

## [A Tale of Two Constantines: Rethinking Codex Sinaiticus, Part 4](#)

Review of Forensic Evidence & Mark 16

Transcript

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I want to pick up where we were last time; last Sunday I had finished the hour by getting into some things related to the forensic evidence related to the Codex. Remember I continued to draw a timeline up here, we talked about a few different points, a few points that we didn't discuss in the past related to that timeline, and we ended by looking at some other forensic evidence.

I gave you this visual overview [1:31] and we looked at the fact that the different sets of leaves – so the ones here on the left, these are the ones that are classified or described as being snow white. These were the 43 leaves that were taken by Tischendorf in **1844** to Germany and given to the King of Saxony as a gift and became known as Codex Frederico-Augustanus.

This is the coloration on the leaves that Tischendorf took in **1859** [on the right 2:07] when he got the remaining portion of the Codex. So, you can just see forensically, are they the same color? I talked about how different people described the Codex and described it as being different colors, and the reason they are doing that is because they are, it's depending upon what part of it they are looking at. Those that see the first 43 leaves that were taken to Germany in 1844, they see them and they're white, to this day they are still that white color; whereas the rest of it has been darkened. We looked at Simonides' testimony that when he saw the Codex in the **1850's** that it had an older appearance than it should have had.

One thing I do need to clear up from last week is I mentioned to you two guys named Kallinikos. So, this is a tale of two Constantines, two Kallinikos', and there are a lot of people with similar names, so it can get confusing pretty fast. But there was a guy named Kallinikos who knew Simonides, was friends with Simonides and he was in Alexandria and he wrote the British newspapers in the **1860's** to corroborate what Simonides was saying. He testifies to seeing someone (maybe even Tischendorf) darkening the Codex. So, this is just the forensic reality here.

Then I showed you a couple of other pictures' parchment color, so again it's important for you to realize that these different pictures and so forth, these are based upon what still exists today. If you notice in this conglomerate photograph of the entire Codex [3:59] you will notice that there are leaves that are distinctly more white than the other ones – these are the 43 leaves that were first taken by Tischendorf to Germany in **1844**; the rest of it is what is now in possession of the British Museum that was taken in **1859** to St. Petersburg, Russia.

So, we also saw here, so these are contiguous pages [4:25], so if you had a book open this would be like facing pages on the same side – so one side of the page is this darker color, the other side is this whiter color. You can see a few more photographs along those lines making that same point.

Q: So, the white ones are the 43, the others are the darker; then are we to understand that at some point they've been re-collated back together?

A: They have only been re-collated back together digitally on [codexsinaiticus.org](http://codexsinaiticus.org). The 43 leaves that were taken to Germany in 1844 are still in Germany, so they have only been assembled together through this project that was done by the British Museum online.

Another question I got during the week was, is there a different way to explain those are this different color and in ..... So, in other words if these 43 leaves are taken to Germany and these [315] remain in Alexandria and remain in the desert sands of Sinai would that explain the different coloration? I'm going to say to you that I do not believe that it would because for the following reason:

One of the big stories you always hear about the reason why Codex Sinaiticus exists at all by those making the traditional argument that it's from the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, or from like 325 to 350 A.D., is because it was in an arid, dry desert climate which meant the pages didn't deteriorate. Well these pages [43] are taken back Germany into a more humid climate and they didn't have air conditioning in 1844, and so it doesn't make sense to me that the pages taken to the humid climate of Germany would survive, been in better condition than the ones that remained in the sands of Egypt for an extra 15-16 years.

So, you have those forensic things, and then we started talking about the actual Codex itself. This one I've got up here, this is an example of what I'm calling unnatural wear [6:50]. You will notice that that particular page [right] is almost at an exact cut and almost at an exact right angle; same as on this side [left]. This is indicative, not of natural wear and tear on a piece of parchment, but this is indicative of some blunt force trauma being enforced on the Codex.

Let me show you that one and then let you compare one, so I'm going to go to quire 10, folia 1. The point is, would you expect naturally over time a thing to wear away at an exact right angle? No, it is indicative of somebody tampering with it.

I have lists here of things that can demonstrate all types of issues with the Codex just from a forensic standpoint, and remember that the inks, the pigments, the parchment has never been tested via forensic evidence.

I have here a list of other things I wanted to show you: Unnatural wear vs. natural wear; I wanted to show you what appears to be unevenly faded ink on specific pages; I wanted to show you legitimate cases and examples of worm damage where the worms ate through sections of the parchment and what would be considered to be a natural way. Remember last time I showed you that the scribe altered the lines and spacing on the text to avoid a wormhole that was already in the parchment.

So, I had down here to show you all these different examples and apparently, we are still not going to cooperate, so I'm not going to wait for this thing to come back to life. If it does and if I have an opportunity to show to you those things I will; other than that I'm going to move on.

Q: So, the pages got unnatural wear, I couldn't [tell] from the picture what that was.

A: The issue was that it was worn like this [10:03], so somebody had removed this section here at an almost exact right angle.

Q: Was there significance to that chunk?

Q: Well that's up for debate, because one of the things that we haven't talked about yet is Simonides' claims that as he's doing the Codex he puts distinguishing features into it to signify that he wrote it – things like acrostics and his initials and different things like this that appear to have been removed somehow from the Codex. So those who are obviously being uncharitable towards Tischendorf will say that Tischendorf removed those things because they would give away the fact that Simonides was actually telling the truth. [10:52 – complete shot of diagram with right angles].

Let me just make a point about that while we're on that topic – while he is in Britain he challenges Tischendorf to a debate; Simonides challenges Tischendorf to a debate, tells him to bring the Codex to England, have a public debate at Cambridge, and he will show the world that he is telling the truth. Tischendorf initially agrees to this meeting and then decides later on, decides not to show up, and Simonides talks about that.

Let me see if I can show you examples of faded ink. I'm going to go to quire 36, folia 1, recto side (I'll explain what that means later). So, you can see on this, I think, pretty clearly [12:02] that the ink is faded in spots in an uneven way. This could signify places where somebody was rubbing it or doing something to it to make it, to darken the page to make the page look older.

I showed you one example of candle wax; I want to show you one more where I think it's candle wax but there's some blemish in the page and the scribe, this time, interrupts an entire word to go around it. I want column two – so you can see right here [13:26] – see this right here? These are the first two characters of a word, then you have the blemish and then you have the rest of the word on the other side. What this forensic evidence suggests is that whoever did this, did it on a parchment that already had these different blemishes in it already, which is consistent with Simonides' story that he took an old largely blank codex off the shelf and wrote in it what ultimately became Codex Sinaiticus.

So, you have examples of wormholes, what appears to be candlewax, water damage, other worm damage, faded ink, natural vs. unnatural wear.

I do want to see if I can show you this one that I tried to earlier, so you can get a better comparison of what I was saying earlier. This is quire 10, folia 1 verso, and you can see the difference between a page that would have what we consider to be natural vs. – you see how this page is definitely worn [14:35] but it's worn in a way that would be consistent with something happening naturally over time vs. this one over here in quire 11, folia 2 .....

So, while we're doing that let me just talk to you about this issue of quires and folias because this is going to be an important thing as we look at what I want to get into about Mark 16. I have to give credit to what I'm about to do to David W. Daniels of Chick Publications and a video he did on Sinaiticus.

This would be a sheet of paper [15:35]. If you were going to make a book you would take a sheet of paper and you would fold it in half. So, this would be sheet 1, or folia 1, and this is the recto side, so if somebody says hold the book right side up, you would hold it like this, this is the right side and then if

you turned the page this would be the verso side. And this would be (this is also the same sheet), but then this would be folia 2, and this would be page 1, page 2, page 3, page 4 if you were turning it like a book. So, when this website is talking about quires and folia and recto and verso, this is what it's talking about.

A quire would be if you took four sheets and folded them in half, and then what would happen is your book would be made up of a bunch of different quires that would then be sown together and thus creating the codex or the book. So, in this particular case a quire with Codex Sinaiticus, a quire equals four sheets; those sheets folded in half equal eight folia, which equals 16 pages. So, if you just turned through here you would see (I've got the pages numbered) you would see that you start with page 1 and by the time you were done with this quire you'd have 16 pages.

Why is that important? If you have your bible, open to Mark 16. I have a footnote at verse 9 in my Scofield Reference Bible and I mentioned this to you guys the very first lesson (this is how I started); I have a footnote in Mark 16:9 and it says:

“The passage from verse 9 to the end is not found in the two most ancient manuscripts, the Sinaitic and the Vatican, and others have it with partial omissions and variations, but it is quoted by Irenaeus and Hippolytus in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Century.”

So, what that is essentially saying is the following: What two codices don't have Mark 16:9-20 in them? So Vaticanus and Sinaiticus don't have Mark 16:9-20 in them. It does not matter that the remaining 600 Greek witnesses [exact number of witnesses varies] to the book of Mark all have those verses in them; so, they're suggesting based upon the authority of the Sinaitic Codex and the Codex of the Vatican that those 12 verses should be removed or should not be in the book of Mark.

Tischendorf claims that he observes what they call a cancel sheet (This is going to be a big deal if I can't show you this.) I'm going to go to Luke 1; this is the beginning of Luke 1 [19:54]. This is the end of Mark 16. You will notice that, what do you see here? (I think that's bleed through) but can you see that there is a big space that is between the end of Mark in Codex Sinaiticus and the beginning of Luke.

Q: Is that atypical?

A: That is not necessarily atypical.

Tischendorf describes what he claims is a cancel sheet. So, if I've got a quire here like I just explained, he is saying that a scribe removed a sheet from the Codex and reinserted a new sheet to cancel out what was originally there. This argument is made based upon the fact that, different handwriting and different colored page – the coloration on the pages is slightly different and the handwriting is slightly different.

The canceled sheet runs from Mark 14:54 – Luke 1:56. Now why would that be? Because you're dealing with a quire [21:23] and it's the middle page; so that means that wherever page 6 ends he's got to start the next page at the top to make sure that things aren't off in the quire; well the reverse is also true. He's got to make sure that wherever page 10 ends that it doesn't mess up where page 11 starts, so if I remove this sheet from the Codex [21:49] and I insert a new sheet am I bound to fit in what I'm doing spatially between this page and this page so everything else makes sense?

So Tischendorf claims to have observed a cancel sheet here between Mark 14:54 and Luke 1:56. Now I've looked at this in great detail ..... If you want to look at these things all you have to do is go up here to the Reference, choose what you want to look at and it will pull up that page for you of the Codex, so you don't have to know what quire and folia and all that is to find what you're looking for, you can just go chapter and verse and it will pull it up.

Sinaiticus, as I said, is made up of a series of quires that are stitched together to make up a codex. So, if you are correcting something in the middle of the folia, the middle of the quire, (pages 7 through 10) you would just remove that [folded] sheet and insert another one.

Let's just say it this way, if the error is on the middle sheet that's pretty easy, because all I have to do is match up the words at the beginning and the end to make sure they're in the right spot. But what if the error or the mistake is in one of the other sheets? Now I've got to make sure they line up on at least four different times if I'm adding a cancel sheet. It's called a cancel sheet because it needs to match up with all the other pages in the quire.

The sheet on Mark 16, this sheet right here [24:10], this is in the middle of the quire. There's a couple ways you can do this....the last page ends on this verse [Luke 1:56] because at the top of the next page is going to be Luke 1:57. This page ends here [24:34] so at the top of the first page of the cancel sheet you're going to have the rest of Mark 14:54 and the rest of it so it fits where it's supposed to fit; so that means if I'm the scribe that's adding the cancel sheet, do I have a limited amount of space to work with?

So what people think happened (I'm just going to draw it out this way visually; I don't know if this is the best way to do it or not.) [25:00]. Let's say I've got Luke 1:56 here [bottom of page on right] and I've got up here at the end of my cancel sheet I need to have Mark 14, the rest of verse 54. If I'm going to take out the end of Mark 16 do I have to leave a significant amount of space but still have everything fit the page? This is all based upon the science of stichometry which counts the height of the letters, the number of characters per column and you can count all this stuff out.

So the idea is that the scribe worked backwards [25:52] to the beginning of Luke [top of page on right], and then he starts over here [top of page on left] and he comes back this way [down page on left] and then he ends the column right here at Mark 16:8 [upper left of page on right], and then you have this blank space [first column on page on right].

Go to Luke 1. So, the idea is he measures out the space for Luke first, and in the space for Luke he ends up compressing the letters; so, he ends up having more letters per line in the Luke section of the cancel sheet [26:41]. There are 200 more letters on these pages than there are on the rest of the Codex. So, what's he doing? He's compressing it in to get it to fit, but one of the problems is he realizes that he's compressed it too much and now over here he's got too much space, so over here there are fewer letters per line to make it bigger to fill the space so that he gets everything to fit and line up where it's supposed to line up in the quire. There is significant evidence here that this was done in a hurry.

Come with me to Luke 1:26; now is Luke 1:26 part of the cancel sheet? Yep, it fits in the range of verses that would be part of the cancel sheet.

**Luke 1:26** *And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,*

The scribe made a mistake on verse 26 in Codex Sinaiticus and it says: “In the sixth month the angel was sent from God unto the city of Nazareth of Judea” not ‘Nazareth of Galilee’; now that is an error of 70 miles difference in geographic terms. No other manuscript in the world has this error in this verse; the only one that has this error in this verse is this Codex right here.

Another example go to Luke 1:41:

*“And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:”*

At verse 41 Codex Sinaiticus adds some words to the text; it says, “And it came to pass that when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb *for joy*; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:”

The insertion in the words in Greek *for joy* is added into that verse at that spot and no other manuscript in the world makes that insertion; so, what this is seemingly demonstrating is that whatever happened here, it was potentially done in a hurry and that mistakes were made as it was done. Now the question then is what in the world is going on here? What is going on here; how could this be the case?

What are some things we already know?

- We already know that in **1856** Simonides published the Shepard of Hermas.
- We also already know that that same year Tischendorf wrote and said that it was a modern creation.
- We know that Tischendorf found the remaining leaves of the Codex in **1859**.
- We know that in **1860** he wrote and said that what Simonides did had to be old because it was in there [point to Codex Sinaiticus **30:30**].

This is a piece from **1863**; it contains in it Tischendorf’s statement from **1856** (Constantin Tischendorf, 1856). This is him saying that Simonides’ Hermas is a fake and a modern creation. Then he finds the Codex, and this is him in **1860** [holds up paper] saying that he was mistaken about this Hermas that Simonides did because he finds what in here [1860 paper]? What does he find in this [**1859**] Codex? He finds a copy of the Shepard of Hermas and so he’s got to retract and recant in **1860** what he had previously said in **1856**, and he does it again in **1863**; we’ve been over that already.

What we’re after is trying to figure out what’s going on with Mark 16. There are only two codices in the world that don’t have verses 9-20 [Vaticanus and Sinaiticus]; so, in both of these Mark 16:9-20 is missing.

So, this is an argument by Constantin Tischendorf and a narrative of the discovery of the Sinaitic manuscript and this is an English translation from **1866**. I found this just this week and I only printed the portion that relates to what we are talking about, and there are a couple of things that I want to read to you out of this. He says:

“Learned men have again and again attempted to clear the sacred text from these extraneous elements but we have at last hit upon a better plan even than this which is to set aside this Textus Receptus altogether and construct a fresh text derived immediately from the most ancient and authoritative sources.”

So, what's he saying? He's saying we should set aside the text of the Protestant Reformation because we now have better, more ancient [texts]; and what is he referring to primarily? Mostly the one is his precious discovery, and the other one that is basically its twin sister in many respects.

Now he also says in here; (it says a lot of interesting things in here; I'm just giving you some of the highlights) he says that:

“This plan is to clear up in this way the history of the sacred texts and to recover if possible the genuine apostolic text which is the foundation of our faith.”

So, he is taking the position that what we need to do is to recover, reconstruct and recover the text. Does he take the position that the text was preserved? No, he takes it as his position and his job to reconstruct it based upon new manuscript evidence.

**May, 1843** – now remember, 1843 is significant because this is the year Simonides published the epistle of Barnabas. In May, 1843 Tischendorf is at the Vatican meeting the Pope and looking at Codex Vaticanus. He says:

“My audience with Pope Gregory the 16<sup>th</sup> in May, 1843 and my intercourse with Cardinal Meza Ferretti...”

And then he mentions the elaborate linguist and so forth and he talks about going into Egypt. Then he says in relationship to finding the Codex:

“On my return to Saxony (*So this could be in 1844*) there were men of learning who at once appreciated the value of the treasure which I brought back with me; I did not divulge the name of the place where I found it in the hopes of returning and recovering the rest of the manuscript.”

Why would he do that? So, nobody else could get it first, and we already know he goes back again in 1853, gets nothing, he goes back again in 1859 where he gets the rest of it. This is part of what I want and is relevant, but here's what he says about this – he is given commendations by the Pope and Oxford and Cambridge University for finding the Codex, and he says in here at one point that he would rather have found the Codex than the crown jewels of Great Britain.

**1859** – He's describing having found the rest of it and he's got it now in his overnight quarters, for lack of a better term:

“After having devoted a few days and turning over the manuscript to the.....On the afternoon of this day I was taking a walk with the steward of the convent in the neighborhood and as we returned towards sunset he begged me to take some refreshment with him in his cell, scarcely had ....”

Now what did we learn last week? According to Tischendorf, this guy now in 1859, he invites him into his cell for tea.

“Scarcely had he entered the room when resuming our former subject of conversation he says, ‘I too have read the Septuagint’, i.e., a Greek copy, a Greek translation made by the 70, and so saying he took down from a corner of the room a bulky kind volume wrapped in a red cloth and laid it before me. I unrolled and discovered to my great surprise not only those very fragments

which 15 years before I had taken out of the basket, but also other parts of the OT, the NT complete and the addition of the epistle of Barnabas and part of the Pastor of Hermas. Full of joy which this time I had self-commended and concealed from the steward and the rest of the community, I asked as if in a careless way for permission to take the manuscript to my sleeping chamber to look it over at my leisure. There by myself I could give way to the transport of joy which I felt.”

So he’s like, ‘Well I’m not going to act like I did the first time because when I acted like I did the first time they locked this thing away and I never saw it again ‘til, I had to come back again; so I’ve learned from my first experience and I’m not going to do that; I’m going to bring it back to my room and have a party.’

“I knew I held in my hand the most precious biblical treasure in existence, a document whose age and importance exceeded that of all manuscripts which I had ever examined during my 20-year study of the subject. I cannot now I confess recall the emotions I felt in that exciting moment with such a diamond in my possession. Through my lamp dim and the night cold I sat down at once to transcribe the epistle of Barnabas.”

The very first night he’s got this thing in his quarters, what does he do? Where does he go first? He goes to Barnabas.

“For two centuries search has been made in vain for the original Greek of this part of the epistle.”

He’s calling it the original Greek, but what did Simonides already publish in 1843?

“And yet this letter from the second down to the beginning of the fourth had extensive authority since many Christians assigned to it and the Pastor of Hermas a place side by side with the inspired writings.”

So, let me ask you a question. Tischendorf, the very night that he gets it, what’s the first thing he reads? He goes to Barnabas and he no doubt also reads [Herms]. How long does it take him to realize he’s got a major problem? I don’t know the exact time but has he already said that Herms is not old that Simonides wrote? And what does he find in this thing [Codex Sinaiticus] in 1859? He finds almost an identical copy of Herms that matched what he already said was a fake in 1856. We already showed you, in 1860 does he reverse course?

So, who’s responsible for this cancel sheet? I’m going to suggest to you that I believe that Tischendorf is, and that he either did it or knows who did it and had it ordered; and the reason for that is the following: Does he have a major problem with the epistle of Barnabas and the Shepard of Herms [in 1860]?

What I have here, this is the NT in the original Greek; this is the Westcott and Hort text but this one is published in 1882. This is the first American printing and it has an introduction by Philip Schaff, and he says the following about Codex Vaticanus: “It was first printed under the supervision of the celebrated Cardinal Angelo Mai.” But it was not published until 1857.

Where was he in 1843? He’s at the Vatican. In **1843** does he see Vaticanus under the supervision of Cardinal Mai? In **1857** Cardinal Mai publishes Codes Vaticanus. In **1859** Tischendorf finds Codex Sinaiticus and goes immediately the first night he has it to the epistle of Barnabas and the Shepard of Herms. The very next year [**1860**] he issues a retraction saying that what he said about Herms wasn’t

accurate and that the Hermas that this Hermas [1856] as well as the one found in the Codex [1859] have to be old.

So, what is one of the quickest ways that he can bring this [Codex Sinaiticus] into agreement with this [Codex Vaticanus] and thereby close the circle that this is an ancient Codex? He can have Mark 16 altered in one of its clearest most discernable distinguishable readings.

Let me also say this, this [holds up paper 43:01] is the Nuevo Testamentum Vaticanum; this is the NT of Vaticanus and notice whose name is on that – Constantin Tischendorf. In 1867 Tischendorf publishes his own copy of Nuevo Testamentum Vaticanum. When he finds this thing in 1859 is he already aware of what's in Vaticanus? He saw it himself, part of it, back in 1843, and Cardinal Angelo Mie two years before [1857], had he published a facsimile of the Codex? Does a guy like Tischendorf pay attention to this kind of stuff?

Philip Schaff says....he's talking about Sinaiticus, the connection between Sinaiticus and Vaticanus....he says:

“It often confirms Codex Vaticanus in characteristic readings.”

And then he lists: John 1:18, Acts 20:28, I Timothy 3:16; he lists the doxology of the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:13; and then he says:

“The end of Mark 16:9-20.”

Now who knew he was up a creek and had to alter his course about Hermas? Who knew what was in Codex Vaticanus? Who calls the world's attention to the fact that there is a cancel sheet in Mark 16? Tischendorf – once in 1844 and in 1867 in *Nuevom Testament Vaticanum*. So, understand who's saying there's a cancel sheet there? Tischendorf himself is saying that there is a cancel sheet there.

*Stichometry*, James Rendell Harris, 1893, page 72:

“It's generally held today that Tischendorf was justified in recognizing in the Sinaitic Codex traces of the same hand that wrote the NT in the Codex Vaticanus.”

So Tischendorf says that the same hand that wrote sections of [Sinaiticus] wrote sections of [Vaticanus]. Why would he say that? Because he's trying to make sure that these two are linked together.

“It's generally held today that Tischendorf was justified in recognizing in the Sinaitic Codex traces of the same hand that wrote the NT in the Codex Vaticanus.”

So, he's saying that the same person that wrote the NT in Vaticanus wrote sections of Sinaiticus.

“And this is a most important point and one that settles, if it be correctly inferred, both the unity of the time and the place in the two codices.”

So, he's saying that if what Tischendorf said is true, then that means that these things [Vaticanus and Sinaiticus] came from the same source, the same time, the same place and therefore they are both old. [47:05] .... saying they are fake; he's saying therefore they're both old.

“According to Tischendorf there are in Codex Sinaiticus six cancel leaves of the NT which have been rewritten by another hand, the hand namely that transcribed the books of Judith and Maccabees.... The evidence for this is Tischendorf’s eyes and Tischendorf’s judgment.”

So, the only reason we should believe any of this is because Tischendorf said so. Now think about this folks, before 2009, well before the British Museum bought Codex Sinaiticus in the 1930’s, where was Codex Sinaiticus? It was in the middle of St. Petersburg, Russia in the back of beyond of Europe where you would take time, money and a lot of things to go over there and look at it, and the only thing people are using here during the Revision [translation of the Revised Version] are facsimiles; they’re not actually using the actual Codex, and so they’re judging based upon Tischendorf’s judgment that these things have the same source, time and place provenance origin.

“The evidence for this is Tischendorf’s eyes and Tischendorf’s judgment. The hands are apparently the same. On such a matter Tischendorf’s opinion is of the greatest weight.”

Now one of the sections that he says, he just so happens to mention, is one of these six cancel sheets is our little cancel sheet, Mark.

“Consequently, most people, even if they have not seen the Sinaitic Codex, accept his judgment.”

Then he goes into Mark 16:

“The interest of question is much intensified by the fact that one of the cancel sheets is that which contains the closing passage of St. Mark, where Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus both show a remarkable omission. The coincidence is a curious one and many naturally enough refuse to believe that it is accidental. They say we have the scribe of B twice over for the omission.”

Now here’s the thing about Tischendorf. Does he claim that this is a cancel sheet? [49:39] Does he claim that they’re written in the same hand? Does he claim that this cancel sheet for Mark 16 is written in the same hand that did the entire NT Codex Vaticanus? The answer’s yes, that’s what he said. Has anybody seen Codex Vaticanus; has anybody seen Codex Sinaiticus, or are they just taking Tischendorf’s word for it?

William Cooper who wrote the Kindle book *The Forging of Codex Sinaiticus*, and Dr. David Sorenson who wrote *Neither Oldest nor Best*, they both say, they both believe Tischendorf, and they say if he’s responsible for the cancel sheet why would he tell everybody about it? I’m taking the exact opposite opinion. Why do they say that everything Tischendorf says can’t be trusted except in this one case?

Now here’s my argument: What did he say about Hermas here [1856]? When he finds this [1859], the first place he goes the very night he has it is to Barnabas and ultimately no doubt to Hermas. Does he have to know that he’s got a problem? Does he reverse course here in 1860 on what he said about Hermas here in 1856? Has he already seen portions of Codex Vaticanus in 1843, and then has he already no doubt looked at the ones Cardinal Mie published in 1857, and so he’s got a problem here [1860] so the quickest way to close the loop on this is to have Mark 16 altered – say it’s a cancel sheet, say the same hand did it in Vaticanus and nobody’s going to argue with it. By the time you get to the Revision committee in the 1870’s they are using a copy of Vaticanus, and facsimiles of Sinaiticus that are both produced by Tischendorf.

I’m not necessarily thrilled with the smoothness of this particular lesson, but is everybody at least following what I’m saying? I submit to you that Tischendorf had Mark 16 cancelled and re-scribed so

that it would match the unique reading of Mark 16 that he already knew was [in Vaticanus], because does he already have a problem for arguing the antiquity of the Codex based upon the Shepard of Hermas and the epistle of Barnabas? So, one of the quickest ways to close that loop is to have that cancel sheet made, make sure these two [Vaticanus and Sinaiticus] match in Mark 16, then say that the same hand did this drop cancel sheet that did all the NT in Vaticanus, and thereby creating what appears to be the same source, time and place provenance of origin.

In the meantime, has Simonides called into question the antiquity of the Barnabas and the Hermas that are found in the Codex? Who is the guy that has access to all this stuff? It's Tischendorf. Did the monks at St. Catherine's do it? No. I'm reading again from Rendell:

“But those who accept Tischendorf's identification will go a step further and try to assign a common origin; thus Dr. Hort says in his introduction that he is inclined to believe that both manuscripts were written in the West, probably at Rome.”

Have Westcott and Hort ever seen a day in their life the original Vaticanus in the Vatican Library or the one that's in St. Petersburg under the auspices of the Russian government? No, and they are reconstructing the text based upon facsimile reproductions that have ultimately been produced by the same guy. Now that's a lot of information.

Q: Even with Tischendorf, when he gets it in 1859 he's looking through it in his quarters, he hasn't seen Codex Vaticanus, the original Codex, since 1843, [No] so how is he making that judgment that this is the same handwriting even though he hasn't seen that for over 10 years, almost 15 years. [Right] ..... same handwriting, I saw 15-16 years ago....

A: That is so beyond, that's a great point; it's an excellent point I hadn't even thought about.

Q: You brought up a good point about the title that he got and everything so maybe it explained what this meant economically and positionally to Tischendorf.

A: He tells you some of that in *When and Where Were the Gospels Written* [55:11] where he talks about getting commendations from the Pope:

“In the month of October, 1862 I repaired to St. Petersburg to present this edition to their majesties (*so that's the final edition that he prints of Sinaiticus*), the Emperor who had liberally provided for the costs and had approved the proposal of this superb appearing in the celebration of the millenary jubilee of the Russian monarchy, has distributed impressions of it throughout the Christian world which without distinction of creed have expressed their recognition of its value. Even the Pope, in an autographed letter, has sent to the editor congratulations and admiration.”

So the editor is who? Tischendorf.

“It is only a few months ago that the two most celebrated universities of England, Cambridge and Oxford, desired to show me honor by conferring on me their highest academic degrees. I would rather set an old man himself of the highest distinction for learning; I would rather have discovered the Sinitic manuscript than the Koh-i-noor of the Queen of England.” (*That's the crown jewel of the Queen.*)

So, did he benefit from all of this? Yeah, absolutely he did. So, you need to understand that I'm taking a decidedly different interpretation than what some of these authors have. I know there's a lot of

conspiracy theorists and stuff out there and this kind of thing, but in the question of who killed JFK, the official story is that Lee Harvey Oswald did it and he acted alone. In this whole story there are a lot of people that want to see Jesuit conspiracies and the Jesuits doing this and forging documents and doing all of this stuff – I'm going to say to you and I'm going to suggest that in the case of Codex Sinaiticus, Tischendorf did it and he acted alone. That to me is the most reasonable, plausible explanation and that he alone is responsible, in large part he is responsible for setting up the line of argumentation that Westcott and Hort buy based upon manuscripts that they had never even seen or handled themselves with their own hands. And they are totally trusting the judgment of Tischendorf as the piece from Rendel that I just read to you said.

I feel like this was very disjointed; maybe it wasn't as bad as I feel that it was. There are a couple of things that I still want to do – I want to talk about some more of the details about Simonides, and then I want to talk to you about what is this ... okay, so what? What is the significance? If Simonides really wrote the thing, who cares, why does it matter and how is it a big deal if he was telling the truth? I believe at this point, I'm sure you figured it out that I do think he was telling the truth. I don't think this thing is old.

What we're going to talk about next time is even if I think it's old, even if one were to think it is old, it's certainly not best. It is absolutely certainly not best. There are over 23,000 marginal notes and corrections in Sinaiticus; it is the most corrected Greek manuscript in existence, and yet somehow, it's supposed to be one of the best, and the only reason they make that argument is based upon how old they say it is.