
Technical terms: hypocoristic, apotropaic, ligature,

(Parenthetical numbers are page references in CIIP; #n are inscription numbers)

*Introduction by Benjamin Isaac*

(8-9) So far about 900 cave/tombs and more than 2000 (some say 3000) ossuaries found in the Jerusalem area from this period. 600-650 of these ossuaries are inscribed.

N.B., this is a much higher ratio than the 897 listed in Rahmani with 227 inscribed. Rahmani says his catalogue of ossuaries in the Israeli State collection only goes up through August, 1989, though published in 1994.

(9) Nearly all known caves are family burials. Only slight evidence for field burials and dug graves in this period (see Kloner-Zissu, pp. 95-99, Beit Safafa, Mt Zion/Hinnom)

(10-17) Jerusalem largely depopulated post 70 CE with massive destruction.

(200-201) Necropolis at Dominus Flevit provides a good representative cross-section of 1st centuries BCE/CE tombs: 17 burial cave complexes; 122 ossuaries; with 43 inscriptions: 31 Hebrew; 10 Greek; and two bilingual.

Common names not in the Talpiot tombs:
Shelamzion, ‘El’azar, Shalom, Shimon/Simon, Iohana/Joana, Ioanes, Yehochanan/Yochanan, Yehonatan, Chananiya, Sha’ul, Zechariah, Shapira, Sara, Dositheos, Menachem

**Images/Monograms**

#8. Broken handle of limestone vessel, found near Robinson’s arch, inscribed כֵּל with images of two “birds” (doves?) crudely inscribed. IAA inventory no. 1978-2323, Israel Museum.

#75. Possible monogram, see Rahmani 42.

#76. Shim’on Boton (perhaps priestly family Boethos, Josephus, *AJ* 19. 297), beneath name appears to be the image of an altar.
Mt of Olives, Mt of Offense (Jebel Batn el-Hawa), discovered in 1873 and studied by Dr. Thomas Chapin (13 inscriptions; unpublished PEF archives per S. Gibson), followed by Clermont-Ganneau some months later. CIIJ publishes 24 inscriptions: 17 Hebrew/7 Greek. A number of cross markings as well as other mysterious symbols are present as well:

#245. Yehuda: with simple cross below
#247. Jesus Jesus: with cross mark to left of first name
#253. Martha daughter of Ptzchi: wavy V shaped mark (matches one on lid)
#256. Shalom, wife of Yehuda: two mysterious “anchor” “canopy” like symbols, reversed
#263. Letters ΗΔ deeply incised with double lines; “Byzantine” crux immissa above

Gibson & Avni (RB April, 1998) argue this is indeed Christian but was added later in the Byzantine period.

Rahmani # 841: Cross marks in circles as mason’s marks?
Rahmani # 348: Fish with mouth open, scales, name Claudius

Epitaphs/Epigrams or Formulae

Rahmani mentions five out of 227 inscribed ossuaries: Nos. 142, 259, 559 (Greek) and Nos. 26 and 455 in Aramaic (perhaps expressing grief or consolation)

? (259) I adjure: let no one take away (of) Tertian

#93. Aramaic: No one has abolished his entering (next world? Naveh), not even Elazar and Shapira
Or, No man can go up (from the grave? Cross)…

Botanical Gardens, Mt Scopus
Israel Museum, IAA 1971-435 (Rahmani 455)

#359: Our parents: Do not ever open
#375: Our father Dositheos—not to be opened
#385: Rufus Whoever moves away has violated his oath
#439: This is the loculus of…Alas! (or Woe!)
#451: Mariam wife of Mathia: whoever moves these, blindness strike

#458. ostophagos: ΟΣΤΟΦΑΓΟΣ ΟΣΤΟΦΑΓΟΣ
ostophagos written twice on fragment
Kidron Valley (near Beth Sahur el-Atiqa)
Rockefeller Museum, IAA 1936-2180

#460: Bones of our fathers: not to open on them
#466: Anyone who derives benefit from it—qorban!
#604: Not to open
#605: Closed, to change and bury any other man with him in this ossuary, closed
Apotropaic

#84. ΚΝΙΦ
# 112. ΙΦΚΧ
# 113. ΧΨ
    ΑΒ
#284. ΙΑΕΙ
#383. ἹΗ (four times on lid and side of box, Rahmani 78)
#509. Ὁ Ἡ
#606. ΕΔΧΨ
Jesus Ossuary Inscriptions:

#36. Jesus, father of Simonides: Ιησους πατρι Σιμονιδου
Faint charcoal, red wash
Sanhedria
Beth Shemesh, IAA 1981-525 (Rahmani 751)

#109. Yeshu’a son of Dositheos (Dostas):
Mt Scopus, west of Augusta Victoria
Israel Museum, IAA 1946-183 (Rahmani 121)

#139. Yehoshua:
Kidron Valley (Shiloah)
Rockefeller Museum, IAA 1936-913 (Rahmani 63).

#195. Yeshu’a:
Name written twice, same hand. Above names: בֶּן
Dominus Flevit, Mt of Olives, Chamber 437:120
**N.b. 9 ossuaries of 22 found in chamber 437. Other names were [Hebrew/Aramaic]: ‘Azariya son of Zekharia; Hananiya son of Shimon and Maria daughter of Agra; Yehosef son of Agra; Yehuda;, Martha; Shalom wife of Shapir; Tuvia son of Agra; [Greek] Zechariah, Mariame, Elazar and Simon.
SBF Museum, no inventory number

#206. Yeshu’a:
Dominus Flevit, Mt of Olives, Trench 425:93
Found with one other ossuary in a trench: Abaskanotos in Greek.
SBF Museum, SF 1109

#239. Shim’on Yeshu’a:
Mt of Olives, Cave 38, near new Jewish cemetery, 1946.
Hebrew University Institute of Archaeology, #8165

#247. Jesus, Jesus: ΙΕΣΟΥΣ ΙΕΣΟΥΣ
Mt of Olives, Mt of Offence (Jebel Batn el-Hawa), 1873
Drawings by Dr. Thomas Chaplin, published by Clermont-Ganneau (PEF Archives)
Cross/X mark to left of first instance.

#267. Of Ioanes (son of) Iesous: ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥΙΗΣΙΟΥ
Slope of Mt of Offense, discovered 1937. Two of 13, the other Ezra
Unclear Hebrew: אֲבָרָהָם? Abraham?
Rockefeller Museum, IAA 1937-1141 (Rahmani 89)

#295. Yeshua Iesoua: ΙΕΣΟΥΑ
Bilingual, one name over another, end of ossuary, spelling with final ꞇ is unusual as is spelling of Jesus, normally Ḥσοῦς but this known from Syria.

Akeldama Cave 2, Chamber B, ossuary 15 (found 1989, part of three cave complex, possibly large clan from Syria, Greek names predominate: Chares, Eiras, Erotas, Doras, Megiste, Ariston, Helena, )

Beth Shemesh, IAA 1993-1694.

#320. Yeshu’a: יְשֵׁעַּא
Kidron Valley, Wadi Yasul or Wadi Beth Sachur, published by Clermont-Ganneau (along with #152, 318, 319. Provenance unclear. Name based on drawing.

Present location unknown

#425. Iesous: ἸΗΣΟΥΣ
Lid of ossuary, badly worn, provenance unknown

École Biblique, no inventory number.

#473. Yehuda son of Yeshu’a: יְרֹדֶה דָּר בְּר יְשֵׁעַא
East Talpiot, 1980

Israel Museum, IAA 1980-501 (Rahmani 702)

#474. Yeshu’a (?) son of Yehosef: יְשֵׁעַּא בְּר יְהוֹסֶף
Unskilled hand, difficult to read, large X mark to right of inscription

East Talpiot, 1980

Beth Shemesh, IAA 1980-503 (Rahmani 704)

#479. Iesous Aloth(?): ἸΗΣΟΥΣἈΛΘΟ
Cross-like symbols in charcoal on all four sides

Aloth(?) possible nickname

Hebron Road, 1945 by Sukenik

Rockefeller Museum, IAA 1946-174 (Rahmani 114)

*(2/28/2011 lid not located, misplaced or missing)

#480. Iesous son of Iou[das]: ἸΗΣΟΥΣΙΟΥ
Rahmani read: Jesus son of Juda; Sukenik: Iesous woe! (ἸΟΥ)

Hebron Road, 1945 by Sukenik

Rockefeller Museum, IAA 1946-173 (Rahmani 113)

#489. Yeshu’a bar Mati: יְשֵׁעַּא בְּר מַתי
*Written twice on side and lid, very cursive script

Malcha, reported by Clermont-Ganneau

Present location and provenance unknown

#546. Yeshu’a: יְשֵׁעַּא
Fragment of an ossuary, name in a “circle” (Figueras “fish”), see #87 (Rahmani 856) for another example, CIIJ also mentions #477—Mariamene from the Talpiot tomb!

Provenance unknown

Israel Museum, IAA 1953-1223 (Rahmani 140)
#547. Yeshu and Yeshu’a son of Yehosef: יְשֵׁו יֶשְׁוָא בֶּן יְהוֹסֵף
Found by Sukenik in basement of DAP.
Israel Museum, IAA S-767 (Rahmani 9)

#531. Ya’akov son of Yosef brother of Yeshu’a; יְהוֹסֵף יִשְׁעָא בֶּן יָהוֹשָׁע
d Surfaced in 2002 from collector Oded Golan, supposedly from Silwan
Currently in IAA possession, uncatalogued

#548. Iesous, son of Iesous, of Iesous: ἸΗΣΟΥΣ ἸΗΣΟΥΥΟΣ ἸΗΣΟΥ
Provenance unknown
SBF Museum, SF 7605

#583. Iesous: ἸΗΣΟΥΣ
With names Popeli and Ioses, all three names in nominative
Provenance unknown
Rockefeller Museum, IAA 1934-7753 (Rahmani 56)
(3/1/2011 finger bone]
Yose Ossuary Inscriptions

#46. Iose: ἸΩΣΕ
Giv’at Ha-Mivtar (same tomb as Avshalom & Hillel son of David)
Near 53 Midbar Sinai Street
Bet Shemesh, IAA 1971-424 (Rahmani 444)

#81. Iose, Leazaros: ἸΟΣΕ ΛΕАЗ ΑΡΟΣ
Both in nominative, maybe two people or Iose is “son of” Lazarus/Eleazar
Mt Scopus
Beth Shemesh, IAA 1975-675 (Rahmani 576)

#116. Maria Yose?: מרי ייוסי (Naveh: Mar Yehose)
Mt Scopus, western slope
Rockefeller Museum, IAA S-765 (Rahmani 8)

#231. Ioses (of Ioudas of Phaidros): ἸΩΣΗΣ
Sisters of Zion, Mt of Olives, southern slope
Found 1902, location today?

#475. Yose: ἸΩΣΗ
East Talpiot, 1980
Beth Shemesh, IAA 1980-504 (Rahmani 705)

#573. Iose: ἸΟΣΗ
Provenance unknown, with Martha and Mocheros
Museum École Biblique, no inventory number

#583. Ioses: ἸΩΣΗΣ
Inscribed twice, with Popeli and Ioses
Providence unknown
Rockefeller Museum, IAA 1934-7753 (Rahmani 56)
(Finger bone 3/1/2011)
Maria (Hebrew/Aramaic) Ossuary Inscriptions

#49. Maria: מַרְיָם
Giv’at HaMivtar (same tomb as Avshalom & Hillel son of David)
Near 53 Midbar Sinai Street
Beth Shemesh, IAA 1971-408 (Rahmani 428)

#71 Maria: מַרְיָם
Hebrew University grounds, Mt Scopus, fragment
Location? No photo in CIIJ

#116. Maria Yose?: מַרְיָם יֹשֵהוֹ (Naveh: Mar Yehose)
Mt Scopus, western slope
Rockefeller Museum, IAA S-765 (Rahmani 8)

#162. Martha and Maria: מָרָתָה מַרְיָם
Eastern slope of Mt Scopus, reported, not surviving
Two names on opposite sides of ossuary, seem to be same hand

#168. Martha and Maria: מָרָתָה מַרְיָם
Maria aka Mariam (מריה)
Dominus Flevit, Mt of Olives, Chamber 70:27
SBF Museum?

#192. Maria (daughter of Agra): מַרְיָם
Dominus Flevit, Mt of Olives, Chamber 437:107
SBF Museum, SF 7711.

#238. Maria (the stranger/proselyte from Delos): מַרְיָם
Fragment, door-knocker motif
Mt of Olives, Viri Galilaei
Museum of the Greek Patriarchate

#312. Maria: מַרְיָם
Tomb of the Shroud

#384. Maria: מַרְיָם
Maria daughter of Sh…
Beth Shemesh, IAA 1957-1112 (Rahmani 152)

# 476. Maria: מַרְיָם
East Talpiot
Israel Museum, IAA 1980-505 (Rahmani 706)
Compare: Mariamene in Talpiot “Jesus” tomb

#133. Mariamnou: μαρίαμνου (Genitive, cf. #477/Rahmani 701)
This form along with Mariame, three “fish” on the front over the rosettes, one with X inside, not mentioned in CIIP.
Kidron Valley, Wadi el-Ahmadiye
Rockefeller Museum, IAA 1942-159 (Rahmani 108)
Mara Ossuary Inscriptions

#97. Mara Martha: מַרְאָה מַרְתָּ הָיָה
Shulamit Garden, Mt Scopus
> on lid with no matching mark on body
Beth Shemesh, IAA 1971-669

#200. Mara: MAPA? Maybe Maria?
Name Storgé/ΣΤΟΡΓΗ just below Mara, possible same person, with Chresimos father of Demarchia
Dominus Flevit, Mt of Olives, Chamber 452:61
SBF Museum, SFB 00432

#262. Mara: אֲשֶׁר מַרְתָּ ? (؟ ) Note two other Marthas in tomb: #252, 253 below.
Mt of Olives, Mt of Offence (Jebel Batn el-Hawa), 1973
Drawings by Dr. Thomas Chaplin, omitted by Clermont-Ganneau (PEF Archives)

#477. Mariame and Mara or Mariam (known as) Mara: ΜΑΡΙΑΜΗΚΑΙΜΑΡΑ
Rahmani: of Mariamene known as Mara: ΜΑΡΙΑΜΗΝΟΥ[MAPA
Written in one hand, sweeping bulging circle around name

Compare: #133. Mariammou: μορισμου (Genitive, cf. #477/Rahmani 701)
This form along with Mariame, three “fish” on the front over the rosettes, one with X inside, not mentioned in CIIP.
Kidron Valley, Wadi el-Ahmadiye
Rockefeller Museum, IAA 1942-159 (Rahmani 108)

#517. Alexa Mara: ΑΛΕΞΑΣΜΑΡΑΜΗΤΗΡ
Below, separate lines: Iouda; Simon her son
Chance find, no details
Beth Shemesh, IAA 1983-570 (Rahmani 868)

#563. Mara daughter of Levi: מַרְאָה בְּרֵעוֹ לְוִי
Provenance unknown
Collection of Arnold Spaer, Jerusalem

Compare:

#414. Mother: ΜΗΤΕΡΑ
Certainly a “title” rather than a name
Syrian orphanage, Schneller Compound
One of three found, one in IAA (#415 “brother”), other two lost

#448. Maras: MAPA [Σ] [T] (final letter unclear?)
Apparently a male based on two male skeletons inside, cf. #543
French Hill intersection, 1992-1993 (nine burial caves found)
Beth Shemesh, IAA 1993-1613
#543. Yehosef Mara son of Benaya son of Yehuda: …
Or: Yosef the Master, the son of…
Fragment of an ossuary, provenance unknown
Beth Shemesh, IAA 1969-666 (Rahmani 327)

#116. Maria Yose? : (Naveh: Mar Yehose)
Mt Scopus, western slope
Rockefeller Museum, IAA S-765 (Rahmani 8)

#452. Masters of the Tomb: מרא יאיאיו and ΚΥΡΕΤΥΣΤΟΥΤΟΥ
Mathia and Simon, brothrs, sons of Iaeiros, masters of the tomb
Burial cave on French Hill
Bet Shemesh IAA 1975-658 (Rahmani 560)
Martha Ossuary Inscriptions

#52. Martha: מַרְתָּה
Giv'at Ha-Mivtar (with Yehohanan the crucified man)
54 disc-designs inside checkerboard pattern on front, sides, lid
Israel Museum, IAA 1968-681 (Rahmani 220)

#74. of Martha: μαρθᾶς
Genitive form, not nominative (as per Ilan, 423)
Military cemetery, Mt Scopus
Rockefeller, IAA 1932-2843 (Rahmani 45)

#97. Mara Martha: מַרְתָּה מַרְתָּה
Shulamit Garden, Mt Scopus
Beth Shemesh, IAA 1971-669

#142. Martha: מַרְתָּה (daughter of Hananiya)
Kidron Valley
Rockefeller Museum, IAA 1936-917 (Rahmani 67)

#162. Martha and Maria: מַרְתָּה מַרְתָּתָה
Eastern slope of Mt Scopus, reported, not surviving
Two names on opposite sides of ossuary, seem to be same hand

#163. Martha: מַרְתָּתָה
Mt of Olives, grounds of Viri Galilaei, drawings only
Names listed twice in different hands

#168. Martha and Maria: מַרְתָּתָה מַרְתָּתָה
Maria aka Mariam (מַרְתָּתָה מַרְתָּתָה)
Dominus Flevit, Mt of Olives, Chamber 70:27
SBF Museum?

#196. Martha (our mother): מַרְתָּתָה
Dominus Flevit, Mt of Olives, Chamber 437:119

#252. Martha: מַרְתָּתָה
Mt of Olives, Mt of Offence (Jebel Batn el-Hawa), 1973
Drawings by Dr. Thomas Chaplin, omitted by Clermont-Ganneau (PEF Archives)

#253. Martha (daughter of Ptzchi): מַרְתָּתָה
Mt of Olives, Mt of Offence (Jebel Batn el-Hawa), 1973
Drawings by Dr. Thomas Chaplin, published by Clermont-Ganneau (PEF Archives)

#272. Martha: מַרְתָּתָה
Wadi Qadom, graffito written over a loculus in Cave 29/4
Traces left, no drawing made

#429. [M]artha: מֶרֶת [.]  
Two small fragments, provenance unknown  
École Biblique, No. 13.4, ossuary 16

#453. Martha: מֶרֶת  
French Hill, Bar Kokhba Street  
With names Hananiya and Yehuda  
Bet Shemesh, IAA 1970-141

#504. Martha: מֶרֶת  
Martha daughter of Yehosef son of Ya’aqov, wife of Yehosef son of Hon  
Unprovenanced from courtyard of Rockefeller Museum after 1967 Six Day War  
Israel Museum, IAA 1969-159 (Rahmani 290)

#505. Martha: מֶרֶת  
Martha daughter of Papos wife of Yehosef  
Unprovenanced from courtyard of Rockefeller Museum after 1967 Six Day War  
Bet Shemesh, IAA 1969-120 (Rahmani 256)

#511. Martha: ΜΑΡΘΑ  
Found “south of Jerusalem,” incised and then written again on lid in charcoal, faint  

#572. Martha: מֶרֶת  
Martha daughter of Hananiya  
SBF Museum, SBF 00471 B35Z, SF 812 and 812a

#573. MarthaloseMocheros: ΜΑΡΘΑΙΩΣΗΜΩΧΡΟΣ  
Provenance unknown  
Museum École Biblique, no inventory no.
Matthew/Mattiya Ossuary Inscriptions from CIIP

#4. Mattiya son of…: מַטְיוֹיָה בֶּן... Stone plaque, broken with name of father erased South of Temple Mount Bet Shemesh IAA, Locus 15023

#75. Matiya/Mattiya: מַטְיוֹיָה מַטְיוֹיָה Two hands, also possible monogram Mt Scopus Rockefeller, IAA 1932-2840 (Rahmani 42)

#146. Mattiya: מַטְיוֹיָה Kidron Valley Hebrew University, no. 1468

#185. Mattata: מַטְטָא Dominus Flevit, Mt of Olives, Chamber 355:37 SBF Museum, SF 1121, SBF 00446

#188. Matiya: מַטְיוֹיָה (son of Chekia) Dominus Flevit, Mt of Olives, Chamber 384:59 SBF Museum?

#204. Matiya: מַטְיוֹיָה Mattiya and Thadda his son/Mattiya Dominus Flevit, Mt of Olives, Loculus 55 SBF Museum, SF 7701

#218. Mathias (son of Castos): ΜΑΘΙΟΥ Genitive, repeated, very inexpert hand Location unknown, lost; drawing Clermont-Ganneau

#219. Mattathias: ΜΑΤΑΘΙΟΥ Maybe same ossuary/lid as 218. Location unknown, lost; drawing Clermont-Ganneau

#276. Mattatiya: מַטַּטיָה Written three times, one over the next on end of ossuary Kidron Valley (Jebel Khallet et-Turi), published by Milik SBF Museum, SF 1105

#277. Mattatiya (son of Choniya): מַטַּטיָה Kidron Valley (Jebel Khallet et-Turi)

#380 & 381. Mattatiya: מַטַּטיָה Two individuals, maybe father and son with the same name
Greek Colony/Talbiye, 1926
Israel Museum, IAA 1936-1869 and Rockefeller Museum, IAA 1936-1870 (Rahmani 71 & 78)

#451. (Mariam wife of )Mathia: מָרְיָם and מָרְיָם מַמְשֵׁיתָא
Epitaph: Whoever moves these, blindness will strike him
Burial cave on French Hill
Israel Museum, IAA 1975-657 (Rahmani 559)

#452. Mathia: מַמְשֵׁיתָא קַאִי סִימְנָא
Mathia and Simon, brothers, sons of Iaeiros, masters of the tomb (see entry under Mara)
Burial cave on French Hill
Bet Shemesh, IAA 1975-658 (Rahmani 560)

#478: Matiya: מַטיָא
[ס] on inside of one long side, right angle to rim
East Talpiot
Beth Shemesh, IAA 1980-502 (Rahmani 703)

#481. Mati: מַטְיָא
Hebron Rd/Sukenik (fragmentary state today)
Hebrew University Institute of Archaeology, inventory 9793

#489. Yeshu’a bar Mati: יֶשׁוּעַ בַּר מַטְיָא
*Written twice on side and lid, very cursive script
Malcha, reported by Clermont-Ganneau
Present location and provenance unknown

#575. Mattiya: מַטיָא (letters unclear)
Fragment of ossuary lid, faint charcoal