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hAvRuTa: a Pardes Torah / Art Encounter Series

Called Up from the Depths

Hadassa Goldvicht and Leon Morris

PART I: The Private Press in the Small Room

Megillah 8b:19

מגילה ח׳ ב:י״ט

MISHNA: The difference between Torah scrolls, and phylacteries and *mezuzot*, in terms of the manner in which they are written, is only that Torah scrolls are written in any language, whereas phylacteries and *mezuzot* are written only in *Ashurit*, i.e., in Hebrew and using the Hebrew script	**מַתְנִי׳** אֵין בֵּין סְפָרִים לִתְפִלִּין וּמְזוּזוֹת, אֶלָּא שֶׁהַסְּפָרִים נִכְתָּבִין בְּכָל לָשׁוֹן, וּתְפִלִּין וּמְזוּזוֹת אֵינָן נִכְתָּבוֹת אֶלָּא אַשּׁוּרִית.

Megillah 8b:20

מגילה ח׳ ב: כ׳

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: Even with regard to Torah scrolls, the Sages permitted them to be written only in Greek. Torah scrolls written in any other language do not have the sanctity of a Torah scroll.	רַבָּן שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אוֹמֵר: אַף בִּסְפָרִים לֹא הִתִּירוּ שֶׁיִּכָּתְבוּ אֶלָּא יְוָונִית.

Megillah 9a:11

מגילה ט׳ א:י״א

The Gemara continues: And this was due to the incident of King Ptolemy, as it is taught in a *baraita*: There was an incident involving King Ptolemy of	וּמִשּׁוּם מַעֲשֶׂה דְּתַלְמַי הַמֶּלֶךְ. דְּתַנְיָא: מַעֲשֶׂה בְּתַלְמַי הַמֶּלֶךְ שֶׁכִּינֵּס שִׁבְעִים וּשְׁנַיִם זְקֵנִים וְהִכְנִיסָן בְּשִׁבְעִים וּשְׁנַיִם בָּתִּים וְלֹא גִּילָּה לָהֶם עַל מָה כִּינָסָן. וְנִכְנַס אֵצֶל

Egypt, who assembled seventy-two Elders from the Sages of Israel, and put them into seventy-two separate rooms, and did not reveal to them for what purpose he assembled them, so that they would not coordinate their responses. He entered and approached each and every one, and said to each of them: Write for me a translation of the Torah of Moses your teacher. The Holy One, Blessed be He, placed wisdom in the heart of each and every one, and they all agreed to one common understanding. Not only did they all translate the text correctly, they all introduced the same changes into the translated text.	כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד, וְאָמַר לָהֶם: כִּתְבוּ לִי תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה רַבְּכֶם. נָתַן הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא בְּלֵב כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד עֵצָה וְהִסְכִּימוּ כּוּלָּן לְדַעַת אַחַת.