

A Textual Commentary on the Greek Gospels  
by  
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Fragmentary papyri

This is a work in progress.

The following 38 papyri appear at least once in this commentary:

P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P19, P21, P22, P25, P28, P35, P36, P37, P39, P45, P53, P55, P59, P60, P63, P64/67, P66, P69, P70, P75, P77, P84, P88, P90, P97, P101, P103=P77, P104, P106, P107, P109, P110

The following 18 papyri are from Oxyrhynchus:

P1, P5, P19, P21, P22, P28, P39, P69, P70, P77, P90, P101, P103=P77, P104, P106, P107, P109, P110

Other than P45, P66 and P75, there are six papyri, which are extensive enough for a more detailed textual evaluation: P4, P5, P22, P37, P60 and P88. All other papyri fragments are very small.

Of the small ones, the following support important readings:

P36, P59, P63, P64, P69, P77, P104, P106, P107, P109

P64      Mt 5:22 omission of εἰκῆ.

P104?    Mt 21:44 omit verse

P77?     Mt 23:38 omit ἔρημος

P69      Lk 22:43-44 omit verses, ὥφθη δὲ ...

P69      Lk 22:61 σήμερον

P106<sup>vid</sup>   Jo 1:34 reads ὁ ἐκλεκτός

P106      Jo 1:42 reads txt = Ἰωάννου

P36+P63   Jo 3:15 P36 reads the short text and P63 the long one.

P36      Jo 3:31 reads txt ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστίν

P107<sup>vid</sup>   Jo 17:11 has a longer reading here, like D

P59      Jo 21:18 reads ἄλλοι

P109     Jo 21:23 reads txt τί πρὸς σέ

P109 is our earliest witness to verse 21:25 (3<sup>rd</sup> CE).

See the detailed discussion of the passages in the commentary.

Overall, it is rather surprising how little the papyri (besides P45, P66, P75) contribute to the evidence. We have about 10 papyri supporting about 12 variants. This is not much.

### P4 (3rd CE)

Paris, Bibl. Nat., Suppl. Gr. 1120

(note that 1120 comprises of a larger collection. P4 is part of it. Merell notes that it is "Gr 1120, suppl. 2", but Thiede calls it "Supplementum Graecum 1120/5".)

First noted in 1892/3 by Pere Scheil, RB 1 (1892) 113-15. Text published with plates: Jean Merell, RB 47 (1938) 5-22

Vincent Scheil bought it in Luxor in 1991. It was originally found in Coptos, Egypt, 1880. P4 was used as stuffing for the binding of a codex of two treatises by Philo. The codex was found in a jar which had been walled up in a house at Coptos. According to C.H. Roberts, the manuscript was concealed "either when Coptos was besieged and sacked by Diocletian in AD 292 or later [303] in his reign during the last and severest of the persecutions."

The dating given is that of NA. Some date it into the 2nd CE (e.g. Roberts and Comfort). This is quite probable considering the use as binding material for a 3<sup>rd</sup> CE codex.

There was the suggestion (e.g. Skeat), that P4 is from the same codex as P64/67. Both papyri have been bought in Luxor. They are very similar, but the color of the papyrus is different. Perhaps they origin from the same scriptorium. They must have a similar date.

#### Contents:

Luke 1:58-59	4:1-2	5:30-39
1:62-80	4:29-32	6:1-16
2:1,6-7	4:34-35	
3:8-38	5:3-8	

#### P75: for comparison

3:18-22	4:1-2	5:37-39
3:33-38	4:34-44	6:1-4
	5:1-10	6:10-49

P4 appears 18 times in this commentary. It reads 13 times txt and 5 times a minority non-txt reading. It never reads Byz. It agrees 16 out of 18 times with B (89%).

P. Comfort did a more complete analysis and writes: "In fact, there is a 93 percent agreement between P4 and P75 in Lk; the same percentage occurs for P4 and B, though not for all the same variants as P75. P4 and P75 are identical in

forty complete verses, with only five significant exceptions (Lk 3:22, 3:36, 5:39, 6:11, 6:14)."

In NA P4 appears 50 times. It reads 47 times txt and 3 times a special minority reading. It never reads Byz. It agrees with B 46 times (92%), with 01 35 times (70%).

J. Merell did a complete collation and found only 14 differences between P4 and B in a total of about 88 verses.

From this it follows that P4 is an exceptionally good witness. It deserves a complete study in every detail.

P4 agrees two times with W in almost singular readings (W is Alexandrian in this part of Lk):

1. 1:65 add καὶ before διελαλεῖτο: P4, W, 1675, Lat

2. 1:68 omit κύριος before ὁ θεὸς: P4, W, Lat

Probably both of these readings are accidental.

Important readings:

Lk 1:76      txt, ἐνώπιον

Lk 3:9      omit καλὸν

Lk 3:33      τοῦ Ἀδαμ τοῦ Ἀδμὶν τοῦ Ἀρνὶ

Lk 5:38      txt, βλητέον without addition

Lk 5:39      txt, read verse

Lk 5:39      txt, χρηστός

Lk 6:1      txt, σαββάτῳ, no δευτεροπρώτῳ

Lk 6:5      singular reading?

Lk 6:10      txt, omit ὑγιὴς ὡς ἡ ἄλλη

Literature:

- Pere Scheil RB 1 (1892) 113-15
- Jean Merell "Nouveaux Fragments Du Papyrus 4" RB 47 (1938) 5-22
- C. Roberts "An early papyrus of the first Gospel" HTR 46 (1953) 233-37
- R. Roca-Puig "Un papiro Griego del Evangelio de San Mateo", Sabadell, 1956
- R. Roca-Puig "Nueva publication del papiro numero uno de Barcelona" Helmantica 37 (1961) 103-24, to which is appended a note by C. Roberts
- C.P. Thiede "Papyrus Magdalen Greek 17 (Gregory-Aland P64): A reappraisal", Tyndale Bulletin 46 (1995) 29-42
- P.W. Comfort "Exploring the common identification of three manuscripts: P4, P64 and P67", Tyndale Bulletin 46 (1995) 43-54
- C.P. Thiede "Notes on P4 = Bibliotheque Nationale Paris, Supplementum Graecum 1120/5", Tyndale Bulletin 46 (1995) 55-57
- P.M. Head "The Date of the Magdalen Papyrus of Matthew (P. Magd. Gr. 17 = P64): A Response to C.P. Thiede", Tyndale Bulletin 46 (1995) 251-285

- T.C. Skeat "The oldest manuscript of the four Gospels?" NTS 43 (1997) 1-34
- P.M. Head "Is P4, P64 and P67 the Oldest Manuscript of the Four Gospels? A Response to T.C. Skeat" NTS 51 (2005) 450-457

## P5 (3<sup>rd</sup> CE)

London, Brit. Libr., Inv. 782 + 2484 = P. Oxy. 208 + 1781

The original editors Greenfell and Hunt say that the two fragments of 208 are part of a single sheet, originally folded in the middle. Now the sheet is broken in the middle. There is a rather bad photo in the *Comfort papyri* book, which makes it clear that the assumption of a single sheet is correct. Since the text of the fragments comprises of part of Jo 1 and 20, it must be concluded that the codex was a single quire book.

If one calculates roughly the space required for Joh 1:1-22, it fits perfectly on one page (verso + recto). The remaining part of Joh at the end fit good on two pages (recto + verso). This would mean that there is one empty page at the beginning, perhaps containing the title.

### Contents:

Jo 1:23-31	Jo 16:14-30 (= 1781)
Jo 1:33-40	Jo 20:11-17
	Jo 20:19-20
	Jo 20:22-25

P5 appears 12 times in this commentary. It reads 6 times txt and 6 times a special minority reading. It never reads Byz. It agrees 8 times with B and 7 times with 01.

In NA P5 appears 18 times. It reads 15 times txt (83%), 3 times special, never Byz. It agrees with B 14 times (78%), 01 11 times (61%). P5 seems to be a very good witness.

### Important readings:

Jo 1:27	short txt, vid
Jo 1:34	has been suggested for ὁ ἐκλεκτός, but it is too doubtful, see entry to this passage in the commentary.

Jo 16:16	short txt
Jo 16:18	omits ὁ λέγει
Jo 16:21	txt
Jo 16:22	reads ἀρεῖ with B
Jo 16:23	reads δώσει ὑμῖν ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου with B
Jo 16:27	reads θεοῦ against B (πατρὸς)
Jo 16:28	reads παρὰ against B (ἐκ)

P22 (3rd CE)

P. Oxy. 1228

Glasgow, Univ. Libr., Ms. Gen. 1026/13

Published in POxy 10, p. 14-16

A good image is in the IGNTP John Papyri volume

The papyrus is interesting, because it appears to be from a roll. The verso is blank. Two columns are extant.

Contents:

Jo 15:25-27

16:1-2

16:21-32

P22 appears 4 times in this commentary and reads always txt. It agrees only once with B, but three times with O1.

In NA P22 appears 9 times and reads 8 times txt and once special. It agrees 6 times with B (67%) and 4 times with O1.

Readings:

Jo 16:22 txt ἔχετε

Jo 16:22 txt αἱρετι

Jo 16:23 txt ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου δώσει ὑμῖν

Jo 16:28 txt παρὰ

There is one problematic reading, which is not noted in the commentary, Jo 16:23. Here P22 reads:

] τι εαν αἰτησ[ητε

There is something left that looks like the top right horizontal stroke of T. Then follows something that could be a Iota. That this is from a Nu is very improbable.

There is much variation at this point. NA interprets P22 as reading ὅτι "vid". If one interprets it as τι εαν, as Swanson does, this would be a singular reading. Not of much importance though.

### P37 (3rd/4th CE)

Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan, Inv. 1570; P. Mich. 137

Henry A. Sanders, HTR 19 (1926) 215-26 transcription and plates

There are good images on the web (see my Bible webpage)

Purchased in Cairo, 1924. It is likely that it came from the Fayum because many of the documents in the purchase came from there.

Contents:

Mt 26:19-52      (P45: 26:1-39)

P37 appears 6 times in this commentary. It reads 5 times txt and once a singular reading. It agrees 4 times with B.

In NA P37 appears 27 times. It reads 11 times txt and 16 times a special minority reading. It never reads Byz. It agrees 10 times (37%) with B, 13 times with D (48%), 11 times with Θ (41%) and 8 times with P45, which has lacunae. Because it agrees in some minority readings with Θ and P45, P37 has sometimes been called "Caesarean".

The many minority readings and the low agreements with all texttypes, marks P37 as a "free" or "wild" text. The agreement with P45 is significant.

Important readings:

Mt 26:28    txt, τῆς διαθήκης, omit καὶ νῆς

Mt 26:42    txt, τοῦτο παρελθεῖν, Byz: τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον παρελθεῖν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ

Mt 26:44    omit 1. πάλιν, omit ἐκ τρίτου, vid, singular reading

P60 (7th CE)

New York, Pierpont Morgan Library; P. Colt 4

L. Casson and E.L. Hettich "Excavations at Nessana" Vol. 2, Literary Papyri, p. 79-122, with plate.

Images in the IGNTP John Papyri volume

The small papyri fragments are in a very bad state.

Contents:

John 16:29-30,

16:32-33

17:1-6

17:8-9

17:11-15

17:18-25

18:1-2

18:4-5

18:7-16

18:18-20

18:23-29

18:31-37

18:39-40

19:2-3



late date this is  
quite good.

Important  
readings:

Jo 18:5 ἐγώ  
εἰμι reads  
either the B or  
the D reading.

Jo 18:40 reads  
txt πάλιν

Jo 19:15 reads  
οἱ δὲ  
ἐκραύγασαν  
λέγοντες

Jo 19:16 reads  
καὶ ἀπήγαγον

P88 (4th CE)

Milano, Univ.  
Cattolica, P. Med.  
Inv. 69.24  
S. Daris,  
Aegyptus 52  
(1972) 80-88,  
with plate.  
To judge from  
the image in the  
ed.pr. the state  
of the papyrus is  
very bad.

"and also/even the  
scribes of the  
Pharisees followed  
him."

Mk 2:16 add  
καὶ πίνει =  
Byz  
Mk 2:22  
txt,  
ἀπόλλυται  
καὶ οἱ ἀσκοί  
Mk 2:22 add  
βλητέον = Byz

Contents:

Mk 2:1-26

P88 appears 13  
times in this  
commentary. It  
reads 8 times txt,  
2 times Byz and 3  
times special. It  
agrees 9 times  
with O1 (!) and 6  
times with B.

In NA P60  
appears 27 times.  
It reads 18 times  
txt (67%) and 6  
times a special  
minority reading.  
It reads 3 times  
Byz. It agrees 18  
times (67%) with  
B and 19 times  
with O1 (70%).

Important  
readings:

Mk 2:16  
insert καὶ: