

NA²⁷ Textual Variants in Mark 8:11-21
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v.11

is the variant reading found in P⁴⁵ W f¹³
This prepositional variance makes no difference as the two can be interchanged.

v. 12 μ

μ is the variant reading in P⁴⁵
The difference between and is that can mean 'search for' or 'look for,' whereas means 'to ask for.' But they can be basically synonymous.

μ
is found in A W 0131 f¹³ and the Majority Text. can also be basically synonymous with , so there is no major difference.

The reading μ of the text is attested by Sinaiticus B C D L f¹ 28. 33. 565. 579. 700. 892. (1241). 2427. 2542

μ
This variant means that the witnesses only have (1= first word)
B L 892 *pc* (a few other manuscripts than those mentioned, differing from the Majority Text).

v.13 μ

The variant reading attested to is μ () A 0131 f¹ Majority Text
sy^{(s).h} sa (P⁴⁵ D W f¹³ 28. 33. 565. 579. 700. 892. 2427. 2542 *pc*, 1241, 1424, it *vg^{cl}*, *bo^{pt}*)

The witnesses for the reading of the text are Sinaiticus B C L (*vgst*, *bo^{pt}*)

v.14 μ

The first variant listed is that of the witnesses showing only the words ' μ ' found in D (it). This grammatical structure seems a bit more normal than the above rendering.

The other variant reading is μ cited in P^{45vid} (W) f¹. (1328). 565. 700. (2542) k sa The reading of this phrase would be 'only one loaf they had.' This is probably the easiest grammatical structure of the three for an English speaker to translate.

v.15

The variant words replacing these in the witnesses cited are:

- is attested by D f¹ 565. 2452

- is attested by 700

In both these cases only the first or second word is cited by the witnesses, not both together.

is attested by P⁴⁵ C 0131 f¹³ 28. 1424 *pc* aur c f 1 *vg*^{cl}

The witnesses for the reading in the text are: Sinaiticus A B L W 33. 2427 Majority Text *vg*st *sy*^{p.h}

P⁴⁵ W f^{1.13} 28. 565. 2542 *pci* k sa^{mss}

The difference in the variant reading is the plural genitive, of the Herodians instead of singular genitive.

v.16

is replaced by the variant in P⁴⁵ W 565

The superscripted T means that a word or words were inserted into the text at that point. p) refers to parallel passages in the Gospels, which are listed in the margin at the beginning of the pericope. So the evidence for a variant reading of inserted into the text is: A C L 0131 f¹³ 33 Majority Text aur f 1 *vg* *sy* bo

The evidence for the reading of the text is: P⁴⁵ Sinaiticus B D W f¹ 28. 565. 700. 2427. 2542 *pcit* sa

This reading is replaced with μ and is supported by Sinaiticus A C L f¹³ 33 Majority Text aur f 1 *vg* *sy*^{p.h} bo^{mss}

is attested by D it

(refer to the parallel gospels) μ is cited by 579. 1424 *pc*

The evidence for the text is: P⁴⁵ B W f¹ 28. 565. 700. 2427 *pck* co

v.17

T

The words inserted here by some witnesses are found in Sinaiticus* A C D (transposed wording in L) W f^{1.13} 33 Majority text lat sy sa^{mss}

The witnesses of the text are: Sinaiticus¹ B 892*. 2427 aur i sa^{mss} bo

T

(Compare the parallel gospel accounts.) The inserted words are , supported by P⁴⁵ W f¹³ pc (sa^{mss}). This is translated 'what do you argue about between yourselves, you of little faith.'

μ , is cited in: (D =minor differences) 28. 565. 700 pc (it) sy^{h**}

μ μ
The variant in this case is replaced words rather than an insertion as the case above.
(047. 1424 pc) μ μ is attested by: A Majority text f 1 vg sy^{(s.p).h}

μ μ is witnessed by: (D) (0143^{vid}). 565 (it) co

The evidence for the reading of the text is: P⁴⁵ Sinaiticus B C L N W f^{1.13} (28). 33. 579. 892*. 1241. 2427. 2542 pc

v.19 T,

The insertions are:

found in: Sinaiticus C D f¹ 33. 565. 579. 1241. 1424. 2542 al (al= some manuscripts [more than represented by pc] other than those explicitly mentioned for a given reading, which differ from the Majority text) vgst sy^s

attested by: 1 (it) sa^{mss}

The evidence for the text: P⁴⁵ A B L W f¹³ 2427 Majority text k vg^{d.lww} sy^{p.h} bo

v.20

is the word variant found in: Sinaiticus (transposed wording in 892. 2427) lat sa

is seen in: A D W f^{1.13} 33 Majority text it sy^h

appears in: C N f

The evidence for the text is: B L 565. 1241. 1424 *pcvg*^{mss}

was inserted in P⁴⁵_{vid}(_{vid=uncertainty}) Sinaiticus C W *f*¹³ 1424 *al* lat sa

The witnesses for the text are: A B D L *f*¹ 33. 2427 Majority text it sy bo

[]

† in the 25th ed. words 1 and 2 appeared, found in Sinaiticus *pc* (a few manuscripts)

is found instead of the words above in: P⁴⁵ A D W *f*^{1.13} 33 Majority text
it sy^h

The reading of the text is found in: B C L (579. 892). 2427 *pcvg*

v.21

The variant words in place of are:

from: B 28. 579. 700. 2427_{vid}. 2542 *pm b d q*

from: A D N W (*f*¹³) 33. 565 *pm lat sy*^{p.h}

The evidence for the text is: Sinaiticus C K L *f*¹ 892. 1241. 1424 *al k sy*^s

It should be pretty evident in this investigation that no real prominent issue arises due to a discussion over any of the variants in this passage. In my opinion, none of the variants make a significant implication for translation or interpretation. However, some of them are interesting to observe and ponder how they possibly were put in some manuscripts.

It is helpful to be acquainted with the strengths and weaknesses, as well as general traits of the different manuscripts. In my study of the variants for this passage, I noticed a handful of codexes (uncials primarily) that constituted the majority of the readings of the Nestle-Aland text as well as the cited variants. What follows is a list of the most notable manuscripts (and in my understanding of textual criticism, the more weightier ones cited for this text) and a brief note about them to help inform the reader.

P⁴⁵ dated in the first half of the III century; in Mark it is closer to the

Ceasarean type text.

- Ⲙ dated sometime in the IV century; one of the major manuscripts; Alexandrian type text.
- B (Vaticanus) dated in the IV century as well; another major manuscript to investigate, also of the Alexandrian type text.
- A (Alexandrinus) V century; in the gospels it tends to follow the Byzantine text type.
- C (Codex Ephraemi) V century; a palimpsest recovered by Tischendorf; seems to be a mix of most of the major text-types.
- D (Bezae) V century, is more of a Western type text.
- L (Codex Regius) VIII century; agrees frequently with B (notice how many times B and L appear together citing the same reading!).

(Codex Sangallensius) IX century; in Mark it follows the Alexandrian text, whereas the other gospels follow the Byzantine text; similar to L.

(Codex Koridethi) IX century; Mark again is unique from the other gospels in this manuscript (it is close to the type of text used by Origen and Eusebius in the III and IV century).
- W dated V century; this manuscript follows fairly closely to P⁴⁵, and in Mark 5:31-16:20 it is the Ceasarean type text; a manuscript of a conglomeration of other types (the above section in Mark appear to be unique).

[See Bruce Metzger's *The Text of The New Testament* for more info.]

Mark 8:16, 17 are the two verses that have the most noticeable variants in this pericope. Out of the whole passage, this is the only place where I found much investigation could be done.

In verse 16 there are three variant readings; two are replaced word order and one is a word inserted into the text. It appears that the most interesting quality about the variants is how they possibly could fit the style that Mark uses in his gospel. It is not an issue of difference in meaning, but rather in style.

The first variant (see v.16 above also) is replacing *α*, which is not earth shattering. But Mark tends to use *α* when changing speakers or focus, and obviously *α* would fit since it is the disciples arguing *α*. The witnesses for this reading are P⁴⁵ (III cent.) W (V cent.) and 565 (IX or X cent.). Once again, it is interesting for stylistic discussion as opposed to meaning or implication.

The next variant is the insertion of the word *α* right before the *α*, thus if the variant is a correct insertion it would read,

α he support for the insertion is:

A (V cent.) C (V) L (VIII) (IX) 0131 *f*¹³ 33 Majority text *α* *f* 1 *vg* *sy* *bo*. But the weight of the witnesses for the reading of the text seems to be much stronger, containing five witnesses from V century and earlier! The absence of the insertion is witnessed by P⁴⁵ (III) Sinaiticus (IV) B (IV) D (V) W (V) *f*¹ 28. 565. 700. 2427. 2542 *pc* *it* *sa*.

The most interesting variant in this verse, and the one which actually would affect the translation minutely is the replacement of *α*. The way the text reads, it is an outside view of the event describing that the disciples were arguing about not having bread, but depending on the validity of this last variant, may be read 'we do not have any bread.' So it would shift from an outsider's perspective to the inside of the disciples' argument.

The variant readings are:

μ (IPPAI) as cited by Sinaiticus (IV) A (V) C (V) L (VIII) (IX) *f*¹³ 33 Majority text *α* *f* 1 *vg* *sy*^{p.h} *bo*^{mss}

This is the translation used in KJV, Reina-Valera, and NIrV. There are some good witnesses for this reading, especially Sinaiticus.

α attested by D (V) *it* (majority or all of Old Latin witnesses). In my opinion this is a weakly attested variant, especially considering that D is more of a Western type text. Also the only other citation for this variant is the Old Latin witnesses, which I presume would follow more of a Western type tradition. So this variant does not have much to offer by way of being an original reading.

μ (IPAAI) which may have crept its way in as Matthew employs that term in his parallel account. The evidence for this reading is once again rather quiet and shallow: 579. 1424 *pc* (some of the manuscripts). I would not consider this part of

Mark's pericope.

Finally, the support for the reading of μ . : P⁴⁵ (III) B (IV) W (V) f¹ 28. 565. 700. 2427pck co (all the Coptic versions extant for the passage).

In conclusion, I think there is good support for the way the text reads in the Nestle-Aland. If much weight can be given to the subjective argument for internal evidence, maybe the first three variants can be accepted so that the text reads:

μ . The meaning is not changed if these variants are accepted, only the style. Personally I am hesitant to float the boat of the text upon the waters of internal evidence because of the subjective nature of that issue. No human is so predictable that you can guess his thought and grammatical usage in a given phrase unless his vocabulary and style is so weak and limited that by default he could not have produced the alternative.

Due to the absence of any more crucial variants to discuss, I chose this one for the interesting point of style that results based upon what readings one adheres to in this pericope.

It is worth mentioning that verse 17 contains some noticable variants. Two of the variants (the first two) are insertions and the last one is the replacement or rephrasing of the reading of the text. It appears that where parallel passages are involved in the gospel accounts, some of the variant readings come from those other accounts. Sometimes scribes tried to harmonize the gospels resulting in more damage than good (both from an exegetical and text-critical viewpoint). This could explain the variant in v.17 of the μ . (you of little faith). On the second variant of verse 17, the first entry is a verbatim echo of Matt. 16:8 if the variant reading μ . is taken. P⁴⁵ does cite this reading as well as W.

My point is not to delve into verse 17, although I have looked into the support for the variants and looked briefly at them in a grammatical light (albeit dim). Once again there does not seem to be a strong case for a variant being weighty and of implicational importance.

One interesting note of benefit in doing this study has been to see the relationship of the primary manuscripts found in support of Mark for this pericope. Certain manuscripts appear together and often support similar readings. It was interesting to notice how many times the reading of the text was attested by Sinaiticus, B (Vaticanus), C, and L. Also noteworthy, P⁴⁵ several times contained the variant reading listed in the critical apparatus. This goes to show that one cannot embrace a

manuscript exclusively based on its date, but even must be aware of tendencies within the papyri manuscripts.