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The Codex Sinaiticus project

Codex Sinaiticus, a manuscript of the Christian Bible written in the middle of the fourth century, contains the earliest complete copy of the Christian New Testament.

The hand-written text is in Greek. Only one other nearly complete manuscript of the Christian Bible Codex Vaticanus (kept in the Vatican Library in Rome) is of a similarly early date. The New Testament appears in the original language (koine) and the Old Testament in the translation from Hebrew into Greek known as the Septuagint, that was adopted by early Greek-speaking Christians. In the Codex, the text of both the Septuagint and the New Testament has been heavily annotated by a series of early correctors.

The significance of Codex Sinaiticus for the reconstruction of the Christian Bible's original text, the history of the Bible and the history of Western book-making is immense. It is is one of the most important witnesses to the Greek text of the Septuagint and the Christian New Testament. An important goal of the Codex Sinaiticus Project is to provide a better understanding of the text of the Codex and of the subsequent corrections to it. This will not only help us to understand this manuscript better, but will also give us insights into the way the texts of the Bible were copied, read and used.

The Codex has had a complex history, as a result of which it is now divided among four institutions. The British Library has the largest portion; other sections are in the Leipzig University Library, in The National Library of Russia, and in St Catherine's Monastery, Sinai. These Sinai leaves and fragments, only discovered in 1975, are here published for the first time. This project, led by the four holding institutions, will create a virtual reunification of all surviving parts of the manuscript. Researchers at the**Institute for Textual Scholarship and Electronic Editing (http://www.itsee.bham.ac.uk/)** (ITSEE) have transcribed the whole text and also aligned each word in the manuscript (over half a million words in total) against the page images. David Parker has written a book about the manuscript, and Richard Goode has written much of the content for the website.

Members of ITSEE have also been involved in development of the website, launches of parts of the website, a conference held in London, news conferences in several places, radio and TV programmes and a range of other products.

Learn more

- **www.codexsinaiticus.org (http://www.codexsinaiticus.org/)**
- **World's oldest bible goes online (http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jul/06/codex-sinaiticus-oldest-bible-online)** (The Guardian, 6 July 2009)

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