

Chapter nine: Last chance for change

Because handwriting is characteristic, it is possible to identify as separate individuals the scribes and correctors who worked on Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Vaticanus and other ancient manuscripts. Although it was often customary to sign off a complete piece of work, with a distinctive decorative flourish (coronis), the scribes rarely gave their names. So now these scribes, although separately identified, are differentiated in textual analysis through numbers and lettering.

Four scribes were initially identified as having worked on scribes Sinaiticus. But it transpired that Tischendorf had been misled, by the distinctive format of the poetical works of the Old Testament, into thinking that these were the work of a separate scribe. So, there was in fact no scribe C.

Two scribes, A and D operated together in tandem, on the bulk of the Old Testament, while a third scribe, B, copied out some of the prophetic books and the Shepherd of Hermas (now non-canonical) at the end of the New Testament. In the New Testament, scribe A did almost the whole of the work, with occasional interventions by scribe D.

This latter scribe sometimes corrected the work of other scribes, contributed three whole leaves (bifolia) within the work of scribe A and, towards the end, began to copy out Revelation, breaking off after only five verses.

I will keep with the existing form of identification, but these scribes would have had personal names. (If you like, you can think of them in this way, maybe as Andrew, Barnabas and Dominic. The first corrector, the scriptorium corrector or diorthotes, denoted as Ca, we could humanise as Cyrenius).

You may find it helpful to get a sense of the manuscript by having a look at Codex Sinaiticus online. There is also more detail and some helpful diagrams in the last four chapters of *The Invention of Jesus*.

In the Old Testament, scribes A and B often worked simultaneously on different parts of the text, each taking on whole books or separate parts of books. This would have been a way of speeding up production, the process also being helped through the work of the scriptorium corrector Ca following on behind. It involved a calculation, by the scribe going on ahead (similar to 'casting off' in publishing) of how much space to leave for the other scribe to complete his part of the task. This often worked out well. But, in the division of labour between Judith and 1 Maccabees, scribe A, in going on ahead, allowed too much space for scribe D to complete the work of copying out Judith.

Despite making strenuous efforts, by cutting the number of lines in a column and decreasing the number of characters in a line, scribe D still ended up well short. This produced the oddity of a blank column on a new page before the start of the next book, 1 Maccabees, something found nowhere else in the manuscript.

The opposite problem, not leaving enough space, occurred in the changeover from 4 Maccabees. This time it was scribe B who went on ahead, to start Isaiah at the beginning of a new quire. Scribe A and scribe D, who divided up 4 Maccabees between them, now needed to get

this book within a single quire. But there was unfortunately too much material. It was only by adding lines, extending the standard length from 48 to 50 or 51 lines, that this objective was achieved.

In the New Testament, as already noted, scribe A did the bulk of the work. But there are, especially in the light of the consequent adjustments that had to be made, some truly unique and baffling interventions within this scribe's work by scribe D. On three occasions, scribe D took over to write just a single bifolium. Two of these sheets involved separated text, one within Matthew and the other involving 1 Thessalonians and Hebrews. The third was an inner sheet within a quire, encompassing the last part of Mark and the beginning of Luke.

In the first two cases, scribe A had twice to calculate how much text to leave and how far to go on. In the case of the inner quire, this tricky calculation had to be made just once. This would have been, on all three occasions, a way of working which was inconvenient, time consuming and prone to miscalculation. This is without, for such a relatively small amount of text, any compensating gain in terms of speed of production. This was not therefore simply an extension of the cooperative pattern evident in the Old Testament. So, why it was decided that scribe A should three times have handed his work to scribe D for just one sheet?

On the inner folios of the Mark-Luke bifolium, Milne and Street noted that was an exceptional stretching out of the text from Mark 15, 16 – 16, 8. While the average number of characters per column in Sinaiticus is about 625 over 48 lines (giving an average line length of 13 characters), the last five full columns of Mark are substantially below this, at between 566 and 598 characters. By contrast, there are six successive columns of over 670 characters at the beginning of Luke. Milne and Skeat suggested that scribe A had accidentally repeated an immense amount of text in Luke, an error of dittography, and that scribe D subsequently redid the sheet to remedy this.

They surmised that Luke, in scribe A's hypothesised first effort, had begun (as was usual for a new book) at the top of a column but that this was, in this instance, the previous column to the one begun by scribe D. Scribe D now had to deal with the issue of having too much space for the bifolium, once the repeated text was removed.

Rather than stretch out Luke from the point at which scribe A (hypothetically) had started this book, they surmised also that scribe D decided to make Luke start at the top of the next column, squeezing into the remainder of the text what was left from the previous column. Mark had consequently to be stretched out into the column vacated from Luke, to avoid leaving a whole column blank. This would, in theory, account for both the stretching out of text in the last verses of Mark and then the compression in Luke.

There are a number of drawbacks to this explanation, which postulates a correction sheet by scribe D rather an alternation of work. In the first place, it would entail a dittography of around 18 lines, far exceeding any other such error in the New Testament, so amounting to an uncharacteristic, major scribal failure for which there is no direct evidence. Secondly, it leaves unexplained an unusual and substantial compression of text on the last column of the first page of the bifolium, which is crammed with 708 characters, just before scribe D went on to stretch out the text of Mark.

Thirdly, throughout the text, dittographies, large and small, were dealt with by placing dots over the repeated characters. There is no reason why a repetition in Luke, if it had occurred,

could not have been dealt with by this means. It would have been a clear and simple remedy, avoiding a considerable amount of extra effort and expense.

It is also, fourthly, odd to postulate a hypothetical problem in Luke when, actually there was at the time a known problem with the authenticity of longer or shorter endings of Mark beyond verse 16, 8 where the women flee from an empty tomb. Both Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus end the gospel at this verse. The changes from compression to stretching out of text may well indicate that the scribes were grappling with this issue.

The three sheets interrupting scribe A's work have characteristics indicating a common cause. All three are instances of one particular scribe taking over the work of another scribe, unusually for just one sheet. All three are associated with highly unusual, large-scale compression of text. In all three cases, there is compression in both halves of the bifolium.

The theory of these sheets as 'correction sheets', to remedy putative huge errors by scribe A, only works if these were errors of omission, which would otherwise have required the insertion of very large corrections, for which there would have been insufficient space in the margins. Such errors are out of keeping with the errors of omission that can be identified by scribe A in the New Testament, mostly of a few characters or lines and only rarely extending to several lines.

Crucially, the compression, which is supposed to identify them, occurs in *both halves* of the two sheets which are so positioned as to have separated text. There is major compression in the first page of I Thessalonians by scribe D which, against the average column length, amounts to 18 lines. On the other folio of this sheet by the same scribe, covering part of Hebrews, there is compression amounting to about 28 lines. If this were the outcome of scribe D putting back text omitted in major blunders by scribe A, then it has to be supposed that scribe A made an uncharacteristic, massive error of omission in one folio. Then, it must be supposed that he went on and later did exactly the same in another folio which, by pure chance, just happened to be part of the same bifolium!

There is similarly, in the Matthew sheet by scribe D, compression in both halves, even though on not such a large scale – text amounting to 10 more lines squeezed into the first folio and 7 more lines in the second. We have to presume that scribe A made a significant error in the first folio and then again in the second folio, which once again by pure chance happened to be part of the same bifolium.

This is too improbable to be taken seriously, especially for postulated errors of omission on so large a scale that they are not found elsewhere in the manuscript. The theory of scribe D's contributions as correction sheets does not fit with the facts. Furthermore, as will be seen, there are a number of indications that scribe A was aware, at the time that he was writing, of the input made or about to be made by scribe D. This would not, of course, have been the case if scribe D had later merely been correcting unanticipated mistakes.

As earlier noted, the interventions by scribe D do not fit the pattern of cooperation in the Old Testament, whereby the scribes worked different portions of the text simultaneously. This would have speeded up production, while also leading to the need to compress or extend text, as a result of spacing miscalculations. Doing this for just a single sheet would have cost more time than it might have saved. It would moreover have been necessary, for the separated sheets within a quire, for scribe A to hang on to the blank sheet, until he had also finished his

work immediately before and after the second blank folio, so as to provide all the cues that scribe D needed.

For the reasons already given, it can be concluded that there was no simultaneous working and so there was no apparent gain for what was evidently a lot of pain. Scribe D will have worked on the quire after scribe A had finished his work, less a blank sheet.

The major compressions of text, and in the case of the end of Mark also substantial stretching out of text, do however fit with what is found from the pattern of cooperation in the Old Testament. The scribes often made mistakes in allowing space to alternate their work, as now also appears to have been the case for the sheets in the New Testament written by scribe D. If, as this all suggests, the scribes were alternating their work but without saving time, just what was the point of a such a cumbersome arrangement for three single sheets?

It is hard to see a possible reason, other than that these were sheets introduced for the purpose of making significant changes to the text from which scribe A was working. This would square with the situation in which Codex Sinaiticus was produced, just after a situation in which the Romans had switched from persecution and then toleration of Christians to one of active patronage and support under the Emperor Constantine. There was now, as there never had been before, an opportunity to get the Christian message to the four corners of the Empire. It had to be the message that the Church wanted, both doctrinally correct and politically expedient.

There would be no second chance, once hundreds and then thousands of copies of the bible, specifically of the New Testament, were in circulation. There was pressure to get the job done quickly both to satisfy demand and to establish an authorised version. Codex Sinaiticus, as a master copy, was on the evidence created to meet these objectives. The general method of production, involving the scribes working swiftly and in cooperation with the scriptorium corrector following on, was designed to optimise both speed and accuracy.

Appearance mattered less, since the bible was not intended for daily use or display, but rather as a reference work. It did not matter much that Ca ended up making thousands of visible alterations, many of which were to remedy mistakes made by the scribes.

This would not, however, have applied to any changes introduced where the criterion was Church policy as opposed to provenance. There were three points at which, I suggest, significant variations were perceived to be needed to the exemplar on which scribe A was working. But allowing scribe A to continue on his way, copying from his exemplar, and then 'correcting' this afterwards, would only have created a record that drew attention to what had been changed. It would seem, I suggest also, that scribe A might have had reservations about making changes, with little apparent justification, to what he was using as his best source.

This is a theory that least accounts for the mechanics of what happened. It is hard to find anything else that works better. The theory challenges the presumption that early Christian writers and editors did not make doctrinal alterations to the text.

Let us start at the beginning, with scribe A embarking on his task of copying out most of the New Testament. The bible was being produced generally in quires of four sheets, each making sixteen pages. To avoid smudging, the scribe might well have written the first, right hand page, allowed a short time for it to dry and then continued on the other side. He left the next

folio of the double sheet, for the time being, blank. He stacked and turned the sheets as he worked. until he reached the middle sheet, when he continued writing through to the next folio and then reversed the process.

Scribe A was working not long after the Council at Nicaea had been convened by the Emperor Constantine in CE 325 to get the Church administrators (episcopoi) to agree on doctrine. The master copy was probably initiated as part of a wider effort, following a more limited request by the Emperor in CE 332 for copies of the scriptures for churches in his new capital (Constantinople).

While writing in the mid fourth century, scribe A would have been using an exemplar for Mark and Matthew, probably from as early as the second century. During the time that had passed, the Greek language had begun to change, with some movement towards shorter vowels to replace longer vowels and diphthongs. This process, known as iotacism, will have meant that the colloquial spelling (and thus likely pronunciation) of the scribes differed from that of the source. Scribe D was rather better than scribe A at keeping to the text. The patterns of deviation for these scribes were generally consistent, and hence characteristic, throughout the whole of the Old and New Testaments.

Scribe A had either chosen, or been instructed, to use an early source. There are some features indicating that the exemplar was indeed very ancient. The opening verse of Mark has, ‘The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ’, as can be found in quotations by patristic (Church) sources from the second and third centuries. From the fourth century onwards, manuscripts have tended to have the words, ‘son of God’, added, in conformity with what had become Church doctrine.

It is unlikely that scribe A would have accidentally omitted such an important phrase (subsequently added in by a corrector) in the opening of Mark. It is more probable that it was simply not there in his exemplar.

Another indication of antiquity is the description, allowing for an accidental harmonisation of ‘mother’ to ‘Mary’, of the women present at the cross, towards the end of Matthew. These are given as ‘Mary the () of James and the Mary the () of Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee’. This version has some resonance with an Old Syriac text, and was extensively changed by the scriptorium corrector.

The common, and also parallel, features of the four gospel accounts suggest that the original story teller, and source for Mark, had in his narrative placed at the cross three women he considered significant in Jesus’ life. These would have been his mother, who was also the mother of three brothers (James, Simon and Judas), his mother’s sister (married to Zebedee and apparently named Salome) and another woman also named Mary. Among the four named children of Mary, Joses/Joseph appears in slightly amended form appears to represent Jesus. Hence, Mary the () of Joseph may have been, one step back, Mary () of Jesus and, since his mother is already accounted for, Mary the wife of Jesus, apparently titled Magdalene.

I am putting this forward, not in order to suggest what may be historically accurate (very little, if any of it, is historically accurate – see chapter 11) but to highlight an implication, contentious for Christians from the second century onwards, that the rebel Jesus was married. It is to suggest that any version that carried such an implication, appropriate for a Jewish man but sitting uneasily with second century Christian perception, would have been suppressed.

The material from scribe A's exemplar was altered by Ca to remove the offending association and was, in this context, of relatively great antiquity.

There were altogether three points in the New Testament at which the work of scribe A was interrupted. In each case, this was through a whole sheet written by scribe D. In each case, the alternation is associated with a highly contentious passage. In each case, there are indications that scribe A miscalculated in allowing text for scribe D to fill the space. There are also some uncharacteristic scribal errors highlighting scribe A's possible awareness at the time of what was happening.

The work of copying out the whole of the New Testament began with the gospel of Matthew. The first quire, written by scribe A, started uneventfully. But, as the end of the quire approached, scribe A began to make more and more mistakes of iotacism (or reversions to his own colloquial use). The levels in the last three folios are exceptionally high, as they continued to be in first folio of the next quire before scribe D took over.

This continued for all the following folios by scribe A until scribe D intervened once again, for the second part of his bifolium, and then continued for the last folio of the quire. Scribe A's patterns of iotacism thereafter reverted to normal.

The scribe's reduced inability to conform to his exemplar indicates that he was distracted, and possibly also agitated. He had to cope with a novel situation, while continuing with his work, of having twice to make calculations of how much text to leave for his fellow scribe within a single quire. Just how distracted he was is indicated by the fact that in each case, before the folios left for scribe D to do, scribe A unusually made a major omission right at the bottom of the page.

Scribe A also failed to sign off Matthew, with his customary decorative coronis, as the last scribe working on a chapter customarily did. It was left to someone else, possibly the scriptorium corrector to do that. That may be because the chapter was unfinished, when scribe A reached the end of Matthew. The blank sheet, together with notes of where to start and where to leave off, had in the meantime been passed to scribe D.

By the time this sheet did come back, the scribes had worked through from Mark into Luke, putting in the marginal references for the Eusebian canon tables. At which point, the exercise was abandoned, it is highly likely because it had been decided after all to leave the canon tables out. There was therefore no reason to do anything for scribe D's sheet and this is why on this sheet the marginal references are missing.

There is then strong evidence that scribe A was aware that his work was going to be taken over by scribe D and that he calculated for the space needed, leaving blank an inner bifolium. In the event, scribe A both times went on too far in the exemplar, leaving scribe D with too much text to fit into his allocated space and consequently the need to compress his text.

It may be that scribe A's agitation was solely a product of the difficulty of the exercise and the extra work involved. It could be that he was also concerned about possible changes to the text that lacked due provenance. Hence, it may be said, the need to bring in another scribe.

What was, in the case of Matthew, the contentious passage? It may, I suggest, have been the verses in which Jesus is given to make Simon (called Peter) the head of his new Church.

There is no equivalent passage for this in Mark, from which the author of Matthew copied extensively. Nor, is it in Luke. There are some patristic references to the passage in Matthew. The evidence is, however, that scribe A's exemplar was very early, predating these references.

The two verses, bestowing authority on Simon, may have been added in at some later point in time as an interpolation and therefore have been lacking in scribe A's exemplar.

The second intervention by scribe D occurred mid-quire, covering the end of Mark and the transition to Luke. There are no unusual errors to suggest that scribe A may have been under additional stress here at this point of handover. But he had only one calculation to make, in terms of how much text to leave for scribe D to write a whole bifolium.

This was nonetheless a crucial part of the narrative, covering the last part of Mark, up to the point at which the women flee in shock and amazement. This is after they have been told by a messenger, posted at the tomb, that Jesus had gone on to Galilee. Both Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus terminate Mark at this point.

It would seem that the plan was for scribe D to insert a longer ending, perhaps consisting of twelve additional verses in circulation at the time, though even then regarded as inauthentic. With this objective in mind, he began to make space by compressing text in the last column of the first page of his bifolium. Instead of around the average of 625 characters, there are 708 characters in this column, representing a saving of 6 or 7 lines.

But then on the verso, that is on the next page, there was an abrupt change. Scribe D switched to stretching his text substantially, such that the last five full columns of Mark in the inner pages of the bifolium are substantially below average, at between 566 and 598 characters. By this means, the scribe extended his use of space by 15 lines and managed to take his text into a new column.

What could explain the change of tactic? In the first place, the presumed initial plan of adding text must have been abandoned because what there is in the text now is the truncated version of Mark. The compression by scribe D in the last page of the first column of his bifolium accords with a plan to save space to allow for the substitution of the longer ending of Mark for whatever was in scribe A's exemplar. The subsequent stretching of text is consistent with a new plan, both to compensate for this and also to allow for space generated by having no ending in place of what was in scribe A's exemplar.

Scribe A, in allocating text to his fellow scribe, and scribe D in making his plans, may however have both failed to take account of the extra space taken up by virtue of beginning a new chapter at the head of a column. As a consequence, and notwithstanding all the efforts that were made, text at the beginning of Luke had also to be compressed.

The third sheet by scribe D consists of the separated folios three and six of a quire, taking in the end of I Thessalonians in the first folio and part of Hebrews in the second. At the end of the last page prior to the first folio of this sheet, there is a very substantial repetition of text (dittography) by scribe A, amounting to 128 characters and ten lines of text.

On the face of it, this was a simple mistake based on a key phrase, 'of God' which the scribe's eye went back to, on encountering it a second time, so repeating a large block of text. As in the case of the two errors framing the folios of scribe D's sheet in Matthew, the significance

of this may be in pointing to scribe A's preoccupation and inattention. Once again, he was having to make major calculations in allocating text for a separated bifolium to be written by another scribe.

But, is there more to it than that? This is another instance where there is some unusual extension of text. Having just completed Colossians, scribe A began I Thessalonians on the page prior to scribe D taking over for a single bifolium. Scribe A began to stretch out his text over the first three columns, with first 613, then 607 and then 589 characters which would overall have extended his text, against the average, by about 5 lines.

The dittography in the last column is unusual, not just in its positioning just before scribe D's work, but in its extent, at 128 characters by far exceeding the few other examples that occur in Codex Sinaiticus. This repetition alone had the effect of stretching out the text by a further ten lines.

Assuming, as in other examples, that the purpose was, at least for the first three columns, to extend the text to fill an allocation of space, the next question is what was there going to be in the copy which would otherwise have been written by scribe A. Was there anything so contentious as to justify a concerted and convoluted effort to ensure that scribe D would deal with it?

There was, indeed. This was the accusation, attributed to Paul in writing to his ekklesia in Thessalonica, that it was not the Romans, but the Jews who had killed Jesus. Paul is given to suggest that they were suffering persecution, just as Paul and his followers had 'from the Jews who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets and persecuted us'.

Paul was a contemporary and educated enough to know that only the Romans could carry out executions and that the outrageous slur on the Jews, as God killers, was unjustified. This suggests in turn that the offending phrase, in 1 Thessalonians 2,15, was a later interpolation and would not have been present in scribe A's exemplar.

Looking at this once again from scribe A's point of view, his objective was to eke out his text so that the 'God killers passage', if introduced, would be in Scribe D's bifolium. Scribe A made strenuous efforts in the first three of his columns, but then realised that he would have to stretch his text substantially in the last column such that it extended to only about 520 characters. This would have been so thin as to make the column really stand out.

What came to the rescue was the dittography, which provided an extra ten lines and ensured that the passage would just, by three lines, scrape into the next bifolium. In the circumstances, this must have been more than just a fortunate accident. A dittography on such an unprecedented scale, unusually just before scribe D's work, in the nick of time resolving scribe A's difficulty, making the offending text fall within scribe D's remit, has in all probability to have been intended. Scribe A, I suggest, consciously contrived it.

Codex Sinaiticus was commissioned by a Church in Rome under Roman patronage. Most probably, the scribes were instructed to use their earliest and thereby most authentic sources. Their work must have been monitored because this complete bible was to be a master copy, used to produce new copies and to be a reference to resolve any future textual disagreements.

There were a few points where considerations of doctrine or political expediency were overriding. One of these was to affirm the divinity of Jesus, which is why one very small though significant change was introduced to the beginning of Mark. This was to describe Jesus as 'son of God'.

It was considered important also to introduce what would be an apostolic succession, with Simon (called Peter) personally authorised by Jesus as the first head of a Christian Church. This is not in Mark. There was no such Church in the lifetime of the rebel Jesus.

It is my view that the two verses assigning future authority to Simon Peter, originated later than when the version of Matthew, available in scribe A's exemplar, was written. Scribe D was delegated to fix this. There may also originally have been a more naturalistic description of the meeting between Jesus and some of his followers on a high mountain. Scribe D may also have introduced modifications to this. Changes in style and content indicate that Scribe A may, for the same reason, have subsequently switched exemplars at the beginning of Mark's version of the transfiguration.

In working from his more recent exemplar, scribe D also introduced in his second folio the familiar version of the women at the cross in Mark. It became, by this means, consistent with what the scriptorium corrector Ca had secured through an extensive alteration in Matthew. These combined efforts eliminated the last traces of a description of two women called Mary, related to Jesus in different ways.

Another objective was to establish that Jesus was resurrected from the dead, even though the texts available did not provide much support for this. A second scribe, our scribe D, was brought in to try to remedy the lack of an authentic ending to Mark's gospel, which should have described this. Space was saved to accommodate the twelve verses comprising the known longer ending, or something like it. But then this plan was also abandoned, perhaps because it was reluctantly recognised that this longer ending was defective. The gospel of Mark was left cut short in Sinaiticus and in its copy, Codex Vaticanus.

The effort to get the resurrection story right was therefore not entirely a success. It may be that, in the context of Church doctrine, a blank space was seen as better than whatever had been in Mark's early exemplar.

The final crucial matter, dealt with through scribe D's three sheets, was the establishment of responsibility for the death of Jesus. It was in fact the Romans who crucified a messianic Jewish rebel (and botched the operation, according to an underlying narrative). But the Romans were now the Church's sponsors and so the blame had necessarily to be shifted to the Jews. This achieved through an aside added to one of Paul's letters, that the Jews had killed the 'Lord Jesus', something that Paul would have known was not and could not have been the case.

We have three highly unusual switches of scribe, so cumbersome to organise that these must have been the product of a compelling motivation. In each case, it was evidently to introduce changes in the text, from a more original exemplar, which were in accordance with the Church's imperatives. These were to absolve their patrons, establish an authorised first leader to head a line of succession and generate a miraculous resurrection.

One scribe (D) was deployed to do this. Another scribe (A) was under instruction to make way, where necessary. While it is hard to deduce personal characteristics for each of the scribes, there is reason to believe that scribe A knew his way around the exemplars. Sitting and writing for long hours (likely on a hard bench in a draughty scriptorium!), it is fair to say that he must also have been hard working. He was subjected to considerable stress and creative in resolving his issues. He was resilient. He got through it.

In this chapter, there has been an examination of the ways scribes in the fourth century were deployed to rework sources to provide an authoritative version of the Christian message, in accordance with Church doctrine at the time. In earlier chapters, we looked at how Mark used his sources, particular letters attributed to Paul/Saul, to fashion his narrative almost three centuries beforehand.

These letters, though quite likely subsequently edited over the centuries, provide an account which is earlier than Mark and helps in understanding how what is in Mark came about. The evidence provided by Paul, being earlier, carries more weight in deciding which should be relied in in deciding points of difference. We demonstrated that Mark made mistakes in interpreting the Greek, one of which was erroneously to read a family title, used by Paul in referencing one or more characters, as instead deriving from an Aramaic word for 'stone'.

Paul, though early in his writings, was not a commentator on what may have been the historical events possibly involving this Simon, a rebel leader Jesus and a priestly family with the title Cephas/Caiphaz.

Before taking our time machine back for one more journey back to this time, we should consider whether there is anything even earlier than Paul which might help.

That is a tall order. Just a few lines have however come to light, not in parchment or papyrus ... but (not without irony, seen in retrospect) written in stone.