



Codex Sinaiticus: The Story of the World's Oldest Bible

D. C. Parker

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Despite its rather austere appearance, the Codex Sinaiticus is a treasure beyond price. Produced in the middle of the fourth century, its bound parchment pages hold the full canon of the Christian Bible and more—the handwritten Greek text of the earliest surviving copy of the complete koine New Testament; the earliest and best copies of some Septuagint texts, the Old Testament Scriptures as they were adopted by the first-century church; and two late first-century Christian texts, the Shepherd of Hermas and the Epistle of Barnabas. The sections are heavily marked by early correctors. Told here is the compelling story of how the Codex Sinaiticus was created and used in the ancient church; how it was preserved for centuries at the monastery of St. Catherine's, Mount Sinai; its subsequent history and how its pages came to be divided and dispersed; and how it has been compiled again and made accessible to a worldwide audience for the first time. D. C. Parker's outstanding research and excellent storytelling skills simultaneously illuminate the chronology of bookmaking in Western culture and the effects of that technology on the presentation of the biblical canon. Offering a fascinating look at the task of making a Bible in the year, ad 350, he discusses how included books were chosen—or not; physical elements of production—layout, ink, parchment, binding, and budget; the jobs of scribes and correctors; and the role of annotators. As readers follow the travels of the pieces of the Codex Sinaiticus through the twentieth century, they'll discover key personalities and places, and absorb the details of the current production of the Internet electronic edition of this singular document. Full-color illustrations and suggestions for further reading add much to the journey.

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