In 1897 two Oxford archaeologists began digging a low sand-covered mound a hundred miles south of Cairo. When they had finally finished, ten years later, they had uncovered 500,000 fragments of papyri. Shipped back to Oxford, the meticulous and scholarly work of deciphering these fragments began. It is still going on today. As well as Christian writings from totally unknown gospels and Greek poems not seen by human eyes since the fall of Rome, there are tax returns, petitions, private letters, sales documents, leases, wills and shopping lists. What they found was the entire life of a flourishing market-town - Oxyrhynchos (the city of the sharp-nosed fish), on a side branch of the Nile - encapsulated in its waste paper. The total lack of rain in this part of Egypt had preserved the papyrus beneath the sand, as nowhere else in the Roman Empire. We hear the voices of barbers, bee-keepers and boat-makers, dyers and donkey-drivers, plasterers and poets, weavers and wine-merchants, set against the great events of late antiquity: the rise and fall of the Roman Empire and the coming of Christianity, as well as the all-important annual flooding of the Nile. The result is an extraordinary and unique picture of everyday life in the Nile Valley between Alexander the Great in 300 BC and the Arab conquest a thousand years later.
4/25/5: **Papyrus Reveals New Clues to Ancient World** - National Geographic News "..the Oxyrhynchus collection holds a lot of information about the rise of Christianity during the Roman period. (Egypt became part of the Roman Empire after Cleopatra's fleet was defeated at the battle of Actium in 31 B.C.). "[Christianity] starts out as a small social phenomenon, then just takes over everything," Obbink said. "You can see other cultural sea changes taking place—changes in taxes, changes in rule. It's all reflected in the papyrus."

4/20/5: **Classical Holy Grail or Unholy Hype?** "So as of right now, the rest of the papyrological community is waiting to hear Dirk Obbink at Oxford either back up for disavow the claims made in the article. At the very best, the Independent's reporters are covering some kind of new imaging breakthrough in an extremely hyperbolic fashion. And at the worst, they're trying to make a major story out of 20-year-old news. " |

Brautigan and Oxy - "I'm sure Brautigan wouldn't have wanted his spoof to be treated this seriously, but I like this idea of the fragments, and falling in love with the sound of them, and with the ghost of what was lost. In this case, and in that of the Oxyrhynchus materials, so little remained that the words could be nothing more than tantalizing. With the discovery of more text for things that were incomplete, some of that mystery will disappear, some of the possibilities will be closed off. "

4/20/5: **Oxy Online** P.Oxy. LVI 4499 The newest volume of *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* contains a fragmentary papyrus of Revelation which is the earliest known witness to some sections (late third / early fourth century). A detailed discussion of its place in the MS tradition is given in the printed volume. One feature of particular interest is the number that this papyrus assigns to the Beast: 616, rather than the usual 666. (665 is also found.) We knew that this variant existed: Irenaeus cites (and refutes) it. But this is the earliest instance that has so far been found. The number - chi, iota, stigma (hexakosiai deka hex) — is in the third line of the fragment shown below. But why does it matter what the number is? For that, we have to turn to ancient Greek ideas about numerology.

4/17/5: **Decoded at last: the 'classical holy grail' that may rewrite the history of the world** - "In the past four days alone, Oxford's classicists have used it to make a series of astonishing discoveries, including writing by Sophocles, Euripides, Hesiod and other literary giants of the ancient world, lost for millennia. They even believe they are likely to find lost Christian gospels, the originals of which were written around the time of the earliest books of the New Testament." | **Apocalypse of Baruch** Discovered at Oxyrhynchus

**P.Oxy.840**
The Gospel of the Savior
"roughly 125-150 A.D."
Your Comments:

It seems unreasonable that a human record would have been made of a Levite priest and the Savior outside of the bible, but the story of cleansing seems very reasonable. Does your paprius really state what you say?

sethw22@gmail.com

The Oxyrhynchus Papyri are a group of manuscripts discovered during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by papyrologists Bernard Pyne Grenfell and Arthur Surridge Hunt at an ancient rubbish dump near Oxyrhynchus in Egypt (28°32′N 30°40′E / 28.533°N 30.667°E, modern el-Bahnasa). The manuscripts date from the time of the Ptolemaic (3rd century BC) and Roman periods of Egyptian history (from 32 BC to the Muslim conquest of Egypt in 640 AD). The Oxyrhynchus papyri are a very numerous group of manuscripts discovered by archaeologists at an ancient rubbish dump near Oxyrhynchus (modern el-Bahnasa) in Egypt. They include thousands of Greek and Latin documents, letters and literary works. They also include a few vellum manuscripts, and more recent Arabic manuscripts on paper (for example, the medieval P. Oxy. VI 1006). See Also Biblical manuscript.