

[نَعْمَانُ الْكَيْلِ] [فَاَسْمَعُ] []	٦
[نَفَانَهُ وَلَا يَمُورُ إِلَّا] []	٧
[وَاعْتَصِمُوا] []	٨
[. وَلَا نَفْرَ فَوَا] []	٩
[بِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ] []	١٠
[] [] [.....] []	١١
[نوح] []	١٢
[] [] [] []	١٣
[] [] [] []	١٤
[] [] [] []	١٥
[] [] [] []	١٦

1. [*In the nam*]e of God, the Compassionate, [*the Merciful*].
2. [*From So and So, Son of So and So, t*]o Su[lai]mān ibn Ḥārīt.
3. [*Thereafter. Verily, I*] praise un[t]o you God, [*besides*]
4. [*whom there is*] no god.
5. [] and So inspe[ct]
6. [] Nu'mān, the corn-measurer. Therefore, prevent []
7. [] []
8. [] and they have had recourse [to]
9. [] . . . and no single person []
10. [] with God's favour []
11. [] []
12. [] []
13. [] []
14. [] []
15. [] []
16. [] []

6. For the « corn-measurer » cf. APG n° 18, 3 and p. 66. He is presumably a successor of the *μειστής* of the Byzantine and early Arabic period, a trustee in the public barns in the province, who had to make the repartition

of the impost in kind among the individual tax-payers. Cf. H. GERSTINGER, *Neue byzantinische Vertragsurkunden aus der Sammlung «Papyri Erzherzog Rainer» in Wien, The Journal of Juristic Papyrology*, XIII (1961), p. 57 (n° 3, VIth cent. A.D.).

However, Grohmann's reading does not correspond to what can be seen quite clearly in the papyrus. Consequently, his rendering and comments are not correct.

The correct reading of the papyrus is as follows:

- ٤ . [لا اله الا لا هو]
 ٥ . [.....] قال في كتابه
 ٦ . [.....] يا ايها الذين امنوا
 ٧ . [اتقوا الله حق تقاته ولا تموتن]]
 ٨ . [الا وانتم مسلمون واعتصموا
 ٩ . [جبل الله جميعا] ولا تفرقوا
 ١٠ . [واذكروا] نعمة الله

The rendering of these lines is as follows:

4. [*there is no god*] but He
5. [.] said in His Book
6. [.] O ye who believe
7. [*Observe your duty to Allah*] with right, observance and do not die
8. [*save as those who have surrendered unto Him*]. And hold fast
9. [*all of you together to the cable of Allah*] and do not separate
10. [*and remember*] Allah's favor

It is evident that the papyrus is not a "fragment of an official letter" but a fragment (lines 6–10) of the Qur'ān, containing Sūra III, verses 102–103.

There is no doubt whatsoever that this is the correct reading of the text; it seems to be of some importance that we have here one of the earliest specimens of the text of the Qur'ān, written in the second century of the Hijra.*

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