A PALESTINIAN SYRIAC PALIMPSEST LEAF OF ACTS XXI (14-26).

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THE first step towards the identification of the Palestinian Syriac Palimpsest leaf, numbered Mingana Syriac 637 in the Mingana Collection of Oriental Manuscripts at Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, was taken by Mr. G. Woledge, formerly Librarian of the Selly Oak Colleges Library, Selly Oak, and now of Queen's College, Belfast, when he observed that in size and general appearance this Palimpsest leaf from the Mingana Collection bore a close resemblance to the facsimile of a similar leaf in Mrs. A. S. Lewis's Codex Climaci Rescriptus,¹ of which one folio was missing. Mr. Woledge, who is not himself an Orientalist, showed the leaf to Professor D. S. Margoliouth, who confirmed the identification of the Mingana Palimpsest as the missing leaf belonging to the Lewis Codex, and who further identified the under-writing as containing a Palestinian Syriac text of part of the twenty-first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

I am grateful to Mr. Woledge for calling my attention to the Palimpsest, and to the Trustees of the Mingana Collection of Oriental Manuscripts for their kind permission to edit it. Mr. Edward Cadbury kindly granted me the use of his violet ray apparatus, without which it would have been impossible in several places to restore the text of the under-writing with so much confidence. I am indebted to Dr. H. L. Gottschalk, Curator of the Mingana Collection at Selly Oak, for several valuable suggestions and for facilitating in every way possible my work

¹ In Horae Semiticae, No. VIII (Cambridge, 1909).
on the Palimpsest. The excellent photographs which are here reproduced, by permission of the Trustees of the Mingana Collection, are the work of Mr. L. Thompson, chemist in the Cadbury Laboratories, Bournville.

For a full description and further details on the Climaci Palimpsests, reference should be made to Mrs. Lewis's work. The main facts may be perhaps recalled. The Codex, the greater part of which was acquired by Mrs. Lewis in 1905 and 1906 from the Near East, contains (including the rediscovered leaf) 139 leaves of fine vellum. The upper-writing, written in an Edessene Syriac hand which has been assigned to the beginning of the ninth century, is a Syriac version of the *Scala Paradisi*, "a book of those who are hastening to write their names in the Book of Life in Heaven", and of the *Liber ad Pastorem* of St. John Climax, Abbot of Mt. Sinai (fl. c. 580).1 The Mingana Palimpsest restores the lost leaf from the latter work, the Latin translation of which begins with the words "*isto: paria quoque de Saule dicuntur*"; 2 for this the Syriac upper-text now reads: 

The under-writing of the Codex consists in part of a Biblical text in Greek sloping uncial (containing fragments of a Gospel Harmony and nine verses of Psalm 140), but in the main of Palestinian Syriac texts; of the Gospels, portions of the Acts and of St. Paul's Epistles, parts of II Peter and I John, fragments of an early Palestinian Syriac Lectionary of the Old Testament, part of an Apostolic myth, and a fragment of a homily, the style of which has been thought to resemble that of Ephrem Syrus. The under-writing is not homogeneous, and the scribe who copied or translated the two works of St. John Climax used parts of several different MSS. as his writing material. These divisions in the Codex according to the under-writing are labelled Climacus I, II, III, IV, V and VI in the

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1 See Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, Tom. LXXXVIII, pp. 579 ff.
order of their occurrence in the Codex as it has been arranged to follow the text of the upper-writing.

The rediscovered leaf belongs to Climacus II, the most valuable part of the whole Codex. The vellum in this part is very fine and thin, and the Palestinian Syriac under-writing is archaic in character and cannot be ascribed to a date later than the sixth century. Climacus II contains portions of the Acts of the Apostles, of St. Paul's Epistles and of II Peter and I John. The value of the Palimpsest under-writing is further enhanced by the fact that it contains, in this part, continuous Biblical texts from a Palestinian Syriac Bible. The continuous text of the Palestinian Syriac version is to be distinguished, in point of antiquity and textual value, from the more familiar text of the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary, a specimen of which is preserved in Climacus III. Of the complete Palestinian Syriac Bible, we possess little more than a number of isolated passages and scattered fragments. The Mingana Palimpsest contains a practically complete text of Acts xxi (14b-26a) from this Bible.

The "textus receptus" has been taken as the basis for comparison with the Greek text and has been printed for convenience opposite the Syriac. Where the Palestinian Syriac appears to preserve a variant reading which is unknown in Greek

1 Noteworthy is the archaic formation of the 'E, which has a small hook at the top (e.g. fol. 2a, line 21) and of the Ḥeths and the Semkaths. Final Nun, e.g. on fol. 1b, line 3, is written in the unusual way (דועך). No point is inserted in the Dalath.

2 See Lewis, op. cit., p. xii.

3 Ibid., p. xiv. The Mingana Palimpsest supplies further evidence of this by indicating (fol. 1a, line 4) the beginning of a new chapter with the words נסך ויהי; i.e. Ἄρχη Κεφαλάιων. The first letter of the first word of the chapter is a large decorated Waw.

4 Printed from the 1863 Oxford edition. Lewis printed Nestle's text. The Palestinian Syriac version was, however, the version of a Byzantine community and its text differs least from the Byzantine standard text. For this reason it seemed advisable to print a Byzantine Greek text, of which the only printed editions here available are those of the Textus Receptus. Where the Palestinian Syriac differs from the Byzantine standard it is possible that it may reflect the so-called "Western text." In the present fragment the evidence is too slight to warrant any conclusions. For other reasons for the printing of a Byzantine text above a critical apparatus, instead of an editor's own reconstruction, see B. H. Streeter, The Four Gospels, p. 147.
MSS., this reading is given in the apparatus in English. In
the collation of Greek readings, A. C. Clark's edition of Acts¹
has been followed mainly, and the "sigla" of that edition
adopted throughout, except in the case of the Latin versions,
where Wordsworth and White's edition of the Latin text is
followed.² The "siglum" L is used for the Latin versions
generally and for the consensus of a majority of Latin MSS.,
where the exceptions are stated; L⁴ is used for the Vulgate;
in other cases the "sigla" of Wordsworth and White have
been attached to the letter L thus, L⁵, L⁶, L⁷, etc., for the Latin
MSS. denoted by gig, d, D, respectively, in their edition. For
the Peshitta, S⁸, for the Philoxenian Syriac S⁹, and for their
consensus S, have been adopted as in Clark's edition. Oc-
casionally a reading is taken from a source other than those
mentioned, in which case the source is stated.

In the Palestinian Syriac text single letters have been occasion-
ally supplied, and this is indicated by a bracket round the
letter. Where there is some doubt as to the reading, suggestions
have been made at the foot and some notes are added later in
explanation. A dagger has been placed before forms of words
which represent a departure from or an addition to the ortho-
graphy to be found in F. Schulthess's Lexicon Syropalaestinum.

² Wordsworth and White, Novum Testamentum Latine (Oxford, 1905).
ACTS, XXI (14b–26a).

14b... ἡσυχάσαμεν
εἰπόντες, Τὸ θέλημα
tοῦ κυρίου γενέσθω.

15 Μετὰ δὲ τὰς
ἡμέρας ταύτας
ἀποσκευασάμενοι
ἀνεβαίνομεν εἰς

16 Ἰερουσαλήμ. συν-
ὲλθον δὲ καὶ τῶν
μαθητῶν ἀπὸ Κασαρείας
σὺν Ἰησοῦν, ἀγοντες
παρ᾽ ὧν δεινοθύμονεν,
Μνᾶσων τινὶ
Κυπρίῳ, ἀρχαῖῳ
μαθητῇ.

† indicates forms new to Palestinian Syriac.

14b a "and (we) said" S vg.
15 a-a "preparations were made for us (or by us) to go up".
16 a "and there came (with us)" S vg om. L ἔτι et venerunt.

b om. S vg L ἔτι.
c cf. von Soden add καὶ τῶν S vg οἱ ὤν ἔτι.
d-d "and we took with us the one who was receiving us as his guests".
17 Βερομένων δὲ ἡμῶν 
eis Ἰεροσόλυμα,
*ἀπεμένως ἐδέξαντο
ἡμᾶς οἱ ἀδελφοί.
18 τῷ δὲ ἐπιούσῃ
eishei ὁ Παύλος
σὺν ἡμῖν πρῶς
Ἰάκωβον, πάντες τε
παρεγένοντο οἱ
19 πρεσβύτεροι, καὶ
ἀσπασάμενος αὐτούς,
*ἐξηγεῖτο καθ' ἐν
ἐκαστὸν ἓν
ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς
ἐν τοῖς ἑνεσει
dia τῆς

1 Frt. ἐκαστὸ (?) (vide p. 214).

17 *"with all affection" (vide p. 214).
19 *"and he narrated to them" pr. "and" S vs add "to them" S.
διακοινιας αυτοι.

20 οι δ' ἀκούσαντες
α' ἑδοξαζον τον κύριον.
εἶπον τε αὐτῷ,
θεωρεῖς ἀδελφέ,
πόσαι μυριάδες
εἰσίν Ἰουδαίων τῶν
πεπιστευκότων· καὶ
πάντες ξηλωται τοῦ
νόμου ὑπάρχουσι.

21 κατηχήθησαν δὲ περὶ
σοῦ, ὅτι ἀποστασίαν
διδάσκεις ἀπὸ
Μωσέως τούς κατὰ
tὰ ἔθνη πάντας
Ἰουδαίων,

20 a εδοξαζαν D K L d gis S.
b θεον Ι' E 383 614 S' a L (dominum L D Θ d gis).
c om.
21 a ad add του νομου a Μως von Soden 1° 174.
b om. D A E 383 L y8 gis.
λέγων· ἀν' ἐπερέμψαν αὐτοὺς

*τὰ τέκνα, μηδὲ
*τοῖς ἔθεσι

περιπατεῖν.

22 τί οὖν ἐστις;

*πάντως δεῖ πλῆθος

συνελθεῖν·

ἀκούσονται γὰρ

ὅτι ἐλήλυθας.

τοῦτο οὖν ποίησον

ὅ σου λέγωμεν·

23 εἰσίν ἡμῖν

Ἀνδρεῖς τέσσαρες

εὐχὴν ἔχοντες

1Fr. l. ἐκεῖνος et ἐκεῖνος.

+ add "to them" L
+ om. (vide p. 214).
έφ' ἑαυτῶν.

24 τούτοις a ἐπαραλαβὼν
d να ἀφίσθητι b σὺν αὑτοῖς,
kαὶ διαπάνησον ἐπ' αὑτοῖς,
ὡς ἔφρησιν τινὶ τῆς
κεφαλῆς, καὶ γνώσι
pάντας ὅτι ἂν
κατῆχεται περὶ σοῦ
οὐδὲν ἐστιν,
ἀλλὰ στοιχεῖς καὶ
αὐτὸς τὸν νόμον
φυλάσσων.

24 a add οὗν von Soden Iσ2 200.
b- b "take and purify thyself" Sν8 Lδ (om. et) sig has adsume et sanctifica te.
c "their head" Sν8 Lδο sig. etc. capita sua.
25 περὶ ὑπὸ τῶν

πεποτευκότων ἐδνίν

ἡμεῖς ἐπεστείλαμεν,

κρίναντες μὴ δὲν

tοιοῦτον τὴρεῖν

αὐτοῦ, εἰ μὴ

φυλάσσοντι αὐτοῦ
tό τε εἰδωλοθυτον,

καί τὸ αἷμα καὶ

πνεῦμα καὶ

26 πορείαν. Τότε

ὁ Πάυλος...

25 * γαρ Ἰερ. ἐνα. * ὑπὸ Ἰερ. ἐνα. S.

* "from the Gentiles" LIT. S.

* * * "we heard and wrote with regard to them" cf. S. Ἰερ. ἐνα. LIT. scripsum. S. Ἰερ. ἐνα. LIT. Ἰερ. E.
A literal English translation is here given; passages or single words where the Palestinian Syriac text appears to diverge from the usual Greek text are printed in italics.

Acts xxi (14b-26a).

14b. . . . we were silent and said: The will of the Lord be done. Beginning of Chapter. 15. And after these days, preparations were made for us (or by us) to go up to Jerusalem. 16. And there came with us of the disciples, those from Caesarea, and we took with us the one who was receiving us as his guests, a certain Mnason, a Cyprian, one of the early disciples. 17. And when we came to Jerusalem, the brethren received us with all affection. 18. And on the next day, Paul entered along with us unto James; and all the elders came. 19. And he greeted them and narrated to them each thing, one by one, of that which God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. 20. And they heard and glorified God, and said to him: Thou seest, our brother, how many myriads there are who believe from the Jews, and all of them zealots unto the Law. 21. However, men have heard concerning thee, that thou art teaching the Jews among the Gentiles that they should depart from the Law of Moses; saying to them that they should not circumcise their children, and should not walk according to their customs. 22. What is it therefore? The multitude is bound to come together, for they will be hearing that thou hast come. This therefore do which we are telling thee. 23. We have four men who have a vow upon themselves. 24. These therefore take and purify thyself along with them, and spend money upon them that they shave their heads; and all will know that what they have heard concerning thee is nothing at all, but that thou also dost conform with them (lit. followest them), observing the Law. 25. For concerning those who believe from the Gentiles, we heard and wrote with regard to them, that they should keep themselves from sacrifice to idols, and from blood, and from that which is strangled, and from fornication. 26a. Thereupon Paul . . . .

Some gleanings of interest are to be gathered from the variant readings. The reading in v. 16, for instance, "And there came with us of the disciples, those from Caesarea, and we took with us
him who was receiving us as his guests . . .” not only introduces another “we” passage, but implies a different Greek text from that with which we are familiar. The usual reading in the second part of the sentence, referring the participle εὐνοῦτες to the subject of συνήλθον, in this case, “some of the disciples from Caesarea,” implies that it was the Caesarean disciples who brought Mnason; the Palestinian Syriac text states, on the other hand, that it was Paul and his company, of whom the writer was one, who took with them to Jerusalem the “old disciple”, Mnason of Cyprus, who was to be their host.1

The coincidence of a number of Palestinian Syriac readings with the readings of Latin MSS. need not be further surprising, in the light of the connection which has been shown to exist elsewhere between the Syriac and the Latin versions.2 The connection has been claimed for the Gospels to be one of direct dependence of Old Latin texts on a Syriac source.3 The situation may be similar in Acts, and even in these few verses there are Old Latin readings, such as “falsa sunt” in v. 24, found elsewhere in the Peshitta only, which strongly suggest Syriac influence.4

On a comparison of this Palestinian Syriac text with the Peshitta, the two Syriac versions appear to have much in common. In v. 19, for instance, two variant readings occur which are found elsewhere in the Peshitta only, and in vv. 16 (omission of καὶ) and 25 (omission of μηδὲν to εἰ μὴ) two further agreements with the Peshitta text are to be found, though here the variants are attested elsewhere. In vv. 14 and 24 the Greek construction of finite verb and participle (14. ἦσυχασαμεν εἰμόνες; 24. παραλαβὼν ἀγνίσθημι) is rendered in both Syriac translations by two finite verbs joined by the conjunction “and”.

1 Cf. A. C. Clark, op. cit., p. 378.
3 Plooij, op. cit.
4 Cf., however, A. C. Clark, op. cit., p. xvii.
It is difficult to say whether this actually reflects a real variant in underlying Greek texts common to both versions, or whether it is simply a "paratactic" rendering serving no more than the common requirements of Syriac idiom. Similarly idiomatic Syriac translation may perhaps be taken as explaining the common rendering of the Greek conjunction δέ by "and" (Waw), e.g. in vv. 15, 16, 17, and 18 (more frequently so rendered, however, in the Peshitta than elsewhere in Palestinian Syriac texts). On the other hand, the common use of the partitive expression "one of (ᾠδος) the former disciples" as a translation of ἄρχαίῳ μαθητῇ in v. 16; the expression ἡσυχ, lit. "our brother", in both versions for ἀδελφόν in v. 20; ἡσυχ "their children" for τὰ τέκνα in the following verse; the common rendering of ἀπόστασιάν in v. 21 by a finite verb, lit. "that they should depart ", and the translation "we wrote" for ἐπεστηκέ- λαμεν in v. 25, all appear to point to a common element in the two translations which must be otherwise explained. That there is no question here of the Palestinian Syriac translation being simply "a modified transcription of the Peshitta" is clear from the number of independent renderings of the Palestinian Syriac, even in this short passage (e.g. in vv. 15, 16, 21, 24, and 25). The explanation of the common element may be that the maker of the Palestinian Syriac version consulted on occasion the Peshitta, or even used it in the making of the new version. It is not impossible that its familiar expressions kept occurring to him and were incorporated, perhaps quite unintentionally, in the Palestinian Syriac translation.

Attention has already been drawn in the text to new forms of Palestinian Syriac words which occur in the Palimpsest. To the vocabularies of the dialect are to be added the proper noun Μαγδών (Μαγδών) and the adjective Κύπριος (Κύπριος), on fol. 1a, lines 14 and 15 respectively. The word Διὰκονία (Διὰκονία), fol. 1b, line 10, is rare, occurring elsewhere only in Col. iv (17). The verb Εὐαγγελία (Εὐαναφαί), fol. 2b, line 2, is not traceable in Christian Palestinian Syriac vocabularies; it is common enough in Edessene Syriac and in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic. The

use of the word $\text{λομή}$ (i.e. in its origins $\tau \delta \xi \iota$) on fol. 2a, line 10, as a translation of $\varepsilon \theta \omicron \varsigma$ is remarkable. Perhaps the nearest approach to this sense is its meaning in Edessene Syriac of “regula”, “statutum”, “$\tau \alpha \gamma \mu \alpha$”.

A few notes are here added on the transcription. On fol. 1a, line 19, the reading $\text{סֶלֶד} \text{כָּחָמ}$ is singular. In the word $\text{סֶלֶד}$, the first and the last two letters are quite distinct (the Heth comes up clearly under the violet ray), but the middle letter is uncertain. No combination of letters other than $\text{סֶלֶד}$ seems possible. It is not impossible, however, that the original under-writing here has been tampered with, either wrongly retraced or deliberately altered. Perhaps the original reading was $\text{סַלַמ}$, which may be compared with the Peshitta $\text{סַלַמ}$ and the readings of the Old Latin, $\text{Ld}$ cum $\text{laetitia}$ and $\text{Lc}$ cum $\text{gaudio}$. In the reading which has been restored as a conjecture in v. 19, fol. 1b, lines 6 and 7 ($\text{דָּּכַּרְמָר} \text{כָּפַּר}$ is the reading of the Harkleian Syriac), the first letter of the word which is read as $\text{כָּפַּר}$, which is certainly either Kaph or Pe, has the suggestion of a looped head, in which case we ought perhaps to read $\text{כָּפַּר}$, which is the reading of the Peshitta at this point (two characteristic Peshitta readings occur immediately before these words). The more usual form of the word for “Paul” in the Palimpsest, however, (e.g. fol. 1a, line 22, fol. 2b, line 22), and generally in the Climaci texts, is $\text{כָּפַּר}$. The part visible in the second last letter of fol. 1b, line 6, appears to be the loop of a He, and perhaps someone, reading $\text{כָּפַּר}$ as the last two letters of this word, may be able to make a better suggestion to fill out the lacuna in the MS. at this point. The loop which suggests a He has been taken here to be the end of the Alaph in $\text{כָּפַּר}$, which has been written twice to fill out the line. In v. 22, fol. 2a, line 12, $\text{סִּי}$ is translated, as frequently, by the word $\text{סִּמָּה}$ followed by $\text{כָּחָמ}$ and a $\text{וֹ}$ clause with the Imperfect. The word $\text{סִּמָּה}$ is the Greek $\nu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$, and the $\nu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ of the Greek text here is omitted in the Palestinian Syriac, probably because of the word $\text{סִּמָּה}$. It may be that a second $\text{סִּמָּה}$ has been omitted in the Palestinian Syriac text by Haplography.