

Mat 25:16

How to interpret the evidence in Codex Alexandrinus?

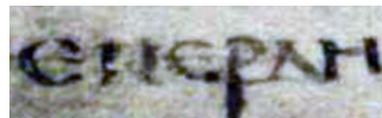
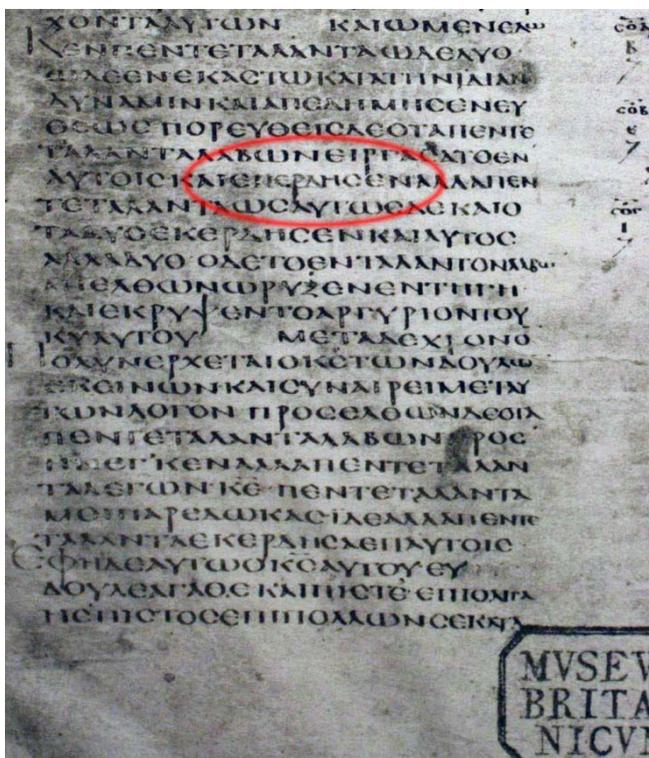
NA²⁷ Matthew 25:16 πορευθεὶς ὁ τὰ πέντε τάλαντα λαβὼν ἤργασατο ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐκέρδησεν ἄλλα πέντε·

ἐποίησεν 01*, K, Π, W, 22, 579, 700, 1071, Maj, q, Sy-H, Basil(4th CE), Tis

ἐκέρδησεν 01^{C2}, B, C, D, L, Θ, f1, f13, 33, 157, 517, 892, 954, 1424, 1675, al, Lat, Sy-P, Sy-Pal, Sy-H^{mg}, Co, arm, geo

The correction in A is not clear. NA has ἐκέρδησεν for A* but Swanson and Tischendorf have ἐποίησεν for A*. From the facsimile the letters for ἐκέρδησεν are visible, but they look somewhat compressed and have a different more brownish color. The letters for ἐποίησεν would fit the space perfectly.

A, (2r, page no. 26, image 005A, left column, line 18 from bottom)
Note that this is the first extant page of the codex!



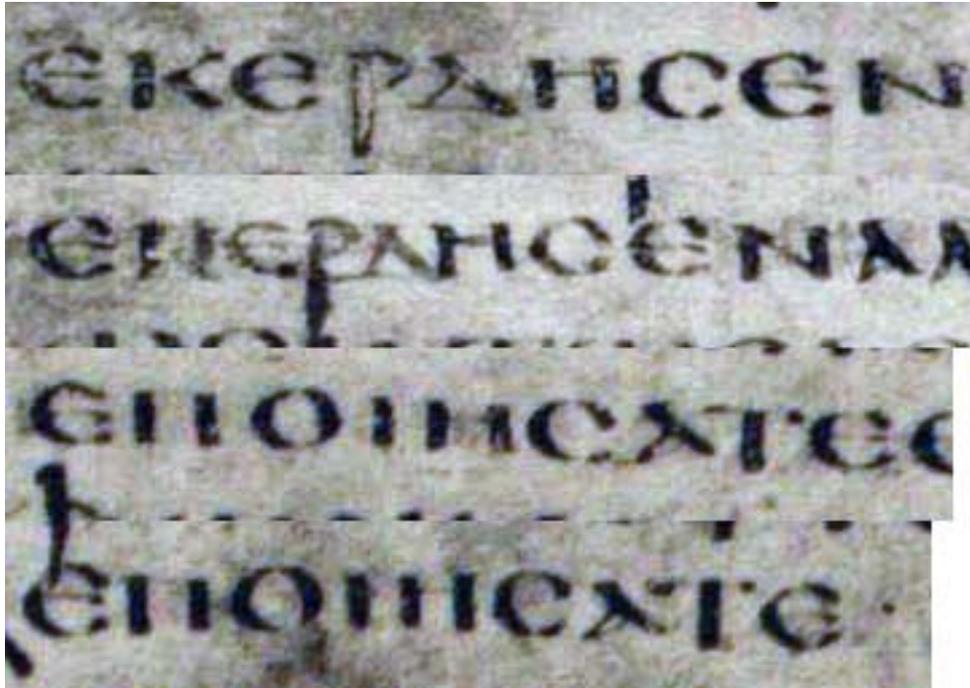
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For comparison:

top: normal ἐκέρδησεν from two lines below

second: the word in question

bottom: two ἐποίησατε from the next page.



If this would be a correction from ἐποίησεν to ἐκέρδησεν, one would expect the κ to be clearly visible, but this is not the case. If this was originally ἐποίησεν, it is not clear why no traces at all are visible from the letters οι, but the π is still visible so well.

Is it possible that NA interprets the black dot at the end of the ε and the following black vertical bar as οι? But why did the scribe not change the ε into an ο?

Here is a contrast enhanced image that shows what is really black only:



Dirk Jongkind suggested possible bleed through from the opposite. I have checked this by superimposing the two pages. At the point in question there are

the letters θε from πορευθεῖς, Mt 26:14, but I cannot see any overlap with this dot.

The only other interpretation, that would take everything into account would be that first this was ἐποίησεν. Then a scribe deleted the ποι completely and wrote κερδ over them. Then a second scribe corrected it back to ἐποίησεν as described above.

Without additional info from a check of the original, this is difficult to judge. From the evidence we have, the NA interpretation appears to be somewhat more probable.

Below is a new image from the BL website. One can see the different colors very well now. But the problems remain. One can see a faded K, superimposed by a vertical bar. Also slight traces of a horizontal bar from a possible ρ can be seen. Then slightly faded erd follow, possibly in different ink. A large dot has been set at the end of the ε and the vertical bar of the Γ seems to have been rewritten. Difficult!

