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Volume 3 | Issue 2

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2011

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#### Recommended Citation

."Could lead codices prove 'the major discovery of Christian history'?" *Peregrinations: Journal of Medieval Art and Architecture* 3, 2 (2011). <https://digital.kenyon.edu/perejournal/vol3/iss2/14>

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## ***Could lead codices prove ‘the major discovery of Christian history’?***

Seventy lead codices were discovered five years ago in a remote cave in eastern Jordan—a region where early Christian believers may have fled after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE. The codices individual pages (about the size of a credit card) are wirebound together. Visually and textually they allude to a messiah and contain some possible references to the crucifixion and resurrection. Their small size seems to indicate that their function was intended for private devotion.

The codices have been test metallurgically and those tests seem to confirm their proposed age. Biblical scholars who have examined the codices suggest an early Christian origin. Philip Davies, emeritus professor of Old Testament Studies at Sheffield University, was "dumbstruck" at the sight of plates representing a picture map of ancient Jerusalem. "There is a cross in the foreground, and behind it is what has to be the tomb [of Jesus], a small building with an opening, and behind that the walls of the city," Davies explained. "There are walls depicted on other pages of these books, too, and they almost certainly refer to Jerusalem."





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