

Handout: “Teaching of the Twelve Apostles”: *Didache ton dodeka apostolon*
“An Instruction of the Lord given to the Heathen by the Twelve Apostles”
Didache kyriou dia ton dodeka apostolon ethesin

In 1873, Orthodox Metropolitan Philotheos Bryennios discovered a cache of old Greek manuscripts in the library of the Jerusalem Monastery of the Most Holy Sepulcher at Constantinople. The collection of manuscripts, later known as *Codex Hierosolymitanus 1056*, was bound in one volume and written by the same hand. It was signed “Leon, notary and sinner,” and bore the Greek date of 6564, which in our dating is 1056 AD.

Outline of the Text:

- I. The Two Ways (1:1-6:3)
 - A. The Way of Life
 - B. The Way of Death
- II. Rituals of the Church (7:1-10:7)
 - A. Instructions on Baptism
 - B. Instructions on Fasting and Prayer
 - 1. Fast days
 - 2. The Lord’s Prayer
 - C. Instructions on the Eucharist
 - 1. Prayer over the cup
 - 2. Prayer over the bread
 - 3. Continuation of the Eucharistic Prayer
 - 4. Invitation to Receive
- III. Ministry (11:1-15:4)
 - A. Visiting Teachers, Apostles and Prophets
 - B. Christians Coming to the Community
 - 1. Transient Christian visitors
 - 2. Christians seeking to join the community
 - C. Material Support for the Clergy
 - D. Assembly on the Lord’s Day
 - E. Church Hierarchy
- IV. Final Exhortation (16:1-8)

Information within the text of the Didache that points to its ancient origins:

1. The sub-title “instructions are for the “heathen” indicates that the manual must have been written when the hierarchy of the Church was still largely Jewish.
2. The simple koine Greek language of the text.
3. The Didache does not yet identify the presbyterate as a third Church office between bishops and deacons. Scholar A. Ehrhard writes: *The fact that the Didache does not yet know the presbyterate as a third office, intermediary between the episcopate and the diaconate, is an infallible proof of its great antiquity.*
4. The document records that the leaders of the community were elected by the community (Didache 15:1).
5. The document also appears to mention the very early Christian custom of eating a complete meal before receiving the Eucharist (Didache chapters 9-10), the “agape supper.”

Handout 2: The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (the Didache)

World events before and after the discovery of the Didache copy

c. 828	The last mention of the Didache prior to its discovery in 1056 by Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople
869-70	Council of Constantinople IV
900-1100	Feudalism at its height in Europe
960-1275	Sung Dynasty ruled China
934	Moslem Egyptian Ikhshidid dynasty captures Jerusalem. They tortured Christians and destroyed many churches
1009	Second Church of the Holy Sepulcher destroyed by Moslems
1049-54	St. Pope Leo IX
1052	Edward the Confessor, King of England, builds Westminster Abby
1054	Greek Schism breaks the unity of Christendom
1055-57	Pope Victor II
1056	Discovery of the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" Henry IV Holy Roman Emperor (1056-1106)
1055-1092	Empire of the Moslem Seljuk Turks reached its zenith
1058-61	Pope Nicholas II
1059	Papal decree places election of the Pope in the hands of the Cardinals
1061-73	Pope Alexander II
1066	Death of Edward the Confessor and Norman Conquest of England. William of Normandy crowned King of England on Christmas Day
1067	Work begun on the Tower of London
1071	Defeat of the Byzantine army by the Moslem Seljuk Turks at Battle of Manzikert in August Turks occupy most of Asia Minor Jerusalem falls to Seljuk army (first captured by Moslems in 934)
1073-85	Pope Gregory VII
1075	Pope Gregory VII forbade Emperor Henry IV to control the election of bishops in Germany. When Henry refused he was excommunicated.
1095	First Crusade proclaimed by Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont
1096-99	First Crusade
1123	Lateran Council I (first general council since the Great Schism)