

Intro:

We are going to reintroduce the timeline this week with a few variations.

- The materials section: Papyrus, then Vellums
- The styles section: Uncials, then Miniscules

These facts are aids in dating the manuscripts. Styles changed with materials change, then further changes within a 'style' came about.

For example, early Uncial texts had no spacing between words, later Uncial texts did.

I. The change from uncial to miniscule

- Slide shows examples of the difference: uncial, miniscule, finally miniscule 1582

A. Characteristics of miniscule manuscripts

1. Cursive flowing style, smaller letters, some differences in form.
2. began to appear in the eighth century, dominated from tenth century on
3. Total number of minuscule runs up into the thousands (1941 list had 2429)
4. Date range: 9th to 16th c.
5. "Since the minuscules are later than the uncials, they are, as a class, of less importance than the uncials. But there are exceptions to this rule." Thiessen, p. 49

They are less important because of their later dates. Differences are more likely to occur because of copying multiple times.
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B. The concept of 'families' of miniscule manuscripts

"Some of these [minuscules] run in groups and show a kinship that can be traced back to the same uncial." Thiessen, p. 49

1. Family 1

- a. Components: Minuscule 1 (10th c.), 118 (13th c.), 131 (11th c.), 209 (12th c.)
- b. Frequently agrees with Aleph, B, L

c. “Erasmus used 1 in the second edition of his Greek Testament (1519), although in the main he used 2 in the Gospels, a poor minuscule of the 12th c.” Thiessen, p. 50

2. Family 13

- a. Components: Minuscules 13, 124, 346 (all 12th c.), 69 (14th - 15th c.)
- b. W. H. Ferrer of Dublin demonstrated that these all share a common original.
- c. Number of others now added to this group.
- d. Distinguishing characteristic: “pericope de adultera” (woman caught in adultery) Jn 7.53-8.11 found after Luke 21.38 in these copies.

II. Lectionaries

A. Characteristics

1. Reading lessons used in services
2. Do not have a continuous text.
3. Usually have an opening formula
 - a. “on a certain occasion ...”
 - b. “The Lord said ...”
 - c. etc.
4. Sometimes omissions and adaptations from the text to make suitable for public reading.

For these reasons many for years considered them to be of little value for textual criticism.

B. Benefits

1. Tend to be conservative quotations
2. More than 1600 known to exist
3. Appear fr. 6th c. onward
4. Most in Uncial form
5. Gregory said they “avoid every new sentence, every new word, every new syllable, every new tone” quoted in Thiessen, p. 51

This concludes the summary of Greek manuscripts. There are other sources of information about the text that we turn to next.

III. Ancient versions

A. Significance

1. First languages for NT translation
2. Earliest translations done in AD 150 (mss. copies not so old)

B. Syriac Versions

1. General observations

- a. The language of Antioch, Syria, and Mesopotamia
- b. Aramaic, the language of Christ and the apostles, was a dialect of Syriac
- c. Antioch was an important city, “almost a second capital of the Roman world, a rival of Alexandria and Ephesus” (Thiessen, p. 52)
- d. As the gospel began to move inland from Antioch, a Syriac version began to be necessary – rural areas would speak less Gk

2. Tatian’s Diatessaron

- a. Tatian was a Syrian
- b. He prepared a harmony of the four Gospels by linking the words of the Gospels into a continuous story.
- c. May have been originally written in Greek, but was circulated in Syriac until about the 4th century.
- d. The Diatessaron was known as “the Gospel” in these regions
- e. Only manuscripts are two Arabic translations of it from the 11th century

3. Old Syriac Version

- a. Discovered in the last century
- b. Originally thought that the Peshitta was the oldest Syriac version
- c. 1842, mass of documents discovered in Egypt revealed an older version.
- d. Two main manuscripts:

1) Sinaitic Syriac

- a) Discovered in the same monastery where Tischendorf discovered Sinaiticus in 1892
- b) A palimpsest
- c) Believed to be from the second century
- d) Contains most of the Gospels
- e) Still at Mt. Sinai, but it has been carefully copied and photographed.

2) Curetonian Syriac

- a) Published in 1858 by Wm. Cureton
- b) Contains the gospels
- c) Begins with a phrase that means “The Gospel of the Separated Ones,” probably to distinguish it from the Diatessaron

4. The Peshitta Syriac

- a. Formerly regarded as the oldest Syriac version, but it is really a revision of the Old Syriac
- b. Translated by Rabbula, Bishop of Edessa, about AD 425
- c. Used a manuscript very close to the Byzantine, or Majority texts
- d. Text spread all over the Byzantine or Eastern Church, headquartered in Constantinople
- e. Some suggest that the Peshitta originated in the second century, but could not substantiate the claim
- f. 243 manuscripts preserve the Peshitta
- g. Two of these manuscripts are from the 5th century and about 12 others from the 6th
- h. Very similar to TR & KJV: “Generally speaking, this is the text of the *Textus Receptus* and of the Authorized Version of the Bible.” (Thiessen, p. 55)

Conclusion:

There are other details, but these are given to help you understand the scope of

the task of piecing together the original text. It is no easy task.