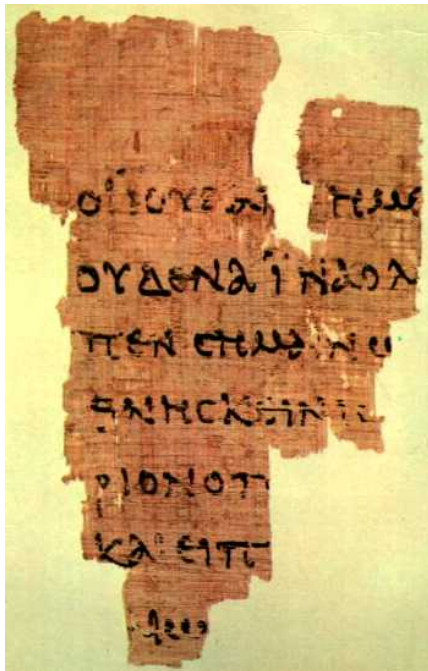


SHARE ***YOUR QUESTIONS***



EQUIPPED FOR LIFE 2025

How can we ask modern questions of an ancient text?



Prof. Steve Walton
Trinity College, Bristol

Slides: <http://stevewalton.info>



What's the Bible for?

‘All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, **so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**’

2 Timothy 3:16-17

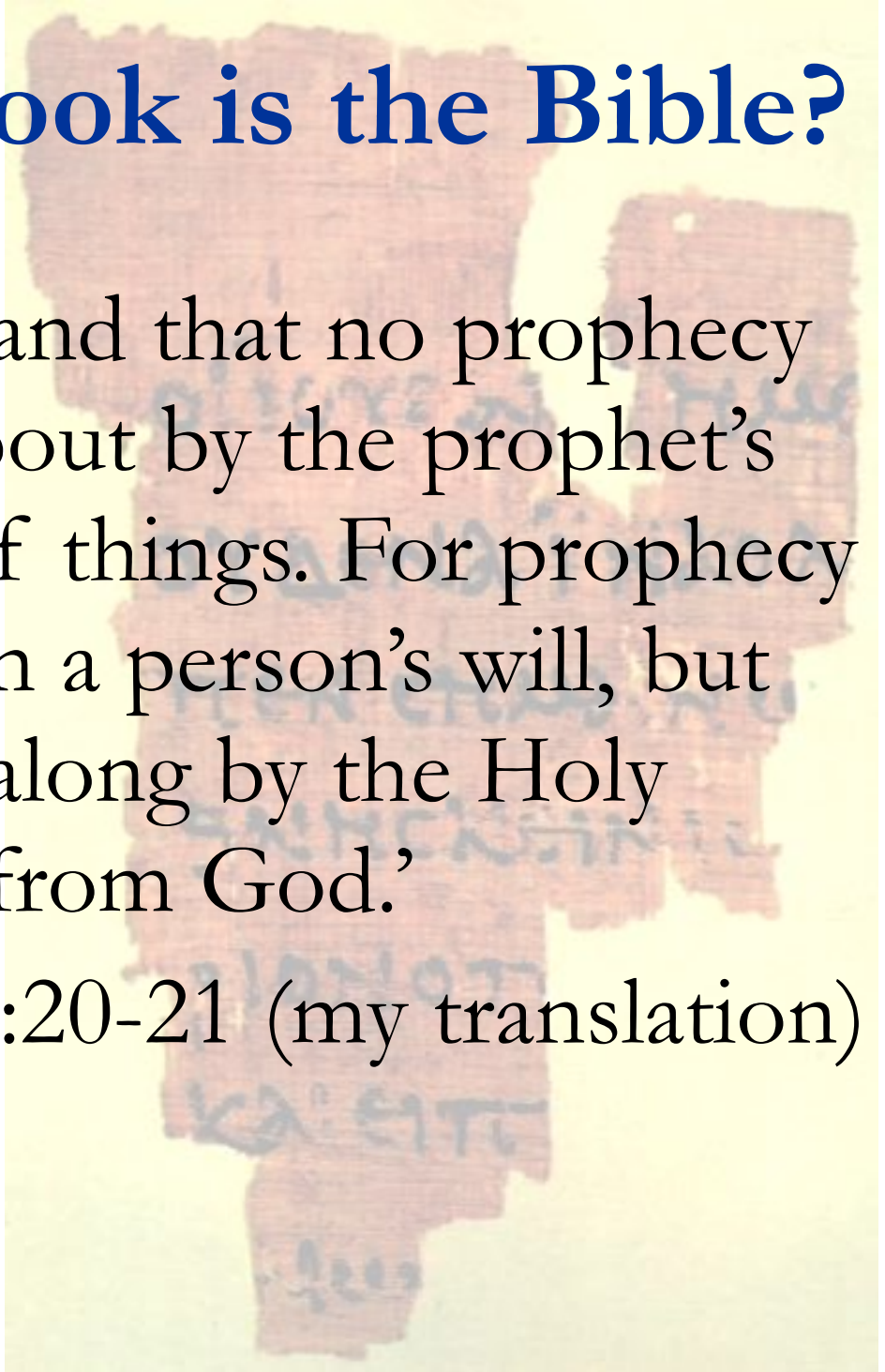




What kind of book is the Bible?

‘...you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in a person’s will, but as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit, people spoke from God.’

2 Peter 1:20-21 (my translation)

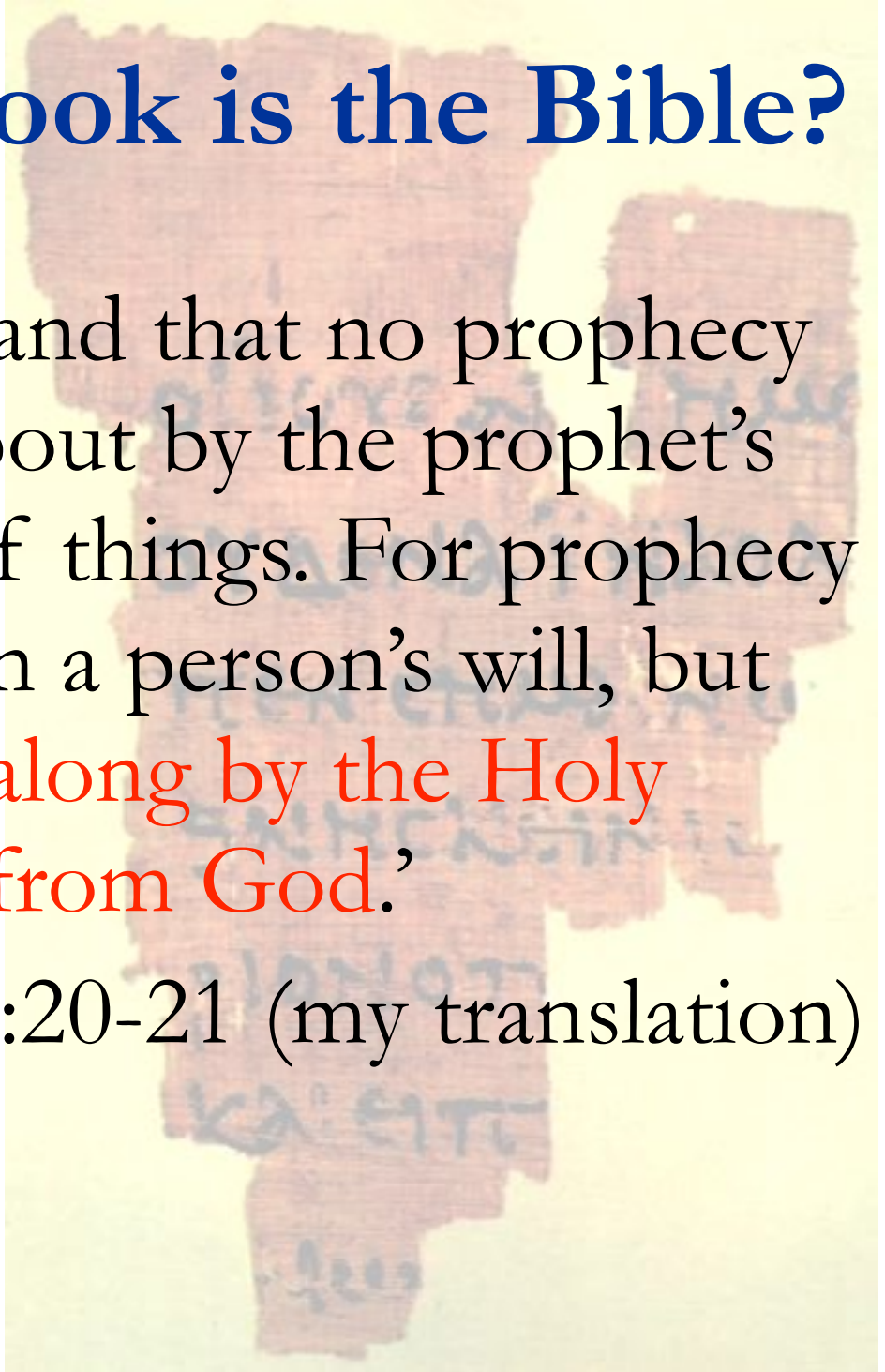




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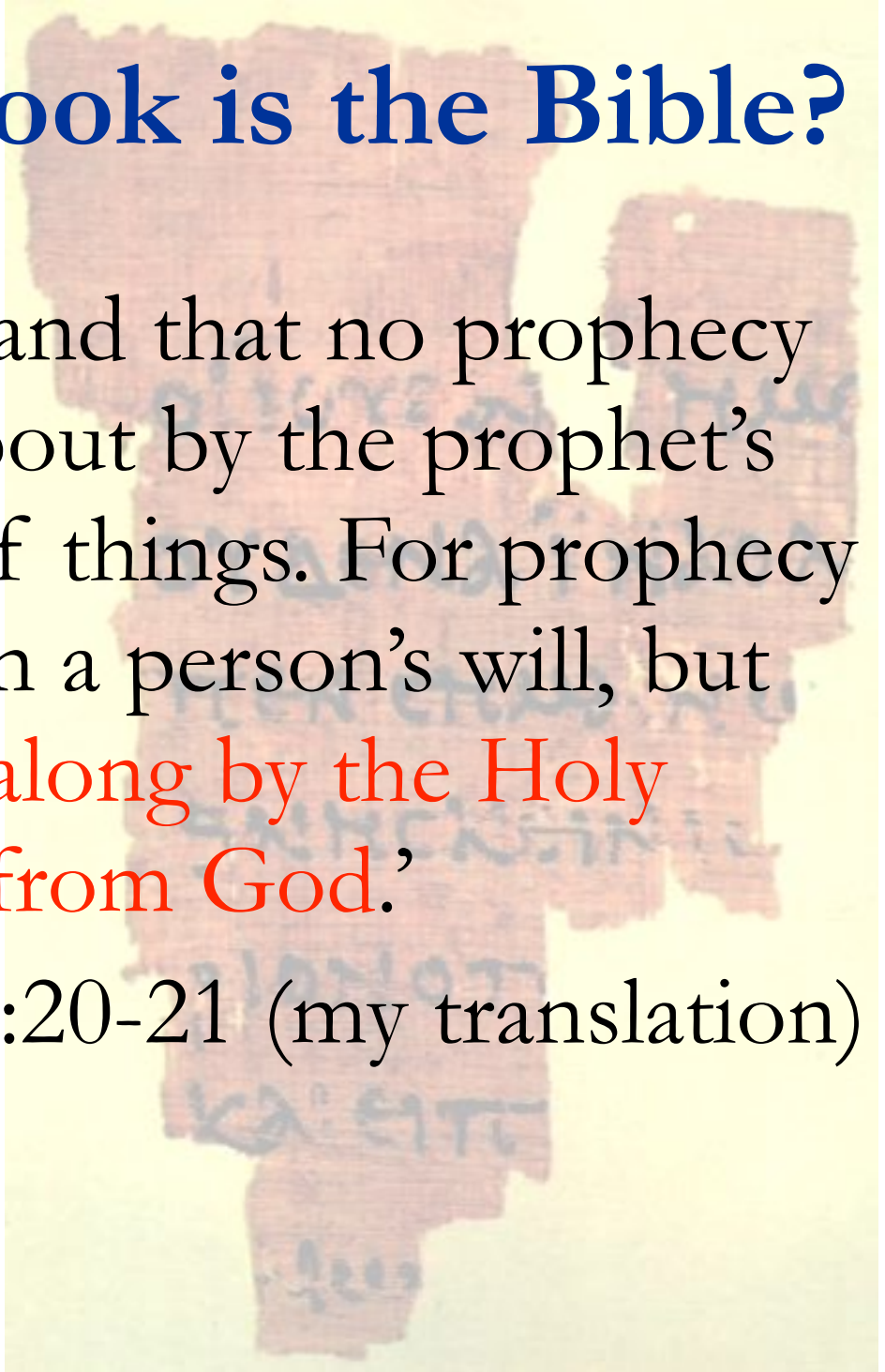




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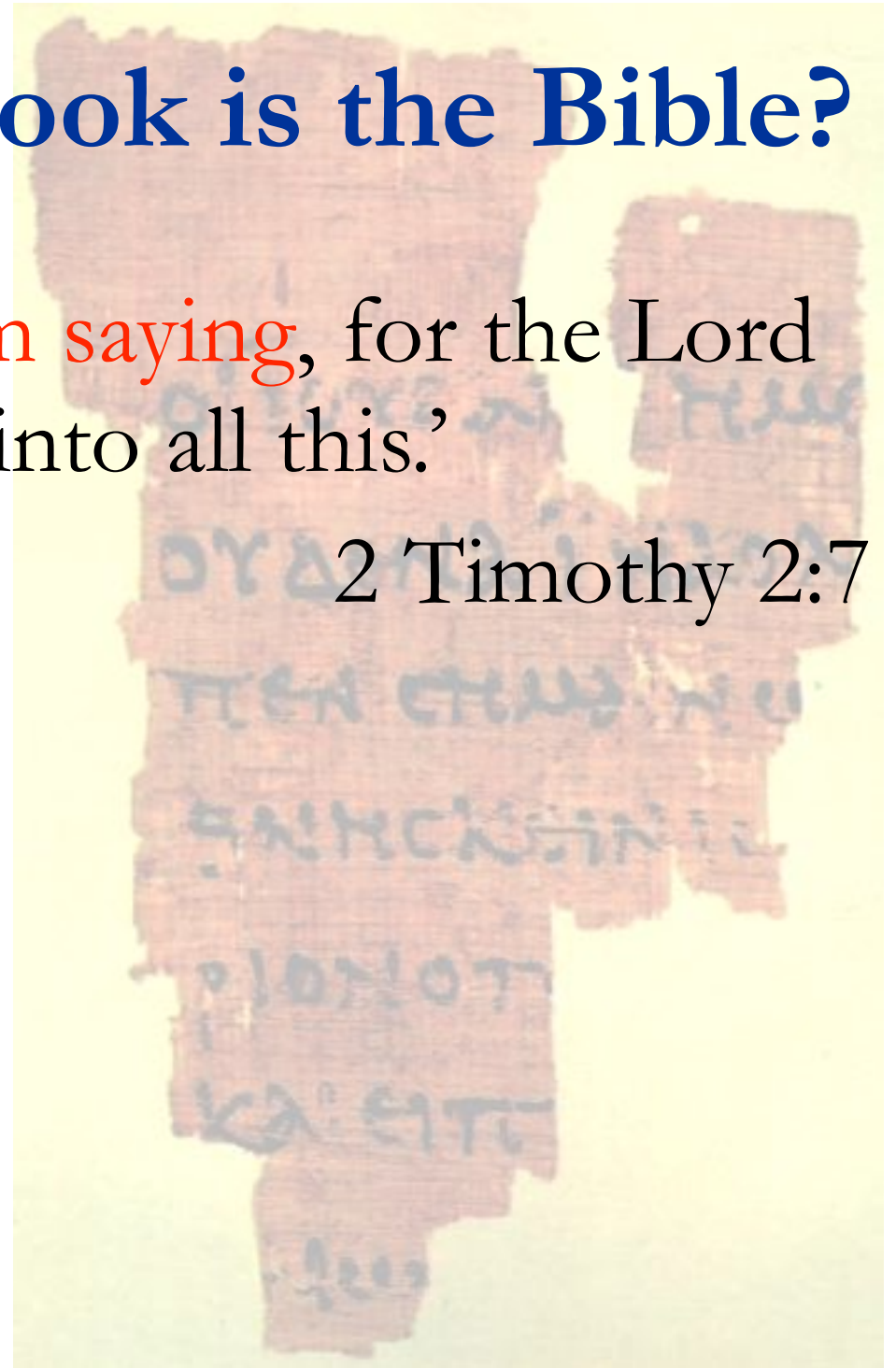




What kind of book is the Bible?

‘Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this.’

2 Timothy 2:7





What kind of book is the Bible?

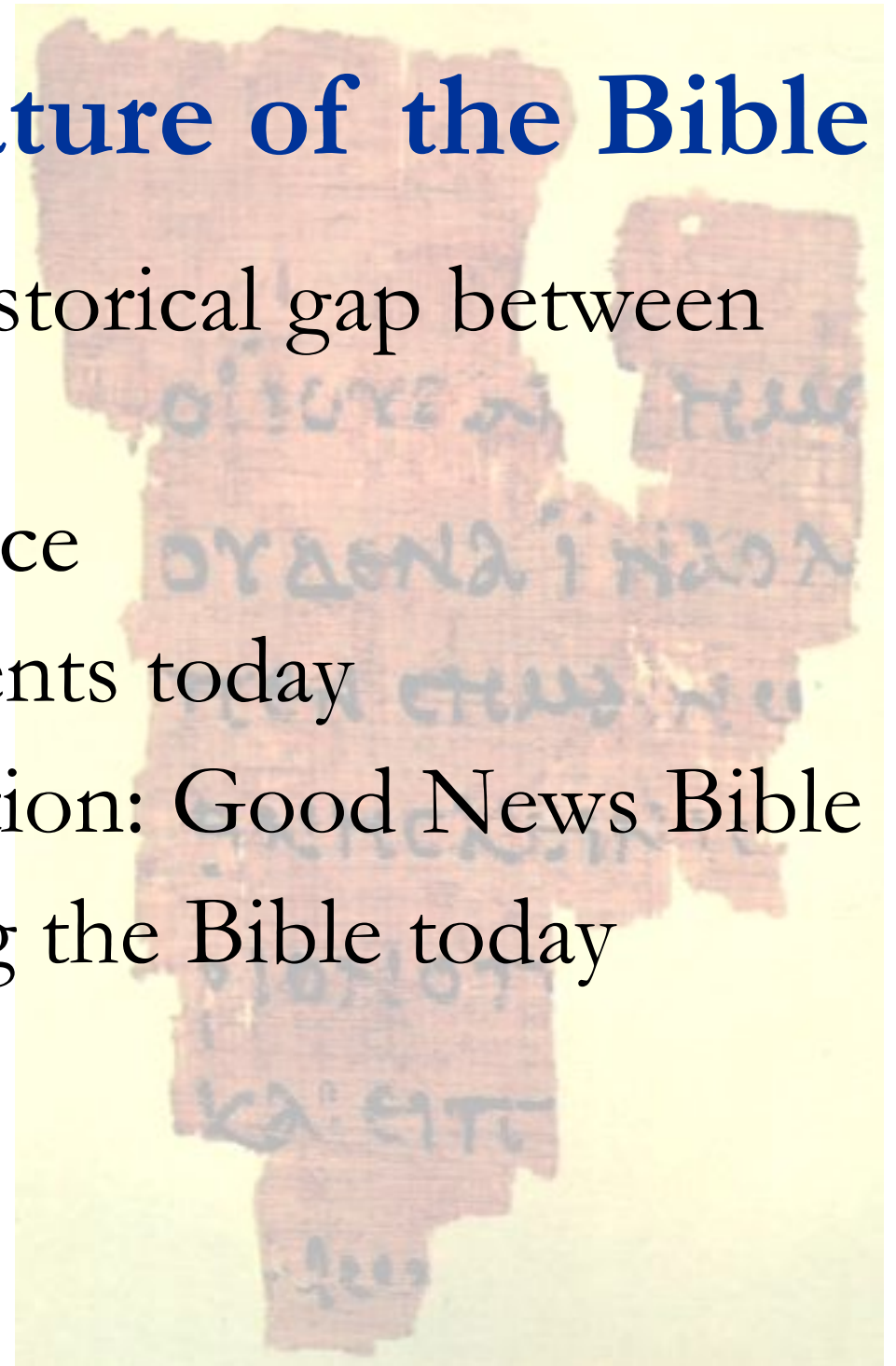
‘Reflect on what I am saying, **for the Lord will give you insight into all this.**’ 2 Timothy 2:7

‘[Jesus] said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.’ Luke 24:25-27



The ancient nature of the Bible

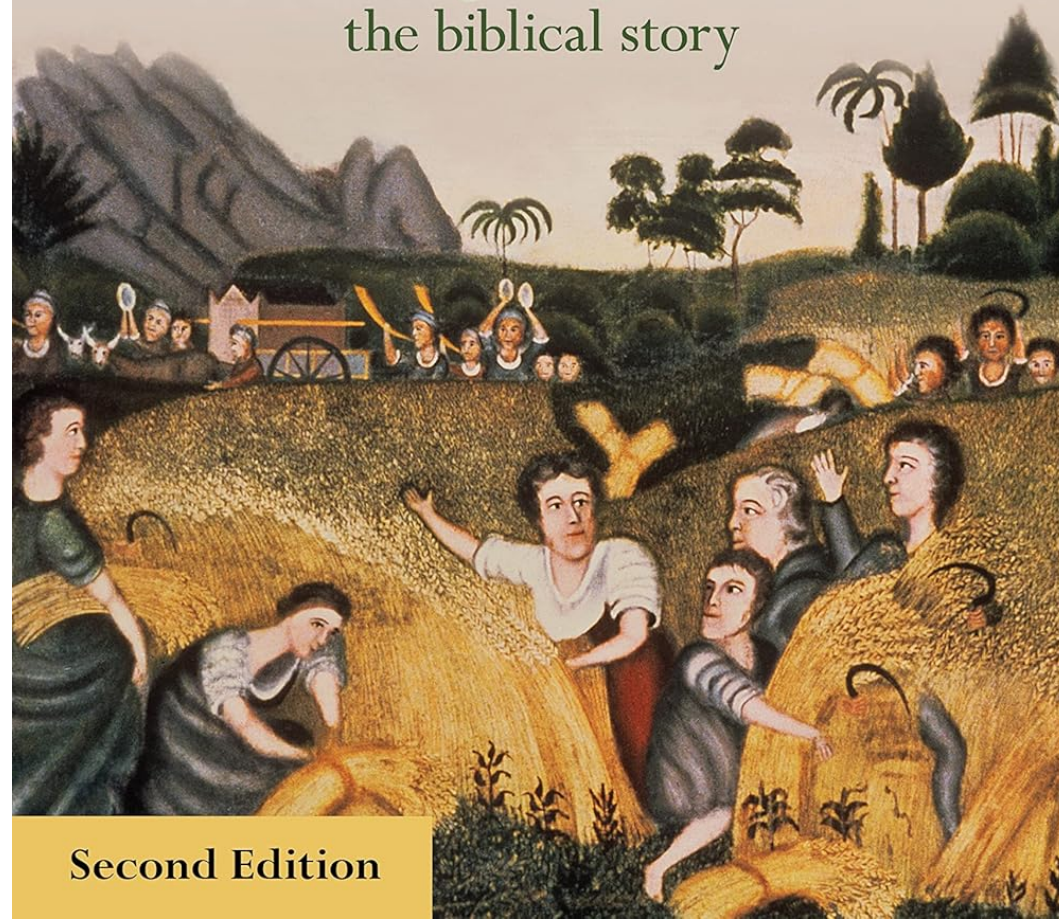
- the cultural and historical gap between then and now
- dynamic equivalence
 - finding equivalents today
 - in Bible translation: Good News Bible
 - in appropriating the Bible today



CRAIG BARTHOLOMEW
AND MICHAEL GOHEEN

THE DRAMA OF SCRIPTURE

Finding our place in
the biblical story

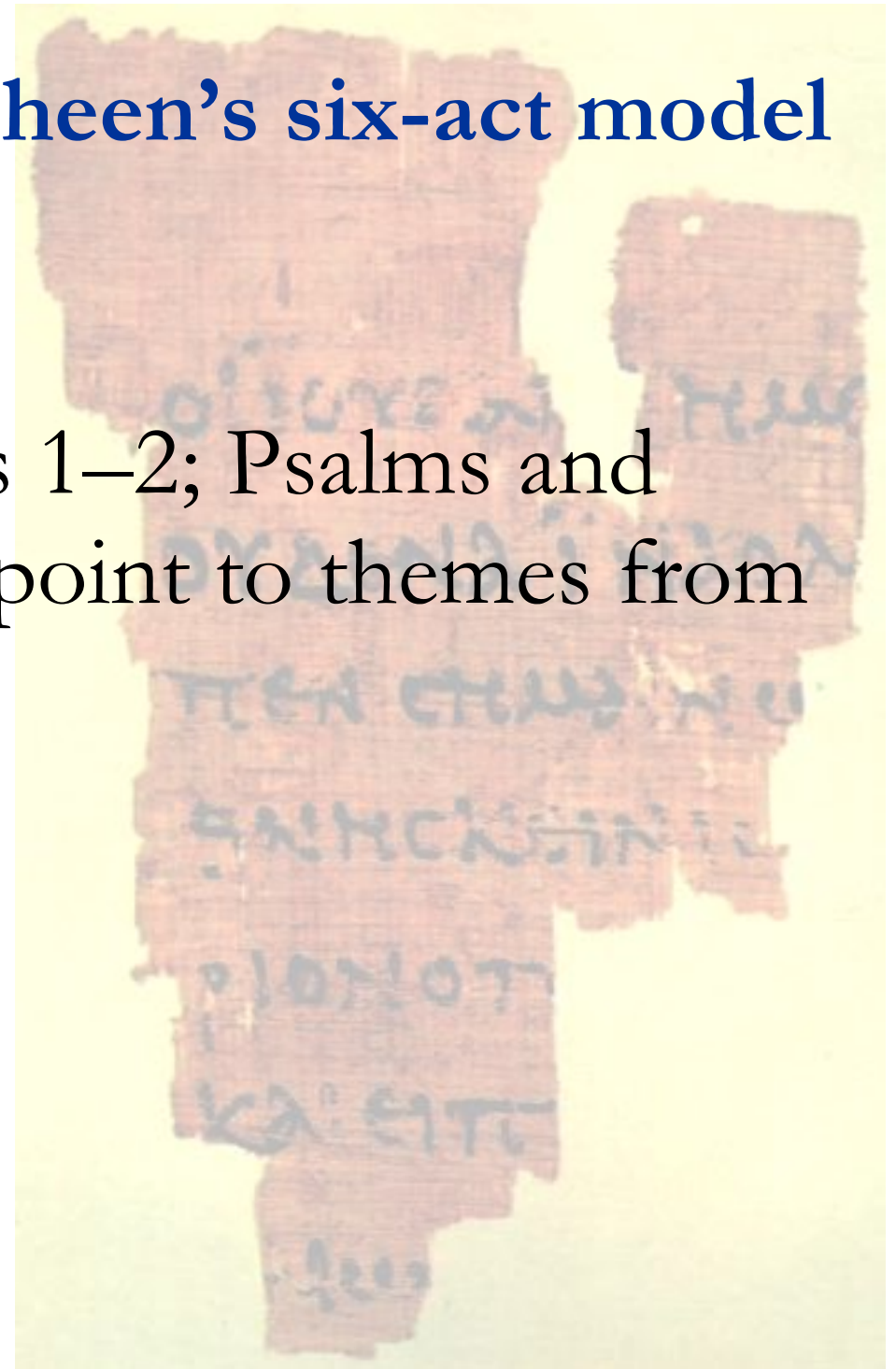


Second Edition



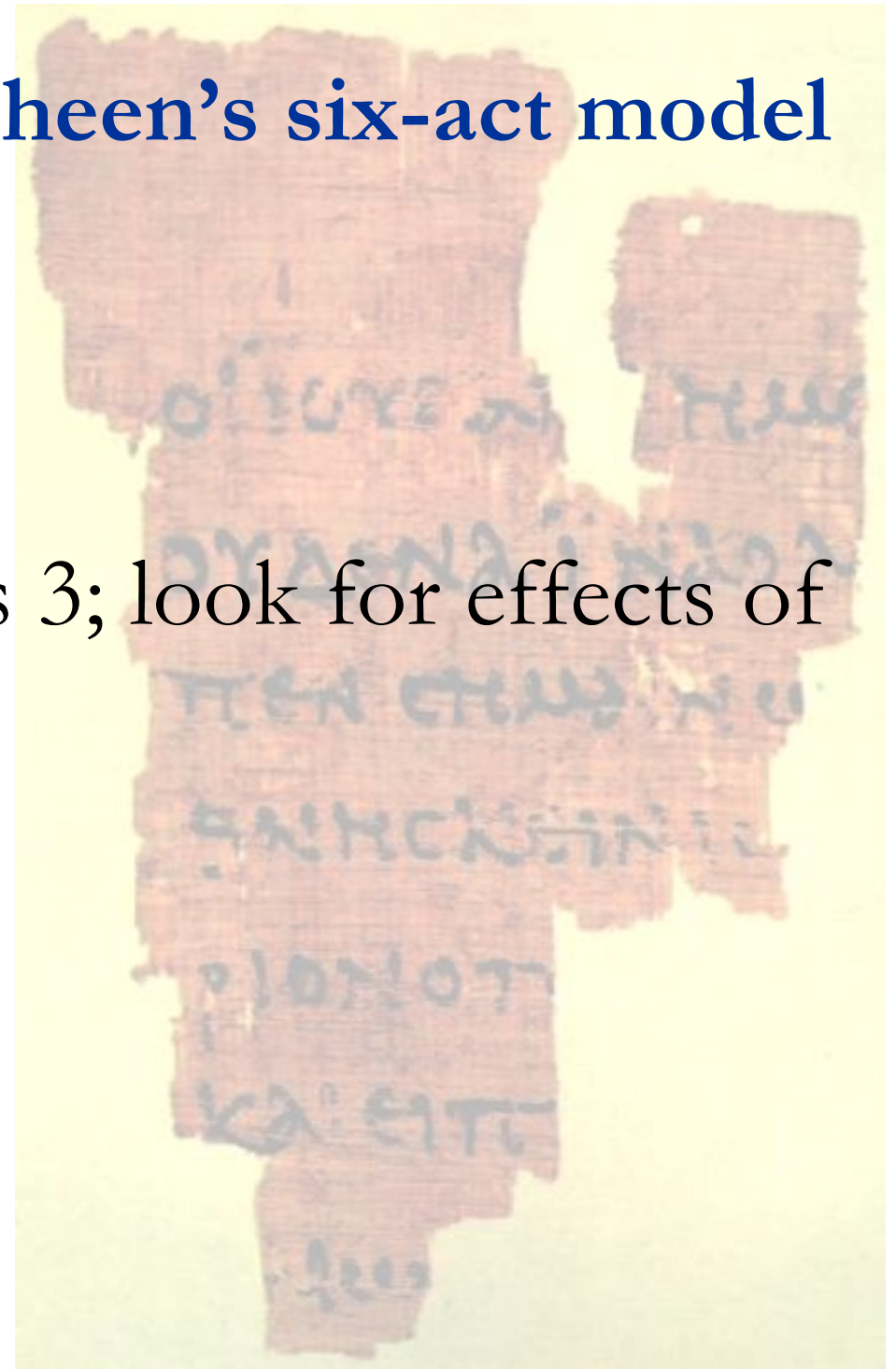
Bartholomew & Goheen's six-act model

- creation
 - not just Genesis 1–2; Psalms and prophets often point to themes from creation



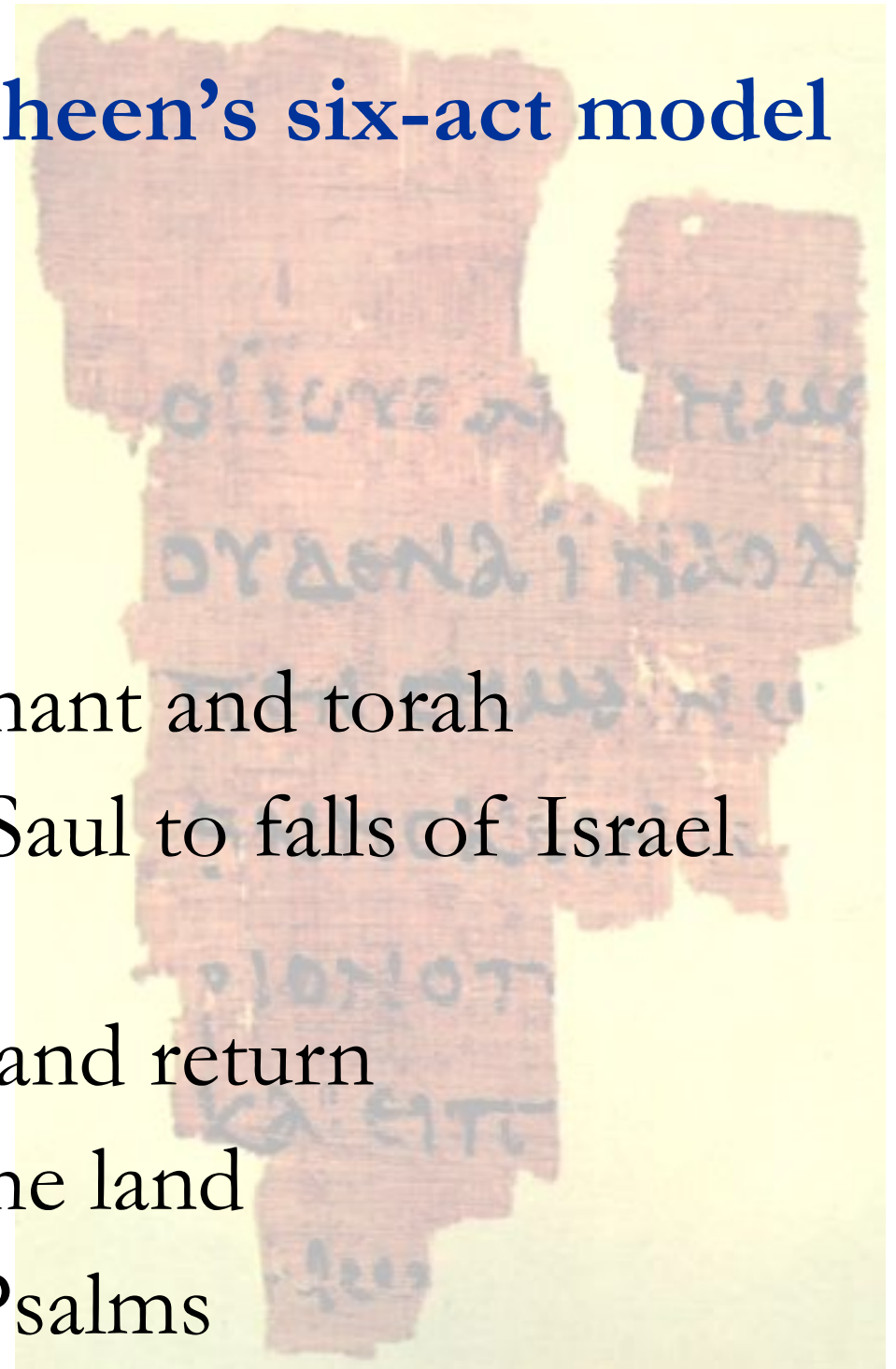
Bartholomew & Goheen's six-act model

- creation
- fall
 - not just Genesis 3; look for effects of human sin



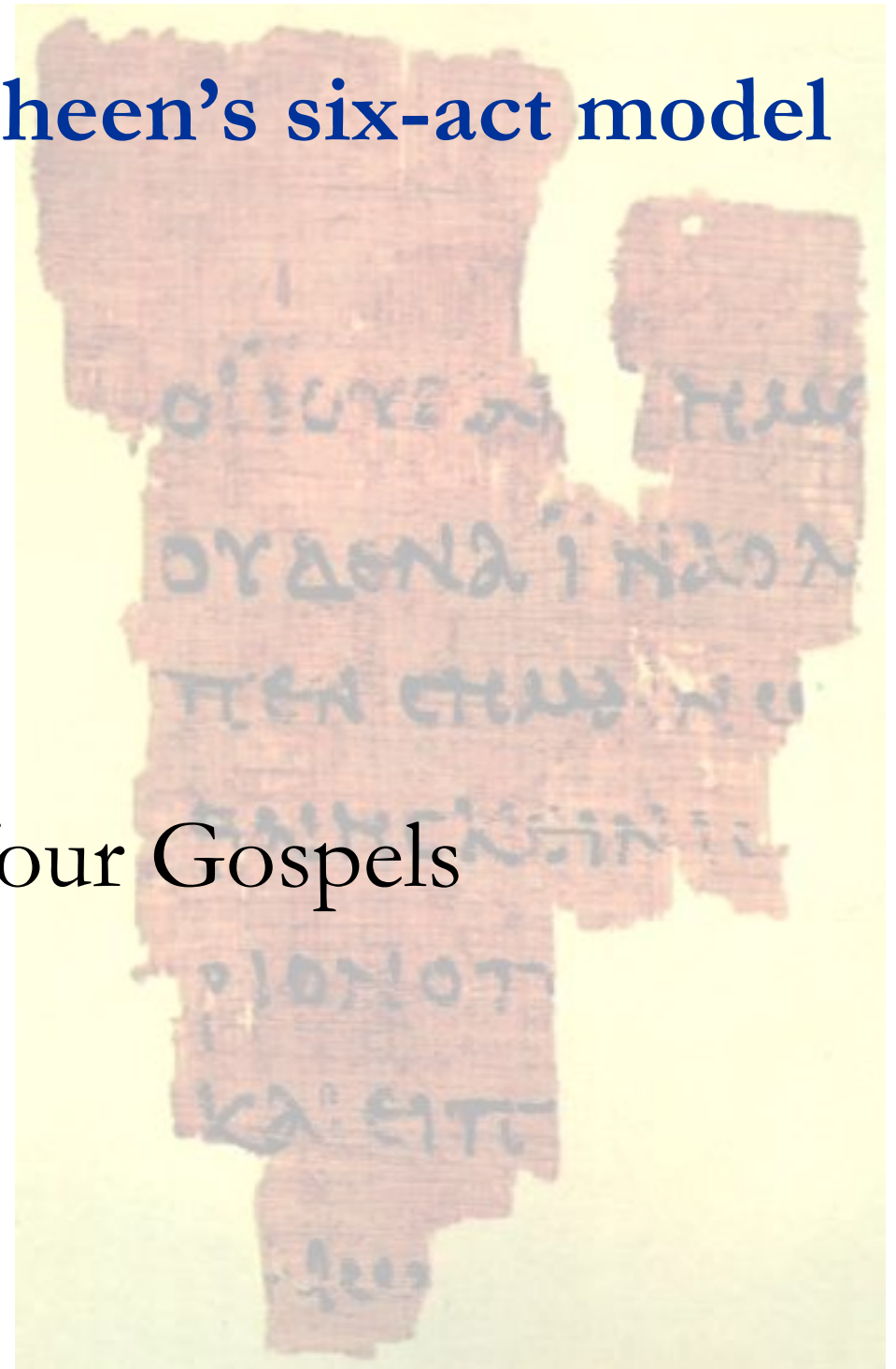
Bartholomew & Goheen's six-act model

- creation
- fall
- Israel
 - features of covenant and torah
 - monarchy from Saul to falls of Israel and Judah
 - exile in Babylon and return
 - resettlement in the land
 - worship — the Psalms



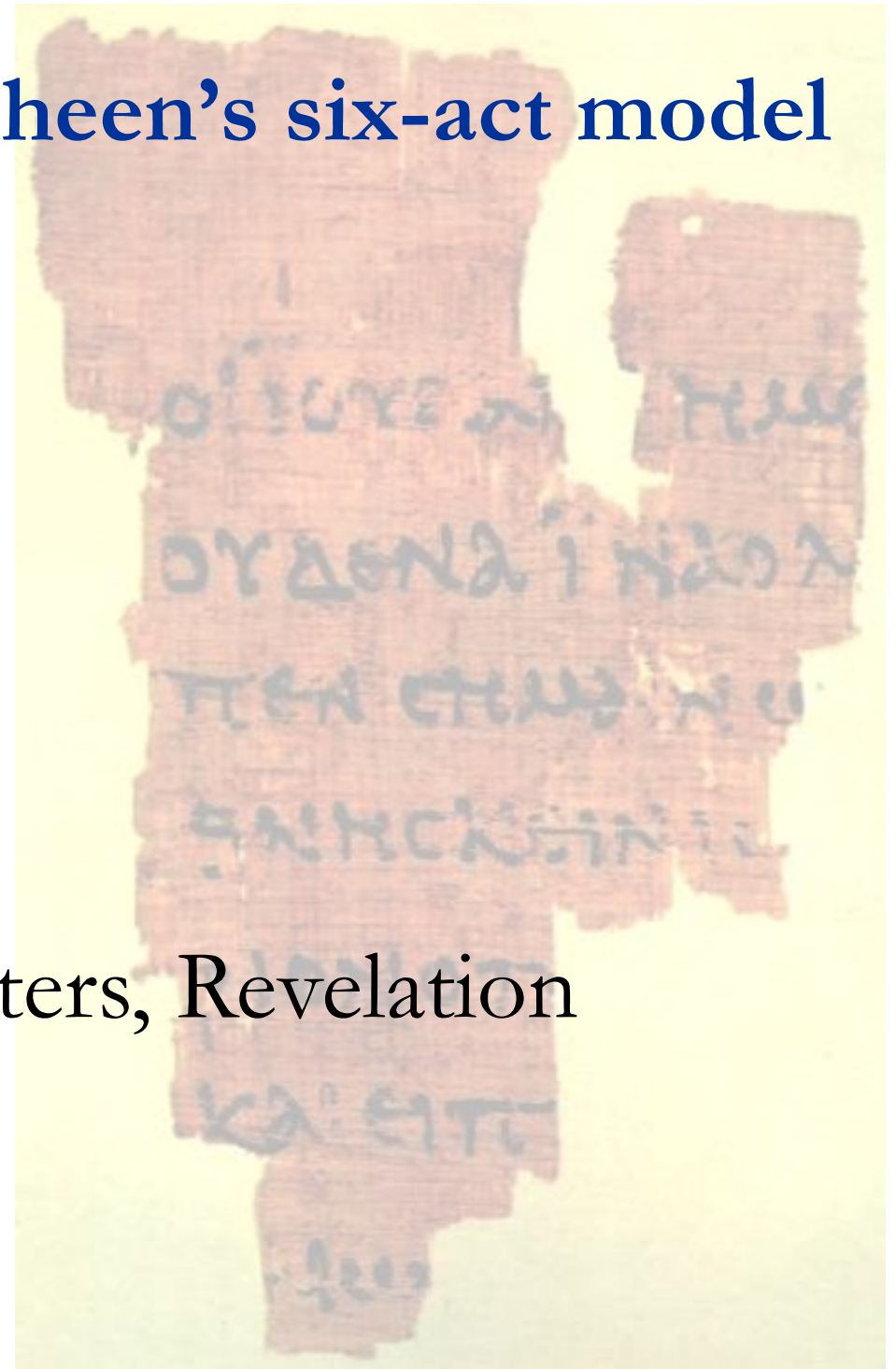
Bartholomew & Goheen's six-act model

- creation
- fall
- Israel
- Jesus
 - principally the four Gospels



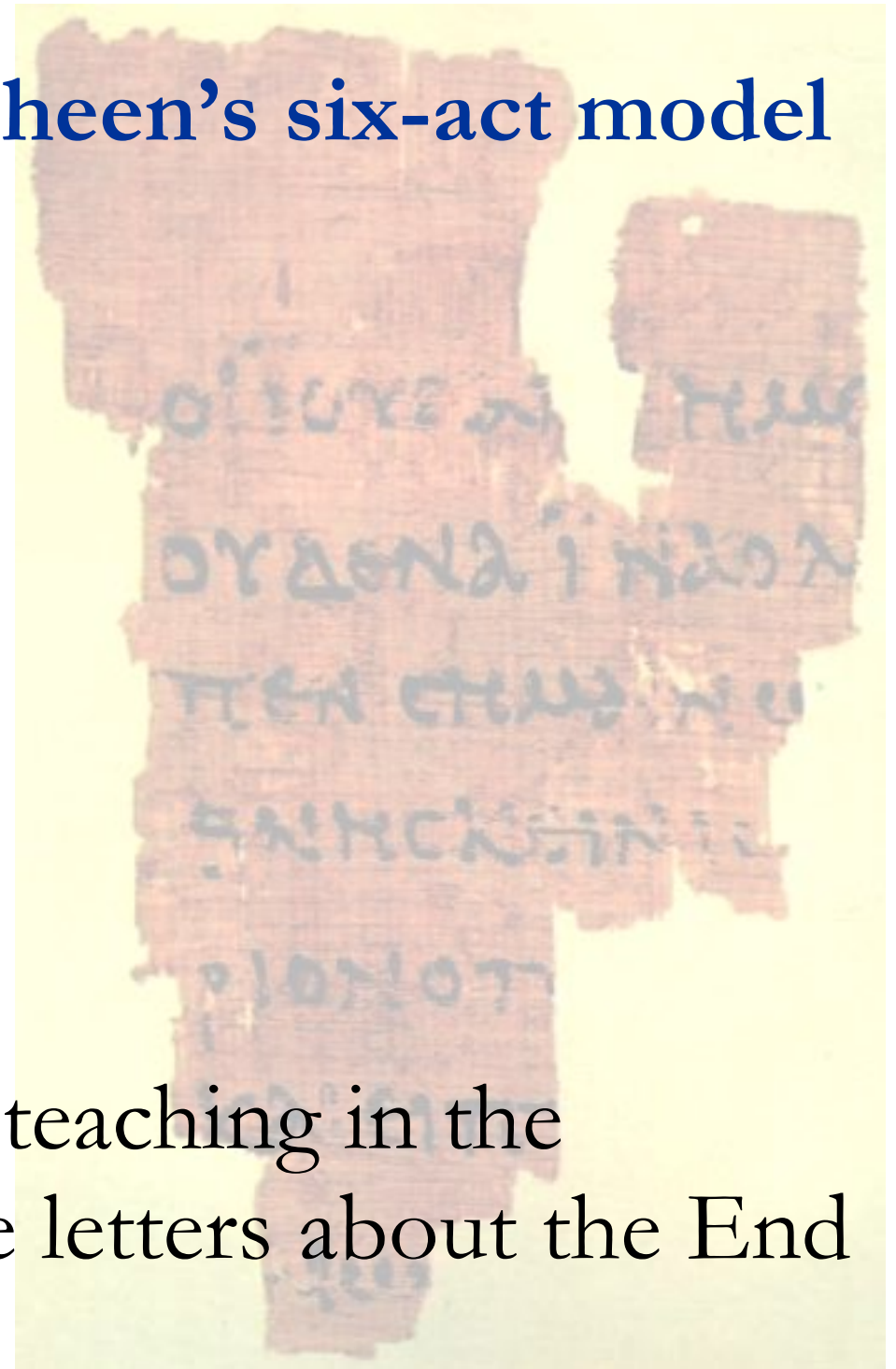
Bartholomew & Goheen's six-act model

- creation
- fall
- Israel
- Jesus
- church
 - Acts and the letters, Revelation



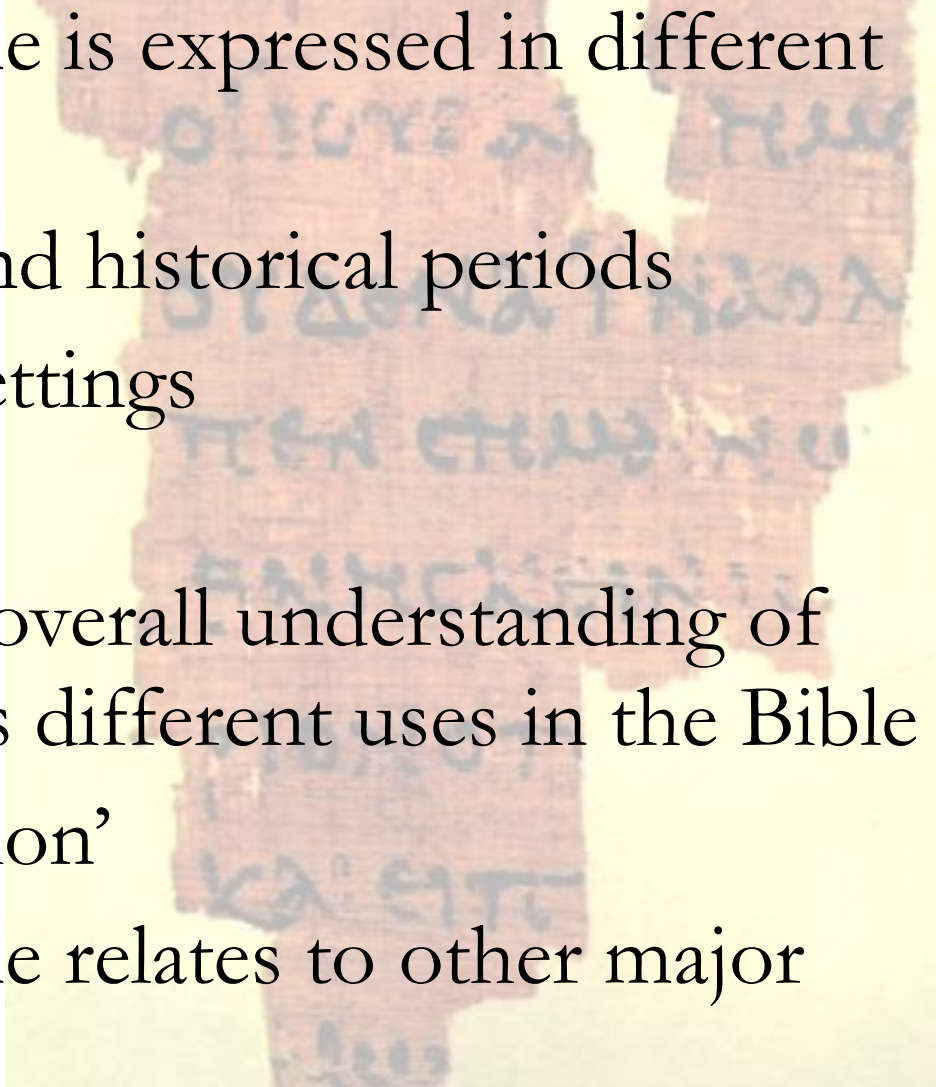
Bartholomew & Goheen's six-act model

- creation
- fall
- Israel
- Jesus
- church
- world to come
 - Revelation plus teaching in the Gospels and the letters about the End



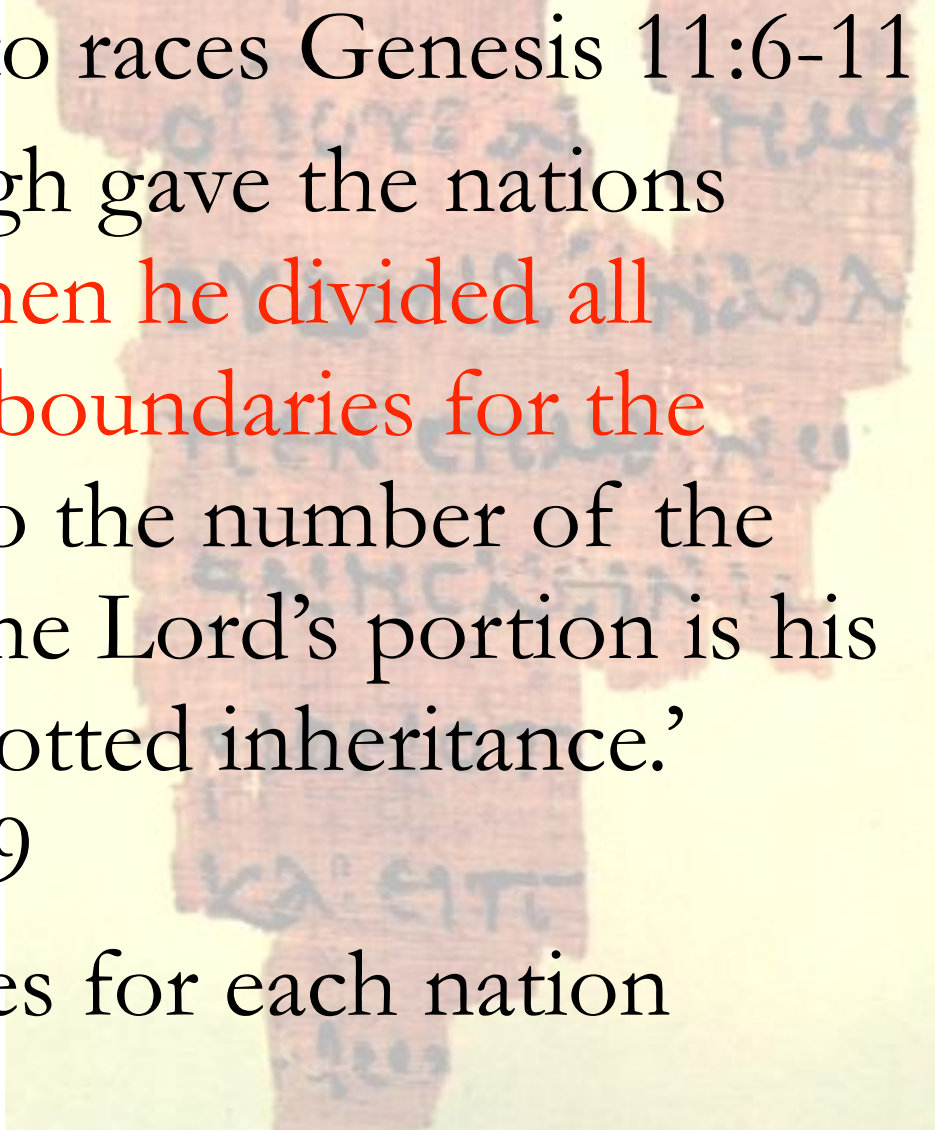


Questions to consider

- consider how the theme is expressed in different parts of the Bible
 - different cultures and historical periods
 - different political settings
 - different lifestyles
 - consider if there is an overall understanding of the theme which unites different uses in the Bible
 - ‘progressive revelation’
 - consider how the theme relates to other major themes in the Bible
- 



Apartheid as selective reading

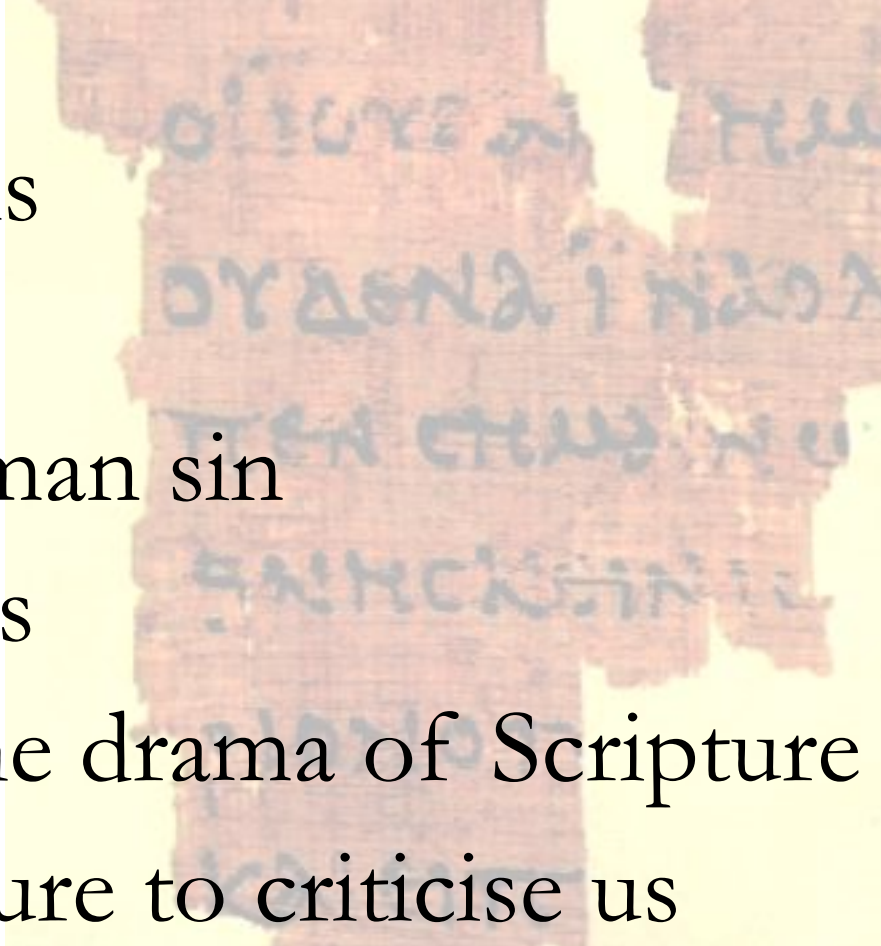
- division of earth into races Genesis 11:6-11
 - ‘When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, **when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the peoples** according to the number of the sons of Israel. For the Lord’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance.’
Deuteronomy 32:8-9
 - God allocating places for each nation
Acts 17:26
- 

Apartheid as selective reading

- notice that the tower of Babel is an expression of human rebellion against God Genesis 11:4
- unity of humankind Acts 17:26 'From **one ancestor** he made all peoples'
- unity of peoples in Christ Galatians 3:28 'There is **neither Jew nor gentile**, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.'
- the vision of the world to come
 - 'with your blood you purchased for God **persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.**' Revelation 5:9; also 7:9

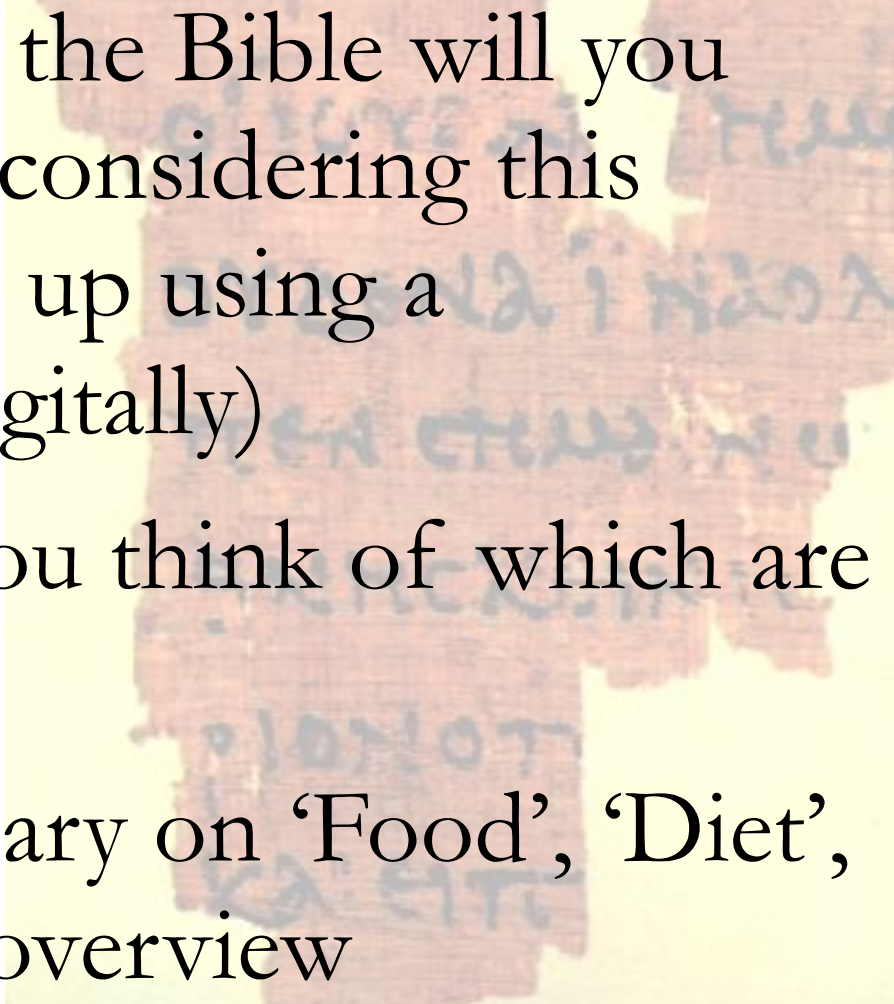


Factors to consider

- the way God is
 - the way the world is
 - created by God
 - damaged by human sin
 - the way humanity is
 - run this through the drama of Scripture
 - be ready for Scripture to criticise us
- 

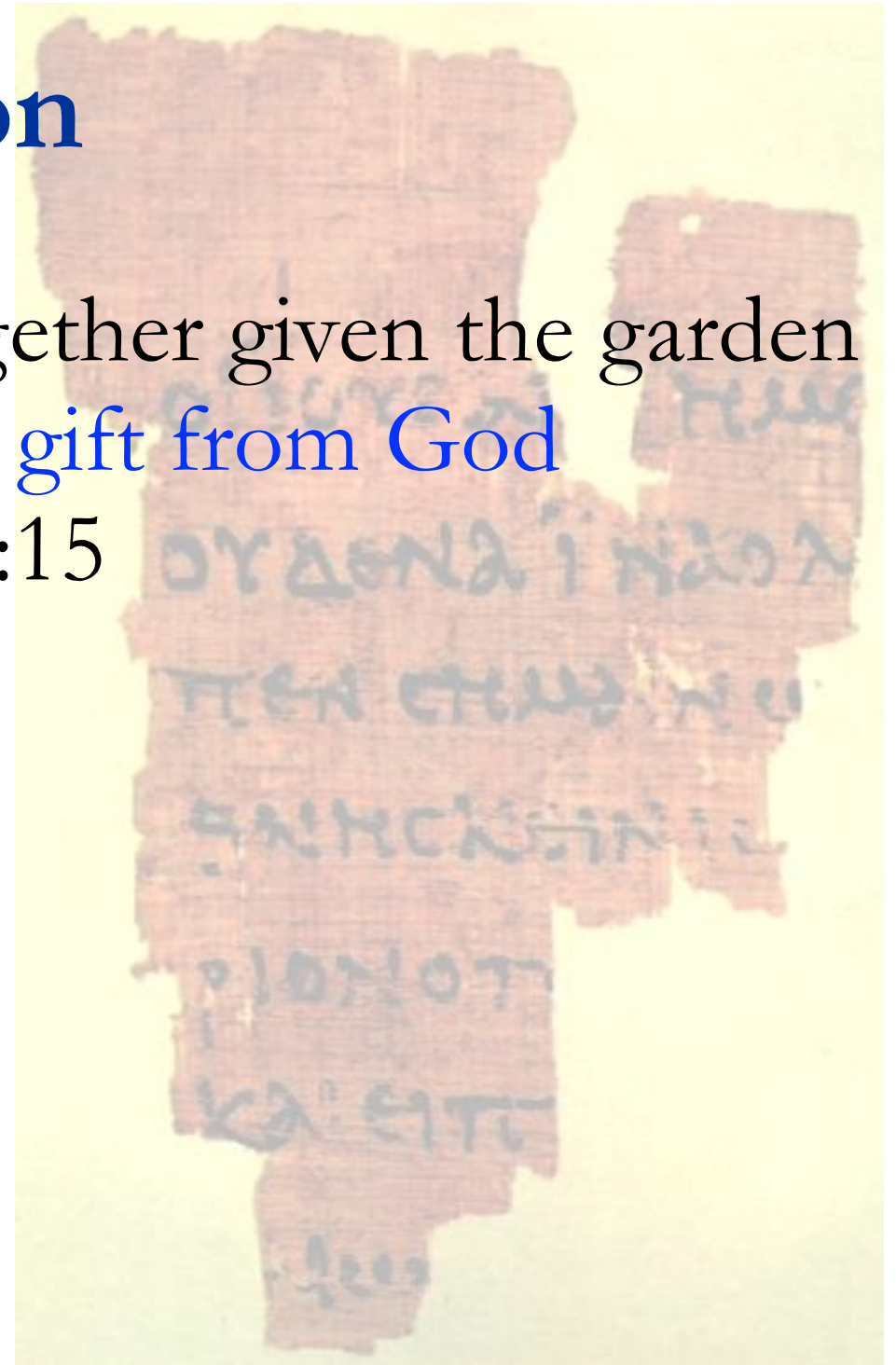


Food in the Bible

- What key words in the Bible will you want to explore in considering this theme? Look them up using a concordance (or digitally)
 - What stories can you think of which are relevant?
 - Use a Bible dictionary on 'Food', 'Diet', etc. to help get an overview
- 

Food in creation

- Adam and Eve together given the garden to tend — food as gift from God
Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15





Food in creation

Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and **let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”**

So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

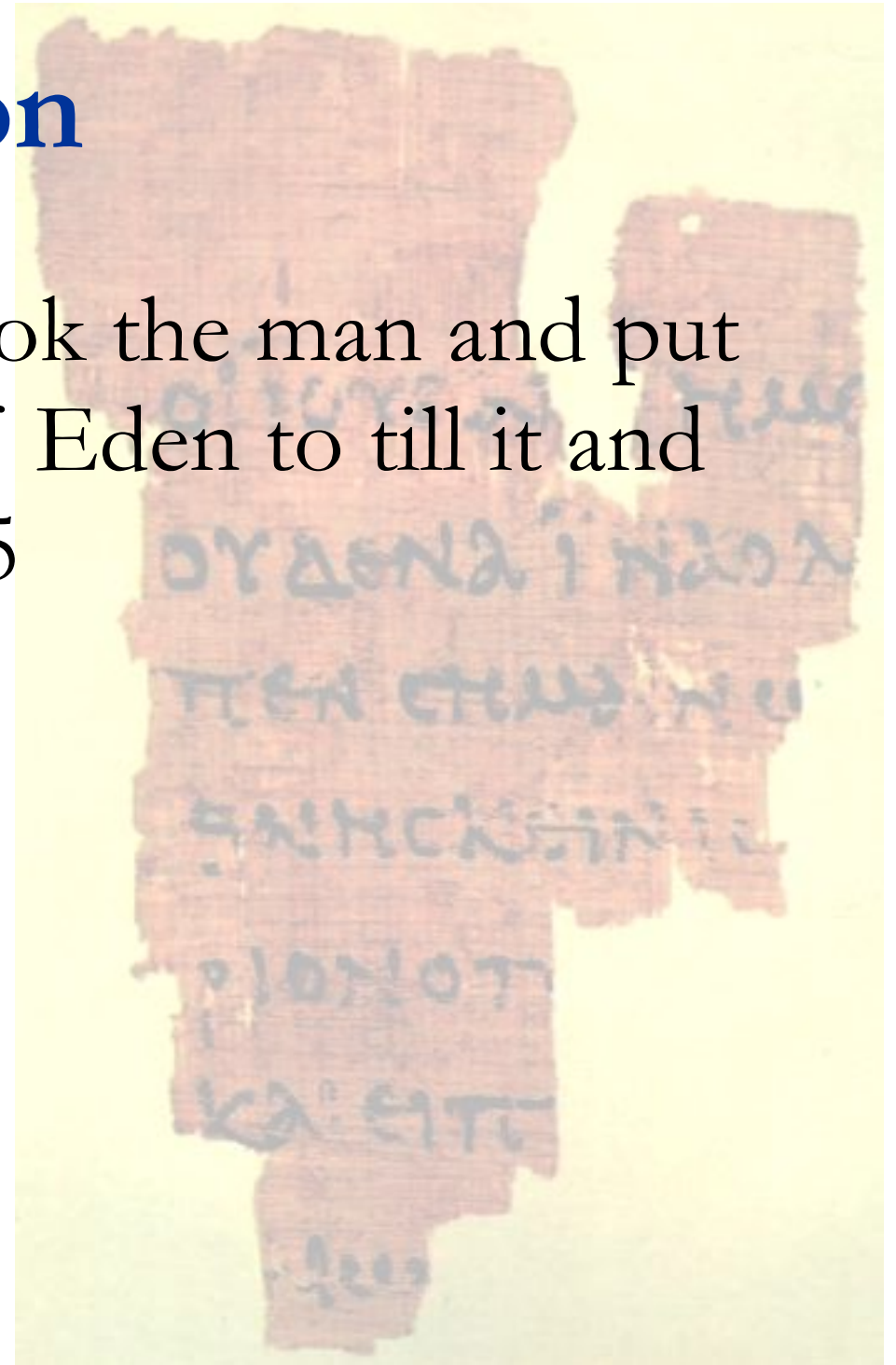
God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and **have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”**

Genesis 1:26-28



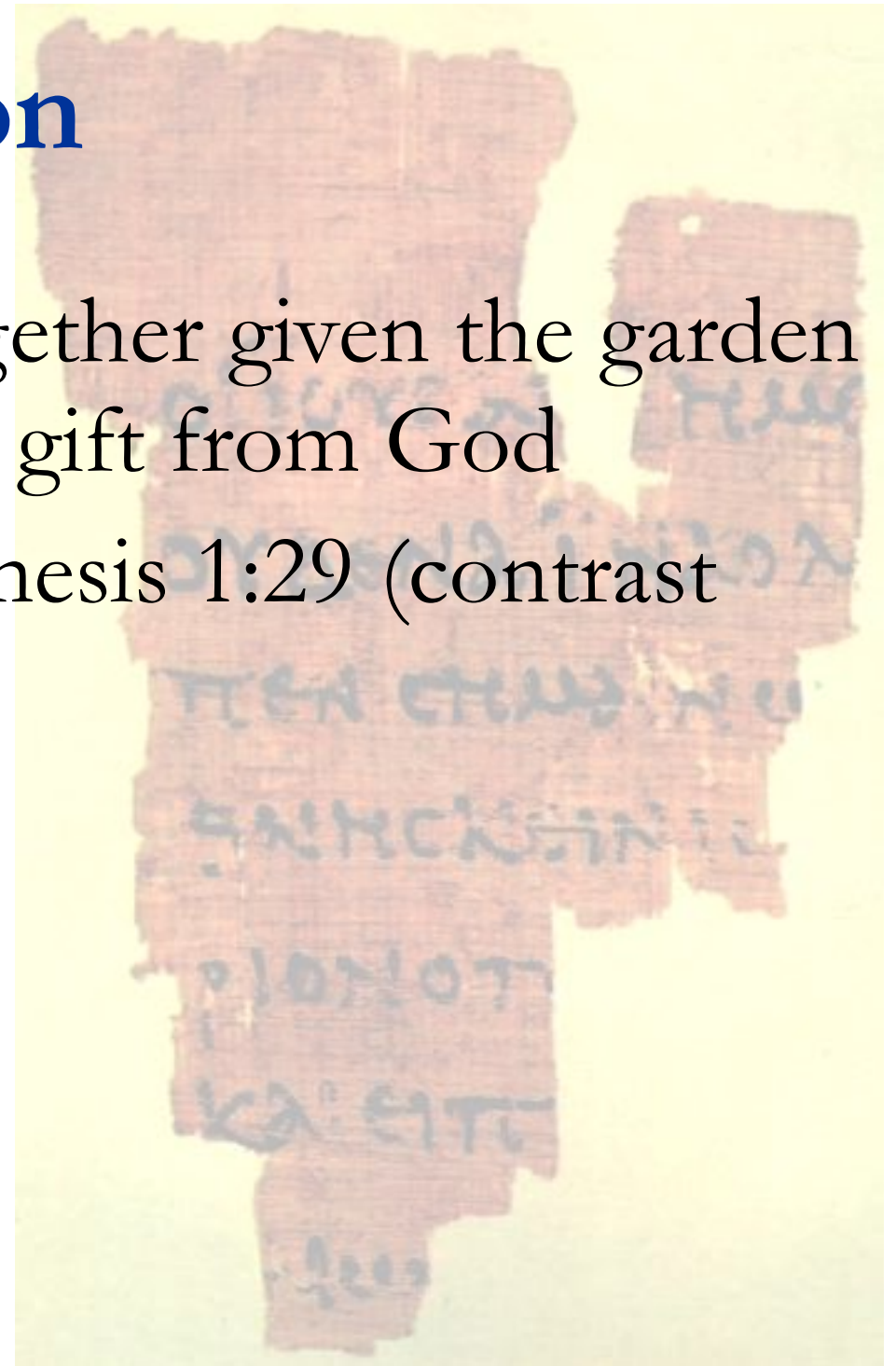
Food in creation

‘The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.’ Genesis 2:15



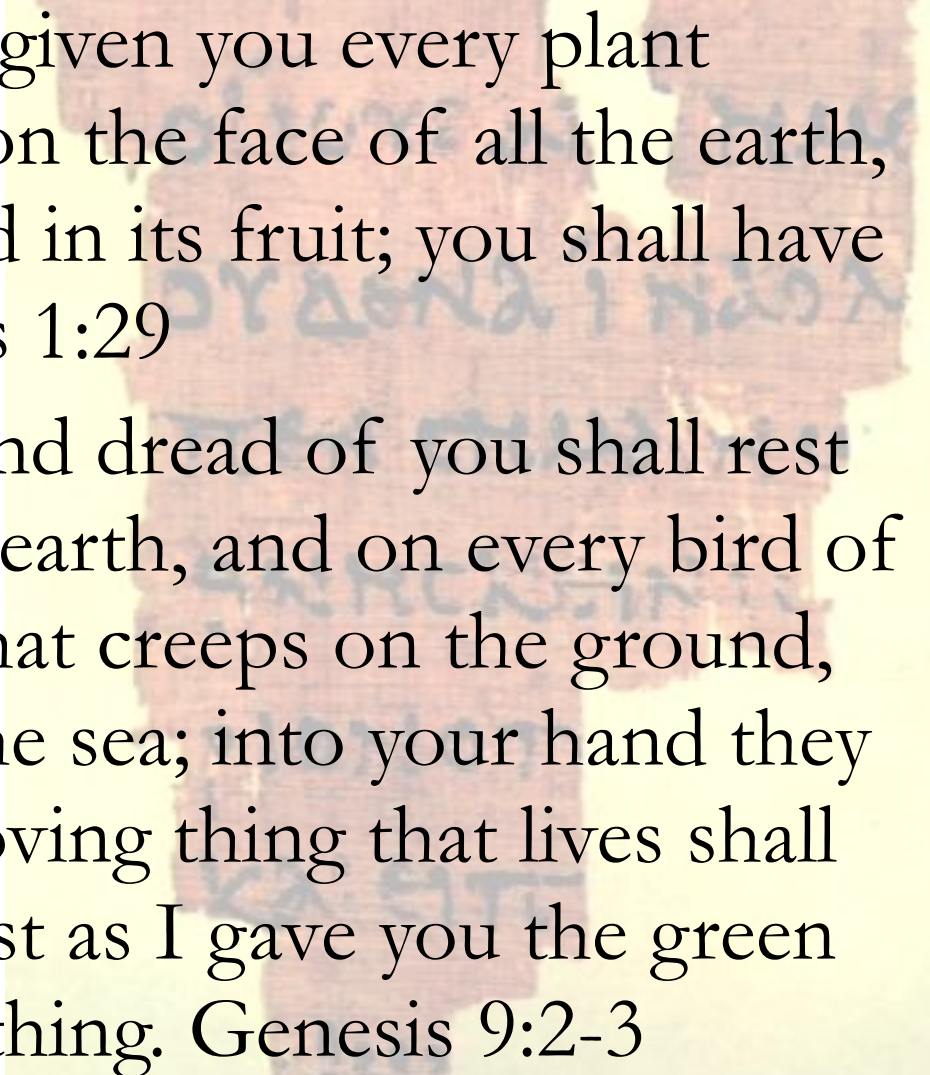
Food in creation

- Adam and Eve together given the garden to tend — food as gift from God
- **vegetarian diet** Genesis 1:29 (contrast Genesis 9:2-3)



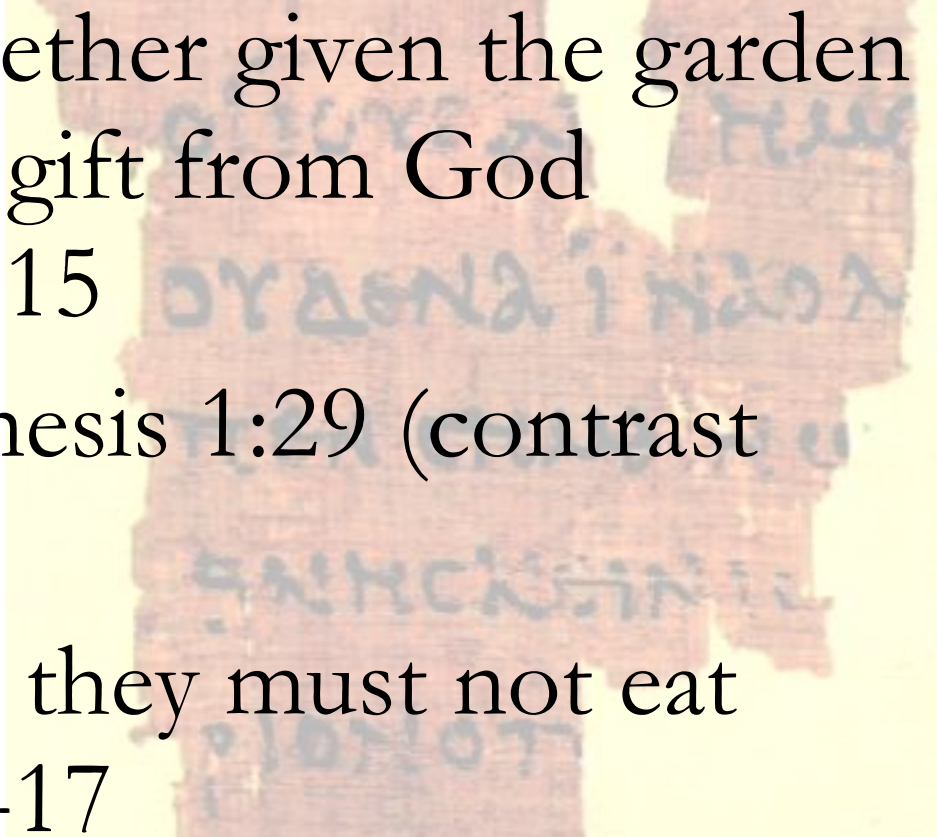


Food in creation

- ‘God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.’ Genesis 1:29
 - [God said,] “The fear and dread of you shall rest on every animal of the earth, and on every bird of the air, on everything that creeps on the ground, and on all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and just as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. Genesis 9:2-3
- 



Food in creation

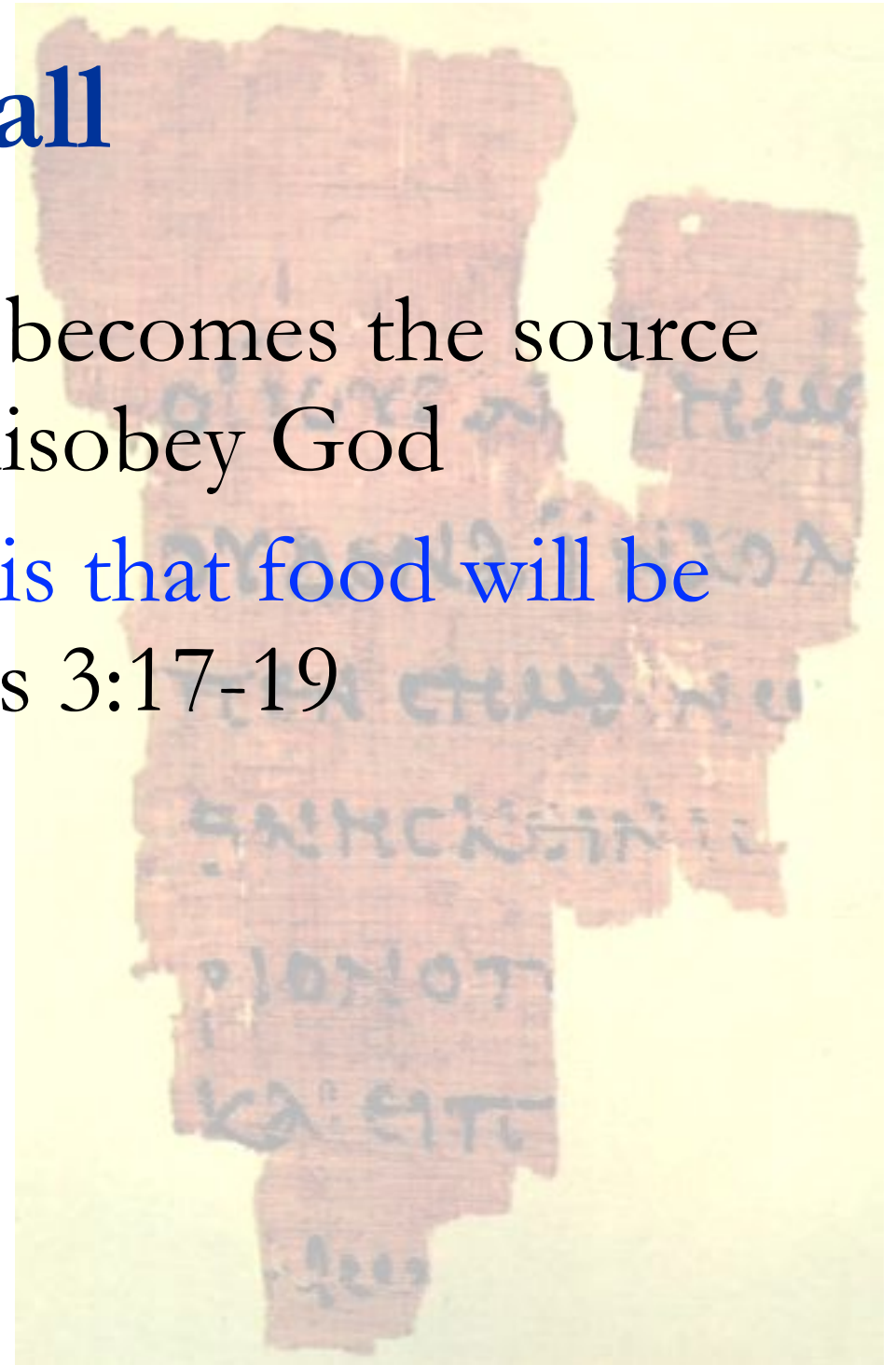
- Adam and Eve together given the garden to tend — food as gift from God
Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15
 - vegetarian diet Genesis 1:29 (contrast Genesis 9:2-3)
 - **limitation**: one tree they must not eat from Genesis 2:16-17
- 

Food and the fall

- the forbidden tree becomes the source of temptation to disobey God Genesis 3:1-7, esp. v 6
 - ‘So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate.’ Genesis 3:6

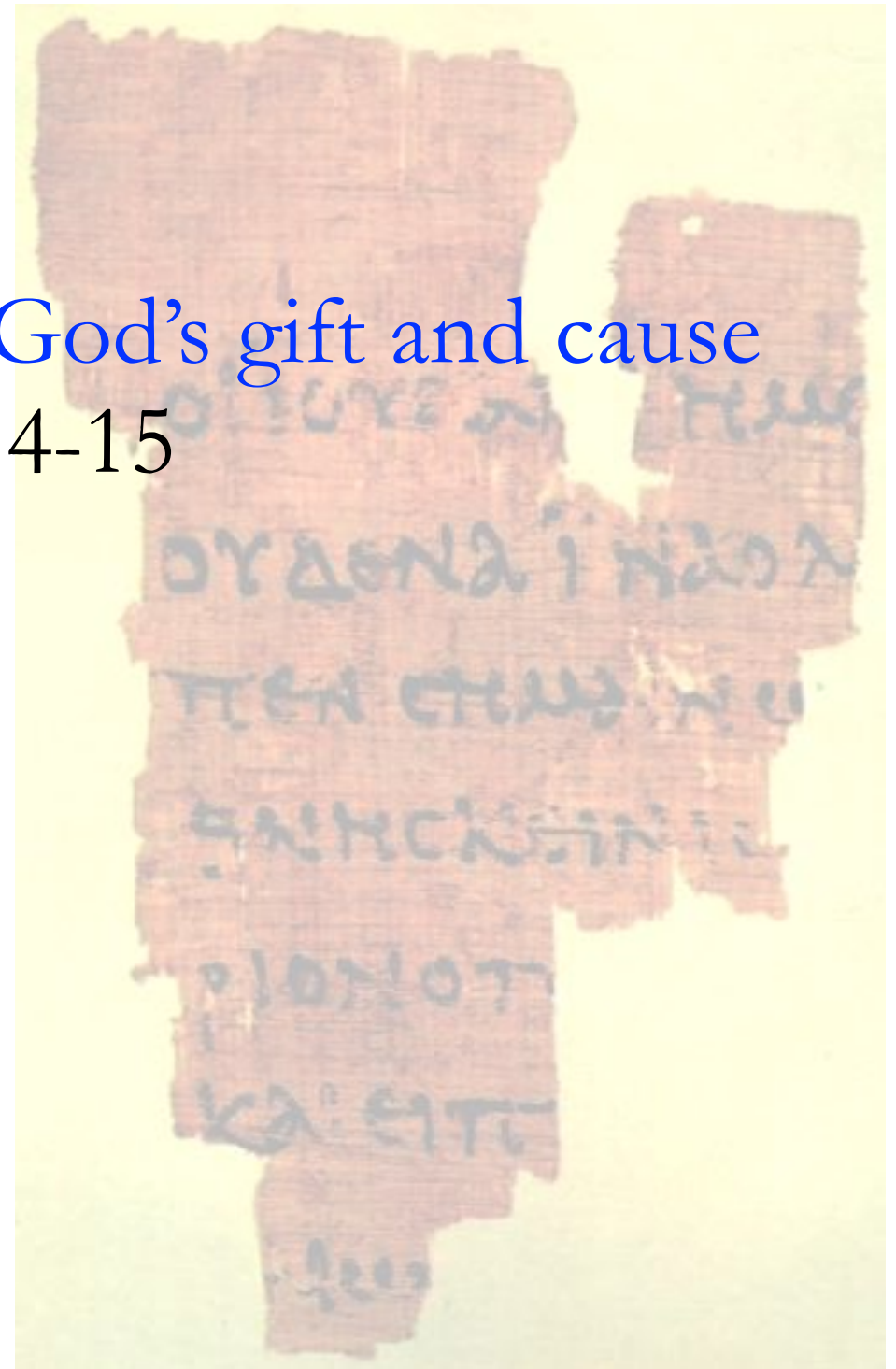
Food and the fall

- the forbidden tree becomes the source of temptation to disobey God
- part of the 'curse' is that food will be hard to get Genesis 3:17-19



Food in Israel

- food and drink as God's gift and cause of joy Psalm 104:14-15

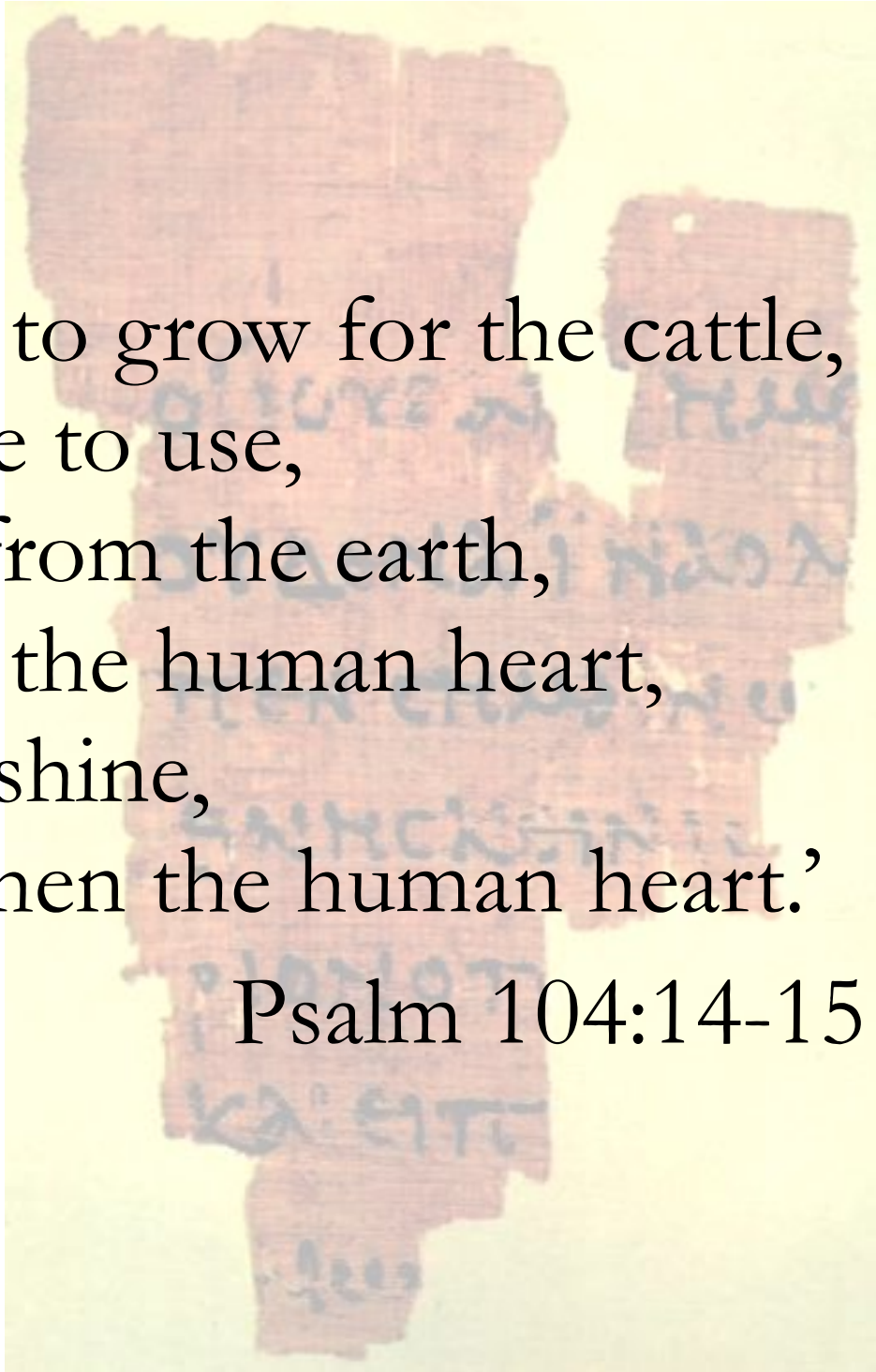




Food in Israel

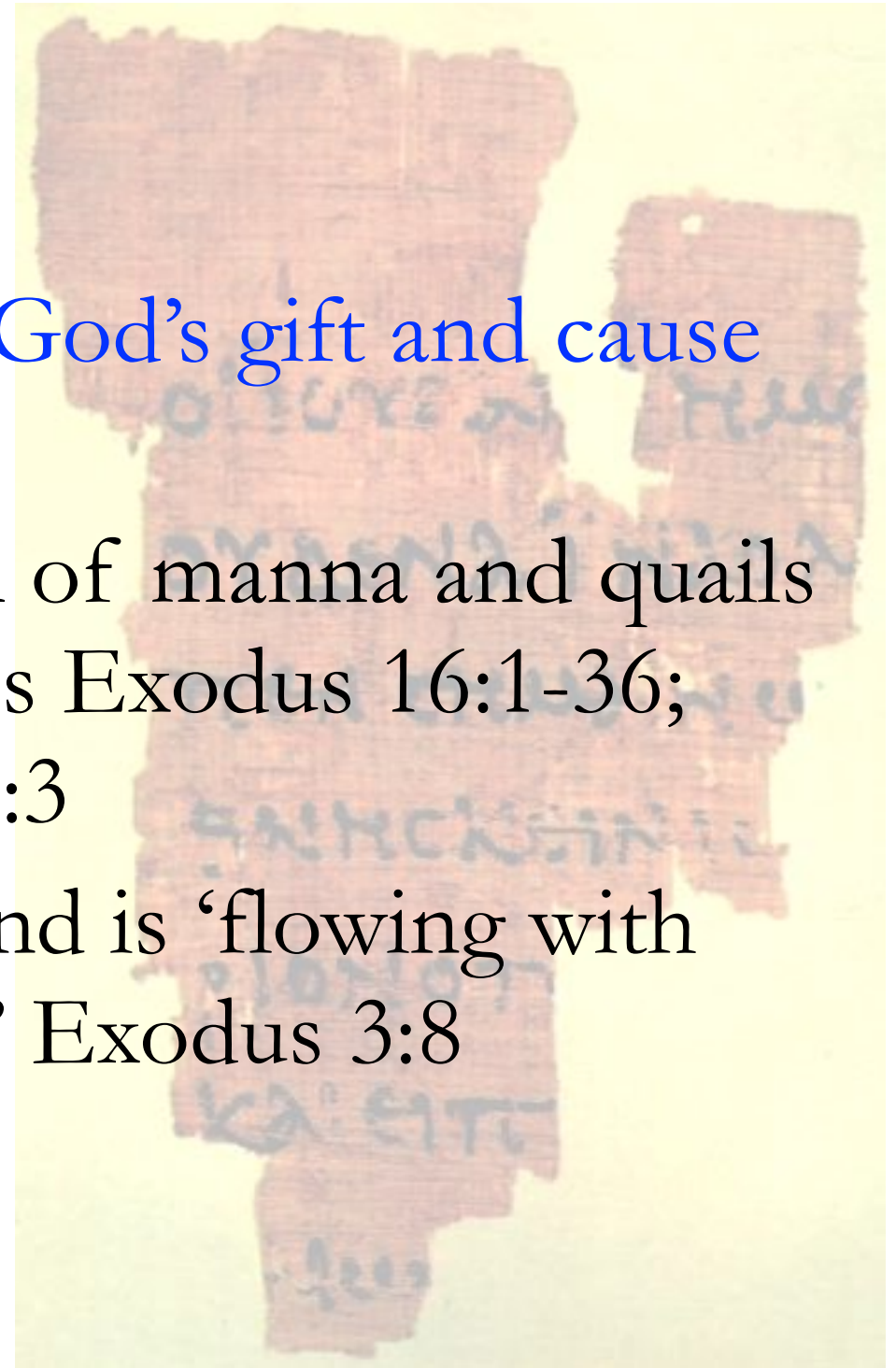
‘**You cause** the grass to grow for the cattle,
and plants for people to use,
to bring forth food from the earth,
and wine to gladden the human heart,
oil to make the face shine,
and bread to strengthen the human heart.’

Psalm 104:14-15



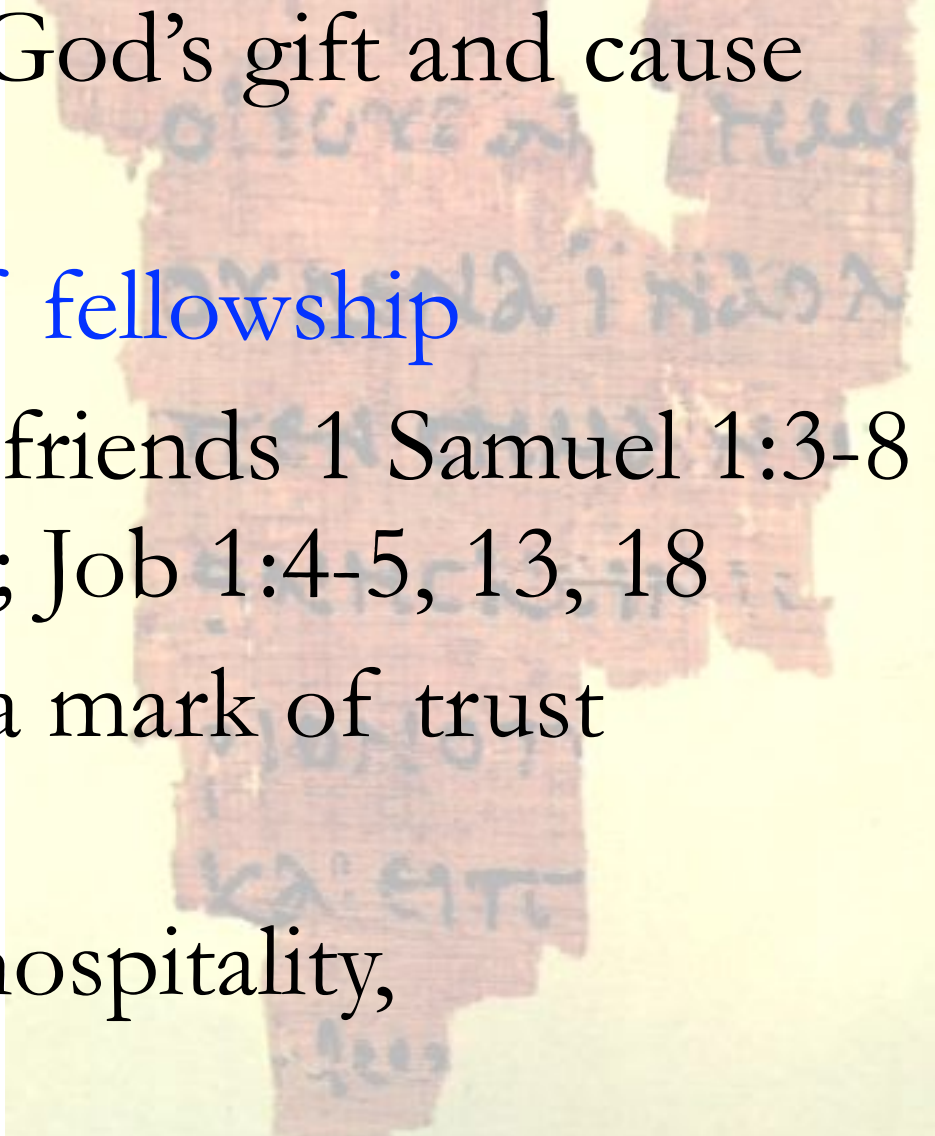
Food in Israel

- food and drink as God's gift and cause of joy
 - God's provision of manna and quails in the wilderness Exodus 16:1-36; Deuteronomy 8:3
 - the promised land is 'flowing with milk and honey' Exodus 3:8



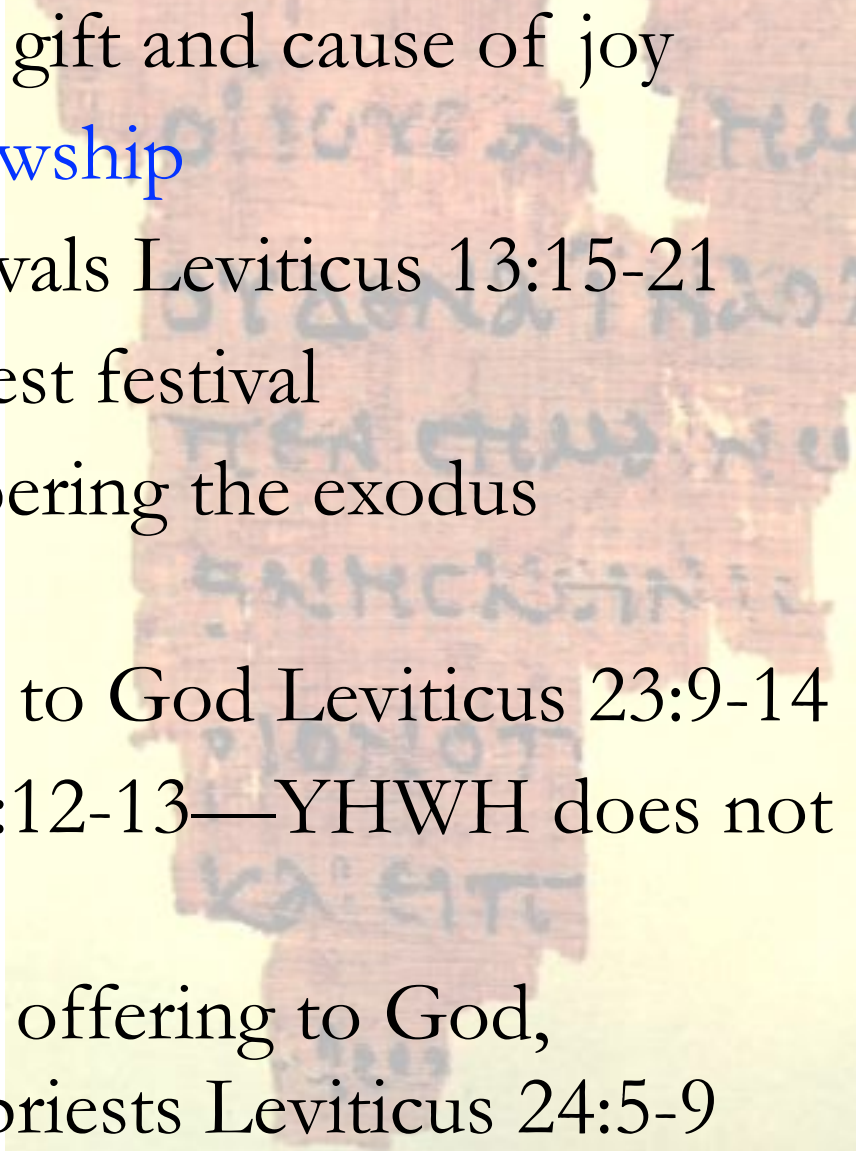


Food in Israel

- food and drink as God's gift and cause of joy
 - food as a means of fellowship
 - with family and friends 1 Samuel 1:3-8 (note vv 14-15!); Job 1:4-5, 13, 18
 - eating together a mark of trust Psalm 41:9
 - sacred duty of hospitality, e.g. Genesis 18
- 

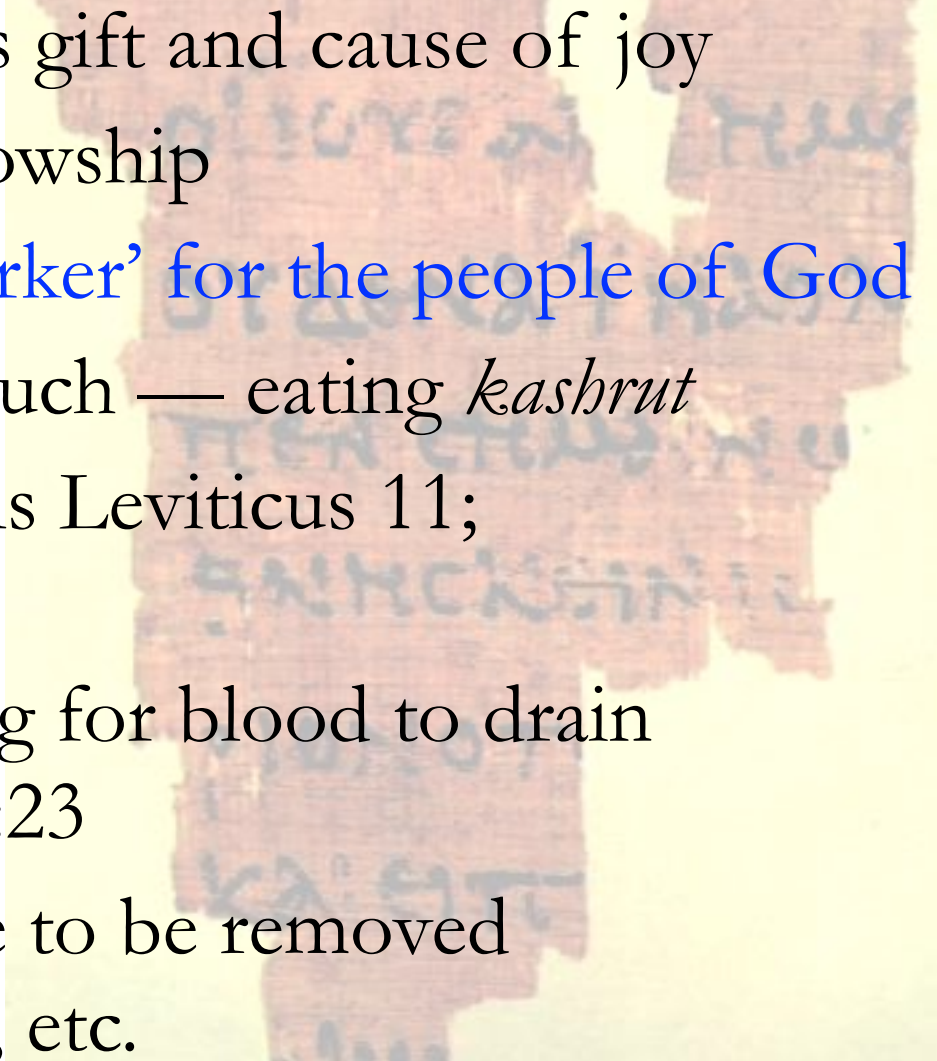


Food in Israel

- food and drink as God's gift and cause of joy
 - food as a means of fellowship
 - with God at the festivals Leviticus 13:15-21
 - Pentecost as harvest festival
 - Passover, remembering the exodus Exodus 12:14-20
 - first fruits offered to God Leviticus 23:9-14
 - note Psalm 50:12-13—YHWH does not eat or drink
 - baked bread as an offering to God, and food for the priests Leviticus 24:5-9
- 



Food in Israel

- food and drink as God's gift and cause of joy
 - food as a means of fellowship
 - food as a 'boundary marker' for the people of God
 - food laws in Pentateuch — eating *kashrut*
 - list of kosher animals Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14
 - meat is to be hung for blood to drain Deuteronomy 12:23
 - key fatty parts are to be removed Leviticus 3:14-17, etc.
- 

Food in Israel

- food and drink as God's gift and cause of joy
- food as a means of fellowship
- food as a 'boundary marker' for the people of God
- abuse of food is a mark of sin
 - the 'fat cows of Bashan' Amos 4:1
 - the law provides food for people who are poor Deuteronomy 23:24-25; 24:19-22; Ruth 2; Deuteronomy 24:6



Food in Israel

‘If you go into your neighbour’s vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes, as many as you wish, but you shall not put any in a container. If you go into your neighbour’s standing grain, you may pluck the ears with your hand, but you shall not put a sickle to your neighbour’s standing grain.’

Deuteronomy 23:24-25

23:24-25

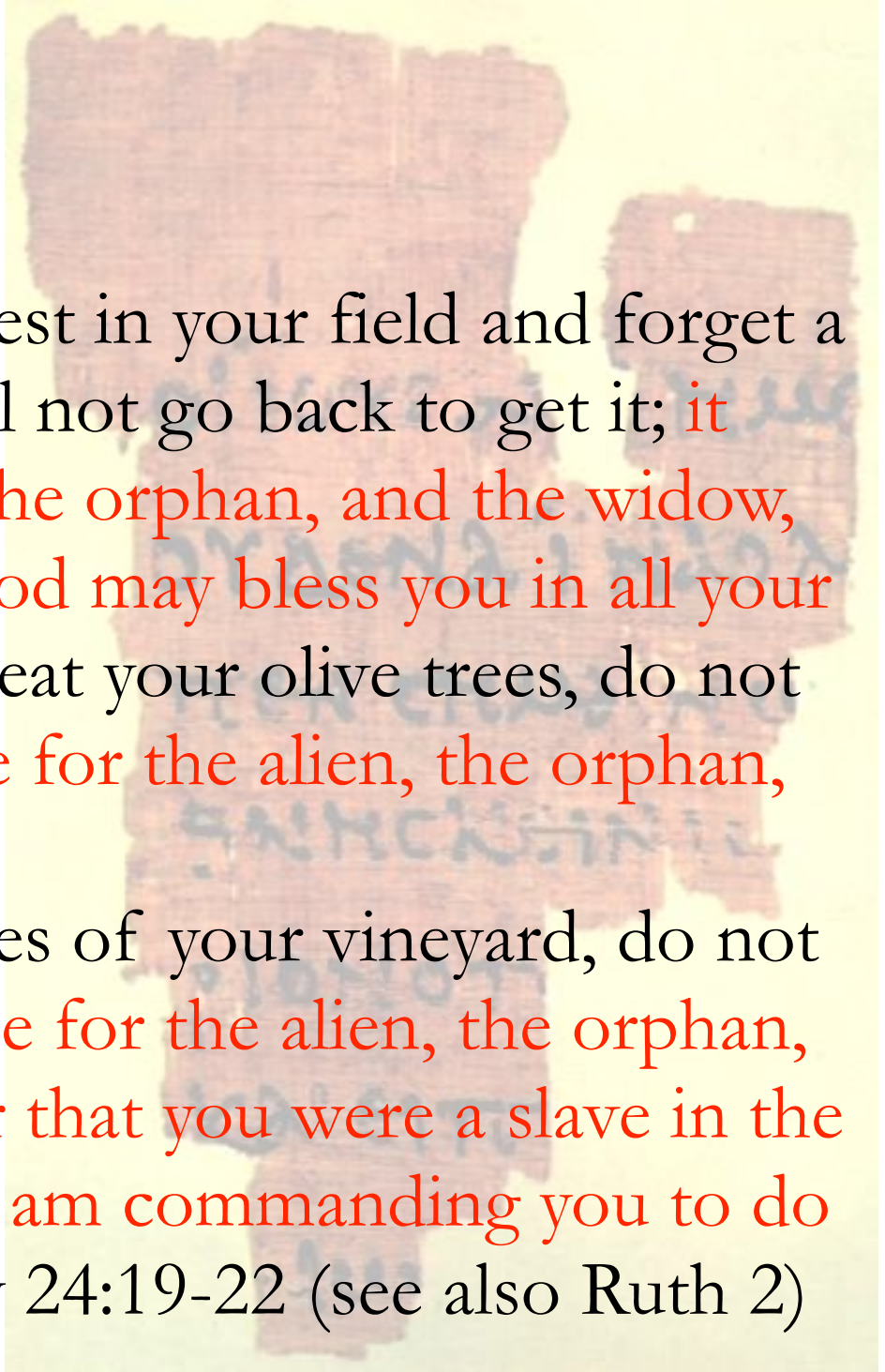




Food in Israel

‘When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; **it shall be left for the alien, the orphan, and the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all your undertakings.** When you beat your olive trees, do not strip what is left; **it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow.**

When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; **it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding you to do this.** Deuteronomy 24:19-22 (see also Ruth 2)

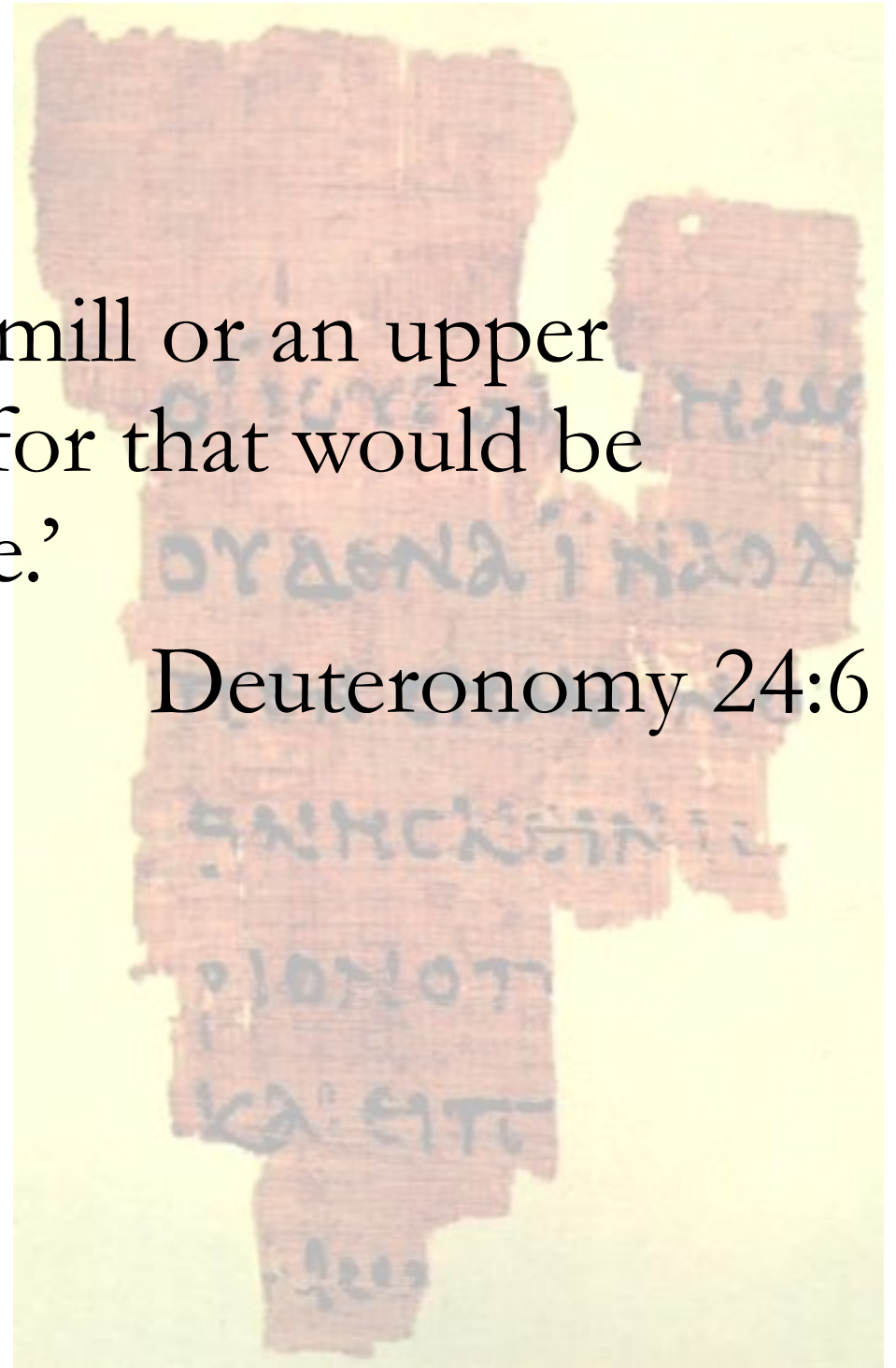




Food in Israel

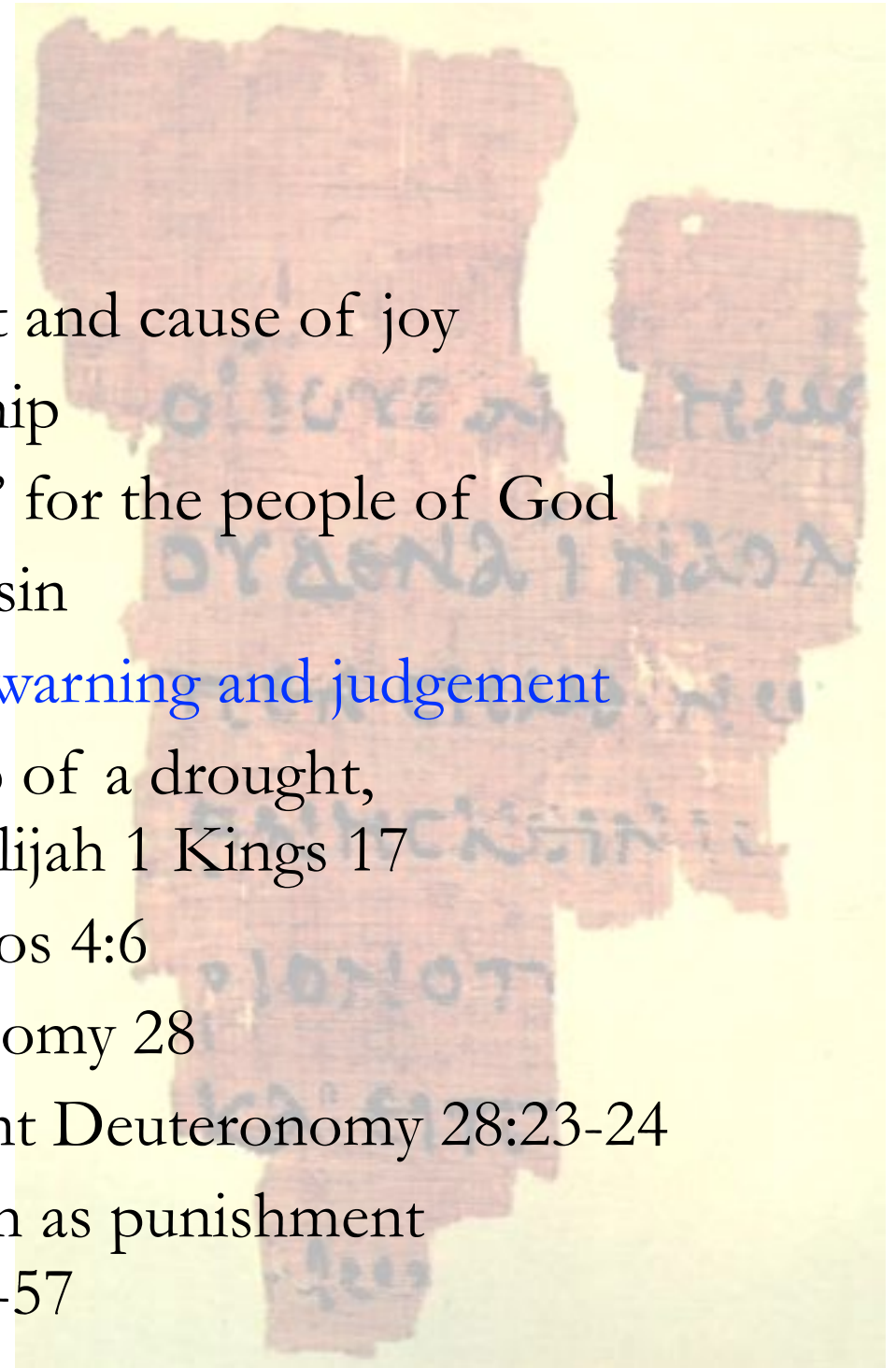
‘No one shall take a mill or an upper millstone in pledge, for that would be taking a life in pledge.’

Deuteronomy 24:6



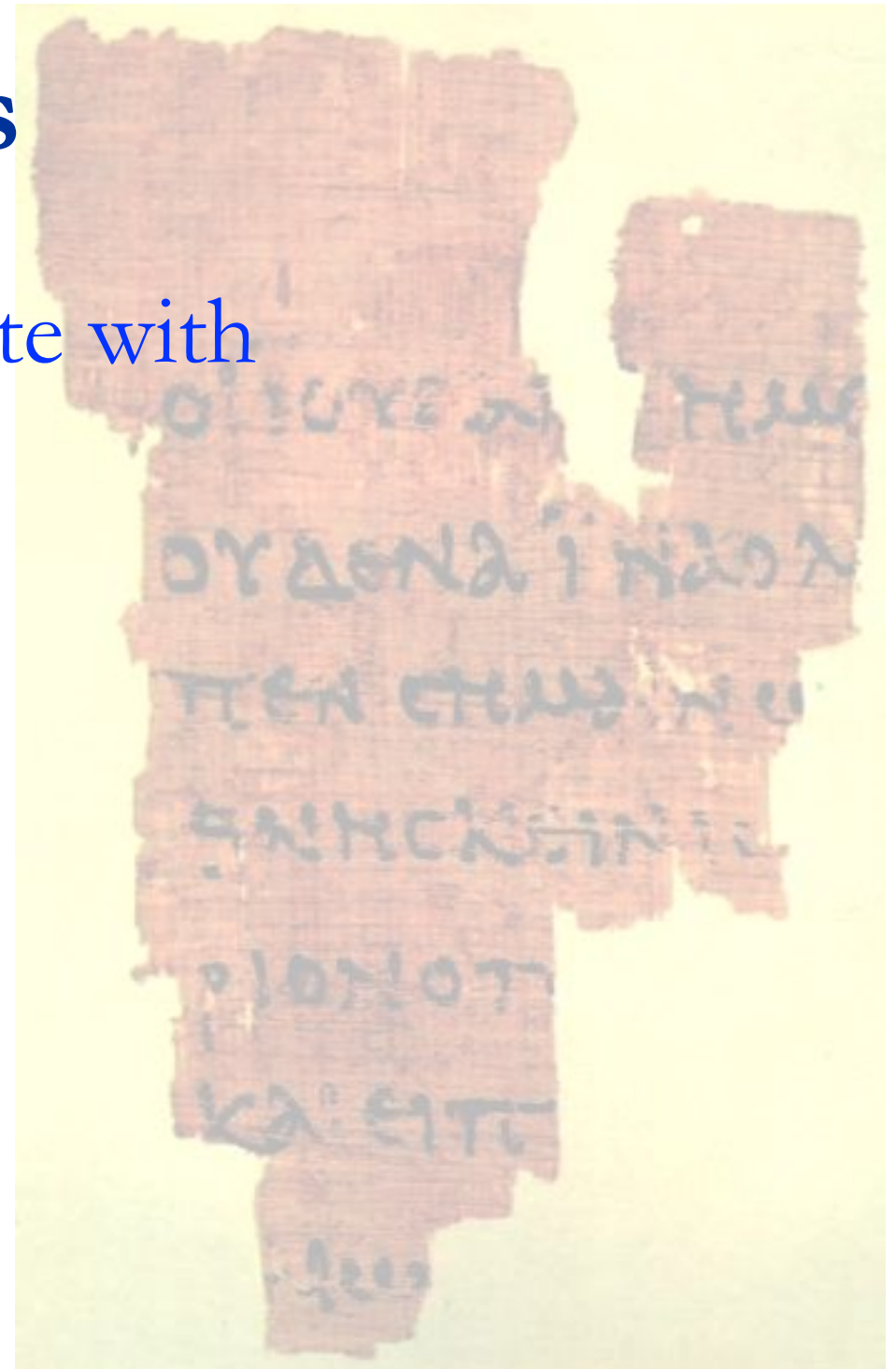
Food in Israel

- food and drink as God's gift and cause of joy
- food as a means of fellowship
- food as a 'boundary marker' for the people of God
- abuse of food is a mark of sin
- lack of food may be God's warning and judgement
 - Elijah warns King Ahab of a drought, but God provides for Elijah 1 Kings 17
 - 'cleanness of teeth' Amos 4:6
 - the 'curses' in Deuteronomy 28
 - drought as judgement Deuteronomy 28:23-24
 - enforced cannibalism as punishment Deuteronomy 28:53-57



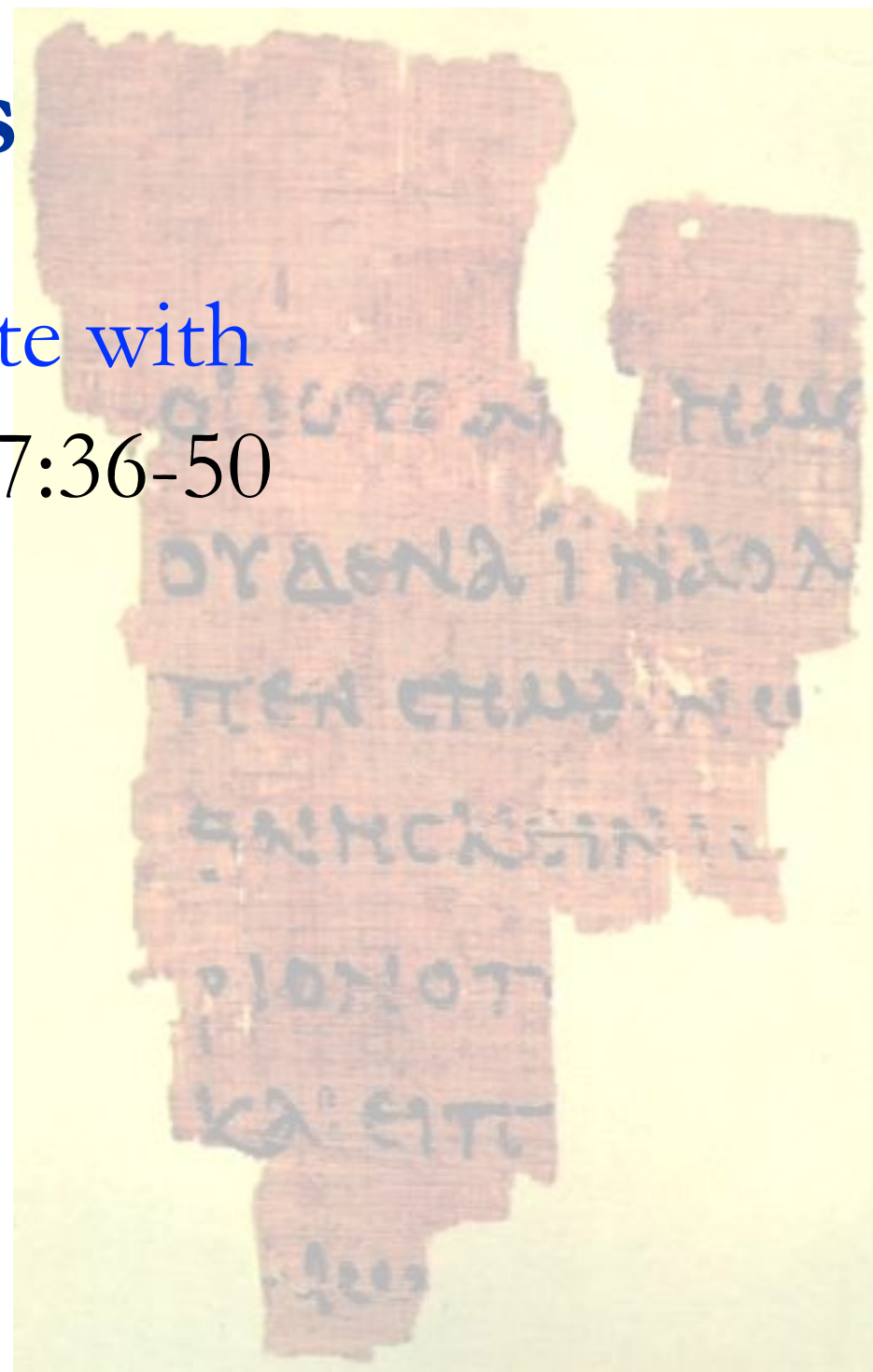
Food and Jesus

- notice who Jesus ate with



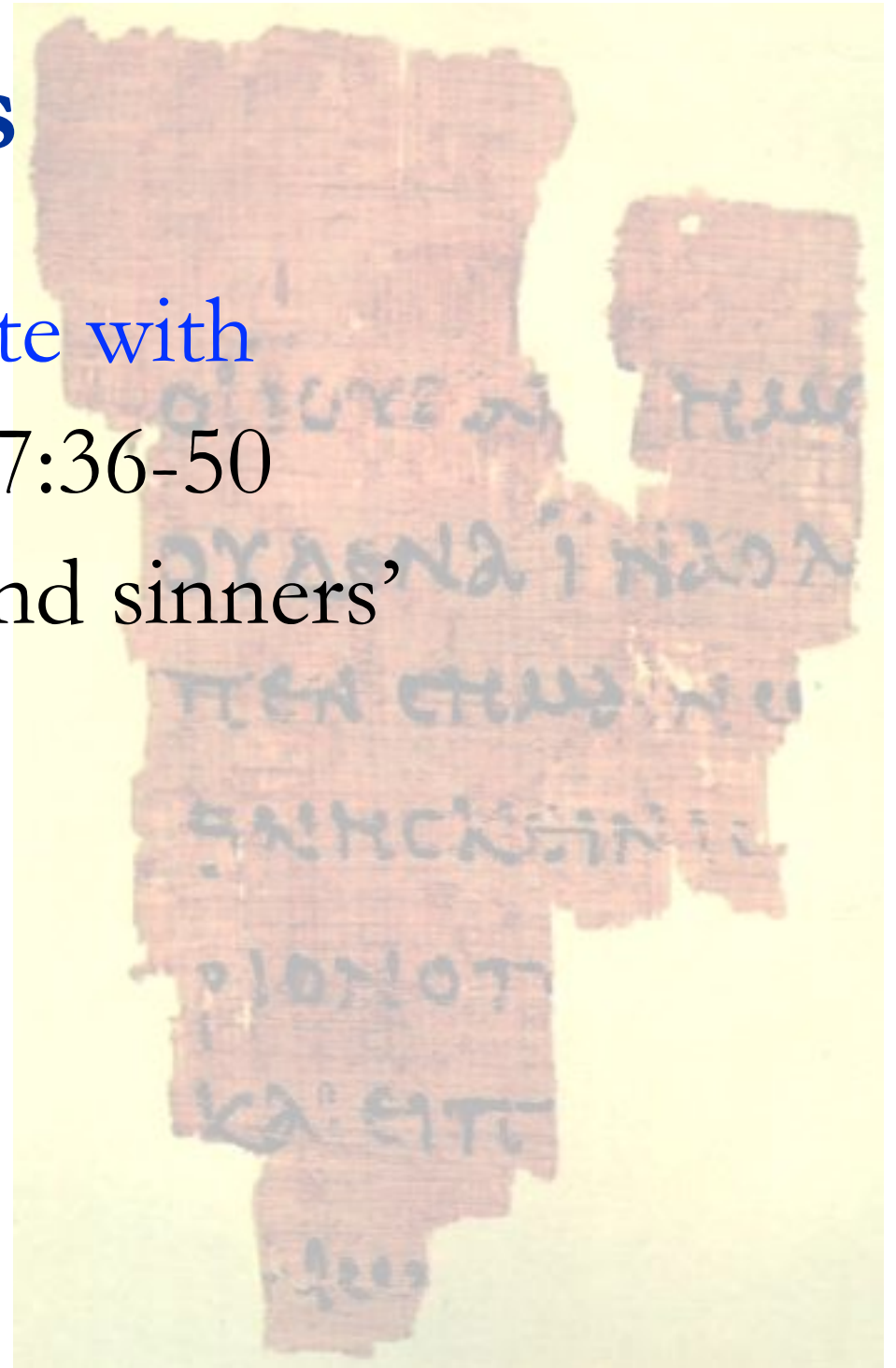
Food and Jesus

- notice who Jesus ate with
 - Pharisees Luke 7:36-50



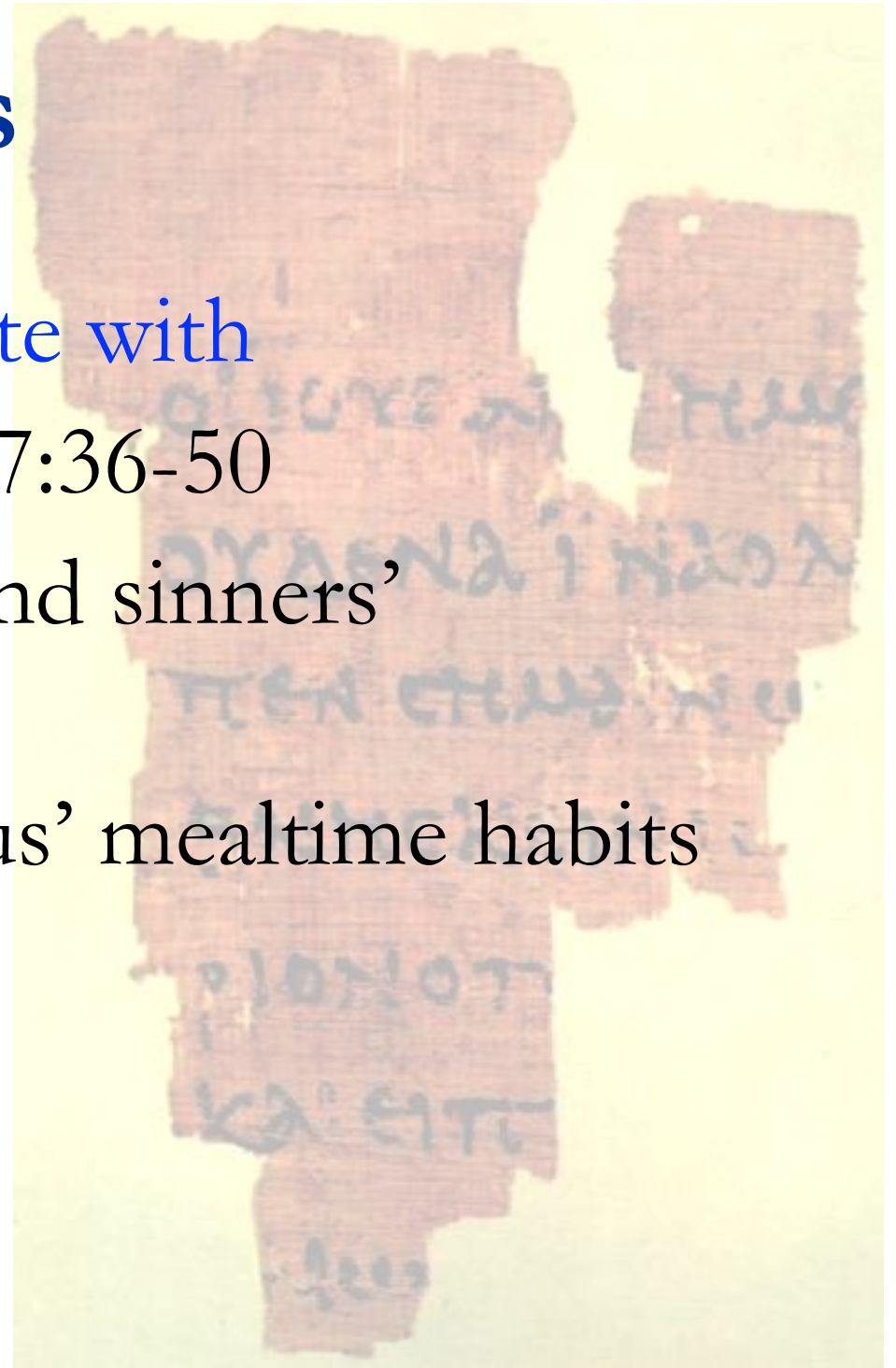
Food and Jesus

- notice who Jesus ate with
 - Pharisees Luke 7:36-50
 - ‘tax collectors and sinners’
Luke 5:29-30



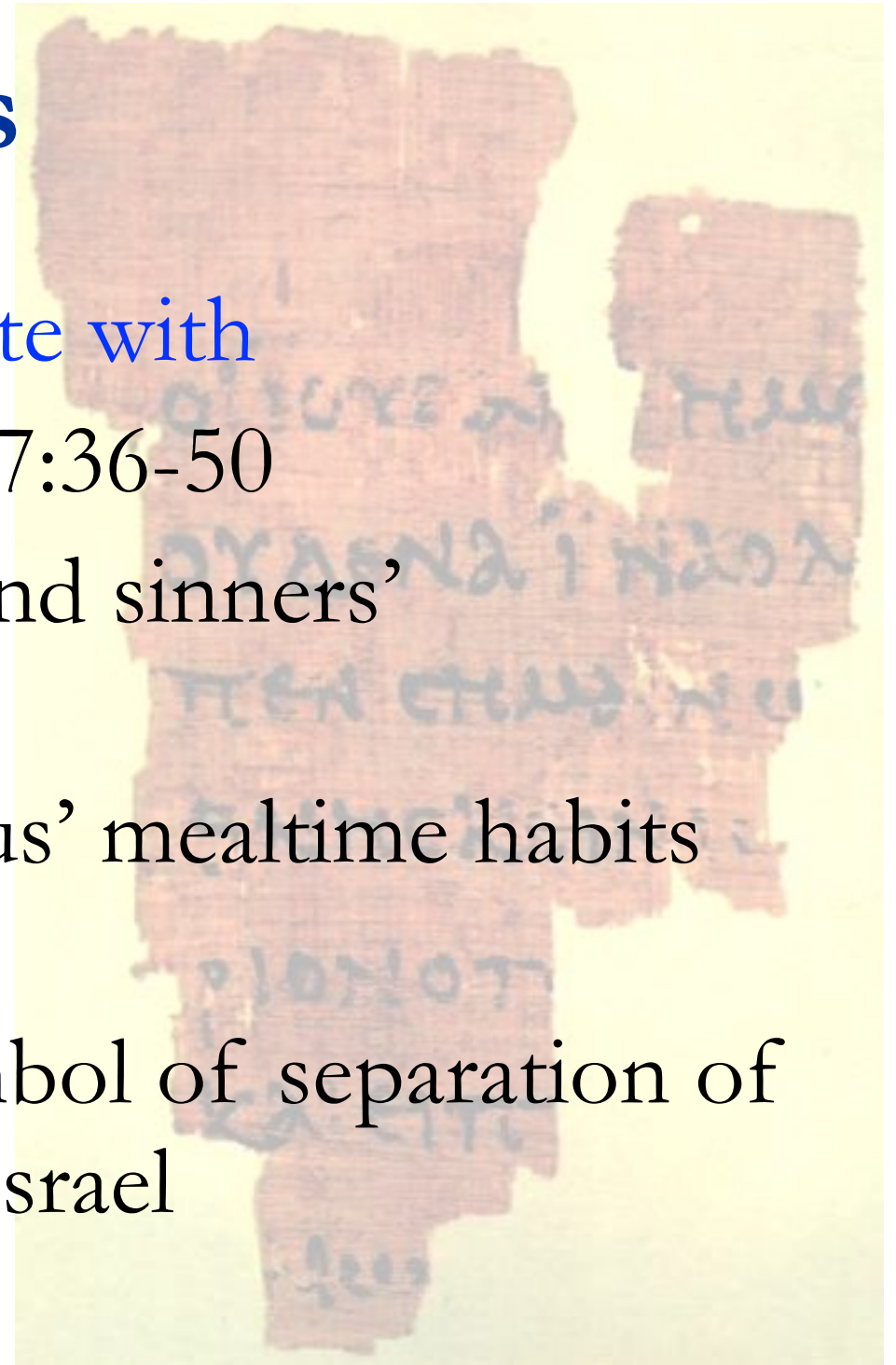
Food and Jesus

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 - ‘tax collectors and sinners’
Luke 5:29-30
 - criticism of Jesus’ mealtime habits
Luke 7:34



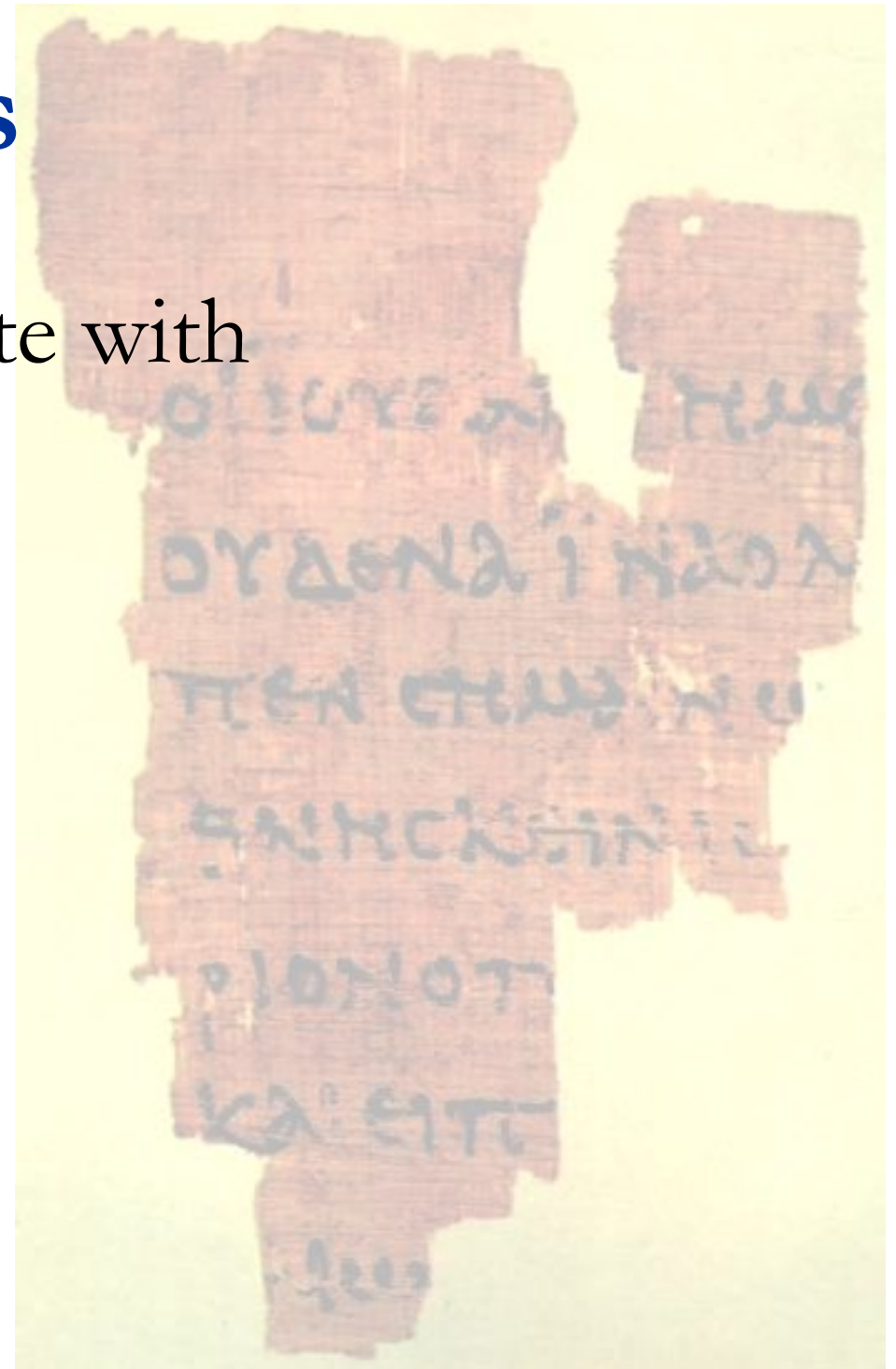
Food and Jesus

- notice who Jesus ate with
 - Pharisees Luke 7:36-50
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Luke 5:29-30
 - criticism of Jesus’ mealtime habits
Luke 7:34
 - food as a symbol of separation of
the ‘pure’ in Israel



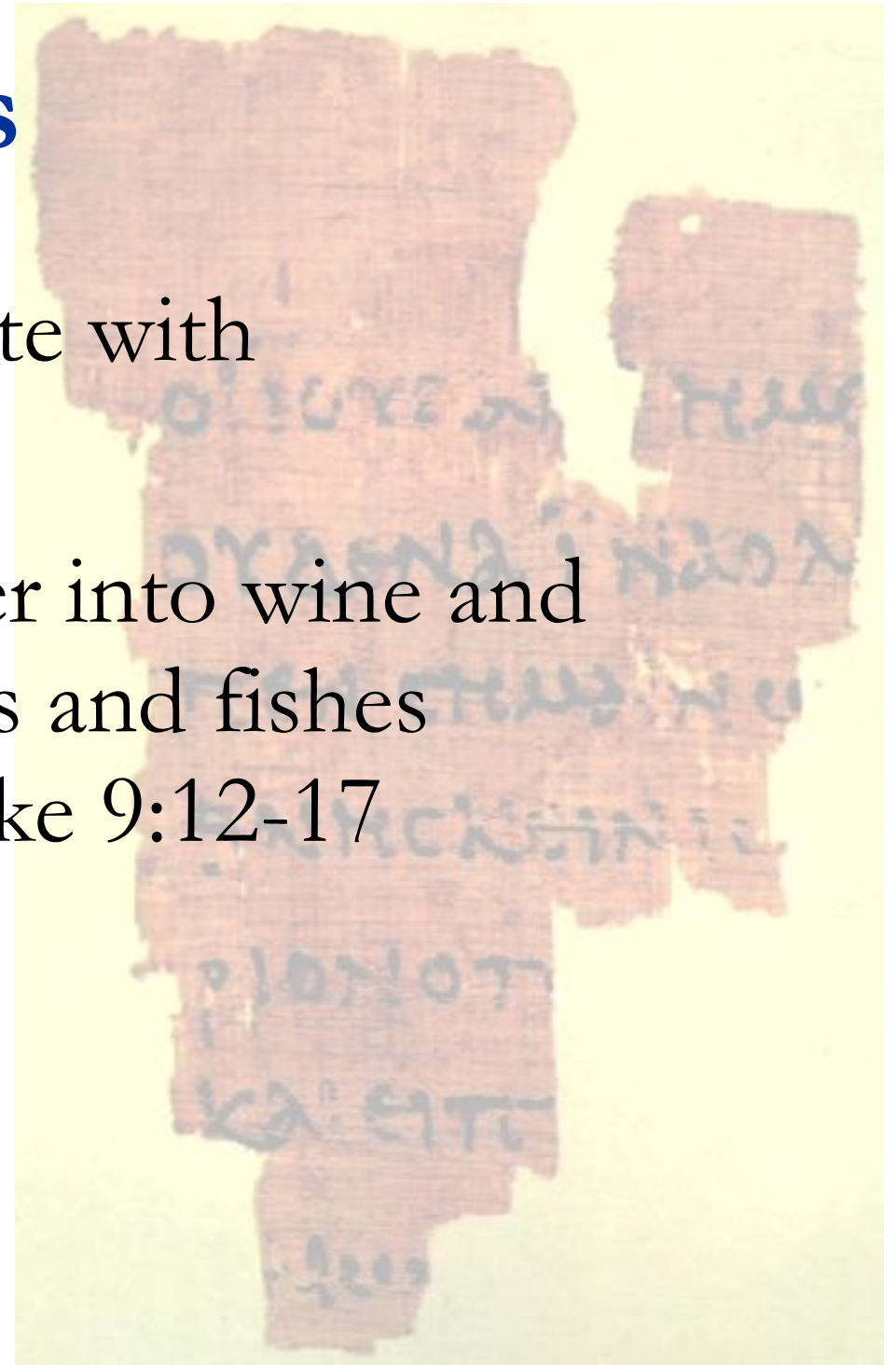
Food and Jesus

- notice who Jesus ate with
- food as Jesus' gift



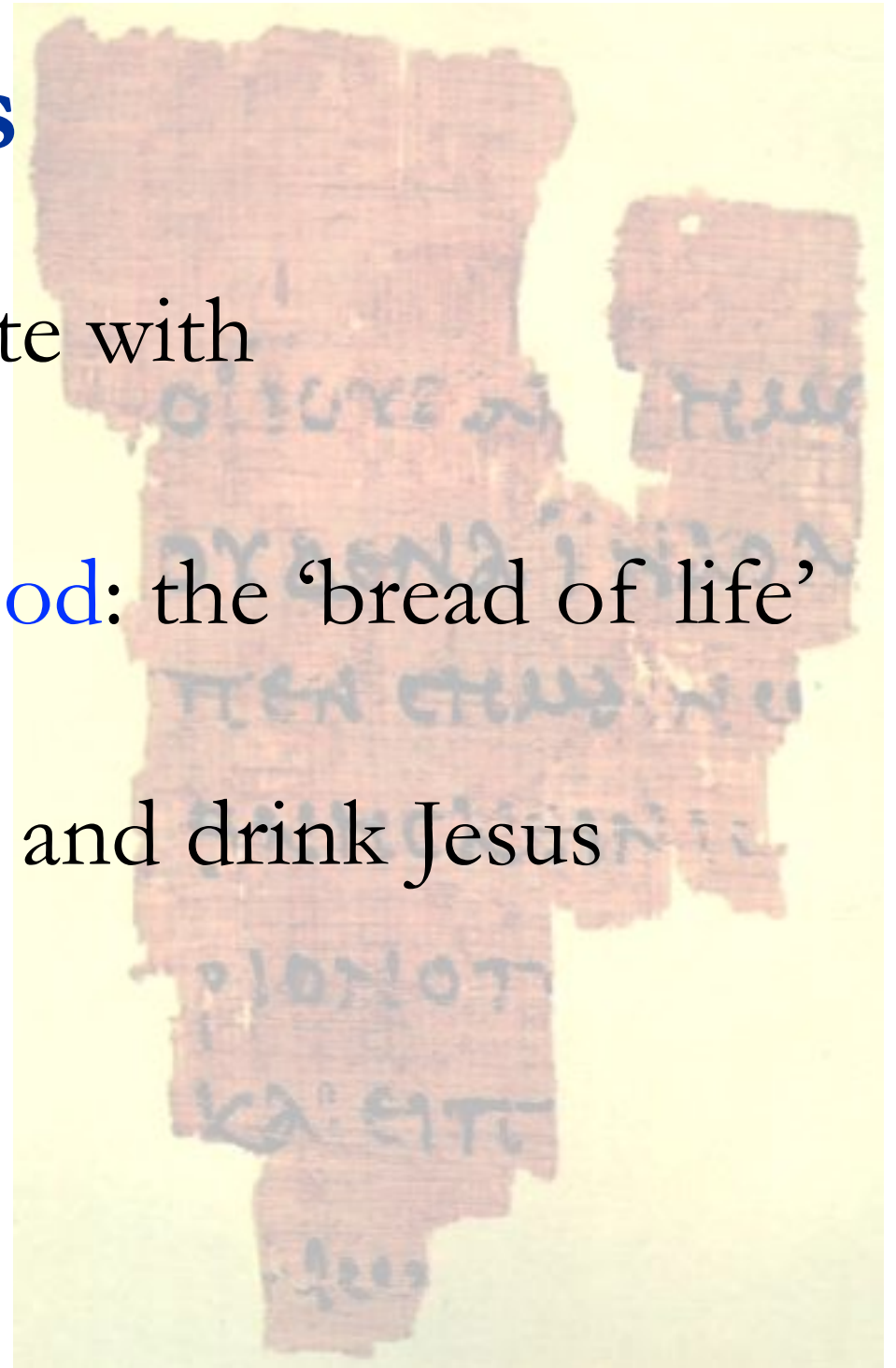
Food and Jesus

- notice who Jesus ate with
 - food as Jesus' gift
 - Jesus turns water into wine and multiplies loaves and fishes
- John 2:1-11; Luke 9:12-17



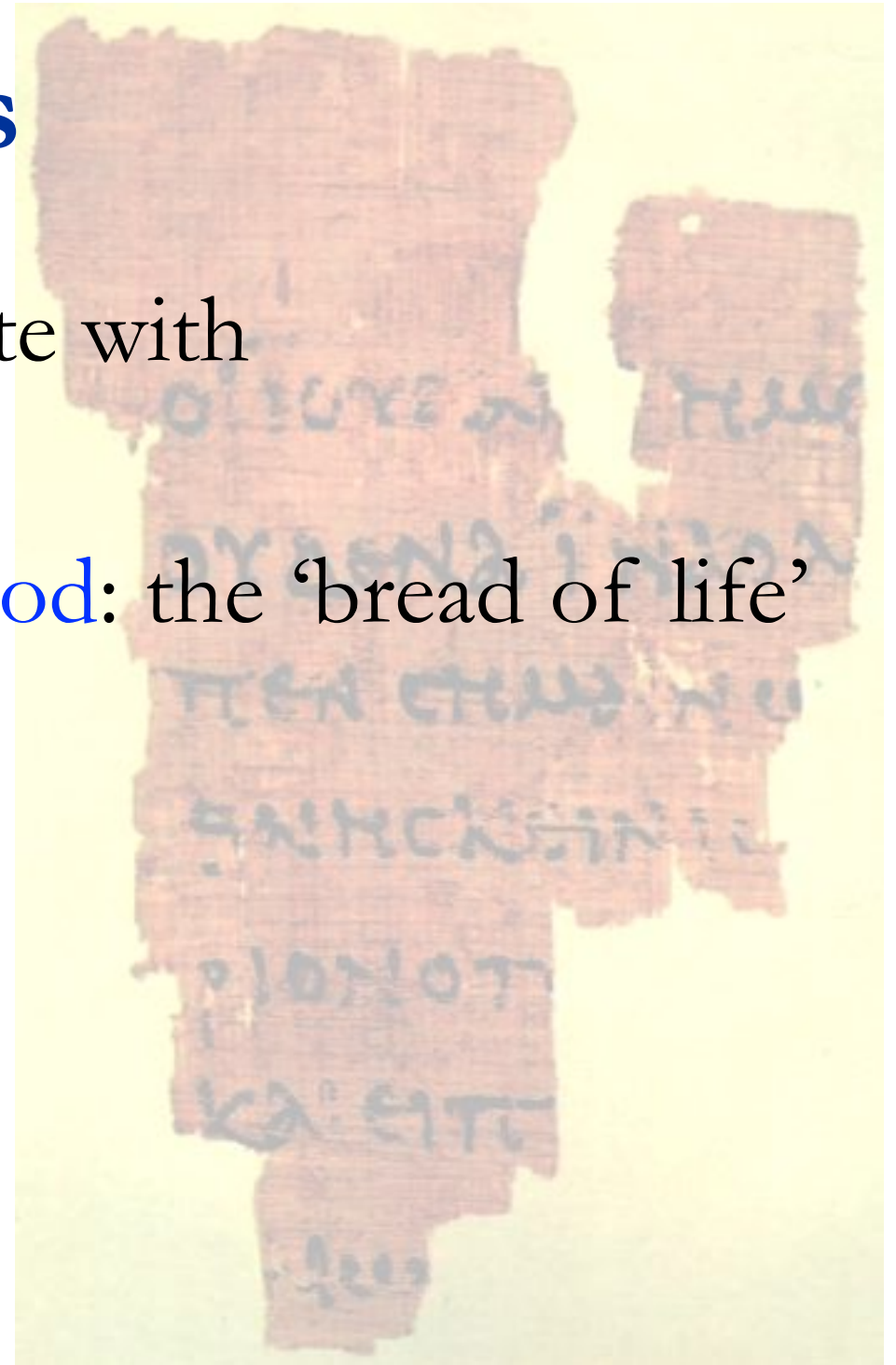
Food and Jesus

- notice who Jesus ate with
- food as Jesus' gift
- **Jesus himself as food:** the 'bread of life'
John 6:35
 - people must eat and drink Jesus
John 6:55, 60



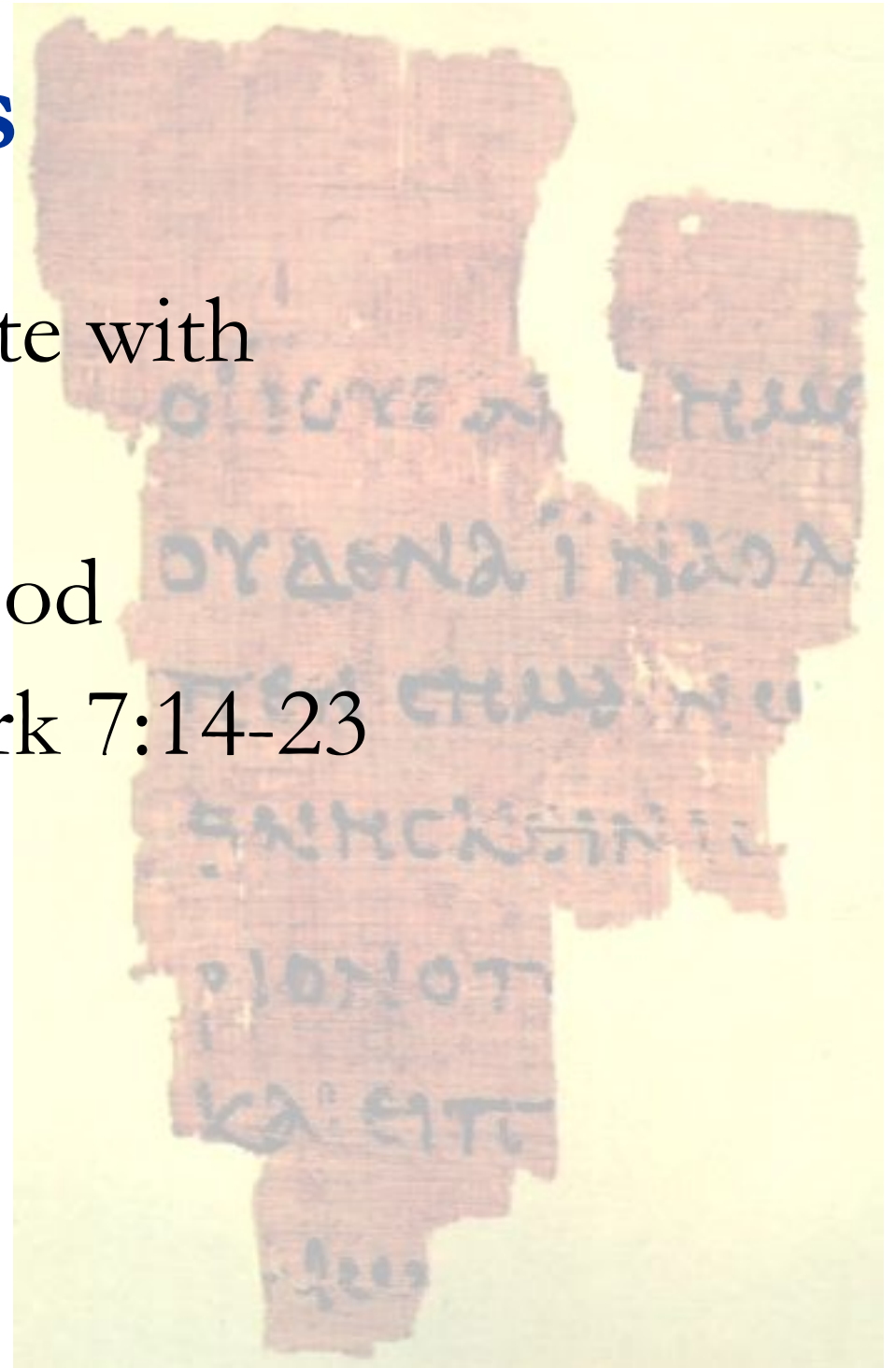
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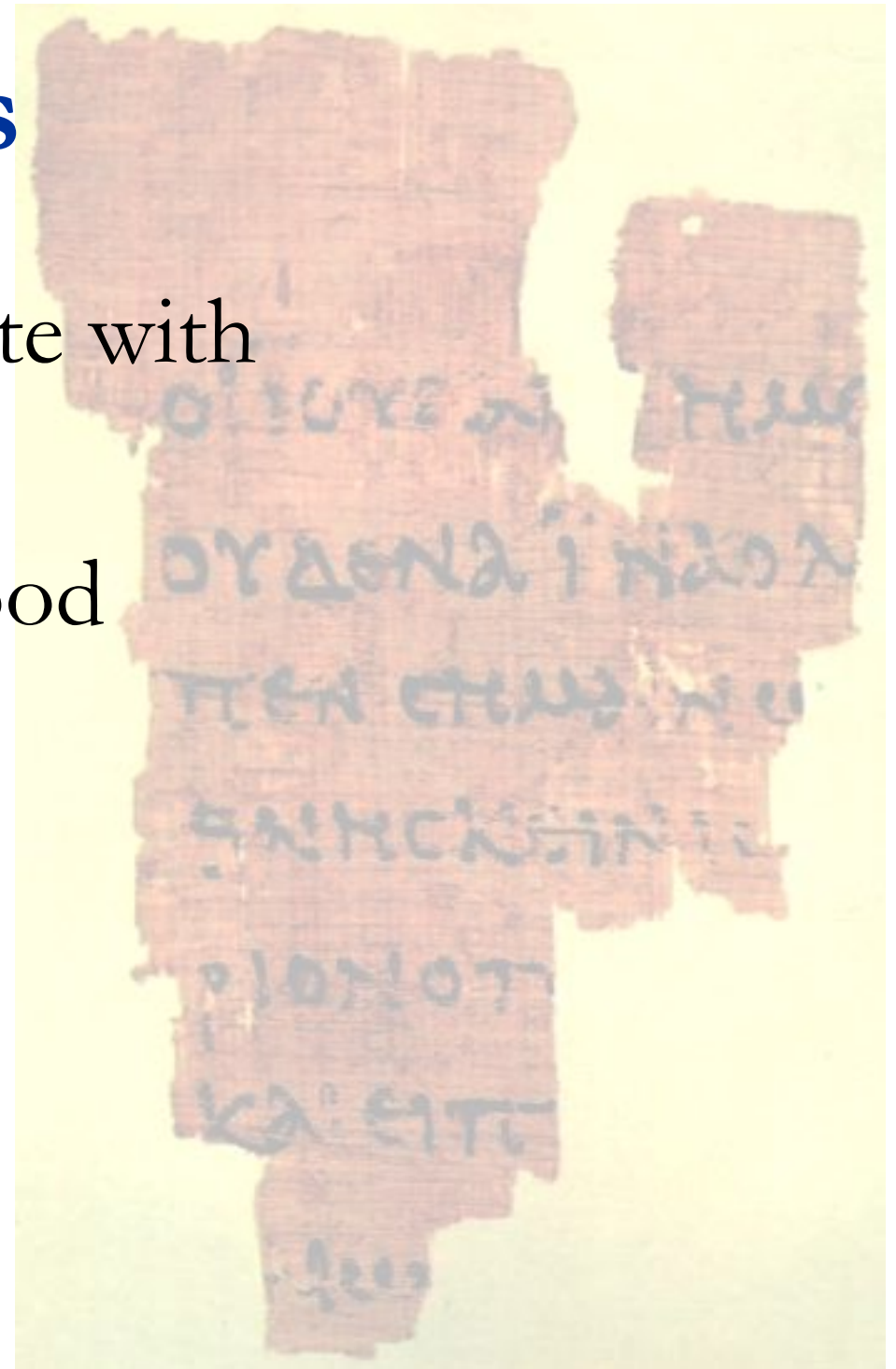
Food and Jesus

- notice who Jesus ate with
- food as Jesus' gift
- Jesus himself as food
- all foods clean Mark 7:14-23



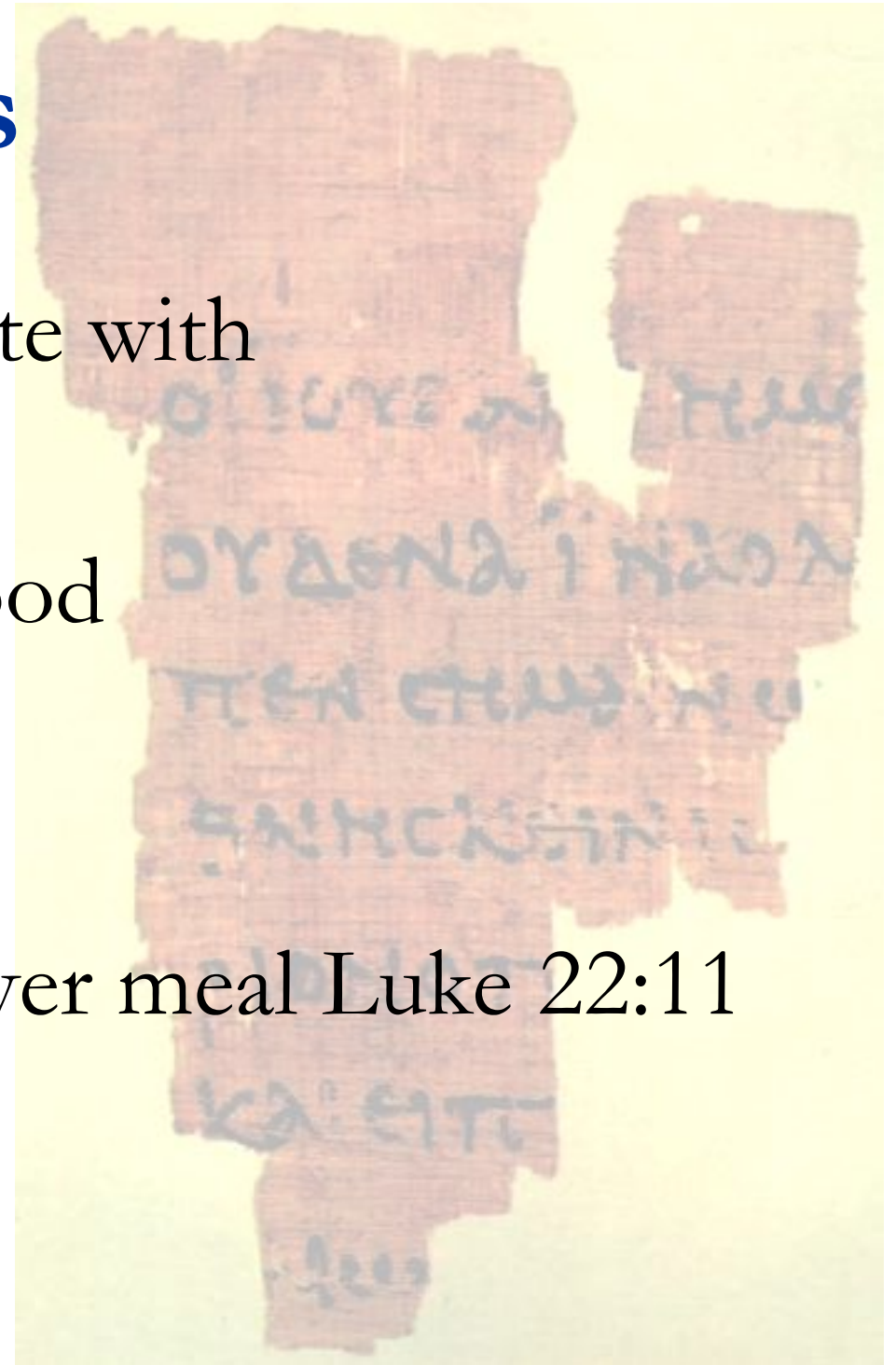
Food and Jesus

- notice who Jesus ate with
- food as Jesus' gift
- Jesus himself as food
- all foods clean
- last supper



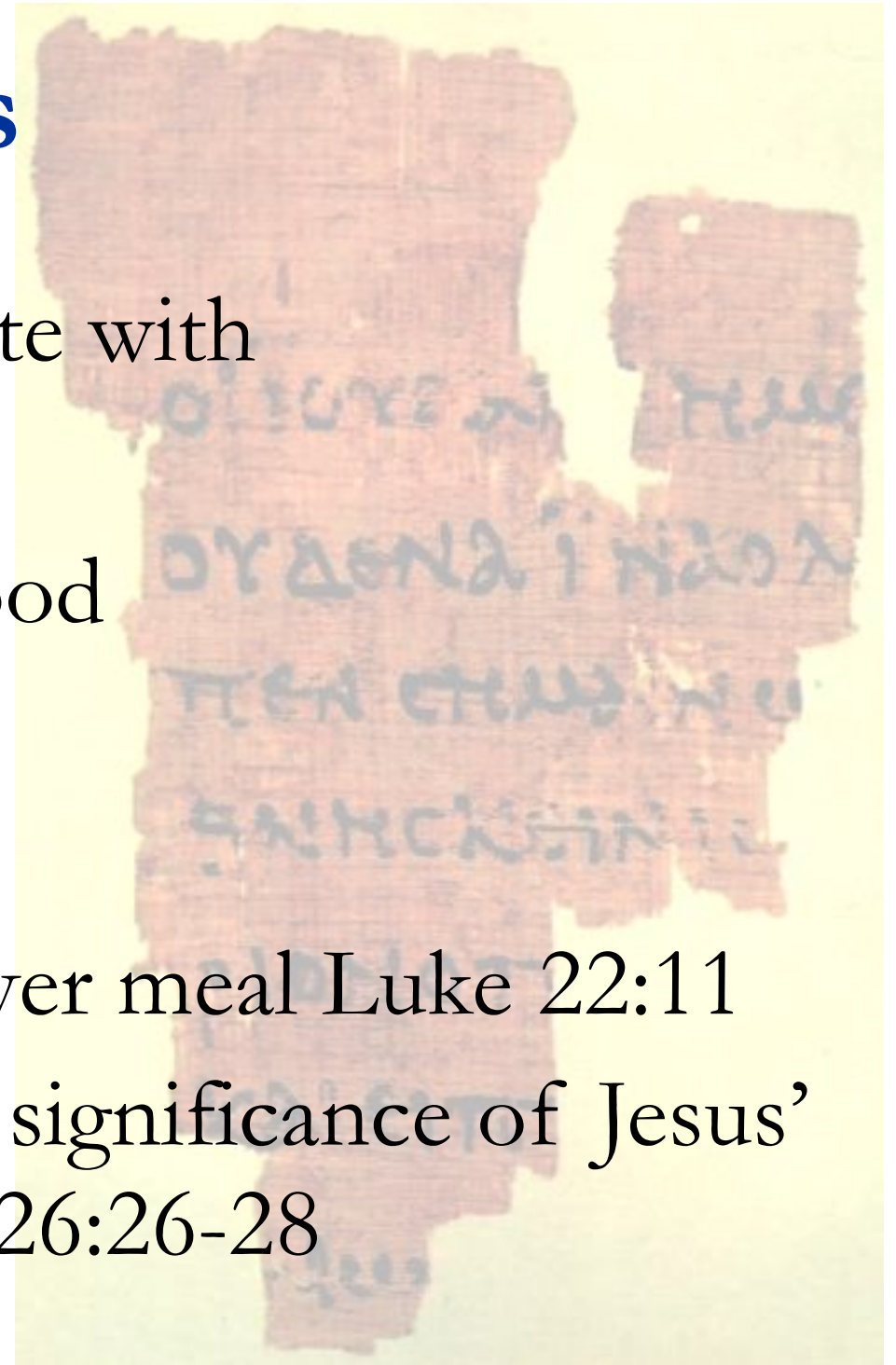
Food and Jesus

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- last supper
 - modified passover meal Luke 22:11



Food and Jesus

- notice who Jesus ate with
- food as Jesus' gift
- Jesus himself as food
- all foods clean
- last supper
 - modified passover meal Luke 22:11
 - food shows the significance of Jesus' death Matthew 26:26-28





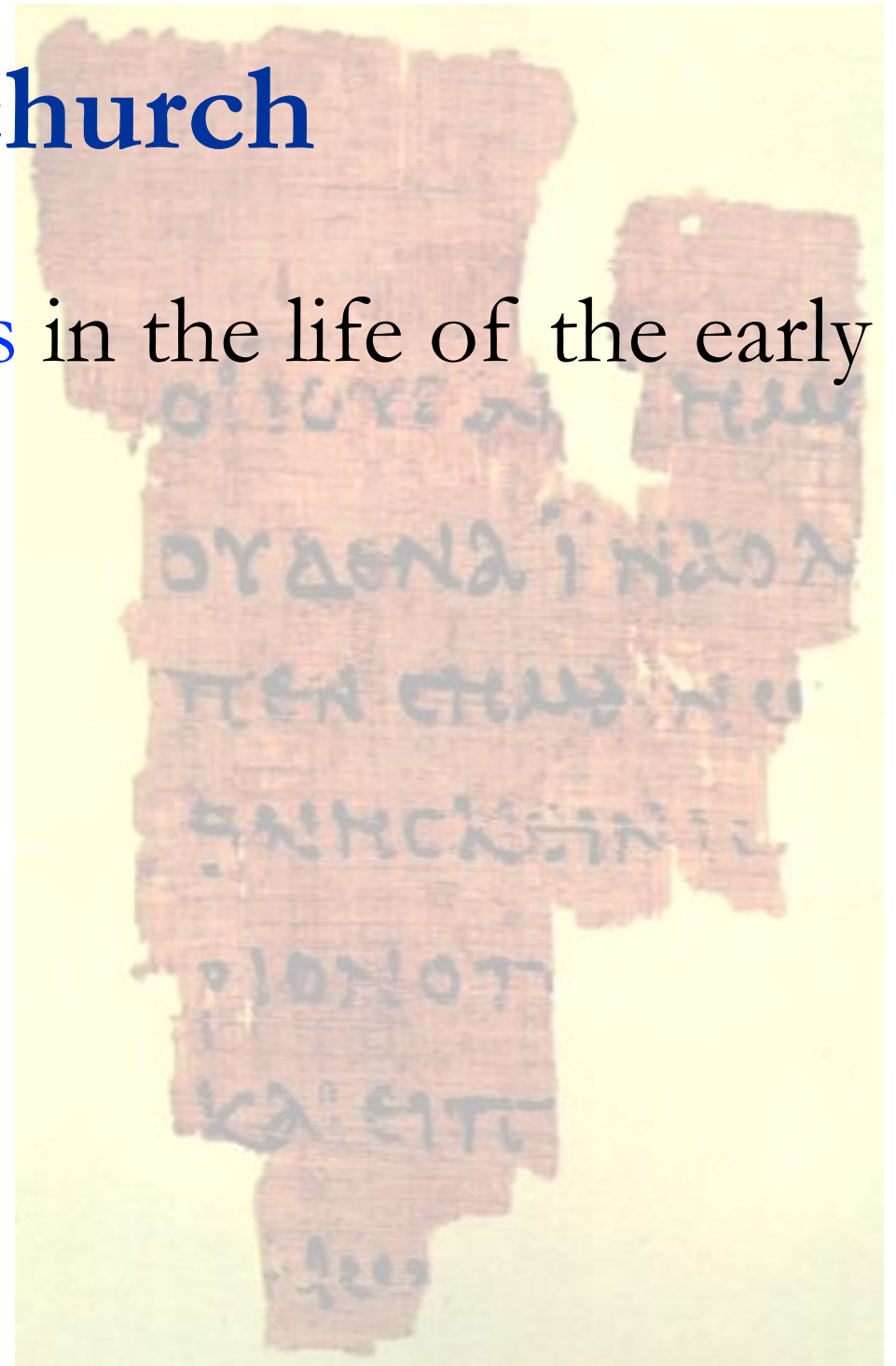
Food and Jesus

‘While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of **bread**, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; **this is my body.**” Then he took a **cup**, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; for **this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.**”’

Matthew 26:26-28

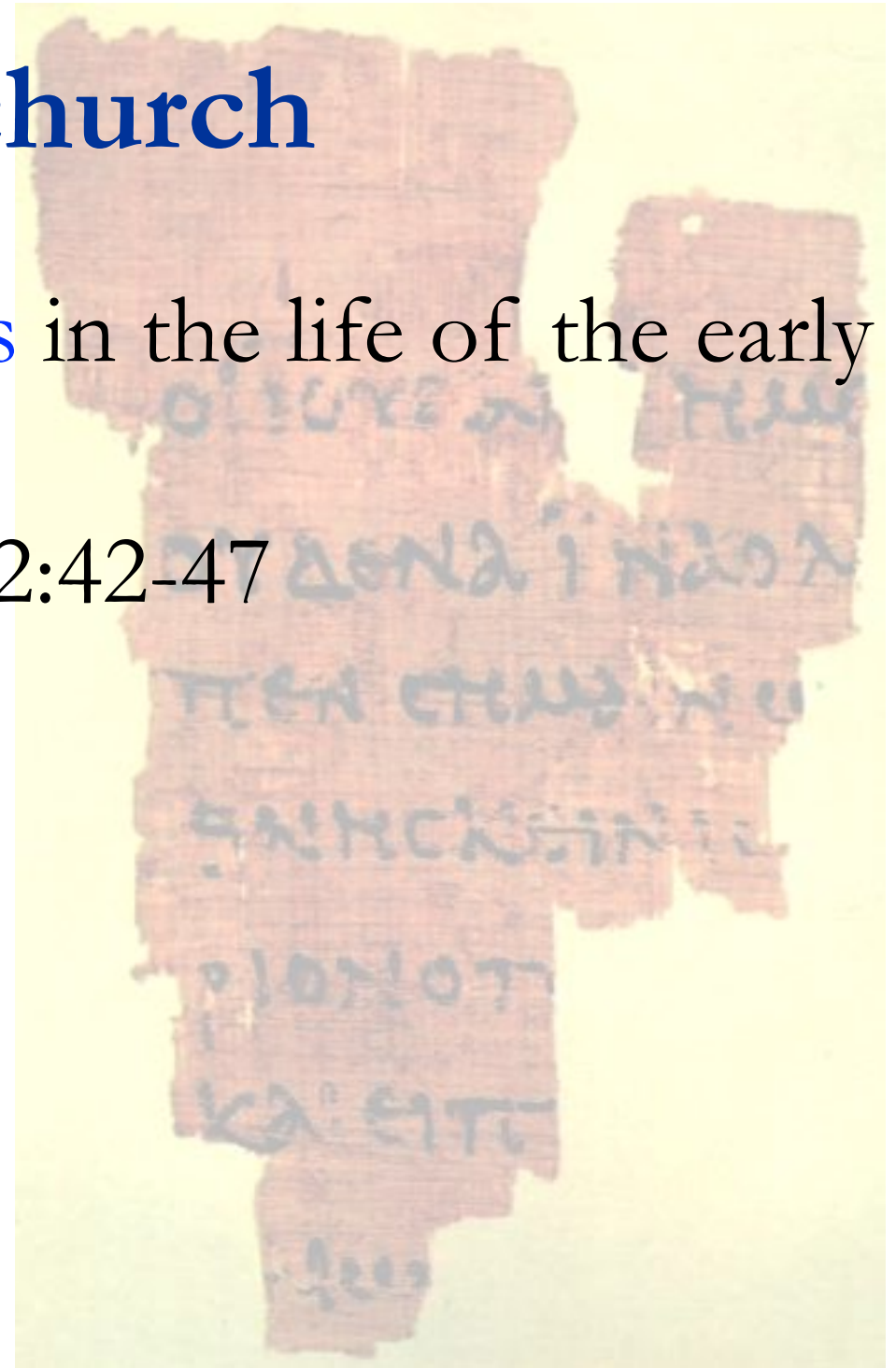
Food and the church

- fellowship in meals in the life of the early believers



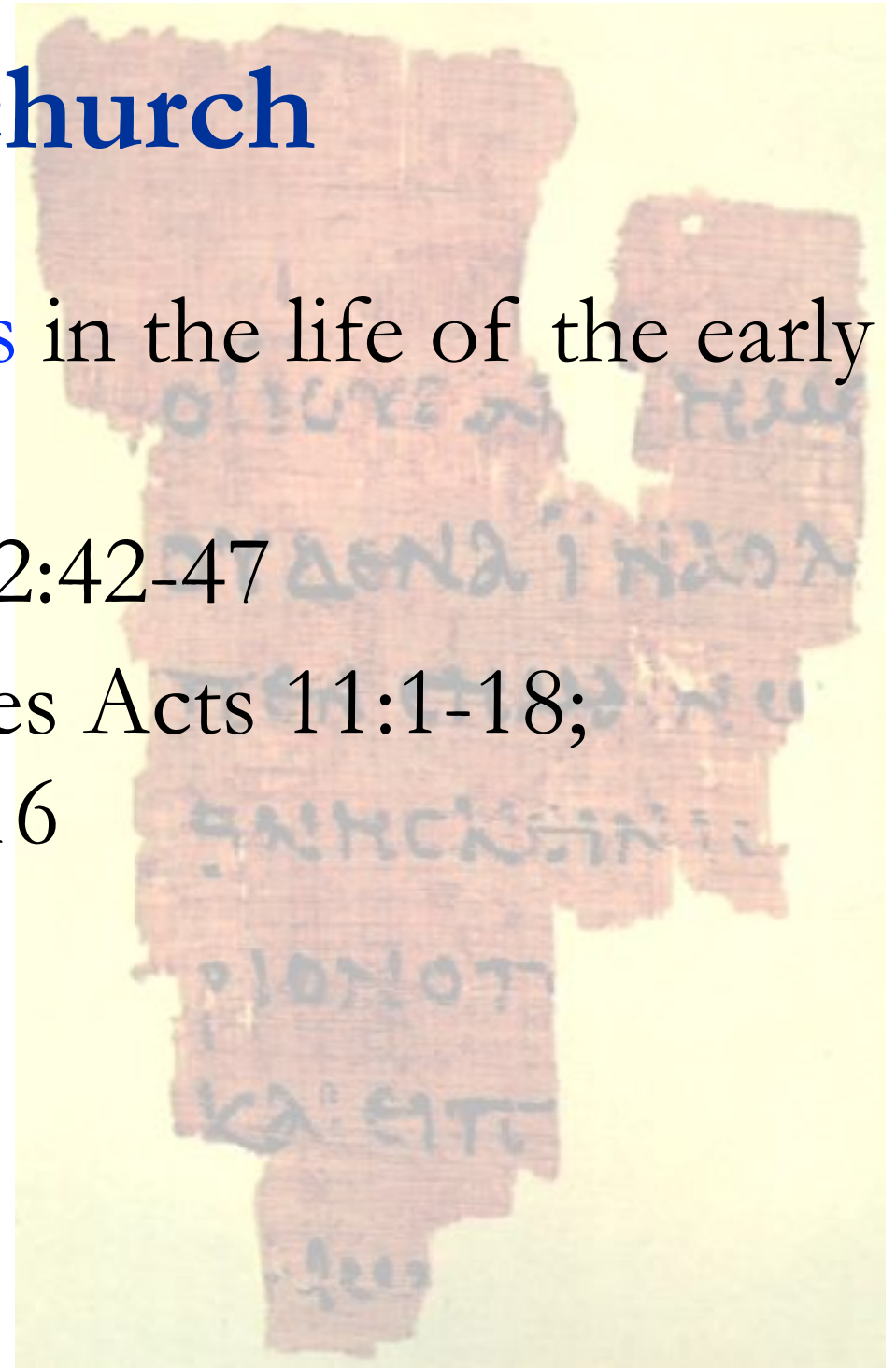
Food and the church

- fellowship in meals in the life of the early believers
 - Jerusalem Acts 2:42-47



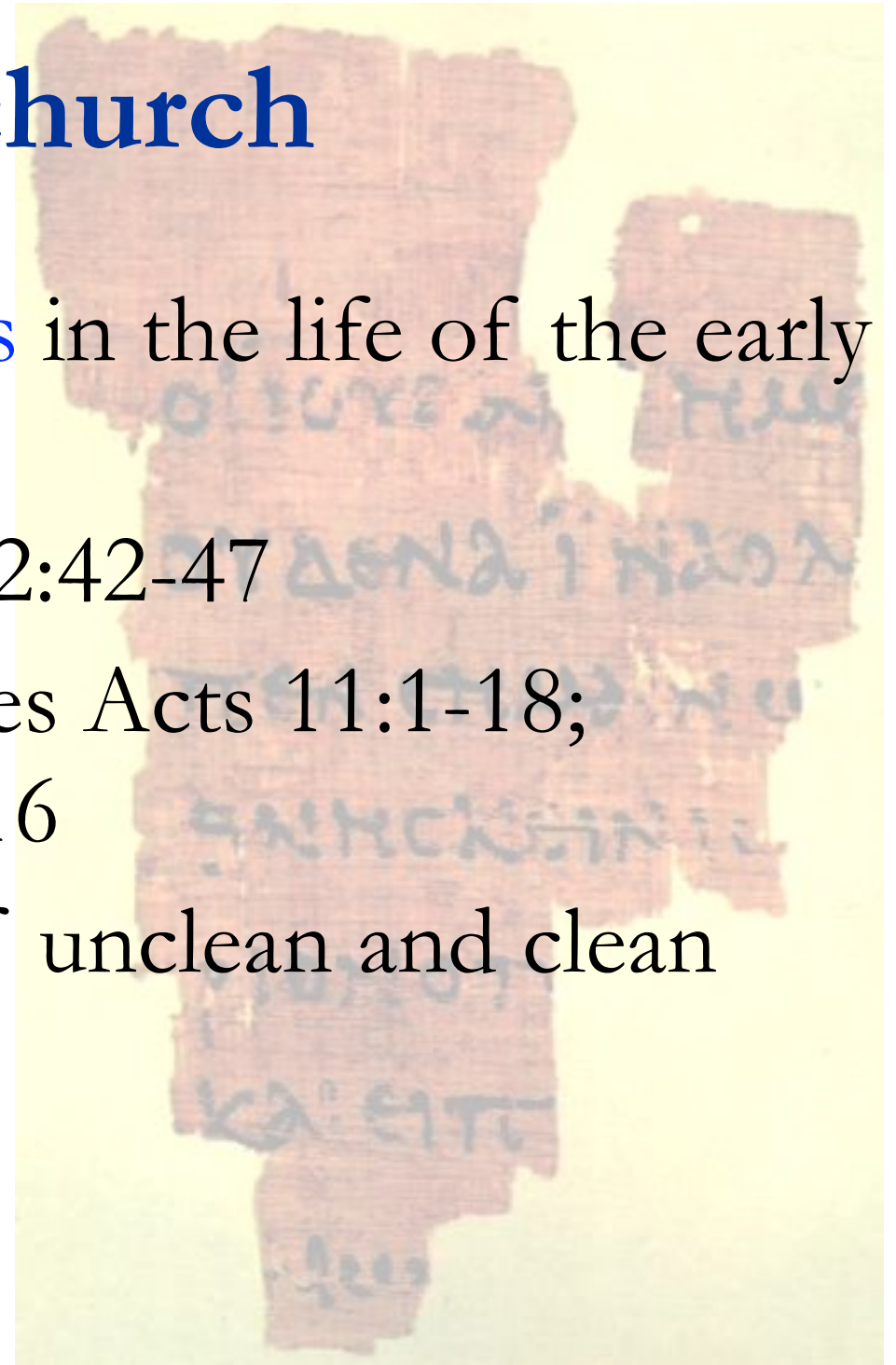
Food and the church

- fellowship in meals in the life of the early believers
 - Jerusalem Acts 2:42-47
 - including gentiles Acts 11:1-18;
Galatians 2:11-16



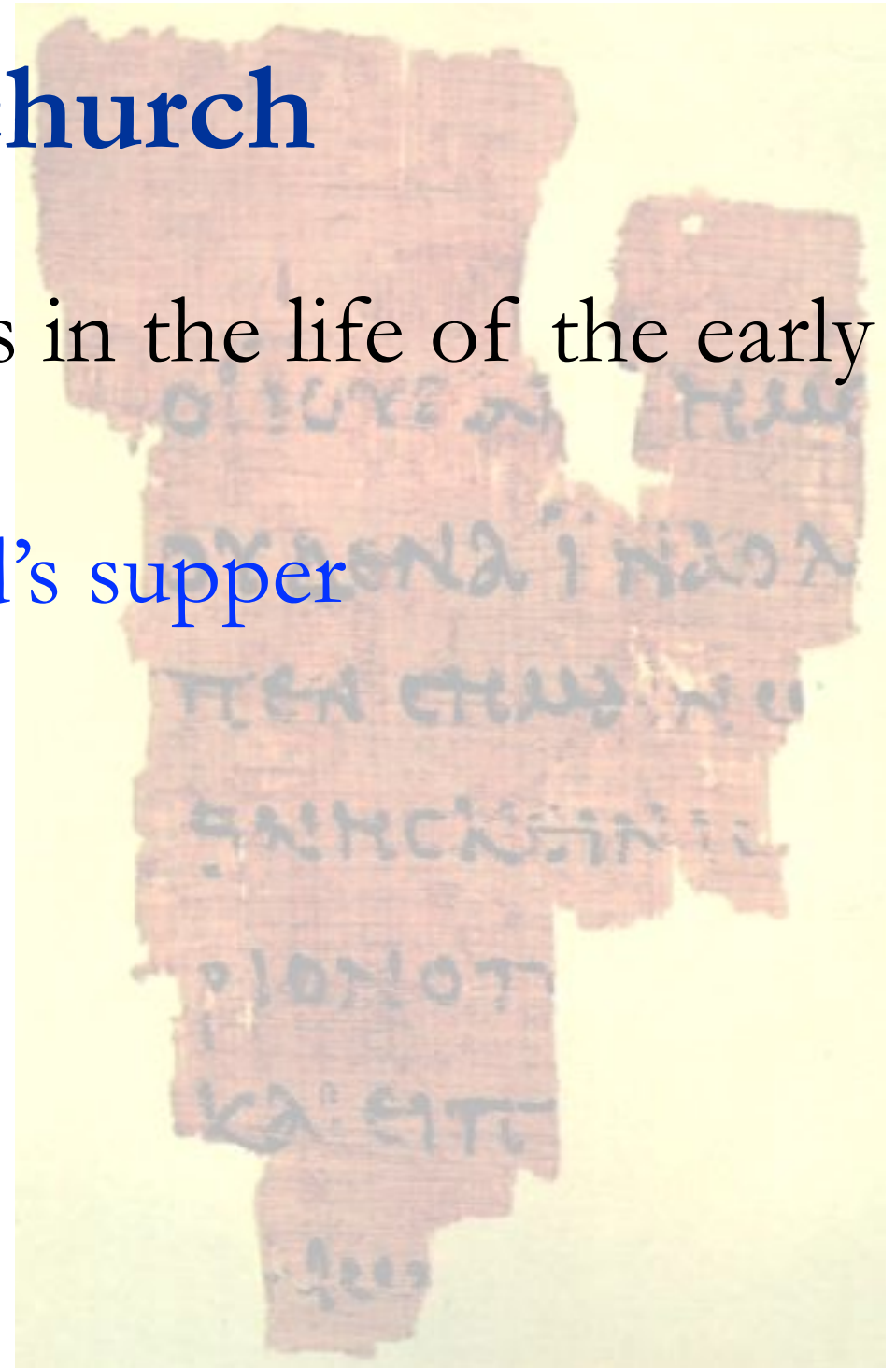
Food and the church

- fellowship in meals in the life of the early believers
 - Jerusalem Acts 2:42-47
 - including gentiles Acts 11:1-18; Galatians 2:11-16
 - Peter's vision of unclean and clean animals



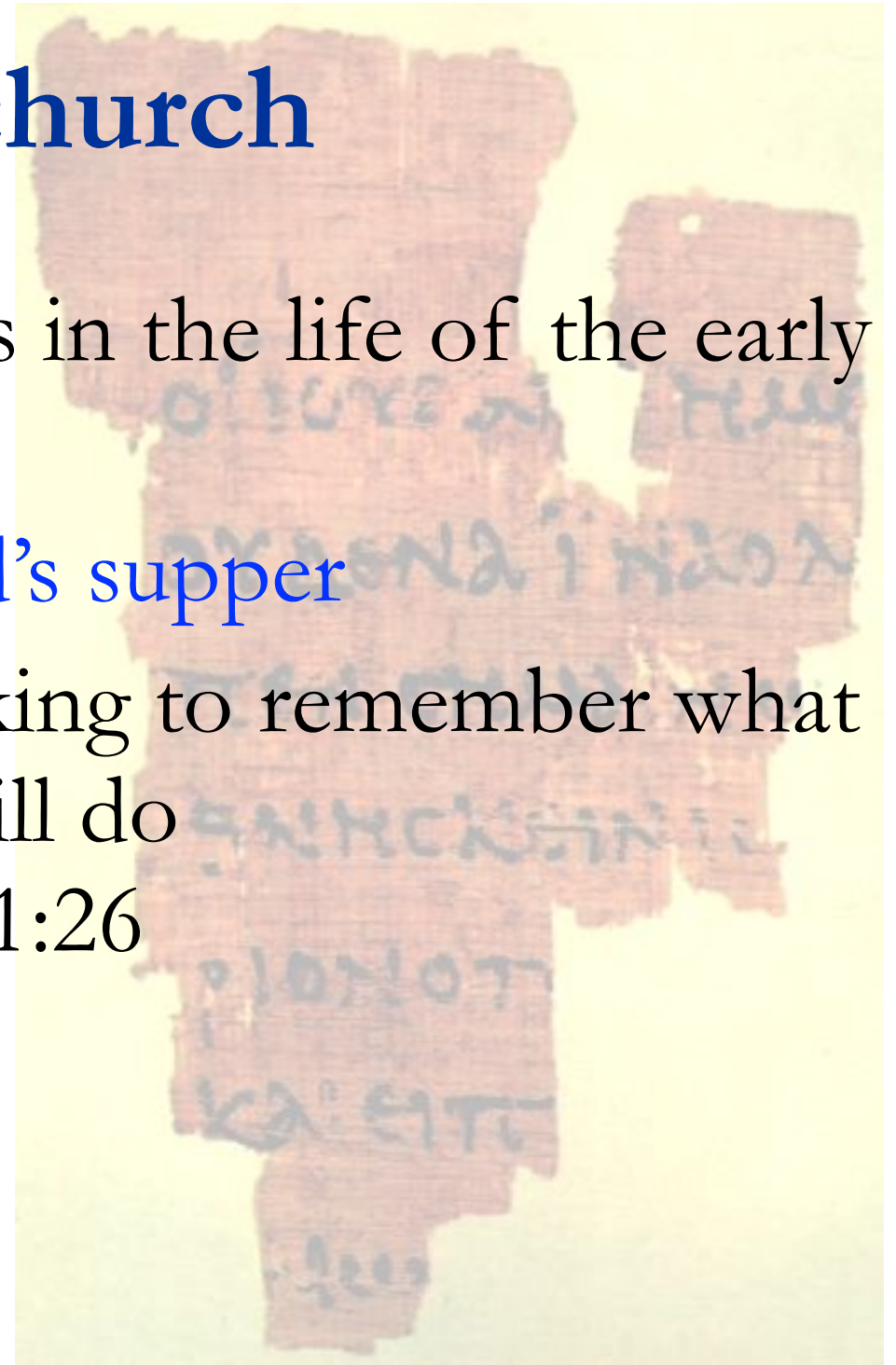
Food and the church

- fellowship in meals in the life of the early believers
- the eucharist/Lord's supper



Food and the church

- fellowship in meals in the life of the early believers
 - the eucharist/Lord's supper
 - eating and drinking to remember what Jesus did and will do
- 1 Corinthians 11:26

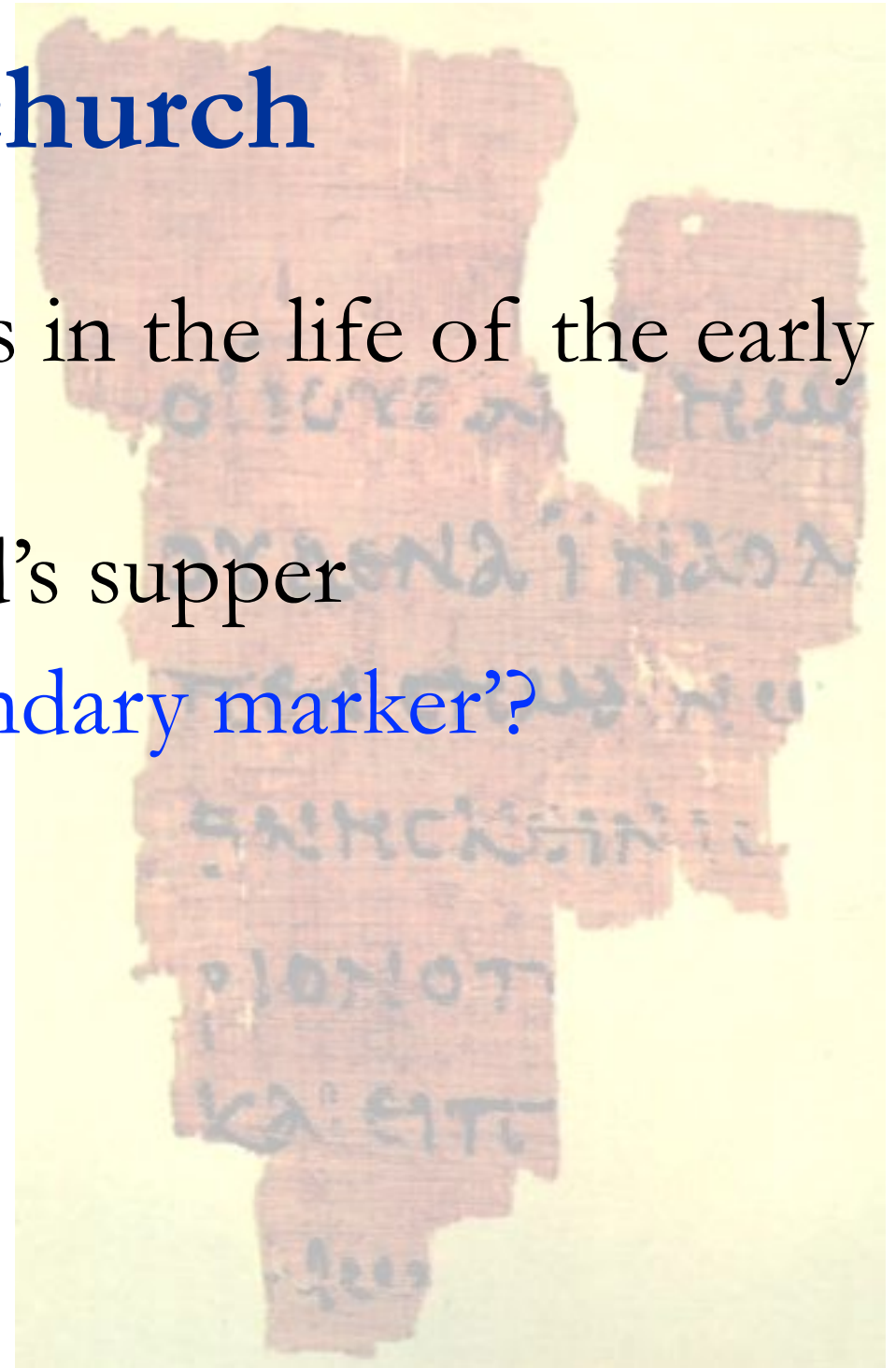


Food and the church

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1 Corinthians 11:26
 - abuse of this fellowship leads to illness and death
1 Corinthians 11:17-34

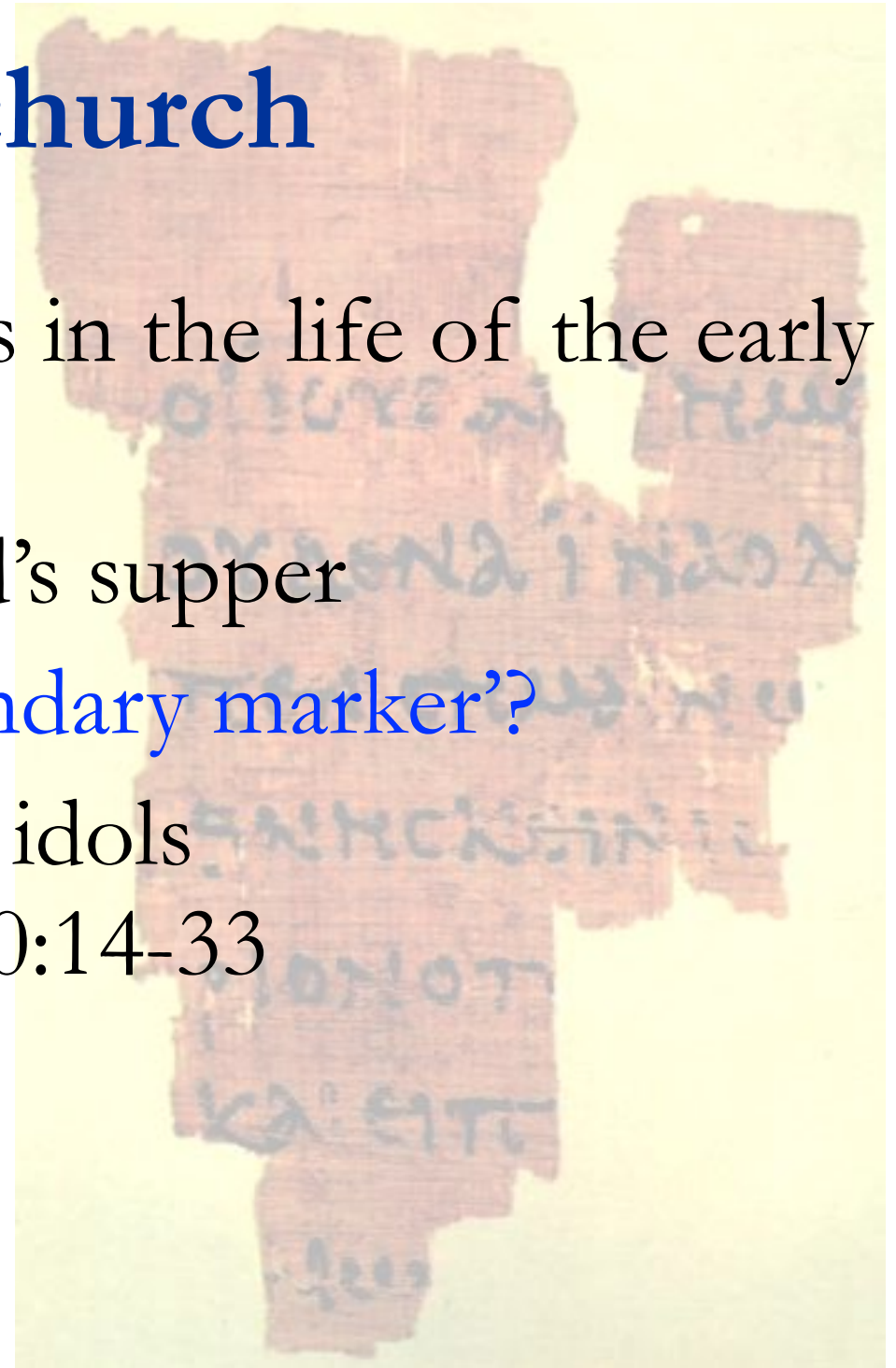
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 - food as God's gift 1 Timothy 4:3-4



Food and the church

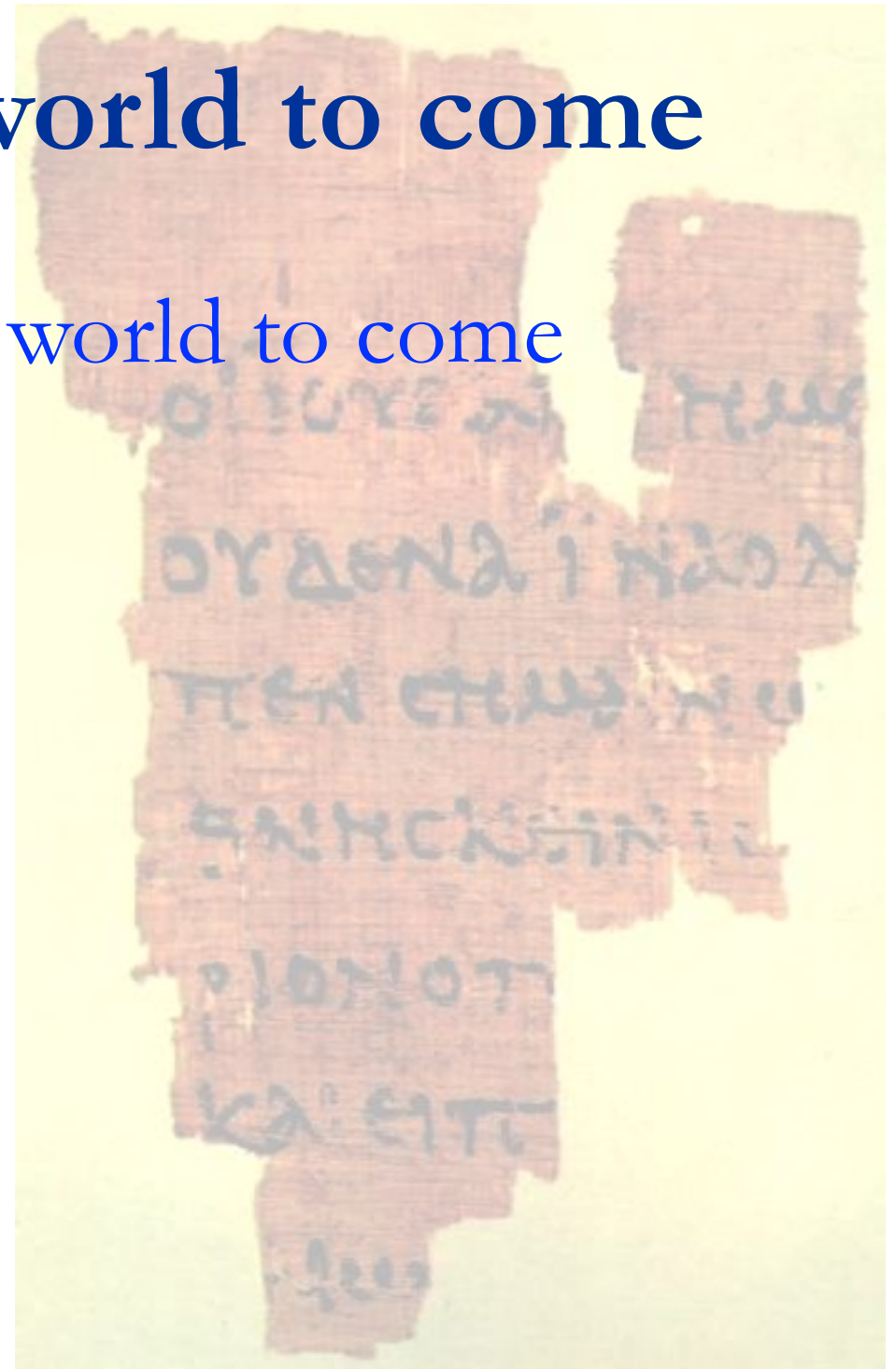
‘They forbid marriage and demand abstinence from foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, provided it is received with thanksgiving.’

1 Timothy 4:3-4



Food and the world to come

- the banquet in the world to come
Isaiah 25:6-8





Food and the world to come

‘On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples

a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,
of rich food filled with marrow,
of well-aged wines strained clear.

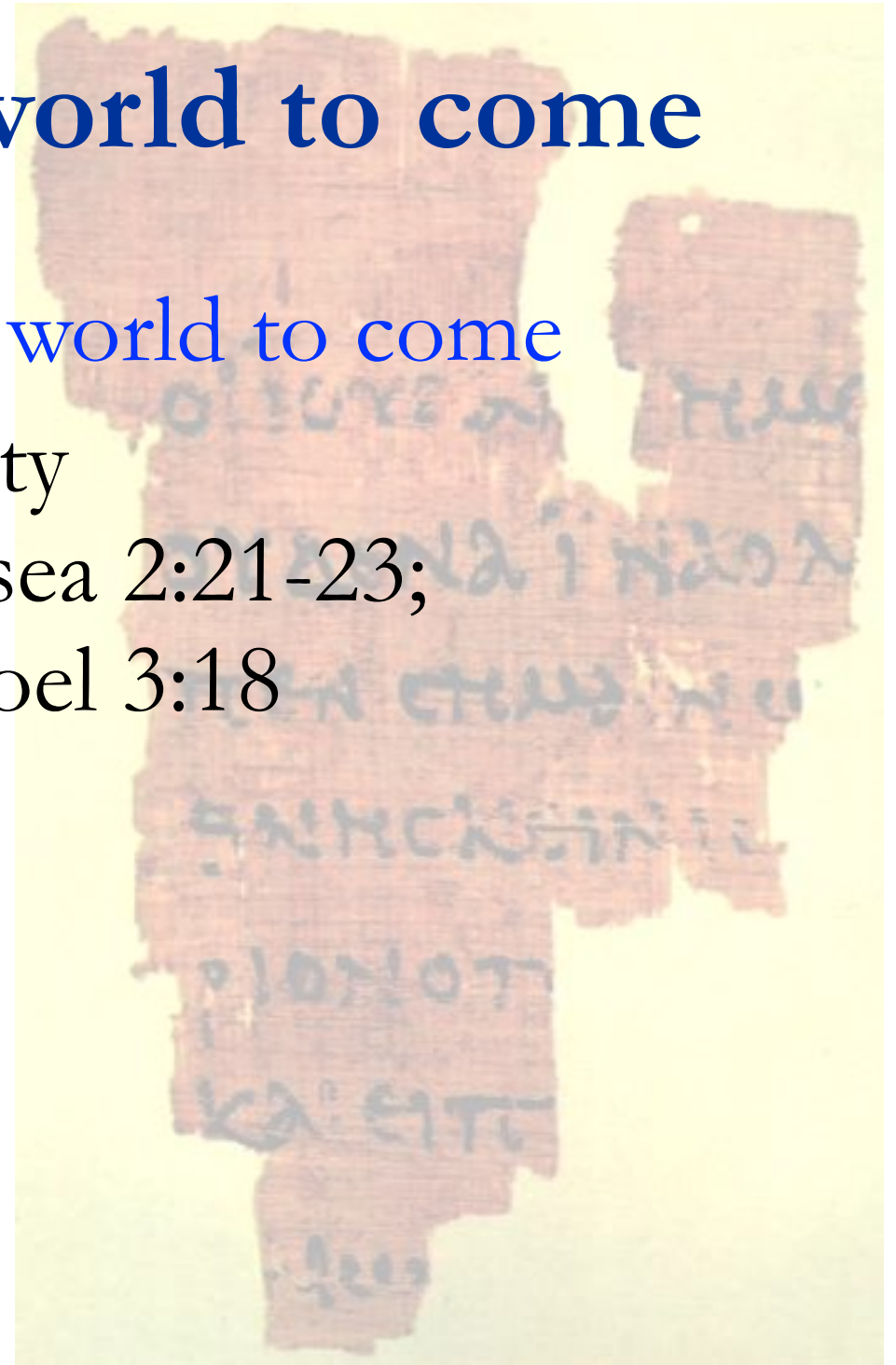
And he will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;
he will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the
earth, for the LORD has spoken.

Isaiah 25:6-8

Food and the world to come

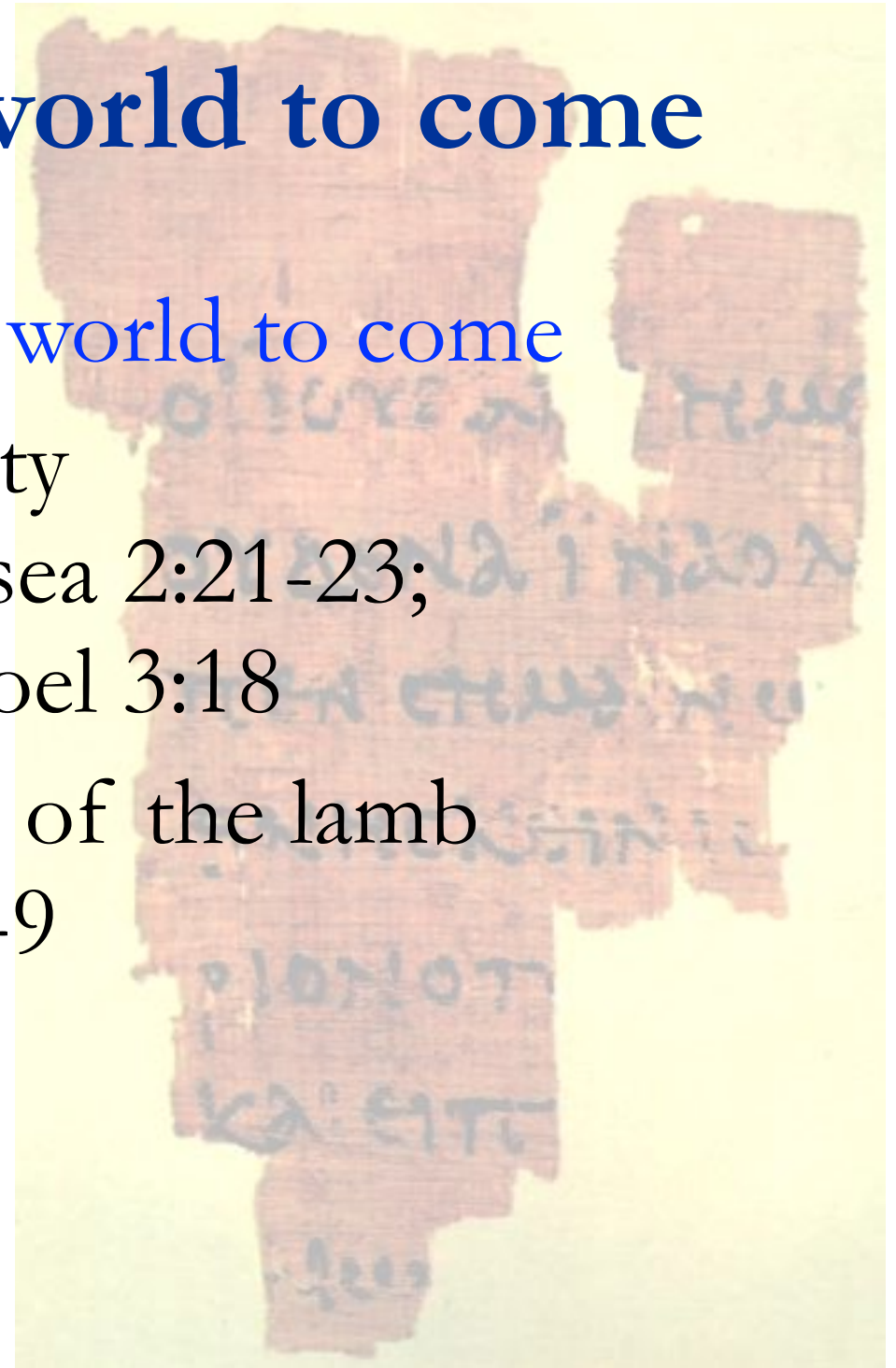
- the banquet in the world to come
 - incredible fertility
Amos 9:11; Hosea 2:21-23;
Ezekiel 47:12; Joel 3:18





Food and the world to come

- the banquet in the world to come
 - incredible fertility
Amos 9:11; Hosea 2:21-23;
Ezekiel 47:12; Joel 3:18
 - wedding supper of the lamb
Revelation 19:7-9





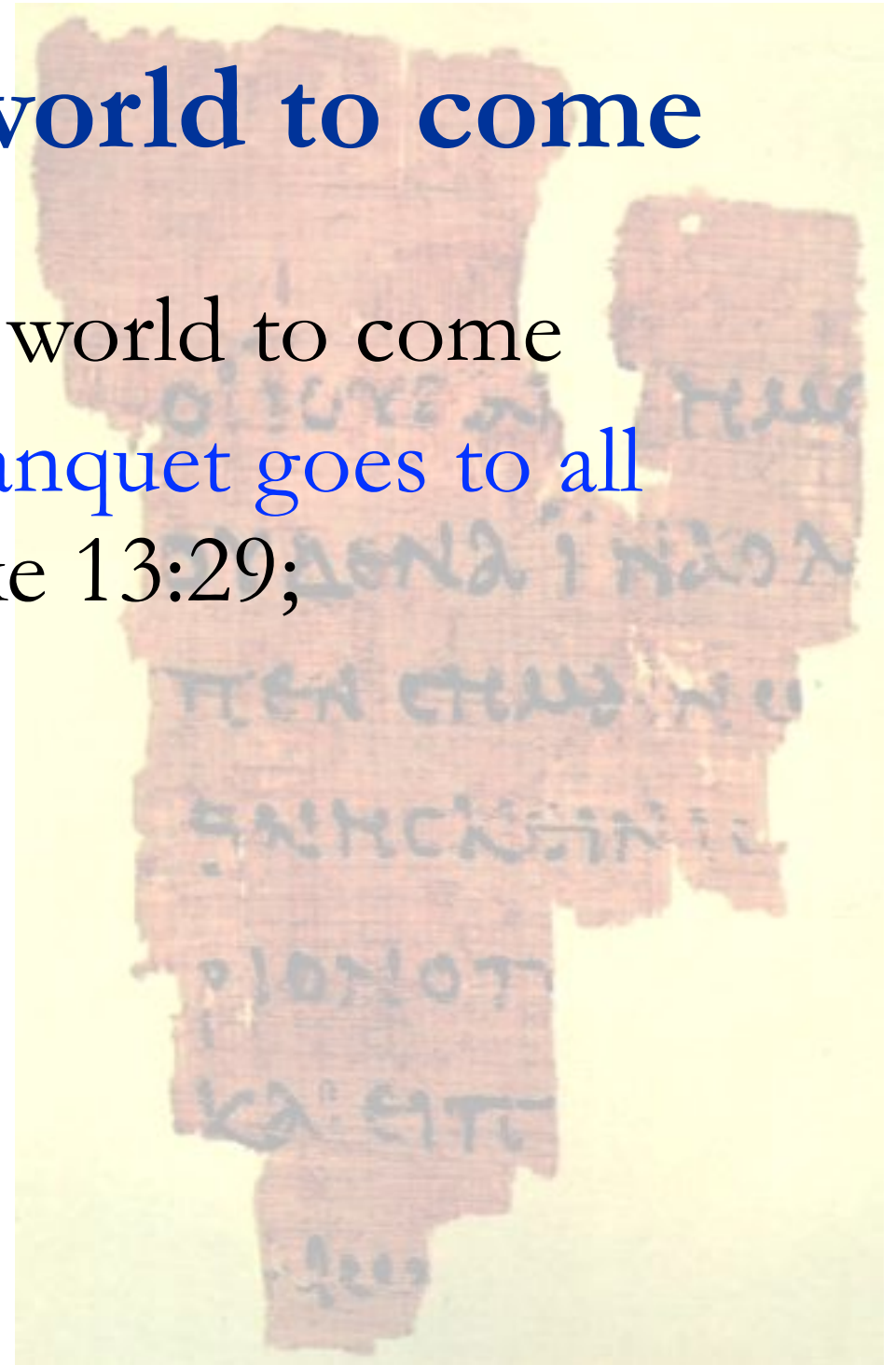
Food and the world to come

“Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for **the marriage of the Lamb** has come, and his bride has made herself ready; to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure”— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, “Write this: **Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.**”

Revelation 19:7-9

Food and the world to come

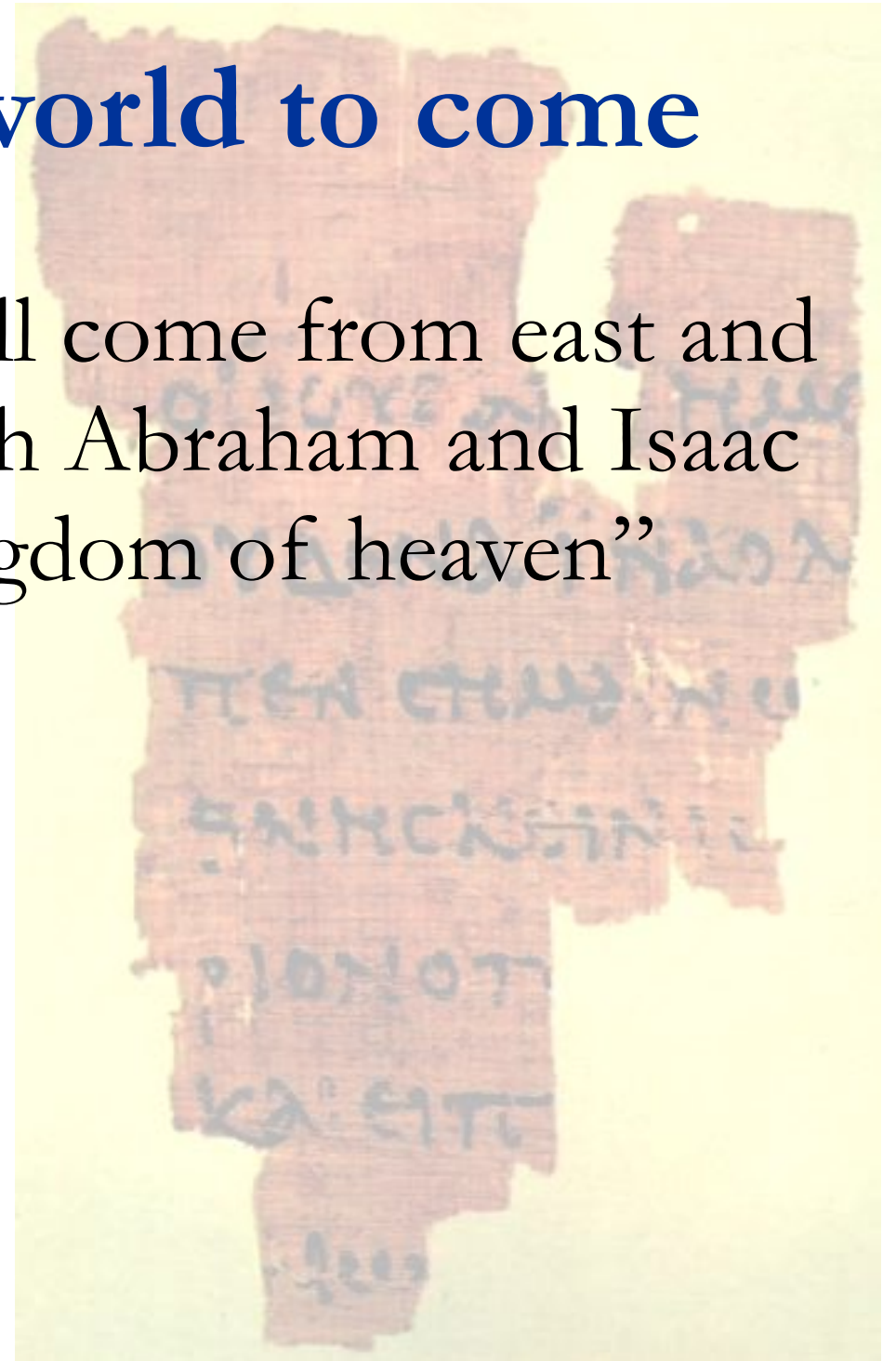
- the banquet in the world to come
 - invitation to the banquet goes to all
- Matthew 8:11; Luke 13:29;
Revelation 3:20





Food and the world to come

“I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven”
Matthew 8:11





Food and the world to come

“I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven”

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“Then people will come from east and west, from north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God.”

Luke 13:29





Food and the world to come

“I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven” Matthew 8:11

“Then people will come from east and west, from north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God.” Luke 13:29

“Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.” Revelation 3:20

Food and the world to come

- the banquet in the world to come
 - invitation to the banquet goes to all
 - but you need to be properly dressed!
- Matthew 22:9-14





Food and the world to come

- the banquet in the world to come
 - invitation to the banquet goes to all
 - **fresh water** in the new heavens and earth
- Revelation 21:6-7





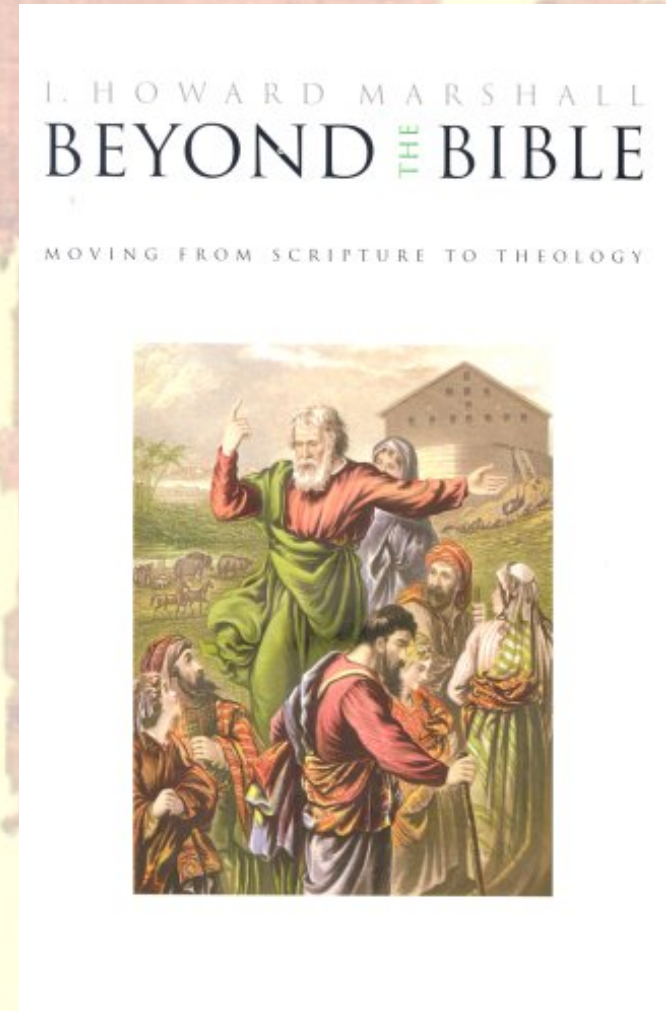
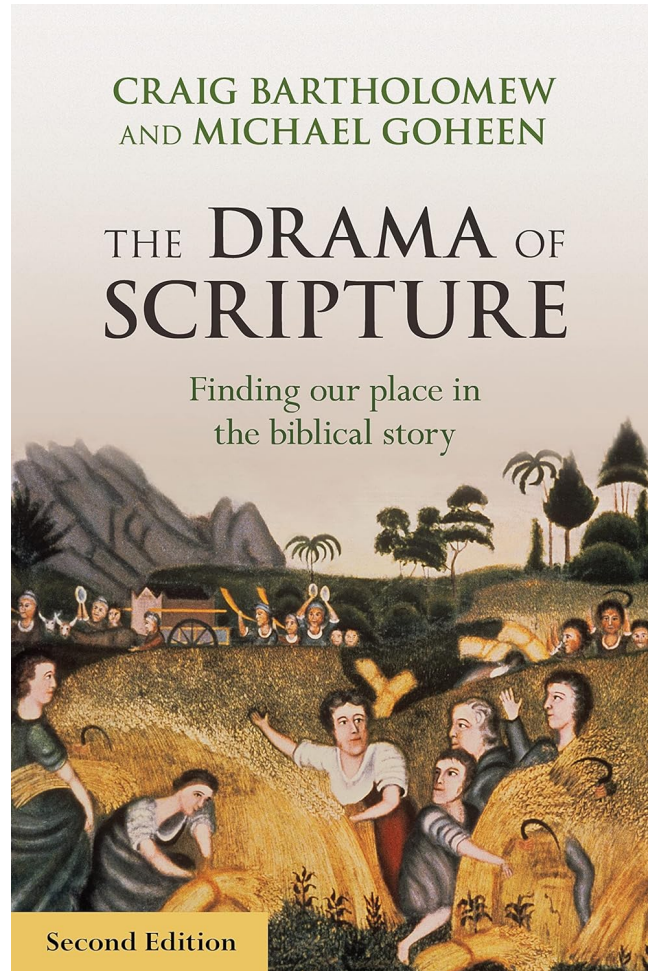
Food and the world to come

‘Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.’

Revelation 21:6-7



Further resources



Richard Bauckham, 'The Genesis Flood and the Nuclear Holocaust: A Hermeneutical Reflection', *Churchman* 99 (1985): 146–55—[link on my website](#)



SHARE ***YOUR QUESTIONS***

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<http://stevewalton.info>