PhD Thesis

The Relationship between Textual Criticism and the Synoptic Question – A Study based on the Passion Narrative

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

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(Marc Chan Chim Yuk)
Acknowledgments

It has been many years in the making – from the first few studies of biblical books to full-time studies in Theology, from a Certificate through to a Postgraduate Degree. It has also been many years of hard work, essay writing, assignments and late nights. Throughout this time, many individuals have been instrumental in my transition from a life around rapidly changing technology (of computers) to one where people are the main focus. So, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of those who have been so important right through this project.

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**Ephesians 3:**

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (NRSV)
Passion Narrative
Abstract

Since the eighteenth century, various hypotheses have been proposed by scholars in an attempt to solve the Synoptic Question. Most of these scholars have used more or less the same Greek text, yet they have come up with different conclusions. So, the question arises whether it is possible to find a trend in the manuscripts dating up to the fifth century which sheds additional clues on the relationships among the Synoptic Gospels. To address this, I have taken the text of the 27th edition of Nestle-Aland as the basis for analysis through the use of the colour-coded scheme proposed by the Karawara Gospels Project. However, in the same colour-coding exercise, the variant readings from the relevant manuscripts are also displayed. This facilitates the identification of any particularities.

Since the Synoptic Gospels contain too much to cover within the constraints of this research project, there is a need to select enough material to make the study relevant. The passion narrative has been selected on the basis of its content and the generally agreed closeness of the texts in all three Synoptic Gospels. So, all the sections, as defined in the Aland Synopsis, in the Triple Tradition are colour-coded and analysed. The relevant variant readings in these sections are also taken into consideration. To display the colour-coding more accurately, it was found that a commonly used and available format is more appropriate since printing is still not a viable alternative. Thus, all the colour-coded sections, as found on the attached CD-ROM, are converted into the PDF format and the Adobe Acrobat Reader, widely available through the Internet, can be used to view them. This study has pointed out that in spite of the commonly agreed closeness of the texts, that of Luke varies quite markedly from the other two.
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