


## From the Depths of Antiquity:


**An Ancient Torah Scroll Sheet  
from the Book of Exodus  
Newly Acquired by the  
Library of Congress**

A Lecture and PowerPoint Presentation by  
**Gary A. Rendsburg,**  
Distinguished Professor of Jewish History,  
Blanche and Irving Laurie Chair in Jewish History,  
Rutgers University

Wednesday, May 23, 2018  
12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.

Library of Congress  
African and Middle Eastern Reading Room  
Thomas Jefferson Building (2nd Floor)  
Washington, D.C.





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A Major Biblical Manuscript

**EXCERPT 00107**  
**TO 00110, Coptic**  
**And thus it was**  
**in Helwan a third**  
**period.**

1916. Size: 10 1/2" x 10 1/2"

Manuscript, parchment, 19th century. Helwan, Egypt. This is a fragment of a larger manuscript, which was found in the ruins of the Temple of Isis at Helwan. The fragment is a single leaf, and is written in Coptic script. It contains a single line of text, which is a fragment of a larger sentence. The text is written in a cursive hand, and is somewhat faded. The fragment is mounted on a card, and is labeled with the number 00107.

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**T**he manuscript contains a text of the same nature as the other two, and is written in the same hand. It is a fragment of a larger manuscript, and is written in Coptic script. The text is a single line, and is a fragment of a larger sentence. The fragment is mounted on a card, and is labeled with the number 00107.

Manuscript, parchment, 19th century. Helwan, Egypt. This is a fragment of a larger manuscript, which was found in the ruins of the Temple of Isis at Helwan. The fragment is a single leaf, and is written in Coptic script. It contains a single line of text, which is a fragment of a larger sentence. The text is written in a cursive hand, and is somewhat faded. The fragment is mounted on a card, and is labeled with the number 00107.

This is the other fragment with the Helwan text. It is a fragment of a larger manuscript, and is written in Coptic script. The text is a single line, and is a fragment of a larger sentence. The fragment is mounted on a card, and is labeled with the number 00107.

Spies from the 19th century and in the present time. The fragment is a single leaf, and is written in Coptic script. It contains a single line of text, which is a fragment of a larger sentence. The text is written in a cursive hand, and is somewhat faded. The fragment is mounted on a card, and is labeled with the number 00107.

This is one of the fragments of the manuscript. It is a fragment of a larger manuscript, and is written in Coptic script. The text is a single line, and is a fragment of a larger sentence. The fragment is mounted on a card, and is labeled with the number 00107.

Catalogue, no. 170  
 (2017), p. 129

EXODUS 10:10  
TO 16:15. *Complete*  
Biblical scroll sheet in  
Hebrew, a *Tonah* scroll  
panel.

Middle East, c. 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup>  
century.

Hebrew manuscript, ink on vellum. 290 x  
600 mm (approx. 23 x 23 1/2 in.). Written  
in an Oriental (Middle Eastern) square  
script, hanging below several horizontal  
lines, in five columns, 71 lines each  
(except the fourth, in 72 lines). Spacing  
various for adjacent sheets visible at  
right and left margins. Upper and lower  
margins cropped without loss of text; a  
few holes affecting single letters, some  
small and static, restoration to black  
margin. A well-preserved and extremely  
rare scroll sheet.

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Catalogue, no. 170  
(2017), p. 129

<p>A Sheet of Parchment from a 10th or 11th Century Torah Scroll: Determining its Type among Four Traditions (Oriental, Sefardi, Ashkenazi, Yemenite)</p> <p>Jordan S. Penkower</p> <p><b>Description</b></p> <p>One sheet from a Torah scroll on fine parchment (slightly damaged; upper and lower empty margins missing), containing Exod 10:10 (end) – 16:15 (beginning), including the Song of the Sea. This sheet was bought by a private collector at Christie's London July 9, 2001 auction.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>The sheet measures 590 x 600 mm. It holds 5 columns, with 71 lines per column, except the fourth column that has 72 lines. The text is divided into open and closed sections. The Song of the Sea is written in stichic form (see below). The fourth column is slightly damaged, and the first column is partially missing in the uppermost right side.</p>	<p>Jordan S. Penkower (Bar-Ilan University)</p> <p>Textus 21 (2002), pp. 235-264</p>
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<https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/exodus-10-10-to-16-15-including-the-song-of-the-7-c-fdg0yw9w6>



Bilingual note in Russian and Hebrew:

Presented by Shelomo Beim,  
Karaite hazzan in the Crimea  
to Grand Duke Constantine,  
brother of Czar Alexander II (1863)

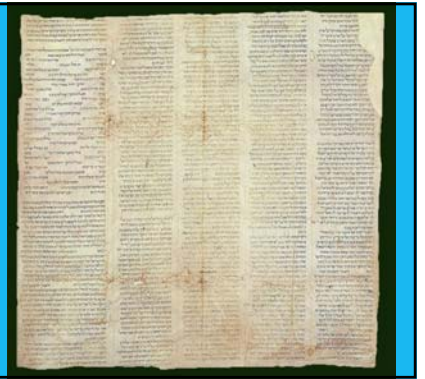


With the Torah  
scroll sheet,  
not yet conserved,  
still within its frame,  
creased from having  
been folded at  
some point.

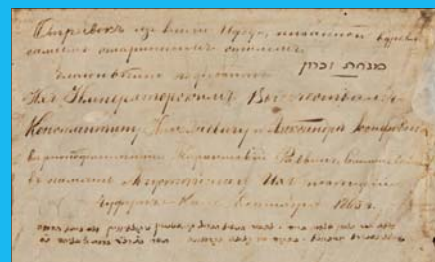
Visit to  
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Library  
of Congress  
Torah Scroll  
Sheet

Exodus  
10:10 – 16:15



Library of Congress Torah Scroll Sheet – before and after conservation



Note in Russian and Hebrew on reverse:

Presented by Shelomo Beim, Karaite hazzan in the Crimea,  
to Grand Duke Constantine, brother of Czar Alexander II (1863)

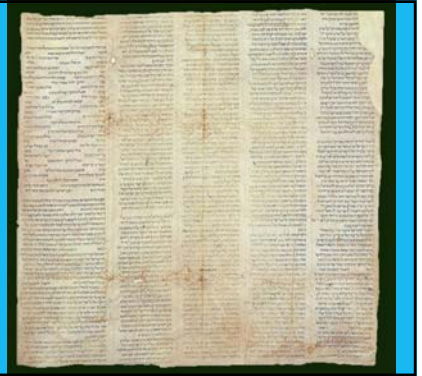
Abraham Firkovich  
(1786–1874)  
Karaite ḥakham

Brought numerous  
manuscripts from the  
Near East to Russia,  
including the famous  
St. Petersburg  
(Leningrad) Codex



Library  
of Congress  
Torah Scroll  
Sheet

Exodus  
10:10 – 16:15



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The Oldest Complete  
Torah Scroll Sheet  
Legible by the  
Naked Eye



**From the Depths of Antiquity:**  
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Exodus 15  
“The Song of the Sea”

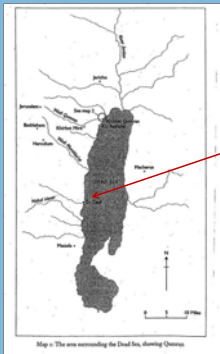


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The Oldest Complete  
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Ein Gedi  
synagogue

5th-7th  
centuries C.E.

Ein Gedi Synagogue – 5th-7th centuries C.E.



Burnt scroll  
from the Ark  
in the Ein Gedi  
synagogue ,  
c. 600 C.E.,  
discovered during  
excavations  
in 1970

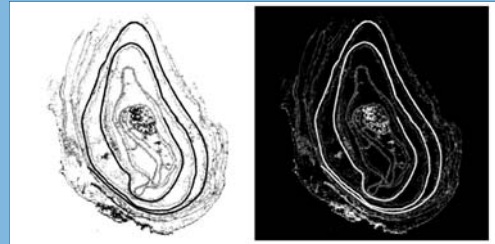


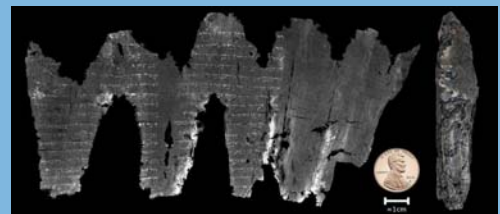
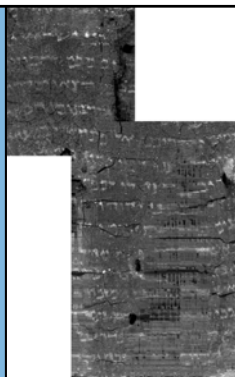
Figure 1. Digital scan of the concentric layers of the rolled scroll

using the Bruker Skyscan model  
1176 Micro-CT scanner (2015)

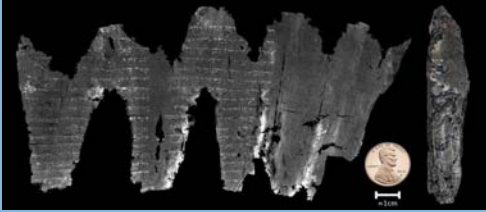
High-resolution 3D  
scan of the scroll,  
using the Bruker  
Skyscan model 1176  
Micro-CT scanner  
(2015)

Leviticus 1:1-8

<http://vis.uky.edu/digital-restoration/engedi2016/>



Composite Scan of the Ein Gedi Leviticus Scroll  
September 2016  
Leviticus, chapters 1-2



**Carbon-14 analysis of the scroll**  
at the Weizmann Institute Radiocarbon Laboratory  
88.9% probability = 210-390 C.E.  $\approx$  300 C.E.

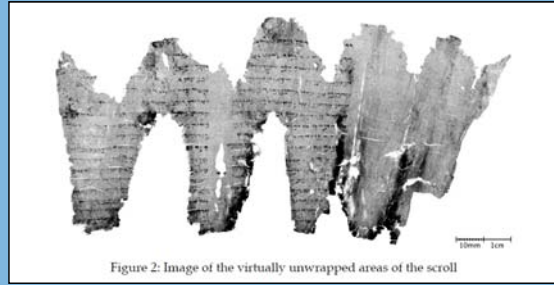


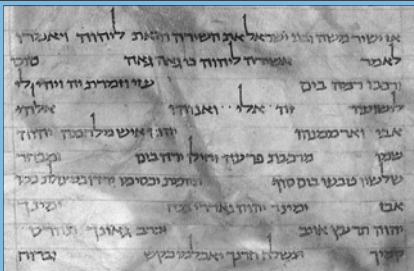
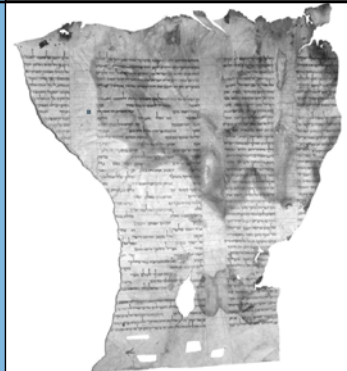
Figure 2: Image of the virtually unwrapped areas of the scroll  
**Ein-Gedi Scroll, c. 300 C.E.**

Ashkar-Gilson, no. 2  
Duke University  
fragment  
c. 700 C.E.  
Exodus 15

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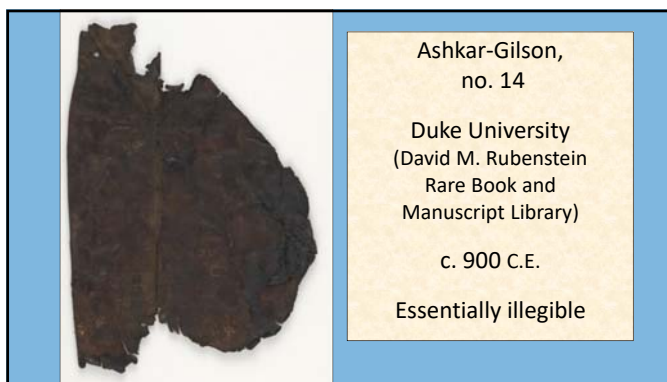
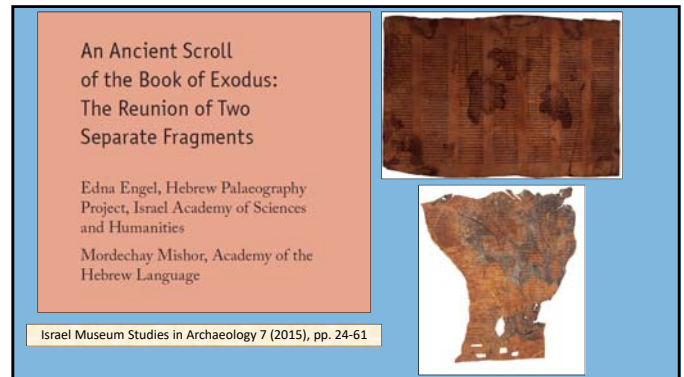
Ashkar-Gilson, no. 2  
Duke University  
fragment  
c. 700 C.E.  
Exodus 15  
More legible through  
photo enhancement



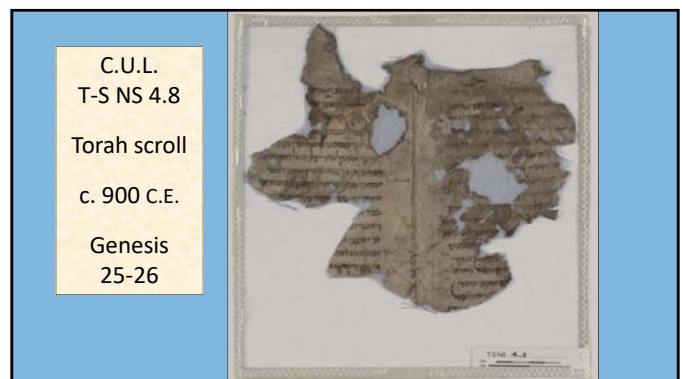
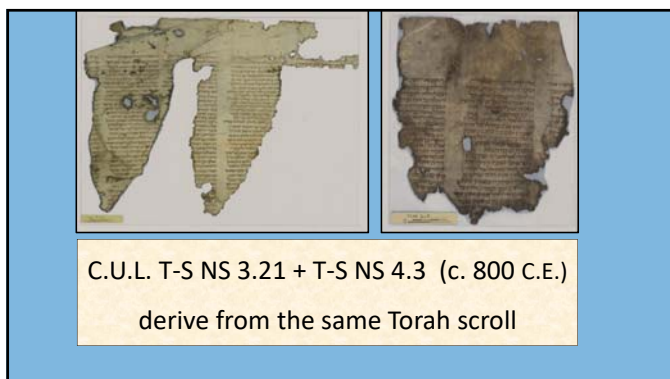
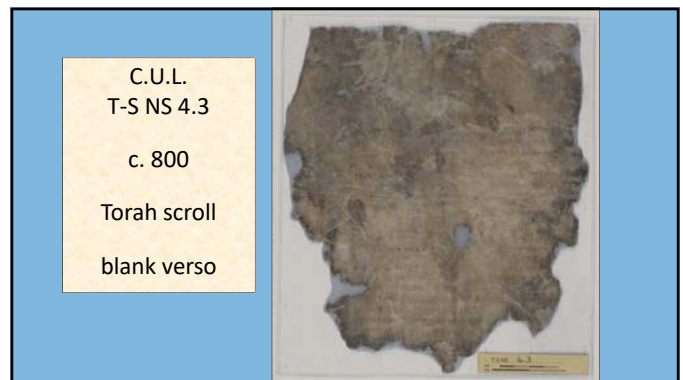
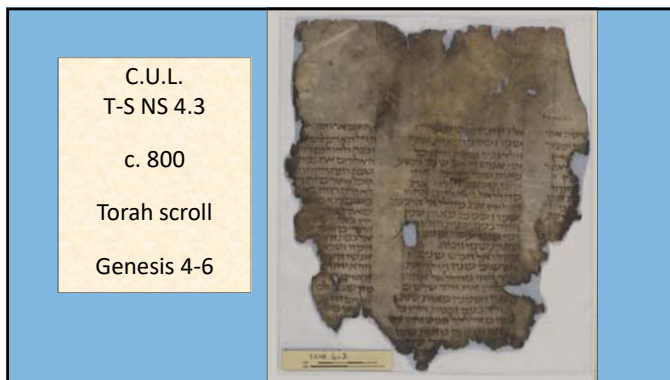
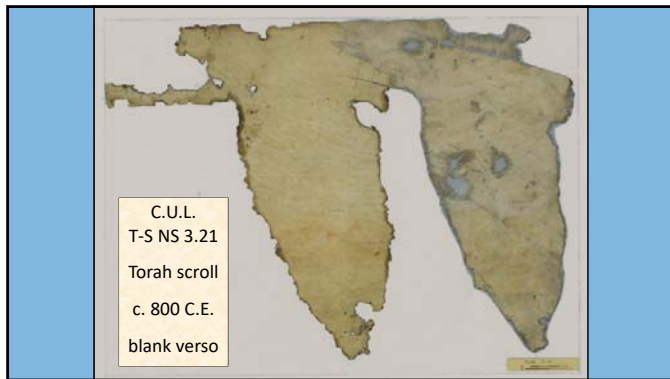
Ashkar-Gilson Scroll | Duke University | c. 700 C.E. | Exodus 15  
More legible through photo enhancement

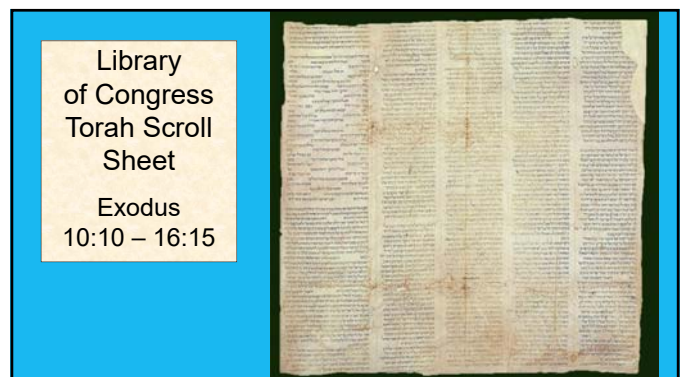
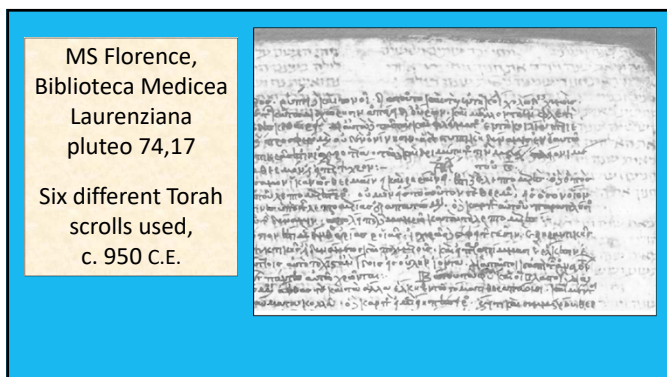
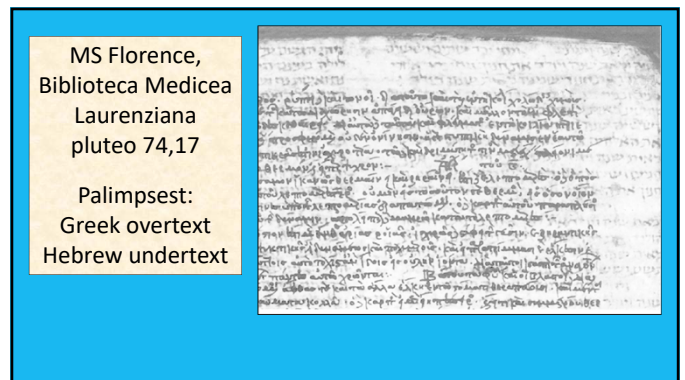
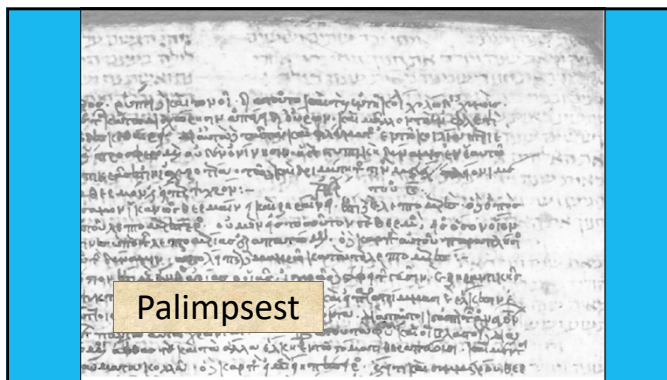
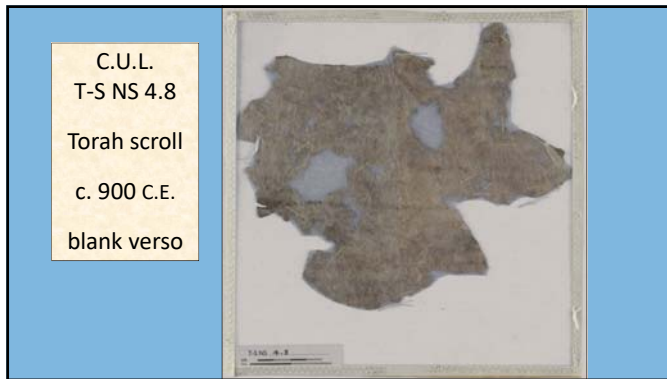
London  
Scroll  
c. 700  
C.E.



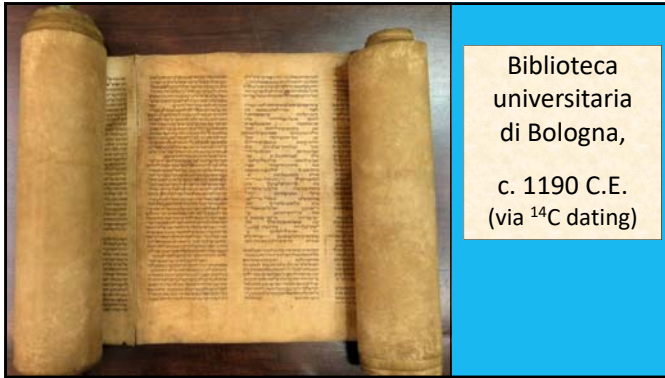












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