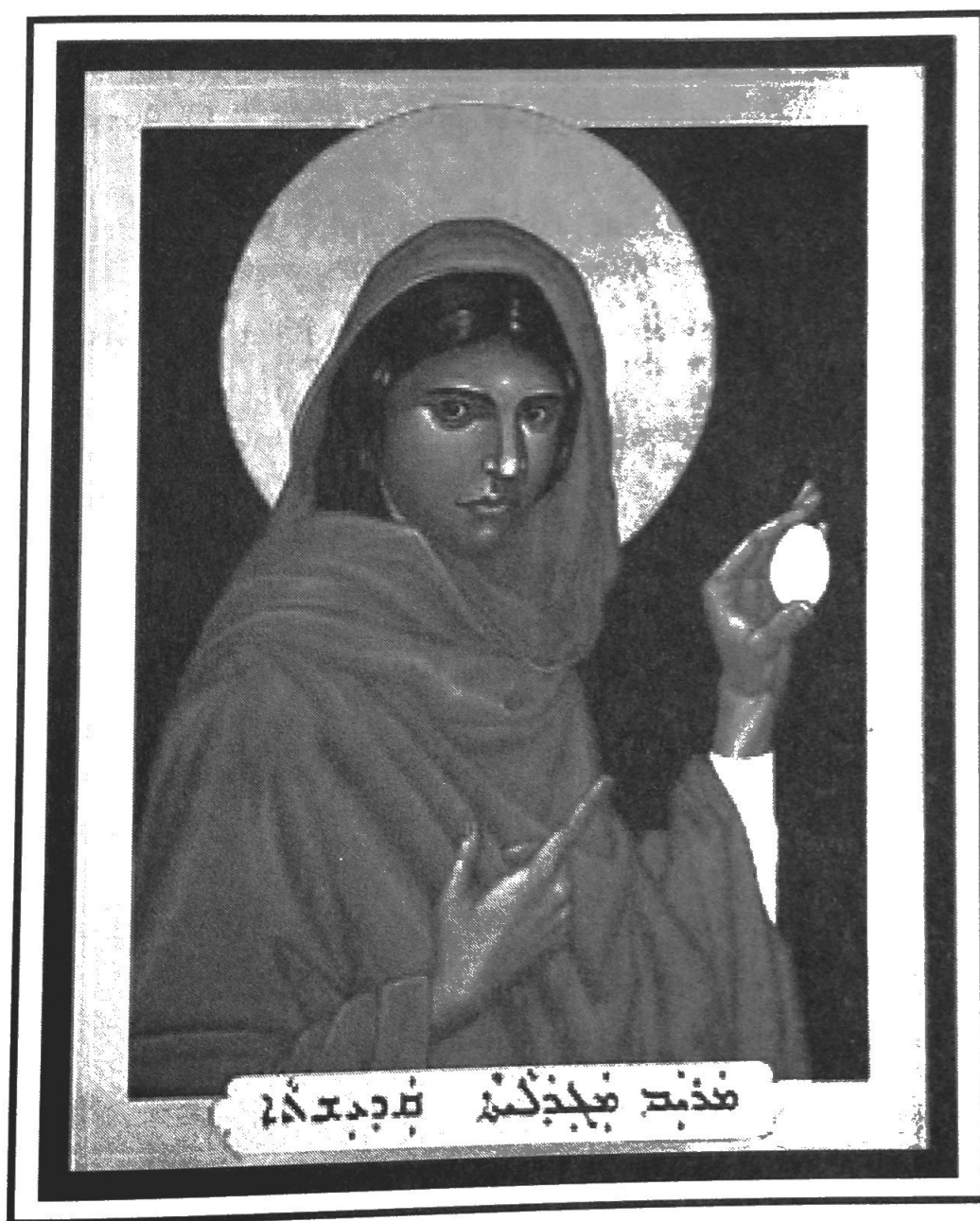


The Gospel of Mary *of Magdala*

JESUS AND THE FIRST
WOMAN APOSTLE



KAREN L. KING

Chapter 1

Introduction

Early Christianity & the Gospel of Mary

Few people today are acquainted with the *Gospel of Mary*. Written early in the second century CE, it disappeared for over fifteen hundred years until a single, fragmentary copy in Coptic translation came to light in the late nineteenth century. Although details of the discovery itself are obscure, we do know that the fifth-century manuscript in which it was inscribed was purchased in Cairo by Carl Reinhardt and brought to Berlin in 1896.¹ Two additional fragments in Greek have come to light in the twentieth century. Yet still no complete copy of the *Gospel of Mary* is known. Fewer than eight pages of the ancient papyrus text survive, which means that about half of the *Gospel of Mary* is lost to us, perhaps forever.

Yet these scant pages provide an intriguing glimpse into a kind of Christianity lost for almost fifteen hundred years. This astonishingly brief narrative presents a radical interpretation of Jesus' teachings as a path to inner spiritual knowledge; it rejects his suffering and death as the path to eternal life; it exposes the erroneous view that Mary of Magdala was a prostitute for what it is—a piece of theological fiction; it presents the most straightforward and convincing argument in any early Christian writing for the legitimacy of women's leadership; it offers a sharp critique of illegitimate power and a utopian vision of

spiritual perfection; it challenges our rather romantic views about the harmony and unanimity of the first Christians; and it asks us to rethink the basis for church authority. All written in the name of a woman.

The story of the *Gospel of Mary* is a simple one. Since the first six pages are lost, the gospel opens in the middle of a scene portraying a discussion between the Savior and his disciples set after the resurrection. The Savior is answering their questions about the end of the material world and the nature of sin. He teaches them that at present all things, whether material or spiritual, are interwoven with each other. In the end, that will not be so. Each nature will return to its own root, its own original state and destiny. But meanwhile, the nature of sin is tied to the nature of life in this mixed world. People sin because they do not recognize their own spiritual nature and, instead, love the lower nature that deceives them and leads to disease and death. Salvation is achieved by discovering within oneself the true spiritual nature of humanity and overcoming the deceptive entrapments of the bodily passions and the world. The Savior concludes this teaching with a warning against those who would delude the disciples into following some heroic leader or a set of rules and laws. Instead they are to seek the child of true Humanity within themselves and gain inward peace. After commissioning them to go forth and preach the gospel, the Savior departs.

But the disciples do not go out joyfully to preach the gospel; instead controversy erupts. All the disciples except Mary have failed to comprehend the Savior's teaching. Rather than seek peace within, they are distraught, frightened that if they follow his commission to preach the gospel, they might share his agonizing fate. Mary steps in and comforts them and, at Peter's request, relates teaching unknown to them that she had received from the Savior in a vision. The Savior had explained to her the nature of prophecy and the rise of the soul to its final rest, describing how to win the battle against the wicked, illegitimate Powers that seek to keep the soul entrapped in the world and ignorant of its true spiritual nature.

But as she finishes her account, two of the disciples quite unexpectedly challenge her. Andrew objects that her teaching is strange and he refuses to believe that it came from the Savior. Peter goes further, denying that Jesus would ever have given this kind of advanced teaching to a woman, or that Jesus could possibly have preferred her to them. Apparently when he asked her to speak, Peter had not expected such elevated teaching, and now he questions her character,

implying that she has lied about having received special teaching in order to increase her stature among the disciples. Severely taken aback, Mary begins to cry at Peter's accusation. Levi comes quickly to her defense, pointing out to Peter that he is a notorious hothead and now he is treating Mary as though she were the enemy. We should be ashamed of ourselves, he admonishes them all; instead of arguing among ourselves, we should go out and preach the gospel as the Savior commanded us.

The story ends here, but the controversy is far from resolved. Andrew and Peter at least, and likely the other fearful disciples as well, have not understood the Savior's teaching and are offended by Jesus' apparent preference of a woman over them. Their limited understanding and false pride make it impossible for them to comprehend the truth of the Savior's teaching. The reader must both wonder and worry what kind of gospel such proud and ignorant disciples will preach.

How are we to understand this story? It is at once reminiscent of the New Testament gospels and yet clearly different from them. The gospel's characters—the Savior, Mary, Peter, Andrew, and Levi—are familiar to those acquainted with the gospels of *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, and *John*. So, too, is the theological language of gospel and kingdom, as well as such sayings of Jesus as "Those who seek will find" or "Anyone with two ears should listen." And the New Testament gospels and *Acts* repeatedly mention the appearance of Jesus to his disciples after the resurrection. Yet it is also clear that the story of the *Gospel of Mary* differs in significant respects. For example, after Jesus commissions the disciples they do not go out joyfully to preach the gospel, as they do in *Matthew*; instead they weep, fearing for their lives. Some of the teachings also seem shocking coming from Jesus, especially his assertion that there is no such thing as sin. Modern readers may well find themselves sympathizing with Andrew's assessment that "these teachings are strange ideas."

The *Gospel of Mary* was written when Christianity, still in its nascent stages, was made up of communities widely dispersed around the Eastern Mediterranean, communities which were often relatively isolated from one other and probably each small enough to meet in someone's home without attracting too much notice. Although writings appeared early—especially letters addressing the concerns of local churches, collections containing Jesus' sayings, and narratives interpreting his death and resurrection—oral practices dominated the lives

of early Christians. Preaching, teaching, and rituals of table fellowship and baptism were the core of the Christian experience.² What written documents they had served at most as supplemental guides to preaching and practice. Nor can we assume that the various churches all possessed the same documents; after all, these are the people who wrote the first Christian literature. Christoph Marksches suggests that we have lost 85% of Christian literature from the first two centuries—and that includes only the literature we know about.³ Surely there must be even more, for the discovery of texts like the *Gospel of Mary* came as a complete surprise. We have to be careful that we don't suppose it is possible to reconstruct the whole of early Christian history and practice out of the few surviving texts that remain. Our picture will always be partial—not only because so much is lost, but because early Christian practices were so little tied to durable writing.

Partly as a consequence of their independent development and differing situations, these churches sometimes diverged widely in their perspectives on essential elements of Christian belief and practice. Such basic issues as the content and meaning of Jesus' teachings, the nature of salvation, the value of prophetic authority, and the roles of women and slaves came under intense debate. Early Christians proposed and experimented with competing visions of ideal community.

It is important to remember, too, that these first Christians had no New Testament, no Nicene Creed or Apostles Creed, no commonly established church order or chain of authority, no church buildings, and indeed no single understanding of Jesus. All of the elements we might consider to be essential to define Christianity did not yet exist. Far from being starting points, the Nicene creed and the New Testament were the end products of these debates and disputes; they represent the distillation of experience and experimentation—and not a small amount of strife and struggle.

All early Christian literature bears traces of these controversies. The earliest surviving documents of Christianity, the letters of Paul,⁴ show that considerable difference of opinion existed about such issues as circumcision and the Jewish food laws⁵ or the relative value of spiritual gifts.⁶ These and other such contentious issues as whether the resurrection was physical or spiritual were stimulating theological conversations and causing rifts within and among Christian groups. By the time of the *Gospel of Mary*, these discussions were becoming increasingly nuanced and more polarized.

History, as we know, is written by the winners. In the case of early

Christianity, this has meant that many voices in these debates were silenced through repression or neglect. The *Gospel of Mary*, along with other newly discovered works from the earliest Christian period, increases our knowledge of the enormous diversity and dynamic character of the processes by which Christianity was shaped. The goal of this volume is to let twenty-first-century readers hear one of those voices—not in order to drown out the voices of canon and tradition, but in order that they might be heard with the greater clarity that comes with a broadened historical perspective. Whether or not the message of the *Gospel of Mary* should be embraced is a matter readers will decide for themselves.

Discovery and Publication

Where did the *Gospel of Mary* come from?

Over a hundred years ago, in January of 1896, a seemingly insignificant event took place on the antiquities market in Cairo. A manuscript dealer, whose name history has forgotten, offered a papyrus book for sale to a German scholar named Dr. Carl Reinhardt.⁷ It eventually became clear that the book was a fifth-century CE papyrus codex, written in the Coptic language (see Box 1). Unbeknownst to either of them, it contained the *Gospel of Mary* along with three other previously unknown works, the *Apocryphon of John*, the *Sophia of Jesus Christ*, and the *Act of Peter*.⁸ This seemingly small event turned out to be of enormous significance.

Dr. Reinhardt could tell that the book was ancient, but he knew nothing more about the find than that the dealer was from Achmim in central Egypt (see map of Egypt, p. 12). The dealer told him that a peasant had found the book in a niche of a wall,⁹ but that is impossible. The book's excellent condition, except for several pages missing from the *Gospel of Mary*, makes it entirely unlikely that it had spent the last fifteen hundred years unnoticed in a wall niche. No book could have survived so long in the open air. It may be that the peasant or the dealer had come by it illegally and, hence, was evasive about the actual location of the find. Or it may have been only recently placed in the wall and accidentally found there. In any case, we still don't know anything specific about where it lay hidden all those centuries, although the first editor, Carl Schmidt, assumed that it had to have been found in the graveyards of Achmim or in the area surrounding the city.¹⁰

Box 1

COPTIC LANGUAGE

Although the *Gospel of Mary* was originally composed in Greek, most of it survives only in Coptic translation. Coptic is the last stage of the Egyptian language and is still in liturgical use by Egyptian Christians, called Copts. The oldest known Egyptian language was written in hieroglyphs, always on stone or some other durable material. In addition, Egyptians also wrote on papyrus, and for this they used a different script called hieratic, employed almost solely for writing sacred literature. A third script, called demotic, was developed for everyday transactions like letter-writing and book-keeping. Each of these scripts is very cumbersome, utilizing different characters or signs to represent whole syllables, not just individual sounds as in English. Sometime during the late Roman period, probably around the second century CE, scribes started writing the Egyptian language in primarily Greek letters, but adding a few from demotic Egyptian. This process made writing Egyptian much simpler and more efficient. Since Coptic script was used almost exclusively by Christians in Egypt, we can assume that Egyptian Christians were the ones who translated and preserved the *Gospel of Mary*.

Dr. Reinhardt purchased the book and took it to Berlin, where it was placed in the Egyptian Museum with the official title and catalogue number of Codex Berolinensis 8502. There it came into the hands of the Egyptologist Carl Schmidt, who set about producing a critical edition and German translation of what is now generally referred to as the Berlin Codex (see Box 2).

From the beginning, the publication was plagued by difficulties. First of all, there is the problem of the missing pages. The first six pages,¹¹ plus four additional pages from the middle of the work, are missing. This means that over half of the *Gospel of Mary* is completely lost. What happened to these pages? Carl Schmidt thought they must have been stolen or destroyed by whoever found the book. The manuscript itself was found protected inside its original leather and papyrus cover (see photo, p. ii),¹² but by the time it reached Carl Schmidt in Berlin, the order of the pages had been considerably jumbled.¹³ It took

Box 2

THE BERLIN CODEX

The book Reinhardt bought in Cairo in 1896 turned out to be a fifth-century papyrus codex. Papyrus was the most common writing material of the day, but codices, the precursor of our book form, had come into use only a couple of centuries earlier, primarily among Christians. The codex was made by cutting papyrus rolls into sheets, which then were stacked in a single pile, usually made up of at least 38 sheets. Folding the pile in half and sewing the sheets together produced a book of about 152 pages, which was finally placed inside a leather cover. The *Gospel of Mary* is a short work, taking up only the first 18¼ pages of a codex that itself is relatively small in size, having leaves that measure on average only about 12.7 cm long and 10.5 cm wide. (See photos, pp. 19–27.)

Schmidt some time to realize that the book was nearly intact and must therefore have been found uninjured. In an uncharitable and perhaps even rancorous comment, Schmidt attributed the disorder of the pages to “greedy Arabs” who must also have either stolen or destroyed the missing pages,¹⁴ but to this day nothing is known about their fate. We can only hope that they lie protected somewhere and will one day resurface.

By 1912 Schmidt’s edition was ready for publication and was sent to the Prießchen Press in Leipzig. But alas! The printer was nearing completion of the final sheets when a burst water pipe destroyed the entire edition.¹⁵ Soon thereafter Europe plunged into World War I. During the war and its aftermath, Schmidt was unable to go to Leipzig and salvage anything from the mess himself, but he did manage to resurrect the project. This time, however, his work was thwarted by his own mortality. His death on April 17, 1938, caused further delay while the edition was retrieved from his estate and sent to press.¹⁶ At this point, another scholar was needed to see its publication through, a task that ultimately fell to Walter Till in 1941.¹⁷

In the meantime, in 1917 a small third-century Greek fragment of the *Gospel of Mary* had been found in Egypt (Papyrus Rylands 463) (see Box 3). Being parallel to part of the Coptic text, it added no new passages to the *Gospel of Mary*, but it did provide a few variants and

Box 3 PAPYRUS RYLANDS 463 (PRyl)

This Greek fragment of the *Gospel of Mary* was acquired by the Rylands Library in Manchester, England, in 1917, and published in 1938 by C. H. Roberts.¹⁸ Like POxy 3525, it was found at Oxyrhynchus in northern Egypt, and dates to the early third century CE. It is a fragment from a codex—it has writing on both sides of the papyrus leaf—and exhibits a very clear literary script. It measures 8.7 cm wide by 10 cm long, although most fibers measure only 8.5 cm. The front of the fragment contains the conclusion of Mary's revelation and the beginning of the disciples' dispute over her teaching. After a short gap, the dispute continues on the other side of the fragment and ends with Levi leaving to announce the good news (*GMary* 9:29-10:4; 10:6-14). (See photos, pp. 1 and 35.)

additional evidence about the work's early date and its composition in Greek. Till incorporated this new evidence into his edition,¹⁹ and by 1943, the edition was again ready to go to press. But now World War II made publication impossible.

By the time the war was over, news had reached Berlin of a major manuscript discovery in Egypt near the village of Nag Hammadi. As chance would have it, copies of two of the other texts found within the Berlin Codex along with the *Gospel of Mary* (*Apocryphon of John* and *Sophia of Jesus Christ*) appeared among the new manuscripts. No new copies of *Gospel of Mary* were found at Nag Hammadi, but publication was delayed yet again as Till waited for information about the new manuscripts so that he could incorporate this new evidence into his edition of the Berlin Codex. But the wheels of scholarship grind slowly, and finally in exasperation, Till gave up. He confides to his readers:

In the course of the twelve years during which I have labored over the texts, I often made repeated changes here and there, and that will probably continue to be the case. But at some point a man must find the courage to let the manuscript leave one's hand, even if one is convinced that there is much that is still imperfect. That is unavoidable with all human endeavors.²⁰

At last in 1955, the first printed edition of the text of the *Gospel of Mary* finally appeared with a German translation.

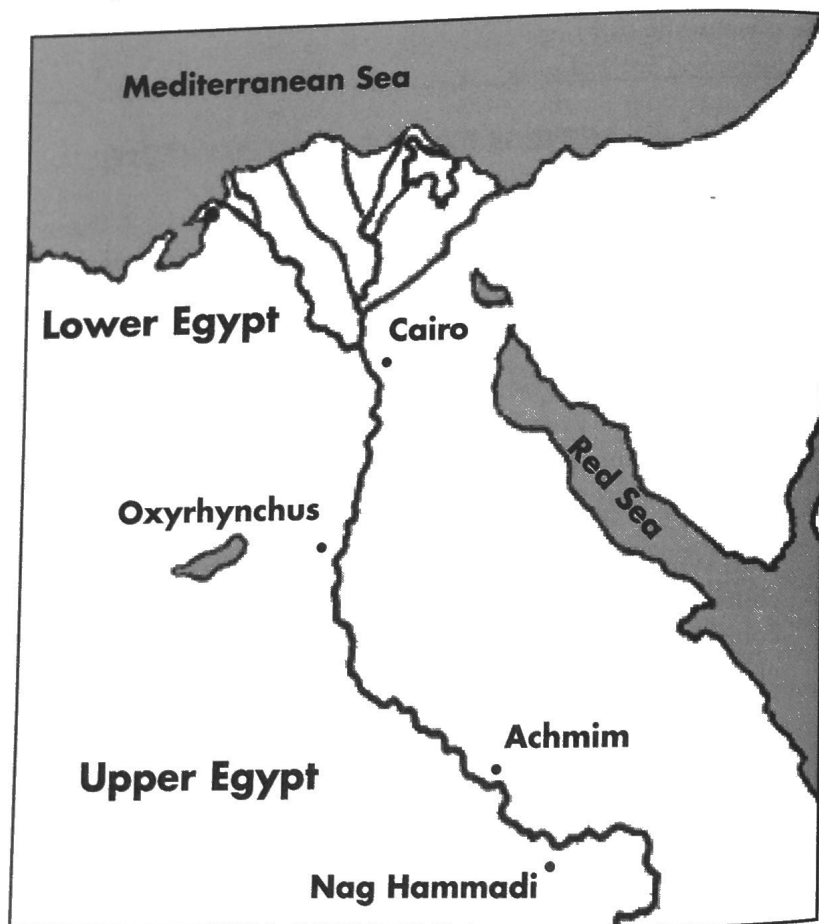
Till was right, of course; scholars continue to make changes and add to the record.²¹ Of foremost importance was the discovery of yet another early third-century Greek fragment of the *Gospel of Mary* (Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 3525), which was published in 1983 (see Box 4).²² With the addition of this fragment, we now have portions of three copies of the *Gospel of Mary* dating from antiquity: two Greek manuscripts from the early third century (P. Rylands 463 and P. Oxyrhynchus 3525) and one in Coptic from the fifth century (Codex Bezae Cantabrigiae 8525).

Box 4 PAPYRUS OXYRHYNCHUS 3525 (POxy)

This tiny and severely damaged papyrus fragment of the *Gospel of Mary* in Greek was found during excavations of the town of Oxyrhynchus, along the Nile in lower (northern) Egypt. Published in 1983 by P. J. Parsons, it is now housed in the Ashmolean Library at Oxford.²³ It dates to the early third century CE. The fragment has writing on only one side, indicating that it came from a roll, not a codex (book). Because it was written in a cursive Greek script usually reserved for such documentary papyri as business documents and letters rather than literary texts, Parsons suggested that it was the work of an amateur. What remains is a very fragmentary fragment indeed. It contains approximately twenty lines of writing, none of them complete. The papyrus measures 11.7 cm long and is 11.4 cm at its widest point, but the top half is only about 4 cm wide. The restoration is based largely on the parallel Coptic text. It contains the Savior's farewell, Mary's comforting of the other disciples, Peter's request to Mary to teach, and the beginning of her vision (*GMary* 4:11-7:3). (See photo, pp. 91.)

Because it is unusual for several copies from such early dates to have survived, the attestation of the *Gospel of Mary* as an early Christian work is unusually strong. Most early Christian literature that we know about has survived because the texts were copied and then recopied as the materials on which they were written wore out. In

antiquity it was not necessary to burn books one wanted to suppress (although this was occasionally done); if they weren't recopied, they disappeared through neglect. As far as we know, the *Gospel of Mary* was never recopied after the fifth century; it may have been that the *Gospel of Mary* was actively suppressed, but it is also possible that it simply dropped out of circulation. Either way, whether its loss resulted from animosity or neglect, the recovery of the *Gospel of Mary*, in however fragmentary condition, is due in equal measure to phenomenal serendipity and extraordinary good fortune.



Achmim is located in central Egypt along the Nile, less than a hundred miles from the site of another important manuscript find near Nag Hammadi. Oxyrhynchus, the site of the discovery of the Greek fragments of the *Gospel of Mary*, lies far to the north.

Chapter 2

Translation

Papyrus Berolinensis 8502,1

1 (Pages 1-6 are missing.)

2 The nature of matter

"... Will m[a]tter then be utterly [destr]oyed or not?"

²The Savior replied, "Every nature, every modeled form, every creature, exists in and with each other. ³They will dissolve again into their own proper root. ⁴For the nature of matter is dissolved into what belongs to its nature. ⁵Anyone with two ears able to hear should listen!"

3 The nature of sin and the Good

¹Then Peter said to him, "You have been explaining every topic to us; tell us one other thing. ²What is the sin of the world?"

³The Savior replied, "There is no such thing as sin; ⁴rather you yourselves are what produces sin when you act in accordance with the nature of adultery, which is called 'sin.' ⁵For this reason, the Good came among you, pursuing (the good) which belongs to every nature. ⁶It will set it within its root."

⁷Then he continued. He said, "This is why you get si[c]k and die: ⁸because [you love] what de[c]ei[ve]s [you]. ⁹[Anyone who] thinks should consider (these matters)!"

¹⁰"[Ma]tter gav[e bi]rth to a passion which has no Image because it derives from what is contrary to nature. ¹¹A disturbing confusion then occurred in the whole body. ¹²That is why I told you, 'Become content at heart, ¹³while also remaining discontent and disobedient; indeed become contented and agreeable (only) in the presence of that other Image of nature.' ¹⁴Anyone with two ears capable of hearing should listen!"

4 *The Savior's farewell*

¹When the Blessed One had said these things, he greeted them all. "Peace be with you!" he said. ²"Acquire my peace within yourselves!"

³"Be on your guard ⁴so that no one deceives you by saying, 'Look over here!' or 'Look over there!' ⁵For the child of true Humanity exists within you. ⁶Follow it! ⁷Those who search for it will find it.

⁸"Go then, preac[h] the good news about the Realm. ⁹[Do] not lay down any rule beyond what I determined for you, ¹⁰nor promulgate law like the lawgiver, or else you might be dominated by it."

¹¹After he had said these things, he departed from them.

5 *Mary comforts the other disciples*

¹But they were distressed and wept greatly. ²"How are we going to go out to the rest of the world to announce the good news about the Realm of the child of true Humanity?" they said. ³"If they did not spare him, how will they spare us?"

⁴Then Mary stood up. She greeted them all, addressing her brothers and sisters, ⁵"Do not weep and be distressed nor let

Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 3525

¹¹... having said [th]ese things, he de[parted].

5 *Mary comforts the other disciples*

¹[But they were distressed, weeping greatly.] ²"How [are we to] g[o to the rest of the world preaching the good] news of the Rea[lm of the child of true Humanity?" they said. ³"For if] they [did not spare him,] how will they keep [away from] us?"

⁴[Then Mary stood up and greeted] them; she tenderly kissed [them all and said, "Brothers and sisters, ⁵do not

BG 8502

your hearts be irresolute. ⁶For his grace will be with you all and will shelter you. ⁷Rather we should praise his greatness, ⁸for he has prepared us and made us true Human beings."

⁹When Mary had said these things, she turned their heart [to]ward the Good, ¹⁰and they began to deba[t]e about the wor[d]s of [the Savior].

6 *Peter asks Mary to teach.*

¹Peter said to Mary, "Sister, we know that the Savior loved you more than all other women. ²Tell us the words of the Savior that you remember, the things which you know that we don't because we haven't heard them."

³Mary responded, "I will teach you about what is hidden from you." ⁴And she began to speak these words to them.

7 *Vision and mind*

¹She said, "I saw the Lord in a vision ²and I said to him, 'Lord, I saw you today in a vision.'

³He answered me, 'How wonderful you are for not wavering at seeing me! ⁴For where the mind is, there is the treasure.'

⁵I said to him, 'So now, Lord, does a person who sees a vision see it <with> the soul <or> with the spirit?'

POxy 3525

weep, do not be dis]tressed nor be in doubt. ⁶[For his grace will be w]ith you sheltering you. ⁷Rather [we should] praise his [great]ness, ⁸for he has united us and [made (us)] true Human beings."

⁹[When Ma]ry [said these things] she turned their mind to[ward the Good] ¹⁰and they began to debat[e] about the say-ings of the Savio[r].

6 *Peter asks Mary to teach*

¹Peter said to] Mary, "Sister, we know that you were greatly [loved by the Sav]ior, as no other woman. ²Therefore tell us t[hose wor]ds of the Savior which [you know] but which we haven't heard."

³[Mary] re[plied, "I will] rep[ort to you as much as] I remember that is unknown to you." ⁴[And she began (to speak) the]se words [to them].

7 *Vision and mind*

¹"When [the Lord] ap[peared] to m[ec] in a vision, ²[I said], 'Lord, today [I saw y]ou.'

³"He replied, ['How wonder-ful you are ... '"]

BG 8502

⁶The Savior answered, 'A person does not see with the soul or with the spirit. ⁷Rather the mind, which exists between these two, sees the vision an[d] that is w[hat ...]'

8 (Pages 11-14 are missing.)

9 *The ascent of the soul*

¹“... it.”

²“And Desire said, ‘I did not see you go down, yet now I see you go up. ³So why do you lie since you belong to me?’

⁴“The soul answered, ‘I saw *you*. You did not see me nor did you know me. ⁵You (mis)took the garment (I wore) for my (true) self.

⁶And you did not recognize me.’

⁷After it had said these things, it left rejoicing greatly.

⁸Again, it came to the third Power, which is called ‘Ignorance.’

⁹[It] examined the soul closely, saying, ‘Where are you going?’ ¹⁰You are bound by wickedness. ¹¹Indeed you are bound! ¹²Do not judge!’

¹³“And the soul said, ‘Why do you judge me, since I have not passed judgement? ¹⁴I have been bound, but I have not bound (anything). ¹⁵They did not recognize me, but I have recognized that the universe is to be dissolved, both the things of earth and those of heaven.’

¹⁶“When the soul had brought the third Power to naught, it went upward and saw the fourth Power. ¹⁷It had seven forms. ¹⁸The first form is darkness; ¹⁹the second is desire; ²⁰the third is ignorance; ²¹the fourth is zeal for death; ²²the fifth is the realm of the flesh; ²³the sixth is the foolish wisdom of the flesh; ²⁴the seventh is the wisdom of the wrathful person. ²⁵These are the seven Powers of Wrath.

²⁶“They interrogated the soul, ‘Where are you coming from, human-killer, and where are you going, space-conqueror?’

²⁷“The soul replied, saying, ‘What binds me has been slain, and what surrounds me has been destroyed, and my desire has been brought to an end, and ignorance has died. ²⁸In a [wor]ld, I was set loose from a world [an]d in a type, from a type which is above, and (from) the chain of forgetfulness

which exists in time. ²⁹From this hour on, for the time of the due season of the aeon, I will receive rest i[n] silence.’ ”

Papyrus Rylands 463 (PRyl)

²⁹“... for the rest of the course of the [due] measure of the time of the aeon, I will rest i[n] silence.’ ”

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³⁰After Mary had said these things, she was silent, ³¹since it was up to this point that the Savior had spoken to her.

10 *The disciples' dispute over Mary's teaching*

¹Andrew responded, addressing the brothers and sisters, “Say what you will about the things she has said, ²but I do not believe that the S[a]vior said these things, f[or] indeed these teachings are strange ideas.”

³Peter responded, bringing up similar concerns. He questioned them about the Savior: “Did he, then, speak with a woman in private without our knowing about it? ⁴Are we to turn around and listen to her? Did he choose her over us?”

⁵Then [M]ary wept and said to Peter, “My brother Peter, what are you imagining? ⁶Do you think that I have thought up these things by myself in my heart or that I am telling lies about the Savior?”

⁷Levi answered, speaking to Peter, “Peter, you have always been a wrathful person. ⁸Now I see you contending against the woman like the Adversaries. ⁹For if the Savior made her worthy, who are you then for your part to reject her?

¹⁰Assuredly the Savior's knowledge of her is completely reliable. That is why he loved her more than us.

¹¹“Rather we should be

PRyl 463

³⁰After she had said these [words], Mary was sile[n]t, ³¹for the Savior had spoken up to this point.

10 *The disciples' dispute over Mary's teaching*

¹Andrew sai[d], “B[rothers], what is your opinion of what was just said? ²Indeed I do not believe that the S[a]vior said these things, for what she said appears to give views that are [dif]ferent from h[is] th[ought].”

³After examining these ma[tte]rs, <Peter said>, “Has the Sa[vior] spoken secretly to a wo[m]an and <not> openly so that [we] would all hear? ⁴[Surely] he did[not want to show] that [she] is more worthy than we are?” ...

⁶“... about the Savior.”

⁷Levi said to Peter, “Peter, you are al[ways] rea[dy] to give way to you[r] perpetual inclination to anger. ⁸And even now you are doing exactly that by questioning the woman as though you're her adversary. ⁹If the Savio[r] considered her to be worthy, who are you to disregard her? ¹⁰For he knew her completely (and) loved her stea[df]ast[ly].

¹¹“Rath[e]r [we] should be ashamed and, once we have clothed [ou]rselves with the

BG 8502

ashamed. We should clothe ourselves with the perfect Human, acquire it for ourselves as he commanded us, ¹²and announce the good news, ¹³not laying down any other rule or law that differs from what the Savior said."

¹⁴After [he had said these] things, they started going out [to] teach and to preach.

¹⁵[The Gos]pel according to Mary

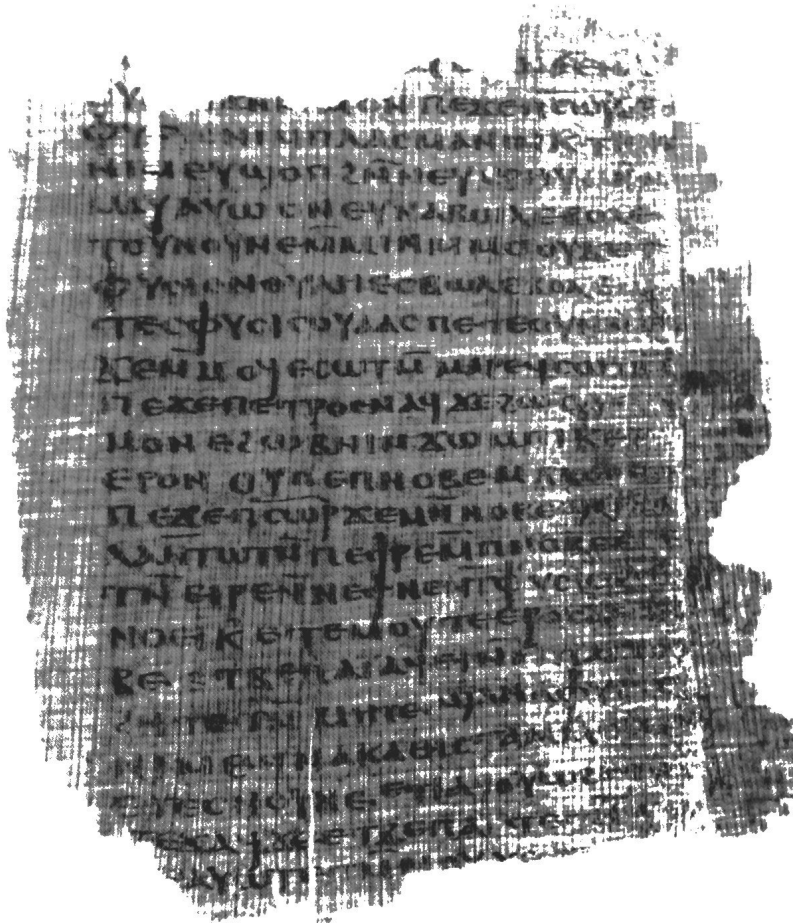
PRyl 463

p[erfec]t Human, we should do what [w]e were commanded.

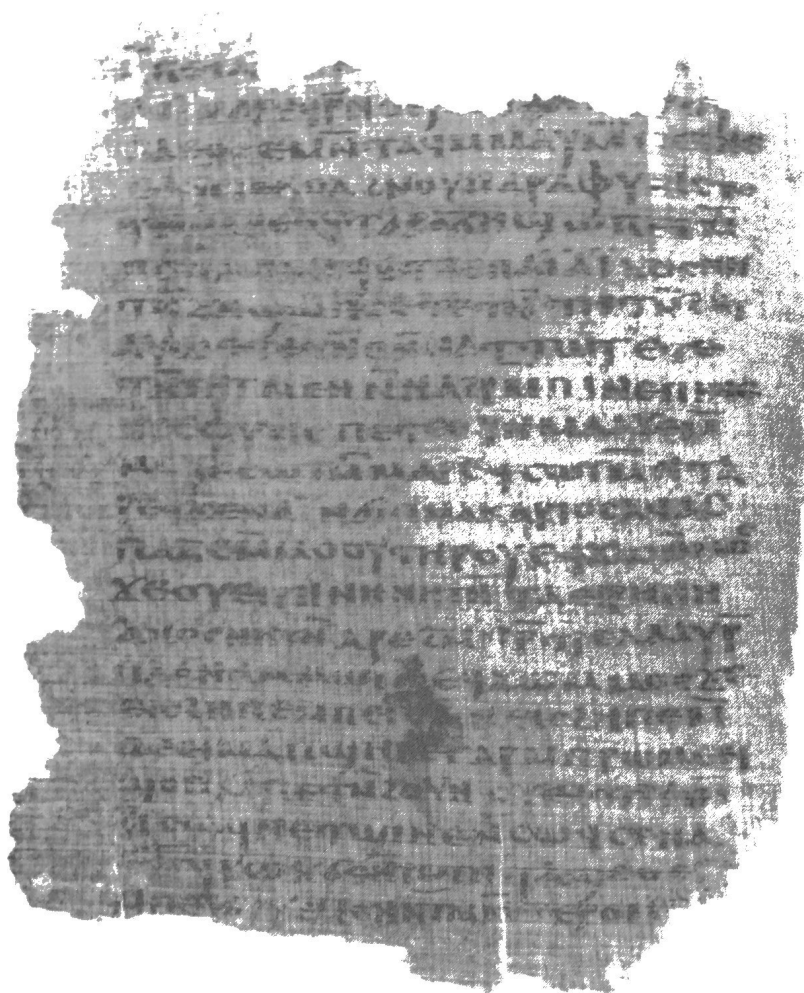
¹²[We] should announce [the] good n[e]ws as [the] Savior sai[d], ¹³and not be la[y]ing down any rules or maki[n]g laws."

¹⁴After he had said [the]se things, Le[vi] le[ft] (and) began to anno[unce] the good ne]ws.

¹⁵[The Gospel according to Mary]



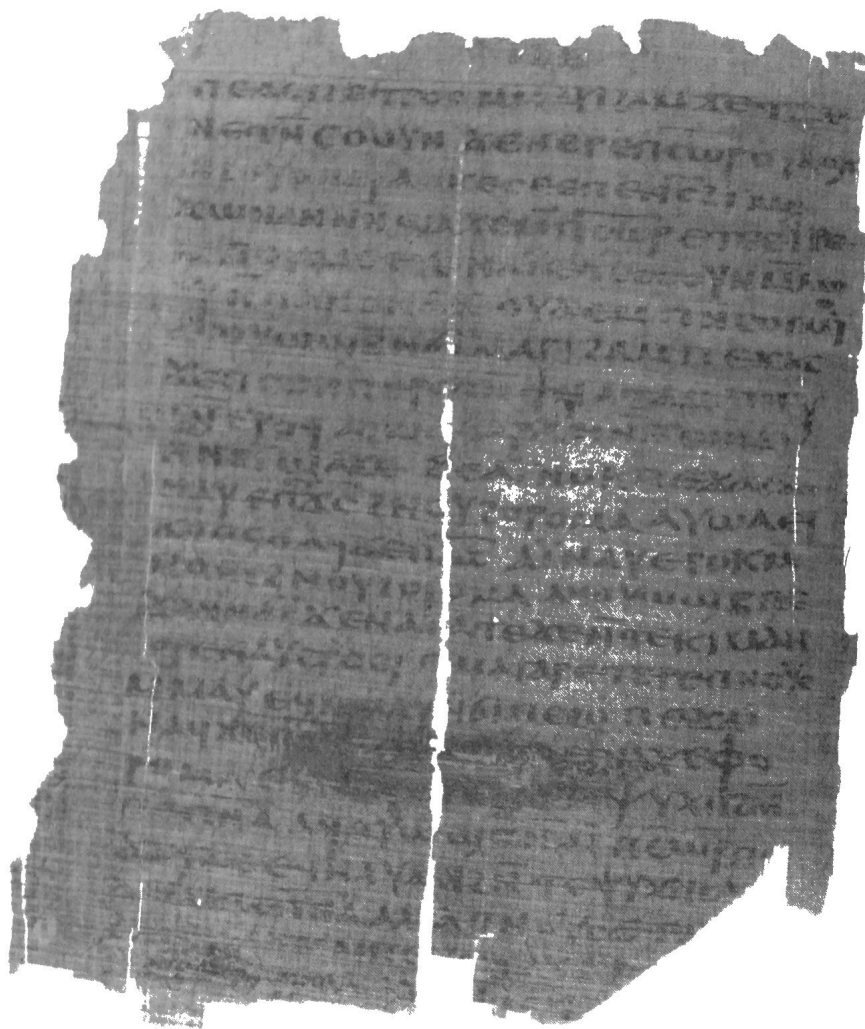
Page 7 of the *Gospel of Mary* from the Berlin Codex. Ägyptisches Museum u. Papyrussammlung SMB Inv.-Nr. P8502. Foto: Margarete Büsing. Used by permission.



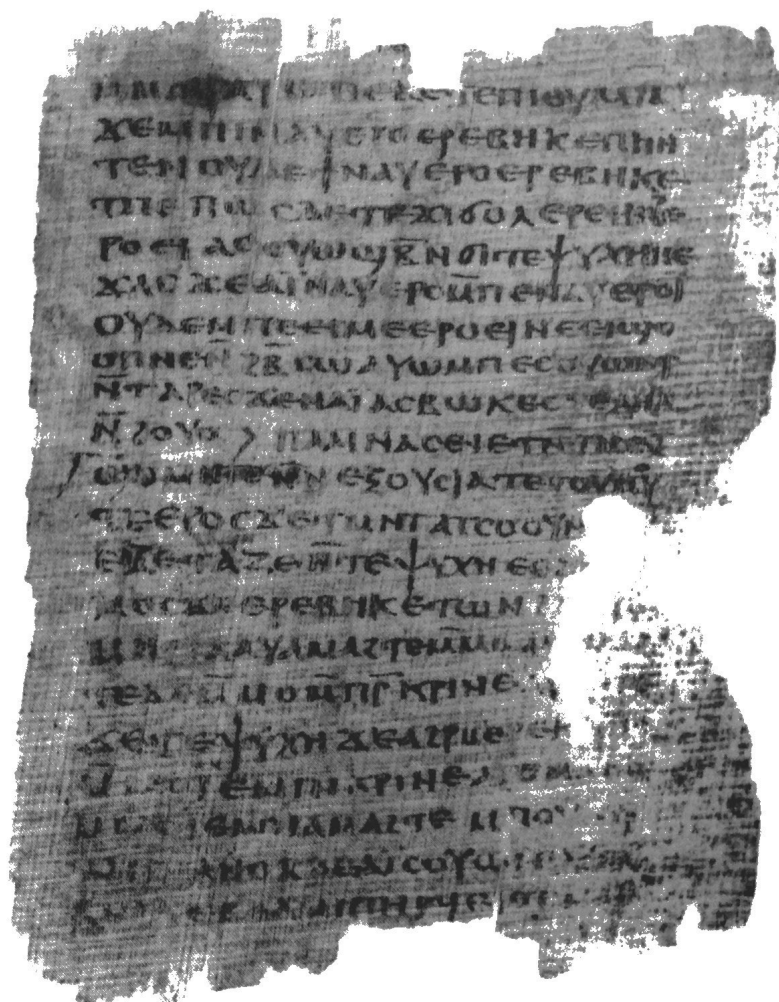
Page 8 of the *Gospel of Mary* from the Berlin Codex. Ägyptisches Museum u. Papyrussammlung SMB Inv.-Nr. P8502. Foto: Margarete Büsing. Used by permission.



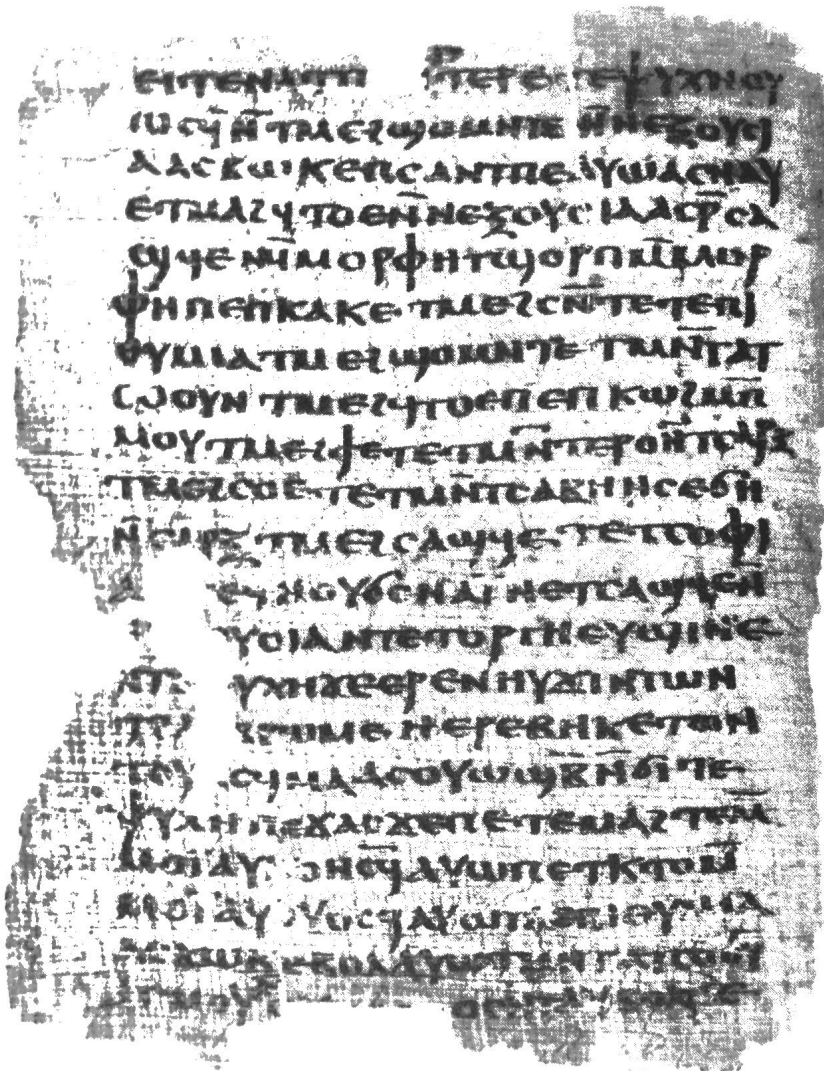
Page 9 of the *Gospel of Mary* from the Berlin Codex P8502. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz Musterabzug für die Fotoabteilung. Foto: Karin Marz. Used by permission.



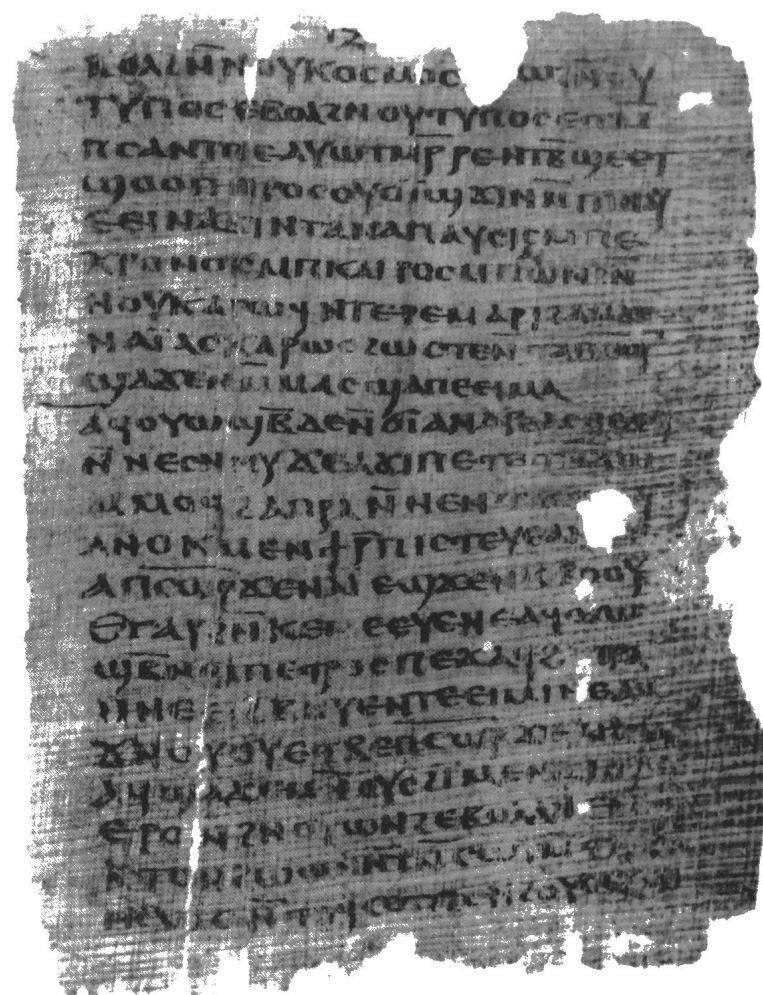
Page 10 of the *Gospel of Mary* from the Berlin Codex P8502.
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz
Musterabzug für die Fotoabteilung. Foto: Karin Marz. Used by
permission.



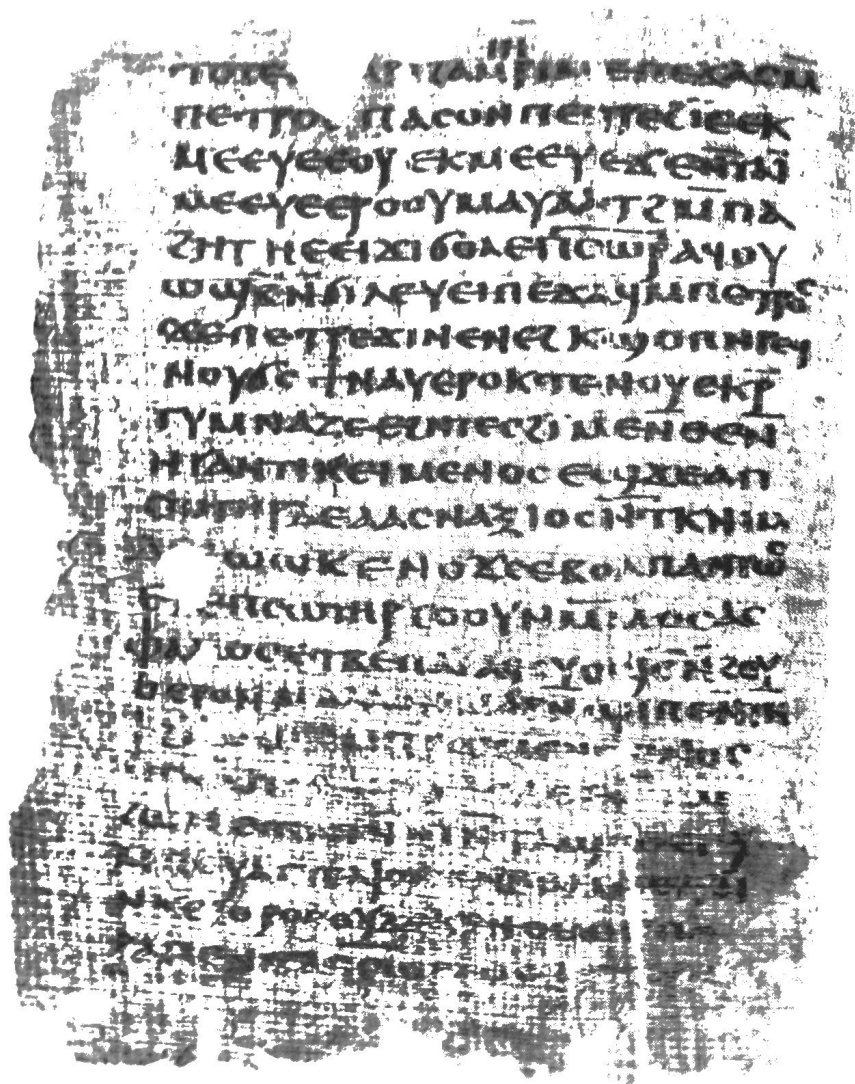
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Museum u. Papyrussammlung SMB Inv.-Nr. P8502. Foto:
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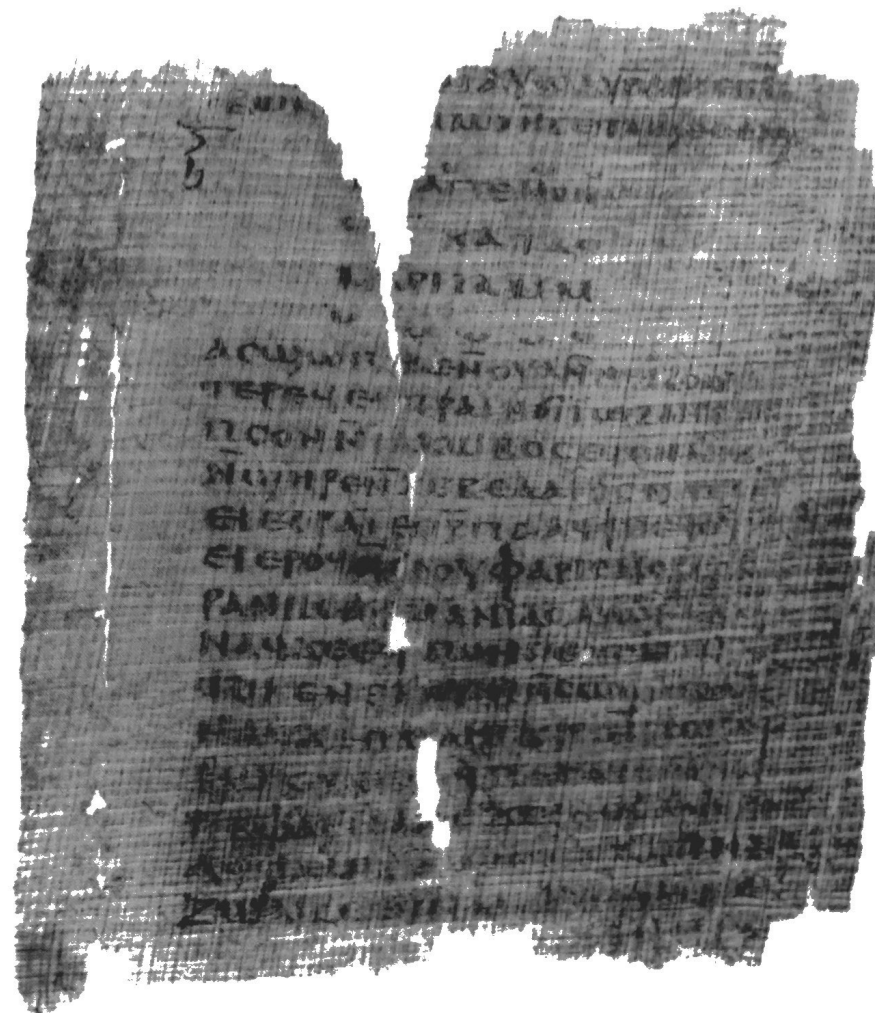
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