

Ronald Van der Bergh

Paragraph Division in the Acts of Codices Sinaiticus and Bezae

This paper investigates paragraph divisions in the Acts of the Apostles of Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis. The need for such an inquiry is evident in the degree of difference between the paragraph divisions in these two manuscripts. In its extant portions of the Acts of the Apostles, Bezae contains circa 225 instances of paragraph division, indicated by ekthesis. In these same portions of Acts (1:1-8:29a, 10:14b-21:2a, 21:10b-21:16a, 21:18b-22:10a, 22:20b-22:29a), Sinaiticus contains circa 234 paragraph divisions, indicated by both ekthesis and the use of the ¶ (i.e. the “paragraph-marker”). The paragraph divisions of the two manuscripts agree in only 104 (or less than 50%) of these cases. This paper will consist of two parts: First, an overview of the grounds for paragraph division in each of the manuscripts will be given. These grounds for paragraph divisions will be sorted into categories deduced from an analysis of the start of each paragraph in the respective manuscript (e.g. narrative shift of time, narrative shift of place, introduction to direct speech). In the case of both Sinaiticus and Bezae, the paper will clearly show that scribes relied on specific key terms when deciding on new paragraph divisions in the text. The second part of the paper will consist of a short comparison and reflection on the differences in paragraph division between these two manuscripts. Despite the differences between them, the analysis will demonstrate that both manuscripts used similar and “consistent” criteria for paragraph division.