  
The Jews?"

# John Rylands papyrus – P<sup>52</sup> Fragment of John's Gospel (c.125)

Reverse side : John 18:37-38



ΕΙΠΕΝ ΟΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ Ο ΠΙΛΑΤΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΕΙ  
ΣΥ ΑΠΙΕΚΡΙΘΗ Ο ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΣΥ ΛΕΓΕΙΣ ΟΤΙ Β  
ΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΕΙΜΙ ΕΓΩ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΓΕΓΕΝΝΗΜ  
ΑΙ ΚΑΙ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΕΛΗΛΥΘΑ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΚΟΣ  
ΜΟΝ ΙΝΑ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΩ ΤΗ ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ ΠΑΣ Ο  
ΩΝ ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑΣ ΑΚΟΥΕΙ ΜΟΥ ΤΗΣ  
ΦΩΝΗΣ ΛΕΓΕΙ ΑΥΤΩ Ο ΠΙΛΑΤΟΣ ΤΙ ΕΣΤΙΝ  
ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΕΙΠΩΝ ΠΑΛΙΝ ΕΞΗΛ  
ΘΕΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΥΣΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΛΕΓΕΙ ΑΥ  
ΤΟΙΣ ΕΠΩ ΟΥΔΕΝΙΑΝ ΕΥΡΙΣΚΩ ΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΑΙ  
ΤΙΑΝ

For this I have been born, and for this I have  
been born into the world that I may bear  
witness to the truth. Everyone that is of the  
truth hears my voice. Says to him Pilate,  
"what is truth?" And this having said again,  
he went out to the Jews and says to them; I  
not any fault find in him.

# **Chester Beatty Collection, Dublin**

Papyrus 45, 46 and 47

Dated between 200-250AD

Bought in Egypt

Location where it was found is unknown.

P45 Four Gospels and Acts

P46 The Epistles of Paul

P47 Revelation

## Chester Beatty papyrus

Papyrus 45 (Dated between 200 -250).

Contains parts of all the Gospels and Acts

P45 shows that the Four Gospels and Acts were combined from an early date.



Luke 11:50–12:12; 13:6-24 (Kept at Chesty Beatty Library, Dublin)

# Chester Beatty papyrus

## Papyrus 46

Dated between 200-250.

Earliest substantial New Testament manuscript.

Purchased in Egypt.



From the second century the epistles of Paul were put together in a papyrus codex and read together.

The Chester Beatty papyrus is the oldest codex of Paul's epistles.

## **Chester Beatty papyrus**

### **Papyrus 46**

**Late 2nd century Papyrus codex of Paul's epistles.**

Contains 86 leaves (originally c.104)

Contains the writings of Paul:

Contained Hebrews but not the pastoral epistles.

Part is kept by Chester Beatty, Dublin (56 leaves)

Romans (last 8 chapters), Hebrews, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians (2 chapters).

and

Part by Univ. Of Michigan (30 leaves).

1 and 2 Corinthians

# Chester Beatty papyrus

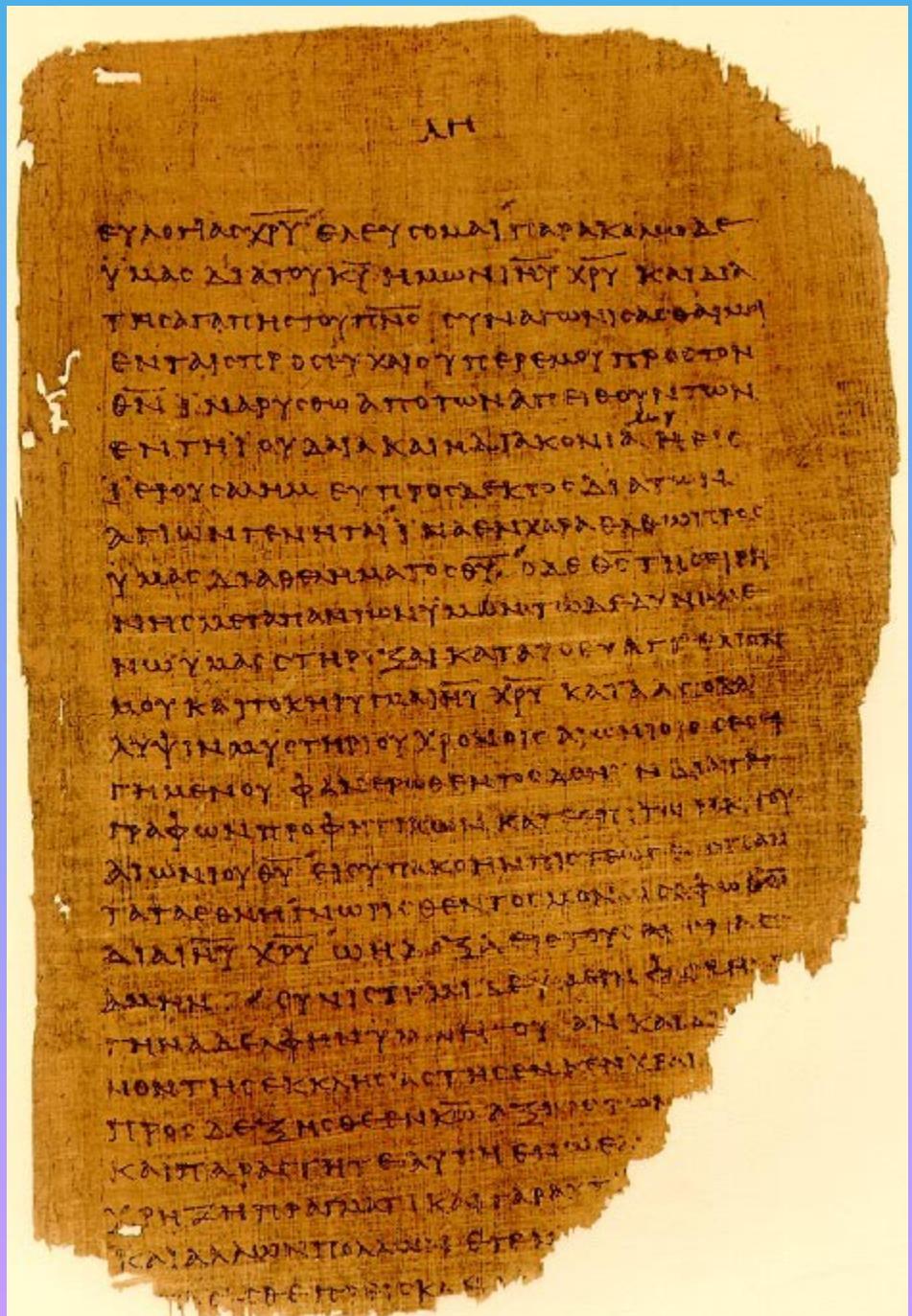
## Papyrus 46

### Epistle's of Paul (c.200)

Chester Beatty

End portion from Romans 15 to line 9

Rom 16:21-24 to line 19 then 16:1-20

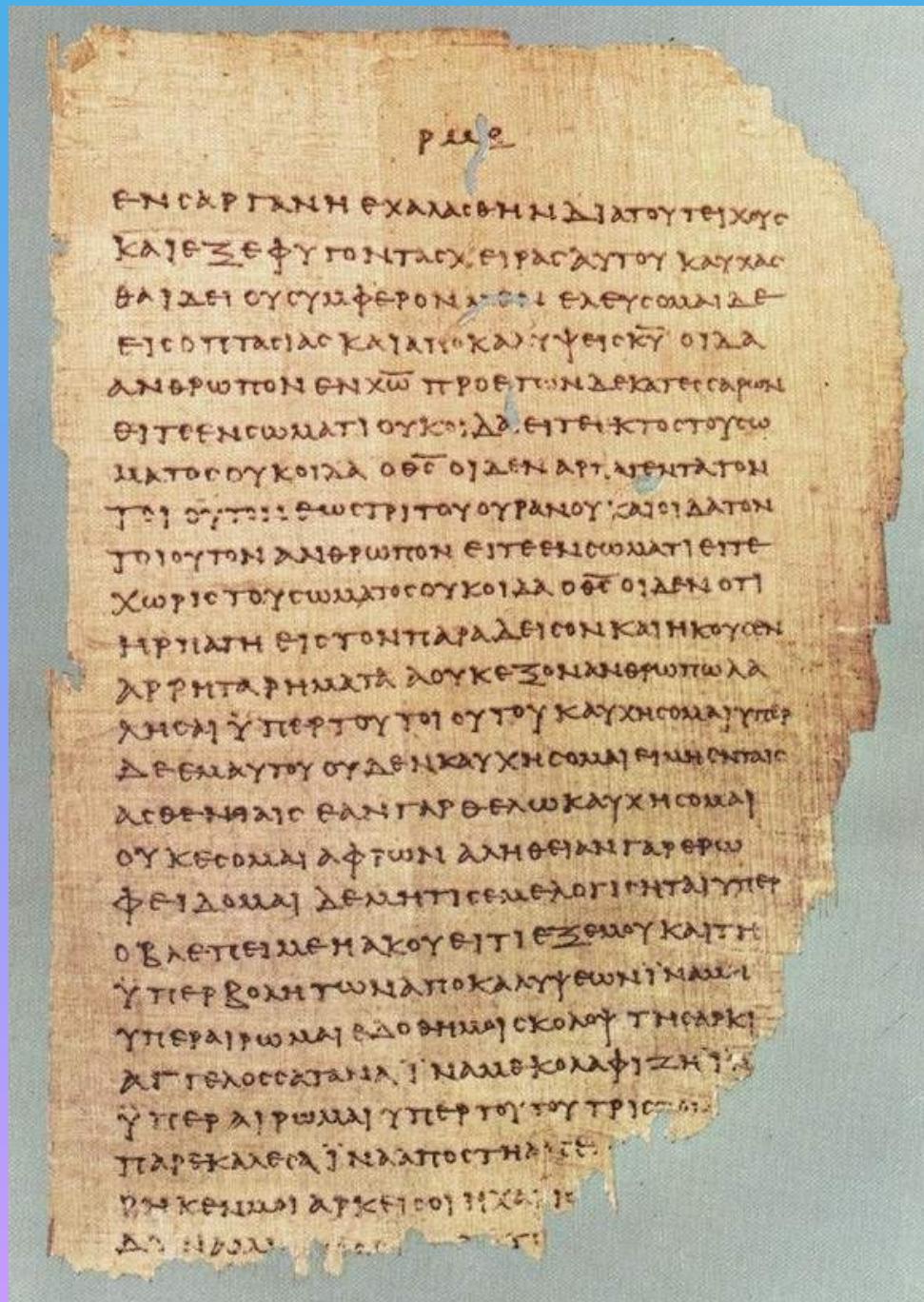


University of Michigan

Papyrus 46

Acquired 1931 and 1933

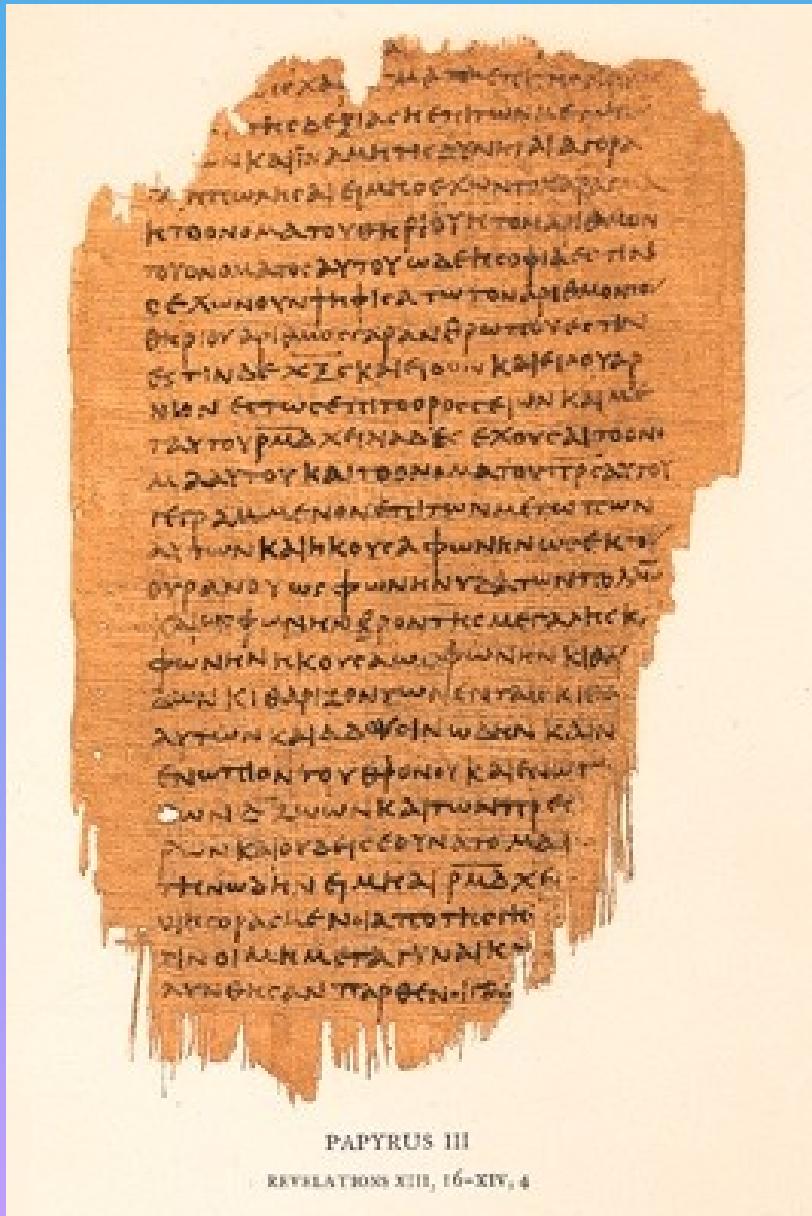
2 Corinthians 11:33 – 12:9



# Chester Beatty

## Papyrus 47

Late 2nd century Papyrus codex of Revelation.



## The Bodmer Papyrus (3rd century)

Bought by Martin Bodmer 1955-6

Kept in Cologny, near Geneva, Switzerland

Thought to have been found at Pabau (near Dishna) Egypt.

The Headquarters of the Pachomian monks.

(Pachomius c.290-c.346)

Manuscripts in Greek and Coptic.

P66 (John)

P72 (1 & 2 Peter and Jude)

P74 (Acts and General Epistles)

P75 (Luke and John)

P8 given to Pope Paul VI in 1969 and is now in the Vatican Library

# The Monastic Community of Pachomius (c.290-c.346)



Basilica of Pachomius in the foreground

The Bodmer papyrus probably came from here.

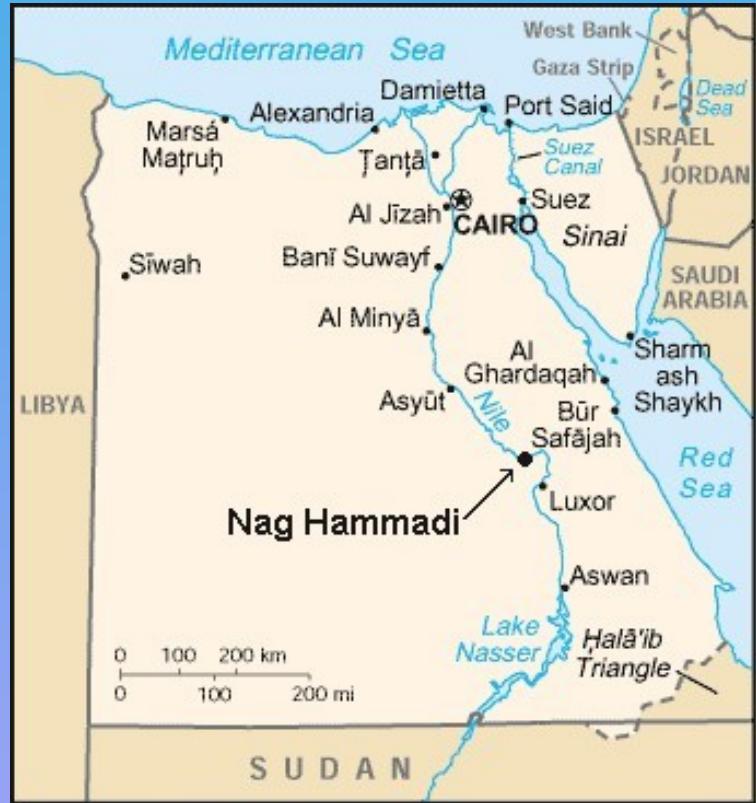
The place where the Coptic Gnostic Gospels were found is in the background

# Nag Hammadi Library.



The Coptic Gnostic Gospels were found at the Nag Hammadi library which was located here.

This was probably a library of the Pachomius monks. The books were probably hidden as the Gnostic Gospels were forbidden.



Nag Hammadi Codices

# Papyrus Bodmer II (p66)

Codex

Dated c.200

John's Gospel

Content: John 1:1-6:11;  
6:35-14:26, 29-30; 15:2-  
26; 16:2-4, 6-7; 16:10-  
20:20, 22-23; 20:25-21:9,  
12, 17.

Story of the Woman in  
Adultery not included  
-John 7:53 – 8:11 (as is the  
case in p75)

Picture - John 1



**Question:** Why is the story of the woman caught in adultery missed out?

Use common sense.

Egyptian Christianity emphasised asceticism.

Copyists probably omitted this story from an early time because it does not condemn immorality.

The woman had committed a terrible sin against her own husband or another man's wife. Jesus protects her from her accusers and then says 'I don't condemn you'. The law condemns - Grace covers

Monasticism is based on an emphasis on legalism and morality.

Not surprising that the Pachomius monks used copies of the scriptures that missed this story out.

## Papyrus Bodmer XV (p75)

(Geneva, Switzerland)

## Gospels of Luke and John

Dated c.175-225

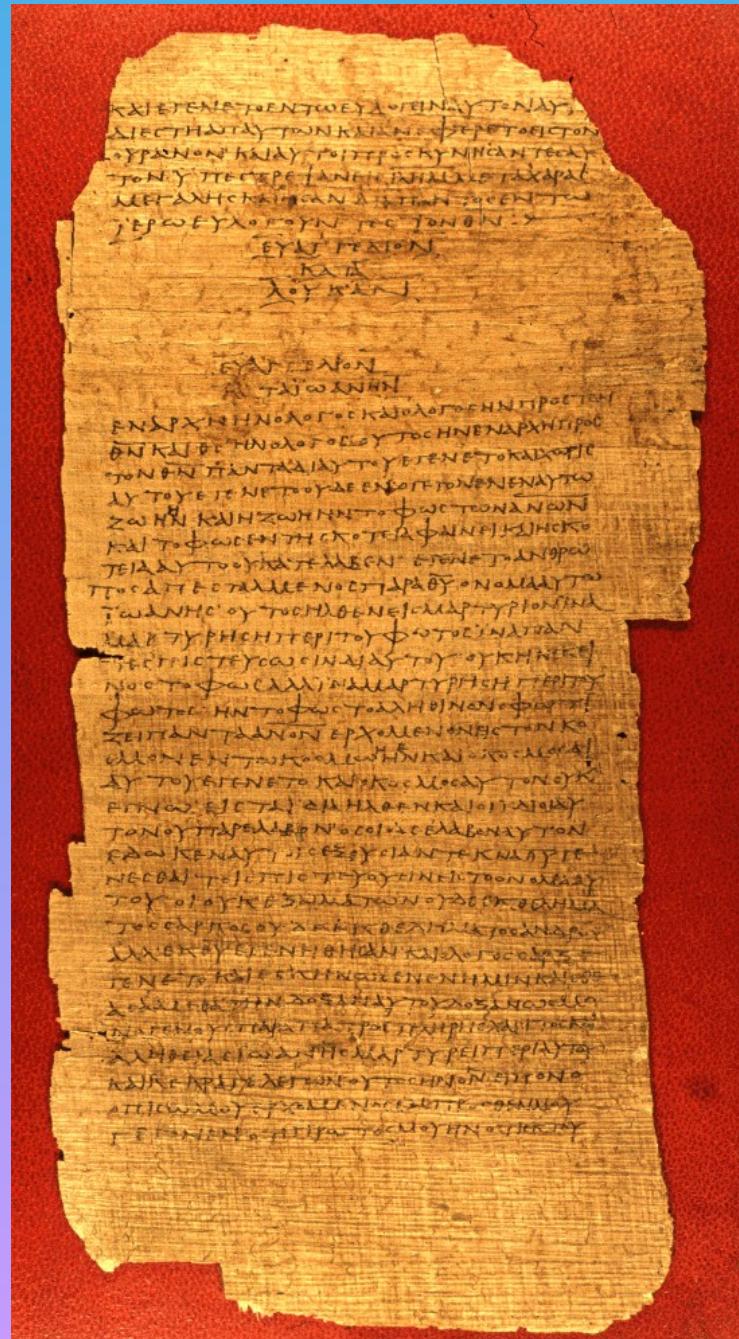
# Discovered in Egypt

Content: Luke 3:18-22; 3:33 - 4:2;  
4:34 - 5:10; 5:37 - 6:4; 6:10 - 7:32,  
35-39, 41-43; 7:46 - 9:2; 9:4 - 17:15;  
17:19 - 18:18; 22:4 - 24:53;

John 1:1 - 11:45, 48-57; 12:3 - 13:1,  
8-9; 14:8-29; 15:7-8.

Story of the Woman in Adultery not included -John 7:53 – 8:11

End of Luke's gospel and the beginning of John's gospel.



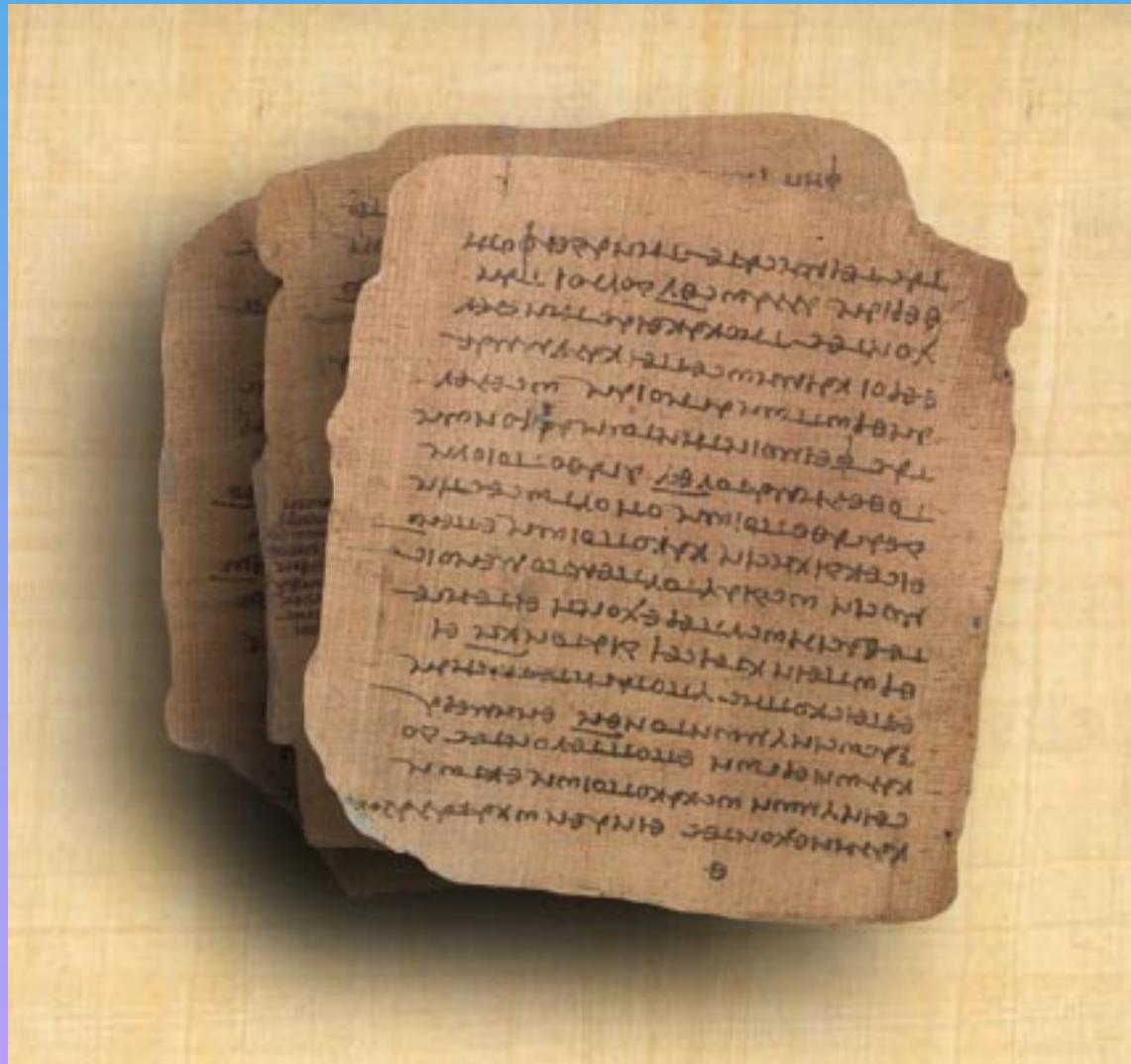
# Papyrus VIII

3rd – 4th century

1 and 2 Peter

Final part of codex

Kept in the Vatican  
Library



# Oxyrhynchus, Egypt

Papyrus (3rd –5th century)

Discovered by Grenfell and Hunt  
1896-7.

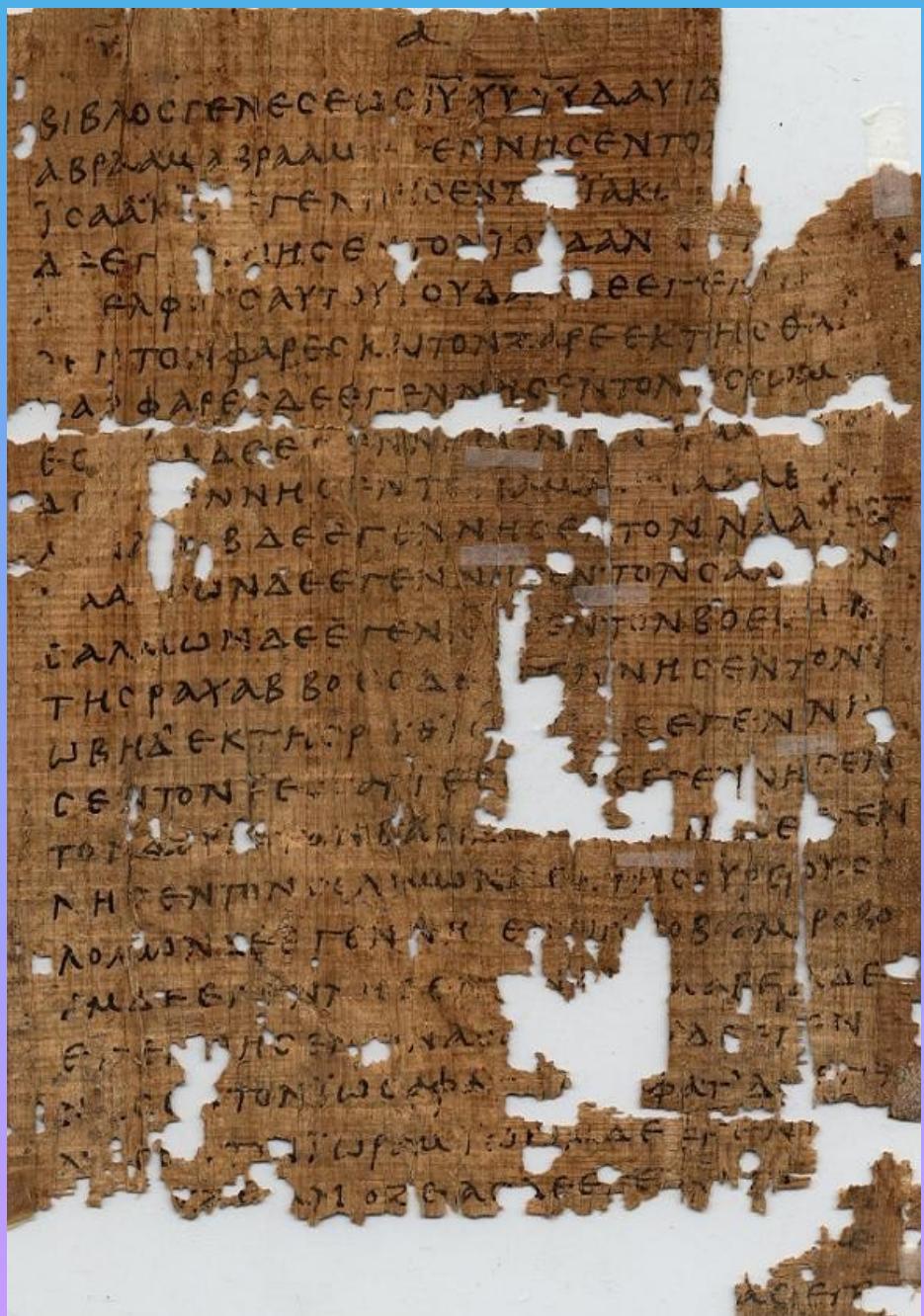
Oxyrhynchus is 300km south of  
Alexandria

44 registered New Testament  
papyrii are from Oxyrhynchus.

P1 (c.250 AD)

Matthew 1:1-9, 12, 14-20

Kept at the Univ. Of Pennsylvania.

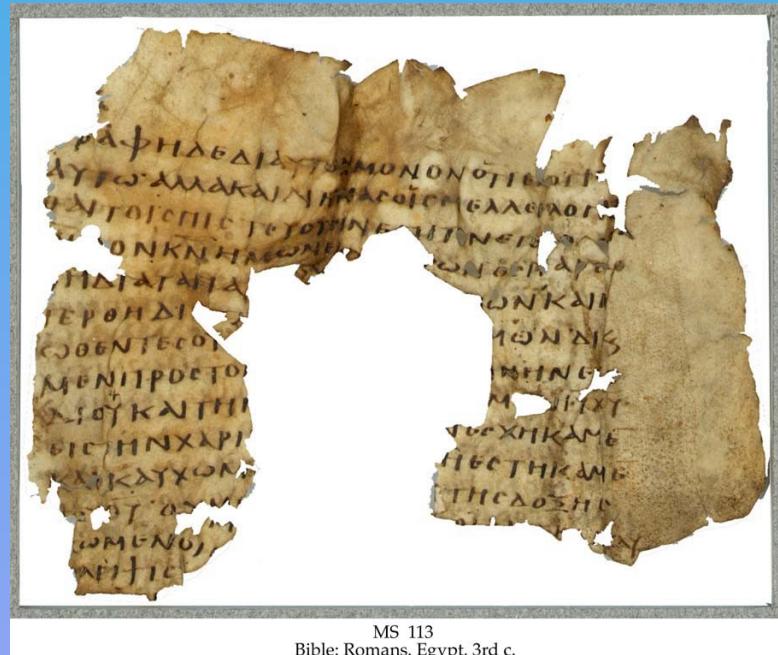


# Oxyrhynchus Papyrus

1897-1909 excavations at Oxyrhynchus in Egypt discovered more than 100,000 papyrii.

The papyrii contain thousands of Greek texts including fragments of the Gospels, Acts, Pauline Epistles, General Epistles, and Revelation.

Only two thousand of the Oxyrhynchus papyrii have been read so far.



c. 3rd century

Romans 4:23 – 5:3; 5:8 - 13

The Shøyen collection

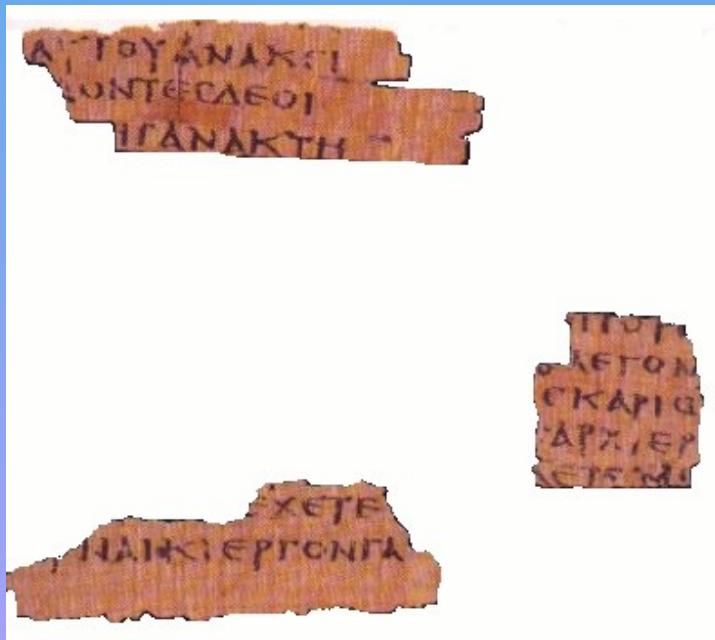
## **Other Greek New Testament Fragments**

- The Magdalen Fragments – Matthew 26:23, 31 (c.200)
- The Fustât Manuscript – Romans 4 – 5 (c. 3rd century)

## Magdalen papyrus p64

Dated c. 200

Purchased in Luxor, Egypt.



Gospel of Matthew 26:23, 31

Magdalen College,  
Oxford

Prof. Dr. Carsten Peter Thiede (1952-2004)

Redated Magdalen papyrus as late 1<sup>st</sup> century.

p67 (part of same codex) contains Matthew 3:9, 15; 5:20-22, 25-28

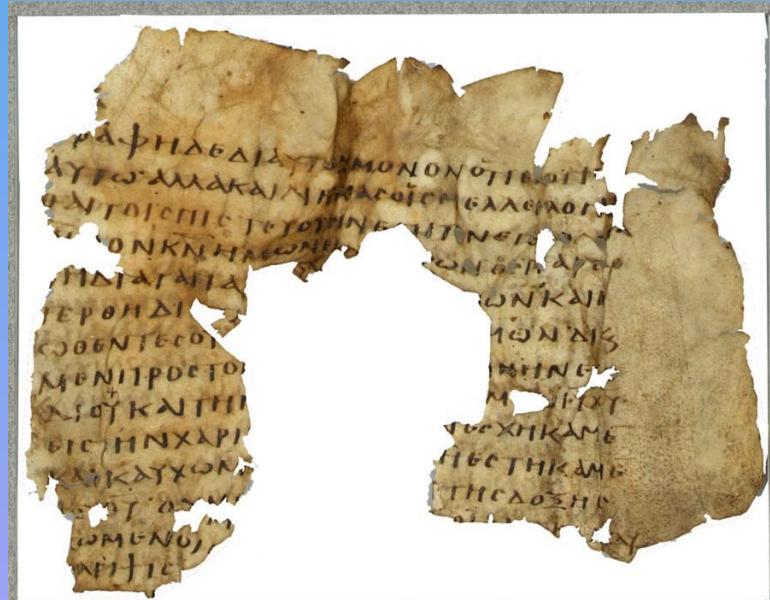
Kept at Fundacion San Lucas Evangelista, Barcelona

# **MS 113 Christian Community at Fustât (Cairo) in Egypt**

Dated c. 3rd century

# The Martin Shøyen Collection, Oslo, Norway.

## Romans 4:23 – 5:3; 5:8 – 13



MS 113  
Bible: Romans. Egypt, 3rd c.

## Parchment codex

**Greek texts** - Codex replaced the use of the scroll and  
Vellum (parchment) replaced the use of papyrus.

In 332 Constantine ordered 50 vellum (parchment) Bibles from Eusebius of Caesarea.

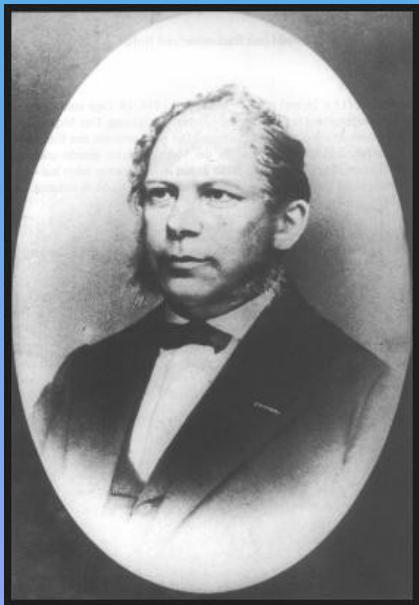
None of these are known today but three codices from the 4th and 5th century exist today:

Codex Sinaiticus which is in the British Museum

Codex Alexandrinus which is in the British Museum

Codex Vaticanus which is in the Vatican Library

## Constantin von Tischendorf (1815-1874)

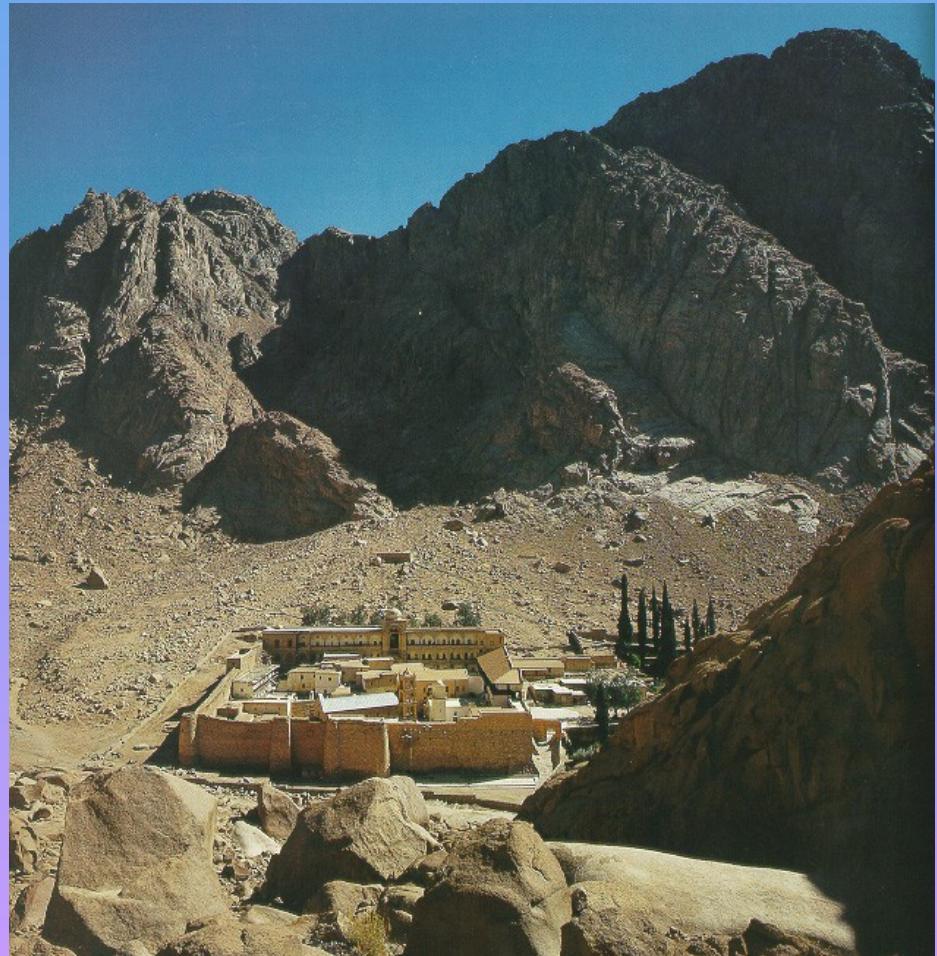


Tischendorf visited the monastery of Saint Catherine in the Sinai in 1844.

129 pages from a Codex were in the library waste paper bin ready to be burnt. Some pages had already been burnt.

In 1859 he again visited the monastery and was shown the Codex Sinaiticus.

The monastery of Saint Catherine in the Sinai

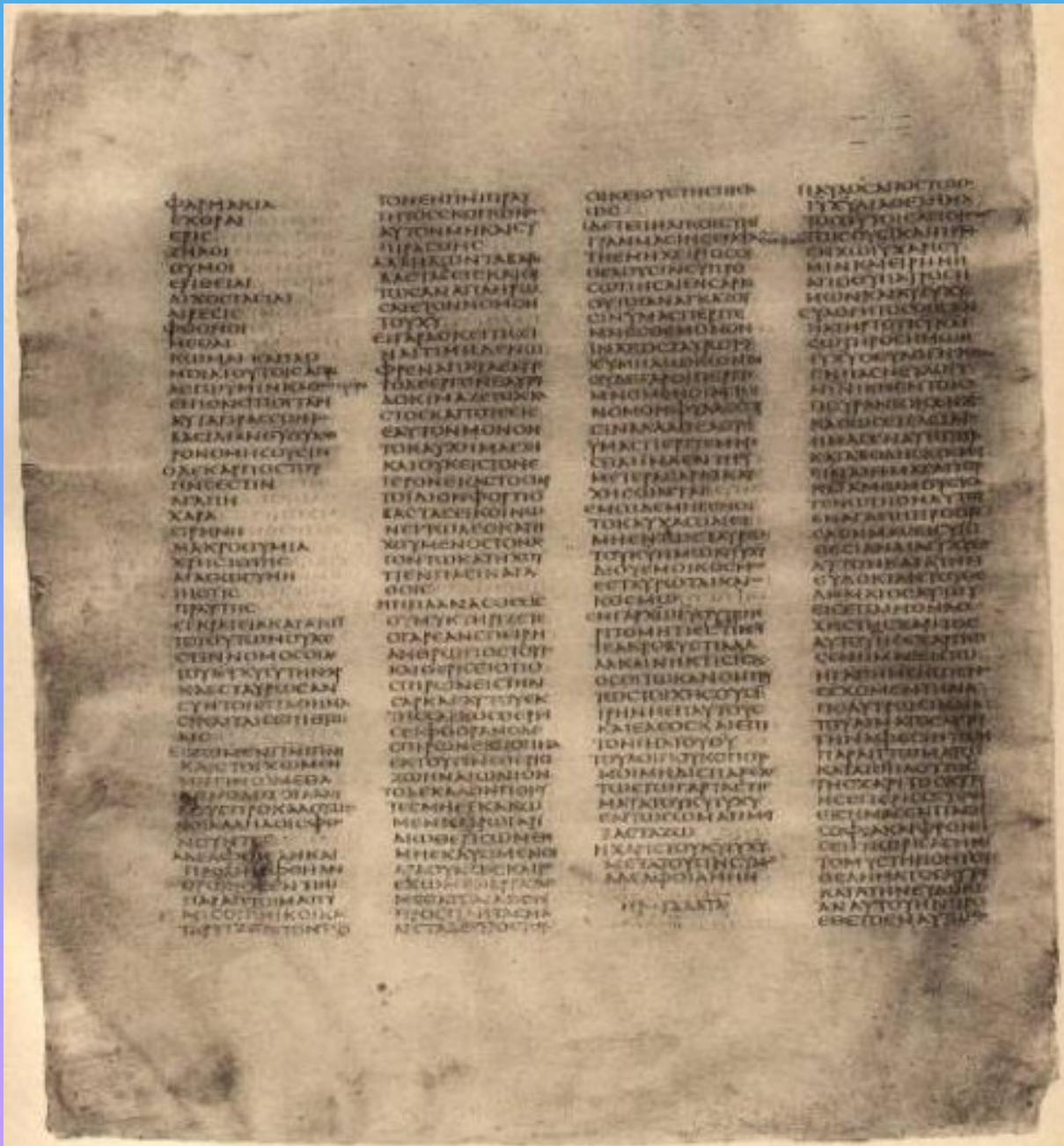


# Codex Sinaiticus

Mid 4th century

Found in 1859 and taken to St. Petersburg.

1933 sold to the British Museum.



# Codex Vaticanus

4th century codex

Origin unknown.

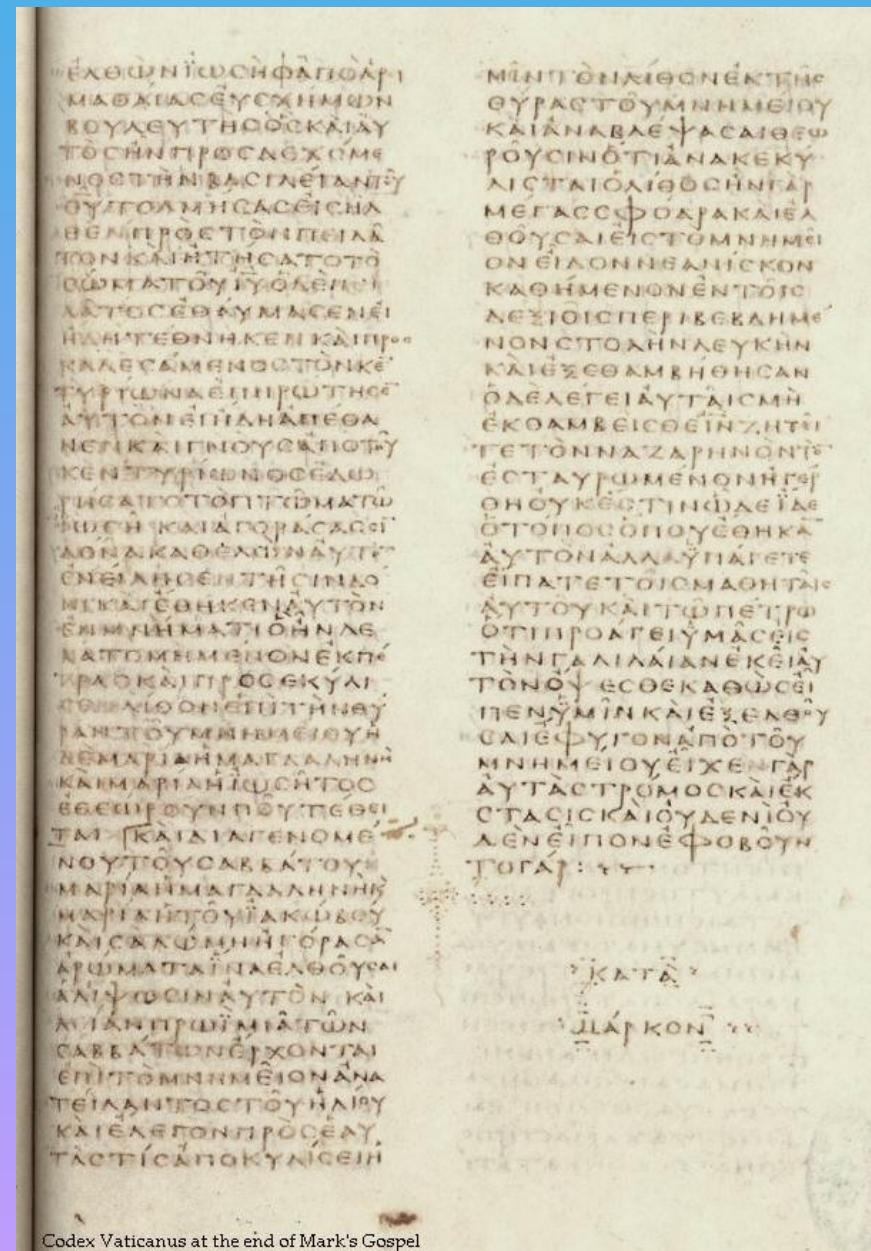
Speculation linked it with one of the 50 vellum codex ordered by Conatantine. Possibly originated from Alexandria.

Brought from Constantinople to Vatican in 14th century.

Written on vellum

Contains the Septuagint including most of the Apocrypha and all the New Testament except 1 and 2 Timothy; Titus; Philemon; Revelation. These were added in the 15th century.

Kept in the Vatican Library



Codex Vaticanus at the end of Mark's Gospel

# Codex Alexandrinus

5th century

Origin unknown. Two notes link the codex to Alexandria – a 13th century Arabic note and a 17th century Latin note,

Brought to Constantinople in 1621. Presented to Charles I of England in 1627.

Contains the complete Septuagint and all the New Testament books plus some apocryphal books.

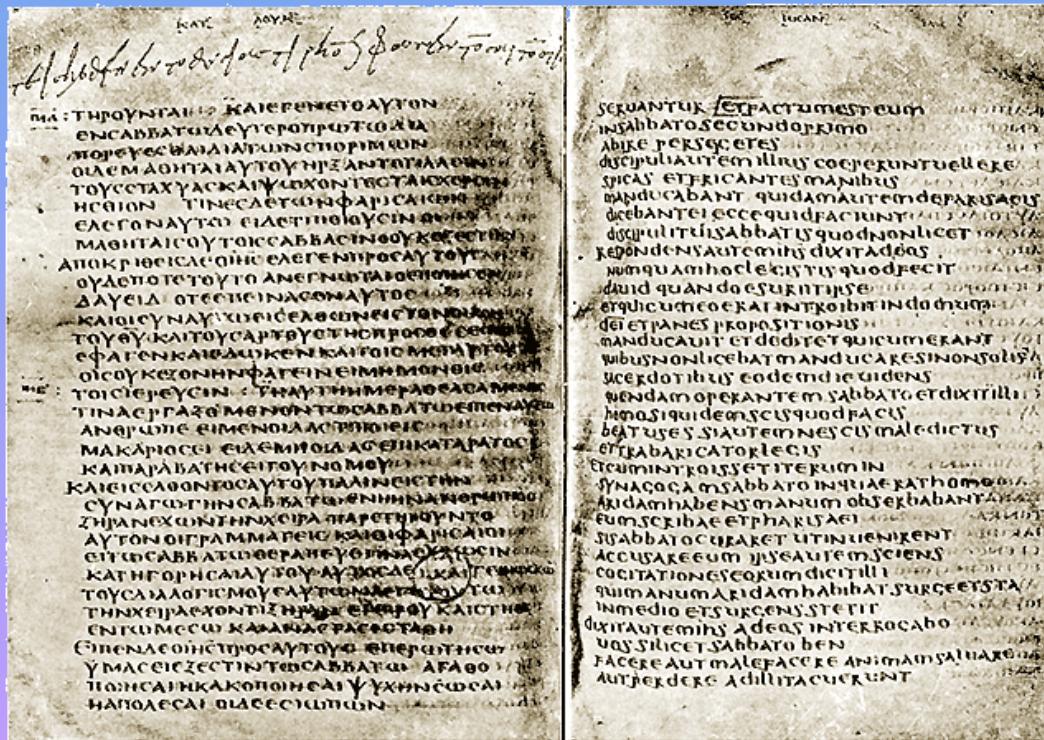
Kept in the British Museum



# Codex Bezae (Dated 5th or 6th century from Southern France)

Repaired in Lyon in 9th century and kept in the St. Ireneaus library at the monastery in Lyon.

Taken from Lyon in 1562 and presented to Theodore Beza (1519-1605) who gave it to Cambridge University in 1581 where it still remains.



It contains the four Gospels in this order: Matthew John Luke and Mark; 3 John and the Acts (only Luke is complete).

Includes the story of the woman caught in adultery (John 7:53 – 8:11)

Kept in the Cambridge University Library.

## **Summary:**

Most ancient New Testament texts have been found in Egypt.

The John Rylands fragment shows that John's gospel was being read in Egypt in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

The Chester Beatty papyrus show that the Four Gospels and Acts were being read together late 2nd century.

The Chester Beatty papyrus show that the Epistles of Paul were read together late 2nd century.

The Bodmer papyrus may have left out the story of the woman caught in adultery for theological reasons. Jesus did not condemn the woman even though she had committed a terrible sin.