A Homily on the Life of Jesus and His Love for the Apostles
A new translation and introduction

by Timothy Pettipiece

The text presented here (Hom. Life Jesus; CANT 81; CPC 0150) was once commonly known as the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles. This misleading title has often obscured the fact that the text is actually a homiletic discourse belonging to a well-established genre of Coptic monastic literature. Homiletic "cycles" were commonplace in late-antique Egyptian Christian contexts, particularly those attributed to prominent eastern bishops such as Athanasius, Cyril, Theophilus, John Chrysostom, and Basil. Two are attributed to Evodius of Rome, a first-century disciple of the apostle Peter, and some scholars have argued that Hom. Life Jesus was composed by the same author. As a result, the text sometimes goes by the title On the Passion and the Resurrection 2—as distinguished from On the Passion and the Resurrection 1 (CPC 0149)—which is, indeed, attributed to Evodius.1 Although homiletic in nature, such works do contain interesting apocryphal elements and should be considered alongside other examples of apocryphal literature and are particularly relevant for forming an understanding of the late reception of noncanonical traditions.

Contents

The beginning of the text is not preserved, but the surviving portion begins with the homilist exhorting to his "brothers" (no doubt fellow monks) about the love of Jesus for his followers, using various New Testament proof texts for illustration (chap. 1). Then the homilist furthers his argument by evoking the canonical episode of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes (from Mark 6 and 8 par., and John 6; chap. 2). The story is amplified with emphasis placed on the young man who brought the items to the gathering. Although several lines from this portion of the text are missing, Jesus is said to have demonstrated his love for his apostles by hiding nothing and revealing "all the works of his divinity" to them (3).

Jesus' willingness to reveal everything to his apostles is then highlighted in what follows, with an inquiry from Thomas for a sign of the resurrection that awaits the faithful (4). Here too a canonical episode, the raising of Lazarus (John 11), is used for illustrative purposes, though amplified with minute and sometimes grotesque details (5–7). In this context, Mary and Martha appear as Lazarus gives a testimony to his experience of the underworld, which involved an encounter with none other than Adam himself (8). This portion bears a number of similarities with other

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1. On this text see the entry on a Homily on the Passion and Resurrection by Dylan M. Burns on pp. 41–86 in this volume.
noncanonical “Harrowing of Hell” texts, such as the Questions of Bartholomew, the Book of Bartholomew, and the Acts of Pilate.

The homilist’s narrative then shifts away from Jesus’ revelatory power and focuses on attempts by imperial officials to crown Jesus king of Judea. In particular, an envoy of the emperor Tiberius, named Carios, is said to have championed Jesus’ coronation, much to King Herod’s frustration (9–10). Remarkably, even Pontius Pilate is claimed to have been a supporter of Jesus (16:1). Fleeing this unwanted attention, Jesus then retreats to the desert with his disciples where there is a long passage highlighting the preeminence of “Abba Peter” as prince of the apostles (12–15). Here too a canonical episode (Matt 16) receives extensive amplification. The other apostles are also given special promises but a large lacuna obscures the details (13:1).

After the spotlight shifts from Peter, further attempts are made to crown Jesus (16), culminating in a remarkable encounter between Jesus and the apostles with the devil and his fishing demons (17). John boldly confronts Satan and challenges him to a fishing contest in the desert. What results is the adversary’s inevitable humiliation before the text once again breaks off following a request from Bartholomew to see the adversary (18).

Manuscripts and Versions

Hom. Life Jesus first appeared in Eugène Revillout’s 1896 collection of Coptic fragmentary manuscripts he believed were witnesses to apocryphal texts. He published three large fragments housed in the Vatican Library. Ignazio Guidi republished the manuscripts a year later along with two leaves from Oxford. The body of evidence was supplemented further when Revillout revisited the text in 1904. He brought together sixteen fragments, including the Vatican and Oxford texts, in a reconstruction of what he called the “Gospel of the Twelve.” Revillout’s reconstruction has not been taken seriously in scholarship, and several of the newly published fragments are believed now to belong to other texts; nevertheless, it did feature, for the first time, a number of manuscripts from Paris. Of these fragments, Pierre Lacau published, also in 1904, the ones now confidently believed to belong to Hom. Life Jesus and assigned the evidence, for the first time, to three separate manuscripts with the sigla A, B, and C. Additional, smaller fragments appeared in subsequent years in publications by Walter Crum, Enzo Lucchesi, and Alin Suciu.

The three Hom. Life Jesus manuscripts, all dated ca. tenth century, once belonged to the library of the White Monastery (Dayr Anbā Shinūda) and are now dispersed among various European collections. These manuscripts are here identified following the convention established by Lacau and supplemented with subsequent discoveries by Morard:

5. Lacau, Fragments d’apocryphes coptes.
7. Lacau, Fragments d’apocryphes coptes, 80–81.
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A: White Monastery manuscript MONB.DH

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B: White Monastery manuscript MONB.MY

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11. Identified by Tito Orlandi; see Morard, “Homélie sur la vie de Jésus,” 108; and published by Lucchesi, “Un évangelie apocryphe imaginaire.”
12. Identified as part of the same folio, and all four assembled for viewing, by Suciu, “Apocryphal Fragment.”
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C: White Monastery manuscript MONB.MT

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Additional pages from all three manuscripts have been identified by Alin Suciu, but some of these have not yet been published. It remains to be determined whether they belong to Hom. Life Jesus or two other texts that precede and follow it in at least two of the three codices: an encomium on the patriarch Abraham and a homily to the apostles on the Final Judgment.

Literary Aspects

Since the text is fragmentary, it is difficult to evaluate the overall literary structure. Nonetheless, the narrative portions of the surviving text are framed within its larger homiletic context and as such are primarily used for exhortation and edification. The missing portions of the introduction to the text likely provided the identity of the homilist and perhaps an occasion for delivering the homily, such as the establishment of commemoration of a particular festival. The portion of the introduction that does remain (111–3) gives a sense of the homilist’s interest in praising the apostles and demonstrating that Jesus loved them; his voice breaks through the narrative shortly after (3:1) with a second statement about the Savior’s love of the apostles.

Unlike the contemporary pseudo-apostolic memoirs, the homilist does not claim to be passing on the contents of a lost apocryphal text. Instead he weaves together canonical and noncanonical stories that serve his interests. These stories include expanded versions of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes (Mark 6:34–44 par; Mark 8:1–10//Matt 15:32–39; John 6:5–13), the resurrection of Lazarus (John 11:1–44), and Peter’s confession at Caesarea Philippi (Matt 16:17–19). Along with the noncanonical traditions used in these expansions there are three new episodes: the effort by Carios to make Jesus king of Judea (inspired by John 6:15), the apostles’ encounter with the devil and his demons disguised as fishermen, and a truncated dialogue with Bartholomew, in which the apostle asks Jesus to reveal to him “the one ... you cast from the height of heaven.” The homily also has literary and thematic connections to other apocryphal works such as the Questions of Bartholomew, the Book of Bartholomew, the Acts of Pilate, the Lament of the Virgin, and the Martyrdom of Pilate.


\textsuperscript{23} On the identification of Hom. Life Jesus as an “apostolic memoir without a homiletic framework,” see Suciu, Berlin-Strasbourg Apocryphon, 6.
Certain features of this text clearly indicate its monastic context, such as the homilist's use of "brothers" to address his audience and the multiple references to Peter as "Abba" ( apa in Coptic)—an honorific title commonplace in monastic cultures. Moreover, as Jesus prays over the loaves and fishes, he asks the Father that "your Son be glorified in you and that those whom you have drawn to him from the world obey him" (25). This phrasing would seem to indicate the anaphoresis of the hearers into the monastic life. Similarly, Satan is said to be able to catch "fish" in the desert, some "by the eyes, others by the belly, still others by the lips" (17:11). In fact, the devil boasts, "It is no miracle to catch fish in the water. The miracle is to catch them in the desert" (17:10). These fish of the desert are clearly the monks to whom the homily is addressed. Moreover, the language used strongly evokes the theology of sin formulated by desert fathers such as Anthony of Egypt and Evagrius of Pontus. The text, then, is intended to illuminate aspects of its spiritual message in a liturgical/monastic context and does so by amplifying and embellishing aspects of the received canonical narrative already familiar to its audience.

Hom. Life Jesus also has some connection to traditions beyond the bounds of Christianity, such as the episode (17:15) in which John throws a stone at the devil. A similar motif is found in Invest. Mich. 11:10–18 and is well known in Islamic tradition as part of the hajj pilgrimage. This places the text on an even wider trajectory that ought to be more fully explored.

Language, Date, and Provenance

Hom. Life Jesus clearly belongs to the era of Coptic homiletic cycles of the fourth and fifth centuries CE—a formative period in early Egyptian monastic spirituality. As with other texts of this genre, Hom. Life Jesus likely was composed in Coptic. Tito Orlandi and Enzo Lucchesi have argued that the text belongs to a short cycle of texts attributed to Evodius of Rome. According to Eusebius, Evodius succeeded Peter as the first bishop of Antioch (Hist. eccl. 3.22) and in turn was succeeded by Ignatius. In Eastern Orthodox tradition he was martyred under Nero. The Coptic texts call him Bishop of Rome, not Antioch, and this may be due to a desire to attribute ideas to the Roman episcopate that are more conducive to Coptic theology than the pro-Nestorian "two natures" Christology promoted by Pope Leo and accepted by the Council of Chalcedon. The two texts that do bear an attribution to Evodius—Homily on the Passion and the Resurrection (CPC 0149) and Homily on the Dormition of the Virgin (CANT 133; CPC 151)—share with Hom. Life Jesus, in Alin Suciu's words, "numerous

25. On this genre, see Orlandi, "Cycles"; Morard, "Homélie sur la vie de Jésus," 103–4. For more detailed discussion see Suciu, Berlin-Strasbourg Apocryphon, 70–108 and the entries on several other texts in this genre included elsewhere in this volume: the Investiture of Michael (by Hugo Lundhaug), the Investiture of Gabriel (by Lance Jenott), the Book of Bartholomew (by Christian H. Bull and Alexandros Tsakos), a Homily on the Passion and Resurrection (by Dylan M. Burns), and a Homily on the Building of the First Church of the Virgin (by Paul C. Dilley).
28. For Hom. Pass. Res. see the entry by Dylan M. Burns on pages 41–86 in this volume. For a Homily on the Dormition of the Virgin, see Stephen Shoemaker, "The Sahidic Coptic Homily on the
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thematic parallels, verbatim expressions, and some rare words." The association of the text with Evodius of Rome finds some support in the prominence it gives to the apostle Peter. And it is perhaps telling that the author refers to Andrew as "the brother of my father Peter" (2:1). Nevertheless, there is no explicit evidence in the text to support this hypothesis, and even if the opening of the text was found, any attribution would be entirely fictional.

Translation

Until now, Hom. Life Jesus has not been translated into English, save for the few fragments that appear in Forbes Robinson's 1896 collection. The translation here is based on the manuscript fragments published by Crum, Guidi, Lacau, and Lucchesi, and arranged according to Morard's reconstruction of the text (including chapter and verse divisions). Page numbers from the Coptic manuscripts are indicated in parentheses. Quotations of Scripture, in most cases, have not been harmonized with the NRSV in an effort to preserve the particular readings of the Coptic text.

Bibliography

EDITIONS AND TRANSLATIONS


Morard, Françoise. "Homélie sur la vie de Jésus et son amour pour les apôtres." Pages 103–34 in EAC 2. (French introduction and translation of entire text.)


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STUDIES


A Homily on the Life of Jesus and His Love for the Apostles

MANUSCRIPT B

1 1[... ] (19) inextinguishable. 2You have seen, O my brothers, the abundance of honors that Christ gave to his apostles and these new names that made them worthy of great honor. Once he hailed them: “You are the salt that will salt the entire world.” Another time: “You are the sons of the bridal chamber”; another time: “You are all the sons of the Most High”; another time: “The one whom you love, I love”; another time: “the one whom you love, my father honors”; yet another time: “You are my brothers and friends.”

3You have seen, O my brothers, how the Savior loves his apostles: he promises them his kingdom. Each among them hears him say, “You will eat and drink with me at the table of my kingdom.” When he was on earth, he ate with them at the earthly table, (20) causing them to ponder the table of his celestial kingdom, because he had no care for the things of this world. If you want to know, listen, and I will teach you. Does not God love his apostles and all of you? Hear John the Evangelist bear witness. Christ prayed to his Father for them: “May they be one, as we are one.” You want to know the truth—he chose the twelve to follow him and gave them the name “apostle.”

Multiplication of the loaves

2 2Hear him calling them and saying, “I feel sorry for this crowd, for they have been with me four days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they get weak on the way.” Andrew, the brother of my father Peter, said to him, “Master, where will we find bread in this deserted place so that [... ]”

MANUSCRIPT A

[... lacuna of 5–6 lines ...]

2 2(22) Jesus said to Thomas, “Go to this man. He has in his possession five loaves of barley bread and two fish. Bring them to me.” Andrew said to him, “Master, these five loaves, what can they do for such a crowd?” Jesus said to him, “Bring them to me and they will be enough.”

3They went away and brought back the young man to Jesus and the young man worshipped him right away and handed him the loaves (23) and the two fish. The young man said to Jesus, “Master, I have endured much exhaustion
because of them." Jesus said to the young man, "Give me the five loaves that you have in your possession. For it is not you who has saved this crowd from want, but a providential arrangement by which you will see a marvelous thing, the memory of which will never disappear, along with food that will restore them."

4Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks over them, broke them and gave them to the apostles to give to the crowd. Judas was the last to receive the bread. Andrew said to Jesus, "Master, Judas did not receive his part of the bread when he came for the distribution to the crowd. You [...] that we might give [...]"

[... lacuna of 10–11 lines ...]

5a[...] (24) your word. For the one with whom I have not shared the bread of my hands, he is not worthy to share my flesh. Besides, he does not care to give to the poor, but cares only for the purse. In fact, it is a mystery [...] my father [...] for sharing my flesh." Right away [...] to them saying, "My Father, root of all goodness, I pray that you bless these five barley loaves, so that they might restore the whole crowd, that your Son be glorified in you and that those whom you have drawn to him from the world obey him." And straightaway his word came to pass with power. His blessing transformed the loaves in the apostles' hands. The whole people ate and were restored. They blessed God.

3 1You have seen, (25) O my beloved, the love of Jesus for his apostles, for he hid nothing from them of all the works of his divinity. 6 Once while blessing the five barley loaves, another time, giving thanks to his Father, and again giving thanks for the seven loaves.

Thomas's question about the resurrection

4 1Thomas said to Jesus, "My Lord, behold every grace you have given us in your goodness. However, there is one thing which we would like you to convince us of. We would like, O my Lord, to see you raise up the dead lying in the tombs, as a sign of the resurrection that will happen to us. We know, O our Lord, that you have resurrected the widow of Nain's son, but the miracle, on this occasion, was different. For you had met them on the road. We want to see how the dismembered bones in the tomb can put themselves back together and how these dead can speak in this place."

2(26) Jesus said to Thomas, "Thomas, my friend, ask me, and your brothers, about everything you want. I will hide nothing from you that you may truly see, that you may touch, and that comforts your heart. If you have wanted to see those in the tombs revealed, you have rightly sought a sign of the resurrection. For I have already said that I am the resurrection and the life."

3If the grain of wheat does not die, it does not bear fruit. If you too do not see with your eyes, your heart is not strengthened. Did I not say to you, 'Blessed are those who have not seen, but have believed, more than those

a. That Jesus hid nothing from the apostles is repeated in 4:2, 11:2, 17:1, and 18:2.
who have seen and who have not believed? You see how many signs and miracles I have accomplished in the presence of the Jews and they have not believed in me.

The death of Lazarus

5 "Now then, O my brothers, (27) you know Lazarus, the man of Bethany, my friend. Four days I have been with you and have not sought news of his sisters. In fact, as of today he has been dead four days. Therefore, let us go to him and console his sisters in the matter of their brother Lazarus.

2"Didymus," come with me, let us go to Bethany. I will show you, in his tomb, the image of the resurrection on the Last Day, so that your heart may be strengthened, for I am the resurrection and the life.

Come with me, O Didymus, I will show you the disjointed bones in the tomb come together again.

Come with me, O Didymus, I will show you the hollow eyes of Lazarus deprived of light.

Come with me, O Didymus, to the mountain of Bethany, I will show you the tongue of Lazarus decomposed, and which will again speak with you.

(28) Come with me, O Didymus, to the tomb of Lazarus and see the decay of his bones and his body destroyed by worms and see what happens at the call of my voice.

Come with me, O Didymus, to the tomb of Lazarus, since he has been dead for four days, so that I might raise him up and he may live again.

3You have sought a sign of the resurrection, O Thomas, come and I will show it to you in the tomb of Lazarus.

You have sought to see how the bones are reunited to each other, come with me to the tomb of Lazarus and you will see them, walking and coming out the door of his tomb.

You have sought the hands that hold, come and I will show you the hands of Lazarus, bound by bandages and surrounded by linens, lift themselves up there and come out of the tomb.

MANUSCRIPT C

4(17) "Didymus, my friend, come with me to the tomb of Lazarus, for my mouth has wanted what you have thought. Today is the fourth day for Lazarus. Martha and Mary are waiting for me to come visit them because of their brother."

5This is what Jesus had said to his apostles, and Didymus came forward and said to him: "My Lord, how will we go there, since the Jews are looking to stone you?" He said this, for he was saddened by the words Jesus had said about Lazarus and did not want (18) to go there. Jesus said to him, "Didymus, the one who walks in my light does not stumble." Jesus said these words to Thomas to comfort him, for he saw him saddened by the death of Lazarus.

a. Thomas's other name, meaning "twin" (John 11:16).
The resurrection of Lazarus

1After this, he arrived near the tomb of Lazarus, and his sister came to meet him there. She said to him, “Lord, if you had been there, my brother would not have died, for you are the resurrection that raises up the dead. I have known you since my childhood, with my brother Lazarus.” Jesus said to her, “Do you believe that I am the resurrection that raises the dead and the life of every being?” Martha said to him, “Lord, I believe.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

2Then, as they were exchanging these words, Martha, Mary, and Jesus arrived at the tomb of Lazarus. Jesus walked ahead of his apostles and said to them, “Remove the stone that is there and bear witness to the way the dead will be raised.”

3At that moment, Thomas cried in front of Jesus and said, “If you (19) have suffered this torment and have come to the tomb of a dead man because of my unbelief, may your will be accomplished on me and may this tomb receive me until the day of your resurrection.” Jesus understood that Thomas was upset and said to him with a joyful voice and a living word, “Thomas, do not grieve. What I am doing, you do not know. Is it worth the effort to remove the stone that is there for a friend closed in a tomb, so that he might arise and come out?

Do not grieve, O Thomas, for I told you to remove the stone that is there and that a proof of the resurrection will appear in the dead man’s tomb.

Do not grieve, O Thomas, for I have told you to remove the stone that is there so that the dead may be raised.

Open the door of the tomb and I will have the one who is dead come out.

Remove the stone, O Thomas, so that I might give life to the one lain in the tomb.

Pull back the stone, O Thomas, so that the one who is dead might find the way to exit the tomb.

I did not ask you, O Thomas, to remove the stone because it is not possible for me to have Lazarus come out with the stone in place, for I have power over everything.

But if you remove the stone, O Thomas, the tomb will be visible and every man will see it and will see how the dead man was lain.

When you will have removed the stone, O Thomas, will the bad odor come out along with the corruption and the worms, like all the other dead? No, none of that will happen.”

6After all this, Jesus said to Mary, “Do you believe that your brother will rise again?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe. He already smells, since it is the fourth day he is dead, but I believe that everything is possible.” Then, Jesus turned to Thomas and said to him,

“Come and see the bones of the one who was dead, lying in the tomb before I raise him.

Come with me, O Thomas, and see the eyes that have melted into water before I give them light again.
Acts \( \text{Quest.} \) Bart.

John \( n:43 \)

John \( 1:21-22 \)

John \( 6:3 \)

John \( 11:44 \)

John \( 11:45 \)

John \( 17:11 \)

John \( 17:23 \)

John \( 11:44 \)

John \( 11:42-44 \)

John \( 11:43 \)

Matt \( 9:33 \)

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Come, O Thomas, and see the one who lies and how he has been placed, before I cause him to stand up.

Come, O Thomas, put your faith in me, for all is possible for me. Martha and Mary, steady your hearts. Have at least the faith of Mary and Martha who bore witness to me by saying 'All is possible.'

7 This is what Jesus said, and he cried out, "My Father, my Father, root of all (21) good, I pray you, for the hour is come for you to glorify your Son, so that every man may know that you have sent me for this work. Glory be to you, forever and ever. Amen."

6 This is what Jesus said, and he cried out, "Lazarus, come out!" Straightaway the mountain turned like a pulley, and the dead rose up and came out due to the voice of Jesus who called, "Lazarus, come out!" Just then Lazarus came out covered in bandages, (his) head covered in a shroud wrapped in cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him and let him come."

The benediction of Lazarus and the joy of the crowd

7 When Lazarus saw that Jesus was standing at the door of the tomb, he bowed down and worshipped him. He cried out, "Blessed are you, Jesus! You whose voice made Amente tremble. You who called me. You whose divine glory those in Hades want to see. Blessed are you, Jesus! You whose voice is the resurrection, for it is you who comes to judge the whole world."

3 This is what Lazarus said to Jesus and the crowd ran to see him. Now Jesus saw that the crowd pressed upon him, as well as Lazarus. (22) Some of his family embraced him, others greeted him, his sisters kissed his mouth. In fact, a great uproar filled the mountain of Bethany. Some cried out of joy, others confessed, "There has never been a man like him in Israel," still others, "We believe that there is a resurrection because of what we have seen today at Lazarus's tomb." The crowds gathered around the tomb of Lazarus like bees around a hive, because of the miracle that happened.

The testimony of Lazarus

8 As for Lazarus, he did not leave the feet of Jesus, kissing them, and bearing witness to the crowds: "The resurrection of the living and the dead is Jesus. What is the celebration in this place when compared to the feast of Amente when he called my name at the door of the tomb and said, 'Lazarus, come out?'

2 I tell you, at that moment my father Adam recognized his call and his voice, as if he was at the door of the dead calling him. He stayed a moment, bending his ear to this voice, thinking that it was he that it called. He bore witness to the crowds, Adam did, saying, 'This voice that I heard is that of my Creator, this call that I heard is that of my bondsman calling me in paradise. Where is he now when he used to come (23) to paradise and call me? Who is this good son that my Creator calls by name saying, 'Lazarus, come out'? I implore you, my son Lazarus, to whom the mercy of the Almighty has come, bring my request to my Creator, O my beloved son Lazarus, when will I hear this voice of life?'"
Jesus said to them, "This is what Lazarus said while he was prostrated at the feet of Jesus. The noise came to the attention of the leaders of the Jews that Jesus had done this on the day of the Sabbath, and <they came> to see Lazarus and to stone Jesus.

**Carlos reports to Herod Antipas**

9 As it happens, around the time that Jesus raised up Lazarus, a Galilean official found himself in the presence of Herod because of the administration of the territories of Philip that he oversaw. He had been accused by the emperor of having ruined them under the pretext that Herod stole his wife. When Carlos, the imperial official, learned of the wonders that Jesus worked, he ran to see him. Then Carlos reported the news about Jesus and said to Herod, "This man is worthy to become king over all of Judea and the territories (24) of Philip."

When Herod heard that Jesus was worthy to become king, he was very troubled and brought forth serious accusations against Jesus. As such, he brought together all the leaders of the Jews and set forth for them what Carlos thought of Jesus and that he was going to be made king. On the spot, Herod gave them an order, saying, "He who is found consenting to this proposal will be put to death by the sword and all the belongings of his house will be seized."

Thus, Ananias and Caiaphas, along with the leaders of the Jews, held a meeting with Carlos, the dignitary of Emperor Tiberius. They forged lying words and false, conflicting testimonies about Jesus, from his birth to his death. Some said that he was a magician, while others that he was born of a woman, still others that he would abolish the Sabbath, and yet others that he would destroy the synagogue of the Jews.

Then they summoned Joseph and Nicodemus and presented them also as leaders of the Jews. But they were not in agreement with them and their lying accusations, so they spoke words of blessing regarding Jesus.

**MANUSCRIPT A**

10 (40) When Herod learned what Joseph and Nicodemus had done, he decided to throw them in prison in order to kill them, because they would not be associated with their evil falsehood.

(41) It turned out otherwise because Carlos was informed of the deception of Herod. He brought together the leaders of the Jews and swore to them in their presence, saying, "By the will of Emperor Tiberius, if anything bad happens to Joseph or Nicodemus, you will perish by the sword of the emperor and your city will be burned."

Then, while these things were happening, Herod required from each leader a pound of gold. He gathered a great sum and gave it to Carlos so that he would not let the fame of Jesus come to the attention of the emperor Tiberius. Carlos accepted the sum from Herod but did not change his position. When Joseph saw that the Jews followed him, he left Jerusalem and went to Arimathea.
Jesus retreats to the desert with his apostles

11 Then Carios brought (42) the apostle John before the emperor and told him the whole affair concerning Jesus. The emperor Tiberius gave John great honors and wrote that Jesus should be seized and made king.4 According to what is written in the Gospels, our Lord Jesus, since he knew that they were coming to make him king by force, retreated to solitude until the days of his abduction passed.

3 He called the apostles and said to them, "My brothers, behold the days of my exit from this world are nearly here. What my father gave to me, I will give to you. I have not left you without teaching you everything you desire.

The election and consecration of Peter

12 (43) "Peter, you are the first of your brothers. Come near me onto this rock, so that I may bless you and make you famous throughout the whole world. Your head will never cause you pain, nor will your eyes be deprived of light until death. Your nails will not be pulled out, your hair will not fall out, the corruption of the tomb will never destroy your body, no wrinkle will ever mark your skin. Bow your head before me, O Peter. The right hand of my father is placed on you to consecrate you archbishop.

2" May the twenty-four elders fill their cups with fragrance today and pour them over you, O Peter, to consecrate you archbishop. May the four animals bless you this day along with my Father (44) and proclaim the Trisagion, for you will be consecrated today, my elect Peter, as archbishop. You seven aeons of light, open one after the other, for the power of my Father will descend among you and rest on the mouth of my elect Peter.

3" Treasures of heaven and dwellings of my kingdom, rejoice this day, for you will contemplate my elect Peter. Principalities and powers of heaven, rejoice, for an inextinguishable power will be given to the tongue of Peter for eternity. Thrones and dominions, rejoice this day, for I will give fatherhood to my elect Peter over tens of thousands of people for eternity.

4" World entire, rejoice today, for I have given to a man the power to show mercy and to forgive. Paradise rejoice (45) on this day and breathe out a fragrance, for I will clothe Peter with a spotless garment for eternity. Amente, mourn today with your powers, for I have forged with my elect Peter an eternal alliance, for I will build my church and the gates of hell will have no power over her.

5" This is what Jesus said to Abba Peter on the mountain. He said to him again, "Simon Peter, tell me, who am I?" And at this moment, Peter looked to the sky and saw the seven heavens open one after the other. He saw the glory of the Father and all the heavenly hosts that descended onto the mountain for his consecration. He saw the right hand of the good Father resting on his head in a single manifestation with (46) that of his Son, both enveloped by the Holy Spirit.

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a. According to Encom. Mary 7, Mary is said to have given the emperor Tiberius a copy of the writings of John, which then led him to write to Herod.
And when he had contemplated them, at this moment, he fell and let forth a cry; and as he lay out, he said, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus said to him, “You are happy, Simon Bar Jonah, for it is not flesh nor blood that has revealed this to you. Now, stand up so that I may give your tongue the power of my tongue to bind and to loosen.”

And at this moment he put his hand on Peter’s head and the heavenly hosts proclaimed the Trisagion, such that the stones of the mountain cried out with them, “Holy, holy, holy, Abba Peter, the high priest.”

And when Peter had received this great honor, his face immediately shone. In the presence of the apostles, he cast beams of light like the sun, like Moses in his time.

The consecration of the other apostles

But when Jesus saw that the heart of the apostles was weak, he said to them, “You, my holy members, (47) do not be distressed at the power that has been given to Abba Peter, since a special tent has been prepared for you in the heavens and a special table for you to eat . . .

[lacuna of approximately thirteen lines . . .]

The church that I have promised to Peter, you are all the bishops. It is Peter who is worthy to be head of the assembly as well as the high priest. Abba Peter is an excellent father for tens of millions of people, but you are the sons of the bridal chamber. Abba Peter is the stalk of the true vine, but you are the fruits and the branches.

I am the good vintner and my Peter grows (48) the vine. Abba Peter is the golden bell, but you are the twelve seeds that surround him. Do not think, O my brothers, that the power given to Abba Peter belongs only to me. Without my Father, there is none. But it is I, along with my Father and the Holy Spirit, who gives to each one honor from heaven. At the same time, it is impossible for me to do anything for myself. Without my Father, no one would receive honor.”

Then Jesus turned to Abba Peter and said to him, “My bishop and my high priest, as compassionate father, as shepherd and good pastor, bend your ear, O Abba Peter, to the cries of sinners and forgive them. Remove . . .

[lacuna of approximately twelve lines; pages 49 to 52 missing . . .]

(53) “It is not impossible for you to move mountains. However, put your faith in the love of my Father. For the fullness of all things is faith.”

Jesus warns his apostles

All these words our Lord said to his apostles to comfort them on the mountain, knowing what was peddled about him in Judea by the magistrates who sought to make him king. The messengers of Theophilus8 came to Jesus

a. This Theophilus is likely the same patron or benefactor to whom Luke and Acts are
and informed him, saying, "They're looking to make you king." The apostles said to Jesus, "Our Lord, it is a joy for us that they want to make you king."

2Jesus replied, "Have I not said to you that my kingdom is not of this world? Do not put the joy of your heart in the kingdom of this world, O my brother apostles, for it exists only for a time.

3"Have I come to you, (54) O my holy members, my brothers, to eat with you at the table of an earthly kingdom? My kingdom lasts forever, in heaven and on earth."

4These and other things Jesus said to his disciples while he hid on the mountain because they wanted to make him king.

A second attempt to make Jesus king

16 1Then the magistrates of Tiberius tried a second time regarding Jesus, and Pilate too, to get Jesus to agree and make him king. Pilate greatly approved, a saying, "Truly, after the signs and wonders that this man worked, he ought to be king of all Judea and ruler over all the territories of Judea. According to what I have heard about this man, (55) he is a good man and worthy to be made king."

2This is what Pilate said in the presence of the magistrates of Emperor Tiberius. Herod could not support him without spurning Pilate. He said to him, "You are only a Pontos Galilean, b a stranger, an Egyptian. You know nothing about the law. Moreover, you have not been governor of this city long enough to know the works of this man."

3Herod also said to him, "Whoever opposes a decree of the emperor upsets the emperor. I do not care if Jesus is made king of Judea." It was then that a closeness developed between Herod and Pilate, because of Jesus.

4(56) From this day on, the expression "Jesus, King of the Jews" spread through Judea. And Pilate wrote this inscription for Jesus and placed it on the cross: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

5When Herod learned these things, he remained fixed in his madness against Jesus, saying, "My father died because of this man, when he was an infant, but I will not die as long as he lives." He gave a lot of money to the magistrates and made them bring it back to the emperor. Then he organized a great conspiracy throughout Judea.

The devil and the fisher demons

17 1Thus, our Lord Jesus knew everything that would happen to him. He said to his disciples, "My brothers, the devil has prepared a cunning trick to have me crucified. Now, keep all my mysteries in your ears. (57) I have not left you

dedicated. Although the name means "god-loving" and is perhaps a generic appellation, the context here seems to indicate that he was understood to be some sort of government official.

a. A rather astonishing assertion, which may be intended to minimize Pilate's role in Jesus' trial and execution.

b. A very peculiar expression which may indicate confusion between Pilate's name Pontius and the region of Pontus. At any rate, Pilate's foreignness and lack of familiarity with local customs are being highlighted.
who fishhooks, other, ignorant has heaven and fisher of and replied, me your accepted done."

When the apostles saw them casting their nets and fishhooks beside each other, they were very astonished. They said to Jesus, "Our Lord, is the one who made such things in the desert?"

Jesus said to them, "Peter, it is the one of whom I have said, (58) 'Satan has claimed you to grind you into dust, but I prayed for you, so that your faith might not fail.' John said to him, "What do they find in the desert?" Jesus replied, "John, my beloved, the one he seeks he has already caught. He is the fisher who catches all the bad fish. He is the one who traps every foul beast and all that is evil."

Philip said to him, "My Lord, who will be caught by his hook or in his nets?" Jesus replied, "A multitude will be caught by his hook and his nets."

Andrew said, "My Lord, why does he want to make people transgress?" (59) Jesus replied, "Did I not come to take those who are mine into my kingdom? He too seeks those who are his to make them suffer his punishment. I accepted this great abasement and I descended into the world to remove the sting of death that is his."

John said to him, "My Lord, give me an order. I will follow it and see it done." Jesus replied, "Go, my beloved John, for I purified you in the womb of your mother."

Then Saint John went to the devil. He said to him, "What are you doing with these nets and what do you catch in this place?" The devil replied, "I heard it said about you and your brothers that you are fishers, men who catch fish. I came here to see your master today. Here I am in this place—me, my servants, and my nets. (60) Call your brothers too, so that they join you here with their nets, and let us cast them in this place. The one who can catch fish in this place is the master. It is no miracle to catch fish in the water. The miracle is to catch them in the desert."

John said to him, "I too have heard talk of your mastery before I even joined you here. But cast your nets and we will see what you catch." He cast them on the ground and caught all sorts of foul fish that are in the water. Some were caught by the eyes, others by the belly, still others by the lips.

Jesus was further away with his apostles and observed. He said to them, "See how Satan captures sinners by their limbs."

Jesus said to John, "Tell him to cast (61) his net again." John went to him a second time and said, "We have seen this mastery of yours. Cast your nets again, that we may see you."

Then he cast them again on the mountain and a great smoke appeared. Immediately the devil understood and his power disappeared. He said to
John, “Is this your mastery?” John replied to him, “The master is Christ. The one who makes empty all mastery like yours, which is that of a tempter.”

15 Then my father John took a stone and threw it at him and struck him.

He fled full of shame and uttering curses. The apostles were amazed by his arrogance.

Jesus reveals the adversary
18 Bartholomew said to Jesus, “My Lord, I would like to see the one you created to laugh at him, whom you cast from the height of heaven, and whose nostril you pierced in the abyss.”

2 Jesus said to him, “Bartholomew, my elect, I have already told you in my conversation with you: everything you desire, ask me, and I will satisfy your heart in all these things. There is no one strong enough to endure this thing you ask, for great fear results from seeing its fearsome aspect. But the one who chases away all fear walks with you, and that one is me.”

3 Straightaway, Jesus called a cloud in the heights; the cloud on which Moses and Elijah were lifted up, the one in which the voice of the Father was heard to say, “This is my [beloved Son]...”

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a. The stoning of the devil (rami al-jamarat) is a well-known practice in Islamic traditions around the hajj. How this episode intersects with that wider tradition requires further research. See introduction p. 27.