

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Palestine Exploration Quarterly* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_peq\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_peq_01.php)

There are those who do not venture so far as to say that this tomb is the true "Holy Sepulchre," but who say that it is worth while maintaining it "because it shows what the tomb in the garden was like." This is in the spirit of those who treat the "Holy Fire" spectacle as a "beautiful allegory." As a matter of fact, the conception it conveys is erroneous. Joseph's garden was probably a vegetable yard or fruit-orchard, not a modern European *parterre*. And the tomb is too mean to have belonged to a person specially characterized as a "rich man."

The statement that this is the "*only* tomb that answers all the conditions" is not worth discussing. I have endeavoured to show that it answers none of them. And if there were any use in doing so, I think I could point out at least five and twenty tombs round Jerusalem in every respect more suitable.

The true site of the Holy Sepulchre is lost and forgotten, and there is no reason to hope that it will ever be recovered.

---

## SOME NEW INSCRIPTIONS FROM JERUSALEM AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

By R. A. STEWART MACALISTER, M.A., F.S.A.

I FORWARD squeezes of a number of inscriptions that have recently come to light in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood.<sup>1</sup>

I. The first is a stone whose inscription has been long known, but it had passed out of sight owing to the demolition of the wall in which it had formerly been built. It has recently been re-discovered in an outbuilding in a garden belonging to the Khaldi family, close to the London Jews Society Hospital. The inscription is fragmentary, the beginnings and ends of the lines being lost. It is correctly given in the Jerusalem volume of the *Memoirs*, but

<sup>1</sup> These are preserved at the Fund's Office, where they may be inspected.—ED.

the stone is there wrongly said to be part of a sarcophagus. It is really a fragment of a lintel, about 3 ft. in length, 19½ in. in height, 8 in. in thickness, and composed of a reddish limestone. It bears a cross in a circle and the inscription:—

. . . . NHTHC	ΘΕ . . . .
. . . . ΙΒΙΩΑΝΝΒ	Δ . . . .
. . . . ΟΦΙΑCTON	Ι . . . .
. . . . . ΩΑΝΝΒ	Δ . . . .



It can hardly be hoped that anything can be made of this fragment, beyond the name "John." It probably belongs to a lintel of some ecclesiastical building.

II. A marble slab, 17 in. by 9½ in. by 1 in. Diagonally broken at the end, but otherwise perfect. Found in the course of some building excavations undertaken by the Greeks outside the St. Stephen's Gate. (See *Q.S.*, April, pp. 137-139.) The inscription is:—

+ΑΥΤΗΗΠΥΛΗΤΟΥΚΥ[ΧΥ] . . . .  
 ΕΙΣΕΛΕΥCΩΝΤΑΙΕ[Ν . . . . .  
 +ΑΓΙΕCΤΕΦΑΝΕΕΥΞ . . . . .

"This is the gate of the Lord Christ . . . . about to enter in . . . . Holy Stephen pr[ay . . . . ." The stone is now preserved in the convent of Abraham. The tip only of the X remains at the end of line 1.

III. A tombstone 35½ in. by 23 in. by 5 in., apparently intended to stand upright over a grave. Inscribed:—

+ ΜΝΗΜΑ  
 ΜΑΡΙΑC  
 ΡΩΜΕΑC

+

"The Memorial of Maria, a Roman,"

IV. On December 27th, with Mr. Hanauer and Yusif, I visited 'Ain Sâmieh, a remote spot at the head of the Wady Sâmieh, N.W. of the village of Kefr Mâlek, sheet XV of the inch map. Yusif had heard rumours of illicit digging there, and going to reconnoitre had discovered a Greek inscription, which I was anxious to examine. On our way we passed through the village of *Yebwâd*, between 'Ain Sinia and Selwâd. This seems to have been an important place in Byzantine times: the local *wely*, dedicated to Neby Yusif, is evidently built of the materials of a small Byzantine church, scanty traces of whose foundations appear above ground in an adjoining field.<sup>1</sup> Over the door of the *wely* is a lintel stone with an ornamental panel; it has borne a cross, which of course has been hammered away. Many drafted stones are to be seen in and around the building. Behind it is lying a fragment of a milestone, 47 in. long and 16 in. in diameter: unhappily the inscription is almost gone, all that is left being:—

NIIVI . . . .

NEPOTIS . . .

. . . . .

ΑΠΟΚΛ . . . .

the rest is chipped away.

In the village is a sort of platform used for entertaining guests and as a place for prayer. It is surrounded by a number of large stones, evidently taken from some Byzantine building. There is a Corinthian anta capital, as well as a lintel stone, 69 in. by 17 in.

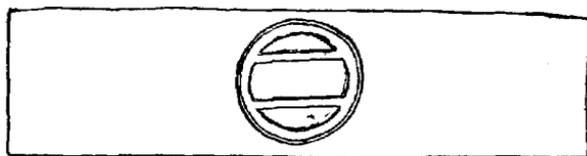


FIG. 1.

by 7 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. thick, bearing this device on one of its broader faces (fig. 1).

<sup>1</sup> (Mr. Macalister writes that the people informed him that no one can make any use of its sacred tree but the very poor; a man of some property who once attempted to gather firewood off it was seized by the local saint, lifted off the earth and replaced upside down.—ED.)

But the most interesting object is a stone here shown: it is a hexagonal slab, which has evidently stood on a pedestal (fig. 2). It has four depressions, about 4 in. deep, three of them hexagonal and one circular. I take it to be a chrismatory.

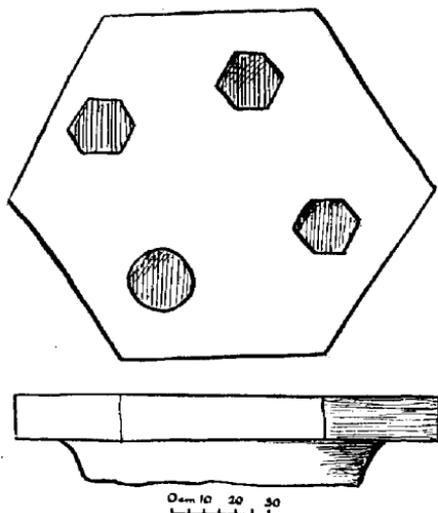


FIG. 2.

V. The 'Ain Sâmieh inscription is cut on the drum of a column 41 in. long, 13 in. in diameter (fig. 3). It is broken at each end. Though for the greater part clear, the inscription is difficult to decipher, especially towards the ends of the lines, which are worn: perhaps three or four letters are lost from the end of each line. I read:—

ΕΠΙΤΔΕΣΙΓ . . .  
 Ε[Κ?]Τ̄ΧΙΣΤΑ<sup>Ο</sup> . . .  
 ΠΥΤΕΥΣΕΒΕΣ . . .  
 ΛΕ<sup>Ο</sup>Τ̄ΙΒΣΤΙΝΙΑΙ . . .  
 ΕΤΣ̄ΛΙΝΔΣ̄ΕΠ[Δ?] . . .  
 ΣΕΡΙΒΠΕΡΙ<sup>Ο</sup>ΔΟΥ  
 ΚΑΡΠΦ<sup>Ο</sup> . . . . .  
 ΣΕΡΓΙΒΖ . . ΙΠΒ  
 ΕΤΙ . . .

Except for the name of Justinian and the date, it is not easy to see what this inscription means. I had a good deal of trouble with the Kefr Malek people, who endeavoured to tear my squeeze from the stone before it was dry. They are finding digging here very profitable and feared that I might bring the Government down upon them. The site is for the greater part Byzantine or early Arab, but there is evidence of a very ancient settlement whose shaft-tombs the thieves had most unfortunately discovered.

Thanks to the energy of Surraya Effendi, the Commissioner of Antiquities, this stone has been rescued and with great labour brought to Jerusalem, where it is now to be seen in the Government

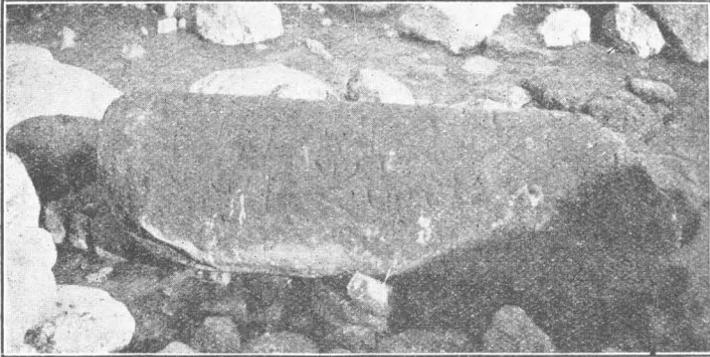


FIG. 3.

museum. The illicit digging that threatened to ruin an important ancient site has been stopped.

VI. Fragment of a Roman inscription found in the Muristan, now preserved in Abraham's convent (fig. 4).

VII. As I finish this paper, Surraya Effendi brings me a small fragment of a marble slab,  $9\frac{1}{4}$  in. by 8 in. by 1 in., bearing a few letters of a Greek inscription. I forward a facsimile. The letters shew traces of having been picked out with red paint. It is evidently part of a tombstone, dated (as the surviving fragment shews) by the era of Eleutheropolis (fig. 5).



FIG. 4.

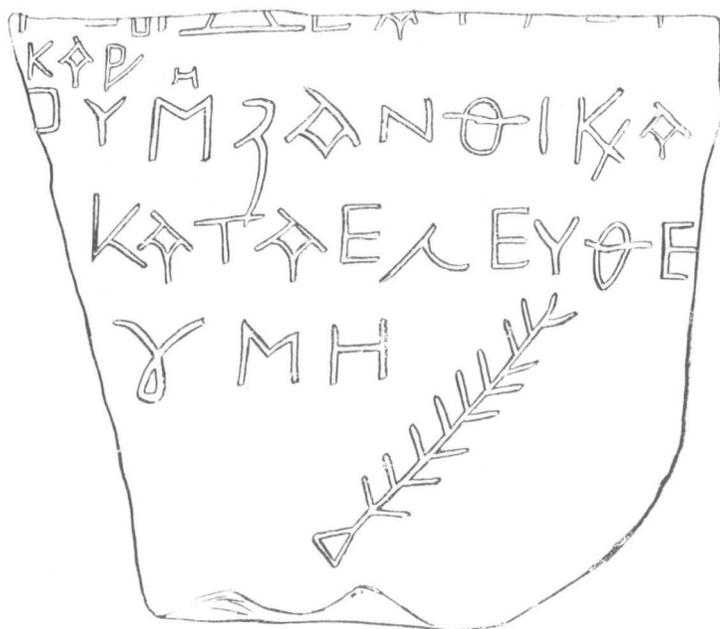


FIG. 5.