



## Writing on Paper and Spreading the Good News

editorial Comment by Gerald Mallmann

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### **SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS (GOD'S WORD).**

This was one of the commands God gave to Adam and Eve at the garden of Eden. For about the next thousand years the art of writing would not have been necessary. Speaking the Good News would do well because the life spans were almost that long. Beyond that time the population had grown and there was a need to preserve the true word as told by the kinfolk. A more permanent way was needed to record all. No one knows when the gift of writing was given. It is evident from all the hints to the subject in sacred Scriptures that the knowledge of writing was given at a very early period. The ability to write was a gift as important as the language and both distinguish man from all creatures besides his ability to reason or think. There are some tradeoffs that we can recognize. Animals have instincts whereas humans must be taught everything. You gain all your knowledge by way of your senses and power to reason. This is why first impressions are so very important. Teachers must be sure that the first impressions are truthful. Keen observations are required while you are curiously manipulating things offered to you under the term science. Be critical and cautious before you come to a conclusion.

In the fifth chapter of Genesis it is said, "This is the book of generations." If memory was to be used, the term "book" would not have been used, and would have had no meaning if the art of writing had been unknown. Also in the Book of Job, which is considered by some to be the most ancient and written before Genesis, we find the term "book". Job 19:23,24 "Oh, that my words were now written, Oh, that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen!" Also Job 31:35: "Mine adversary had written a book."

Before the discovery of paper by the Chinese in the beginning of the Christian era they wrote on thin boards. Other cultures had used various materials like animal skins, leaves, clay, bark and bones. Silk fibers and rice paper which is really a shaved reed were probably used before Ts'ai Lun (105 AD) paper. This was kept a secret for about 500 years when the Japanese acquired it in the 7th century. The Buddhists in 770 mass produced prayers on paper that were block printed. The secret to the making of the paper was gotten from several Chinese they captured who were skilled in paper making. They were forced to build and operate a mill. At the location there was plenty of water, hemp, and flax to allow it to become the center of the world's papermaking.

Papyrus was a close form of paper and was in existence already at 2,000 BC. The Dead Sea Scrolls are of such material. Very recent findings show the Roman's carried on general correspondence with each other while they were in the British Isles by writing on sheets of alder or birch bark. In writing they used a carbon ink with dip-and-scratch pens. More important writings were found on oak wood tablets. These were all found in the ruins of a Roman Fortress of Vindojanda near Bardon Mill, England. The bark letters were folded and holes were punched on an edge to permit tying when folded.

As long as we tend to respect what we see in print with more confidence than what we see or hear through other media, we will have paper. If you have the time and curiosity do read about the ancient libraries like those of the time of Daniel, the Mayas, Aztecs, and Egyptians. *LSI*