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The author of this manuscript leaf, Nicholas de Lyre (1270-1349), is commonly considered to be the greatest biblical exegete of the fourteenth century and one of the greatest throughout history. He was born in Lyre Normandy and entered into the Franciscan order in 1300, at about thirty years old. His education in Lyre provided him with an extensive knowledge of Hebrew and Jewish teachings as well as the Talmud, Midrash, and the works of Rashi. Throughout Nicholas’s career he would often use Hebrew as a means to understanding the Holy Scripture in a Christian context. Shortly after joining the Franciscan order his talent was recognized and he was sent to study in the house of the Cordelier in Paris. From there he rose to a place of prestige at the University of Paris and participated in many intellectual disputes on the Holy Scripture. He was also one of the Franciscan bachelors of theology present in the Knights Templar affair of 1307. Nicholas’s greatest work was the *Literal postill on the whole Bible*, which was a commentary on the Bible. Begun in 1322 and completed in 1331, the *Literal postill on the whole Bible* was a literal commentary of the Bible, as opposed to the popular allegorical interpretation of scripture. Nicholas de Lyre used many of his earlier lectures on the Bible in writing the *Literal Postill*. From 1333 to 1339 Nicholas focused on writing his *Moral postill on the whole Bible*. Today there are over eight hundred manuscripts of Nicholas’s *Postills* still existing. Nicholas de Lyre successfully managed to maintain a relationship with the Pope, the French royal family, and the Franciscan Order throughout his life. Before his death in 1349 he accomplished both literal and moral commentaries on the Bible as well as several shorter works.

The printers of this leaf of the *Postill*, Conrad Pannartz and Arnold Swynheim, are credited as the first printers to introduce the printing press to Rome in 1467. Arnold Swynheim is commonly believed to have learned the art of printing from Johann Gutenburg from 1461-1464. It is likely the two printers worked together in Germany and in 1464 they arrived at the Benedictine monastery of Subiaco where
they worked together there for three years. In 1472 they printed the Postilla of Nicholas de Lyre in Rome. Swynheim and Pannartz separated after 1473 and continued to work independently in Rome.

Sources
