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my gods,

my Lares; they are placed around a little altar on which I always keep the sacred fire burning. They are now the only ones in whom I still have faith. The flame rising from this hearth, which I contemplate in my evening dreams, still speaks to my soul. It is alive, shines, enlightens and rises over my house as if to show me that there is a better land beyond this earth on which we live.

Vesta! The great Vesta! She is the divinity I love best, because she is pure, because she is a virgin. Speak to me no more of Venus and of Apollo. Their statues adorn my house, but if they were not objects of art, by Jupiter! I would sell them, not to the Jews, who hold them in abhorrence, but to the Greek merchants.

On the two banks of the Jordan that I visited, all the people in every direction spoke to me of the new religion which the Prophet of Nazareth preaches to the Galileans. But the crowd is less impressed by His teachings than by the wonders He works wherever He passes. I am anxious to see Him, and above all, to hear Him, that I may know what religious doctrine He brings into the world.

Vale, November 10th, 780, Magdala