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Studies in the Bible and Antiquity is dedicated to promoting a better understanding of the Bible and of religion in the ancient world, bringing the best LDS scholarship and thought to a general Latter-day Saint readership. Questions may be directed to the editors at sba@byu.edu.

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Editors' Introduction

We are very pleased with the positive reception to our first two issues of *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity*. We appreciate the kind words from readers, the increase in submissions, and the adding of *Studies* to the Ancient World Online (AWOL) list of open-access journals in ancient studies, which will make *Studies* accessible to an even wider audience. We also thank those who have provided constructive criticisms to help us improve *Studies*. We are committed to make each issue the best we can by consistently publishing engaging, well-researched articles that illuminate various aspects of the Bible and the ancient world.

In this third issue of *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity* we offer four excellent essays. Miranda Wilcox's "Constructing Metaphoric Models of Salvation: Matthew 20 and the Middle English Poem *Pearl*" provides an insightful study of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1–6). This essay focuses on the remuneration of the eleventh-hour laborer and explores the question, Should payment to the laborer be viewed literally as a specific (and seemingly unmerited) wage or as a metaphor of salvation? As evidenced in a famous fourteenth-century Middle English poem, Wilcox shows that the "end of the parable ultimately explodes the teleology of the metaphorical model when the payment to the laborers defies human expectations of merit-based compensation" (p. 28).

This parable speaks more to divine grace and atonement than to human models of fairness and compensation.

David E. Bokovoy presents a "fresh interpretation of Isaiah 6 by illustrating some of the ways in which Isaiah's prophetic call narrative can be understood to reflect the theme of Christ and covenants" (p. 32). In "On Christ and Covenants: An LDS Reading of Isaiah's Prophetic Call," Bokovoy shows that Isaiah functions as a messenger of the divine council in declaring the gospel and covenants of Christ. In Isaiah's call, one can see that the people to whom Isaiah is sent have left Christ and broken their covenants through idolatry. Bokovoy aptly brings into the discussion pertinent material from the Book of Mormon that reinforces the close connection among Isaiah's prophetic call, Christ, and covenants.

Mark Alan Wright analyzes from a cultural perspective manifestations of the sacred (hierophanies) and the appearances of deity (theophanies) in "'According to Their Language, unto Their Understanding': The Cultural Context of Hierophanies and Theophanies in Latter-day Saint Canon." Wright examines the construction of hierophanies and theophanies first in the Old Testament and then considers unique Latter-day Saint scripture, particularly the Book of Mormon. Wright ably demonstrates that cultural differences exist between the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon in terms of the revelatory process. For example, the Old Testament prophetic call pattern that includes a vision and sacred book fits well with Lehi's time but does not correspond to the "falling," "near-death" call pattern exhibited later on in the Book of Mormon. In fact, the falling pattern actually fits comfortably within the Mesoamerican cultural context. Wright illustrates how cultural context may influence how revelation is received.

This year has been the four hundredth anniversary of the publication of the King James Version of the Bible. In "A Text-Critical Comparison of the King James New Testament with Certain Modern Translations," Lincoln Blumell evaluates twenty-two readings found in the King James New Testament that are omitted or changed in most modern translations. Blumell introduces readers to the com-

plex world of textual criticism and then examines in detail each of these twenty-two variants. While Blumell is candid about the "text-critical shortcomings" of the KJV New Testament, he finds them to be "largely minor" and cautions that they "should not be over-exaggerated or allowed to overshadow [its] strengths" (p. 126). This thorough, double-length study is a significant contribution to LDS scholarship on both the KJV and the text of the New Testament.

We wish to thank the authors for these excellent papers and also the many others who have made this issue of *Studies* possible. We thank the reviewers of these papers for their helpful comments. We are deeply grateful to Shirley Ricks for her tireless production work on each issue of *Studies,* from submission to publication. We also thank Managing Editor Don Brugger for his editorial assistance, Daniel Friend for proofreading the articles, and Stetson Robinson for typesetting this issue.

Constructing Metaphoric Models of Salvation: Matthew 20 and the Middle English Poem *Pearl*

Miranda Wilcox

The parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1–6) may be the most unsatisfying parable in the Bible. The parable compares an employer remunerating labor and God granting salvation. This parallelism becomes problematic at the parable's end when the employer grants all the employees equal payment in spite of their varying amount of labor. The laborers who worked the entire day express their dissatisfaction that their compensation was not greater than the amount paid to those who were hired in the eleventh hour. Like the angry employees, readers are often perplexed at the apparent lack of commensurate remuneration for human service to God; such exchange contradicts their expectations of proportionality in justice. The interpretative tension generated by this parable demonstrates the possibilities and limitations of constructing metaphoric models of salvation, the process whereby God and humans are reconciled. It also exposes the inadequacy of applying human economic analogies to divine relations, and it invites its audience to consider the function and purpose of using metaphors to understand spiritual concepts.

Parables use metaphors as conceptual models to teach and to generate new insight about spiritual phenomena. Generating metaphors and using them to teach produces the cycle of metaphoric

Studies in the Bible and Antiquity 3 (2011): 1–28.

modeling. The parable in Matthew 20 invites its audience to join this cyclical process of metaphoric modeling. The fourteenth-century poem *Pearl* exemplifies how extending the metaphoric model presented in Matthew 20 conveys a vision of justification and sanctification, dual processes of salvation that transcend some human expectations about commensurate justice and comparative value. *Pearl*'s creative strategies demonstrate how metaphoric modeling generates spiritual insight about salvation. The *Pearl*-poet explores analogies between the equal payment of a penny to all the vineyard laborers and the priceless gift of the pearl of great price, the eternal life promised to all faithful Christians.

Pearl's retelling of the parable in Matthew 20 questions whether terrestrial concepts of value and exchange should frame salvation as a transaction based on merit. The poem demonstrates in metaphoric models that heavenly relationships, particularly salvation and grace, operate on a different scale, not a scale of terrestrial binary or comparative value, but one of celestial fullness, an endlessly sufficient abundance that satisfies all lack and need. Before discussing the interpretative challenges of the parable in Matthew 20 and its retelling in *Pearl*, this paper will outline the necessity of, as well as the inherent tension in, constructing metaphoric models of salvation.

Pedagogical and Generative Functions of Metaphoric Modeling

Biblical parables tell stories that focus the audience's attention on the relationships between familiar human situations and less familiar divine concepts. Humans are very adept at constructing analogies between familiar and unfamiliar things, and cognitive scientists now argue that much of human thinking employs analogical processes.[1] Essentially, parables are metaphors in narrative

1. For an introduction concerning the widespread use of conceptual metaphors in human cognition, see George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). For an advanced discussion, see Raymond Gibbs Jr., ed., *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). Conceptual phenomena are difficult for humans to articulate and share because they exist outside the realm of visible observation or other sensory perception. Metaphors link source domains of familiar objects or

form. These metaphors function by creating analogies between human experiences and spiritual phenomena and thus communicate complex conceptual relationships more intuitively than propositional statements of doctrine. Understanding how metaphors work enhances the reader's ability to interpret metaphors in scriptures.

Metaphors juxtapose two or more situations in ways that invite reflection about their implicit, shared similarities. For example, the metaphor "life is a journey" invites us to consider how our experiences of traveling on journeys are like our experiences of living. Living and journeying both involve movement, movement that may include temporal, spatial, or emotional aspects. We can then extrapolate from broad correspondences among the experiential domains of journeying and traveling to more specific narrative entailments; for example, being delayed on a journey can be compared to encountering an obstacle in life. Metaphors are powerful cognitive tools that help humans perceive relationships and understand their world.

Metaphors in biblical parables can function in two fundamental ways: pedagogical models and generative models.[2] Teachers frequently use metaphors to instruct students about new paradigms. Pedagogical metaphors link students' existing experiences to new concepts by highlighting familiar structures. A science teacher may introduce the properties of light to students by showing them how a wave moves along a string or along the surface of water. The students then use their visual observations of the properties of waves in their classroom as a model from which to extrapolate about the unfamiliar behavior of electromagnetic waves. The metaphor "light is a wave" has been a crucial instructive model that bridges the gap between students' observations of familiar, visible, physical objects

activities with target domains of unfamiliar concepts; the linking process reveals new insight about the similarities between the two domains.

2. For a discussion of metaphors as pedagogical models, see Graham Low, "Metaphor and Education," in *Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, 212–31. For a discussion of metaphors as generative and pedagogical models, see Theodore L. Brown, *Making Truth: Metaphor in Science* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 19–30, 183–94.

and the unfamiliar behavior of invisible atomic phenomena. Yet the metaphor "light is a wave" did not begin as a pedagogical model; it began as a generative model that scientists devised in the seventeenth century as experimental observations challenged the prevailing metaphorical model, "light is a particle." Scientists applied their knowledge of the physical properties of wave movement to explain previously unexplained aspects of the behavior of light. However, scientists eventually realized that they did not want to abandon the "light is a particle" model. The competition between the metaphorical models of light as a particle and as a wave began to be resolved in the early twentieth century when physicists introduced the wave-particle duality of radiant energy.[3] Today, quantum mechanics explains that all matter simultaneously exhibits particulate and wavelike properties. The history of metaphoric models of light demonstrates how scientists use metaphoric models to generate research and to instruct the uninitiated, and how scientists revise their models when new observations and research alter their conception of a natural phenomenon.[4] Biblical parables employ metaphors for the same cognitive purposes.

Scientific models and biblical parables demonstrate that there is a perpetual relationship between generative and pedagogical metaphors. Humans generate metaphors to understand unfamiliar phenomena, and if a metaphor proves to be applicable as a conceptual model, then the metaphor becomes a useful pedagogical device. There is a temptation to halt the metaphoric cycle when a generative model becomes a pedagogical model; however, if the metaphoric cycle stops here, the pedagogical model will become reductive and limiting.[5] Pedagogical models not only initiate learning, they also

3. Brown, *Making Truth*, 89–93.

4. In *Making Truth*, Brown traces the use of metaphors in scientific conceptions of atoms, biochemical molecules, protein folding, cellular processes, and global warming.

5. In *Making Truth*, 157–59 and 183–85, Brown describes how scientists have recently become more aware of the pedagogical possibilities and limitations of using metaphors in scientific discourse as new advances in research render previous models obsolete or incomplete. As such, researchers and students are encouraged to be more self-conscious about employing metaphors because relying strictly on implications of

prompt additional exploration for better models. Thus, the cyclical process of metaphoric modeling perpetuates itself. In the case of the metaphoric models of light, scientists made breakthroughs when they embraced both models rather than when they focused on one or the other. The biblical parables likewise invite readers to explore the metaphoric model narrated in the parable while simultaneously generating new metaphoric possibilities. Therefore, the cyclical process of metaphoric modeling aids seekers in pursuit of spiritual (and scientific) understanding.

"Every man a penny": An Economic Model for Salvation in Matthew 20

In Matthew 20, Christ is the master teacher. He creates a metaphoric model with both pedagogical and generative functions when he aligns the relation between an employer and employee with that between God and his disciples. Evoking our experience with economic relationships, specifically labor remuneration, serves a pedagogical function in that it links an intimately familiar human situation with a less familiar divine condition. The employer, the lord of the vineyard, needs laborers to help care for his vines just as God needs disciples to serve in his kingdom on earth, the church. The lord of the vineyard recruits employees to tend his vines and promises to pay them a wage for their labor much as God invites disciples to follow him and promises eternal life to those who serve faithfully. At the end of the day, the lord of the vineyard assembles his employees to pay them their wage; likewise, at the last judgment, God assembles his disciples and grants them eternal life. More analogical connections could be explored between these relationships.

the metaphoric domain can lead to oversimplification and errors in argument. Theologians have likewise recognized the fundamental importance of metaphorical models for conceptualizing spiritual phenomena and recently have become more sensitive to the need of recognizing the limitations of the metaphorical domains. For a discussion of the role of theological metaphorical models, see Jan G. van der Watt, ed., *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

The paradoxical conclusion of the parable propels the generative function of the metaphor. The parallelism between the employer-employee and the God-disciple relationships becomes strained in the last scene when the lord pays each laborer the same wage regardless of the length of his labor in the vineyard. At the end of the parable the laborers and readers expect, according to the human experience of economic justice, that the payment of the employees should be commensurate to the length of their labor for their employer. Yet the landowner quells their complaints with an unexpected reversal: "So the last shall be first, and the first last" (Matthew 20:16). The equal reward despite the disparities between the merit and value of the laborers' work in the parable raises questions about divine justice. One way of resolving this crux is to conclude that the metaphoric model is limited—that is, God's principles of remuneration do not operate with the same assumptions about merit and value that the human economy does. By undermining its own metaphoric application, the parable of the laborers in the vineyard invites the readers to engage in the process of metaphoric modeling to devise new models of salvation.

A Middle English poem named *Pearl* by modern editors embraces this invitation. *Pearl* provides a beautiful and sophisticated example of the process of generating metaphoric models to understand Matthew 20. The anonymous poet constructs models that reveal that terrestrial economic assumptions have limited symbolic valence in the divine economy of salvation. The poet responds to the interpretative crux of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard by linking it with the parable of the pearl of great price in Matthew 13:45-46. Exploring the complexities of the physical, narrative, verbal, and spiritual relations between the penny from the first parable and the pearl from the second parable yields spiritual insight about salvation—namely, that salvation does not result from the value of human labor or the merit of human effort, but from God's grace.

"The grace of God is great enough": Soteriological Satisfaction in the Middle English Poem *Pearl*

Pearl survives in a single manuscript that was produced in the last quarter of the fourteenth century in a West Midlands dialect of Middle English. Although the name of the poet is unknown, he also composed *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Patience*, and *Cleanness*.[6] *Pearl* begins with a man mourning the loss of his precious pearl. As the poem progresses the audience learns that the man, usually called the Dreamer, is actually grieving the death of a young child, usually called the Pearl Maiden. The Dreamer falls asleep on her grave and finds himself in a liminal forest. Here the Dreamer meets his dead child—now exalted as a shining queen of heaven—wearing pearl-encrusted robes, a crown of pearls, and a single pearl of great price on her breast. The Dreamer is overjoyed to see his child, but he is confused that she has received such a marvelous heavenly reward even though she died so young. The Pearl Maiden recounts the parable of the laborers in the vineyard followed by the parable of the pearl of great price to explain to the Dreamer the logic of heavenly justice and salvation by examining verbal and visual analogies between terrestrial and celestial concepts of space, time, and value.

The *Pearl*-poet constructs the foundation for the metaphoric models by employing a unique pattern of verbal repetition. The 101 stanzas of the poem are divided into twenty sections that contain five stanzas (one contains six); the five stanzas are linked by the device of concatenation, or overlapping repetition. A concatenating word is repeated in the first and last line of each stanza in a section. The pattern of the concatenating words organizes the poet's metaphoric models and symbolic development, which in turn frame his argument about salvation. Although a comprehensive analysis of the twenty concatenating words is beyond the scope of this paper, the sequence of the six words (*date*, *more*, *inoghe*, *ryght*, *maskelles*,

6. For background about the *Pearl*-poet, the poem, and the manuscript, see Ad Putter, *An Introduction to the* Gawain-*poet* (London: Longman, 1996).

and *Jerusalem*) that are repeated at the center of the poem outline how the Pearl Maiden corrects the Dreamer's limited human conceptions about salvation.

The word *date* reveals the temporal limitations of the laborers, who represent all humans, and their linear expectations of celestial experience. As a result of their restricted perspective, the laborers demand *more* and evoke the comparative scale of value used in the terrestrial economy. The lord of the vineyard responds that he pays *inoghe*, or "enough," just as God equally satisfies human need.[7] The celestial state of abundant satisfaction contrasts with terrestrial institutions based on scarcity. To obtain celestial satisfaction, humans must be justified as *ryght*, or "righteous," and sanctified as *maskelles*, or "spotless and flawless," as a pearl is. These justified and sanctified beings live together in *Jerusalem*, the heavenly abode of the saved. The Dreamer's concluding vision of New Jerusalem is the linguistic and symbolic culmination of the poet's explanation of divine grace and salvation.

In the ninth and tenth sections, the poet repeats significant words and visual patterns to construct a metaphoric model that links qualities of spatial dimension, temporal duration, and economic scale; these parallel categories will encompass the terrestrial perspective. The Pearl Maiden begins retelling the parable of the vineyard in the ninth section of the poem; these stanzas are linked with the concatenating word *date* (lines 481–540). The word *date* had a wider meaning in Middle English than a specific point of time; it was used to express dimensions of temporal reckoning. Medieval Europeans, like much of the modern world, imagined time as a linear trajectory that could be identified in discrete units with beginnings and endings, for example, a lifespan, a year, a day, or an hour.[8] The parable's narrative is precisely divided into multiple temporal durations, and the *Pearl*-poet highlights these temporal units

7. Translations of Middle English words and phrases in the text are my own. I provide Marie Borroff's translation of *Pearl* in the indented quotations; see note 9.

8. *Middle English Dictionary*, s.v. "date (n.2)," http://quod.lib.umich.edu.erl.lib.byu.edu/m/med/ (accessed 13 December 2010).

by using *date* to refer to the entire harvest season (505), the beginning of the harvest (504), and the lengths of time that the laborers harvest in the vineyard (516, 517, 528, 529, 540, 541). The focus on temporal units reveals that the laborers are limited by their terrestrial perspective of linearity, not only in reckoning time but also in reckoning value.

As in Matthew 20, the narrative crux occurs in the *Pearl*-poet's retelling of the parable at the end of the day when the lord and steward line up their laborers to receive their wage. Lines 541–56 begin the tenth section of the poem in which the concatenating word shifts from *date*, a word that connotes temporal measurement, to *more*, a word that connotes a scale of value.[9]

"The date of the daye the lorde con knaw,	"Duly the lord, at day's decline,
Called to the reve: 'Lede, pay the meyny.	Said to the steward, 'Sir, proceed;
Gyf hem the hyre that I hem owe,	Pay what I owe this folk of mine;
And fyrre, that non me may reprené,	And lest men chide me here, take heed:
Set hem alle upon a rawe	Set them all in a single line,
And gyf uchon inlyche a peny.	Give each a penny as agreed;
Bygyn at the laste that standes lowe,	Start with the last that came to the vine,
Tyl to the fyrste that thou atteny.'	And let the first the last succeed.'
And thenne the fyrst bygonne to pleny	And then the first began to plead;
And sayden that thay hade travayled sore:	Long had they toiled, they said and swore;

9. The Middle English text in the columns throughout is edited by J. J. Anderson in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Pearl, Cleanness, Patience* (London: Everyman, 1996). This edition standardizes Middle English orthography. For a critical edition of *Pearl*, see Malcolm Andrew, Ronald Waldron, and Clifford Peterson, eds., *The Complete Works of the Pearl Poet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). Please note that the single and double quotations marks are included as they appear in the source—they do not always come in pairs in the portions quoted. The modern English translation in the columns throughout is by Marie Borroff in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Patience, and Pearl: Verse Translations* (New York: Norton, 2001).

'These bot on oure hem con streny;	'These in an hour had done their deed;
Uus thynk uus oghe to take more.	It seems to us we should have more.
———	———
"'More haf we served, uus thynk so,	"'More have we served, who suffered through
That suffred han the dayes hete,	The heat of the day till evening came,
Thenn thyse that wroght not houres two,	Than these who stayed but an hour or two,
And thou dos hem uus to counterfete.'	Yet you allow them equal claim.'

The laborers complain that the varying duration or *date* of their labor should be compensated in a commensurate manner; those who worked longer "oghe [ought] to take more" (552). The word *more* implies a comparative scale of value in which more and less become the criteria of evaluation and reward.[10] The laborers argue that natural justice in a human economy requires a proportional system of recompense. In this scene, the concepts of time and value are linked not only verbally, but also visually. When the laborers are lined up in a row according to the length of time they worked, their spatial orientation visually realizes their expectation of comparative value, yet each laborer is paid "inlyche a peny [a penny alike]" (546).

The complaints of the laborers resonate with the Dreamer's wonder at his daughter's exalted state despite her early death. The Dreamer then becomes the voice of the terrestrial perspective in Pearl as he interprets the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. Like the unhappy laborers in the parable, the Dreamer's perception of justice is also informed by a comparative scale of value; he articulates his concept of divine justice as a monetary transaction in lines 597–600.

10. Jill Mann traces the medieval categories of value and the relationship between economic theories and theological frameworks in "Satisfaction and Payment in Middle English Literature," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 5 (1983): 17–48.

Now he that stod the long day stable,	Now he who all day kept his station,
And thou to payment com hym byfore,	If you to payment come in before,
Thenne the lasse in werke to take more able,	Then the less, the more remuneration,
And ever the lenger the lasse, the more.'	And ever alike, the less, the more."

The poet contrasts the Dreamer's perspective with the celestial perspective of the Pearl Maiden. She spends the remainder of the poem teaching the Dreamer, and thus the audience, how to "escape the earthly habit of comparative measurement."[11] She does this by expanding the metaphoric model of spatial dimension, temporal duration, and economic scale that the poet crafted in the retelling of the parable from Matthew 20 and the concatenating words of *date* and *more*.

The Pearl Maiden repeatedly cautions the Dreamer concerning his terrestrial assumptions about celestial dynamics. She prefaced the parable of the laborers in the vineyard by explaining to the Dreamer that neither God's time nor his grace are limited or bounded by human expectations: "'Ther is no *date* of hys godnesse, / . . . 'For al is trawthe that he con dresse, / And he may do nothynk bot ryght [There is no limit of his goodness, for everything is truth that He is able to ordain, and He may do nothing except right]" (493–96, emphasis added). While retelling this parable, she expands the dialogue between the laborers and the lord of the vineyard, whom she explicitly names Christ. Christ asks the laborers to reconsider *more* in terms of God's covenant with and mercy for humanity.

Thenne sayde the lorde to on of tho:	Then said the lord to one of that crew,
'Frende, no waning I wyl the yete;	'Friend, I will not change the game;
Take that is thyn owne, and go.	Take your wage and away with you!
And I hyred the for a peny agrete,	I offered a penny, to all the same;

11. Marie Borroff, "Introduction," in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Patience, and Pearl*, 116.

Quy bygynnes thou now to threte?	Why begin to bicker and blame?
Was not a pené thy covenaunt thore?	Was not our covenant set of yore?
Fyrre then covenaunde is noght to plete.	Higher than covenant none should aim;
Wy schalte thou thenne ask more?	Why should you then ask for more?
———	———
"'More, wether louyly is me my gyfte,	"'More, am I not at liberty
To do wyth myn quat-so me lykes?	To give my own as I wish to do?
Other elles thyn yye to lyther is lyfte	Or have you lifted an evil eye,
For I am goude and non byswykes?'	As I am good, to none untrue?'
'Thus schal I,' quoth Kryste, 'hit skyfte:	'Thus,' says Christ, 'shall I shift it awry:
The laste schal be the fyrst that strykes,	The last shall be first in the queue,
And the fyrst the laste, be he never so swyft;	And the first the last, were he never so spry,
For mony ben called, thagh fewe be mykes.'"	For many are called, but friends are few.'
Thus pore men her part ay pykes,	So poor men take their portion too,
Thagh thay com late and lyttel wore;	Though late they came and puny they were,
And thagh her sweng wyth lyttel atslykes,	And though they make but little ado,
The merci of God is much the more. (557–76)	The mercy of God is much the more.

The Pearl Maiden narrates through the voice of Christ, the lord of the vineyard, that the comparative scales of value and competitive compensation advocated by the laborers are not appropriate means of measurement in the kingdom of heaven. The laborers and the Dreamer are asked to transform their linear and comparative expectations of celestial affairs. Christ explains that God's abundant mercy "is much the more" by using a metaphor of a queue: "the last shall be the first who comes, and the first the last." The metaphor readily suggests linear reorganization in which the people at the beginning and end of the line are switched; however, the metaphor also imagines the union of the beginning and end of the line into a

circle.[12] People standing in a circle are equally arranged with respect to each other; their position no longer indicates sequential priority or privilege. The *Pearl*-poet repeatedly converts linear images into circular images throughout the poem; transforming linearity to circularity symbolizes a shift from limited human perspective and experience to celestial understanding and being.

Next, the Pearl Maiden redefines *date* and *more* in terms of *inoghe* (or *inough*). The poet replaces the concatenation of *date* in the ninth section and *more* in the tenth section, terms that both evoke the comparative expectations of the laborers and the Dreamer, with the concatenation of *inoghe* in the eleventh section (lines 601–60). The Middle English word *inoghe* has a wider meaning than the modern English word *enough*. In Middle English, *inoghe* meant not only adequate or sufficient but also perfect and complete satisfaction.[13] The Pearl Maiden explains that God's justice and his mercy are "enough" because they are absolute and beyond the measurement of comparative value.

'Of more and lasse in Godes ryche,'	"Of more and less," she answered straight,
That gentyl sayde, 'lys no joparde,	"In the Kingdom of God, no risk obtains,
For ther is uch mon payed inlyche,	For each is paid the selfsame rate
Whether lyttel other much be hys rewarde.	No matter how little or great his gains.
. . .	. . .
For the grace of God is gret inoghe. (601–4, 612)	The grace of God is enough for all.

12. In "*Pearl*'s 'Maynful Mone': Crux, Simile, and Structure," in *Acts of Interpretation: The Text in Its Contexts, 700–1600*, ed. Mary J. Carruthers and Elizabeth D. Kirk (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1982), 163–64, Marie Borroff offers this insight: "The sequence [of the laborers in a row] is thus a spatial analogue to the temporal sequence made up of the successive hours of the day; each has a beginning and an end. The lord's decree on the order of the payment reverses the expected order of both time and space. . . . All the saved participate equally in this reward, and its value is infinite, literally 'beyond compare,' unlike earthly rewards, which are measured in terms of quasi-linear scale of values or degrees ranging from high to low."

13. *Middle English Dictionary*, s.v. "inough," n. and adv. (accessed 12 March 2010). See also *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "enough," http://dictionary.oed.com (accessed 12 March 2010).

The refrain "for the grace of God is gret inoghe" is repeated with slight variation four more times. The word *sufficient* could replace *enough* in the refrain: "the grace of God is sufficient for all" because *inoghe* indicates the midpoint between "too much" and "too little" or between "more" and "less" and represents satisfaction.[14] Need is eradicated by enough and is satisfied; more turns satisfaction into excess.[15] In *Pearl*, the connotations of *inoghe* signify "endlessly sufficient abundance," as do the metaphorical models of flowing water and an immaculate pearl, two metaphors that the Pearl Maiden develops next.[16]

Patterns of thematically significant words are not the only means by which the poet constructs metaphorical models that compare human and celestial dimensions of measurement. The Pearl Maiden expands the metaphorical model with two additional domains to illuminate how celestial satisfaction is achieved through the two interrelated processes of cleansing sanctification and righteous justification. First, the Pearl Maiden metaphorically explores the concept of divine graciousness through sanctification when she shifts the Dreamer's focus from the merit accumulated by the laborers in the vineyard during fixed durations of time to an endless flowing spring that unites the sacramental elements of water and blood shed during Christ's saving sacrifice. Second, the Pearl Maiden metaphorically depicts the divine graciousness of justification when she encourages the Dreamer to imagine the payment of the two-dimensional penny, the human monetary marker of comparative value and merit, from the parable of the laborers in the vineyard in terms of the gracious gift of a three-dimensional pearl, whose spherical form indicates celestial satisfaction in the parable of the pearl of great price.

14. Jill Mann outlines medieval constructions of value based on proportionate exchange in "Price and Value in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," in *Chaucer to Spenser: A Critical Reader*, ed. Derek Pearsall (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 187–205.

15. Mann, "Satisfaction and Payment," 30. Mann concludes, "In the heavenly kingdom renunciation is paradoxically rewarded with satisfaction. In its fullness the desire for 'more' falls away, not because one prudently settles for 'less' but because that endless desire is endlessly satisfied, and it is the completeness of that satisfaction that constitutes 'enough.'"

16. Mann, "Satisfaction and Payment," 29.

Drawing on multiple biblical images and words, *Pearl* explores the process of sanctification. Sanctification is a purifying process whereby humans are allowed to come into contact with God, specifically in ritual worship in a sacred space. The Middle English term *sanctificacioun* derives from the Latin *sanctificatio*, which expresses the multivalent New Testament term *hagiasmos*, a Greek word with roots in the term *hagios* "holy" and its cognate *hagnos* "purity."[17] The concept of holiness was intimately and anciently connected to divine worship. Drawing on related Levitical concepts for holiness, worship, and purity in the Old Testament, holiness in the New Testament specifically expresses the idea of sanctification when persons are "drawn into the holy sphere, and for that reason consecrated, are made holy. This happens through baptism . . . [and] through the blood of Christ."[18] Thus, sanctification is a communal practice that involves the pure becoming holy by withdrawing from the profane.[19] The Pearl Maiden instructs the Dreamer how he can become holy by being cleansed in the waters of baptism and by the atoning blood of the Lamb.

After telling the parable of the laborers of the vineyard, the Pearl Maiden uses images of water pouring out in abundance to express the copious satisfaction of God's grace to explain why all of the laborers were equally paid the same wage. The properties of flowing water metaphorically reveal the consolatory and restorative power of divine mercy:

17. Hans Küng, "Justification and Sanctification according to the New Testament," in *Justification: The Doctrine of Karl Barth and a Catholic Reflection* (London: Burns & Oates, 1964), 295–96.

18. Küng, "Justification and Sanctification," 296.

19. In "Justification and Sanctification," 297, Küng, a prominent Catholic theologian, defines sanctification as "the action of God which sets life in opposition to sin and lays claim to it for himself: a separation from what is worldly and sinful and a special election for what is divine and sacred. So, according to the New Testament, holiness in the context of ritual worship consists in being snatched out of this world of sin, of darkness and of Satan, and consequently in being called to share in the heritage of the saints. At the same time, this concept of holiness receives a transcendental character and expresses the divine elevation of God above the world, which saints can share."

For the gentyl Cheventayn is no chyche,	No niggard is our chief of state,
Quether-so-ever he dele nesch other harde;	Be it soft or harsh his will ordains;
He laves hys gyftes as water of dyche,	His gifts gush forth like a spring in spate
Other gotes of golf that never charde	Or a stream in a gulley that runs in rains.
Hys fraunchyse is large that ever dard	His portion is large whose prayers and pains
To Hym that mas in synne rescoghe.	Please him who rescues when sinners call.
No blysse bes fro hem reparde,	No bliss in heaven but he attains:
For the grace of God is gret inoghe. (605–12)	The grace of God is enough for all.

Here the Pearl Maiden links the vineyard owner's payment of the equal wage to the laborers in the parable with God's gift of the kingdom of heaven, or in other words eternal life, to the faithful after their deaths.[20] God's grace is as boundless as a flowing spring or stream; God's grace satisfies all individually. Grace is not finite; every human has the opportunity to be equally satisfied—just as any container, regardless of variations in size, can be filled with water until it is full.[21] The imagery of flowing water culminates in the description of the river of life that flows through New Jerusalem at the end of the poem. In lines 1057–59, this river, shining brighter than the sun and moon, is the "living water" that Christ announces to the woman at Jacob's well; it is "a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). Like water, God's abundant mercy cannot be quantified or meted out in discrete proportions.

In addition to its overflowing abundance, water is also pure, and the poet links the cleansing power of the water's purity with the blood that flowed from Christ's dying body.

20. See also *Pearl*, lines 625–36.
21. Mann, "Satisfaction and Payment," 25–26.

Ryche blod ran on rode so roghe,	Rich blood ran down rood-tree tall
And wynne water then at that plyt;	And with it flowed forth water bright:
The grace of God wex gret innoghe.	The grace of God was enough for all.
———	———
'Innoghe ther wax out of that welle,	"Enough for all flowed from that well,
Blod and water of brode wounde.	Blood and water plain to behold:
The blod uus boght fro bale of helle,	By the blood our souls were saved from hell
And delyvered uus of the deth secounde.	And the second death decreed of old.
The water is baptem, the sothe to telle,	The water is baptism, truth to tell,
That folwed the glayve so grymly grounde,	That followed the spearhead keen and cold,
That wasches away the gyltes felle	Old Adam's deadly guilt to dispel
That Adam wyth inne deth uus drounde.	That swamped us in sins a thousandfold.
Now is ther noght in the worlde rounde	Now all is withdrawn that ever could hold
Bytwene uus and blysse bot that he wythdrow,	Mankind from bliss, since Adam's fall,
And that is restored in sely stounde;	And that was redeemed at a time foretold
And the grace of God is gret innogh. (646–60)	And the grace of God is enough for all.

The iconographical association between water and blood stems from John 19:34, where water and blood gush from Christ's pierced side as he dies on the cross. Christ's wound metaphorically becomes a "well" from which the cleansing liquid of two saving rites flows: baptism and the sacrament.

The poet returns to imagery of flowing blood at the end of the poem when the Dreamer sees the Lamb presiding over New Jerusalem; the Lamb's white fleece is marred by blood perpetually flowing from a wound in his side.

So worthly whyt wern wedes hys,	His dress so white, so mild his mood,
His lokes symple, hymself so gent.	His looks so gracious, himself the same;
Bot a wounde ful wyde and weete con wyse	But a wound there was, and wide it stood,
Anende hys hert, thurgh hyde torente;	Thrust near his heart with deadly aim.
Of his quyte syde his blod outsprent.	Down his white side the red blood came;
Alas, thoght I, who did that spyt?	"O God," thought I, "who had such spite?
Ani breste for bale aght haf forbrent	A breast should consume with sorrow and shame
Er he therto hade had delyt.	Ere in such deeds it took delight."
———	———
The Lombe delyt non lyste to wene;	The Lamb's delight was clearly seen,
Thagh he were hurt and wounde hade,	Though a bitter wound he had to bear;
In his sembelaunt was never sene,	So glorious was his gaze serene,
So wern his glentes gloryous glade. (1133–44)	It gladdened all who beheld him there.

The wounded lamb seems anomalous amidst the perfection of New Jerusalem and the spotless host of sanctified maidens who each bear a shining pearl. The Dreamer expects the lamb, as a symbol for Christ, to embody the same spotless, monochrome perfection as the pearls, but the lamb, wounded and covered in flowing blood as seen through the eyes of the Dreamer, is the most flawed creature in his vision. The complex duality of the juxtaposed symbols makes "the claims for imperfection against perfection."[22] Hugh White argues that the Lamb "represents an inclusive generosity that is prepared to forgive, indeed to embrace the imperfections of those who are to be forgiven in such a way as to constitute with the help of those imperfections a new perfection, which must be a higher perfection since the Lamb is the summit of the universe."[23] White's explora-

22. Hugh White, "Blood in *Pearl*," *Review of English Studies*, n.s., 38/149 (1987): 6.
23. White, "Blood in *Pearl*," 6.

tion of the intriguing paradox of symbolic values embodied by the pearl and lamb suggests that grace plays a large role in the soteriological model communicated in *Pearl*. White's conclusion that "*Pearl* subtly celebrates imperfection and the human experiences of sin and suffering" revises the exclusive human binary of absolute exalted perfection versus fallen sinfulness in which the only relation between the two is opposition.[24] *Pearl* suggests otherwise; the poem narrates a relationship between the Dreamer and God via the Pearl Maiden. God's act of gracious forgiveness of human sin not only sanctifies humanity but also justifies humanity. Justification is a process that confers a state of grace on an individual freed from the bondage of sin.

The theological concept of justification has been the subject of much debate in Judeo-Christian traditions and was a topic of concern among Scholastic theologians contemporary with *Pearl*.[25] The Latin term *justificatio* and the Middle English loanword *justificacioun* have legal connotations that derive from biblical terminology, terminology that associates God's judgment as being like a legal trial in which God, as the judge, graciously absolves or forgives human sin and grants righteousness.[26] Since justification is the process by which humans are made righteous before God, righteousness is a condition of salvation as well as a fruit of salvation. Humans cannot possess righteousness in themselves; they possess it only in relation to God, who transforms their very being.[27] The *Pearl*-poet employs verbal repetition and metaphoric models rather than logical propositions to envision how God justifies the righteous.

The twelfth section (lines 661–720) employs the concatenating word *ryght*, a Middle English word that evokes the biblical conceptions of justice, righteousness, and justification. In this section, the

24. White, "Blood in *Pearl*," 12; and Jena Theresa Trammell, "*Pearl* and Contemporary Theological Controversy," *Medieval Perspectives* 17/1 (2003): 171–77.

25. Alister McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 186–207.

26. Küng, "Justification and Sanctification," 292–94; see also McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, 6–21.

27. Küng, "Justification and Sanctification," 294.

Pearl Maiden explains to the Dreamer that a *ryghtwys man* must suffer guilt and punishment and be saved by God's grace so that his heart can become innocent and clean again; for only "the ryghtwys man schal se hys face [the righteous man shall see his face]" (675). She continues in the thirteenth section by explaining that a *ryghtwys man* must be as "ryght as a chylde [as righteous as a child]" (723), who is "harmles, trwe, and undefylde, / wythouten mote other mascle of sulpande synne [harmless, true, and undefiled, without mote or stain of polluting sin]" (725–26). An innocent child and the soul of a person made righteous are as pure as a "perle maskelles [a pearl without spot]" (744). The term *maskelles*, meaning "without spot, mark, stain, fault, or blemish," is the concatenating word in the thirteenth section (lines 721–80), where the Pearl Maiden introduces the second biblical parable, the parable of the pearl without price.[28]

As in Matthew 13:45–46, the jeweler sells all of his wealth to purchase the precious pearl that represents the eternal life of those saved by God.

'This makelles perle, that boght is dere,	"This immaculate pearl I tell you of,
The joueler gef fore alle hys god,	The jeweler gave his wealth to gain,
Is lyke the reme of hevenesse clere;	Is like the realm of heaven above;
So sayde the Fader of folde and flode.	The Father of all things said it plain.
For hit is wemles, clene, and clere,	No spot it bears, nor blemish rough,
And endeles rounde, and blythe of mode,	But blithe in rondure ever to reign,
And commune to alle that ryghtwys were.	And of righteousness it is prize and proof:
Lo, even inmyddes my breste hit stode.	Lo, here on my breast it long has lain,
My Lorde the Lombe, that schede hys blode,	Bestowed by the Lamb so cruelly slain,
He pyght hit there in token of pes.	His peace to betoken and designate;

28. *Middle English Dictionary*, s.v. "mascelles" (accessed 4 December 2010). See *Pearl*, lines 721–80.

I rede the forsake the worlde wode
And porchace thy perle maskelles.'
(733–44)

I bid you turn from the world insane
And purchase your pearl
immaculate."

The pearl's shape, color, and price analogically convey the sublime state of living in the celestial kingdom. The pearl is without spot like the souls of the innocent and pure; it is perfectly round and thus "endless" like eternity; it is precious beyond comparative value; and it is "blithe" as it represents the bliss of the redeemed. The three-dimensional pearl becomes a salient symbol of fullness, perfection, and satisfaction in the poem. The circularity and roundness of the pearl emphasize the endlessness of eternity—that is, "freedom from measurements of time, as the circumference of a circle is free from interruptions, that is, from beginnings and ends."[29] For medieval Christians, "eternity is not perpetual duration, 'longer than' time; it is the absence of time. So too with the worth of the heavenly pearl. It is not 'greater than' the worth of anything on earth; it is absolute, literally 'beyond measure.'"[30] The pricelessness of the immaculate pearl contrasts the finite value of the penny wage or any other form of monetary compensation.

To help the Dreamer understand the divine gift of eternal life, the Pearl Maiden transforms the two-dimensional circular penny in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard into the three-dimensional spherical pearl in the parable of the pearl of great price. The spherical nature of the pearl is an "abstraction from the linear or dimensional, two-ended mode[s] of earthly space, time, and value" described in the parable of the vineyard.[31] The penny and the pearl are alike in the roundness that symbolizes the eternity of the heavenly kingdom, and they are alike in their role as valuable objects, as indices of worth.[32] However, the penny coin in the

29. Borroff, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Patience, and Pearl*, 113.
30. Borroff, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Patience, and Pearl*, 116.
31. Borroff, "*Pearl*'s 'Maynful Mone,'" 164.
32. The circular pearl and penny are also linked to the circular garland of flowers on the daughter's grave (25–60) and the crown that Pearl Maiden wears as a bride of heaven (205–10, 413–16, 445–80).

parable could be cut in half because the earthly idea of value involves splitting money and sharing it in quantifiable portions; however, a pearl loses its entire value if it is marred or split in any way. The replacement of the metaphoric model of the penny with the pearl enables the Dreamer to understand that the kingdom of heaven is not a divisible good—it can be given "in its entirety or not at all."[33]

The Pearl Maiden uses the metaphoric model of the pearl to address the crux of the parable of the vineyard. The payment to those who labored in God's kingdom is not a meager coin but a pearl of great price, and this pearl can only be "payed inlyche" (603). In Middle English, *pay* could mean "payment" in a monetary sense, but it also could mean "satisfaction." Jill Mann concludes that if everyone is "payed inlyche" in the kingdom of heaven, then

> all are equally "paid" because all are equally "satisfied"—that is, everyone has *enough*. The earthly notion of "payment" is transformed into the heavenly notion of "satisfaction," with the emphasis on the element "satis-," that is, on the idea of "enough." The idea of "more" then becomes an absurdity; once one is satisfied, there is no need for more—indeed, there is no room for its absorption.[34]

The heavenly notion of satisfaction replaces the earthly notion of payment. The transformation of the two-dimensional disk of the penny into the three-dimensional sphere of the pearl illustrates the concept of eternal satisfaction to the Dreamer, whose limited temporal expectations are shaped by competitive compensation. Terrestrial economics are governed by division and comparable scales of worth; celestial economics, in contrast, are based on satisfaction and fullness. In heaven, value exceeds human imagining; *more* is not comparative—it is beyond articulation.[35] Since human language cannot precisely express what lies beyond human expectations,

33. Mann, "Satisfaction and Payment," 26-27.

34. Mann, "Satisfaction and Payment," 25.

35. Borroff, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Patience, and Pearl*, 115-17; Mann, "Satisfaction and Payment," 30.

metaphoric models can gesture toward heavenly concepts of fullness, grace, and satisfaction.

The poem culminates when the Pearl Maiden grants her father, the Dreamer, a vision of her home, the Heavenly Jerusalem. The poet uses images from the book of Revelation to describe the holy city where the Pearl Maiden and her fellow sanctified and justified companions dwell with the Lamb of God. Symbols of perfection multiply exponentially to depict the indescribable state of salvation and echo or enlarge metaphors previously introduced in the poem. For example, the number twelve, a numerological symbol of perfection, develops significant eschatological implications. The poem has 1,212 lines. During the retelling of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, the "payment," or last judgment, takes place at the twelfth hour. *Pearl* concludes with a description of the twelve gates and twelve precious stones that comprise New Jerusalem (see Revelation 21:10–27). In this divine realm of absolutes, there cannot be more or less with respect to perfection.

The numerological symbolism is enhanced by the Dreamer's description in one of the final scenes of the poem of the procession of the pearl maidens led by the Lamb of God through bejeweled streets flowing with living water and illuminated by Christ's own light. This procession echoes the line of laborers in the vineyard awaiting their payment. The spatial transformation of a line into a circle encourages the conceptual transformation of comparative duality to abundant graciousness. The linear extension of the laborers is analogous to the temporal economics of monetary compensation and its inherent hierarchy of poor and rich. This impoverished state contrasts that of the procession of the brides circling through the streets of New Jerusalem spatially depicting the endlessness of eternal life.

I was war of a prosessyoun.	I saw a procession wend its way.
This noble cité of ryche enpryse	Without a summons, without a sign,
Was sodanly ful wythouten sommoun	The city was full in vast array

Of such vergynes in the same gyse	Of maidens in such raiment fine
That was my blysful anunder croun.	As my blissful one had worn that day.
And coronde wern alle of the same fasoun,	As she was crowned, so crowned were they;
Depaynt in perles and wedes qwyte;	Adorned with pearls, in garments white;
In uchones breste was bounden boun	And in like fashion, gleaming gay,
The blysful perle wyth gret delyt.	They bore the pearl of great delight.
Wyth gret delyt thay glod in fere	With great delight, serene and slow,
On golden gates that glent as glasse.	They moved through every golden street;
Hundreth thowsandes I wot ther were,	Thousands on thousands, row on row,
And alle in sute her livrés wasse;	All in one raiment shining sweet.
Tor to knaw the gladdest chere.	Who gladdest looked, was hard to know;
The Lombe byfore con proudly passe,	The Lamb led on at station meet,
Wyth hornes seven of red golde cler;	Seven horns of gold upon his brow,
As praysed perles his wedes wasse.	His robe like pearls with rays replete.
Towarde the throne thay trone a tras. (1096–113)	Soon they approached God's mighty seat.

Unlike the laborers lined up after their service in the vineyard, all the pearl maidens in the procession are satisfied completely and uniquely; there is no hierarchy of rank in heaven.[36] Here the communal aspect of justification is depicted. Justification as righteousness is a relationship and thus involves covenantal nomism—that is, "the law understood as governing life within the covenant people, obedience to the law understood as the proper expression of covenant membership."[37] *Pearl* depicts how righteousness, or the receipt of

36. See also *Pearl*, lines 445–67 and lines 601–12.

37. J. D. G. Dunn, "The Justice of God: A Renewed Perspective on Justification by Faith," *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 43 (1992): 18. See also Küng, "Justification and Sanctification," 297–98.

the pearl of great price, obligates the covenant members towards God and towards each other.

The metaphoric logic of the narrative exegesis of two biblical parables in the medieval poem *Pearl* reminds its reader that divine justice transcends human institutions and expectations. God does not use money to measure value; there is no scarcity of his resources. God measures value on the intimately personal level: the cleanliness, desires, and intents of human hearts. The merit of an individual is not compared or ranked according to the achievement or failure of others, but only in relation to the person's own potential. Celestial measurements of value transcend the "comparative deserts" of terrestrial existence. *Pearl* teaches that every individual receives the gift of salvation perfectly appropriate to satisfy his or her state of need and desire; it is a loving gift that is calibrated according to the individual's ability to be transformed.

Constructing Metaphoric Models of Salvation

Pearl articulates a deeply moving and consoling testament of the divine graciousness of justification and sanctification through its metaphoric models of salvation. The poem exemplifies how constructing and expanding metaphoric models generate new insights about salvation, insights that suggest alternatives to the traditional economic models of salvation. While there has been a long tradition in the history of Judaism and Christianity of using economic metaphors to conceptualize sin, atonement, and salvation, human economic assumptions can limit a person's ability to conceptualize divine graciousness.[38] The poet's critique may be a reaction against the legalistic language of Scholastic theologians, specifically William of Ockham, Thomas Bradwardine, and John Wycliffe, who attempted to parse out specific mechanisms of divine grace

38. For a history of metaphors used for atonement in the Judeo-Christian tradition, see Peter Schmiechen, *Saving Power: Theories of Atonement and Forms of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005).

and human merit in salvation in the fourteenth century.[39] These Oxford scholars were among many theologians who interpreted divine mechanisms within the framework of human justice and value. Economic metaphors were (and are) useful soteriological models because they represent value in familiar terms—monetary transactions. Over time, these economic metaphors became deeply entrenched into Judeo-Christian consciousness, theological language, and ritual practices.[40] For example, during the era of Persian rule (538–333 BC), there was a shift from conceptualizing sin as a burden, which could be lifted by transferring the weight to a scapegoat, to construing sin as a debt, which must be repaid through bondage of slavery to a creditor. In the Second Temple period, the metaphor of sin as a debt was extended into the metaphor of redemption as balancing the debt of sin or generating credit with virtues of almsgiving and good works. Human agency could be exercised to counteract the consequences of sin in this model, and soteriological doctrines of merit developed. Christians subsequently inherited and expanded these economic models of atonement, including such theories as retributive atonement and penal substitution.[41]

39. Trammell, "*Pearl* and Contemporary Theological Controversy." See also David Aers, *Salvation and Sin: Augustine, Langland, and Fourteenth-Century Theology* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009); McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, 138–50; and Ian C. Levy, "Grace and Freedom in the Soteriology of John Wyclif," *Traditio* 60 (2005): 279–337.

40. For a history of metaphors used for sin in the Judeo-Christian tradition, see Gary A. Anderson, *Sin, A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

41. Schmiechen, *Saving Power*, 38–45, 103–19. Two economic models of salvation that have been popular in the Latter-day Saint community in the early twenty-first century are Boyd K. Packer's parable of the debtor and Stephen Robinson's parable of the bicycle. Boyd K. Packard, "The Mediator," *Ensign*, May 1977, 54–55, reprinted in *Gospel Principles* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2009), 63–65; Stephen Robinson, *Believing Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 30–34. In these models, salvation is turned into an object of great value and high price. The amount of money that salvation is worth signifies that it is a desired and scarce commodity that mankind cannot afford. A generous benefactor who represents Christ loans or gives mankind enough money to purchase salvation or satisfy the debt of sin to escape punishment. Human expectations about economic transactions reify salva-

Despite the widespread use of economic metaphors of salvation, the soteriological implications of the economic institutions can be problematic. Human economies define relationships by lack or need and are mediated agonistically and contractually; the logic is governed by scarcity of resources with subsequent debt and commutative justice.[42] Like the *Pearl*-poet, Daniel M. Bell Jr.—a Christian ethicist, professor of theology, and Lutheran minister—argues that using ossified economic metaphors for salvation may potentially hinder spiritual enlightenment. Bell imagines

> a forgiveness that is aneconomic precisely in its exceeding the horizon of economy—surpassing every debt, defying every contract, exploding every calculus of equivalence, desert, and retribution foisted upon us by the poverty of economy—and renewing life in its true modality of gift, donation, and unending generosity, whereby human relations become peaceable as they participate in the proliferation of noncontractual, which is to say, covenantal bonds of love.[43]

Pearl and Bell demonstrate that metaphoric models produce insight most effectively when humans continuously engage in the cyclical process of modeling metaphors with generative and pedagogical functions and resist the temptation to halt the process. This is the invitation of the parable of the laborers.

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tion in these models. Yet salvation is not an object—it is a state of being or maybe even a particular type of relationship with God—and it cannot be purchased.

42. Daniel M. Bell Jr., "Forgiveness and the End of Economy," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 20/3 (2007): 325–44, especially pages 326–28. See also R. Dennis Potter, "Did Christ Pay for Our Sins?" *Dialogue* 32/4 (1999): 73–86.

43. Bell, "Forgiveness," 337. On page 333, Bell explains: "Rightly understood, the atonement is not a matter of economic reckoning, but ontological union [with God]. As such, it displays the plenitude of divine charity, of God's forgiveness, of God's giving and giving again. (The root of the meaning of forgiveness is 'to give excessively'.) God has always given to humanity in the form of love, and when humanity rejected that gift, God forgave, gave again in the form of love incarnate, which is the Son (thus, the difference between an economic, contractual relation, which has a clear beginning and end, and God's eternal covenantal commitment)."

The tension in this parable reveals that divine action is not limited by human expectations of how economic relationships should work and function. The end of the parable ultimately explodes the teleology of the metaphorical model when the payment to the laborers defies human expectations of merit-based compensation. The parable invites us to search beyond the ossified metaphorical models of human economy to generate new metaphors to understand soteriological relations—that is, relations involved in the process of salvation. Seekers of spiritual truth need soteriological metaphors, or models about God's saving action, yet they must balance the insights gained with the self-awareness that their embodied or social experiences employed in metaphorical source domains may circumscribe their spiritual perception.

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On Christ and Covenants: An LDS Reading of Isaiah's Prophetic Call

David E. Bokovoy

Isaiah can be an intimidating book. Few compositions feature such a multifaceted array of religious and literary symbolism. Yet the book of Isaiah holds special significance within the canon of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—Isaiah's writings appear in all four books of LDS scripture. In the Book of Mormon, Christ himself appears and places a divine stamp of approval on Isaiah's words by commanding his people to diligently search the writings of the Old Testament prophet (3 Nephi 23:1). Though Isaiah's complexities cannot be overstated, the Book of Mormon can function as an interpretive guide for Latter-day Saints. The following analysis illustrates some of the ways in which the Book of Mormon can aid in identifying textual meaning in the story of Isaiah's prophetic commission.

For students of Isaiah who demonstrate a willingness to seriously engage his writings, such as the Book of Mormon prophet Nephi, the book of Isaiah can evoke considerable delight: "And now I, Nephi, write more of the words of Isaiah, for my soul *delighteth* in his words" (2 Nephi 11:2). Throughout his commentary on Isaiah 2–14, Nephi appears to adopt a biblical-like *leitwort*, or "theme

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word," as a means of conveying his intense joy in Isaiah's words.[1] "My soul *delighteth* in proving unto my people the truth of the coming of Christ," states Nephi in 2 Nephi 11:4.

> And also my soul *delighteth* in the covenants of the Lord . . . ; yea, my soul *delighteth* in his grace, and in his justice, and power, and mercy. . . . And my soul *delighteth* in proving unto my people that save Christ should come all men must perish. (vv. 5–6)

Nephi's apparently intentional repetition of the theme word *delighteth* might suggest a familiarity on the part of the Book of Mormon prophet with one of the literary motifs reflected in Isaiah's writings via the original Hebrew. Though not apparent in the English version of the King James Bible, Isaiah uses the Hebrew word *ḥāpēṣ*, "delight," with considerable frequency, beginning with the statement "I *delight* not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats" (Isaiah 1:11, emphasis added throughout).[2] Though the King James translation presents Isaiah's statement that God does not *delight* in the blood of sacrifices, it also states, translating the same Hebrew word in a less emphatic sense, that the Lord is merely "*well pleased* (*ḥāpēṣ*) for his righteousness' sake" (Isaiah 42:21). By incorporating this Hebraic theme into his introduction to Isaiah 2–14, Nephi shares with his readers the fact that he takes delight in three topics: Isaiah, Christ, and covenants. Following the inherent literary logic in Nephi's comments, the Book of Mormon prophet

1. For an introduction to this important literary technique, see Martin Buber, "Leitwort Style in Pentateuch Narrative," in *Scripture and Translation*, ed. Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig; trans. Lawrence Rosenwald and Everett Fox (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 114–28. As literary scholar Robert Alter notes in his analysis of the convention, "This kind of word-motif, as a good many commentators have recognized, is one of the most common features of the narrative art of the Bible." Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 92.

2. The root appears most frequently in the book of Psalms for a total of twenty-seven occurrences. Isaiah features the next largest number at twenty, for a rounded average of eight appearances per one hundred words. In contrast, the other two major prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, use *ḥāpēṣ* a combined total of only eight times, the same number, coincidentally, attested for the root in all the Minor Prophets combined.

delights in Isaiah, since from Nephi's perspective, Isaiah teaches the two themes in which Nephi takes considerable delight, namely Christ and covenants.

This observation perhaps reveals one of the basic reasons Isaiah assumes such a prominent role throughout the Book of Mormon. According to its title page, the Book of Mormon features two very specific purposes directly connected with Nephi's editorial commentary. The Book of Mormon exists

> to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers . . . that they may know the covenants of the Lord. . . . And also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ.

Thus, from Nephi's perspective, Isaiah shares the Book of Mormon's dual focus in professing the importance of Christ and covenants.[3] Elder Jeffrey R. Holland recognized this concentration. Concerning the writings of Nephi, Jacob, and Isaiah on the small plates, Elder Holland wrote:

> After reading these three witnesses from the small plates of Nephi, the reader knows two things in bold relief: that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and that God will keep his covenants and promises with the remnants of the house of Israel. These two themes constitute the two principal purposes of the Book of Mormon, and they are precisely the introductory themes addressed by Nephi, Jacob, and Isaiah.[4]

For Latter-day Saints interested in identifying the theme of Christ and covenants in Isaiah, a careful study of Isaiah's prophetic call narrative featured in Isaiah 6 (chapter 26 in 2 Nephi) proves

3. For an analysis of these objectives in the title page, see Victor L. Ludlow, "Covenant Teachings in the Book of Mormon," in *The Disciple as Scholar: Essays on Scripture and the Ancient World in Honor of Richard Lloyd Anderson* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 2000), 67–71.

4. Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997), 35.

especially inviting.[5] In an effort to explore the manner in which Isaiah 6 can be seen to address the dual theme identified in Nephi's commentary, the following study presents one possible LDS reading of Isaiah's prophetic call narrative using insights from contemporary biblical scholarship and the Book of Mormon. While the following survey does not seek to uncover the original meaning of the text, this analysis presents a fresh interpretation of Isaiah 6 by illustrating some of the ways in which Isaiah's prophetic call narrative can be understood to reflect the theme of Christ and covenants.

In preparation for the Book of Mormon's use of Isaiah 6, Nephi instructs his readers that he will send forth the words of Isaiah to Nephi's descendants because, like Nephi himself, Isaiah saw Christ, the Redeemer (2 Nephi 11:2). As is the case with the word *delighteth* in Nephi's introduction to Isaiah 2–14, the term *send* appears as a prominently repeated literary motif in this segment of Nephi's Isaianic commentary: "And my brother, Jacob, also has seen [Christ] as I have seen him; wherefore, I will *send* their words forth. . . . Nevertheless, God *sendeth* more witnesses" (2 Nephi 11:3). Nephi's emphasis that Isaiah, Jacob, and other witnesses had been sent to teach of Christ reflects the famous imagery in Isaiah's prophetic call narrative, where Isaiah responds to God's query "Whom shall I *send*?" with the dutiful reply "Here am I; *send* me" (Isaiah 6:8). The dual repetition of the verb *to send* in Isaiah's account signifies that Isaiah was commissioned by God to serve as a messenger to the house of Israel.

From both a secular and a religious perspective, messengers appear in Old Testament passages to be directly linked with the Hebrew verb *šālaḥ*, "to send." In his own writings, Isaiah illustrates the relationship between messengers and *šālaḥ* through his comments regarding the land beyond the rivers of Ethiopia that

5. For previous Latter-day Saint explorations of this chapter, see especially Paul Y. Hoskisson, "A Latter-day Saint Reading of Isaiah in the Twentieth Century: The Example of Isaiah 6," in *Sperry Symposium Classics: The Old Testament and the Latter-day Saints*, ed. Paul Y. Hoskisson (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center and Deseret Book, 2005), 193–25; and David Bokovoy, "The Calling of Isaiah," in *Covenants, Prophecies, and Hymns of the Old Testament* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2001), 128–39.

"*sendeth* ambassadors by the sea, . . . saying, Go, ye swift *messengers*" (Isaiah 18:2). Similar imagery appears throughout the entire Old Testament. When Jacob, for example, sought for reconciliation with his brother Esau, the book of Genesis draws upon this matching pattern, stating that Jacob "*sent messengers* before him" (Genesis 32:3). As messengers, it was important for Jacob's servants to preface their speech with the traditional messenger formula expressed in verse 4 with the phrase *thy servant Jacob saith thus*. In ancient Israel, this standard introduction to indirect speech served as a meaningful reminder that the spoken word did not originate with the messenger, but instead with the sender. In the words of biblical scholar Claus Westermann, "The formula authorizes the message, which is repeated by the messenger before the addressee, to be the word of the sender, corresponding, therefore, to the signature in our letter form."[6] Old Testament prophets like Isaiah were specifically viewed as messengers sent by God and his council to declare the divine word.[7] For Isaiah, the commissioning of this role is described in Isaiah 6.

As servants of God who spoke the Lord's word, Israelite prophets like Isaiah often employed the secular messenger formula in their religious discourses. This observation provides meaningful insights into various prophetic statements similar to those issued by Isaiah concerning God's chosen people: "But now *thus saith the Lord* that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine" (Isaiah 43:1). Isaiah also illustrates the Israelite cultural tradition of identifying prophets by the Hebrew word *mal'āk*, translated as either "messenger" or "angel" in the King James Bible: "I am the

6. Claus Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*, trans. Hugh C. White (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 100; see also James F. Ross, "The Prophet as Yahweh's Messenger," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg*, ed. Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), 98–107.

7. For an introduction to the topic of the divine council, including the role of prophets, see David E. Bokovoy, "'Ye Really *Are* Gods': A Response to Michael Heiser concerning the LDS Use of Psalm 82 and the Gospel of John," *FARMS Review* 19/1 (2007): 267–313.

Lord that . . . confirmeth the word of his servant [the prophet], and performeth the counsel of his *messengers*" (Isaiah 44:24, 26). From Nephi's perspective, Isaiah served as an inspired witness of the Savior sent to declare an eminent message concerning both Christ and covenants.

When as a part of Isaiah's call narrative the high god called for volunteers from the council to address the crisis created by Israel's apostasy with the formulation "who will go for [the all-inclusive] *us*," Isaiah responded as a newly inducted member of the assembly, "Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8).[8] Each book of the Major Prophets contains examples of the symbolic use of the mouth as an allusion to prophetic participation in the divine council (Isaiah 6:7; Jeremiah 1:9; Ezekiel 3:1–3). The motif makes sense, for as Gregory Glazov explains, "a messenger is actually a spokesperson and the biblical metonym for this concept is 'mouth' (*peh*), as in: 'Thou shalt be as my mouth' (*kᵉpî tihyeh*) (Jer. 15:19, MT, LXX; cf. Hos. 6:5)."[9] The seraph's act of purifying the prophet's mouth in Isaiah 6 features important symbolic elements reflecting this insight. Through the act of a sacred mouth-cleansing ritual, Isaiah appears to have received a religious rite similar in purpose to the traditional Mesopotamian *mīs pî*, or "opening of the mouth," ritual. As Victor Hurowitz has noted, a comparative analysis between *mīs pî* and Isaiah 6 suggests a common motif. "A large portion of the [Mesopotamian] sources," writes Hurowitz, "raise the possibility that the washing of the mouth or the purity of the mouth has independent significance as a characteristic granting or symbolizing special divine or quasi-divine status to the person or object so designated. The pure mouth enables the person or object to stand before the gods or to enter the

8. S. B. Parker identifies the following motifs as apparent in most Near Eastern council stories, each of which one could associate with Isaiah 6: (1) crisis, (2) the high god calls for volunteers, (3) a winning proposal is made, (4) a savior/messenger is commissioned. See Simon Parker, "Council," in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 204–6.

9. Gregory Y. Glazov, *The Bridling of the Tongue and the Opening of the Mouth in Biblical Prophecy* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 28.

divine realm, or symbolizes a divine status."[10] By analogy, through a mouth-cleansing ritual at the altar, Isaiah received a divine status as one fully capable of participating in God's council and eventually of speaking his message. This use of traditional Near Eastern imagery connected with the deification of an idol as a representation of Isaiah himself becoming a "god" in the assembly works well in the context of Isaiah's message regarding Israel's violation of sacred covenants by means of idolatry.

The textual imagery in Isaiah's story of prophetic commission reflects the prophet's role as a messenger sent from God. In the Old Testament, the noun *mal'āk*, or "angel/messenger," frequently appears as the title associated with these representatives from the divine council. In a statement that illustrates the synonymous parallel between angels and the *ṣaba'*, or "host" (one of the biblical terms for the divine council), the Psalmist declares:

> Bless [praise] the Lord, ye his *angels*. . . .
> Bless [praise] ye the Lord, all ye his *hosts* (Psalm 103:20–21)

Throughout the Old Testament, divine messengers, or angels, often appear indistinguishable from human beings (see especially Genesis 19:1–22; 32:25–31; Judges 13:3–23). Therefore, the use of the term *mal'āk* for both human and divine messengers "results in some passages where it is unclear which of the two is intended if no further details are provided."[11] Following his interaction with the seraph in the story of his prophetic call narrative, Isaiah had become a *mal'āk*, or messenger of God, an angel delivering a dual message concerning the importance of God's covenants and Jesus Christ the healer.

10. Victor Hurowitz, "Isaiah's Impure Lips and Their Purification in Light of Akkadian Sources," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 60 (1989): 54. Tzvi Abusch has drawn a similar conclusion in his analysis of the antiwitchcraft compilation Maqlu, where the human speaker in the text "must become a member of the company of the stars, the heavenly host or retinue of the gods of heaven Anu and Antu, for only then can he serve as their emissary." "Ascent to the Stars in a Mesopotamian Ritual: Social Metaphor and Religious Experience," in *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys*, ed. John Collins and Michael Fishbane (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 22.

11. S. A. Meier, "Angel I," in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons*, 48.

Isaiah accepted God's sacred commission "Whom shall I send?" by volunteering to serve as a prophet/*mal'āk*. The account of this commissioning begins with the prophet's testimony, "I saw . . . the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up" (Isaiah 6:1). With these words, readers learn that as part of his prophetic commission, Isaiah experienced a throne theophany, or vision of God seated upon his throne. From an ancient Near Eastern perspective, a throne theophany signified that a divine judgment was about to be rendered, either against an individual or a nation/group.[12] The prophet Micaiah, for example, learned of a judgment about to be rendered against the wicked King Ahab via a throne theophany: "I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left" (1 Kings 22:19). In Isaiah 6, the judgment would occur against the kingdoms of Judah and Israel as a direct response of their violation of sacred covenants (vv. 10–13). This important theme appears connected with throne theophanies throughout antiquity.

Like Isaiah 6, the Book of Mormon features a throne theophany that prepares Old Testament readers familiar with the symbolic meaning of such events for a judgment rendered against the city of Jerusalem.[13] The account confirms the thematic meaning behind this traditional Old Testament occurrence when Nephi writes that on this sacred occasion his father Lehi learned that the holy city "should be destroyed" (1 Nephi 1:13). In a direct reflection of ancient biblical imagery, Lehi's prophetic call narrative denotes the impending judgment against the inhabitants of Jerusalem by presenting the prophet's vision of deity "sitting upon his throne" (1 Nephi 1:8). The Book of Mormon account of Lehi's prophetic commission has much in common with Isaiah 6. Reading Isaiah's call narrative in connec-

12. See Rolf Knierim, "The Vocation of Isaiah," *Vetus Testamentum* 18 (1968): 54–56.

13. For a previous analysis of Lehi's vision as a throne theophany, see Blake T. Ostler, "The Throne-Theophany and Prophetic Commission in 1 Nephi: A Form-Critical Analysis," *BYU Studies* 26/4 (1986): 67–95; and also John W. Welch, "The Calling of a Prophet," in *The Book of Mormon: First Nephi, The Doctrinal Foundation*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1988), 35–54.

tion with Lehi's experience provides important insights into Isaiah's commission.

First Nephi 1 states that Lehi was "carried away in a vision, even that he saw the heavens open, and he thought he saw God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of *angels* in the attitude of *singing* and *praising* their God" (1 Nephi 1:8)—that is, two actions that specifically involve the mouth. Having read from the book that revealed information regarding the destruction of Jerusalem, Lehi, like Isaiah, accepted a commission to serve as a messenger of the council testifying of Christ and covenants. In the words of Nephi, Lehi "began to prophesy and to declare unto them [the inhabitants of Jerusalem] concerning the things which he had both *seen* and *heard*" (v. 18). From a biblical perspective, the joint use of the verbs *to see* and *to hear* throughout Nephi's portrayal of the event often refers to the prophet's vision of the council (see, for example, Jeremiah 23:18).[14] Reading the introductory chapter of the Book of Mormon through the lens of Old Testament tradition, Lehi appears, like Isaiah, as a messenger sent to represent the assembly that had convened in order to pass judgment upon Jerusalem for a violation of God's holy covenants. Nephi's account may represent this subtle biblical motif through a reference to Lehi assuming the traditional role of council member, praising the high god of the assembly.

As noted, 1 Nephi 1:8 specifically identifies the members of the council "singing and praising their God" like the seraphim in Isaiah 6. Granted, Lehi's experience seems to occur on earth rather than in heaven; however, from a Near Eastern perspective, the line between these two spheres was not rigidly defined in terms of the divine assembly.[15] Scholars have long recognized that the word pair *heaven and earth* serves as merismus (in which two parts of a thing, sometimes polar opposites, stand for the whole) in ancient Near

14. See David Bokovoy, "The Bible vs. the Book of Mormon: Still Losing the Battle," *Farms Review* 18/1 (2006): 8.

15. Note that in his dream Lehi is on earth and the council members specifically come down out of heaven (see 1 Nephi 1:9–11).

Eastern sources referring to all of the gods of the assembly who occupy the two realms.[16] Northwest Semitic mythology concerning the divine assembly presents the high god El and his council meeting to govern the cosmos at the "sources of the two rivers," in the "midst of the fountains of the double-deep," and in the "domed tent" of El located on the earthly mountain of El, Mount Ṣapanu.[17] Thus the fact that in Lehi's vision the council appears to occupy both earthly and heavenly realms accords with traditional Near Eastern conceptions.

Following his interaction with the council mediator, Jesus Christ, Lehi could perform the very same act identified with the "numberless concourses of angels" (1 Nephi 1:8). Given the way biblical prophets like Isaiah were seen as official members of the council, Nephi's account may suggest that Lehi had become one of these angels, or messengers, praising God:

> Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty! Thy throne is high in the heavens, and thy power, and goodness, and mercy are over all the inhabitants of the earth; and, because thou art merciful, thou wilt not suffer those who come unto thee that they shall perish! (1 Nephi 1:14)

In this statement, Lehi fulfills the assignment specifically given the *ṣaba'*, or "host," in Psalm 103:20–21 to "praise/bless" the Lord. In what is perhaps an apparent attempt to deliberately highlight the analogy, Nephi returns to the same verb in his account that first described the action of the council: "And after this manner was the language of my father in the *praising* of his God" (1 Nephi 1:15). Hence, in a way quite comparable to Isaiah's experience, Lehi

16. See, for example, G. Ernest Wright, *The Old Testament against Its Environment* (London: SCM Press, 1950), 2:36; and Loren R. Fisher, "Abraham and His Priest-King," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 81/3 (1962): 267.

17. Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 36; Marjo C. A. Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds: Ugaritic and Hebrew Descriptions of the Divine* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1990), 370; Richard J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 98–160. See KTU 1.4; 1.2.III; 1.3.V.5–7; 1.6.I.32–34; 1.101.2; 1.3.III.29.

appears to have become a fully inducted member of the *mal'akim* to bear witness of the Book of Mormon's great dual focus. Like Isaiah, Lehi has seen God seated in council judgment upon his throne.

Though Nephi identifies Isaiah as an eyewitness of Christ, technically, from a Latter-day Saint perspective, the *specific* identity of the Lord who sat upon the judgment throne in Isaiah's vision (as well as in Micaiah's) remains somewhat of a mystery. Latter-day Saint commentators, including the authors of the LDS scriptural footnotes, have typically connected the enthroned deity with the premortal Jesus rather than God the Father.[18] For Latter-day Saints, this view would of course make doctrinal sense. Moreover, interpreting the Lord seated upon the throne as Jesus certainly works well with Nephi's observation that, like the rest of Isaiah's writings, Isaiah 6 (2 Nephi 16) provides a powerful testimony of Christ. Still, notwithstanding this possible reading, when Isaiah's call narrative is interpreted in harmony with Lehi's comparable dream in the Book of Mormon, a case can also be made for interpreting the Lord in Isaiah 6:1 as a reference to God the Father, with a symbolic allusion to Christ appearing later in the narrative.[19]

The impression that the divine being in Lehi's vision represents God the Father is quite clear via the fact that one of the praising angels surrounding the heavenly throne, whose "luster was above that of the sun at noon-day," descends in order to interact personally with Lehi (1 Nephi 1:9). That this angelic being is specifically Jesus Christ is apparent from the fact that twelve disciples follow

18. Donald W. Parry, Jay A. Parry, and Tina M. Peterson seem to reflect the general consensus on this matter by following the proposal in the LDS footnote stating "Jesus, who is called 'King of kings' (Rev. 19:16), sits on the throne in the throne room of the heavenly temple," in *Understanding Isaiah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1998), 66.

19. Isaiah 6:1 uses the basic Hebrew word *'adonai*, or Lord, to refer to God rather than the divine name *Jehovah*. However, as Keith H. Meservy notes, there are occasions in the Old Testament when, from a Latter-day Saint perspective, the name *Lord* (Jehovah) is applied to God the Father, not Jesus Christ; see Keith H. Meservy, "LORD = Jehovah," *Ensign*, June 2002, 29 n. 3. In verse 5, Isaiah proclaims, "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord (Yahweh) of Hosts"; however, again, the contemporary LDS standard of identifying Jehovah/Yahweh as "Jesus" cannot always be applied retroactively to LDS scripture; see, for example, Doctrine and Covenants 109:34, 42, 56, where Joseph Smith prays directly to Jehovah.

him, the brightest angel; like their impressive leader, they possess their own unique luster. According to the account, however, the brightness of the twelve following Christ exceeded only "that of the stars in the firmament" (v. 10). The comparison of the heavenly host with stars reflects traditional conceptions associated with the divine council in Near Eastern sources. Job 38:7, for example, connects the gods of the assembly with the "morning stars" via synonymous parallelism. Deuteronomy 4:19 refers to Yahweh's council as "the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven," and Northwest Semitic mythology identified the council as "the sons of God/El" (*bn il*) and the "assembly of the stars" (*phr kkbm*) (see KTU 1.10.I.4). Identifying Christ in Lehi's vision as the council being whose luster was above that of the sun at noonday parallels the Book of Abraham, which uses the brightest star in the universe, that is, Kolob, as a type for Christ:

> And I saw the stars, that they were very great, and that one of them was nearest unto the throne of God; and there were many great ones which were near unto it; And the Lord said unto me: These are the governing ones; and the name of the great one is Kolob, because it is near unto me, for I am the Lord thy God: I have set this one to govern all those which belong to the same order as that upon which thou standest. (Abraham 3:2–3)

By analogy, Isaiah, who experienced a similar vision to Lehi and whose narrative of prophetic commission can be shown to have had a direct literary impact upon Nephi's account, may have likewise witnessed God the Father as the "Lord" seated upon a throne. Clearly, as Nephi suggests, the account of Isaiah's prophetic commission bears witness of the importance of Christ and covenants, but it may do so in a manner not typically recognized by contemporary readers unfamiliar with certain technical biblical/Near Eastern conceptions. The symbolism in Isaiah's call narrative suggests that Isaiah experienced a sacred encounter very similar to the event described in 1 Nephi 1. A proper understanding of ancient conceptions con-

cerning Israelite prophets interacting with God and the heavenly council enhances this interpretation.

The traditional throne theophany that both Isaiah and Lehi experienced included a vision of the great heavenly council or assembly. As is typical for the Book of Mormon, the heavenly host described in Lehi's vision appears designated by the English word *angels*.[20] Relying upon an important Old Testament symbol, Isaiah, in turn, describes members of the heavenly host witnessed in *his* throne theophany as *seraphim*, a word that derives from the triliteral Hebraic root *śrp*, meaning "to burn."[21] In this sense, Isaiah's description of the heavenly host as "fiery/burning beings" reflects the description of the heavenly host in Lehi's vision, but it also echoes an insight shared by the Prophet Joseph Smith concerning the status of those who dwell in God's presence. On one occasion, the Prophet taught that those who abide with the Lord "are able to *dwell in everlasting burnings*, and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power."[22] The term *seraph* appears as a designation for the members of God's premortal assembly "before the world was made" in Doctrine and Covenants 38:1. This would suggest that *seraph* in LDS theology appears as a literary allusion to the sons of God. The fact that Isaiah describes the members of the assembly/host as "fiery beings" provides an important literary link with the Book of Mormon, which, as noted, specifically places emphasis upon the inherent luster of the heavenly host Lehi witnessed surrounding God's throne.

In his council vision, Lehi observed the "angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God" (1 Nephi 1:8). The account therefore parallels Isaiah's encounter, which depicts the members of the

20. See, for example, 1 Nephi 11:14 and 3 Nephi 17:24, which depict the heavens opening with angels descending from the midst, as well as 3 Nephi 11:8, where those gathered around the temple witness a man descend from the open heavens and assume the being is an angel.

21. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, study edition (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 2:1360.

22. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 347, emphasis added.

heavenly assembly surrounding the Lord's throne singing praises to God with such vigor that "the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried" (Isaiah 6:4). Though the Book of Mormon refers to members of the heavenly host by the English word *angels* and Isaiah describes the beings in his vision as *seraphim*, from an Old Testament perspective, both these terms can apply to members of the assembly serving in the council that surrounded God. As one biblical scholar has explained, "The conception of a host of heavenly beings, Yahweh's *entourage*, was always present in the faith of Israel; it never clashed with monotheism, but in fact emphasized Yahweh's majesty and uniqueness."[23] Under the direction of the high god, this divine council served an important judiciary role in ancient Semitic thought, including the writings of the Old Testament.[24]

As messengers commissioned by God, Israelite prophets like Isaiah are identified in the Old Testament as functioning participants in the celestial arraignments of the divine council.[25] The explicit connection between Israelite prophets and the assembly provides the conceptual background for Amos's declaration: "Indeed, my Lord God does nothing without having shown his council (*sôd*) to his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).[26] That a legitimate prophet participated in God's council, or *sôd*, is also apparent from Jeremiah's condemnation of false diviners: "who has stood in the council (*sôd*) of the Lord and has seen and heard his word" (Jeremiah 23:18).

23. C. J. Labuschagne, *The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 82–83.

24. See David E. Bokovoy, "שמעו והעידו בבית יעקב: Invoking the Council as Witnesses in Amos 3:13," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127/1 (2008): 37–51.

25. See Martti Nissinen, "Prophets and the Divine Council," in *Kein Land für sich allein: Studien zum Kulturkontakt in Kanaan, Israel/Palästina und Ebirnâri für Manfred Weippert*, ed. Ulrich Hübner and Ernest A. Knauf (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 4–19; for an analysis of Isaiah 40 as an example of a prophetic commission in the divine council, see Frank M. Cross Jr., "The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 12/4 (1953): 274–77; for an exploration of the role of prophets as mediators and messengers in the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon, see David E. Bokovoy and John A. Tvedtnes, *Testaments: Links between the Book of Mormon and the Hebrew Bible* (Tooele, UT: Heritage, 2003), 30–38.

26. The translations in this paragraph are mine from *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*.

In a thematically related narrative, Zechariah records a vision in which the high priest Joshua attends a meeting of the celestial court (Zechariah 3:1-7). Joshua receives a divine promise that through obedience to the Lord of Hosts, God will allow his prophet/priest to specifically "move among these attendants" (v. 7). Another text, Psalm 25, appears to indicate that any righteous human being could receive this unique privilege: "The *sôd* of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant" (Psalm 25:14). According to the Psalmist, the Lord is "a God dreaded in the council (*sôd*) of holy beings" (89:8). Therefore, "the members of this *sôd* around YHWH," notes H. J. Fabry, "are kept clearly on the terminological periphery, and finally their designation as *qᵉdôšîm* [saints/holy ones] even opens up the possibility that human beings also belong to this *sôd* (cf. Job 15:8; Ps. 89:8[7]), though this involves primarily the prophets (1 K. 22:19-22; Isa. 6; 40:1-8; Jer. 23:18,22; Am. 3:7)."[27] While each of these biblical sources proves important in analyzing the evidence concerning the conception of Israelite prophets interacting with the divine council, scholars have long recognized that the throne theophany in Isaiah 6 provides one of the most important narrative examples of this ancient tradition.

Since, as noted, prophets served as the mouth of God and his assembly, on occasion the Old Testament suggests that ethical purity of the mouth, like the type Isaiah received via the seraph, served as a prerequisite for entry into the heavenly council/temple, or the "holy hill" of the Lord: "Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?," asks the Psalmist. And the answer: "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue" (Psalm 15:1-3).[28] Isaiah's initial expression of "woe" reflects the absolute seriousness of entering the presence of God in a state of worthiness (Isaiah 6:5).

27. H. J. Fabry, "*sôd*," in *The Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 174.

28. See Glazov, *Bridling of the Tongue*, 122-23.

In part, Isaiah's reference to the fact that his experience occurred in "the year king Uzziah died" may have been intentionally designed to highlight the intense precariousness of Isaiah's situation. The account of Uzziah's death presented in 2 Chronicles associates the king's demise with a punishment from God on the occasion when Uzziah illicitly entered the presence of deity by means of the holy temple:

> But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord, that were valiant men: And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the Lord God. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar. (2 Chronicles 26:16-19)[29]

As one living among apostate people, Isaiah describes himself as "a man of unclean lips . . . [who] dwell[s] in the midst of a people of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5). Therefore, in order to join the council, Isaiah first needed to receive sanctification at the temple altar. Isaiah describes the event with these words:

> Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath

29. See Alexander Zeron, "Die Anmassung des Königs Usia im Lichte von Jesajas Berufung. Zu 2. Chr. 26,16-22 and Jes 6,1ff," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 33 (1977): 65-68.

> touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. (Isaiah 6:6–7)

Though the literal identity of this fiery angelic being is ambiguous in the text, one possible LDS reading would interpret the seraph who cleanses Isaiah as an allusion to Christ. Additional support for this interpretation appears in Jeremiah's comparable story of prophetic commission, where it is the Lord Yahweh himself who assumes the role of Isaiah's seraph: "The Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth" (Jeremiah 1:9).

Interpreting the Lord seated upon the throne as God the Father and the seraph who heals Isaiah as an allusion to Christ would allow the chapter to serve as an illustration of Isaiah's role as an eyewitness of Jesus who, as Nephi observed in his commentary, had been sent to testify of the Redeemer. In addition, this proposal strengthens the tie between Isaiah's and Lehi's call narratives, for as illustrated, Lehi's throne theophany specifically included a vision of God the Father seated upon the throne, followed by a personal interaction with Christ, one of the angelic host in the heavenly assembly. Moreover, interpreting the fiery being who interacts personally with Isaiah as a reference to Christ works well with the fact that the seraph that cleanses Isaiah, helping the Israelite prophet to become worthy to stand in God's presence, may function as a symbolic allusion to the seraph in Numbers 21:8 that heals the children of Israel. According to the account in Numbers, "The Lord *sent* fiery serpents (*hanḥāšîm haśĕrāpîm*) among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died" (Numbers 21:6). From a literary perspective, God's sending of the serpents described as seraphim to inflict judgment upon Israel links with God's question "Whom shall I send?" in Isaiah's call narrative. Hence, an LDS reading of this chapter, which associates God the Father with the Lord seated upon the throne, still allows for Isaiah to serve as an eyewitness of Jesus and for the call narrative itself to convey an important, albeit symbolic, message concerning Christ.

Unlike Isaiah's account of prophetic commission, the story of judgment in Numbers 21 allows for Israel to repent and become saved through a symbolic representation of the seraphim that caused their affliction: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent (*śārāp*, singular of seraphim), and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live" (Numbers 21:8). Significantly, in terms of the symbolism featured in Isaiah's account, this fiery serpent that possessed the ability to save those who would look upon the image with faith appears specifically designated as a seraph, the singular form of the seraphim in Isaiah's vision.[30] Thus, the seraph that heals Isaiah may function as a symbolic allusion to the seraph that saves Israel in Numbers 21. Both New Testament and Book of Mormon authors refer to this seraph as a type for Christ (see John 3:14; Helaman 8:14–15). Through parallelism, the seraph in Isaiah's vision can be read by Latter-day Saints as an allusion to Jesus, the heavenly being who possesses the power to make one holy in the presence of God. The seraph therefore may function as an allusion to one of the two themes Nephi identified in the writings of the Old Testament prophet.

In addition to its witness of Christ as purifier, the specific message the Lord gave Isaiah in his prophetic commission to share as his word illustrates the connection between Isaiah 6 and the importance of honoring covenants, particularly those connected with proper worship. After Isaiah volunteered to represent the assembly as messenger, the Lord informed Isaiah that as a result of covenant violations, Israel would be destroyed:

> And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with

30. Koehler and Baumgartner, *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 1360.

> their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. (Isaiah 6:9–10)

Hence, as one responsible to symbolically afflict Judah/Israel with his words, Isaiah served a similar role as the fiery serpents in Numbers 21.

From a symbolic perspective, Isaiah's commission, which states, "hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not" (Isaiah 6:9), suggests that by violating their covenant not to participate in idol worship, the people were to be treated like the images they had chosen to worship.[31] As witnessed in Psalm 135, imagery such as hearing yet not *truly* understanding and seeing while not *really* perceiving represents a typical prophetic taunt raised against Near Eastern idols:

> The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths. They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them. (Psalm 135:15–18)

Similar imagery connecting these weaknesses with idols appears explicit in Isaiah 42:17–20:

> They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods. Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see. Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant? Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not.

An idol representing a false god did not truly possess the ability to see or to hear. In essence, Isaiah's message in chapter 6 is that the

31. G. K. Beale, "Isaiah VI 9-13: A Retributive Taunt against Idolatry," *Vetus Testamentum* 41/3 (1991): 257–78.

people have symbolically become what they worship, a fact supported by Isaiah chapter 1, which tells Israel she shall become an oak, or terebinth, that is, the material used in the production of an idol:

> For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen. For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water. (Isaiah 1:29–30)

The direct literary allusion to this imagery in Isaiah 6 appears in verse 13, which speaks of Israel's remnant as a "tenth" that will return and be burned again as a "terebinth and as an oak whose substance is in them." As G. K. Beale has noted:

> Expressions describing Israel as "having ears but not hearing" (6:9–10) and "like a burning tree" (6:13) are best understood as metaphors of idolatry which are applied to the disobedient nation in order to emphasize that they would be punished for their idol worship by being judged in the same manner as their idols.[32]

According to the book of Deuteronomy, God placed his chosen people under covenant to avoid the illicit worship of these foreign images. The biblical commandment concerning the way Israel was to treat these idols was very specific:

> Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree: And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place. (Deuteronomy 12:2–3; compare 7:24–26)

Deuteronomy also specifies the death penalty for those Israelites who violated this sacred covenant (Deuteronomy 17:2–5). Deutero-

32. Beale, "Isaiah VI 9–13," 272.

nomic law specifically mandated the entire destruction of a city seduced into worshipping idols by means of burning (Deuteronomy 13:12–18). Hence, this legal background provides the justification for Isaiah's severe message of impending judgment. Israel had broken her covenant with the Lord and would be treated like the idols she worshipped. No doubt it was a difficult, yet important, message for Isaiah to share.

As witnessed through this essay, Isaiah 6 features a number of profound religious and literary symbols. These motifs play an especially important role in terms of defining Isaiah's prophetic call narrative and the message he would impart. Though Isaiah's complex use of Near Eastern conceptions can prove challenging for the modern interpreter, Latter-day Saints can take considerable delight in Isaiah's words through insights offered via contemporary biblical scholarship, together with religious truths obtained through the Book of Mormon. Using the Book of Mormon as a guide, Isaiah can be seen to present a remarkable message concerning the themes of Christ and covenants.

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"According to Their Language, unto Their Understanding": The Cultural Context of Hierophanies and Theophanies in Latter-day Saint Canon

Mark Alan Wright

Latter-day Saint canon is replete with manifestations of the sacred. A general term for a manifestation of the sacred is *hierophany*, whereas the appearance of a deity is referred to as a *theophany*.[1] Scholars of religion note that hierophanies are products of their culture; in essence, a culture both defines and is defined by its hierophanies.[2] The peoples and cultures described in Latter-day Saint canonical texts did not exist in cultural vacuums. They were surrounded by, and at times entrenched within, other nations; sometimes the people were generalized as Gentiles or pagans and at other times were specified by name, such as Babylonians, Egyptians, or Lamanites. It was within these contexts that ancient prophets received revelations and were witnesses to divine power. Each prophet was a product of his own culture, and the manner in which the divine was manifested to the prophets was largely defined by the semiotics of their culture.

Language is not limited to the words we use; it also entails signs, symbols, and bodily gestures that are imbued with meaning

1. In essence, all theophanies (the appearance of a god) are hierophanies (manifestation of the sacred), but not all hierophanies are theophanies.

2. Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1959), 11.

Studies in the Bible and Antiquity 3 (2011): 51–65.

by the cultures that produced them.[3] As with spoken language, symbolic and gestural languages are culturally specific and can be fully understood only by those entrenched within that particular culture. The Book of Mormon prophet Nephi appears to have understood this concept and noted that the Lord "speaketh unto men according to their language, unto their understanding" (2 Nephi 31:3). This is echoed in modern revelation, as Doctrine and Covenants 1:24 declares: "Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding." More recently, the late LDS apostle Marion G. Romney reaffirmed, "Revelation comes to men in an unlimited number of ways."[4]

Scholars can place the events described in the Old Testament[5] within their cultural context by turning to the wealth of information found in ancient Near Eastern texts, which range from intimate personal letters to sweeping historical epics. We can now do likewise for the Book of Mormon, thanks to recent advances in scholarship that have provided translations of hundreds of ancient glyphic texts and interpretations of richly detailed works of art that depict many aspects of ancient Mesoamerican beliefs and practices.[6] Although LDS canon is rife with accounts of hierophanic experiences, this discussion will be limited to a few examples from the Book of Mormon and the Old Testament.

Storm Hierophanies

The way in which deities were conceptualized anciently was not static and appears to have been shaped in different eras accord-

3. Yu. M. Lotman, B. A. Uspensky, and George Mihaychuk, "On the Semiotic Mechanism of Culture," *New Literary History* 9/2 (1978): 211–32.

4. Marion G. Romney, "Revelation," *Improvement Era*, June 1964, 506.

5. Although the Society of Biblical Literature recommends using the term *Hebrew Bible* rather than *Old Testament* to avoid bias, the focus of this work is on LDS canonical texts, so the use of the term *Old Testament* is appropriate.

6. Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2007); John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1985).

ing to the most pressing concerns of a particular culture. The great Assyriologist Thorkild Jacobsen argues that in Mesopotamia during the fourth millennium BC the primary concern was famine, so natural phenomena that were linked to agricultural fertility were worshipped as incorporeal deities specific to a particular phenomenon such as rain or lightning. By the third millennium, the biggest threat to the survival of a nation was war, so the gods gradually transformed into anthropomorphized warriors; rather than being the actual phenomena, they became humanlike rulers over such phenomena or used them as their weapons. By the second millennium, religious worship appears to have narrowed its focus from concerns of group survival to more individual religious expression, which reflects the type of worship we find in the Old Testament.[7]

The picture that emerges is that local gods were custom-made for local conditions and local concerns. For example, the highest-ranking gods of the Canaanites were the storm gods, which were logical choices for a land plagued by tempests. Because storms were so fierce, so too were the gods, and they came to be thought of as mighty warriors who brandished powerful weapons in their hands, such as lightning or fiery maces. Storms, then, were hierophanies to cultures who worshipped storm gods, and lightning served as a menacing manifestation of the power their gods wielded.

In ancient Mesopotamia, lightning was deified as the god Birqu and essentially functioned as the weapon of the storm god Adad. Similarly, Baal, the god of Ugarit, is depicted holding a lightning spear in his right hand and a war mace in the other.[8] In the Old Testament, one of Yahweh's many roles is that of storm god, which is closely linked with his role as a divine warrior. Similar to Birqu and Baal, he hurls arrows of lightning at his enemies. For example, the prophet Zechariah assures Zion they will be protected, for "the

7. Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976).

8. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, eds., *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 519; compare Alberto R. W. Green, *The Storm-God in the Ancient Near East* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 199.

Lord will appear over them; his arrow will flash like lightning. The Sovereign Lord will sound the trumpet; he will march in the storms of the south, and the Lord Almighty will shield them" (Zechariah 9:14–15 NIV; see also 2 Samuel 22:15; Psalms 18:14; 144:6).

Lightning as a manifestation of the Lord's power is a common feature of both the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon. However, it appears to serve a different function in the two contexts, and an analysis of the vastly different cultural settings reveals why. In the Old Testament, lightning generally functions as both a weapon in the Lord's arsenal, as discussed above, but also as a standard feature associated with theophanies, typically grouped with thunder, clouds, and earthquakes.[9] For example, when Yahweh appeared to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai, there was "thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain," after which "Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently"; the grand theophany reached its culmination when "the Lord descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain" (Exodus 19:16–20 NIV).

Lightning had far different connotations in the New World, specifically in Mesoamerica. Unlike the ancient Near Eastern concept of lightning as a dangerous and destructive weapon in the hands of a storm god, in Mesoamerica lightning was associated with fertility and regeneration, even resurrection.[10] A central tenet of ancient Maya theology was that the maize god died, was buried, and was resurrected when lightning cracked open the surface of the earth, which was variously conceptualized as a mountain, a rock, or even a giant turtle carapace.[11] Notably, the Book of Mormon mentions

9. Van der Toorn, Becking, van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, 519.

10. Mary Ellen Miller and Karl Taube, *The Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya: An Illustrated Dictionary of Mesoamerican Religion* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 106.

11. Frauke Sachse and Allen J. Christenson, "Tulan and the Other Side of the Sea: Unraveling a Metaphorical Concept from Colonial Guatemalan Highland Sources";

lightning ten times, and each instance directly refers to the time of destruction at the death of Christ, either by way of prophecy or in reference to its fulfillment (1 Nephi 12:4; 1 Nephi 19:11; 2 Nephi 26:6; Helaman 14:21, 26–27; 3 Nephi 8:7, 12, 17, 19). In light of the cultural context within which the Book of Mormon likely took place, it may be more appropriate to associate lightning with Christ's resurrection rather than his death. Interestingly, Samuel the Lamanite prophesied that Christ would not be the only one to resurrect amidst the lightnings; "many graves shall be opened, and shall yield up many of their dead; and many saints shall appear unto many" (Helaman 14:25).

Storms and lightning, then, were both hierophanies in the sense that they manifested divine power, but the meaning behind these sacred manifestations varied greatly between the peoples of the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon. Rather than seeing this as a contradiction or inconsistency in divine symbolism, it is rather a reaffirmation that hierophanies are culturally embedded phenomena.

Abrahamic Theophanies and Hierophanies

Yahweh referred to Abraham as "my friend" (Isaiah 41:8; see also James 2:23), a relationship evidenced by the frequent interactions between the two. Some of these interactions are difficult to classify, as they lay somewhere along the continuum between theophanies and heirophanies. At times Abraham is spoken to in vision (Genesis 15:1), but at other times he simply hears the voice of the Lord with no fanfare of thunder or quaking of the earth (Genesis 12:1–3; 22:1–2). His sacrifice of his son Isaac was halted by "the angel of the Lord" (Genesis 22:11), who spoke by virtue of divine investiture of authority, and when Abraham himself was about to be sacrificed by the priests of Elkenah he was visited by the "angel of his presence" (Abraham 1:15), which may refer to the preincarnate Jesus Christ.[12]

http://www.mesoweb.com/articles/tulan/Tulan.pdf (accessed 13 August 2008).

12. Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* (Louisville, KY: Westminster, 1992).

Abraham witnessed Yahweh's wrathful judgment as it was poured out upon Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:28), in addition to his tender mercies in giving the patriarch a son in his old age (Genesis 21:1–2).

Abraham was entrenched within a variety of cultures throughout his long life. He was born in Ur of the Chaldees (Genesis 11:26–28), migrated to Haran (Genesis 11:31), journeyed to Canaan (Genesis 12:1–5), settled in Hebron (Genesis 13:18), and sojourned in Egypt (see Genesis 11–20; Abraham 1–3). From each of these locales he acquired cultural knowledge and learned much concerning foreign gods and the relationship the people maintained with them. Indeed, while he was residing in the land of the Chaldeans he learned firsthand that the heathen gods were offered human sacrifices when he found himself upon an altar (Abraham 1:1–15). His upbringing sets the stage for what would become one of the defining moments in Abraham's life, the command to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac.

Students of the Bible sometimes struggle to comprehend Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac, but by taking into account his own experiences with the divine, combined with his multicultural background, his attitude becomes perhaps a bit more understandable. Human sacrifice is attested in the ancient Near East, including specific references to child sacrifice. For example, a number of Assyrian legal documents "contain penalty formulas which demand that the person who breaks the contract can redeem himself only by burning his eldest child on the altar of a temple."[13] This is of particular interest in examining the life of Abraham as he assumed the roles of both would-be sacrificer in the case of his son Isaac and would-be sacrificial victim in a sacrifice in which his father, Terah, was involved (Abraham 1:30).

Although human sacrifice seems reprehensible to modern readers, Abraham had been given evidence that Yahweh did at times require human sacrifice. He stood as witness when the Lord's judgment came upon Sodom and Gomorrah in the form of fire and

13. William J. Adams Jr., "Human Sacrifice and the Book of Abraham," *BYU Studies* 9/4 (1969): 473–80.

brimstone, and the next morning he beheld that "the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (Genesis 19:28). The only other instance where the "smoke of a furnace" simile is used in the Bible is when the Lord descends upon Mount Sinai in the grand theophany to Moses and the children of Israel, as discussed above. Significantly, the Hebrew word used to denote the smoke arising from Sodom and Gomorrah (קיטר, *qîṭōr*) did not refer to common smoke, but rather to the sacred smoke created by ritual sacrifices, suggesting that Sodom and Gomorrah were effectually made burnt offerings unto the Lord.[14]

Further adding to Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his beloved son was his understanding of the resurrection. Far from being unique to the Christian tradition, the hope for resurrection was had among other ancient Near Eastern peoples, especially in Egypt, where Abraham sojourned. According to later traditions, after Abraham himself had miraculously escaped the sacrificer's knife, he had a hierophanic experience as he was catapulted into a fire, "which thereupon was instantly transformed into a blooming bower of delicious flowers and fruits amid which Abraham sat enjoying himself in angelic company."[15] This account fits comfortably among the visual language of ancient Near Eastern art that depicts a "revived or resurrected king sitting beneath an arbor amid the delights of the feast at the New Year."[16] According to Hugh Nibley, St. Jerome—an early Christian scholar who began writing in the late fourth century AD—described "a Jewish belief that Abraham's rescue from the altar was the equivalent of a rebirth or resurrection."[17] Whether or not these late traditions about Abraham's own triumph over death at the time of his sacrifice have any merit, his understanding of the plan of salvation would have assuaged any fears he had concerning the sacrifice of his son. It had been revealed to him by Jehovah

14. Jeffrey J. Niehaus, *God at Sinai: Covenant and Theophany in the Bible and Ancient Near East* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 196.

15. Hugh Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 2000), 328.

16. Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt*, 328.

17. Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt*, 328.

during a face-to-face theophany (Abraham 3:11) that "they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever" (Abraham 3:26). Beyond the cultural background for Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac that we have briefly discussed here, the apostle Paul concisely summarized Abraham's theological rationale when he concluded, "Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death" (Hebrews 11:19 NIV).

Prophetic Commissions in the Old and New Worlds

In the Old Testament and its pseudepigrapha,[18] the way in which prophets are commissioned by Yahweh tends to be somewhat formulaic, as comparing the prophetic calls of Micaiah (1 Kings 22:19–22), Isaiah (Isaiah 6), and Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1) demonstrates. As Blake Ostler summarizes:

> The pattern that emerges . . . is that of a righteous individual who, concerned for the wickedness of his people, prays and weeps on their behalf until physically overcome by the spirit of revelation and who, carried away in a vision, sees God enthroned amidst the heavenly council. He also receives a heavenly book which explains the secrets of the universe and the impending disaster of his people. The vision is completed with a call or commission extended from the heavenly council to warn his people of their impending destruction if they will not repent; however, he is also forewarned that his people will reject him.[19]

18. Pseudepigrapha refers to Jewish religious works that were written from circa 200 BC to AD 200.

19. Blake T. Ostler, "The Throne-Theophany and Prophetic Commission in 1 Nephi: A Form-Critical Analysis," *BYU Studies* 26/4 (1986): 67–95.

Some of these elements appear to be aspects of a shared cultural language among neighboring ancient Near Eastern cultures. Ostler explains that

> the idea of the heavenly book was pivotal in Israel where Moses received the Law on heavenly tablets from God on Sinai. It may have become associated with the commission narrative because of the role of fixing the fates on the divine tables at the Babylonian Akitu festival.[20]

Ostler further demonstrates that Lehi's prophetic calling fits within the historical context of preexilic Israel. This is to be expected, as Lehi had his vision while he was yet at Jerusalem, which spurred his flight into the desert a decade prior to the Babylonian captivity.

Unlike Lehi, later prophets in the Book of Mormon—those grounded firmly in the New World—did not receive their commissions according to this ancient Near Eastern pattern; rather, their calls conform to a pattern that can be detected in ancient Mesoamerica. Elements of this pattern can be seen throughout the Book of Mormon in the accounts of individuals who are overcome by the Spirit to the point that they fall to the earth as if dead and ultimately recover and through that process become spiritually reborn and subsequently prophesy concerning Jesus Christ. This process may seem foreign to modern readers, and indeed it should, since it is not part of our "cultural language" and its deeper meaning is lost in translation. But to the Nephites, living in an ancient Mesoamerican setting, falling to the earth as if dead is pregnant with meaning. Modern Western culture would classify such episodes as near-death experiences,[21] but an examination of the specific cultural context in which the Book of Mormon events likely took place provides a more nuanced understanding of this obscure practice.

Ethnographic work among traditional societies has shown that holy men of various types—broadly referred to as shamans—

20. Ostler, "Throne-Theophany," 80.

21. Kevin Christensen, "'Nigh unto Death': NDE Research and the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 2/1 (1993): 1–20.

commonly receive their calling near-death experiences. Anthropologist Frank J. Lipp notes in reference to modern Mesoamerican shaman-priests called *curanderos* (curers or healers): "Divine election occurs within a context of some physical or emotional crisis," such as "a severe, chronic, or life-threatening sickness."[22] While in this state they have a vivid dream where "the individual is informed by a spirit being," such as an angel, that "she or he will receive the divine gift to cure illnesses."[23] The healing process is often aided by the prayers and ritual actions of another *curandero* on behalf of the critically ill individuals. Once recovered, the newly called shamans possess a power and authority that is recognized by the members of their community because of their shared cultural language. According to Lipp, "During the initiatory dream vision the individual may experience temporary insanity or unconsciousness," and it is through this near-death experience that "he or she is reborn as a person with shamanic power and knowledge."[24]

The Book of Mormon similarly describes individuals who fall to the earth as if dead and then recover and become healers. Beyond the examples where physical infirmities are removed, the Book of Mormon also provides numerous examples of individuals who are spiritually healed. It would be a mistake to place physical and spiritual healing in separate categories; the two concepts are equated in LDS canon and in the ancient mind. For example, during Christ's visit to the Nephites in the land Bountiful, beyond the healing he provided to the "lame, or blind, or halt, or maimed, or leprous, or that are withered, or that are deaf, or that are afflicted in any manner" (3 Nephi 17:7), he taught his disciples that they must minister to the unworthy with the hope that "they will return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I shall heal them" (3 Nephi 18:32). Centuries earlier, Abinadi quoted Isaiah's message

22. Frank J. Lipp, "A Comparative Analysis of Southern Mexican and Guatemalan Shamans," in *Mesoamerican Healers*, ed. Brad R. Huber and Alan R. Sandstrom (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 103.

23. Lipp, "Southern Mexican and Guatemalan Shamans," 103.

24. Lipp, "Southern Mexican and Guatemalan Shamans," 104.

that it is "with his stripes we are healed" (Mosiah 14:5) from our sins and our iniquities.

The first recorded instance in the Book of Mormon where someone falls to the earth as if dead in connection with a prophetic commission is that of Alma the Younger. As he was going about with the sons of Mosiah to destroy the church, an angel came down to "stop [them] by the way" (Alma 36:6; compare Mosiah 27:10). Significantly, when the angel first spoke to them as with a voice of thunder, they "understood not the words which he spake unto them" (Mosiah 27:12). The angel "cried again," and this time his words were plainly understood (Mosiah 27:13; compare 3 Nephi 11:3–6). After being threatened with destruction, Alma fell to earth and became so weak that he could neither speak nor move his hands (Mosiah 27:19). After Alma's helpless body was carried back to his home by his friends (who had also fallen to the earth but were not the focus of the angel's rebuke and therefore quickly recovered), Alma's father rejoiced, acknowledging the Lord's hand in what had transpired. What his father did next is significant: "He caused that the priests should assemble themselves together; and they began to fast, and to pray to the Lord their God that he would open the mouth of Alma, that he might speak, and also that his limbs might receive their strength" (Mosiah 27:22). These priests were acting in their capacity as *curanderos,* or healers. Alma was healed, not just physically, but spiritually as well. His exquisite and bitter pain was replaced by exquisite and sweet joy (Alma 36:21). He clearly linked his physical healing with his spiritual healing when he declared, "My limbs did receive their strength again, and I stood upon my feet, and did manifest unto the people that I had been born of God" (Alma 36:23).

Because Alma had been healed, both body and soul, he now possessed a culturally recognized power to heal. This recognition would have extended beyond just the believing Nephites who had a clear understanding of the priesthood that Alma held (see Alma 13). For example, Zeezrom was a contentious and apostate Nephite from Ammonihah who knew nothing concerning true points of

doctrine (Alma 12:8). After contending with Alma and Amulek, Zeezrom became convinced of his own guilt and endured a painful repentance process. Interestingly, the language used to convey Zeezrom's situation intentionally parallels that used to describe Alma's experience. Alma 14:6 tells us that Zeezrom "knew concerning the blindness of the minds, which he had caused among the people by his lying words; and his soul began to be *harrowed up* under a consciousness of his own guilt; yea, he began to be encircled about by the *pains of hell*," after which he lay "sick, being very low with a burning fever; and his mind also was exceedingly sore because of his iniquities" (Alma 15:5). Just as Alma was snatched out of "an everlasting burning" (Mosiah 27:28), Zeezrom was "scorched with a burning heat" that was caused by "the great tribulations of his mind on account of his wickedness" (Alma 15:3) and his fear that Alma and Amulek "had been slain because of his own iniquity" (Alma 15:3), much as Alma was concerned that he "had murdered many of [God's] children, or rather led them away unto destruction" (Alma 36:14).

Despite the parallels in their accounts, Zeezrom's soul does not appear to have been carried away in vision, and his conversion and healing come at the hands of men rather than from some interaction he had with the Lord while in his near-death state. We instead read that Zeezrom besought healing from both Alma and Amulek. However, the only one to take Zeezrom by the hand was Alma, as he had become the culturally (and spiritually) recognized healer by virtue of his own near-death experience. Alma turned Zeezrom's focus back to the Lord when he asked, "Believest thou in the power of Christ unto salvation?" and then assured him that "if thou believest in the redemption of Christ thou canst be healed." Alma wanted to be clear that healing came through Christ and not through his own power, so he cried, "O Lord our God, have mercy on this man, and heal him according to his faith which is in Christ." His plea was heard, and Zeezrom "leaped upon his feet, and began to walk" (Alma 15:6–11).

At the same time Alma was preaching to reclaim apostate Nephites within the greater lands of Zarahemla, Ammon was in the land of Nephi trying to win new converts in Lamanite territory. Through his acts of humility and dedicated service, he gained audience with Lamoni, king over the land of Ishmael (Alma 17:21). Ammon's preaching opened the spiritual eyes of King Lamoni, and for the first time he saw his need for a redeemer. The king humbled himself and cried unto the Lord for mercy, at which point he fell as if he were dead (Alma 18:42). Lamoni was seemingly on his deathbed for three days and was even believed to be dead by many of his people (Alma 19:5). Ammon understood that this was not the case, as he had previously witnessed Alma's equivalent experience. The similarity between Lamoni's and Alma's experiences demonstrates the larger cultural language that was shared by Nephites and Lamanites in their ancient Mesoamerican setting.

The New Testament account of Saul's conversion experience on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3–9) may bear superficial similarities to Alma's experience in the Book of Mormon, but there is a significant difference. We have no record that Saul had a near-death experience in the sense that his soul embarked on a spirit journey while his body lay suffering (as did Alma and Lamoni), which is a defining factor in Mesoamerican shamanic calls. While Lamoni was lying as if dead, his wife was truly concerned for his well-being. Acting on faith in Ammon's word alone, she stayed by Lamoni's side all that night and anxiously waited for him to emerge from his deep sleep. When he arose, he testified, "I have seen my Redeemer," and he prophesied that "he shall come forth, and be born of a woman, and he shall redeem all mankind who believe on his name." Lamoni then sinks to the earth again, being overcome by the Spirit (Alma 19:13). The queen was likewise filled with the Spirit and also fell to the earth, followed by Ammon; finally even the servants of the king were overwhelmed by the Spirit. At the apex of the narrative, Ammon, the king, the queen, and their servants were all prostrate upon the earth, "and they all lay there as though they were dead" (Alma 19:18). When the queen was raised from the ground by her

faithful handmaid Abish, she testified that she had interacted with the Lord by proclaiming, "O blessed Jesus, who has saved me from an awful hell!" (Alma 19:29). Even the king's servants who had fallen united their testimony with Ammon's to declare "they had seen angels and conversed with them" (Alma 19:34). King Lamoni, his wife, Ammon, and the king's servants all "administered" unto the gathered crowd (Alma 19:33), which action carries connotations of healing. While their bodies had lain motionless, their spirits were busy interacting with the Lord and increasing in culturally recognized spiritual potency.

Ammon appears to have fallen to the earth more than any other individual in the Book of Mormon. His initial conversion experience occurred when the angel rebuked him and his brothers along with Alma (Mosiah 27:12). As discussed above, he fell to the earth again when King Lamoni and his wife were converted (Alma 19:14) and once more when he was overcome with joy as he and his brothers chanced upon Alma in the wilderness (Alma 27:17). In his Mesoamerican context, Ammon's experiences—rather than being viewed as a sign of physical weakness or perhaps a case of spiritual hypersensitivity—would actually have imbued him with more spiritual potency as a holy man. Among the modern Tzotzil Maya of Chamula, for example, "the ability to cure illnesses of increasing severity is dependent upon the number of times the shaman has lost consciousness in a trance."[25]

Conclusion

The hierophanies recorded in LDS canon directly reflect the unique cultural background of the individuals who witnessed them. By examining the cultural context in which such manifestations occur, modern readers can obtain a greater understanding of the revelatory process recounted in these texts. This study has briefly examined the cultural context behind a few divine manifestations, primarily from the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon,

25. Lipp, "Guatemalan Shamans," 104.

but the same approach can fruitfully be employed in interpreting hierophanic experiences recorded in other canonical texts. Modern Latter-day Saints believe in continuing revelation, collectively and individually, and cultural context continues to influence the manner in which divine manifestations are received by individuals entrenched within the various cultures that comprise the worldwide church.

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A Text-Critical Comparison of the King James New Testament with Certain Modern Translations

Lincoln H. Blumell

With 2011 marking the 400th anniversary of the first edition of the King James Version (KJV), much has been written in celebration of this remarkable Bible that has had such a profound impact on Western society.[1] It seems especially fitting, however, to reconsider the venerable KJV from the perspective of biblical studies. Toward that end, I wish to explore how the New Testament (NT) text of the KJV and certain modern versions differ. My aim is not to examine translational differences but, rather, to identify and evaluate the text-critical differences between them.[2]

I thank the two anonymous reviewers of this essay for their candid yet insightful feedback. I also thank the editors of this journal, Carl Griffin and Brian Hauglid, for their many helpful suggestions.

1. On the KJV's impact on Western society, be it theological, linguistic, or political, see Robert Alter, *Pen of Iron: American Prose and the King James Bible* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 227–50, 461–98; Alister E. McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2001); and Benson Bobrick, *Wide as the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001).

2. The process or method of evaluating differences and variants between biblical manuscripts in an attempt to determine the most likely original reading is known as textual criticism. For an introduction to biblical textual criticism, see Bart D. Ehrman,

To illustrate what I mean by "text-critical" differences, let's consider Mark 7:16, which in the KJV reads, "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear." If we turn to this verse in one of the many modern English versions, chances are that we will see nothing but the verse number and a dash. In fact, in most modern translations of the NT, this verse does not exist. Some might assume that the verse was deliberately suppressed,[3] but the reason for this omission is not that sinister. Rather, the reason is that many ancient Greek manuscripts have no equivalent of Mark 7:16 but skip from verse 15 to verse 17.[4] Thus the Greek subtext of a particular NT version can have a significant impact on the English rendering of the text.

This study will examine twenty-two NT passages that appear in the KJV but are omitted in most modern translations. In evaluating whether the KJV readings for select verses can be defended by ancient manuscript evidence or ought to be rejected as later interpolations, I do not intend this study to be either an apology for the KJV or an indictment of its NT text. While the KJV NT text has come under increasing scholarly criticism over the past century for certain readings that cannot be considered authentic or original, I will show that it also contains readings that, though omitted in various modern translations, are likely to be authentic. In setting forth and clarifying the text-critical differences between the KJV

The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writers, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 487–99; and Paul D. Wegner, *A Student's Guide to Textual Criticism of the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006).

3. This line of reasoning may derive from 1 Nephi 13:28–29, where Nephi reports that many "plain and precious things" have been expunged from the Bible. In some cases such corruption could certainly have included the addition of spurious material.

4. For convenience and per modern convention, all NT material will be cited by chapter and verse. It should be noted, however, that the versification of the NT is a relatively modern phenomenon. The versification followed by the KJV NT and most modern translations was first devised by the famous Parisian printer Robert Estienne (1503–1559) in his 1551 printed edition of the Greek NT. Chapter divisions as we know them today in the NT were first introduced into the Latin Vulgate in the thirteenth century by Stephen Langton (ca. 1150–1228), the Archbishop of Canterbury. See Robert L. Omanson, *A Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 2006), 14.

NT and modern editions, I simply hope to inform readers of the KJV NT about its text-critical strengths as well as its weaknesses.

The Greek Text of the King James Bible[5]

When King James I of England decided to sponsor a new Bible translation at the Hampton Court Conference in January 1604, one of the first stipulations he made was that the translation would be based not on the Latin Vulgate but on original-language manuscripts—Hebrew for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament: "A translation be made of the whole Bible, as consonant as can be to the original Hebrew and Greek; and this is to be set out and printed, without any marginal notes, and only to be used in all churches of England in time of divine service."[6] The Greek text that the translators settled on was from an edition of the NT published in 1589 by the French Calvinist Theodore de Beza (1519–1605).[7] Beza's Greek NT text was based largely on the 1522 Greek NT text published by the famous Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus (1466–1536).[8] Because Erasmus's edition, which would come to be known as the "Received Text" (Lat. *Textus Receptus*), is the Greek textual basis for the KJV NT, it is worth examination.[9]

5. A more detailed sketch of this section can be found in Lincoln Blumell, "The New Testament Text of the King James Bible," in *The King James Bible and the Restoration*, ed. Kent P. Jackson (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center and Deseret Book, 2011), 61–74.

6. McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 163–64. In collaboration with Richard Bancroft, the Bishop of London, King James drew up a series of fifteen guidelines for the translators. For these guidelines, see McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 172–75.

7. Beza produced nine different editions of the Greek NT. His tenth edition was published posthumously in 1611. Only four of Beza's editions (1565, 1582, 1588–89, and 1598) were independent editions, the others being simply smaller reprints. See Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 151–52.

8. Beza relied heavily on Robert Estienne's 1551 edition of the Greek NT, which in turn was essentially based on an earlier edition by Erasmus.

9. The term *Textus Receptus*, used to designate the Greek NT text essentially produced by Erasmus, was first coined in 1633 by two Dutch printers, Bonaventure and Abraham Elzevir. In the preface to a 1633 edition of a Greek NT they printed, one based on an earlier edition by Beza, they wrote, "Therefore you have [dear reader]

After the invention of the printing press in the mid-fifteenth century, the first book to be widely printed was the Bible, specifically the Latin Vulgate used by the Roman Catholic Church. Half a century later, an enterprising printer named Johannes Froben from Basel, Switzerland, approached Erasmus in the summer of 1514 about preparing a Greek edition of the NT for publication. After some delays and additional goading, Erasmus finally agreed to the project, and in the following summer he began the work of putting together a Greek New Testament in Basel. The only Greek manuscripts available in Basel were in the Dominican Library, and not one of those seven different manuscripts predated the twelfth century.[10] To save time, he simply submitted two of these manuscripts to Froben for publication (one that contained the Gospels and another that contained Acts through Revelation) with corrections written between the lines or in the margins.[11] Remarkably, by the following spring (1516), Erasmus's first edition of the Greek NT was published. Though it would undergo four subsequent re-editions (1519, 1522, 1527, 1535), because it was the first Greek NT to be printed and widely circulated, Erasmus's text became the "Received Text" of the NT for many centuries.

During the past century, the KJV NT has come under increasing criticism because of the limited textual basis behind its translation. As two notable critics of the KJV NT text have stated:

> It [i.e., the *Textus Receptus*] lies at the basis of the King James Version and of all principal Protestant translations in the

the text now received by all, in which we give nothing changed or corrupted." From Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 152.

10. One such manuscript that contained Acts and the Pauline letters was obtained from the family of Johann Amerbach of Basel. See William W. Combs, "Erasmus and the Textus Receptus," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 1 (Spring 1996): 45.

11. On these manuscripts, see Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 142–45; P.-Y. Brandt, "Manuscripts grecs utilisés par Erasme pour son édition de *Novum Instrumentum* de 1516," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 54 (1998): 120–24; Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 4–6; and C. C. Tarelli, "Erasmus's Manuscripts of the Gospels," *Journal of Theological Studies* 44 (1943): 155–62.

> languages of Europe prior to 1881. So superstitious has been the reverence accorded the Textus Receptus that in some cases attempts to criticize or emend it have been regarded as akin to sacrilege. Yet its textual basis is essentially a handful of late and haphazardly collected minuscule manuscripts, and in a dozen passages its reading is supported by no known Greek witness.[12]

At the heart of this criticism lies the fact that since the publication of Erasmus's Greek NT in 1516 a number of much older—and by implication more reliable—NT manuscripts have been discovered. Some of these predate the Greek manuscripts employed by Erasmus by more than one thousand years. For example, complete copies of the Greek NT have been discovered that date to the fourth century, complete copies of certain NT books to the late second century, and fragments of certain NT books to the early or mid-second century.[13] Significantly, sometimes these newly discovered texts contain readings that differ markedly from those found in the *Textus Receptus* and hence the KJV.[14] Since these textual variants appear in manuscripts, or fragments of manuscripts, that are rather early, it is often thought that they more accurately reflect original NT readings. As a result, many modern editions of the NT have incorporated these "newer" readings into their translations. However, the appearance of a textual variant in an ancient manuscript is no guarantee that it represents the original text or that the reading

12. Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 152.

13. Despite the early dating of some of these texts, not one is an autograph copy (i.e., the original text written by one of the various authors of the NT books).

14. To put this in quantifiable perspective, of the roughly 5,400 NT written manuscripts and fragments of manuscripts that we currently possess, the cumulative differences (i.e., textual variants) between them number anywhere from 200,000 to 300,000. As Bart Ehrman has put it: "Perhaps it is simplest to express the figure in comparative terms: there are more differences among our manuscripts than there are words in the New Testament." See Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writers*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 490. However, this does not mean that the NT text is completely unreliable. The overwhelming majority of such differences is relatively insignificant and has to do with spelling errors and other minor variations.

must be preferred to an alternative reading found in a later manuscript. A number of other factors have to be considered, as I hope to demonstrate later in this study.

Ancient Texts of the New Testament

What follows is an overview of the most important ancient manuscripts used in contemporary scholarship for establishing the earliest text of the NT. I will refer to these in the course of my analysis of the KJV NT passages that are often omitted in modern translations of the NT.

Papyri (𝔓)

Various Egyptian papyri from the second through sixth centuries AD supplement our knowledge of the NT text by preserving the earliest attestations of certain NT passages. To date there are about 125 known NT papyrus fragments (numbered $\mathfrak{P}^1$, $\mathfrak{P}^2$, $\mathfrak{P}^3$, $\mathfrak{P}^4$, etc.) that range in length from a verse or two to entire codices containing NT books. These fragments can predate the oldest ancient Bibles by as much as 200–250 years. Notable fragments include $\mathfrak{P}^{52}$, a small fragment containing John 18:31–33 on one side and 18:37–38 on the other and possibly dating to the first quarter of the second century AD (the earliest-known NT text);[15] $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$, dating to about AD 200 and containing many of Paul's letters;[16] and $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$, a virtually complete codex of John's gospel dating to the late second or early third century AD.[17]

15. Precise dating of papyrus fragments is not possible since the typical paleographic means employed gives a window of twenty-five or fifty years. While the earliest date proposed for $\mathfrak{P}^{52}$ is around AD 125, it could date from the middle to late second century. In any case, there is wide consensus in scholarship that it is a second-century fragment. See Brent Nongbri, "The Use and Abuse of $\mathfrak{P}^{52}$: Papyrological Pitfalls in the Dating of the Fourth Gospel," *Harvard Theological Review* 98/1 (2005): 23–48.

16. While a date of ca. AD 200 is often proposed for $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$, a third-century dating cannot be ruled out.

17. For a useful introduction to the various NT papyri, see Philip W. Comfort and David P. Barrett, eds., *The Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts: New and*

Codex Sinaiticus (ℵ)[18]

The fourth-century Codex Sinaiticus contains complete copies of every book in the NT as well as the *Epistle of Barnabas*, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, and the Septuagint (LXX).[19] It could even potentially be one of the fifty Bibles commissioned by Constantine in the year AD 331 and produced under the direction of Eusebius of Caesarea.[20] This Bible, written with four Greek columns per page, was discovered in the 1850s at St. Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai by Constantin von Tischendorf, who took it back with him to St. Petersburg. In 1933 this codex was purchased by the British government for £100,000 and is presently housed in the British Library.

Codex Vaticanus (B)

This Bible from the fourth century contains complete copies of all the books in the NT except part of the Epistle to the Hebrews (chaps. 9–13), all of the pastorals (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus), and Revelation. Like Codex Sinaiticus, it may have been one of the fifty Bibles commissioned by Constantine. It also may have been one of the copies prepared for the emperor Constans by Athanasius during his exile at Rome about AD 341.[21] Called the Codex Vaticanus because it resides in the Vatican Library, this Bible is written in capital Greek letters (uncial script) and is laid out with three columns of text per page.

Complete Transcriptions with Photographs (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2001). Compare Roger S. Bagnall, *Early Christian Books in Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 1–24; and Charles E. Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels? Probing the Great Gospel Conspiracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 249–50.

18. The letter represents the siglum (or abbreviation) used in scholarly studies to refer to the specific codex.

19. The Septuagint, or LXX as it is commonly known, is simply the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

20. Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 4.36, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, series 2, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 1:549 (hereafter *NPNF*).

21. Athanasius, *Defense before Constantius* 4 (*NPNF* 4:239).

Codex Alexandrinus (A)

This fifth-century codex contains every NT book except portions of Matthew (chaps. 1–24), John (chaps. 6–8), and 2 Corinthians (chaps. 4–12). It also includes *1* and *2 Clement* as well as the majority of the Septuagint. Called the Codex Alexandrinus because its earliest-known location was the city of Alexandria in Egypt, it is written with capital Greek letters and is laid out with two columns per page. Cyril Lucar, Patriarch of Alexandria during the early part of the seventeenth century, sent this Bible as a gift to King James I of England. Because King James died (in March 1625) before it arrived, it was instead presented to his successor, Charles I, in 1627. Today it is housed in the British Library.

Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C)

In the twelfth century, this fifth-century codex was erased and reused for some thirty-eight hymns of Ephraem.[22] Its 209 folia, or leaves (145 of which belong to the NT), contain both the Septuagint and the NT, though damaged portions of this ancient Bible are riddled with lacunae.[23] It is written with capital Greek letters and

22. This text is a palimpsest, a manuscript that has been reused after the original text has been largely erased or removed by scraping or washing. The erased script is typically referred to as the "underscript" and the newer script as the "overscript." Ephraem the Syrian, whose tractates were written over the removed biblical text, was an Eastern church father who lived in Nisibis and Edessa in the latter part of the fourth century.

23. The NT lacunae are as follows: Matthew 1:1–2; 5:15–7:5; 7:26–18:28; 22:21–23:17; 24:10–45; 25:30–26:22; 27:11–46; 28:15–to the end; Mark 1:1–17; 6:32–8:5; 12:30–13:19; Luke 1:1–2; 2:5–42; 3:21–4:25; 6:4–36; 7:17–8:28; 12:4–19:42; 20:28–21:20; 22:19–23:25; 24:7–45; John 1:1–3; 1:41–3:33; 5:17–6:38; 7:3–8:34; 9:11–11:7; 11:47–13:7; 14:8–16:21; 18:36–20:25; Acts 1:1–2; 4:3–5:34; 6:8; 10:43–13:1; 16:37–20:10; 21:31–22:20; 3:18–24:15; 26:19–27:16; 28:5–to the end; Romans 1:1–3; 2:5–3:21; 9:6–10:15; 11:31–13:10; 1 Corinthians 1:1–2; 7:18–9:6; 13:8–15:40; 2 Corinthians 1:1–2; 10:8–to the end of the book; Galatians 1:1–20; Ephesians 1:1–2:18; 4:17–to the end of the book; Philippians 1:1–22; 3:5–to the end of the book; Colossians 1:1–2; Thessalonians 1:1; 2:9–to the end of the book; 2 Thessalonians completely lost; 1 Timothy 1:1–3:9; 5:20–to the end of the book; 2 Timothy 1:1–2; Titus 1:1–2; Philemon 1–2; Hebrews 1:1–2:4; 7:26–9:15; 10:24–12:15; James 1:1–2; 4:2–to the end; 1 Peter 1:1–2; 4:5–to the end of the book; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 1:1–2; 4:3–to the end of the book; 2 John completely lost; 3 John 1–2; Jude 1–2; Revelation 1:1–2; 3:20–5:14; 7:14–17;

is laid out with one broad column per page. This important biblical codex is presently housed in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

Codex Freerianus (W)

Codex Freerianus is a fifth-century codex that contains a copy of the four Gospels written on 187 folia and ordered as follows: Matthew, John, Luke, and Mark. While it contains Matthew and Luke in their entirety with relatively few lacunae, large sections in Mark (part of chap. 15) and John (part of chaps. 14–16) are missing because of damage. Written in Greek uncial script in a single column per page, this manuscript was obtained in 1906 by Charles Lang Freer, a wealthy American railroad-car manufacturer from Detroit, via an antiquities dealer in Egypt. It is housed in the Freer Gallery of Art as part of the Smithsonian in Washington, DC, and is sometimes referred to as the Freer Codex or Codex Washingtonianus.

Codex Bezae (D)

This fifth- or sixth-century codex contains many NT books, but owing to damage, many sections are missing.[24] As in the Codex Freerianus (W), the order of the four Gospels is Matthew, John, Luke, and Mark. In various places this Bible contains unique readings that are not attested elsewhere, though many of them probably represent later interpolations. This ancient Bible is a Greek and Latin diglot, meaning that it contains Greek text in a single column on the left-hand page and Latin text in a single column on the right-hand page. It is called Codex Bezae because it once belonged to Theodore Beza, who donated it in 1581 to Cambridge University, where it still resides.

8:5–9:16; 10:10–11:3; 16:13–18:2; 19:5–to the end of the book. On the lacunae, see Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece (NA[26]), 689.

24. The missing sections are Matthew 1; 6–9; 27; Mark 16; John 1–3; Acts 8–10; 22–28; Romans 1; James; 1 and 2 Peter; 1–3 John; Jude; and Revelation. See Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 368–78; and David C. Parker, *Codex Bezae: An Early Christian Manuscript and Its Text* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 8.

Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece (NA[27])

This Greek version of the NT is the standard critical edition used in contemporary scholarship. In 1898 Eberhard Nestle (1851–1913) assembled a Greek text of the NT based on previous editions. Over the last century this version was constantly updated and revised, and in 1993 the twenty-seventh edition was produced (designated NA[27]), primarily under the direction and editorship of Kurt Aland (1915–1994). The text is edited and produced by the Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung (Institute for New Testament Textual Research) at the University of Münster. The Greek text of NA[27] is known as an "eclectic text" since it is based on readings from a wide array of ancient manuscripts and does not represent a single manuscript.[25]

KJV Passages Omitted in Various Modern NT Translations[26]

1. Matthew 12:47 KJV[27]

Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.	εἶπε δέ τις αὐτῷ, Ἰδού, ἡ μήτηρ σου καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί σου ἔξω ἑστήκασι, ζητοῦντές σοι λαλῆσαι.

This verse forms the middle section of a narrative unit (Matthew 12:46–50) in which Jesus tells those listening that "whosoever shall do the will of my Father" are "my brother, and sister, and mother" (v. 50). This verse is omitted in some modern translations (ESV, RSV) but present in others (CEV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV,

25. For an English introduction to this text, see pp. 44*–83* of NA[27].

26. This study does not take into account passages in which only portions of a verse have been removed, with the exception of 1 John 5:7b–8a; that is because the omission constitutes a significant part of the two verses.

27. The Greek text herein is taken from F. H. A. Scrivener's 1894 edition of the Greek NT. I have drawn from this source throughout this study in order to parallel the KJV translation at the beginning of each section with the corresponding Greek text, which essentially constitutes the *Textus Receptus* and would have been the Greek text employed by the translators of the KJV NT. Scrivener's edition is based on Theodore Beza's 1598 edition of the Greek NT.

NWT, REB, TEV).[28] This is because it is not found in certain ancient manuscripts, such as Codex Sinaiticus (א) and Codex Vaticanus (B), yet is attested in Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C), Codex Freerianus (W), and Codex Bezae (D); a later corrector added it to Codex Sinaiticus (א*).[29] Though the NRSV and NIV include this verse, a footnote placed after it briefly explains its omission in select ancient witnesses.

While this verse is not attested in the most ancient manuscripts, it may have originally been part of Matthew's gospel but then was accidently omitted through *homoioteleuton*.[30] Since both Matthew 12:46 and Matthew 12:47 end with λαλῆσαι ("to speak"), it is conceivable that after a scribe finished writing verse 46, he looked back at his exemplar only to have his eye skip to the end of verse 47, causing him to inadvertently omit that verse. Furthermore, because verse 47 seems necessary for the following verses to make sense, it is likely an authentic verse and not a later scribal interpolation. Interestingly, when this story is told in Mark 3:31–35, verse 32 (the equivalent of Matthew 12:47) is securely attested in the manuscript tradition.

Though it might be tempting to suppose that some modern NT translations have omitted this verse in an attempt to propagate or

28. For modern versions of the Bible, see *The SBL Handbook of Style for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999), 72–73, and www.biblegateway.com.

29. Codex Sinaiticus (א), as well as some of the other ancient NT manuscripts (principally Codex Freerianus [W] and Codex Bezae [D]), had various correctors over the ages who both inserted and omitted verses as they saw fit to correct the various readings preserved in these Bibles. While their corrections are secondary, they still offer some valid text-critical insights into the potential authenticity or inauthenticity of select verses. For the correctors of Codex Sinaiticus (א), see Dirk Jongkind, *Scribal Habits of Codex Sinaiticus* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2007), 9–20. For the correctors of Codex Bezae (D), see Parker, *Codex Bezae*, 35–48. Codex Alexandrinus (A) is defective for much of the Gospel of Matthew, so it is not possible to determine whether or not it contained this verse.

30. *Homoioteleuton* refers to an omission that occurs when two words or phrases have identical endings and the scribe's or copyist's eye skips from one to the next, resulting in omission of the intervening material. On this phenomenon, see Wegner, *Student's Guide to Textual Criticism of the Bible*, 49–50.

defend the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary[31] and to obfuscate the fact that Jesus had any biological siblings, it is already evident from verse 46, as well as from the corresponding Markan account (Mark 3:31–35), that Jesus had "brethren" in the biological sense. The omission of Matthew 12:47 in modern translations has far more to do with its absence in certain ancient manuscripts than with any doctrinal issue.

2. Matthew 17:21 KJV

Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.	τοῦτο δὲ τὸ γένος οὐκ ἐκπορεύεται εἰ μὴ ἐν προσευχῇ καὶ νηστείᾳ.

Matthew 17:21 concludes a narrative unit (vv. 14–21) in which Jesus expels a demon from a boy after the disciples fail to do so and are then chided by Jesus for lacking the necessary faith to perform the exorcism (v. 20). In the KJV, verse 21 ostensibly clarifies further why the disciples were unsuccessful. In most modern NT translations, this verse is omitted (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) because it is not found in either Codex Sinaiticus (א)[32] or Codex Vaticanus (B).[33] It is present in Codex

31. This doctrine holds that Mary remained a virgin throughout her lifetime, that Jesus was her only biological offspring, and that she never "knew" Joseph in the biblical sense of the word (*virgo intacta*). This tradition is held principally in Roman Catholicism and in Eastern Orthodoxy. The idea of Mary's perpetual virginity was first introduced into the *Protoevangelium of James*, where it is argued that the "brethren" of Jesus were actually children of Joseph from a previous marriage. It is not until the fourth century that Mary is referred to as "ever virgin" (ἀειπάρθενος); in the fifth century this doctrine becomes fairly established. See F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), s.v. "Mary, the Blessed Virgin," 1047–48. In his discussion of this verse, Erasmus treats the various issues surrounding the perpetual virginity of Mary at some length by referencing various patristic authors. See Anne Reeve, ed., *Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament: The Gospels. Facsimile of the Final Latin Text (1535) with Earlier Variants (1516, 1519, 1522 and 1527)* (London: Duckworth, 1986), 58–59.

32. However, the questionable verse was added much later by one of several correctors of Sinaiticus (א^{c}).

33. Codex Alexandrinus (A) does not contain most of the Gospel of Matthew, so it is not possible to determine whether or not it contained this verse.

Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C), Codex Freerianus (W), and Codex Bezae (D). The verse's omission in the two earliest manuscripts is relatively strong evidence against its authenticity, notwithstanding its inclusion in later manuscripts. Without a plausible explanation to the contrary,[34] it would seem that the verse is not original to Matthew.

This verse may represent a deliberate addition to Matthew by a later scribe who assimilated it from the same account in Mark 9:14–29. Mark 9:29 reads, "And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."[35] Thus there is reason to suspect that Matthew 17:21 was added in select manuscripts to deliberately harmonize the accounts in Mark and Matthew. Indeed, verse 21 is somewhat intrusive and foreign to the narrative block (vv. 14–20) that naturally ends with verse 20, where Jesus straightforwardly makes the point that the disciples lacked the necessary faith to cast out the demon.

34. There is no evidence for scribal error due to *homoioteleuton* (see note 30 above) or *homoioarcton*. *Homoioarcton* is an omission that occurs when two words or phrases have identical or similar beginnings and the scribe's or copyists' eye skips from one to the next, causing omission of the intervening material. See Wegner, *Student's Guide to Textual Criticism of the Bible*, 49–50.

35. While Matthew 17:21 is not an exact citation of Mark 9:29, it is remarkably close. Certainly an attempt at harmonization is being made here. In Mark 9:29, "and fasting" (καὶ νηστεία) does not appear in Codex Vaticanus (B) or Codex Sinaiticus (א), nor does it seem to appear in $\mathfrak{P}^{45}$, an early third-century papyrus codex containing sections of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts. While one cannot be absolutely certain that $\mathfrak{P}^{45}$ did not contain "and fasting," since the text is damaged in that part of the verse, the line spacing suggests it was not present. On this codex, see Comfort and Barrett, *Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, 155–201 (esp. p. 171). On the other hand, "and fasting" does appear in Codex Alexandrinus (A), Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C), Codex Freerianus (W), and Codex Bezae (D). Nevertheless, a number of modern versions have dropped "and fasting" from their translations (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV). Commenting on this specific verse, Bart Ehrman has argued that "and fasting" was likely added to Mark 9:29 in a later monastic context where fasting was a part of the daily ascetic regimen. See Bart D. Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005), 97; see also Philip W. Comfort, *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary: Commenting on the Variant Readings of the Ancient New Testament Manuscripts and How They Relate to the Major English Translations* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2008), 130.

3. Matthew 18:11 KJV

For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.	ἦλθε γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου σῶσαι τὸ ἀπολωλός.

In the KJV this verse serves as the effective beginning of the parable of the lost sheep (Matthew 18:11–14), but it is omitted in a number of modern translations (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) because it does not occur in either Codex Sinaiticus (א) or Codex Vaticanus (B).[36] Moreover, the church fathers Origen (ca. AD 185–254) and Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. AD 260–340) show no awareness of this verse in their commentaries.[37] Interestingly, Luke's version of the parable of the lost sheep (15:4–6), which is somewhat similar to Matthew's rendering, does not include the equivalent of Matthew 18:11. However, this verse does appear in both Codex Freerianus (W) and Codex Bezae (D).

Given that this verse is unknown in any manuscript before the fifth century, is absent from the two most important NT manuscripts, and was apparently unknown to both Origen and Eusebius, it seems fairly certain that it was a later interpolation and thus is not authentic to Matthew. Because Luke 19:10 shares a number of distinct parallels with Matthew 18:11, it is possible that at some point a scribe inserted the verse into Matthew's account to provide a connection between verse 10 (the end of a short discourse on temptations and sin, vv. 6–9) and verses 12–14 (the parable of the lost sheep).[38] Luke 19:10 concludes the story of Jesus and Zacchaeus (vv. 1–10) and reads, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." With the exception of two words (ζητῆσαι

36. Codex Alexandrinus (A) does not contain most of the Gospel of Matthew, so it is not possible to determine whether or not it once contained this verse. Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) is also damaged in this section of Matthew.

37. Origen wrote a commentary on the Gospel of Matthew around AD 246–48 (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.36; *NPNF* 1:278–79), and although it is only partially preserved, it is evident that he was not aware of Matthew 18:11, for his commentary skips from verse 10 to verse 12 without comment. Similarly, it is evident in Eusebius's work on Matthew that he too had no knowledge of Matthew 18:11.

38. Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 2002), 36.

καὶ, "to seek and"), Luke 19:10 shares an exact verbal overlap with Matthew 18:11.[39] Because verse 11 talks about saving "that which was lost," it is easy to see why some scribe or copyist might have been inclined to insert it into Matthew, for it provides a nice segue into the parable of the lost sheep, which would otherwise have a seeming semantic gap between verses 10 and 12.

4. Matthew 21:44 KJV

> And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.
>
> καὶ ὁ πεσὼν ἐπὶ τὸν λίθον τοῦτον συνθλασθήσεται· ἐφ' ὃν δ' ἂν πέσῃ λικμήσει αὐτόν.

This verse occurs in the concluding section of the parable of the wicked tenants (Matthew 21:33–46). Verse 44 is spoken by Jesus to the chief priests and Pharisees to clarify his quotation of Psalm 118:22 in verse 42: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner." In a number of modern Bible versions, this verse is either completely omitted (NJB, RSV, TEV) or included with an explanatory footnote (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NLT, NWT, NRSV, REB) because it is absent from certain ancient manuscripts, most notably Codex Bezae (D). Additionally, with the publication of 𝔓[104], a second-century papyrus fragment that contains Matthew 21:34–37 on one side and the remains of some subsequent verses on the other side (vv. 43 and 45?), it has been tentatively asserted that verse 44 seems to be absent and that the text skips from verse 43 to verse 45.[40] If this fragment could serve as evidence for

39. In some manuscripts of Matthew, 18:11 appears exactly as it is cited in Luke, which lends some support to the claim that it was probably borrowed from Luke 19:10. See Comfort, *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary*, 52–53.

40. This fragment was first published as P.Oxy. LXIV 4404. While the editor of the fragment, J. D. Thomas, raised the possibility that verse 44 was missing, he was reluctant to do so with certainty since the text is very badly effaced on the back of the fragment where verses 43 and 45 seem to appear. The reading on the back of the papyrus is so tentative that, with the exception of one letter, Thomas wrote every other letter with an underdot to signify the uncertainty of the reading. More recently, Comfort has argued that verse 44 is missing from the fragment (*New Testament Text and*

the omission of verse 44, it would be very significant given its early date. Yet the text on the back side is so effaced and illegible as to preclude determination either way.[41] On the other hand, the verse is attested in both Codex Vaticanus (B) and Codex Sinaiticus (א), as well as in Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) and Codex Freerianus (W).

Given the nature of the evidence, it is difficult to determine with much certainty whether verse 44 is a later interpolation or is actually authentic. Those who argue the former assert that the verse was borrowed from Luke 20:18 to more fully harmonize Matthew's telling of the parable with Luke's account (20:9–18):[42] "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (v. 18).[43] However, while the two verses certainly share similarities, they begin differently and their placement is different. In Luke, verse 18 immediately follows Jesus's citation of Psalm 118:22, whereas Matthew has an intervening verse (v. 43) in which Jesus declares that the "kingdom of God" shall be given to another nation. If Matthew 21:44 is a case of scribal harmonization, why was the verse not inserted right after verse 42 so that it would be exactly parallel with Luke?

If, on the other hand, the verse is original to Matthew, then it could have been lost from certain manuscripts as a result of a scribal slip. Bruce Metzger has raised the possibility that if verse 44 is original to Matthew, it could have been accidently omitted in some manuscripts as a result of *homoioarcton*. In verse 43 the last

Translation Commentary, 65); however, his assertion is based on Thomas's suggestion and offers no additional argumentation. Having examined a digital image of the back side of the papyrus fragment, I do not think that one can confidently argue that verse 44 is not attested. In the section where verse 45 supposedly begins, Thomas reads ακου]σα[ν]τες ο[ι, the beginning words of verse 45. Alternatively, one could read και πεσω[ν, the beginning words of verse 44.

41. Origen's *Commentary on Matthew* skips this verse completely, possibly because it was missing in his copy of Matthew.

42. Comfort, *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary*, 65.

43. Although Mark 12:1–12 also contains a version of the parable of the wicked tenants, it does not include a verse comparable to either Matthew 21:44 or Luke 20:18. The passage does, however, include the quotation of Psalm 118:22 (compare Mark 12:10).

word is αὐτῆς ("of it"), and in verse 44 the last word is αὐτόν ("it").[44] A scribe could have finished writing verse 43, looked back to his exemplar, and inadvertently skipped ahead to the end of verse 44, thus omitting this verse.[45] In light of the ancient manuscript evidence, especially the fact that verse 44 is attested in both Codex Sinaiticus (א) and Codex Vaticanus (B), the case for authenticity is reasonable. All the same, if the back side of 𝔓[104] can ever be convincingly read and verse 44 is indeed omitted, this would be strong evidence that Matthew 21:44 is likely a later interpolation.

5. Matthew 23:14 KJV

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, γραμματεῖς καὶ Φαρισαῖοι, ὑποκριταί, ὅτι κατεσθίετε τὰς οἰκίας τῶν χηρῶν, καὶ προφάσει μακρὰ προσευχόμενοι· διὰ τοῦτο λήψεσθε περισσότερον κρίμα.

In Matthew 23, verse 14 functions as one of a number of "woes" pronounced by Jesus against the scribes and Pharisees at the Temple Mount (Matthew 23:1–36). This verse is omitted in most modern translations of the NT (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NWT, NRSV, REB, RSV, TEV) since it does not appear in any of the most important ancient manuscripts, namely, Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex Vaticanus (B), or Codex Bezae (D).[46] This verse is first attested in Codex Freerianus (W), where it is placed before verse 13.

While a scribal slip due to *homoioarcton* is conceivable, since verses 13, 15, and 16 all begin with the word *woe* (οὐαὶ) and a scribe could have overlooked verse 14 because it too begins with *woe*, this seems unlikely because of the early and widespread absence of the

44. Both αὐτῆς and αὐτόν are different genders of the Greek personal pronoun αὐτός, αὐτή, αὐτό that may be variously translated depending on the context. The translations provided are based on the context of the respective verses.

45. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 47.

46. Codex Alexandrinus (A) does not contain most of the Gospel of Matthew, so it is not possible to determine whether or not it contained this verse. Likewise, Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) is also damaged in this section of Matthew, so it is not possible to determine whether or not it contained this verse.

verse in a number of different manuscripts. It is highly unlikely that multiple scribes working independently of one another all accidentally skipped the very same verse. A more plausible explanation is that verse 14 is an interpolation derived from either Mark or Luke, where remarkably similar sayings are directed specifically against the scribes:[47] "which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation" (Mark 12:40); "which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation" (Luke 20:47).[48] That Matthew 23:14 is an interpolation is further evidenced by that fact it appears in relatively late manuscripts in different places within Matthew 23, either before or after verse 13.[49] Here it is worthy of note that even though the *Textus Receptus* put this verse before verse 13, the KJV (as well as the NKJV) moved this verse to its present location after verse 13.

6. Mark 7:16 KJV

If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.	εἴ τις ἔχει ὦτα ἀκούειν ἀκουέτω.

This verse comes from the middle section of Jesus's rather extended discourse against the "traditions of the elders" among the Pharisees (Mark 7:1–23). Prompted by the Pharisees finding fault with Jesus's disciples for partaking of food without first washing their hands (vv. 1–5), this discourse may be divided into two sections: verses 6–15, in which Jesus criticizes the Pharisees for their hypocrisy, and verses 17–23, in which the disciples question Jesus about what he had said to the Pharisees. Thus, verse 16 acts as a mediating verse between the two sections. Most modern NT trans-

47. Comfort, *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary*, 69–70.

48. Both Mark 12:40 and Luke 20:47 are otherwise securely attested in the manuscript record. It is interesting to note that whereas Mark has parallel particles (κατεσθίοντες/προσευχόμενοι), Luke changes these to finite verbs (κατεσθίουσιν/προσεύχονται). Matthew first employs a finite verb and then a particle (κατεσθίετε/προσευχόμενοι).

49. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament,* 50.

lations (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) omit this verse since it does not appear in either Codex Sinaiticus (א) or Codex Vaticanus (B). It does, however, appear in later manuscripts, namely, Codex Alexandrinus (A), Codex Freerianus (W), and Codex Bezae (D).[50]

The context of verse 16 would not appear to have facilitated the loss of the verse through scribal error. Similarly, since verse 16 has no apparent theological implications and since elsewhere in the Gospel of Mark the very same saying is attested (at 4:9 and 4:23), one cannot easily suppose that this verse was deliberately expunged. A more likely explanation is that it was inserted to provide a sequel to verse 15 and to bridge the two sections that comprise Jesus's discourse. One commentator has noted about the verse: "It appears to be a comment by a copyist (taken from 4.9 or 4.23), introduced as an appropriate comment coming after v. 14."[51]

7. Mark 9:44 KJV

Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.	ὅπου ὁ σκώληξ αὐτῶν οὐ τελευτᾷ, καὶ τὸ πῦρ οὐ σβέννυται.

Mark 9:44[52] forms part of a narrative unit in which Jesus admonishes his followers that it is better to cut off any offending body parts (i.e., hand, foot, eye) and be maimed (metaphorically speaking) than to be cast into hell on account of those offenses (Mark 9:42–50). Within this context, verse 44 vividly reinforces the consequences of sin that are associated with the torments of hell (vv. 43, 45, 47, lit. *Gehenna*). This verse is omitted in most modern NT translations (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) because it is not attested in the two oldest manuscripts, Codex Sinaiticus (א) and Codex Vaticanus (B). Similarly, it is omitted in Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) and Codex Freerianus (W).

50. Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) is damaged in this section of Mark, so it is not possible to determine whether or not it contained this verse.

51. Omanson, *Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament*, 77.

52. What is said in this section about verse 44 is equally true for verse 46 in no. 8 below.

On the other hand, this verse is attested in Codex Alexandrinus (A) and Codex Bezae (D).

The omission of this verse is not crucial in terms of meaning because the very same saying appears in verse 48, which is otherwise securely attested in the ancient manuscript tradition: "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." It is possible that a scribe or copyist added verse 44 in order to balance out this narrative unit by reemphasizing the punishments awaiting those who sin. Indeed, each time Jesus speaks of cutting off a body part, his warning is reinforced with a reference to the torments of hell—specifically worms and fire—for greater effect. This repetition, or epistrophe, was a well-known literary trope in antiquity used for effect and balance. Because Jesus does not employ this kind of repetition anywhere else in Mark, its presence here supports the argument that it was added by a scribe. All the same, the fact that epistrophe does not occur elsewhere in Mark does not preclude the possibility that it is used in Mark 9:44. In any case, the nature of the manuscript evidence strongly suggests that verse 44 was a later interpolation based on verse 48.

8. Mark 9:46 KJV

Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.	ὅπου ὁ σκώληξ αὐτῶν οὐ τελευτᾷ, καὶ τὸ πῦρ οὐ σβέννυται.

See notes on Mark 9:44 in no. 7 above.

9. Mark 11:26 KJV

But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.	εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς οὐκ ἀφίετε, οὐδὲ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ἀφήσει τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν.

Mark 11:26 forms part of a narrative unit in which Jesus instructs his disciples on the meaning of a withered fig tree and teaches about the principle of faith (vv. 20–26). Previously in the

chapter (one day earlier) Jesus had cursed this very fig tree on his way to Jerusalem because it did not have any figs (vv. 12–14). The very next day, on a return trip to Jerusalem, Peter notices that the fig tree is now completely withered, which prompts Jesus to give the discourse of which Mark 11:26 is the concluding verse. In most modern translations of the New Testament (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV), this verse is omitted since it does not appear in Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex Vaticanus (B), or Codex Freerianus (W). It does, however, appear in Codex Alexandrinus (A), Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C), and Codex Bezae (D).

Although a case could be made for omission due to *homoioteleuton*, since both verses 25 and 26 end with ὑμῶν ("your"), the absence of verse 26 in a number of different codices makes that scenario somewhat unlikely, as one would have to assume that multiple scribes working independently all made the very same error. A more plausible explanation, as Erasmus already pointed out in his notes on the NT (see below), is that this verse was added at some point in imitation of Matthew 6:15, where Jesus gives instruction concerning prayer (following the Lord's Prayer, vv. 9–13): "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." In Mark 11:24–25 Jesus talks about prayer and the necessity of forgiveness, especially the necessity of forgiving an offender so that God might forgive the offended person's trespasses in his prayerful petition. Because verse 26 is remarkably similar to verse 25—so close, in fact, that it runs the risk of being redundant—it may have been added later for emphasis and thus should really be seen as an expansion of verse 25. As the narrative unit currently stands (vv. 20–26), this verse can be omitted with no apparent impact on the overall meaning of the pericope.

Erasmus's notes on this verse: "'But if you should not forgive.' In most Greek manuscripts [lit. books] these things are not added [i.e.,

present]. Theophylact[53] neither reads nor interprets. It seems possible that this has been inserted from Matthew 6."[54]

10. Mark 15:28 KJV

And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.	καὶ ἐπληρώθη ἡ γραφὴ ἡ λέγουσα, καὶ μετὰ ἀνόμων ἐλογίσθη.

This verse is part of the narrative unit that comprises Mark's crucifixion narrative in verses 21–32. Mark 15:28, which is a quotation from Isaiah 53:12b, appears right after the report that Jesus was crucified between two thieves (v. 27). In virtually every modern NT translation, this verse is omitted (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) since it does not appear in any of the ancient manuscripts: Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Alexandrinus (A), Codex Ephraem Syri Rescriptus (C), or Codex Bezae (D).[55] In fact, this verse does not appear in any NT manuscript until the end of the sixth century.[56] There is no reason why this verse should be absent from every major ancient manuscript except that it was added at a much later date to Mark's gospel. The addition is almost certainly drawn from Luke 22:37, where at the last supper Jesus foretells his crucifixion (quoting Isaiah 53:12b): "For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, *And he was reckoned among the transgressors*: for the

53. Theophylact of Ohrid (b. ca. 1055; d. after 1125) was a Byzantine exegete who eventually became Archbishop of Ohrid in the region of the Bulgarians. His principal works include a series of commentaries on several books in the Old Testament as well as commentaries on every NT book except Revelation. Erasmus was influenced considerably by his writings and frequently refers to him in his notes. See *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, s.v. "Theophylact," 1607.

54. My English translation is based on the Latin text of Erasmus given in Reeve, *Erasmus' Annotations of the New Testament*, 139. Subsequent citations herein of Erasmus are likewise based on this edition.

55. Codex Freerianus (W) is defective in this part of Mark, so it is not possible to determine whether or not it contained this verse.

56. Uncial 083 (sixth century) was discovered in the early 1970s at St. Catherine's Monastery. Other manuscripts with this verse include Uncial 013 (ninth century) and Δ 037 (ninth century).

things concerning me have an end" (emphasis added). Beyond the textual data, which firmly indicates that this verse was added, its authenticity may be further doubted since as a general rule Mark (unlike Matthew and to a lesser extent John and Luke) rarely quotes from the Old Testament.

11. Mark 16:9–20 KJV

[9]Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. [10]And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. [11]And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. [12]After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. [13]And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them. [14]Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. [15]And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. [16]He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. [17]And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; [18]they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall

[9]ἀναστὰς δὲ πρωῒ πρώτῃ σαββάτου ἐφάνη πρῶτον Μαρίᾳ τῇ Μαγδαληνῇ, ἀφ᾽ ἧς ἐκβεβλήκει ἑπτὰ δαιμόνια. [10]ἐκείνη πορευθεῖσα ἀπήγγειλε τοῖς μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ γενομένοις, πενθοῦσι καὶ κλαίουσι. [11]κἀκεῖνοι ἀκούσαντες ὅτι ζῇ καὶ ἐθεάθη ὑπ᾽ αὐτῆς ἠπίστησαν. [12]μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα δυσὶν ἐξ αὐτῶν περιπατοῦσιν ἐφανερώθη ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ πορευομένοις εἰς ἀγρόν· [13]κἀκεῖνοι ἀπελθόντες ἀπήγγειλαν τοῖς λοιποῖς· οὐδὲ ἐκείνοις ἐπίστευσαν. [14]ὕστερον, ἀνακειμένοις αὐτοῖς τοῖς ἕνδεκα ἐφανερώθη, καὶ ὠνείδισε τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν καὶ σκληροκαρδίαν ὅτι τοῖς θεασαμένοις αὐτὸν ἐγηγερμένον οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν. [15]καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, πορευθέντες εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα, κηρύξατε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει. [16]ὁ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθεὶς σωθήσεται, ὁ δὲ ἀπιστήσας κατακριθήσεται. [17]σημεῖα δὲ τοῖς πιστεύσασιν ταῦτα παρακολουθήσει· ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου δαιμόνια ἐκβαλοῦσιν, γλώσσαις λαλήσουσι καιναῖς, [18]ὄφεις ἀροῦσι, κἂν θανάσιμόν τι πίωσιν, οὐ μὴ αὐτοὺς βλάψει, ἐπὶ ἀρρώστους χεῖρας ἐπιθήσουσι, καὶ καλῶς ἕξουσιν. [19]ὁ μὲν οὖν

recover. [19]So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. [20]And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

κύριος, μετὰ τὸ λαλῆσαι αὐτοῖς, ἀνελήφθη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν, καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ. [20]ἐκεῖνοι δὲ ἐξελθόντες ἐκήρυξαν πανταχοῦ, τοῦ κυρίου συνεργοῦντος, καὶ τὸν λόγον βεβαιοῦντος διὰ τῶν ἐπακολουθούντων σημείων. ἀμήν.

These last twelve verses of Mark[57] contain Jesus's postresurrection appearances to the disciples (vv. 9–14) and a charge, which is accompanied by divine promises (vv. 17–18), to take the gospel "to every creature" (v. 15). The final verse (v. 20) then concludes with a summation of the apostles' ministry: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."

While these twelve verses are not omitted in any modern NT edition, they are placed in either double brackets or italics with a note about their absence in certain early manuscripts. Most notably, Mark 16:9–20 does not appear in Codex Vaticanus (B) or Codex Sinaiticus (א). It is also omitted in certain Latin, Armenian, Georgian, and Ethiopic copies of the gospel.[58] On the other hand, these verses are attested in Codex Alexandrinus (A), Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C), and Codex Bezae (D). Additionally, an unusual variant (see below) of these verses is attested in Codex Freerianus (W).

The patristic literature on these verses is mixed; some authors seem to have been aware of them in their copies of Mark while others seem not to have known about them or were unsure of their authenticity. Noting in his *First Apology* (ca. AD 150) that the apostles "went forth and preached everywhere,"[59] Justin Martyr (ca. AD

57. The literature on the textual authenticity/inauthenticity of Mark 16:9–20 is large and can hardly be cited here. For a fairly recent bibliography of the subject, see N. Clayton Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), 190–230. For a good LDS analysis, see Thomas Wayment, "The Endings of Mark and Revelation in the King James Bible," in *The King James Bible and the Restoration*, 75–94.

58. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament,* 102–3.

59. Justin Martyr, *Apology* 1.45, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (1885; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 1:178 (hereafter *ANF*).

100–165) uses language that is basically identical to a phrase that otherwise only appears in the Gospels at Mark 16:20.[60] Since this is a short verbal overlap, one cannot be certain that Justin is referencing Mark 16:20. In any case, the first definite reference to one of the final twelve verses in Mark comes from Irenaeus (ca. AD 130–200). In his work *Against Heresies* (ca. AD 180), he states, "But at the end of his gospel, Mark says, 'And then after the Lord Jesus spoke to them, he was received up into heaven and sits on the right hand of God.'"[61] Here Irenaeus is definitely referencing Mark 16:19 even though his wording does not exactly agree with that in the Vulgate.[62] One other second-century author that may have been aware of Mark 16:9–20 is Tatian (ca. AD 120–80). In his *Diatessaron* (ca. AD 150–60), an edition of the four canonical Gospels in one continuous narrative, he includes the final twelve verses of Mark. However, the problem with this evidence is that the *Diatessaron* survives only in much later Latin and Arabic versions that may not be accurate transcriptions of the original composition.[63]

While Justin, Irenaeus, and Tatian may have been aware of Mark 16:9–20, other patristic writers such as Clement of Alexandria (ca. AD 150–215) and Origen likely were not aware of these verses because they were absent in their copies of Mark.[64] Eusebius of Caesarea, in response to a question from a friend named Marinus about an alleged discrepancy between Matthew and Mark on the exact timing of the resurrection,[65] reports that the concluding verses of

60. In Mark 16:20 the order of the last two words is reversed (ἐξελθόντες ἐκήρυξαν πανταχοῦ), but this makes no difference to the meaning of the phrase.

61. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.10.5–6 (*ANF* 1:426); the English translation is mine.

62. In the Vulgate, Mark 16:19 reads: *et Dominus quidem postquam locutus est eis adsumptus est in caelum et sedit a dextris Dei*.

63. It seems most likely that Tatian originally composed his work in either Greek or Syriac. On his use of Mark 16:9–20, see *Diatessaron* 53–54 (*ANF* 9:125–29).

64. Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 322.

65. The question Eusebius was addressing was how it is that Matthew appears to say that Jesus was raised "late on the Sabbath" (Matthew 28:1) when Mark says he was raised "early on the first day of the week" (Mark 16:2). Though Eusebius will not use this argument, the Greek adverb ὀψέ that is used in Matthew and is often translated as "late" can also be translated as "after." See Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, comp., *Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), s.v. ὀψέ. Therefore,

Mark (vv. 9–20) are likely spurious and do not appear in the more "accurate" copies of the Gospel of Mark:

> The solution to this might be twofold. For, on the one hand, the one who rejects the passage itself [Mark 16:9–20], namely the pericope which says this, might say that it does not appear in all the copies of the Gospel according to Mark. At any rate, the accurate copies define the end of the history [i.e., Gospel] according to Mark with the words of the young man who appeared to the women and said to them, "Do not fear. You are seeking Jesus the Nazarene" [Mark 16:6]. In addition to these, it says, "And having heard this they fled, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid" [Mark 16:8]. For in this way the ending of the Gospel according to Mark is defined in nearly all the copies. The things that follow [Mark 16:9–20] are in some but not in all of the copies and may be spurious; this is particularly so because it is a contradiction to the witness of the other gospels.[66]

Later, Jerome (ca. AD 345–420) will basically echo Eusebius's comments and similarly remark that the concluding verses of Mark were missing in most copies of the scriptures: "It [Mark 16:9–20] appears rarely *in copies* of the gospel [i.e., Mark]; almost all Greek copies do not have this pericope at the end."[67]

If Eusebius is right, Mark's gospel concludes at 16:8: "And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid." However, such an ending hardly seems fitting for a "gospel" (Mark 1:1) whose express purpose is to declare the "good

many translations of Matthew 28:1 read "after the Sabbath" and remove any apparent discrepancy.

66. Eusebius, *Questions to Marinus* 1.1. Translation is adapted from James A. Kelhoffer, "The Witness of Eusebius' *ad Marinum* and Other Christian Writings to Text-Critical Debates concerning the Original Conclusion to Mark's Gospel," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 92 (2001): 84–85.

67. Jerome, *Epistle* 120.3; translation is mine (emphasis added).

news" of Jesus's resurrection. Even though from a text-critical standpoint Mark 16:8 is currently the earliest attested ending for Mark's gospel (appearing in Codex Sinaiticus [א] and Codex Vaticanus [B]), its abruptness is problematic, giving rise to various theories against its authenticity.

One widely held theory is that the original ending of Mark's gospel was lost very early and was subsequently copied and recopied without the conclusion (hence Eusebius and Jerome could state that most copies of the gospel did not have anything after Mark 16:8). Some have even speculated that the ending was lost when an early manuscript containing the gospel lost its final page.[68] Proponents of this theory argue that Mark's gospel has a tendency toward narrative fulfillment—that is, whenever something about Jesus's ministry is promised or prophesied in the gospel, Mark tends to narrate its realization.[69] For example, in Mark 7:29, when the Syrophoenecian woman comes to Jesus and entreats him to heal her daughter and Jesus responds that "the devil is gone out of thy daughter," Mark completes the story by narrating how the woman went home and found her daughter healed (Mark 7:30). Later, in Mark 10:52a, Jesus tells blind Bartimaeus, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." Again, Mark demonstrates the fulfillment of Jesus's words, narrating in 10:52b, "And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way."[70] However, there is one notable exception to this rule in Mark 14:28, where Jesus promises the disciples, "But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee." This prophecy never has narrative fulfillment if one takes Mark 16:8 as the concluding verse. Some commentators have therefore used Mark 14:28 as evidence that Mark did not originally intend to end his gospel at 16:8.

The current ending for Mark's gospel in the KJV, often referred to as the "longer" ending, is widely attested in most later

68. Croy, *Mutilation of Mark's Gospel*, 12, 18–32.

69. Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 1009.

70. For these and other examples of narrative fulfillment in Mark, see Croy, *Mutilation of Mark's Gospel*, 57–60.

manuscripts. While it is not without textual problems, and even some who argue that Mark 16:8 is not the original ending also reject it, it cannot be dismissed offhand as inauthentic. If it is not the original ending to Mark, then at the very least it probably contains some of the characteristics of the original ending (i.e., postresurrection appearances and a charge to spread the gospel).

The following ancient endings for the Gospel of Mark are attested:

1. The Gospel of Mark ends at Mark 16:8: "And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any *man*; for they were afraid." This ending is attested in both Codex Vaticanus (B) and Codex Sinaiticus (ℵ).

2. The "shorter" or "intermediate" ending of Mark, as it is known, adds one verse after Mark 16:8 that reads: "But they reported briefly to Peter and those with him all that they had been told. And after this Jesus himself sent out by means of them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation." This ending is first attested in Codex Regius (L) of the eighth century and Codex Athos (Ψ) of the eighth or ninth century.[71]

3. The "longer" ending of Mark (16:9–20) is the one contained in the KJV and is widely attested in many manuscripts, most notably Codex Alexandrinus (A), Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C), and Codex Bezae (D).

4. A variant of the "longer" ending is attested in Codex Freerianus (W). After Mark 16:14 and before verse 15, this codex adds the following: "And they excused themselves, saying, 'This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who does not allow the truth and power of God to prevail over the unclean things of the spirits. Therefore reveal your righteousness now'—thus they spoke to Christ. And Christ replied to them, 'The term of years of Satan's power has been fulfilled, but other terrible things draw near. And for

71. However, these same codices also contain the "longer" ending of Mark. The vocabulary used in this ending is totally foreign to Mark and suggests that this ending is definitely non-Markan and a later interpolation.

those who have sinned I was delivered over to death, that they may return to the truth and sin no more, that they may inherit the spiritual and imperishable glory of righteousness that is in heaven.'"[72]

12. Luke 17:36 KJV

Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.	δῦο ἔσονται ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ· ὁ εἷς παραληφθήσεται, καὶ ὁ ἕτερος ἀφεθήσεται.

Luke 17:36 forms part of a narrative unit in which Jesus, responding to the Pharisees, discourses on the future coming of the kingdom (Luke 17:20–37). This passage shares a number of parallels with a section of the Olivet discourse in Matthew 24:29–41. Verse 36 of Luke 17 is excluded from almost every modern NT translation (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) because it is absent in most ancient manuscripts: Codex Sinaiticus (ℵ), Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Alexandrinus (A), and Codex Freerianus (W). The verse is also absent from $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$, a third-century papyrus codex from Egypt that contains large blocks of Luke's and John's gospels.[73] While Codex Bezae (D) lacked the verse too, it was inserted by later correctors.

Although it is not impossible that verse 36 was accidently dropped due to *homoioteleuton*, since verses 35 and 36 end with the word ἀφεθήσεται (**"**will be left"), the cumulative evidence from early manuscripts against the verse's authenticity is overwhelming. The most likely scenario is that at some point verse 36 was added to Luke 17 in light of the very similar saying in Matthew 24:40 ("Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left"), although the scribe harmonized it to the style of Luke 17:35.

It is noteworthy that Erasmus could not find this verse in any of the Greek manuscripts he was consulting (see his notes below).

72. Translation from Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 81.

73. For a detailed description and analysis of $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$, see Comfort and Barrett, *Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, 501–608 (see p. 554 on the missing verse in this codex).

While this verse is not present in the *Textus Receptus*, it was included in the KJV through the influence of the Latin Vulgate.[74]

Erasmus's notes on this verse: "'Two men in the field.' This portion is not present in Luke among the Greek [manuscripts], although the divine Ambrose[75] recollects fields. On the contrary, in the copy belonging to Paulinus there is no mention except concerning the bed. Theophylact read just two, concerning the bed and millstone; the third, concerning the field, seems to be taken from Matthew, chapter 24."

13. Luke 22:43-44 KJV

[43]And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. [44]And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.	[43]ὤφθη δὲ αὐτῷ ἄγγελος ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἐνισχύων αὐτόν. [44]καὶ γενόμενος ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ, ἐκτενέστερον προσηύχετο. ἐγένετο δὲ ὁ ἱδρὼς αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ θρόμβοι αἵματος καταβαίνοντες ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν.

These two verses form part of Luke's Gethsemane narrative in which Jesus prays to God in great agony on the night before the crucifixion (Luke 22:39-46).[76] Although in the RSV verses 43 and 44 are omitted, they appear in the CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, and TEV (sometimes in brackets to highlight their dubious nature). These verses are absent from Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Alexandrinus (A), the third-century papyrus manuscript $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$, and $\mathfrak{P}^{69}$ (a papyrus manuscript dating to the middle of the third century and containing portions of Luke 20:41, 45-48, 58-61).[77] Addi-

74. Comfort, *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary*, 221.

75. Ambrose of Milan (ca. AD 339-397) was one of the most famous Latin church fathers of the fourth century. Though he had grown up in a Christian family, he was not baptized until immediately before his ordination as bishop of Milan in either 373 or 374. As bishop he would play an important role in the conversion of Augustine (ca. AD 386). He wrote a number of treatises and left behind numerous letters. See *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, s.v. "Ambrose," 49-50.

76. In his gospel, Luke never mentions Gethsemane, only the Mount of Olives (v. 39). Gethsemane is mentioned only in Matthew 26:36 and Mark 14:32.

77. $\mathfrak{P}^{69}$ is otherwise known as P.Oxy. XXIV 2383. The editor of the papyrus, E. G. Turner, noted that while verses 43 and 44 are not on the papyrus, the lacuna between verse 41 and verse 45 is too small to accommodate them. "The scribe's large omission

tionally, in some later manuscripts (post-eighth century) the two are marked with asterisks or obeli to signify their questionable nature, and in later manuscripts they have been placed after Matthew 26:39 or 26:45a, indicating that they were not necessarily fixed in Luke.[78] On the other hand, Luke 22:44 is attested in a fragmentary parchment codex that contains portions of Matthew and Luke from Hermopolis Magna, in Upper Egypt, that dates to the late third or early fourth century AD (0171 = PSI II 124).[79] Likewise, a case should really be made that verses 43 and 44 are attested in Codex Sinaiticus (א) since both א* and א² give the verses, though א¹ suppresses them.[80] These verses are also included in Codex Bezae (D).

Given the disparate nature of the manuscript evidence, it is difficult to determine whether or not these verses are original to Luke's narrative. Early patristic evidence suggests that the story of Jesus's suffering and bleeding in the Garden of Gethsemane (which appears only in Luke) was known by a few early Christians. The most notable such witness is Justin Martyr, who comments on these very verses in his *Dialogue with Trypho* (ca. AD 135), although he does not mention in which gospel they were contained: "For in the memoirs [Gospels], which I say were drawn up by his apostles and those who followed them, [it is written] that 'His sweat fell down

on the recto is easier to explain (ll. 3–4 nn.) if his exemplar did not in fact contain verses 43–44, the incident of the appearance of the angel and of the bloody sweat." E. Lobel, C. H. Roberts, E. G. Turner, and J. W. B. Barns, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri, Part XXIV* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1957), 2. More recently, see Kurt Aland, "Alter und Enstehung des D-Textes im Neuen Testament. Betrachtungen zu P69 und 0171," in *Miscellànea papirològica Ramón Roca-Puig*, ed. Sebastià Janeras (Barcelona: Fundacio Salvador Vives Casajuana, 1987), 57–60; and Thomas Wayment, "A New Transcription of P. Oxy. 2383 (𝔓⁶⁹)," *Novum Testamentum* 50 (2008): 351–57.

78. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament,* 151.

79. This parchment fragment contains Matthew 10:17–23, 25–32 and Luke 22:4–50, 52–56, 61, 63–64. On this fragment, see Comfort and Barrett, *Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, 635–41. This parchment codex is broken off right before verse 44, so there is no way to know if it also included verse 43.

80. After Codex Sinaiticus (א) was completed, the first corrector (א*) of the text, who was a contemporary of the scribe who produced Luke (in fact, he was the *diorthōtēs* [διορθωτής] who checked the manuscript before it left the scriptorium), added these verses because they were missing. Subsequently the verses were removed by a later corrector (א¹) only to be restored by an even later corrector (א²). In my opinion, Codex Sinaiticus (א) ought to be considered a genuine witness for Luke 22:43–44.

like drops of blood' while he was praying, and saying, '[Father] if it be possible, let this cup pass.'"[81] The phrase "His sweat fell down like drops of blood" can only refer to Luke 22:44b.[82] Thus Justin clearly was aware of this story, knew that it was in some "memoir" (i.e., gospel), and is an early witness to the authenticity of these verses (although not necessarily in Luke).

Irenaeus of Lyons is another early witness to the suffering of Jesus in Gethsemane as described in Luke 22:43–44. In a section of his *Against Heresies*, in which he criticizes Christian docetists who denied that Jesus actually assumed flesh and experienced (as God) a fully human existence, he remarks that Jesus, among other things (being hungry, weary, and pained), "sweated great drops of blood."[83] This confirms that Irenaeus was aware of the suffering in Gethsemane that is described only in Luke 22:43–44. Interestingly, since all the examples of Jesus's humanity in this section of Irenaeus's treatise are scriptural proof texts, it is evident that in using the phrase "sweated great drops of blood," Irenaeus was not relying on some oral story but was quoting a scriptural source.[84]

Another early Christian writer who was aware of the Gethsemane account and definitively references it is Hippolytus of Rome (ca. AD 170–236). In a fragmentary exegetical commentary on Psalm 2, he states that Jesus "sweated under the agonies and was strengthened by the angel."[85] Thus Hippolytus was aware

81. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 103.8 (*ANF* 1:251). My translation is based on the Greek text in Miroslav Marcovich, ed., *Iustini Martyris Dialogus cum Tryphone* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997), 249 (103.8).

82. While Justin does not specifically mention blood (αἷμα) (as Luke does in 22:44b: θρόμβοι αἵματος), θρόμβος usually carries the connotation of blood. See Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. θρόμβος; and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, rev. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), s.v. θρόμβος.

83. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.22.2 (*ANF* 1:454). The accompanying Greek in this section reads: ἵδρωσε θρόμβους αἵματος.

84. Elsewhere in his writings, Irenaeus seems to allude to Luke 22:43–44. See *Epideixis tou apostolikou kērygmatos* 75 (*Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*), Ancient Christian Writers 16, trans. Joseph P. Smith (New York: Newman, 1952), 96.

85. Greek text taken from G. Nathanael Bonwetsch and Hans Achelis, eds., *Hippolytus Werke: Erster Band, Exegetische und Homiletische Schriften* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1897), 146.

of the tradition recorded in Luke 22:43–44, for both references—"sweating under agonies" and being "strengthened by an angel"—appear only in Luke's gospel. Consequently, that passage has a very ancient pedigree, even if it is not necessarily borne out by the manuscript evidence.[86]

In his treatise *On the Trinity* (ca. AD 356–360), Hilary of Poitiers (ca. AD 315–368) highlights the disparate nature of the manuscript evidence with respect to Luke 22:43–44:

> We must not ignore the fact that in several manuscripts, both Latin and Greek, nothing is written of the angel coming or of the bloody sweat. It is therefore ambiguous whether this is an omission, where it is wanting, or an interpolation, where it is found (for the disparity of the copies leaves the question uncertain to us); let not the heretics flatter themselves that herein lies a confirmation of his weakness, that he needed the help of an angel.[87]

In his polemical work *Against the Pelagians* (ca. AD 415), Jerome expresses a similar sentiment about the ambiguous manuscript evidence. Whereas Hilary notes the absence of support for Luke 22:43–44 in some biblical manuscripts, Jerome notes the opposite:

> In some copies, Greek as well as Latin, the following words are found written by Luke: "There appeared to him an angel from heaven strengthening him" (referring, undoubtedly, to the Lord, Savior). "And falling into an agony, he prayed more

86. In addition to Justin, Irenaeus, and Hippolytus, there might be one other Christian writer of relatively early date (pre-fourth century) who also makes reference to the story of Jesus's suffering in Gethsemane. A fragmentary commentary on Luke 22:42–43 attributed to Dionysius of Alexandria (d. ca. AD 264) discusses Luke 22:43–44 as it currently appears. Despite the metaphorical interpretation of Jesus's sweating blood, it would be very significant if the author was indeed Dionysius of Alexandria, since it would securely establish third-century evidence of these verses in Luke. On this commentary, see Charles L. Feltoe, *The Letters and Other Remains of Dionysius of Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904), 229–31. For Dionysius's exegesis of these verses, see pp. 241–45.

87. Hilary, *On the Trinity* 10.41.1. My translation is based on the Latin text from *Patrologia Latina* 10:375.

> earnestly. And his sweat became as drops of blood running down to the ground."[88]

The assumption that verses 43–44 were not originally part of Luke's gospel but are a later accretion raises a question about why these verses were added. Yet no satisfactory answer (at least in my opinion) has been forthcoming. While Metzger thinks the verses are not original to Luke, he can only suggest that they were probably "added from an early source, oral or written, of extra-canonical traditions concerning the life and passion of Jesus."[89]

On the other hand, with the assumption that the verses were original but then omitted, there is at least one plausible reason to explain their removal. Possible textual issues such as *homoioteleuton* or *homoioarcton* aside, I think these verses may have been deliberately removed because some Christian scribe(s) or copyist(s) felt they were potentially embarrassing in depicting what could be construed as a "weak" Jesus on the eve of his death. In his detailed work *The Death of the Messiah*, Raymond Brown argues this point, adding that a weak Jesus ostensibly contradicted Greco-Roman expectations of courage and bravery before death.[90] Interestingly, all ancient anti-Christian writers from the first four centuries whose works are still extant criticized Jesus's actions portrayed in Luke 22:42–45 because he appeared fearful of dying and did not show equanimity or true philosophical courage in the face of death.[91]

88. Jerome, *Against the Pelagians* 2.16. My translation is based on the Latin text from *Patrologia Latina* 23:578.

89. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 151.

90. Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah, From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 1:183–85. Brown writes, "While clearly the evidence available does not settle the issue of whether Luke wrote 22:43–44, in my judgment the overall import of the types of evidence or reasoning discussed above favors Lucan authorship; and henceforth I shall write as if Luke were the author" (p. 185).

91. In Greco-Roman society, Socrates was often held up as the ideal model for the ways persons ought to act and speak in the face of imminent death since he manifested (at least according to Plato's *Apology*) virtue, equanimity, and courage when he was condemned by the Athenian boule. On Greco-Roman ideals for death, see Jan Willen van Henten and Friedrich Avemarie, *Martyrdom and Noble Death: Selected Texts from Graeco-Roman, Jewish and Christian Antiquity* (London: Routledge, 2002), 9–41.

The emperor Julian "the apostate" (ca. AD 331–363), in his work *Against the Galileans* (ca. AD 362), severely reproaches Jesus because of his alleged weaknesses in Gethsemane as detailed in Luke 22:42–45:

> Furthermore, Jesus prays in such language as would be used by a pitiful wretch who cannot bear misfortune with serenity, and though he is a god is reassured by an angel (Luke 22:43). And who told you, Luke, the story of the angel, if indeed this ever happened? For those who were there when he prayed could not see the angel, for they were asleep. Therefore when Jesus came from his prayer he found them fallen asleep from their grief. He said: "Why do you sleep? Arise and pray," and so forth. And then, "and while he was yet speaking, behold a multitude and Judas went before them" (Luke 22:46–47). That is why John did not write about the angel, for neither did he see it.[92]

From this brief extract it is clear that in Julian's estimation Jesus lacked the proper courage before death, and so Julian argues that Jesus could not possibly have been "a god" as the "Galileans" (i.e., Christians) declared.[93]

Almost a century earlier the neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry (ca. AD 234–305), in his work *Against the Christians* (ca. AD 270), similarly criticized Jesus's actions and words in Gethsemane:

> When [Jesus] himself agonizes in anticipation of his death, he prays that his suffering might be eliminated (Luke 22:42; Matthew 26:39); and he says to his companions: "Wait, pray, so that temptation may not overcome you" (Luke 22:40, 46; Matthew 26:41). Surely these sayings are not worthy of a son of God, nor even a wise man who despises death.[94]

92. Translation adapted from *Julian III*, trans. Wilmer C. Wright, Loeb Classical Library 157 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1923), 431 (frag. 4); compare R. Joseph Hoffmann, ed. and trans., *Julian's "Against the Galileans"* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2004), 144 (frag. 7).

93. Since Julian mentions the angel, he is clearly aware of Luke 22:43 in the manuscript tradition he was using. On this point see T. Baarda, "Luke 22:42–47a, the Emperor Julian as a Witness to the Text of Luke," *Novum Testamentum* 30/4 (1988): 289–96.

94. Translation adapted slightly from R. Joseph Hoffmann, ed. and trans., *Porphyry's "Against the Christians": The Literary Remains* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1994), 40.

Finally, Celsus (ca. second century AD) composed an extended treatise against Christianity entitled *True Doctrine* (ca. AD 178),[95] in which he too criticized Jesus's actions and words in Gethsemane: "Why then does he [Jesus] utter loud laments and wailings, and pray that he may avoid the fear of death, saying something like this, 'O Father, if this cup could pass by me'?" (Luke 22:42; Matthew 26:39).[96] Celsus continues his criticism of Jesus in Gethsemane with an accusation against Christians generally that bears significantly on the status of Luke 22:43–44:

> After this he [Celsus] says that some believers, as though from a drinking bout, go so far as to oppose themselves and alter the original text of the gospel three or four or several times over, and they change its character to enable them to deny difficulties in face of criticism.[97]

The implication here is that Celsus was aware that the Gethsemane account was being deleted or altered in the Gospels because certain Christians felt it was potentially embarrassing. This could explain why the account in Luke 22:43–44 has such a disparate history in the manuscript record.

It has recently been argued that this account of Gethsemane may have been dropped by certain Christian groups, such as the Marcionites in their copy of the Gospel of Luke, because it portrayed a side of Jesus that was not only too weak but also too subordinate to the Father (the Demiurge to Marcionites).[98] Similarly, since Arians will later argue from Luke 22:42–44 that Jesus was not God but was a man with all the attendant human frailties, it may be that some Christians simply preferred to expunge these verses that were already somewhat dubious and were being used by heretics to ad-

95. On the dating of Celsus's treatise, see H. U. Rosenbaum, "Zur Datierung von Celsus' ΑΛΗΘΗΣ ΛΟΓΟΣ," *Vigilae christianae* 26 (1972):102–11; Jeffrey Hargis, *Against the Christians: The Rise of Early Anti-Christian Polemic* (New York: Lang, 1999), 20–24.

96. Origen, *Against Celsus* 2.24, in Origen, *Contra Celsum*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 88.

97. Origen, *Against Celsus* 2.27, in Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 90.

98. Claire Clivaz, "The Angel and the Sweat Like 'Drops of Blood' (Lk 22:43–44): $\mathfrak{P}^{69}$ and f^{13}," *Harvard Theological Review* 98/4 (2005): 429–32.

vance their theological arguments.[99] Interestingly, as noted by Hilary of Poitiers above, whatever the true nature of Luke 22:43–44, "let not the heretics flatter themselves that herein lies a confirmation of his [Jesus's] weakness, that he needed the help of an angel."

While I am persuaded that a compelling, albeit circumstantial, case can be made that Luke 22:43–44 was original but later deliberately omitted because it invited criticism, not all scholars embrace this view. In particular, Bart Ehrman and Mark Plunkett, in a full-length article devoted to Luke 22:43–44, argue that these verses were not original to Luke but were later interpolations.[100] Nevertheless, while they doubt the authenticity of these verses, they conclude that it is not a straightforward matter: "No one argument yields a definitive solution. Rather, the cumulative force of a group of arguments must be assessed, and even then the critic is left with a probability-judgment."[101]

14. Luke 23:17 KJV

For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.	ἀνάγκην δὲ εἶχεν ἀπολῦειν αὐτοῖς κατὰ ἑορτὴν ἕνα.

In the larger context of this verse, Pilate condemns Jesus to crucifixion, in lieu of Barabbas, because of the cries of the "chief priests" and "rulers of the people" (Luke 23:13–25). Within this narrative unit, verse 17 is a parenthetical aside that explains to the reader the Passover tradition of releasing a prisoner to the people. In most modern translations of the NT, this verse is omitted (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) since it does not appear in Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Alexandrinus (A), or 𝔓[75]. The verse is attested in Codex Sinaiticus (א) and Codex Freerianus (W).[102] In Codex Bezae (D) it is transposed and placed after Luke 23:19.

99. Arius *apud* Epiphanius, *Refutation of All Heresies* 16.19.4.

100. Bart D. Ehrman and Mark A. Plunkett, "The Angel and the Agony: The Textual Problem of Luke 22:43–44," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 45 (1983): 401–16.

101. Ehrman and Plunkett, "Angel and the Agony," 416.

102. Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) is defective in this part of the manuscript, so it is not possible to determine whether or not it contained this verse.

While this verse could have accidently dropped out as a result of *homoioarcton*—since verse 18 begins with ἀνέκραξαν ("they cried out") and verse 17 begins with the visually similar ἀνάγκην ("necessity")—this explanation cannot adequately explain its widespread omission in so many early manuscripts. A more likely explanation is that this verse was added as a scribal interpolation to help explain the crowd's request that Pilate release Barabbas in place of Jesus (v. 18) and that it was adapted from similar verses elsewhere: "Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would" (Matthew 27:15); "Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired" (Mark 15:6). Furthermore, the smooth transition from Luke 23:16 to 23:18 would seem to suggest that verse 17 was a later addition.

15. John 5:4 KJV

For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.	ἄγγελος γὰρ κατὰ καιρὸν κατέβαινεν ἐν τῇ κολυμβήθρᾳ, καὶ ἐτάρασσεν τὸ ὕδωρ· ὁ οὖν πρῶτος ἐμβὰς μετὰ τὴν ταραχὴν τοῦ ὕδατος, ὑγιὴς ἐγίνετο, ᾧ δήποτε κατείχετο νοσήματι.

This verse forms part of the descriptive background to the account of Jesus healing a man at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:1–18). The man is reported to have been infirm some thirty-eight years before Jesus commanded him to take up his bed and walk (v. 8). This command provoked a controversy with "the Jews," who accused Jesus of sanctioning work (bed carrying) on the Sabbath day (vv. 16–18). As a preamble to this story, John describes the pool of Bethesda and reports how crowds congregated around it "waiting for the moving of the water" (v. 3). Verse 4 functions as an ostensible explanation for the "troubling" of the water and its alleged therapeutic powers by claiming that it was the work of an angel.

In most modern NT translations, this verse is omitted (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) because it is absent from the ancient manuscripts Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex

Vaticanus (B), Codex Freerianus (W), Codex Bezae (D), 𝔓[75], and 𝔓[66].[103] In Codex Alexandrinus (A) and Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C), the passage was not originally included but was later inserted by a corrector. Additionally, in a number of later manuscripts this verse is marked by either asterisks or obeli to signify its questionable nature.[104] By the ninth century this verse had appeared in most Greek manuscripts.

Greek patristic texts offer very little evidence for John 5:4 until the later part of the fourth century.[105] But, for example, Tatian (ca. AD 120–180) may have been aware of this verse, for it is included in some much later Latin and Arabic copies of his *Diatessaron*.[106] The first secure reference to the account of the angel at Bethesda is in Tertullian's (ca. AD 160–225) treatise entitled *Concerning Baptism* (ca. AD 205). He refers to the account (without explicitly mentioning the Gospel of John) in the context of comparing Christian baptism with non-Christian rituals of cleansing and how in the Christian case the Holy Spirit, via an angel, might actually sanctify the waters of baptism: "If it is thought strange that an angel should do things to waters, there has already occurred a precedent of that which was to be. An angel used to do things when he moved the Pool of Bethsaida [Bethesda]."[107]

While confirming that certain Christians knew of the story of the angel at Bethesda by the third century, the evidence from Tertullian on its own cannot prove that John 5:4 is authentic. In fact,

103. Except for Codex Freerianus (W) and Codex Bezae (D), these manuscripts omit verse 4 along with John 5:3b ("waiting for the moving of the water"). 𝔓[66] is a papyrus codex that contains large sections of the Gospel of John (1:1–6:11; 6:35–14:26, 29–30; 15:2–26; 16:2–4, 6–7; 16:10–20:20, 22–23; 20:25–21:9, 12, 17) and dates to either the end of the second century or beginning of the third century. On this codex, see Comfort and Barrett, *Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, 376–468.

104. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 179.

105. For the later patristic evidence for this verse, see Gordon D. Fee, "On the Inauthenticity of John 5:3b–4," *Evangelical Quarterly* 54/4 (1982): 214–15.

106. On Tatian's use of John 5:4, see *Diatessaron* 22.12 (*ANF* 9:77).

107. Tertullian, *On Baptism* 5.5 (*ANF* 3:671). Translation from Ernest Evans, *Tertullian's Homily on Baptism* (London: SPCK 1964), 15.

the manuscript support against it is overwhelming.[108] On internal grounds, the few defenders of the authenticity of this verse point out that it is needed (along with 3b) to make sense of verse 7:[109] "The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." While verse 4 does help clarify verse 7, it is not absolutely necessary. Furthermore, it runs against the text-critical principle of *lectio difficilior potior* ("more difficult reading is better"). Put simply, a more difficult, perhaps ambiguous, reading is more likely to be older than another reading that is expanded and clearer, since a scribe or copyist would likely be more inclined to add a verse for clarification than to remove a verse in an otherwise straightforward narrative.[110] In John 5 it is more likely that verse 4 was added (to help clarify v. 7) than omitted. Furthermore, verse 4 contains certain words and linguistic constructions that are otherwise foreign to the Gospel of John and suggest a different hand than the writer of this gospel.[111] In light of all the evidence, it seems very likely that this verse is not authentic but is a later interpolation.[112]

108. It needs to be kept in mind that Tertullian does not actually cite John and that his phrasing is by no means a quotation or citation but more appropriately an allusion: *piscinam Bethsaidam angelus interveniens commovebat*. All the same, since John 5 is the only chapter in the Gospels that mentions the pool of Bethesda, Tertullian almost certainly had this gospel in mind when he made the reference.

109. Zane C. Hodges, "The Angel at Bethesda–John 5:4," *Bibliotheca sacra* 136 (1979): 25–39.

110. All the same, some restraint needs to be exercised before invoking this text-critical principle. If a passage makes no sense, one should not uncritically suppose that it must be older than another rendering that makes more sense, for one should always assume that the author of any text is seeking from the start to be understood.

111. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 179; Fee, "On the Inauthenticity of John 5:3b–4," 210–13.

112. Of interest is Bruce R. McConkie's comment on this verse: "No doubt the pool of Bethesda was a mineral spring whose waters had some curative virtue. But any notion that an angel came down and troubled the waters, so that the first person thereafter entering them would be healed, was pure superstition. Healing miracles are not wrought in any such manner. If we had the account as John originally wrote it, it would probably contain an explanation that the part supposedly played by an angel was merely a superstitious legend comparable to some that have since been devised by some churches of Christendom." Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973), 188.

16. John 7:53–8:11 KJV

[53]And every man went unto
his own house. [1]Jesus went
unto the mount of Olives. [2]And
early in the morning he came
again into the temple, and all
the people came unto him; and
he sat down, and taught them.
[3]And the scribes and Pharisees
brought unto him a woman taken
in adultery; and when they had
set her in the midst, [4]They say
unto him, Master, this woman
was taken in adultery, in the
very act. [5]NowMoses in the law
commanded us, that such should
be stoned: but what sayest thou?
[6]This they said, tempting him,
that they might have to accuse
him. But Jesus stooped down,
and with his finger wrote on the
ground, as though he heard them
not. [7]So when they continued
asking him, he lifted up himself,
and said unto them, He that is
without sin among you, let him
first cast a stone at her. [8]And again
he stooped down, and wrote on
the ground. [9]And they which
heard it, being convicted by their
own conscience, went out one by
one, beginning at the eldest, even
unto the last: and Jesus was left
alone, and the woman standing
in the midst. [10]When Jesus had
lifted up himself, and saw none
but the woman, he said unto
her, Woman, where are those
thine accusers? hath no man
condemned thee? [11]She said, No
man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her,
Neither do I condemn thee: go, and
sin no more.

[53]καὶ ἐπορεύθη ἕκαστος εἰς
τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ, [1]Ἰησοῦς δὲ
ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν.
[2]ὄρθρου δὲ πάλιν παρεγένετο
εἰς τὸ ἱερόν, καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς
ἤρχετο πρὸς αὐτόν, καὶ καθίσας
ἐδίδασκεν αὐτούς. [3]ἄγουσιν δὲ
οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι
πρὸς αὐτὸν γυναῖκα ἐν μοιχείᾳ
κατειλημμένην, καὶ στήσαντες
αὐτὴν ἐν μέσῳ [4]λέγουσιν
αὐτῷ, Διδάσκαλε, αὕτη ἡ γυνὴ
κατειλήφθη ἐπ᾽ αὐτοφώρῳ
μοιχευομένη· [5]ἐν δὲ τῷ νόμῳ
ἡμῖν Μωϋσῆς ἐνετείλατο τὰς
τοιαύτας λιθοβολεῖσθαι· σὺ οὖν
τί λέγεις; [6]τοῦτο δὲ ἔλεγον
πειράζοντες αὐτόν, ἵνα ἔχωσι
κατηγορεῖν αὐτοῦ. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς
κάτω κύψας τῷ δακτύλῳ ἔγραφεν
εἰς τὴν γῆν, μὴ προσποιούμενος.
[7]ὡς δὲ ἐπέμενον ἐρωτῶντες
αὐτόν, ἀνεκύψας εἶπε αὐτοῖς,
ὁ ἀναμάρτητος ὑμῶν, πρῶτος
τὸν λίθον ἐπ᾽ αὐτῇ βαλέτω· [8]καὶ
πάλιν κάτω κύψας ἔγραφεν εἰς
τὴν γῆν. [9]οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες,
καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς συνειδήσεως
ἐλεγχόμενοι, ἐξήρχοντο εἷς
καθ᾽ εἷς ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ τῶν
πρεσβυτέρων ἕως τῶν ἐσχάτων,
καὶ κατελείφθη μόνος ὁ Ἰησοῦς,
καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἐν μέσῳ ἑστῶσα.
[10]ἀνακύψας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ
μηδένα θεασάμενος πλὴν τῆς
γυναικός, εἶπεν αὐτῇ, γύναι,
ποῦ εἰσιν ἐκεῖνοι οἱ κατήγοροί
σου; οὐδείς σε κατέκρινεν; [11]ἡ
δὲ εἶπεν, Οὐδείς, κύριε. εἶπεν
δὲ αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, οὐδὲ ἐγώ σε
κατακρίνω, πορεύου καὶ μηκέτι
ἁμάρτανε.

In this story[113] the scribes and Pharisees bring before Jesus a woman allegedly caught in the act of adultery and question him about the appropriate punishment, which according to the law of Moses was stoning (Deuteronomy 22:21–24). Jesus eventually responds, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8:7). At this the accusers gradually depart, "being convicted by their own conscience" (v. 9), and leave Jesus alone with the woman. The pericope comes to a close with Jesus exhorting the woman to "go, and sin no more" (v. 11). This is the only story of this type preserved in any of the Gospels.

In most modern translations, these verses are either written in italics or placed in brackets and are usually accompanied by an explanatory note about their tenuous character. John 7:53–8:11 does not appear in any of the most important ancient manuscripts: Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex Freerianus (W), 𝔓[66], or 𝔓[75]. Although Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) and Codex Alexandrinus (A) are damaged in this section of John's gospel, measurement of the missing sections suggests insufficient room for the passage in question. A number of later manuscripts mark this passage with asterisks or obeli to signal its questionable nature.[114] Furthermore, in some manuscripts the passage is placed after John 7:36 or 7:44, at the end of the gospel (i.e., after John 21:25), or after Luke 21:38, all of which suggests that this story was a later interpolation.[115] In its present location, the story is first attested in Codex Bezae (D).[116] Given the nature of the manuscript and papyrological

113. The literature on the authenticity/inauthenticity of this story in the Gospel of John is fairly extensive. For a cursory bibliography, see Daniel B. Wallace, "Reconsidering 'The Story of Jesus and the Adulteress Reconsidered,'" *New Testament Studies* 39 (1993): 290 n. 2. For an LDS treatment, see Thomas Wayment, "The Woman Taken in Adultery and the History of the New Testament Canon," in *The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ: From the Transfiguration through the Triumphal Entry*, ed. Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and Thomas A. Wayment (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006), 372–97.

114. Gary M. Burge, "A Specific Problem in the New Testament Text and Canon: The Woman Caught in Adultery (John 7:53–8:11)," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 27/2 (1984): 142.

115. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 188.

116. This is the only manuscript dating to before the eighth century that contains this story.

evidence, it seems almost certain that this pericope was not originally part of John's gospel.

While it is possible that a verse or two might unintentionally be lost, it is less likely that a copyist or scribe could accidently omit twelve whole verses. Furthermore, it is also unlikely that these verses were inadvertently dropped by a number of different copyists and scribes working independently of each other at different times and in different places. Though some have speculated that perhaps the story was intentionally omitted from John's gospel because it could portray Jesus as too lenient on adultery, this theory does not adequately take account of all the evidence. Unlike Luke 22:43–44, where a circumstantial case can be made for deliberate omission, there is no evidence that John 7:53–8:11 was expunged due to "moral prudence," as Augustine would later argue.[117] If this were the case, at least one early manuscript ought to contain the story (as is the case with manuscript 0171 [PSI II 124] and Luke 22:43–44), yet not a single early manuscript before Codex Bezae (D) contains the story.

In patristic literature this story in its current form is unknown until the later part of the fourth century. Origen, in his *Commentary on John*, skips directly from John 7:52 to 8:12, so evidently none of the third-century copies of John known to Origen contained this story. Similarly, Tertullian and Cyprian (d. AD 258) show no awareness of this story, even though they both issued ecclesiastical instructions concerning adultery.[118] In the Greek East, the first church father to unambiguously mention the story is Euthymius Zigabenus (early twelfth century), who notes that it clearly was inserted into John's gospel.[119] In the Latin West, the story is first mentioned at the end of the fourth century by Ambrose and then Jerome. Interestingly, Jerome remarks that the story was well attested: "In the Gospel according to John there is found in many Greek as well as

117. Augustine, *On Adulterous Marriages* 2.6–7. Compare Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 189.

118. Tertullian, *On Modesty* (ca. AD 220); Cyprian, *Letter* 55.20 (ca. AD 250).

119. Edwyn C. Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel* (London: Faber and Faber, 1940), 674. Euthymius states that "accurate copies" either omit the story or mark it with obeli.

Latin copies the story of the adulteress who was accused before the Lord."[120]

While the story seems to have been unknown to patristic writers until the end of the fourth century, it is possible that a version was known much earlier. In his *Ecclesiastical History* (ca. AD 320), Eusebius quotes a story known to him through the writings of Papias of Hierapolis (ca. AD 60–130), an early bishop of Hierapolis in western Asia Minor. "The same person [Papias] uses proofs from the First Epistle of John, and from the Epistle of Peter in like manner. *And he also gives another story of a woman who was accused of many sins before the Lord*, which is found in the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*."[121] While this reference is brief and the description incomplete, Papias apparently knew of a story that circulated among early Christians and that shared at least some parallels with the story of the woman taken in adultery.[122] Eusebius's comment about the *Gospel according to the Hebrews* containing the story is difficult to assess since this gospel is no longer extant.[123] Additionally, since it is not clear that Eusebius was aware of the story of the woman taken in adultery in John 7:53–8:11, it is difficult to know how he was interpreting the statement from Papias. Was there another story in circulation about a different woman being accused of sins before Jesus?

120. Jerome, *Against the Pelagians* 2.17. My translation is based on Latin text from *Patrologia Latina* 23:579.

121. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.39.17 (*NPNF* 1:173), emphasis added (sometimes cited as Papias Frag. 3.17). Translation is my own. See Michael W. Holmes, ed. and trans., *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 740–41.

122. While the tenth-century world chronicler Agapius of Hierapolis reports that Papias was in fact referring to the story of the woman taken in adultery that is found in John, this is probably his own inference and, because of its late date, should not necessarily be taken at face value. See Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 760–61.

123. The so-called *Gospel according to the Hebrews* (the title is not original) is believed to have been an early second-century gospel produced in Alexandria and used principally by Jewish Christians. It is known primarily from scattered references by later Christian authors. See Bart D. Ehrman, *Lost Scriptures: Books That Did Not Make It into the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 15–16.

Another relatively early source that possibly references this story is the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, or *Teachings of the Apostles*. While this source purports to have been written by the apostles at the time of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), modern scholarship has shown that it was actually composed sometime in the third century.[124] In the section of this treatise where bishops are instructed to mercifully receive penitent sinners, an illustrative story is given, one that suggests that the author(s) of the treatise was aware of a story similar to what is found in John 7:53–8:11:

> And when the elders had set another woman which had sinned before Him [Jesus], and had left the sentence to Him, and were gone out, our Lord, the Searcher of the hearts, inquiring of her whether the elders had condemned her, and being answered No, He said unto her: "Go thy way therefore, for neither do I condemn thee." This Jesus, O ye bishops, our Saviour, our King, and our God, ought to be set before you as your pattern.[125]

While the example cited in the *Didascalia Apostolorum* shares definite parallels with John 7:53–8:11, there are also clear differences. Jesus's response to the woman in the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, "Go thy way therefore, for neither do I condemn thee," is remarkably similar to what is found in John 8:11, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." On the other hand, the Johannine version implies that the woman was actually guilty of adultery, whereas the example cited in the *Didascalia Apostolorum* supposes that that woman was actually innocent of whatever charges were being leveled against her (it is not clear that it was necessarily adultery). Furthermore, the Johannine version refers to the "scribes and Pharisees," while the *Didascalia Apostolorum* mentions "the Elders"; in the former the

124. See *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, s.v. "Didascalia Apostolorum," 479. Though this text was originally written in Greek, it is extant only in Syriac.

125. *Constitutiones Apostolorum* 2.24 (*ANF* 7:408). Because the *Didascalia Apostolorum* is embodied in the first six books of the fourth-century *Apostolic Constitutions*, I have selected this work for reference.

accusers leave as a result of a guilty conscience, whereas in the latter they leave voluntarily so that Jesus can judge independently.

Finally, in his *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*, Didymus the Blind (ca. AD 318–98), the famous biblical exegete from Alexandria, relates a story that is very similar to what is found in John 7:53–8:11.

> We find, therefore, in certain gospels [the following story]. A woman, it says, was condemned by the Jews for a sin and was being sent to be stoned in the place where that was customary to happen. The saviour, it says, when he saw her and observed that they were ready to stone her, said to those who were about to cast stones, "He who has not sinned, let him take a stone and cast it." If anyone is conscious in himself not to have sinned, let him take up a stone and smite her. And no one dared. Since they knew in themselves and perceived that they themselves were guilty in some things, they did not dare to strike her.[126]

The story, as related by Didymus, shares definite parallels with the account in John 7:53–8:11, most notably "He who has not sinned, let him take a stone and cast it" (compare John 8:7). However, there are also some important differences. For example, Didymus does not identify the charge as adultery, nor should it be automatically assumed, since other crimes also merited stoning according to the law of Moses.[127] Furthermore, the story is framed differently from how it appears in John. In John the scribes and Pharisees seek to entrap Jesus and therefore bring the woman to him and solicit his opinion on the condemnation, whereas in Didymus's account the Jews never seek out Jesus's judgment—rather, Jesus shows the initiative and intervenes on the woman's behalf. Though it might be tempting to suppose that Didymus must have had the Gospel of John in mind when he said the story could be found "in certain gos-

126. Didymus, *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*, 223.6b–13a. Translation from Bart D. Ehrman, "Jesus and the Adulteress," *New Testament Studies* 34/1 (1988): 25.

127. Namely, breaking the Sabbath (Numbers 15:33–36), idolatry (Deuteronomy 17:2–5), and rebellious children (Deuteronomy 21:19–21).

pels," the clear differences between the accounts make that facile assumption problematic. Furthermore, Didymus might have been referring not to John's gospel but to the similar story that Eusebius attributes to the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*.

In any event, the patristic evidence demonstrates that at least by the second century certain Christians were aware of a story about a condemned woman who appeared before Jesus and whose punishment was subsequently nullified or mitigated as a result of the encounter. Yet the similar story in John cannot be deemed original to that gospel. The ancient manuscript evidence speaks against it, and the story contains literary features that suggest non-Johannine authorship.[128] Different earlier versions of this story suggest that its current form in John is not the original version. Perhaps, then, the story evolved into its present form and was added to John in the fourth or fifth century because its core had an ancient pedigree and its appeal to mercy over punishment was attractive.

17. Acts 8:37 KJV

And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.	εἶπε δὲ ὁ Φίλιππος, εἰ πιστεύεις ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας, ἔξεστιν. ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ εἶπε, πιστεύω τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶναι τὸν Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.

In this verse Philip, one of the seven chosen by the apostles to help with the ministry (Acts 6:5), travels to Gaza and converts a eunuch from Ethiopia whom he meets along the way (Acts 8:26–40). After Phillip briefly preaches about Jesus (v. 35), the eunuch requests baptism (v. 36). Philip replies that he can receive baptism as long as believes with all his heart (v. 37a), whereupon the eunuch professes belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God (v. 37b) and is then baptized (v. 38).

Most modern NT translations (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) omit this verse because it is missing from Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex

128. On this last point, see Wallace, "Reconsidering," 290–96.

Alexandrinus (A), and 𝔓[45].[129] Its earliest attestation in a codex is in the sixth century, in Codex Laudianus (E),[130] after which date it becomes more common until, by the ninth century, it appears with some frequency in various Greek miniscules. Given the strong manuscript evidence and lack of grounds for accidental omission, it seems probable that verse 37 was a later accretion to Acts. Supporting this view is the fact that the Ethiopian eunuch's declaration of belief in verse 37b is a confessional phrase that gained currency in the liturgy and catechetical confessions of the fifth and sixth centuries. As Metzger has argued, "Its insertion into the text seems to have been due to the feeling that Philip would not have baptized the Ethiopian without securing a confession of faith, which needed to be expressed in the narrative."[131]

Erasmus remarked (see below) that to his knowledge Acts 8:37 was not attested in any Greek manuscript he consulted, although he attributed this to scribal error. Interestingly, Irenaeus of Lyons, in his *Against Heresies* (ca. AD 180), mentions the Ethiopian eunuch's confession (otherwise known only from Acts 8:37) and quotes it (albeit in Latin) rather closely to how it appears in Acts 8:37b (Greek): "I believe Jesus to be the son of God."[132]

Although some might suspect that this verse was removed because it could be used against the practice of infant baptism (confession of belief being something that infants are unable to do), there is no indication that this was the case. When the debate about infant baptism emerged in the fifth century, Acts 8:37 was never invoked as a proof text against the practice, nor do we find an allegation that adherents of the practice expunged this verse from their scriptures. Furthermore, there are textually secure passages in the NT that

129. Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) and Codex Bezae (D) are damaged in this portion of Acts, so it is not known if they contained this verse.

130. Codex Laudianus (E), named after its former owner Archbishop William Laud, is a diglot manuscript assigned to the sixth century that contains both a Latin text (left column) and a Greek text (right column) of the book of Acts. On this codex, see Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 110.

131. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 315.

132. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.12.8 (*ANF* 1:433).

show confession to be an important prerequisite for baptism (Acts 16:29–33; 18:8). If Acts 8:37 was removed for doctrinal reasons, why were these other passages not expunged too?

Erasmus's notes on this verse: "And Philip said: 'If you believe &c.' [the rest of the verse] until the place 'and he commanded the chariot to stand still [v. 37],' I did not find in the Greek manuscripts, although I think that it has been omitted by the carelessness of copyists. For I found this [verse] is applied in certain Greek manuscripts, but in the margin."

18. Acts 15:34 KJV

Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.	ἔδοξε δὲ τῷ Σίλᾳ ἐπιμεῖναι αὐτοῦ.

After the Jerusalem Council, where it was determined that Gentile followers need not be circumcised to become Christians, Paul and Barnabas, accompanied by Silas and Judas, went to Antioch to inform the Christian congregations in the city about the ruling. Acts 15:33 gives the impression that Silas and Judas returned to Jerusalem. However, in verses 40–41 we learn that Paul (in Antioch) chose Silas (seemingly in Jerusalem) as his new companion and headed toward Cilicia. Verse 34 clarifies the situation by stating that Silas did not actually return to Jerusalem but remained in Antioch, where Paul was.

Most modern editions of the NT omit this verse (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) because it does not appear in any of the most important ancient witnesses: Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex Alexandrinus (A), or 𝔓[74].[133] The verse does appear in Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) and in Codex Bezae (D), but in Bezae it is expanded: "But it seemed good to Silas that they remain, and Judas journeyed alone."

133. 𝔓[74] is a seventh-century papyrus manuscript that contains large sections from Acts, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1–3 John, and Jude. It is an important witness for Acts because it contains almost the entire book. On this manuscript, see Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 101.

Because a variety of ancient manuscripts lack this verse, it is highly unlikely that it was accidentally omitted due to scribal error. It seems far more likely that this verse was later added by a copyist to explain how Paul could have chosen Silas as his new companion so readily. Nevertheless, beyond adding clarity to the narrative, this verse has no theologically significant implications.

Erasmus's notes on this verse: "'To remain there' is to remain in the same place. In other respects, after these words, which is followed in our copies with 'wherefore Judas alone went away to Jerusalem,' I did not find among the Greek [manuscripts]. It seemed that Silas remained there to be found, except in one manuscript, in which it is placed in the margin. Truly it is possible for this to be seen as an error made by scribes."

19. Acts 24:7 KJV

But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands,	παρελθὼν δὲ Λυσίας ὁ χιλιαρχος μετὰ πολλῆς βίας ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν ἡμῶν ἀπήγαγεν

The context here is Paul's hearing before the Roman procurator (governor) Felix in Caesarea, when a lawyer named Tertius[134] accuses Paul of having profaned the temple (Acts 24:6) and relates how Lysias, a Roman tribune, had come and rescued Paul from the angry mob. Most modern NT translations omit verse 7 (along with v. 6b)—CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV—since it does not appear in any of the most important ancient manuscripts: Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex Alexandrinus (A), or 𝔓[74].[135] The verse is first attested in the sixth-century Codex Laudianus (E).

In light of the overwhelming manuscript evidence, it seems rather certain that verse 7 was added to Acts 24. The most plausible explanation is that it was inserted into Tertius's speech to clarify

134. The KJV uses the diminutive form *Tertullus*.

135. Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) and Codex Bezae (D) are damaged in this portion of Acts, so it is impossible to determine whether they contained this verse.

that it was Lysias who forcibly removed Paul from the mob, an incident reported previously in Acts 21:33. However, some scholars see the verse as authentic and argue that a jump from verse 6b to verse 8 upsets clarity and completeness. Yet this is precisely the place where a copyist or scribe might be most inclined to insert extra material into the text in order to clarify an otherwise semiambiguous passage. In any case, about the only implication of the addition or omission of this verse is that it has some bearing on the interpretation of παρ᾽ οὗ ("of whom") at the start of verse 8. If the verse is omitted, this clearly refers to Paul; if retained, it refers to Lysias.

Erasmus's notes on this verse: "'Whom we took and we wanted to judge him according to our law. And the tribune Lysias came in and with great force took him from our hands, commanding his accusers to come to you.' In multiple Greek copies they lack all this. Except in one I found added, but of the smallest form, and it is in the space of the margin."

20. Acts 28:29 KJV

And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.	καὶ ταῦτα αὐτοῦ εἰπόντος, ἀπῆλθον οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, πολλὴν ἔχοντες ἐν ἑαυτοῖς συζήτησιν

This verse forms part of the conclusion of Acts. Paul is in Rome awaiting his appearance before the emperor (Acts 28:16–31). In the meantime he called the leading Jews of the city together and declared the gospel unto them (vv. 17, 23). Paul's message was met with mixed reactions (v. 24), whereupon he rebuked certain of them by quoting Isaiah 6:9–10 (Isaiah's words of reproach to Israel) before they left. Verse 29 describes the reactions of certain Jews after they departed from Paul.

In most modern NT translations, this verse is omitted (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) because it does not appear in any ancient manuscript. It is not present in Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex Alexandrinus (A),

Codex Laudianus (E), or $\mathfrak{P}^{74}$.[136] Even Erasmus remarks (see below) that he could not locate this verse in several Greek manuscripts. Given the overwhelming manuscript evidence against its authenticity, this verse appears to be a later interpolation to Acts. The best explanation is that it was inserted at some later point to smooth out the rather hasty transition from verse 28 to verse 30. In any event, this verse has no significant theological implications.

Erasmus's notes on this verse: "'And when they had said these things, the Jews departed from him, having a great dispute among themselves.' I did not find the words in several old manuscripts."

21. Romans 16:24 KJV

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.	ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν. ἀμήν.

Part of the final instructions in Romans (16:17–24) before the concluding doxology (vv. 25–27), this verse is basically a repetition of verse 20b: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."[137] Most modern NT translations (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV) omit the verse because it is not attested in Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex Alexandrinus (A), Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C), $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$, or $\mathfrak{P}^{61}$. However, it is attested in Codex Bezae (D).

In light of the overwhelming manuscript evidence against its authenticity, combined with the fact that it essentially repeats verse 20b, the verse very likely is a later addition to Romans. Perhaps the most likely explanation is that it effectively closes the letter with a

136. While it appears that verse 29 is absent from $\mathfrak{P}^{74}$, that portion of the manuscript is damaged and riddled with lacunae, preventing any definitive conclusion. The same holds for Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) and Codex Bezae (D), which are also damaged in this section of Acts.

137. There is debate about whether or not the name-title *Christ* was originally a part of this verse since it is not attested in the earliest manuscripts: Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Sinaiticus (א), or $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$.

dominical declaration, one perhaps added in a later ecclesiastical context in which this letter was read as part of the liturgy.[138]

22. 1 John 5:7b–8a KJV

[7]For there are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. [8]And there are three that bear witness in earth,] the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

[7]ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ πατήρ, ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα· καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσι. [8]καὶ τρεῖς εἰσὶν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ, τὸ Πνεῦμα, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ αἷμα· καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἕν εἰσιν.

These two verses are part of the book's concluding narrative section wherein the author testifies about the reality of Jesus Christ and his divine Sonship (1 John 5:6–20). As they currently stand in the KJV, these two verses assert the unity of the Godhead. In virtually every modern NT translation (CEV, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV, NWT, REB, RSV, TEV), verses 7b and 8a are omitted since they do not appear in a single ancient Greek manuscript.

In the oldest Greek manuscripts containing 1 John—Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex Vaticanus (B), and Codex Alexandrinus (A)—these two verses read as follows:[139] "[7a]For there are three that bear record, [8b]the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." Similarly, not a single early church father writing in Greek is aware of 1 John 5:7b–8a. For example, the earliest Christian commentator on these verses, Clement of Alexandria, cites them as follows: "[7a]For there are three that bear witness, [8b]the spirit, and the

138. Though the final doxology (vv. 25–27) occurs with minor variations in Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Sinaiticus (א), Codex Alexandrinus (A), and Codex Bezae (D), there has been some debate about whether Paul actually appended it to his original letter or whether it was added shortly thereafter when Paul's letters were collected and read in various early Christian communities. See Raymond F. Collins, "The Case of a Wandering Doxology: Rom 16,25–27," in *New Testament Textual Criticism and Exegesis: Festschrift J. Delobel*, ed. A. Denaux (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2002), 293–303.

139. Codex Bezae (D) does not contain any of the Johannine epistles (1–3 John). Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (C) is damaged in this section of the codex, so it is not possible to determine how 1 John 5:7–8 read in it.

water, and the blood, and these three are one."[140] The fact that no Greek writer of the ancient church is aware of 1 John 5:7b–8a is very telling, especially when one considers the theological controversies of the fourth century that centered on the nature of the Godhead (i.e., Arianism and Sabellianism) and were resolved by promulgating the doctrine of the Trinity. Certainly if 1 John 5:7b–8a were authentic, why did not a single church father writing in Greek cite these verses in defense of Trinitarian theology since they form the only explicit Trinitarian formula in the entire NT?

When one goes beyond the Greek NT and Greek patristic writers and examines other ancient copies of the NT, whether they be in Syriac, Coptic, or Ethiopic, the results are the same.[141] No ancient copy of 1 John in any of these languages contains 5:7b–8a. Similarly, a survey of the Old Latin version of the NT, preserved fragmentarily by such Latin fathers as Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine, reveals that 1 John 5:7b–8a was not in the earliest Latin versions of the NT.[142] Furthermore, it is evident that Jerome's Vulgate did not contain these verses either.[143]

Based on the overwhelming textual evidence, it is fairly obvious that 1 John 5:7b–8a, commonly referred to as the *Comma Johanneum* (Johannine Comma),[144] is not authentic but is a much later interpolation. Where did it come from? Its earliest attestation is in the *Liber Apologeticus*, a fourth-century homily by either Bishop Priscillian

140. This reference comes from the fragments of Clement preserved in Latin by the sixth-century Roman statesman and monastic founder Cassiodorus (ca. AD 485–580). See fragment 3 (*ANF* 2:576).

141. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 648.

142. Though some have tried to argue that Cyprian, in *The Unity of the Catholic Church* 6, refers to 1 John 5:7a–8b, this is not correct. See Maurice Bévenot, trans. and ed., *St. Cyprian: The Lapsed, The Unity of the Catholic Church* (Westminster, MD: Newman, 1957), 109, n. 53.

143. Specifically, Codex Fuldensis, one of the earliest and most important manuscripts of the Vulgate (copied about AD 541–46), does not contain these verses. Neither does Codex Amiatinus, the earliest nearly complete copy of the entire Latin Vulgate copied before AD 716.

144. This designation refers to how the interpolated material neatly forms a short clause within the narrative flow of the two verses.

of Avila (d. AD 385) or his successor, Bishop Instantius.[145] According to Metzger, it was between the fifth and sixth centuries when this interpolation was placed in select Latin versions of 1 John:

> Apparently the gloss [1 John 5:7b–8a] arose when the original passage [1 John 5:7–8] was understood to symbolize the Trinity (through the mention of three witnesses: the Spirit, the water, and the blood), an interpretation that may have been written first as a marginal note that afterwards found its way into the text. In the fifth century the gloss was quoted by Latin Fathers in North Africa and Italy as part of the text of the Epistle, and from the sixth century onwards it is found more and more frequently in manuscripts of the Old Latin and of the Vulgate.[146]

At some point between the eighth and ninth centuries, when this reading caught on and became somewhat widespread in Latin NT manuscripts of the time, it was apparently conscripted into select Greek manuscripts. At present, the earliest Greek manuscript that contains 1 John 5:7b–8a is a tenth-century manuscript in which these verses are added as part of an alternative reading.[147] Of the nearly 5,400 known Greek manuscripts of the NT, only 8 contain the Johannine Comma, and most of them are from the fifteenth or sixteenth century.[148]

The story of how these verses made their way into the Greek NT produced by Erasmus, which subsequently paved the way for their inclusion in the KJV, is intriguing. In the first and second editions of Erasmus's Greek NT (1516, 1519), 1 John 5:7b–8a was not included because Erasmus knew of no Greek manuscript that had these verses. However, by omitting these verses, Erasmus—and

145. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 648.

146. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 648.

147. Though this manuscript is dated to the tenth century, it is not certain whether the addition of 1 John 5:7b–8a was made immediately after the manuscript was written or a considerable time later.

148. For these manuscripts, see Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 647–48.

subsequently his version of the NT—began to come under increasing attack from various quarters of the church. The accusations ranged from negligence (Lat. *supinitas*), for not adequately or thoroughly checking all Greek manuscripts of the time, to heresy, because 1 John 5:7b–8a was thought to be a divine safeguard against Arianism.[149] One of the most vocal and persistent critics was Edward Lee, who would later serve as Archbishop of York (1531–1544). In 1520 Erasmus issued a detailed response directly to Lee, entitled *Responsio ad Annotationes Eduardi Lei.* In it Erasmus defended himself and his work and explained why 1 John 5:7b–8a was omitted from his first two editions of the Greek NT:

> I shall merely say that I examined at various times more than seven manuscripts and did not find in any of them what we read in our texts. If I had come across one manuscript that had the reading found in our texts, I would have added the phrase missing in the others on the strength of that one. Since that did not happen I did the only thing possible and indicated what was lacking in the Greek texts.[150]

Nevertheless, Erasmus's third edition of his Greek NT, published in 1522, inserted the questionable Johannine Comma, which remained in all future editions. The primary reason for its insertion was that, very conveniently, a Greek NT manuscript containing 1 John 5:7b–8a suddenly appeared and sometime between May 1520 and June 1521 was brought to the attention of Erasmus, who included the Johannine Comma in his third edition. However, it is evident that he had reservations about the authenticity and timely appearance of that manuscript. The manuscript, known today as Codex Montfortianus and by Erasmus as Codex Britannicus, dates to the early sixteenth century.[151] It contains the entire NT written

149. H. J. De Jonge, "Erasmus and the Comma Johanneum," *Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses* 56/4 (1980): 382–86.

150. Erasmus, *Controversies with Edward Lee*, Collected Works of Erasmus 72, ed. Jane E. Philips, trans. Erika Rummel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 404.

151. It is designated by the number 61 and is currently housed at Trinity College in Dublin. See Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 129.

in miniscule script with one column per page. Scholars have long recognized that this manuscript was basically produced to induce Erasmus to include the Johannine Comma.[152] As Metzger and Ehrman argue:

> In an unguarded moment, Erasmus may have promised that he would insert the *Comma Johanneum*, as it is called, in future editions if a single Greek manuscript could be found that contained the passage. At length, such a copy was found—or was made to order! As it now appears, the Greek manuscript had probably been written in Oxford about 1520 by a Franciscan friar named Froy (or Roy), who took the disputed words from the Latin Vulgate. Erasmus inserted the passage in his third edition (1522), but in a lengthy footnote that was included in his volume of annotations, he intimated his suspicion that the manuscript had been prepared expressly in order to confute him.[153]

There is no substantial evidence that Erasmus felt constrained by any promise to include these verses if they could be found in a Greek manuscript. A more likely reason for their inclusion was that the protests moved him to defend his good name and ensure the continued success of his Greek NT.[154] As a result, these verses were later included in the KJV since they appeared in all versions of Erasmus's Greek NT after the second edition, even though they clearly were not original to 1 John. The correct reading for 1 John 5:7–8 should be: "[7]For there are three that bear record, [8]the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three agree in one."

Erasmus's notes on these verses: "'There are three who give testimony in heaven.' In the Greek manuscript(s) I only found this concerning the testimony of the three: 'there are three testifying, the spirit and the water and the blood'; it is because there are three that

152. J. Rendel Harris, *The Origin of the Leicester Codex of the New Testament* (London: Clay, 1887), 46–53.

153. Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 146–47.

154. De Jonge, "Erasmus and the Comma Johanneum," 385.

testify—the spirit, and the water, and the blood. The divine Jerome announced beforehand in his canonical letters that this passage was suspected to be a corruption from the Latin interpreters, and the testimony of 'the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit' was omitted by several. . . . To this Paolo Bombasio, a learned and blameless man, at my enquiry described this passage to me word for word from a very old codex from the Vatican library, in which it does not have the testimony 'of the father, word, and spirit.' If anyone is impressed by age, the book was very ancient; if by the authority of the Pope, this testimony was sought from his library. The edition by Aldina agrees with this reading."[155]

Conclusion

It should be readily apparent that, on the basis of the evidence from the ancient NT manuscripts, there are some passages that do not actually belong in the KJV NT. Of the twenty-two passages that appear in the KJV but are omitted or bracketed in most modern editions of the Bible (see table 1), there are good grounds for omitting nineteen of them (forty verses). Though this sounds like a significant number, when one considers that there are about 7,956 verses in the NT, the questionable verses make up only one-half of 1 percent of the entire NT (.005). While the KJV NT certainly has some textual problems owing to its Greek subtext, it must also be acknowledged that, statistically speaking, the Greek subtext nearly always agrees with the ancient textual evidence as it currently stands.[156]

Even though the textual integrity of nineteen passages (forty verses) is to be doubted, whether they are omitted or not makes little or no difference doctrinally or theologically. For example, numbers 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 14 may be regarded as some kind of gospel harmonization. Because they have been directly conscripted

155. Erasmus's notes on these verses are too long to cite in their entirety.

156. Even if every single invalid variant attested in the KJV NT were counted, not only those variants (treated in this examination) that affect an entire verse or passage but also those that affect parts of a verse or a few words, the ratio would probably not exceed 2% of the total NT text.

Table 1. Likely authenticity of New Testament verses included in the KJV but deleted in modern versions

		Likely authentic (original)	Likely added (unoriginal)	Definitely added (unoriginal)
1.	Matthew 12:47	✓		
2.	Matthew 17:21		✓	
3.	Matthew 18:11		✓	
4.	Matthew 21:44	✓		
5.	Matthew 23:14			✓
6.	Mark 7:16		✓	
7.	Mark 9:44		✓	
8.	Mark 9:46		✓	
9.	Mark 11:26		✓	
10.	Mark 15:28			✓
11.	Mark 16:9–20		✓	
12.	Luke 17:36			✓
13.	Luke 22:43–44	✓		
14.	Luke 23:17		✓	
15.	John 5:4		✓	
16.	John 7:53–8:11			✓
17.	Acts 8:37		✓	
18.	Acts 15:34			✓
19.	Acts 24:7		✓	
20.	Acts 28:29			✓
21.	Romans 16:24		✓	
22.	1 John 5:7b–8a			✓
Totals		3	12	7

from elsewhere in the Gospels, little is changed doctrinally by omitting these passages. For example, number 9 (Mark 11:26) has been taken directly from Matthew 6:15, which is a textually secure verse. But even though Mark 11:26 should be omitted, the same material remains in Matthew 6:15, so effectively nothing is lost. The same is

generally true for the other nine instances of harmonization. While numbers 17 and 21 are not gospel harmonizations, since the material they contain can be securely found elsewhere in the NT, their omission makes little difference doctrinally. Additionally, other verses, like numbers 19 and 20, have no real significance outside of clarifying the mundane details of a passage and therefore have no real theological significance.

On the other hand, a few of the questionable KJV passages do carry theological implications, and significant ones at that. The one with the greatest theological significance is number 22 (1 John 5:7b–8a). If this verse is admitted as authentic, it could be argued that there is at least one NT verse that contains overt Trinitarian theology. However, as this and numerous other studies before it have shown, the famous (perhaps infamous) Johannine Comma is clearly a much later interpolation that lacks any ancient textual support whatsoever. To a lesser extent, number 15 (John 5:4) is potentially theologically significant because if it is authentic, the principles upon which miracles are thought to be predicated (e.g., faithfulness and righteousness) would have to be expanded to include arbitrary chance. Further, if number 13 (Luke 22:43–44) is authentic, the verse has theological consequences for how one views Jesus's atoning sacrifice and the role Gethsemane played in that sacrifice.

Though in most text-critical cases the KJV NT appears to be inferior to many modern Bible editions, such deficiencies should not be overexaggerated or allowed to overshadow the strengths of the KJV. Such strengths include the beauty of its language and its consistently very close or literal translation of the Greek text—something some modern editions have moved too far away from by taking too much license in translation. Despite its largely minor text-critical shortcomings, the KJV is still a respectable edition of the NT that can still, even four hundred years after its publication, be used with much profit, especially if one is made aware of some of those deficiencies.

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