

Five Agrapha from Fragmentary Early Christian Papyri

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Abstract

Sayings of Jesus are all over in Christian writings. They are found in the New Testament gospels, of course. They are also found in canonical material outside of the gospels. They are found in apocryphal gospels, acts, and apocalypses as well as works of early Christian writers. But the papyri, those incomplete fragments of theological tracts, homilies, commentaries, liturgies, hymns, and who knows what else, also contain mention of sayings of Jesus.

This paper examines five *agrapha* that occur in three relatively early papyri (P.Amh. Gr. 1 2, AD/CE 300–399; P.land. 5.69, AD/CE 300–399; and P.Gen. 3.125, AD/CE 150–249). These *agrapha* are not cataloged in Stoker's "Extracanonial Sayings of Jesus," which organizes and presents extracanonial sayings of Jesus from a wide array of sources.

Background

This is not an intentional collection of *agrapha*, here defined as “sayings attributed to Jesus that occur outside of accounts of the life of Jesus.” Instead, it is the result of the research into fragmentary early Christian papyri, dated to ranges intersecting the second through fifth centuries. These *agrapha* are not to my knowledge found in fragments of the New Testament or the Septuagint, nor are they found in fragments easily attributable to any known author or writing. These are fragments from liturgies, hymns, homilies, and other theological writings.

In the process of collecting, researching, and translating these early fragmentary manuscripts¹ I came across a few different instances where there appeared to be sayings attributed to Jesus that were not well known in the wider literature. The involved papyri are:

- P.Amh. Gr. 1 2, AD/CE 300–399
- P.land. 5.69, AD/CE 300–399
- P.Gen. 3.125, AD/CE 150–249

P.land. 5.69 witnesses one potential *agraphon* while P.Amh. Gr. 1 2 and P.Gen. 3.125 each provide witness to two different potential *agrapha*.

P. Amh. Gr. 1 2

P.Amh. Gr. 1 2 (TM 64476), originally published by Grenfell and Hunt,² is a hymn dated to the fourth century.³ Grenfell and Hunt provide no specific information regarding provenance, and Trismegistos only lists “Egypt.” The hymn consists of twenty-five lines. The first twenty-four are structured as an acrostic; the last line is mutilated and only provides the ending phrase. Each acrostic line consists of three phrases, the start of each phrase reiterates the letter or sound of the current letter anchoring the acrostic. There are two possible *agrapha* within the acrostic structure, one at line nine (iota), and one at line 16 (pi).⁴

¹ An inventory of the material, with transcriptions and draft translations, is available here: <https://rickbrannan.github.io/StuffEarlyChristiansRead/data/html/>

² Bernard P. Grenfell and Arthur S. Hunt, “Il. Christian Hymn,” in *The Amherst Papyri Part I* (London: Henry Frowde, 1900), 23–28; Ernst Preuschen, “Ein altchristlicher Hymnus,” *ZNTW* 2 (1901): 73–80; C. Wessely, “28. Vieil Hymne Chrétien,” in *Les plus anciens Monuments du christianisme, écrits sur papyrus*, *Patrologia Orientalis* 4.2 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1908), 205–209, <http://archive.org/details/patrologiaorien04grafplgo>; Thielko Wolbergs, *Griechische religiöse Gedichte der ersten nachchristlichen Jahrhunderte. Band 1: Psalmen und Hymnen der Gnosis und des frühen Christentums*, *Bieträge zum klassischen Philologie* 40 (Meisenheim am Glan: Anton Hain, 1971), 16–20; Ferguson, Everett, *Early Christians Speak: Faith and Life in the First Three Centuries*, 3rd ed. (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 1999), 150–152.

³ For transcription and translation, see my “Stuff Early Christians Read” project: <https://rickbrannan.github.io/StuffEarlyChristiansRead/data/html/P.Amh.%20Gr.%201%202.html>

⁴ On line 14 (Ξ xi) of the papyri, a summary or paraphrase of words associated with Jesus in the canonical gospels (Mt. 25:31–46) is instead attributed to “God” (ΘΣ, θ(ε)ς). This is worth noting, but is outside of the scope of this paper.

Line 9

Line nine is the line for iota and includes the start of a saying of Jesus; some surrounding lines are given for context.

Transcription (from Grenfell and Hunt):

7 Ην εμαθες ελπιδα κρατει, Ην ωρισεν σοι ο δεσποτη[ς Η...] λον.
8 Θ(εο)ς ηλυθε πολλα κομισας, Θανατο[υ] τριτοπημα τελεσα[ς Θ...]...ους.
9 Ι(ησου)ς ο παθων επι τουτοις, ειπων οτι νωτα παρεχω Ινα μη θαν[ατ]ω περιπησης.
10 Καλ' εισι τα θεσμα του θ(εο)υ· Κατα παντα τυποις υπομεν[ει] Καλην ζωην ινα λαβης.
11 Λουσαμενος εν Ιορδανη, Λουσαμενος ενι τυποις, Λουτρον [τ]ο καθαριον εχει.

7 δεσποτη[ς Η...] λον] Wessely δεσποτη[ς Ημεραν ουδενι δη]λον

10 υπομεν[ει]] Preuschen υπομεν[ω]

11 εχει] Preuschen εχω

Translation:

7 Hold fast to the hope which you have learned, which the Master determined for you ...
8 God came bringing many blessings, he wrought a triple victory over death ...
9 Jesus who suffered for these, saying, "I give my back, so that you may not experience death."
10 Glorious are the ordinances of God; in all things he suffers as an example, that you may have glorious life.
11 Having been washed in the Jordan, Having been washed as an example, He has the pure bath.

Jesus is clearly identified as the speaker, and a quotation attributed to him is introduced by ειπων οτι ("saying that").

There are three questions to answer regarding this agraphon. First, to what or whom does επι τουτοις ("for these") refer? Second, where is the end of the words attributed to Jesus? And third, what are the possible parallels to the saying here attributed to Jesus?

ΕΠΙ ΤΟΥΤΟΙΣ ("for these")

The phrase επι τουτοις only occurs once in the New Testament (3Jn 10) but 28 times in the Septuagint. In these 29 instances, επι τουτοις functions anaphorically, having its logical referent supplied in previous context. The referent is typically generic and not explicitly stated.

As the verb in line nine (περιπησης) is singular⁵ and not plural, there is no close candidate to be referent in the succeeding text. The context of line 8 is missing text that could explicitly provide the referent, but even in the absence of a specific reference one can make some sense of a reference back to the "triple victory over death" mentioned in line 8, particularly if those victories were somehow explicated in the missing phrase. However, understanding "these" as a generic reference to the people whom Jesus "suffered" for is probably the best available option.

⁵ Aorist active subjunctive second person singular of περιπίπτω.

Grenfell and Hunt offer the following suggestion about επι τουτοις: “the letters can hardly be read as ενι τυποις, though possibly this should be restored; cf. 10 and 11.”⁶ Lines 10 and 11, perhaps in the quotation if Preuschen’s reconstruction is correct (see below), use the phrases κατα παντα τυποις and ενι τυποις; line 17 also uses ενι τυποις. Grenfell and Hunt note these instances are “always in reference to events in the life of our Lord” and offer “as an example” as the intended meaning of ενι τυποις within the papyrus.⁷ If implemented, the suggestion ties the material together, prefacing the quotation with “Jesus, who suffered as an example, saying ...” While the alternative is attractive, it is a conjecture that goes against the plain reading of the letters on the papyrus.

End of the Quotation

There are two possibilities for ending the quotation, depending on the reconstruction followed. Grenfell and Hunt’s transcription⁸ (largely followed by Wessely)⁹ reads the relevant finite verbs in lines 10 and 11 as third person singular, indicating an end to the quoted material at the end of line nine. Preuschen’s edition, however, reconstructs these verbs as first person singular,¹⁰ requiring the speaker (Jesus) to continue through the end of line 11. The quotation in Preuschen’s edition could be translated as follows:

9 Jesus who suffered for these,¹¹ saying, “I give my back, so that you may not experience death.

10 Glorious are the ordinances of God; in all things **I suffer** as an example, that you may have glorious life.

11 Having been washed in the Jordan, Having been washed as an example, **I have** the pure bath.”

When the verbs are first person singular, their logical referent is Jesus. The extending of the quotation places testimony of being an example in the mouth of Jesus. Problematically, extending the quotation also places portions of the alphabetic acrostic in the mouth of Jesus as well, virtually guaranteeing that this statement is not representative of anything ever said in a single utterance by the historical Jesus. With Preuschen’s reconstruction, a compilation of several biblical statements has been given voice by Jesus each pointing to Jesus as the example and source of salvation.

Because the hymn is an alphabetical acrostic, it seems best to follow Grenfell and Hunt (and Wessely) with third person verbs in lines 10 and 11, and conclude the quotation at the end of line nine. Many of the acrostic triplets are self-contained and apart from some common terms or ideas have little direct connection to each other. Reading the quotation as ending on line nine removes this complexity and situates the quotation as a single unit instead of as a compound citation.

⁶ Grenfell and Hunt, “Il. Christian Hymn,” 27.

⁷ Grenfell and Hunt, “Il. Christian Hymn,” 27.

⁸ Grenfell and Hunt, “Il. Christian Hymn,” 25–26.

⁹ Wessely, “28. Vieil Hymne Chrétien,” 206.

¹⁰ Preuschen, “Ein altchristlicher Hymnus,” 75.

¹¹ Or possibly “who suffered as an example.”

Parallels

Virtually every line of this acrostic quotes from or alludes to the biblical text in some way. The words attributed to Jesus on line nine have relationship with the Septuagint. The most direct lexical relationship is the phrase “I give my back,” which calls to mind Isaiah 50:6.

Line 9: **νωτα παρεχω** Ινα μη θαν[ατ]ω περιπεσης
 I give (my) back so that you may not experience death
Is. 50:6: **τόν νώτόν** μου **δέδωκα**¹² εἰς μάστιγας
 The back of me **I give** to lashes

While the verbs used are different, the sentiment is the same. Indeed, the *Epistle of Barnabas* quotes the same verse in Isaiah with yet another verb, a form of τίθημι:

EpBarn 5.14: Ἴδού, **τέθεικά** μου **τόν νώτον** εἰς μάστιγας,
 Behold, **I have put** my **back** to whips

Each of these variations communicates the same basic idea, that the speaker intends to absorb or has already absorbed punishment of some sort, possibly in the place of another.

The reason for Jesus “giving [his] back” is provided through a ἵνα clause which explains “so that you may not experience death.” While similar language regarding experiencing death occurs in Dan. 2:9, that passage is not related as there is no negator and the context is of punishment, not rescue. Preuschen sees a relationship with Is. 53:5 and its use in the New Testament (1 Pe. 2:24; Rom. 6:5),¹³ and the passages do appear thematically related. But Is. 53:5 and 1 Pe 2:24 have no lexical similarity, only generally speaking of being wounded or bruised and not specifying the region (the back), and implying healing as a result of the wounding instead of specifying the healing as not experiencing death.

Line 16

Line 16 is the line for the Greek letter Π (pi). It contains a saying that appears to be based on either Lk 6:20 or a conglomeration of Mt 5:3 and Mt 5:5. Some surrounding lines are given for context.

Transcription (from Grenfell and Hunt):

15 Ὀν επεμψε πατηρ ινα παθη. Ο λαβων ζωην αι[ω]νι[αν], Ο λαβων κ[ρ]ατος αθανασιας.
16 Παισιν δ' [ε]υηγγελιζε λεγων, Πτωχοι βασιλειαν ... ειναι κληρονομιας.
17 Ραπισ[μενος] ενι τυποις Ροπην ινα παντι παρεχη [Ρ ... θ]ανατον ιν' ολεση.
18 Συ θα[ν]ων ι[ν]’ αναστασιν ιδης, Συ το φως ιν’ αιωνι[ο]ν ι[δ]ης, Συ θ[εο]ν[] φωτων ινα λαβης.

 16 βασιλειαν ...] Wessely βασιλειαν λαβ[ωσιν Παιδες]
 17 Ραπισ[μενος]] Preuschen Ραπιζ[ομενος] | παρεχη [Ρ ... θ]] Wessely [Ρηξας θ]

Translation:

¹² Vaticanus (B) and thus Swete read εδωκα.

¹³ Preuschen, “Ein altchristlicher Hymnus,” 78.

- 15 The Father sent him to suffer, Who has received eternal life, Who has received power over immortality.
- 16 He preached the gospel to his servants, saying, “The poor [shall possess] a kingdom, theirs is the inheritance.”¹⁴
- 17 He was scourged as an example, in order to give an impulse to all ... in order to destroy death.
- 18 In order that after death you may see resurrection, that you may see the light to eternity, that you may receive the God of lights.

The statement is attributed to the one the Father sent to suffer (line 15), who in the overall context must be Jesus (cf. line 9). But some questions remain, including who are the “servants” and what are the parallels behind the quotation?

The “servants”

Grenfell and Hunt’s translation (listed above) indicates that the gospel was preached to “his servants.” The underlying term is *παισιν*, the dative plural of *παις*. It can refer to a boy or a youth, one’s own offspring, or a servant.¹⁵ It is used to refer to Israel (Lk 1:54) and David (Lk 1:69; Ac 4:25) as servants of God.¹⁶ However, Preuschen argues that the term should be translated “children”¹⁷ and Wessely, publishing after Preuschen but not mentioning his work, uses *les enfants* in his translation.¹⁸ Preuschen appeals to the nature of the acrostic, which at this position requires the use of a word beginning with the letter Π, as limiting vocabulary to a word like *παις*. He also notes the plural of *παις* in Mt 18:3 as providing support for the possible translation:

Mt 18:3 Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἔάν μὴ στραφῆτε καὶ γένησθε ὡς τὰ **παιδία**, οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθητε εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν
 Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like **children**, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

In this passage,¹⁹ *παις* is used in the plural²⁰ and its referent is abstract. In the larger context (Mt 18:1–5), however, the rest of the instances of *παις* are singular (*παιδιον*,²¹ vv. 2, 4, 5). The introduction of the child into the discourse fits the semantic range of the term understood as “child” or “youth.”²² That a “servant” is not intended is reinforced by the use of “these little ones” (*τῶν μικρῶν τουτῶν*) in Mt 18:6 to refer to the child/children of Mt 18:1–5.

¹⁴ Wessely’s reconstruction, translated by Ferguson, reads “The poor [receive] the kingdom to be children, of the inheritance.”

¹⁵ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd Edition, ed. Frederick William Danker, 3rd ed. (University Of Chicago Press, 2001), 750.

¹⁶ Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd Edition, 750.

¹⁷ Preuschen, “Ein altchristlicher Hymnus,” 79.

¹⁸ Wessely, “28. Vieil Hymne Chrétien,” 208.

¹⁹ And similar passages, Mt 19:14; Mk 10:14; Lk 18:16.

²⁰ Though note the parallel in Luke 18:17, also cited by Preuschen, is the singular *παιδιον*.

²¹ *Παιδιον*, typically understood as “child,” is technically the diminutive of *παις* though several lexicons treat it as a distinct lexical entity (cf. BDAG, Louw-Nida)

²² J. P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, eds., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (United Bible Societies, 1999), 2.182.

The application of the use of παις/παιδιον in Mt 18:3 to its use in P.Amh. Gr. 1 2 is less obvious. There is no use of παιδιον introducing the participant into the discourse to predispose the use of παισιν as “children.” But Preuschen’s insight that παις is the best available word to communicate “children” with the slim but relevant example of Mt 18:3 combined with Wessely’s agreement in his translation swing the balance. Wessely’s reconstruction plausibly suggests how this complete line could be understood:

- 16 **Παισιν** δ’ [ε]υηγγελιζε λεγων, Πτωχοι βασιλειαν λαβ[ωσιν **Παιδες**] ειναι κληρονομιας.
 16 He preached the gospel to the **children**, saying, “The poor re[ceive] the kingdom, to be [**children**] in the inheritance.”

Interestingly, Ferguson translates Wessely’s text but here diverges from Wessely’s translation, using “servants” for Παισιν and “children” for Παιδες.²³

Parallels

The primary canonical parallels to the saying attributed to Jesus are Mt 5:3 and Lk 6:20, with some further possible relation to James 2:5. Parallels outside of the canon include *Gos. Thom.* 54 and *Poly. Phil.* 2.3.²⁴ The below includes Wessely’s reconstruction

- Line 16 **Πτωχοι βασιλειαν** λαβ[ωσιν Παιδες] ειναι κληρονομιας
 Mt 5:3 *Μακάριοι οί πτωχοί* τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.
 Lk 6:20 *Μακάριοι οί πτωχοί*, ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

The expressions are lexically different but compatible; one speaks of the poor receiving the kingdom and the other associates possession of the kingdom with the poor. Mt 5:3 describes the poor as “poor in spirit” while Lk 6:20 does not. Matthew speaks of the “kingdom of heaven” and Luke speaks of the “kingdom of God.” Neither Mt 5:3 nor Lk 6:20 mention an inheritance but Mt 5:5 does mention that the meek “will inherit the earth,” using a verb form instead of the noun form found in line 16. James 2:5 does, however, join the concepts of being poor with being an heir of the kingdom. The term “inheritance” (κληρονομιας) is used elsewhere in the papyrus, in line 13 (*ny*):

- 13 *Νυν* εργασαι **κληρονομιας**, *Νυν* καιρον εχεις οτι [διδως] *Νυν* τοις πεινωσι μεγαλως.
 13 Now work out your **inheritance**, now is the time for you to give, even now, to them that hunger greatly.

In the context of line 13, appearing after a few lines discussing what Jesus completed for his people, inheritance is something accomplished by giving to those who hunger — the poor. In line 16, the kingdom is received by the poor, and instead of working through charity to receive an inheritance, an inheritance is provided for them. With Wessely’s reconstruction, as a result of receiving the kingdom the poor are provided the inheritance; they need not achieve it.

²³ Ferguson, Everett, *Early Christians Speak: Faith and Life in the First Three Centuries*, 151.

²⁴ William D. Stroker, *Extracanonial Sayings of Jesus* (Society of Biblical Literature, 1989), 104.

P.land. 5.69

P.land. 5.69 (TM 59668),²⁵ sometimes associated with Didymus the Blind, is a fourth century papyrus published originally by Josef Sprey in 1931²⁶ and revisited by Peter Alois Kuhlmann in 1994.²⁷ The transcriptions of Frey and Kuhlmann differ significantly in some areas; the transcription and reconstruction of Kuhlmann is used below with significant differences noted.

Transcription:

10 κ(ύριος)ς τῶν δυνάμεων· [οὔτ]ός ἐστιν ὁ [κ(ύριος)ς στρατιῶν· κ(αὶ) κ(ύριος)ς]
11 σαβαώθ ἐρμηνεύεται κ(ύριος)ς τῶν δυν[άμεων· ὑφ' οὗ ὑψώ-]
12 θη κ(αὶ) ὁ υ(ιός)ς· ἀλλ' αὐτός φησιν· πάντας ἐ[λκύσω πρὸς ἑμαυτὸν]
13 κ(αὶ) πάντα τὰ ἐμὰ σὰ εἰ(σι) κ(αὶ) τὰ σὰ ἐμά· αὐτὸς γ[ὰρ εἰκὼν ἐστι(ν)]
14 τοῦ π(ατ)ρ(ός)ς ἐν παντί κ(αὶ) ἐν πάσῃ ἀρετῇ]. διὸ ἐπέβη ἐπὶ

10 ο[κ(ύριος)ς στρατιωῶν· κ(αὶ)κ(ύριος)ς] Sprey ο[παντοκράτωρ· το[γαβ]

13 γ[αβ εἰκὼν ἐστ(ν)]] Sprey γάρ εἶπετι οὐ[μείων]

Line-based translation:

10 L(ord) of the pow[ers]· [This] one is the [L(or)d of Armies· A(nd) L(or)d]
11 Sabaoth being translated L(or)d of the pow[ers]· by which was lift-]
12 ed up e(ven) the S(on)· But himself he said· everyone I wi[ll draw to himself]
13 a(nd) all the things of me yours a(re) a(nd) the things yours mine· himself F[or the image he is]
14 of the F(at)h(er) in all things a(nd) in[all truth]. For this reason he treads upon]

Translation:

This one is the Lord of Armies. And Lord Sabaoth, being translated “Lord of the Powers,” by whom even the Son was exalted. But he himself said, “I will draw everyone to myself” and “all my things are yours and your things are mine.” For he himself is the image of the Father in all things and all truth.

The words attributed to “the Son” (Jesus) are either two distinct quotations, referring to John 12:32 (“I will draw everyone to myself”) and John 17:10 (“all my things are yours and your things are mine”); or they are a composite quotation if the καὶ that joins the two is read as part of the quotation.

Regarding the quotation itself, it is important to note that over half of the first portion of the quotation is reconstructed. Only one word exists in whole (πάντας, “everyone”) and only one questionable letter following that word, ε, witnesses the balance. While Kuhlmann and Sprey

²⁵ Transcription and draft translation available:

<https://rickbrannan.github.io/StuffEarlyChristiansRead/data/html/P.land.%205%2069.html>

²⁶ Josef Sprey, “69. Christologisches,” in *Literarische Stücke und Verwandtes*, Papyri landanae 5 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1931), 165–169, <http://bibd.uni-giessen.de/pub/iand/piandv5/papiandv5-165.html>.

²⁷ Peter Alois Kuhlmann, “5.2 Christologisches Bruchstück,” in *Die Giessener Literarischen Papyri und die Caracalla-Erlasse: Edition, Übersetzung, und Kommentar* (Giessen: Universitätsbibliothek, 1994), 160–167, <http://geb.uni-giessen.de/geb/volltexte/2006/3638/pdf/BA-46-Teil-2.pdf>; Alan Muggidge, *Copying Early Christian Texts: A Study of Scribal Practice*, WUNT 362 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 305–306.

agree on the reconstruction, it is probably not best to consider it secure for the purposes of identifying a quotation. Indeed, the supplied text likely originates with John 12:32 as it matches letter for letter and fits the block. The second portion of the quotation, however, is witnessed in the papyrus and outside of a word order issue and a different form of a verb the content agrees with John 17:10.

Participant reference in this area of the papyrus is confusing. The question of the referent for the speaker (“he himself”) can be reconciled with either “the Son” or “Lord Sabaoth,” but “the Son” is the better choice as it is more proximate and the content of the quotations has some relationship with the words of Jesus in the gospel of John. Further, material after the quotations describes the speaker as “the image of the Father in all things and all truth.”

The better reading is to understand these as two separate quotations attributed to Jesus from the gospel of John combined with και (“and”) to achieve a particular effect.²⁸

P.Gen. 3.125 (inv. 253)

P.Gen. 3.125 (inv. 253, TM 63820),²⁹ dated to 150–250, represents two or possibly three homilies. Originally published in 1973 by Rudhart³⁰ who also revisited the papyrus in 1996,³¹ this fragment representing a possible early collection of homilies has not received the attention it deserves. Even though it is a single papyrus fragment, it may be considered a collection because there is an obvious end of one homily and start to another on the recto between lines 21 and 22. The text on the verso may be a continuation or a different homily, it is unsure.

Recto I lines 17–21

The first agraphon is near the end of the first homily recorded on the recto, referred to as “Recto I.”

Transcription:

- 17 [ης ημῶν ειρηνης. αυτη γαρ εστιν ημ[ιν βεβαια]
18 [καθ’] ων ειπεν ο Κ(υριος) μου Ι(ησου)ς οταν τας χει[ρας επι-]

²⁸ When I submitted the abstract of this paper I had only read the Greek and completed a draft translation of the material into English. In that initial reading I understood the joining και[as part of the quotation, but my opinion on this changed as I further researched the text and better understood both Sprey and Kuhlmann’s work. I no longer consider this composite quotation to be a previously unattested saying of Jesus.

²⁹ Transcription and draft translation available:

<https://rickbrannan.github.io/StuffEarlyChristiansRead/data/html/P.Gen.%203.125.html>

³⁰ Jean Rudhardt, “Un papyrus Chrétien de la bibliothèque publique et universitaire de Genève,” in *Littérature Histoire Linguistique: recueil d’études offert à Bernard Gagnebin* (Lausanne: L’Age d’Homme, 1973), 165–188.

³¹ Jean Rudhardt, “125 Papyrus Chrétien,” in *Les papyrus du Genève: Troisième volume, Nos. 118–146, Textes littéraires et documentaires*, ed. Paul Schubert, vol. 3 of (Genève: Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire, 1996), 54–73.

- 19 [θητε ἐπι τον οικον εκεινον και η υιος [ειρηνης]
 20 [εκει], τω τοπω εκεινω η ειρηνη υμ[ων εγκατ-]
 21 [οικε]ι ει δε μη, προς υμας επιστρεφει.

Line-based translation:

- 17 [ing a message to you]u of peace. shē For is to y[ou reliable]
 18 [according to] what spoke the L(or)d of me J(esu)s when thē hēn[ds st-]
 19 [art up]on the house that one even the son [of peace]
 20 [there], the place that one the peace of [you dw-]
 21 [el]f if but not, to you will return.

Translation:

For it is guaranteed to you,³² according to what my Lord Jesus spoke, “When the hands start upon that house, and the son of peace is there, in that place your peace dwells. But if not, it will return to you.”

Are there sayings of Jesus in the New Testament that exhibit a close relationship with this material?

Parallels

This agraphon has distinct similarities with both Mt 10:11–13 and the parallel in Lk 10:5–6. The coloring shows lexically or conceptually similar portions in each edition.

- Lines 17–21: [ης ημ]ιν ειρηνης. αυτη γαρ εστιν ημ[ιν βεβαια καθ’] ων ειπεν ο Κ(υριο)ς μου Ι(ησου)ς **οταν τας χει[ρας επιθητε επι τον οικον εκεινον και η υιος [ειρηνης εκει], τω τοπω εκεινω η ειρηνη υμ[ων εγκατοικε]ι ει δε μη, προς υμας επιστρεφει.**
- Mt 10:11–13: εις ην δ’ αν πολιν η κωμην εισελθητε, εξετασате тис εν αυτη̄ αξιός εστιν· κακεῑ μεινατε εως αν̄ εξελθητε. **εισερχόμενοι δε εις την οικίαν ασπάσασθε αυτήν· και ε̄αν̄ μ̄εν̄ η̄ η̄ οικίᾱ αξία, ε̄λθάτω η̄ ειρήνη ῡμων̄ επ̄ αυτήν, ε̄αν̄ δε̄ μη̄ η̄ αξία, η̄ ειρήνη ῡμων̄ προς̄ ῡμας̄ επιστραφήτω.**
- Lk 10:5–6: εις ην δ’ αν̄ εισελθητε οικίαν, πρωτον λεγετε· **Ειρήνη τῷ οἴκῳ τούτῳ. καῑ ε̄αν̄ εκεῑ η̄ υἱὸς̄ ειρήνης, ε̄παναπαήσεταῑ επ̄ αυτον̄ η̄ ειρήνη̄ ῡμων̄· εῑ δε̄ μη̄ γε, ε̄φ’ ῡμας̄ ανακάμψει.**

The aligned portions are conceptually related. When parallel portions are visualized as a table, here with translations, the relation becomes evident.

Lines 17–21	Mt 10:11–13	Lk 10.5–6
οταν τας χει[ρας επιθητε επι τον οικον εκεινον When the hands start upon that house	εισερχόμενοι δε εις την οικίαν ασπάσασθε αυτήν As you enter the house, greet it	εις ην δ’ αν̄ εισελθητε οικίαν, πρωτον λεγετε· Ειρήνη τῷ οἴκῳ τούτῳ. Whatever house you enter, first say, “Peace to this house!”

³² More idiomatically, “For you are assured.”

<p>και η υιος [ειρηνης εκει] and the son of peace is there</p>	<p>και εαν μεν η η οικια αξια If the house is worthy</p>	<p>και εαν εκει η υιος ειρηνης And if anyone is there who shares in peace</p>
<p>τω τοπω εκεινω η ειρηνη υμ[ων] εγκατοικει] in that place your peace dwells.</p>	<p>ελθατω η ειρηνη υμων επ' αυτην let your peace come upon it</p>	<p>επαναπαησεται επ' αυτον η ειρηνη υμων your peace will rest on that person</p>
<p>ει δε μη But if not</p>	<p>εαν δε μη η αξια But if it is not worthy</p>	<p>ει δε μη γε But if not</p>
<p>προς υμας επιστρεφει it will return to you.</p>	<p>η ειρηνη υμων προς υμας επιστραφητω let your peace return to you.</p>	<p>εφ' υμας ανακαμψει it will return to you.</p>

As these alignments show, lines 17–21 have more in common with the version of the saying found in Luke (“son of peace” language) but a few portions (“it will return to you”) more clearly align with Matthew. As Rudhardt notes, “Our text presents a new version where we find elements of one and the other.”³³

Recto II lines 22–23

The second *agraphon* is at the start of the second homily on the recto. This portion of the manuscript has several lacunae, which is unfortunate, because it appears that there is significant presentation of and interaction with words of Jesus.

Transcription:

- 22 [του] Σ(ωτηρο)ς ειποντος οτι ουδεν ανευ θεληματο[ς θ(εο)υ γινεται ου-]
23 δε στρουθιον εις παγίδα εμπεσειται οι τ[...ασ-(?)]

Line-based translation:

- 22 [of the] S(avior) those who said that nothing without the will[] of G(o)d happens, n-]
23 ot[a spār]ow in a snare will fall who [...st-(?)]

Translation:

... of the Savior who said that “Nothing happens apart from the will of God, not a sparrow will fall into a snare”

Parallels

As with the *agraphon* located in Recto I, this *agraphon* also has similarities with sayings of Jesus found in Matthew and Luke.

³³ Rudhardt, “125 Papyrus Chrétien,” 70. Rudhardt writes in French; English translation is from the author.

- Lines 22–23: [του] Σ(ωτηρο)ς ειποντος οτι ουδεν ανευ θεληματο[ς θε(ε)ου γινεται ου]δε στρουθιον εις παγίδα εμπεσειται οι τ[...ασ-(?)]
- Mt 10: 29–31: οὐχὶ δύο στρουθία ἀσσαρίου πωλεῖται; καὶ ἐν ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐ πεσεῖται ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ἄνευ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν. ὑμῶν δὲ καὶ αἱ τρίχες τῆς κεφαλῆς πᾶσαι ἠριθμημέναι εἰσίν. μὴ οὖν φοβεῖσθε· πολλῶν στρουθίων διαφέρετε ὑμεῖς.
- Lk 12:6–7: οὐχὶ πέντε στρουθία πωλοῦνται ἀσσαρίων δύο; καὶ ἐν ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπιλεησμένον ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ. ἀλλὰ καὶ αἱ τρίχες τῆς κεφαλῆς ὑμῶν πᾶσαι ἠριθμῆνται. μὴ φοβεῖσθε· πολλῶν στρουθίων διαφέρετε.

Each of these sayings uses the image of the value of sparrows, indicating that they are preserved. But neither of the sayings from the canonical gospels also use the language of a snare or trap in their comparisons. Rudhardt provides several instances related to this saying from Tertullian, Origen, and Pseudo-Clement using “without the will of the Father” or the picture of a snare or trap.³⁴ He concludes his discussion noting “Did there exist a third which presented these two figures [RB: “will of the Father” and a snare or trap] at the same time? They were at least associated in the minds of some authors, as they are in our papyrus.”³⁵

In lines 22–23, however, the relation is appositional: God’s concern and foreknowledge reaches down to the level of preserving sparrows from falling prey to a snare; actions of that level and beyond are within the purview of God. The sayings in the canonical gospels, however, simply assert that God preserves sparrows, which are not worth much, so he will preserve his own as well since they are much more valuable. The language of sparrows and snares may be better aligned with Psalm 123:7 [LXX], which compares the rescue of the soul to the rescue of a sparrow from a snare/trap:

Ps 123:7 [LXX]: ἡ ψυχὴ ἡμῶν ὡς στρουθίον ἐρρύσθη ἐκ τῆς παγίδος τῶν θηρευόντων· ἡ παγὶς συνετρίβη, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐρύσθημεν.

Our soul was rescued like a **sparrow** from the **trap** of the ones going hunting. The **trap** was crushed, but we were rescued.³⁶

While the general concept behind Ps 123:7 [LXX] fits nicely with the concept of lines 22–23, there are no other indicators that a passage from the Psalms would be in the mind of the author of the material recorded in the papyrus.

Summary

Each of these five agrapha³⁷ indicate some relation with the established text of the Greek Old and New Testaments. The two agrapha found in P.Amh. Gr. 1 2 are the most tenuously related, likely due to the metrical constraints of the alphabetic acrostic. The two quotations functioning as a single citation in P.land. 5.69 are the more rigid, likely due to the nature of the reconstruction’s

³⁴ Rudhardt, “125 Papyrus Chrétien,” 72.

³⁵ Rudhardt, “125 Papyrus Chrétien,” 72. Rudhardt writes in French; English translation is from the author.

³⁶ Translation from the *Lexham English Septuagint*.

³⁷ Or four agrapha if P.land. 5.69 is two separate quotations.

reliance on the established text of the gospel of John. The two agrapha found in P.Gen. 3.125 offer perhaps the most interesting of relationships as they exhibit some structural and conceptual influence from Matthew and Luke, but diverge lexically.

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