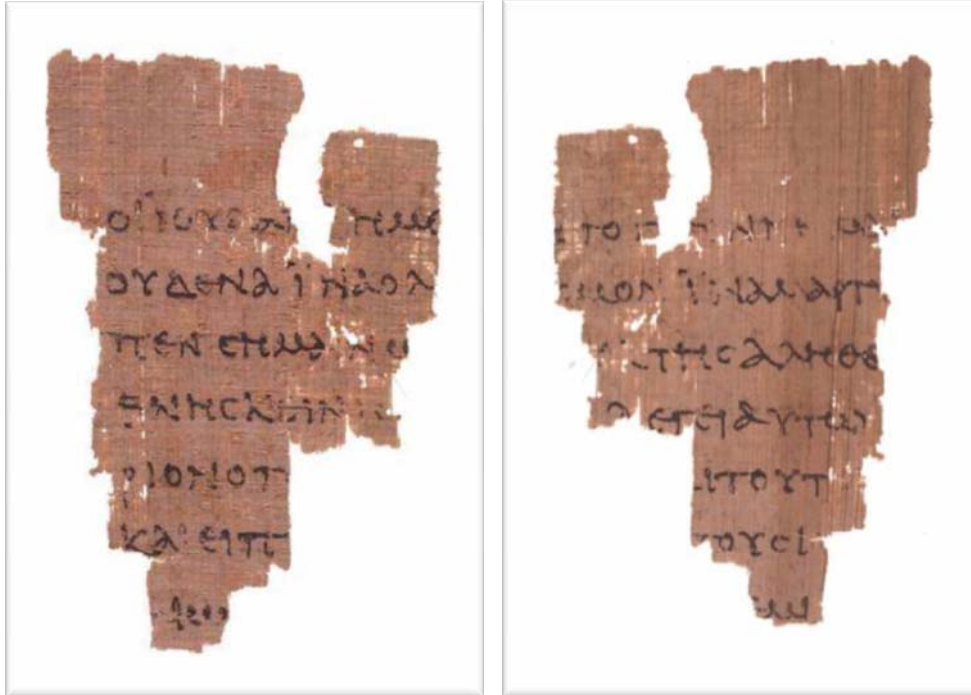


# St John fragment

## An unpublished fragment of the fourth gospel



This small fragment of St. John's Gospel, less than nine centimetres high and containing on the one side part of verses 31-33, on the other of verses 37-38 of chapter xviii<sup>1</sup> is one of the collection of Greek papyri in the John Rylands Library, Manchester.

It was originally discovered in Egypt, and may come from the famous site of Oxyrhynchus<sup>2</sup> (Behnesa), the ruined city in Upper Egypt where Grenfel and Hunt carried out some of the most startling and successful excavations in the history of archaeology; it may be remembered that among their finds of new fragments of Classical and Christian literature were the now familiar "Sayings of Jesus".

The importance of this fragment is quite out of proportion to its size, since it may with some confidence be dated in the first half of the second century A.D., and thus ranks as the earliest known fragment of the New Testament in any language.

It provides us with invaluable evidence of the spread of Christianity in areas distant from the land of its origin; **it is particularly interesting to know that among the books read by the early Christians in Upper Egypt was St. John's Gospel, commonly regarded as one of the latest of the books of the New Testament.**

<sup>1</sup> xviii = 18

<sup>2</sup> Οξύρρυγχος: σημαντική αρχαιολογική θέση της Αιγύπτου  
[http://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/Οξύρρυγχος\\_\(πόλις\)](http://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/Οξύρρυγχος_(πόλις))  
[http://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/Πάπυροι\\_της\\_Οξύρρυγχου](http://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/Πάπυροι_της_Οξύρρυγχου)

Like other early Christian works which have been found in Egypt, this Gospel was written in the form of a codex, i.e. book, not of a roll, the common format for non-Christian literature of that time.

## Τα εδάφια (κατά Ιωάννην ιη')

Εμπρόσθια όψη:

**31** εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ πιλάτος, λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς, καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν κρίνατε αὐτόν. εἶπον αὐτῷ οἱ ἰουδαῖοι, ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἀποκτεῖναι οὐδένα:  
**32** ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ ἰησοῦ πληρωθῇ ὃν εἶπεν σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ ἤμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν.  
**33** εἰσηλθεν οὖν πάλιν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον ὁ πιλάτος καὶ ἐφώνησεν τὸν ἰησοῦν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν ἰουδαίων;

Οπίσθια όψη:

**37** εἶπεν οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ πιλάτος, οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ σὺ; ἀπεκρίθη ὁ ἰησοῦς, σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεὺς εἰμι. ἐγὼ εἰς τοῦτο γενένημαι καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ἵνα μαρτυρήσω τῇ ἀληθείᾳ: πᾶς ὃ ὢν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκούει μου τῆς φωνῆς.  
**38** λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ πιλάτος, τί ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια; καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν πάλιν ἐξηλθεν πρὸς τοὺς ἰουδαίους, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, ἐγὼ οὐδεμίαν εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν.

Πηγή: <http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/specialcollections/collections/stjohnfragment/>