

Coptic text mentions Jesus' wife

By [James F. McGrath](#)

September 19, 2012

The [New York Times](#), the [Harvard Gazette](#), [The Huffington Post](#) and other media outlets are breaking the news that Karen King, a scholar well known for her work on the phenomenon usually referred to as “Gnosticism,” has come into possession of and has been studying a Coptic papyrus fragment which is likely to be authentic, dates from around the 4th century, and *has Jesus mention his wife*. UPDATE: [King has posted online a pre-publication version of an article she has written about the text](#).

It is important to note that this is clear evidence only of one thing, namely that the author of this text, centuries after the time of Jesus, believed that Jesus had been married.

Anything beyond that is speculation, although there certainly do seem to be points of intersection with, or echoes of, [other previously known extracanonical texts](#) referring to Mary Magdalene.

Having made the above points, I should add that many people find the idea that Jesus was married inherently unbelievable, and there is no reason why they should. It may be that thinking of Jesus being married makes him seem too human. But that is not inappropriate, given the evidence.

See also [posts](#) by [John Byron](#), [James Tabor](#), [Jim West](#), and [Joel Watts](#).

Originally posted at [Exploring Our Matrix](#)