The Codex Alexandrinus is a fifth century codex bound book of the entire New Testament Scripture with the two Epistles of Clement attached. Wikipedia says that the Codex Alexandrinus, “… contains all of the books of the New Testament (although the pages that contained Matthew 1:1-25:5 are not extant). In addition, the codex contains 1 Clement (lacking 57:7-63) and the homily known as 2 Clement (up to 12:5a).”

The Number of extant Manuscripts of 1 and 2 Clement - By J. B. Lightfoot

The authorities for the text are three in number, two Greek manuscripts and a Syriac version.

(1)- Codex Alexandrinus (A), where the Epistles of Clement (1st and 2nd) are added to the New Testament; an uncial manuscript probably belonging to the fifth century. It is fully described above, v. 1 p. 116 sq. It is much blurred and worn, and a leaf has disappeared towards the end of the First Epistle. Thus it omits from § 57 ανθ’ων γαρ ηδικουν to the end of § 63. In the Second Epistle it breaks off at § 12 ουτε αρσεν ουτε θηλυ τουτο, the end of the manuscript being lost. The so-called ν εφελκυστικον is almost uniformly inserted. All deviations from this authority in my text are noted in the apparatus criticus beneath. The lacunae in this manuscript are not stated, except where a various reading is concerned; but a complete list is given at the end of the Epistles.

Church historians and scholars state that there is only one early extant Greek manuscript of 1 and 2 Clement that was found in Alexandria dating from the
fifth century. All other extant manuscripts of 1 and 2 Clement came from this single source which proves that 1 Clement chapter 58 was added later.

(2) Codex Constantinopolitanus (C), a cursive manuscript dated A.D. 1056, and containing the whole text of the Two Epistles. It is described fully above, I. p. 121 sq. The ν εφελκυστικον [the following] is systematically omitted, though there are one or two exceptions. All the variations of this manuscript likewise are recorded beneath, with the exception of ν εφελκυστικον which it seemed unnecessary to notice.

(3) Syriac Version (S), where the Epistles of Clement are found incorporated among the Epistles of the New Testament in the Philoxenian (Harclean) version. The extant manuscript is dated A.D. 1170. The authority is described fully in the introduction, I. p. 129 sq. How far this version may be accepted as evidence for the text, and to what extent it seemed advisable to record the variations from the Greek, I have there stated with sufficient precision.

It is hard to believe that most Trinitarians scholars reject the first century Roman authorship of 2 Clement even though all three extant manuscripts of 1 and 2 Clement were found attached together with 1 and 2 Clement inscribed on the manuscripts. The historical evidence also informs us that there was another extant manuscript of 1 Clement with 2nd Clement attached to it at Corinth which has been lost. Therefore we know that every manuscript of 2 Clement was always found attached to 1 Clement with the words, The “Second Epistle of Clement” written on the manuscripts. If the second epistle of Clement was not written by Clement, then Clements’ name should not have been written on all of the extant manuscripts, nor should each of the manuscripts entitled “The Second Epistle of Clement” have been attached after Clements’ first Epistle.

Udo Schnelle a New Testament scholar at the University of Halle-Wittenberg, and is the author of a number of theological works.

New Testament scholar Udo Schnelle wrote (in The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings, p. 355): "In 2 Clement a larger number of logia (pron. Lojia) of Synoptic types are found (cf. 2 Clem 2.4; 3.2; 4.2; 6.1, 2; 8.5; 9.11; 13.4), which are in part introduced with quotation formulae. Alongside these are found quotations of unknown origin; cf. 2 Clem 4.5; 5.2-4; 12.2; 13.2. This data and the introductory formula in 2 Clem. 8.5 [for the Lord says in the Gospel] suggest that the author of 2 Clement used, in addition to the
Old Testament, an apocryphal gospel that has not come down to us. There is a clearly recognizable tendency in 2 Clement to trace the authority of the Lord back to written documents."

This so called apocryphal gospel has been proved to be the Gospel to the Egyptians. Why would Clement of Rome cite the gospel to the Egyptians as scripture if it was believed to be a spurious gospel in the first century?

Professor Robert M. Grant was the most prolific and influential American historian of ancient Christianity of his generation. Professor at University of Chicago (born 1917, died 2014).

Robert M. Grant referenced 2 Clement (in The Anchor Bible Dictionary, v. 1, p. 1061):

An early Christian epistle (2 Clement) transmitted along with 1 Clement in the biblical Codex Alexandrinus (5th century) and the later Jerusalem Codex (1056) which includes the Didache, as well as in the Syriac version. It was not written by the author(s) of 1 Clement and, indeed, it is not a letter but a sermon on self-control, repentance, and judgment. The sermon begins abruptly: "Brothers, we must think about Jesus Christ as about God, as about the judge of living and dead; and we must not think little of our salvation." The preacher tells his "brothers and sisters" that he is reading them a "petition" or "plea" (Gk enteuxis) to "pay attention to what is written," i.e. to the scriptures which he frequently cites (along with quotations from "the prophetic word," otherwise unknown, and something like the apocryphal Gospel of the Egyptians). He himself refers to "the books (i.e., the OT) and the apostles" as authorities (14.2).

Clement of Rome frequently cited the Gospel to the Egyptians as it if was an authoritative document. Clement clearly believed that the Gospel to the Egyptians was inspired scripture.

Grant further wrote (in The Anchor Bible Dictionary, v. 1, p. 1061):

Scholars have noted the "synoptic-type" Jewish piety of the sermon, perhaps surprising around A.D. 140-160 (the epistle's approximate date). The work appears to rely upon the Gospel of John as well, however, notably in 9:5-6: "If Christ the Lord who saved us was Spirit at first but became flesh [John 1:14] and so called us, so shall we receive the reward in the flesh. Let us then love one another [John 13:34] so that we may all come to the kingdom of God." The kingdom will come when truth and good works are accompanied by ascetic practice (chap. 12). Until then, Christians must preserve the "seal of baptism" (7:6, 8:6) and belong to "the first, spiritual Church, created [like Israel, according to some rabbis] before
sun and moon," for Gen 1:27 refers to the male Christ and the female Church, both spiritual; Christ is also the Spirit (chap. 14). The theology is not altogether clear, and the author soon turns to the state that he has "given no trivial counsel about self-control," leading into his practical appeal for repentance and going so far as to say that "fasting is better than prayer, but almsgiving is better than both" (16:4).

Robert Grant commented on Clement’s theology not being “altogether clear” because 2 Clement 14 identifies Christ as the Holy Spirit. Trinitarians are supposed to believe that the Son is not the Holy Spirit.

Most modern scholars now believe that 2nd Clement may not have been written by Clement himself even though the words “Second Clement” appears on the fifth century manuscript itself found in Alexandria, on the early Greek Manuscript found in Corinth (not extant), and upon the Codex (C) and the Syriac (S) manuscripts. It amazes me that Trinitarian scholars refuse to accept the first century Roman bishop as the author of 2 Clement, even though every single manuscript of 1 Clement was always found with 2 Clement attached it with the words “Second Clement” appearing on the manuscript.

Furthermore, Grant wrote (op. cit., p. 1061): “Scholars have noted the "synoptic-type" Jewish piety of the sermon, perhaps surprising around A.D. 140-160 …”

Scholars have noted that the synoptic type of Jewish style of writing is “surprising” for a document dated after the first century. Hence, the internal evidence within Second Clement itself lends support to it being composed within the first century.

There are three primary reasons why 2 Clement is not believed to be written by Clement of the first century Roman Church.

1. 2 Clement cites The Shepherd of Hermas which was also written in the first century, but Hippolytus’ third century Muratorian Canon falsely ascribed Hermas to the mid second century (many scholars such as John Robinson and George Edmondson proved that the Muratorian fragment is “full of error”). However, besides the internal evidence which states that Clement of Rome sent “The Shepherd of Hermas” to churches throughout the world within the first century; church historians A. T. Robinson and George Edmondson have convincingly documented the evidence proving that both Hermas and Clement were contemporaries within the first century Apostolic era. The Shepherd of Hermas itself states in Vision 3:5 that some of the first century apostles were still alive while the Shepherd of Hermas was written. Thus proving that Hermas was a first century composition.

2. The author of 2 Clement quoted texts from the Gospel to the Egyptians, which he regarded as scripture. This presents a problem for Trinitarian scholars because the historical data proves that “The Gospel to the Egyptians” was highly regarded as sacred scripture by the early Modalistic Monarchians. Ephiphanius (340-403) wrote that The Gospel to the Egyptians states that Jesus “makes clear to the disciples that he himself is the Father, that he himself is the Son, and that he himself is the Holy Spirit (Panarion 62).” This book was very popular among the
Sabellians but was rejected by Origen and others due to its graphic “Sabellian” content.

Epiphanius (340-403) wrote in Panarion 62:
“But their whole deception, and the whole power of their deception, they have (currently have) from certain apocryphal [writings], especially from the gospel called Egyptian, upon which some place this name. For in it many such things are quoted (not just in the past but in the present) mysteriously, as if in a corner, as if from the person of the Savior, such as when he makes clear to the disciples that he himself is the Father, that he himself is the Son, and that he himself is the Holy Spirit.”

Notice that even in the fourth century, Epiphanius speaks of the Modalists by saying, “they have (not just in the past, but current) from certain apocryphal [writings], especially from the gospel called Egyptian, upon which some place this name (not just in the past, but current in the fourth century).” Hence it appears that the Gospel to the Egyptians was still extant in the late fourth century but was likely destroyed by the later Roman Catholic Church due its overt Modalistic content.

3. The contents of 2 Clement also contain graphic Modalistic theology (explained below), so it is not surprising that Trinitarian scholars have questioned its authenticity.
THE GOSPEL TO THE EGYPTIANS: Luke opened his gospel narrative by writing, “Inasmuch as MANY HAVE UNDERTAKEN TO COMPILE A NARRATIVE of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitneses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught (Luke 1:1-4).”

We know that the gospel of John was the last gospel narrative to be written, so it is unlikely that the “many” which preceded Luke could have only been two, Matthew and Mark. This is a very strong argument in favor of their being other true gospel narratives that have not come down to us.

There is absolutely no evidence to suggest that the Greek Gospel to the Egyptians (not to be confused with a “wholly Gnostic Coptic Gospel of the Egyptians” - Wikipedia) was not written within the first century. Most scholars speculate that this non extant gospel narrative was written in the second century because they disagree with its contents (based upon its Modalistic contents cited by Clement of Alexandria and Epiphanius).

Some scholars have placed the Gospel to the Egyptians with the Gnostic literature even though there is no proof that this gospel narrative was written by later Gnostics. Ron Cameron wrote that The Gospel of the Egyptians was probably written in the late first or early second century.

“Based on compositional parallels in the morphology of the tradition, a date in the late first or early second century is most likely.”


Glen Davis wrote that “The Gospel of the Egyptians” “was probably written in the first half of the first century”. “All that survives to us from the 'Gospel of the Egyptians' are several quotations made by Clement, Hippolytus, and Epiphanius. It was probably written in the first half of the first century (in Greek) and in Egypt ...” From EarlyChristianWritings.com, under “The Gospel of the Egyptians.”
James Donaldson was a Scottish classical scholar and translator. In the late 19th and early 20th century, he worked with Alexander Roberts to translate many Greek and Latin texts into English, known as the Roberts-Donaldson translations.

The Introductory Notice from Roberts – Donaldson’s Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 2, pg. 515 states that 2 Clement was found within the fifth century Alexandrian Codex.

“There can be no doubt, however, that in the catalogue of writings contained in the Alexandrian ms. it is both styled an epistle, and, as well as the other which accompanies it, is attributed to Clement. As the ms. is certainly not later than the fifth century, the opinion referred to must by that time have taken firm root in the Church; but in the face of internal evidence, and in want of all earlier testimony, such a fact goes but a small way to establish its authenticity.”

In the fourth century, Eusebius (Hist. Eccl., iii. 38) affirmed that there was a second Epistle of Clement: "We must know that there is also a second Epistle of Clement. But we do not regard it as being equally notable with the former …"

Although Eusebius admitted that the second Epistle was attributed to Clement, Eusebius did not regard it as “being equally notable with the former” Epistle of Clement. Eusebius and other “semi Arians” obviously disagreed with 2 Clement which says that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, and that Jesus Christ is the “Father.” Eusebius and his contemporaries obviously knew that Clement quoted the Gospel to the Egyptians and the Shepherd of Hermas which contain graphic Modalistic
theology. Therefore they would not have regarded it as being equally notable with the former.

In the mid to late fourth century (340-403), Epiphanius wrote that the Gospel to the Egyptians describes Jesus making it “clear to the disciples that he himself is the Father, that he himself is the Son, and that he himself is the Holy Spirit (Panorian 62).”

Roberts and Donaldson state that 2 Clement is ascribed to the second century because of a quote from the Shepherd of Hermas and a quote from the Gospel of the Egyptians.

“Chapter XII (21) contains a report of words purporting to have been spoken by the Lord; these, Clement of Alexandriá states, are taken from the Apocryphal Gospel according to the Egyptians, not now extant. The reference in Chapter XIV (14) to the spiritual church, recalling Ephesians 1:3-5, is parallel to the Pastor (Shepherd) of Hermas, Vision II. 4. These passages help to determine the date; …” From Vol. VII., p. 515 of the Ante-Nicene Fathers

Scholars Roberts and Donaldson highlighted the fact that 2 Clement cites passages from the lost Gospel to the Egyptians and a passage from The Shepherd of Hermas (Vision 2:4) which led scholars to “determine the date.” Furthermore, citations from early Christian writers who cited the Gospel to the Egyptians affirmed that the Gospel narrative was clearly Modalistic. That would mean that the author of 2 Clement was himself Modalistic in his theology.

To make matters worse for Trinitarian scholars, the author of 2 Clement cited a passage from the Shepherd of Hermas (Vision 2:4). The Shepherd of Hermas also happens to contain graphic Modalistic theology as the Holy Spirit is identified as the same divine Person as the Son of God.

Although Eusebius admitted that the second Epistle was attributed to Clement, Eusebius not did regard it as “being equally notable with the former” Epistle of Clement? Eusebius and other “semi Arians” obviously disagreed with 2 Clement saying that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ (2 Clement 14:3-4), and that Jesus Christ is the “Father” (2 Clement chapter 1). Eusebius and his contemporaries obviously knew that Clement quoted the Gospel to the Egyptians and the Shepherd of Hermas which contain graphic Modalistic theology.
The Gospel to the Egyptians describes Jesus making it “clear to the disciples that he himself is the father, that he himself is the son, and that he himself is the Holy Spirit.” It is highly improbable that Clement would have cited the Gospel to the Egyptians if he himself did not agree that Jesus is the Father and Holy Spirit. Furthermore, Clement’s words in 2 Clement 14 parallel the words found in the Shepherd of Hermas (Vision 2:4) which show that Clement must have read and believed in the inspiration of the Shepherd of Hermas.

Since Clement believed and read the Shepherd of Hermas, it is apparent that Clement also believed in Modalistic Monarhcan theology. For according to Hermas, the angel informed him that the Holy Spirit incarnated Himself in a body who is “that Spirit” which “IS THE SON OF GOD.”

In Hermas Parable 5:6, Hermas wrote concerning the deity of Jesus, “The pre-existent Holy Spirit which created all things did God make to dwell in a body of flesh chosen by Himself.”

Hermas also wrote in Similitude 9:1,

“The angel of repentance, he came and said to me, I want to show you what THE HOLY SPIRIT which spoke with you in the form of the church, showed you; for THAT SPIRIT IS THE SON OF GOD.”

Hermas wrote that “the pre-existent Holy Spirit who created all things did God made to dwell in a body of flesh chosen by Himself” and that “the Holy Spirit … is the Son of God.” Trinitarians are supposed to believe that the Holy Spirit is not the Son and the Son is not the Holy Spirit.

Wherefore, both Clement and Hermas of the first century Roman Church believed that the Holy Spirit is Jesus, the Son of God. That is Modalism, not Trinitarianism! Therefore Oneness Modalists can claim apostolic succession through Peter and the earliest Roman Bishops rather than the Trinitarian Catholic Church.

Now we can see why the writings of Clement, The Shepherd of Hermas, and the Gospel of the Egyptians (cited by Epiphanius in the fourth century but likely destroyed in the fifth century) were rejected and fell out of use by the latter Roman Catholic Church. This explains why we have only one fifth century copy of the two Epistles of Clement (which appears to be the source from which the eleventh century Greek copy and twelve century Syriac copy of 1 Clement was
made), only a limited number of Greek manuscripts of The Shepherd of Hermas, and none of the Gospel to the Egyptians.”

Under The Shepherd of Hermas, the Orthodox Wiki Encyclopedia states,

“Only a limited number of incomplete Greek manuscripts are extant. Additionally, a number of fragments have been discovered, including fragments of a Middle Persian translation. Of note is that the Codex Sinaiticus of the mid fourth century contains a copy of the Shepherd of Hermas at the end of the New Testament, illustrating its popularity at that time.”

The historical evidence suggests that 1 and 2 Clement, the Shepherd of Hermas, and the now lost Gospel to the Egyptians were very popular in the early days of Christianity, but they were neglected or destroyed by the later Roman Catholic Church. It seems very likely that these early Christian writings fell out of use and in some cases were destroyed because the State Church disagreed with their contents.

The Shepherd of Hermas states that Clement of Rome made copies of the Shepherd of Hermas to send it to other churches as scripture. This same Clement of Rome also cited the Gospel to the Egyptians as inspired scripture. These are the facts of early Christian history that cannot be denied.

Furthermore, a particular unknown passage of scripture appears from a lost book of the Bible, once in 1 Clement, and again in 2 Clement. This same passage appears to be from the lost Gospel to the Egyptians. Hence, the Clementine authorship of both 1 and 2 Clement is probable. For it is highly unlikely that an unknown passage would appear in both literary works without being written by the same author.
Both 1 Clement 23 and 2 Clement 11 cite the same passage with some slight differences.

"Far be from you that scripture where it says (2 Clement says, “for the prophetic word also says”), ‘Miserable are the double-minded which doubt in their soul (2 Clement says “heart”), which say: these things we heard in our fathers' days also, and lo! We have grown old and nothing of these things has befallen us (2 Clement says, “but we expecting from day to day have seen none of these things”). O foolish ones, compare yourselves to a tree; take the vine; first it sheds the leaf, then a shoot comes (2 Clement says “then a leaf, then a flower”), and after that a sour berry, then a cluster fully ripe. (Here 1 Clement ends and 2 Clement continues): So also my people have had unquietness and afflictions: afterward it shall receive good things." 1 Clement 23 says that the quote is from “that scripture” while 2 Clement 11 says “the prophetic word.”

Since Clement of Rome cited the same unknown scripture in both 1 and 2 Clement, it becomes even more evident that Clement of Rome was the author of both 1 and 2 Clement. Since the Gospel to the Egyptians is the only lost book of the Bible known to have been cited in 2 Clement, the mysterious scriptural quote that appears in both 1 and 2 Clement most likely came from the lost Gospel to the Egyptians. This would mean that the Gospel to the Egyptians was written before 70 A.D. (while the original apostles were still alive).

The Gospel to the Egyptians plainly stated that Jesus is the same Divine Individual as the Holy Spirit of the Father. At around 200 A.D., Clement of Alexandria proved that Clement of Rome cited the Gospel to the Egyptians in 2 Clement. Therefore the most likely source of this unknown scripture cited in both 1 and 2 Clement is from the words of Jesus out of the lost Gospel to the Egyptians. For Jesus often used the analogy of agricultural plants in his style of teaching.

Clement cited the Gospel to the Egyptians as scripture (a Gospel narrative with known Modalistic content) and the Shepherd of Hermas Vision 2:4 as scripture (which also contains known Modalistic content). This would mean that the first century Roman Bishop who cited these passages had to have himself been a Modalist. These facts are totally unacceptable to Trinitarian scholars. For if the first century Clement of Rome, who would have been
taught by the first century apostles, was a Modalistic Roman Bishop, then this would completely destroy the Roman Catholic idea of Trinitarian Apostolic Succession.

Many Trinitarian scholars have erroneously dated 2 Clement, The Shepherd of Hermas and the Gospel to the Egyptians as second century compositions. Yet the evidence proves that all three of these documents were written in the first century.

Glen Davis wrote that “The Gospel of the Egyptians” “was probably written in the first half of the first century”. “All that survives to us from the 'Gospel of the Egyptians' are several quotations made by Clement, Hippolytus, and Epiphanius. It was probably written in the first half of the first century (in Greek) and in Egypt …” From EarlyChristianWritings.com, under “The Gospel of the Egyptians.”

We know that “Hermas” is listed in Romans 16:14 and was believed by the earliest Christian writers to have been the same “Hermas” who later wrote “The Shepherd of Hermas.”

Origen (200-253) believed the author of the Shepherd of Hermas as the one who Paul greeted at the end of his Epistle to the Romans (16:14). Other early Christian sources believed Hermas to have been a contemporary of Clement of Rome, according to (Hermas) vision ii, 4, 3.”

Dennis Barton wrote, “It is very unlikely that a situation, where two people with the same names and in the same relationship as Clement and Hermes (who worked together in Rome at the same time), would repeat itself half a century later.” Dennis Barton, “The Clementine Gospel Tradition”

Clement is listed in Philippians 4:3 as a fellow laborer who probably travelled with the apostle Paul.

“I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.” Philippians 4:3

Meyers New Testament Commentary says, “... that Clement of Rome is the person meant. [181] So most Catholic expositors (not Döllinger), following Origen, ad Joh. i. 29; Eusebius, H. E. iii. 15; Epiphanius, Haer. xxvii. 6; Jerome, Pelagius, and others; so also Francke, in the Zeitschr. f. Luth. Theol.
1841, iii. p. 73 ff., and van Hengel, who conjectures Euodia and Syntyche to have been Roman women who had assisted the apostle in Rome, and had travelled with Epaphroditus to Philippi (with Clement). See generally, besides Lünemann and Brückner, Lipsius, de Clem. Rom. ep. p. 167 ff.; J. B. Lightfoot, p. 166 ff.; and Hilgenfeld, Apost. Väter, p. 92 ff.”

Besides the internal evidence which states that Clement of Rome sent “The Shepherd of Hermas” to churches throughout the world within the first century (Hermas Vision 2: 4, 3), and that Hermas wrote “The Shepherd” while some of the first century apostles were still “alive” (Hermas Vision 3:5); church historians A. T. Robinson and George Edmondson have convincingly documented the evidence proving that both Hermas and Clement were contemporaries within the first century Apostolic era and that the Muratorian fragment is full of errors.

Church Historians Harnack and Lightfoot stated that both 1 and 2 Clement were known to have been preserved in the archives of Corinth, but are no longer extant.

1. Harnack - This letter (2 Clement) was kept in the archives of the church at Corinth together with I Clement, which had also come from Rome ... (Harnack, Chronogie I, pp. 438 ff).

2. Lightfoot - ... it (II Clement) was found in the Corinthian archives together with I. Clement.


We know that 1 Clement was originally sent to the Corinthian Church to deal with the schism that occurred in the Corinthian Church in the first century. Since the historical evidence proves that 2nd Clement was also found along with 1 Clement in the archives in Corinth, it is highly probable that both letters came from the first century Bishop of Rome.

Wherefore, the historical evidence proves that the early first century Church in Rome believed in Oneness Modalism long before the Trinity doctrine developed.

For more information about the theology of Clement of Rome, click on the link to our other YouTube Video entitled, “Clement, The Theology of”.