

A New Sahidic Fragment of the Gospel of Luke from the Michigan Collection

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Abstract

This article publishes for the first time the extant remains of a Sahidic Coptic manuscript containing portions of Luke 17-19. Almost all of the special Lukan pericope concerning Jesus and Zacchaeus is preserved (19:1-10), as well as most of the parable of the Dishonest Judge (18:1-8). The edition includes a transcription, translation, palaeographical analysis, critical apparatus, as well as images of the fragment.

Keywords

Gospel of Luke – P.Mich. inv. 546 – Coptic New Testament

Introduction

I present here P. Mich. inv. 546, a previously unpublished Sahidic fragment of the Gospel of Luke housed in the University of Michigan Papyrology Collection.¹ The fragment is among a batch of papyri that was purchased in the early 1920s by Dr. David L. Askren for Prof. Francis Kelsey of Michigan. The Gospel of Luke is preserved complete in Sahidic Coptic in P.Palau Rib. Inv.-Nr. 181 (sa 1 according to the *Liste der Koptischen Handschriften des Neuen Testament*),² which

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- 1 I am grateful to Prof. Arthur Verhoogt, Acting Archivist at the University of Michigan Papyrology Collection, for granting permission to publish the fragment here. Image digitally reproduced with the permission of the Papyrus Collection, Graduate Library, University of Michigan.
 - 2 F.-J. Schmitz and G. Mink, *Liste der Koptischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments 1: Die sahidischen Handschriften der Evangelien 1 & 2* (ANTF 9, 13, 15; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1986, 1989, 1991).

was published by Quecke in 1977.³ Quecke recorded the variants of the Pierpont Morgan manuscript M 569 (sa 9), which preserves all four Gospels, although Luke has not been formally edited.

The text of our fragment is written in brown ink on light-colored parchment measuring 14.3 x 6.4 cm and contains portions of Luke 17:35-18:4 on the hair side, and Luke 19:3-10 on the flesh side;⁴ hair and flesh are distinguishable by color. Only portions of the left and right margins are preserved. The archaeological provenance of the fragment remains unknown.⁵ There are approximately 105-110 lines missing between hair and flesh, which suggests that there were originally two parallel columns of text. Preserved in this fragment are 18 lines of the first column on the hair side, and 19 lines of the second column on the flesh side. Each reconstructed line averages around 24-25 letters and so each column would likely have originally contained close to 40 lines. The original dimensions of this codex would therefore be quite large; I estimate around 30 x 26 cm, excluding margins. Due to the spacing at the top of this fragment on both recto and verso, it is clear that the fragment constitutes the upper portion of a folio of a codex; the first lines of both extant columns on hair and flesh sides are present. No pagination has been preserved.

The script is Coptic uncial or bimodular and roughly bilinear. Features of decoration include circlets, especially with Δ, κ, τ and χ, and points on the ends of most letters. There is one occurrence of an enlarged initial letter in “ekthesis” at the beginning of Luke 18:1 (ΔϣϣΩ). ε and ο are very narrow. Ω is only moderately round, and its hasta is tall. γ has lost its vertical stroke. In most occurrences, the scribe writes supralinear strokes of the “connective” type as a dot. Logical punctuation is present. In view of the difficulties in dating Coptic manuscripts, I have followed others in not assigning a date.⁶

3 H. Quecke, *Das Lukasevangelium saïdisch: Text der Handschrift PPalau Rib. Inv.-Nr. 181 mit den Varianten der Handschrift M 569* (Barcelona: Papyrologica Castroctaviana, 1977).

4 In the APIS description of P.Mich. inv. 546 (michigan.apis.5258), it is noted that a smaller fragment may belong to the leaf edited here. However, Prof. Verhoogt examined this smaller fragment on my behalf and determined that it is not related on account of the differences in the composition of ink (carbon vs. iron based) and the ductus and spacing.

5 It should be noted that Askren's place of residence was Medinet-el-Fayoum (ancient Crocodilopolis Arsinoe). Other fragments in this particular batch that were purchased by Askren may possibly stem from this region. See Brice C. Jones, “Two Unidentified Christian Fragments in the Michigan Collection,” *ZPE* 186 (2013), forthcoming.

6 On the difficulties in dating Coptic manuscripts, see B. Layton, “Towards a New Coptic Palaeography,” in T. Orlandi and F. Wisse (eds.), *Acts of the Second International Congress of Coptic Studies* (CIM: Rome, 1985) 149-158.

The correspondence between our Coptic text and the Greek New Testament is close. Following the majority of Greek and Coptic manuscripts, our fragment omits Luke 17:36, which some scribes added to their manuscripts (D^{f13} 579 700 lat sy) by assimilation to Matthew 24:40. The following differences may be noted. The Coptic clarifies the Greek reading ἐπὶ χρόνον in 18:4 by adding ⲡⲟⲩⲛⲟⲥ (“a long [lit. great] time”).⁷ The (restored) Coptic translates the Greek word συκομορέα (“sycamore tree”) with ⲟⲩⲃⲱ ⲛⲕⲛⲧⲉ (“fig tree”) in Luke 19:4. ⲕⲛⲧⲉ is the standard translation of συχέα, as in Luke 13:6, but Coptic also uses it to render συκομορέα.⁸ In 19:6, the Coptic text has omitted the two occurrences of the Greek conjunction καί, but this does not necessarily mean that the *Vorlage* of the Coptic translator did not contain them. E. Perttilä has demonstrated that asyndeton is very common in Coptic texts, and that “[t]o read the Greek behind the Coptic text is in the case of conjunctions mostly impossible.”⁹

Transcription and Translation

Hair Side, col. i (Luke 17:35-18:4)

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 1 | ⲛⲁⲱⲱ[ⲡⲉ ⲉϥⲛⲟϥⲧ ϭⲓ ⲟϥⲟⲡⲧ ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲭⲓ] | (17:35) |
| | ⲟϥⲉⲓ ⲛⲉⲥ[ⲕⲁ ⲟϥⲉⲓ ⲁϥⲟϥⲱⲱⲃ ⲁⲉ ⲛⲁϥ ⲭⲉ] | (17:37) |
| | ⲉⲧⲱⲛ ⲡⲭ[ⲟⲉⲓⲥ ⲛⲧⲟϥ ⲁⲉ ⲡⲉⲭⲁϥ ⲛⲁϥ] | |
| | ⲭⲉ ⲡⲙⲁ ⲉⲧⲉ[ⲡⲉ ⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲛⲁⲱⲱⲡⲉ ⲙⲓ] | |
| 5 | ⲙⲟϥ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲛⲁⲉ[ⲧⲟⲥ ⲛⲁⲥⲱⲟϥⲉ ⲉⲣⲟϥ] | |
| | ⲁϥⲭⲱ ⲁⲉ ⲛⲁ[ϥ ⲛⲟϥⲡⲁⲣⲁⲃⲟⲗⲛ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ] | (18:1) |
| | ⲭⲉ ⲱⲱ[ⲉ ⲉⲱⲗⲛⲗ ⲛⲟϥⲟⲉⲓⲱ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉⲧⲙⲓ] | |
| | ⲉⲓⲕⲁ[ⲉⲧ ⲉ]ϥⲭⲱ [ⲙⲙⲟⲥ ⲭⲉ ⲛⲉϥⲛ] | (18:2) |
| 10 | ⲟϥⲕⲣⲓⲧⲛⲥ ϭⲛ ⲟϥ[ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ ⲉⲛⲗⲓⲣⲟⲧⲉ] | |
| | ⲁⲛ ϭⲛⲧϥ ⲙⲓⲡⲛ[ⲟϥⲧⲉ ⲁϥⲱ ⲛⲗⲱⲡⲉ ⲁⲛ] | |
| | ϭⲛⲧⲗ ⲡⲣⲱⲙ[ⲉ ⲛⲉϥⲛ ⲟϥⲭⲛⲣⲁ ⲁⲉ ϭⲛ] | (18:3) |

7 Codex D does something similar by adding the indefinite τινά (“a certain time”).

8 W.E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), 112b.

9 E. Perttilä, “How to Read the Greek Text behind the Sahidic Coptic,” in A. Voitila and J. Jokiranta (eds.), *Scripture in Transition: Essays on Septuagint, Hebrew Bible, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Raija Sollamo* (SJSJ 126; Leiden: Brill, 2008) 367-78, here 376. B. Layton, *A Coptic Grammar* (Porta Linguarum Orientalium N.S., 20; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000) states that, with main clauses in the past tense, “[a]syndeton expresses closer linkage than ⲁϥⲱ, ⲁⲉ, ⲛⲙⲛⲥⲱ-ⲥ, or other conjunctions” (§237, 183).

- τ[π]ολις ετῆμα[Υ εσνηΥ ωαροϣ εсхω]
 ἡμος· δε δ[ρι παρδπ εβολ ρῆ πετχιρδ-]
 15 π οϣβη[ει· αϣω ἡπῶοϣω ἡοϣ-] (18:4)
 ἡος ἡοϣοειω· [ἡῆῆса ναи δε πεχα-]
 υ ρραι ἡρην[τῷ· δε εωδε πνοϣτε ἡ-]
 †ρροτε ρη[τῷ αν. αϣω ἡ†ωπε αν]

Flesh side, col. ii (Luke 19:3-10)

- 1 [ἡπῶεῆβom εтве πἡηηωε· х]ε οϣκοϣι (19:3)
 [πε ρῆ τεϣοτ· αϣπωт δε ε]οη αϣταλε (19:4)
 [εхῆ οϣω ἡκῆτε·] δε εϣεναϣ
 [εροϣ· δε νεϣηηΥ εβολ ρῆ π]ῆα εтἡμαϣ·
 5 [αϣει δε εμαϣ· αϣϣιατῷ] ερραι ἡεῆε πε- (19:5)
 [хаϣ ναϣ· δε заκχαиос σε]πἡ αμοϣ επе-
 [снт· ραπс гαρ εтраω]ωπε ρῆ πεκἡι
 [ἡποοϣ· αϣεεπἡ· αϣ]ει επеснт αϣ- (19:6)
 [ωопῷ εροϣ εϣραωε·] αϣнаϣ δε тἡ- (19:7)
 10 [ροϣ· αϣκρῆρῆ· εϣх]ω ἡμος· δε αϣωκ
 [εροϣἡ· αϣεοиε εϣω]ῆε ἡρῷρἡове·
 [α заκχαиос δε азерат]ῷ πεхаϣ ἡпхо- (19:8)
 [еис· δε еис ρηηте †]† пхоеис ἡтἡ-
 [αωε ἡназϣпархон]та ἡῆρк[ε αϣω]
 15 [пента†ωтоϣнт еро]ϣ ἡтен [οϣа·] (19:9)
 [†натааϣ ἡϣтоϣкωв·] πεхе ιс [наϣ]
 [δε αϣοϣхαι ω]ωπε ρῆ πε[ἡи ἡποοϣ·]
 [κατα θε δε οϣ]ωἡρε ρωω[ϣ πε ἡте]
 [авраρам· ἡта] πωἡρε г[αρ ἡпрωме] (19:10)

Luke 17:35–18:4 (Hair):

³⁵ “...grinding grain together. One will be taken and the other left behind.”

³⁷ And they answered him, “Where, Lord?” And he said to them, “The place where the body (σῶμα) will be the vultures (ἀετός) will gather.” ^{18:1} He told them a parable (παραβολή) concerning their need to pray always and not to become tired (ἐγκακέω), ² saying, “There was a judge (κριτής) in a city (πόλις) who did not fear God and did not have respect for people. ³ And there was a widow (χήρα) in that city (πόλις) who came to him saying, ‘Grant justice [lit., do my judgment] upon the one who takes judgment against me.’ ⁴ And he did not wish it for a long time. After these things he said in himself, ‘Though I do not fear God or have respect . . .’”

Luke 19:3-10 (Flesh)

³ ... he was not able on account of the crowd because he was small in his stature.
⁴ So he ran forward and climbed upon a fig tree so that he might see him because he was coming by that place. ⁵ And he came there. Jesus lifted up his eyes and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry up and come down. For it is necessary that I go into your house today." ⁶ He hastened, came down [and] received him, rejoicing.
⁷ And all saw and murmured saying, "He came and lodged with a sinful man."
⁸ But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Behold, I give, Lord, half of my belongings (ὑπαρχόντα) to the poor, and that which I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back fourfold." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Salvation has come to this house today, because he is also a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man ..."

Critical Apparatus

The following brief apparatus excludes orthographical variants and records only those variants of special interest. For convenience, restorations of lacunae and word division are based on Horner unless otherwise noted.¹⁰ The fragments are collated against the following texts:

sa 1 = Hans Quecke's edition of P.Palau Rib. Inv.-Nr. 181.¹¹

sa 9 = Pierpont Morgan Manuscript M 569, readings of which are found in Quecke, *Das Lukasevangelium saïdisch*.

H = Horner's edition. Horner, *Coptic Version of the New Testament*.

Hair Side

2 ⲛⲁⲗ sa 1 : + ⲉϣⲗⲱ ⲙⲙⲟⲥ sa 9 Horner¹²

12 ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ sa 1: ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ sa 9 Horner

Flesh Side

15 ⲛⲧⲉⲛ : ⲛⲧⲉ sa 1 Horner : ⲛⲧⲛ sa 9

17 Ⲓⲙ sa 1 sa 9 : ⲙ Horner

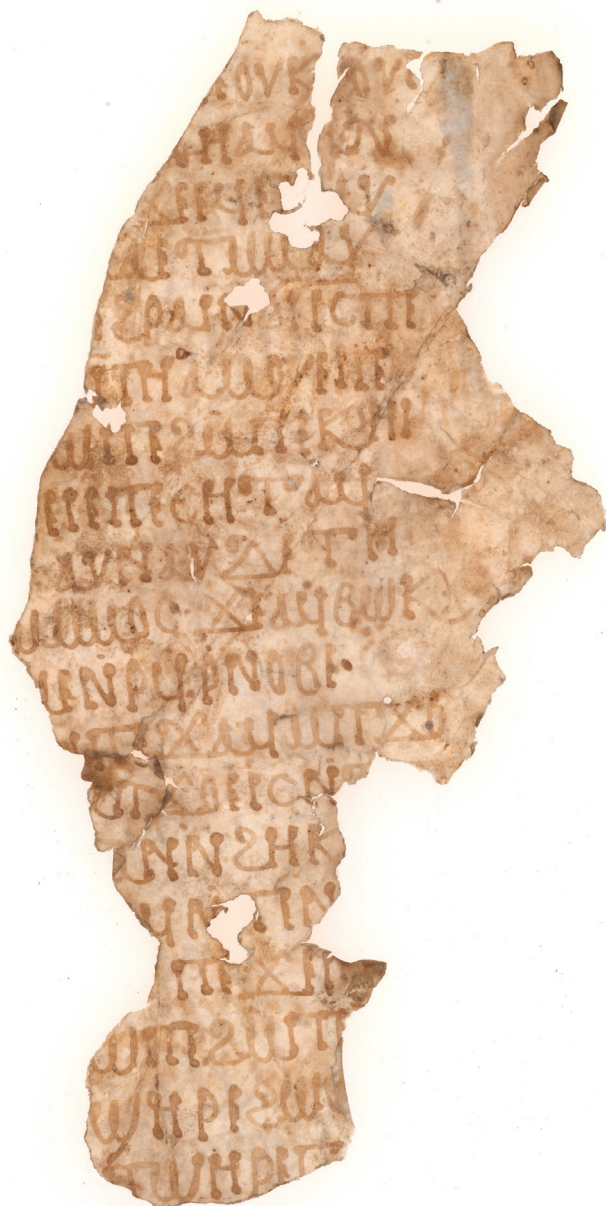
10 G.W. Horner, *The Coptic Version of the New Testament in the Southern Dialect, otherwise called Sahidic or Thebaic*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911).

11 H. Quecke, *Das Lukasevangelium saïdisch: Text der Handschrift PPalau Rib. Inv.-Nr. 181 mit den Varianten der Handschriften 813 und 814 der Chester Beatty Library und der Handschrift M 569*. Rome and Barcelona: Papyrologica Castroctaviana, 1977.

12 The length of our line suggests against the inclusion of this variant.



Hair



Friesl