

New Testament II: Greek

Earl C. Davis

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

February 2, 1904¹

1.² W.H. hold that about the year 350 [C.E.] the texts of the New Testament were in a very chaotic condition. But upon evidence afforded by quotations made from N.T. by church fathers at 400 [C.E.] they conclude that the improved conditions of [the] text in the year 400 or thereabouts gives very conclusive evidence that between the years 350 and 400 a revision of the text was made. This revised text they called the Syrian text. In all questions of textual criticism, the pre-Syrian reading must be determined.

They hold that before this revision there were current three types of texts. There were Western, Syrian and Neutral. The Western text was characterized by looseness in addition, omission and paraphrase. W.H. hold that the Neutral text shows the purest text. Aleph and B are their standards. B is purer than Aleph. These two are according to W.H. the purest extant texts.

2. The evidence for the condition of the N.T. at about 150 AD is not exactly conclusive. But one may say that at least the Christians at this time had in the large a quite clearly defined group of books which later became parts of the N.T. The evidence of this comes from various sources. Marcion, heretic at Rome, about 140-160 ??? for his sect on canon consisting of expurgated editions of Luke and ten Pauline epistles, i.e., all epistles except ??? and Hebrews. There is the evidence of Justin, 150, who wrote about this time. It is quite clear that he used our

¹ This is from a collection of manuscripts—mostly class papers—written while Davis was a student at Harvard Divinity School, 1902-1904. This manuscript—which is what was once called a "blue book"—is clearly for the New Testament II class he took during the 1903-04 academic year.

² This manuscript clearly is a set of answers to questions that unfortunately we do not have.

synoptic gospels, possibly the Gospel of John. Abbott thinks that this is beyond doubt, but others do doubt it. It is also quite clear that he used [the] Gospel of Hebrews. But in ??? all doubts as to the use of [the] Gospel of John disappear. It has been shown quite clearly that the basis of ??? harmony is John, about which the other three are woven. But up to this time the Gospels have not been cited by name, and only a few of Paul's epistles have been cited by name, and very few, in fact only 1st John and 1st Peter of the Catholic have been cited. Justin had spoken of memoirs of the Apostles, which are called Gospels, but it is very doubtful³ if he meant that word Gospels in the sense in which it later came to be used.

In short, at the year 150, we find that the Christians had a body of literature, which upon the basis of intrinsic spiritual worth they had selected from a mass of similar literature. At this time, it consisted of 4 Gospels, Acts, Certainly 10 and perhaps 13 epistles of Paul, probably Hebrews, Apocryphon of John, 1st epistle of John, 1st of Peter. But at this time, I think one must say the consciousness of a ??? scripture on the same plane as the O.T. was not yet a fact. It remained for the next generation, ???, ??? of ??? and Origin to show the consciousness of ???.

3. It seems to me probable that Romans was written at Corinth during the 3 months stay, just as Paul was starting out for Jerusalem with the collections for the saints. Of course, the evidence is not conclusive, but Paul apparently had long wished to visit Rome and the conditions of the letter would indicate that by some means or other probably through the travelers he had received word from Rome, and ??? at Rome and received word from him. I am inclined to believe that when he started out on his 3rd journey he intended to go to Rome but was prevented from going by the delay caused by the disturbed conditions in the Galatian church (I think that the epistle to Galatians were written from Ephesus Just before 1 Corinthians.) and in the church at Corinth. When these difficulties had been ??? we find Paul on his three months visit to Corinth and making the final preparations for taking contributions to Jerusalem. This is the only way that I can account for the 3 years stay at Ephesus when

³ The professor underlined, "very doubtful" and put "Why?" in the margin.

the whole plan of Paul been to keep going. So, at Corinth, Paul, disappointed in not being able to make his intended trip to Rome, and just before he turns to go East again, takes occasion to write his epistle to the Romans, to show them his interest in them, and perhaps to carry to them some of his theological ideas.

It is difficult to say whether the readers were Jews or Gentiles. B??? held that they were Jews, and that Romans was written for [the] purpose of advancing the interests of Pauline ???. This can hardly be maintained. (1) Because there are certain indications within the letter itself which point to the fact that he was writing to Gentiles. Also, there are passages which indicate that he was writing for Jews. The conclusion must be, from the internal evidence of the Epistle, that he was writing to a mixed community.

There also (2) one would expect that at Rome the ??? would be mixed. Rome was cosmopolitan and doubtless the ??? community was started by men who had been converted elsewhere and had drifted together at Rome. At least there is no evidence of evangelization. This would do [the] job best probably to a mixed Jewish and Gentile church.

4. Epistles to Romans opens with salutation and personal references stating Paul's interest in [the] church at Rome and his hope to go to them. Then he swings off into a rather theological discussion in which he shows that the whole world, both Jewish and Gentile, is under the displeasure of God, as is evidenced by their sin.

Then he goes on to show that through faith in Jesus Christ both Jews and Gentiles may be saved.

This is followed by practical exhortations, pointing out the great obligation resting upon those who may thus receive salvation through Jesus Christ, conclusion and salutations.

5. The occasion for writing the Epistle to the Colossians was probably the news brought by Epaphras to the effect that certain false teachers were making their way into the church at Colossus. Paul had never been at Colossus, but the detailed

knowledge which he shows of conditions indicates that his knowledge was exact, and perhaps it was at the suggestion of Epaphras that Paul wrote. Just what these "fake teachers" stood for is uncertain. Some have held that it was gnostic teaching as the use of [the] word "angels" indicates. But other remarks point to Jewish ceremonial laws of some type. One must hold that at least the basis of the teaching of Jewish and just what other elements entered into it is uncertain. Perhaps this may be a beginning of ideas which later developed into Gnosticism, but one must remember that [the] Gnostics were largely of [a] philosophic speculative turn, who would hardly be confounded with Jewish customs.

Paul opens the letter with usual salutation, followed by a statement of the encouraging news received from the church at Colossus. He commends them for their faith and fidelity and hopes they will so continue. Then he warns them against those fake teachers, and follows this by one of his Christological discussions, which characterize this group of epistles, in which he places the Christian ideas over against the fake teachers. Conclusion in personal reference to ??? who probably was messenger. Salutations.

6. The problem of the genuineness of 1st Peter is difficult.

(1) In the 1st place it is a well-attested epistle and has always been ascribed to Peter. If it is by Peter, we must hold of course to an early date. Peter undoubtedly suffered martyrdom at Rome in 64. It must have been before that date. Now it shows unmistakable evidence of Pauline thought and is in sympathy with Pauline ideas. So much so that it is said that the author of 1st Peter must have gone to school to Paul. Of course, this raises the question of the Council at Jerusalem, and the affair at Antioch where all things point. Peter was put in a bad box by Paul. The conclusion was the Peter was consigned to the gospel up through the circumcision. That was in the year 50. The Epistle was written from Rome. See evaluation of questions. It shows no evidence of this controversy, but is in fact quite Pauline, therefore, we must say that, if written by Peter it must have been written after the Council of Jerusalem and long enough after it for the feeling of opposition to Paul to wear away and certain Pauline ideas to become absorbed. This would put it very late, just before the death of Peter.

But on the other hand, if the dependence upon Paul is genuine, it is strange that Peter, in writing to churches in Asia minor, should not have mentioned Paul's name, especially since those churches were so interested in Paul and Paul (as Peter must have known) was in Rome a prisoner. Again the fact is that all hold that if Peter is responsible for the epistle, it must have been written by an ???, as style etc. point.

Taking all these points into consideration, it hardly seems possible to me that we can assign the epistle to Peter, although tradition is so ??? on the point.

(Note explaining place.) Babylon is the alleged place of writing, but it is probably a figurative use of word meaning Rome as was common. This is confirmed by the orbs in which the messenger is to carry the letter to the churches in Asia minor.

[Here a brief diagram of cities in Asia minor on the itinerary of the visitor.]

7. The dependence of 2nd Peter on Jude was early noticed. It is undoubtedly by Peter who is defendant.

In the 2nd Peter the author seems to have written the epistle for the purpose of embodying the teachings of Jude and assigning it to an apostle. Practically all of Jude is taken up bodily and put into the 2nd chapter of 2nd Peter. This is preceded by an introduction, and then there is appended a chapter on eschatological doctrines followed by a conclusion.

8. (a) Origin was the head of the school of Catechetical at Alexandria, ??? of Clement. He lived from about 180-257, later when to Caesarea, and was one of the greatest of the early literary fathers of the church. He took up the threads and loose ends of the Christian movement and did a great deal towards bringing affairs into some kind of system.

(b) Paul wrote to the Corinthians probably 4 times The first letter was from Corinth and had to do with care of discipline. The 2nd also was from Corinth and is known [as] 1st Corinthians. The third was probably written from Macedonia, after an

unrecorded visit to Corinth, and was probably a stinging letter of rebuke. The 4th was also written from Macedonia after reconciliation.

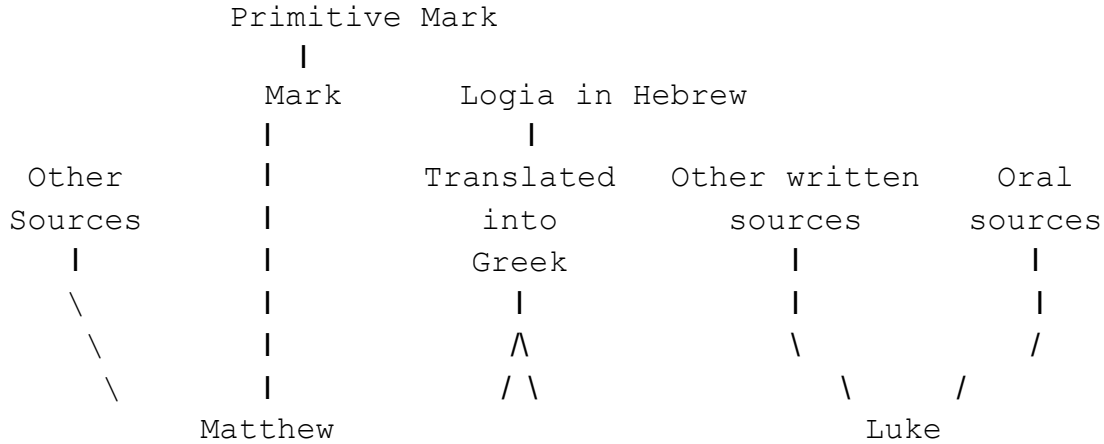
(c) The Galatian Judaizers probably taught the necessity of ceremonial law as the basis of salvation, in distinction from Paul's salvation by faith. It is evident that they opposed Paul on the ground of not being one of the apostles, and that Paul's doctrine of salvation by faith would lead to immorality.

(d) The original manuscript of [the] epistle to Ephesians has no address, and there is no indication as to whom it is addressed. It was probably a circular letter, as is indicated by Colossians and is the same as is spoken of there as the letter from the ???. ??? ??? an epistle to ???.

(e) Philippians was written from Rome during Paul's imprisonment, as a letter of thanks to the church at Philippi for sending him money for his comfort.

(f) Earliest evidence of the use of the epistle to the Hebrews is in Clement of Rome. (EC)

9. Traditions of sources to Gospels are rather confused, but a comparison of synoptics has lent scholars to come to accept in general the "two source theory," or a modified form of it. It is that Mark as we have it is one source, or at least but once removed from primitive Mark, and that the other two synoptic gospels are dependent upon Mark, and are other sources called the Logia. Whether this Logia is the one referred to by Papias as the Logia of Matthew or not is not certain, but it probably is.



The above diagram [transcribed above as faithfully as possible] to me is about correct. The dependence of Matthew and Luke upon our Mark is unquestionable, I think. Evidently also Matthew and Luke drew from a common written Logia. But there are some differences in their use of this source. This is seen in the Beatitudes, which offer in an abbreviated form in Luke, with some distinctions. Some hold that this points to divergent traditions, but I think that it can be accounted for by [a] common source Logia, perhaps ???, and then the difference to be explained by divergences in translation. Then Luke has so much that is peculiar to himself that I think he must have had another written source, and it is to be expected, in fact he himself implies, that he had an oral source.

10. The Gospel of John differs from the synoptics.

1st in plan. It is not historically built upon exactly the same plan as [the] others.

2nd. It uses in a great extent different material, and for a different purpose.

3rd. It is avowedly interpretive.

4th. The language which is put into Jesus' mouth is entirely different from the simple language of Jesus in the synoptics.

(5) Teaching is by discourse. No parables.

(6) Jesus not merely messiah, but the external logos incarnate.

(7) The historical is lost in the philosophical.

(8) Perhaps it is but characterized as a spiritual interpretation of a noble life.

(9) But there is one characteristic which, if one considers it a very accurate tradition from Jesus, viz., the prominence of Jesus himself. Christ is the center of interest, no longer is the sinner the ???, but it is the Christ explaining himself.

So apparent are the interpretative elements in it, that many have claimed it not as historical, but as philosophical.

11. An apocalypse is a type of literature which was common and very popular in [the] Jewish race in [the] centuries just before [the] birth of Jesus. It was in a sense a modified form of prophecy. The prophet, by his insight into social-political relations disclosed what must be the course of events in this world. On the other hand, when prophecy died out, the scribes, doubtless reflecting the suffering minds of the people, using the imagery of prophets and other writers, attempted to predict the end of things, to look forward to a new age, and a new world. These apocalypses are characterized by their otherworldliness. They are probably the outgrowth of the great sufferings of the Jews and perhaps that is why they were so popular among ??? in [the] time up [to] the persecutions.

1. Book of Daniel
2. 2nd or 4th Exodus
3. Book of Enock, Sibylline Oracles

[Included in the "blue book" manuscript transcribed here was a postcard to "Mr. E.C. Davis." The address, "15 Divinity Hall, Cambridge, Mass" is crossed out and replace with "Billerica, Mass." The text of the postcard reads, "N.T. 2. Exam, A. Half your mark. J.H. Ropes."]