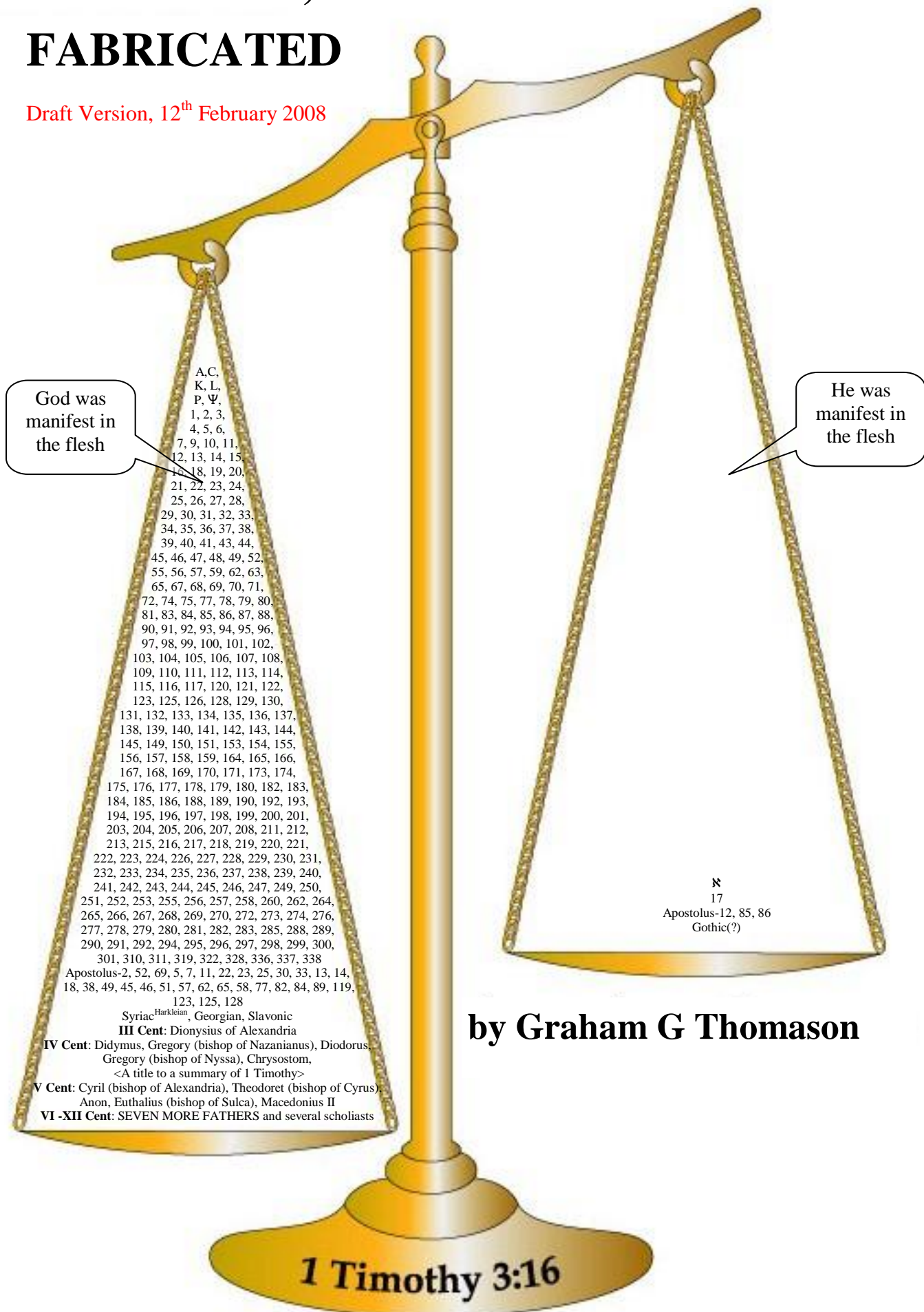


# SCRIPTURE, AUTHENTIC AND FABRICATED

Draft Version, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008



God was  
manifest in  
the flesh

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18, 38, 49, 45, 46, 51, 57, 62, 65, 58, 77, 82, 84, 89, 119,  
123, 125, 128  
Syriac<sup>Harkleian</sup>, Georgian, Slavonic  
**III Cent:** Dionysius of Alexandria  
**IV Cent:** Didymus, Gregory (bishop of Nazanianus), Diodorus,  
Gregory (bishop of Nyssa), Chrysostom,  
<A title to a summary of 1 Timothy>  
**V Cent:** Cyril (bishop of Alexandria), Theodoret (bishop of Cyrus),  
Anon, Euthalius (bishop of Sulca), Macedonius II  
**VI -XII Cent:** SEVEN MORE FATHERS and several scholiasts

He was  
manifest in  
the flesh

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17  
Apostolus-12, 85, 86  
Gothic(?)

by **Graham G Thomason**

**1 Timothy 3:16**

Scripture, Authentic and Fabricated

by Graham G. Thomason, M.A., Ph.D.

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Draft Version, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2008

### **Explanation of the cover**

The manuscript evidence for the two main readings of 1 Timothy 3:16 is placed on the scales of the balance. The evidence was collected by J W Burgon in the years 1881-1883 by careful enquiry at all the libraries and other places where the manuscripts were kept. The symbols **Ⲛ A K L P Ψ** are for uncial manuscripts. The ordinary numbers following these represent minuscule manuscripts in *Scrivener* numbering of the *Paul*-manuscripts, as that is the numbering used by Burgon. The numbers following the word *Apostolos* are lectionaries (books for church readings). Then the ancient translations supporting the reading are given, and finally the Church Fathers and early writers who quote the verse in their writings. The topic is discussed in more detail in this book. Note: manuscript **Ψ** was not known to Burgon as it was discovered later.

## Preface

The choice of which Bible to work with is not, in the first instance, a matter of English style: the first concern of a Christian believer must be whether what he or she is reading, and believing, is *genuine Scripture* or not. God sets great value by the words He has given us. Psalm 12:6 reads:

**The words of the LORD are pure words,  
Silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.**

The distinctive nature of these words to us is brought out in 1 Corinthians 2:13

**... not in the words which man's wisdom teaches,  
but which the Holy Spirit teaches ...**

As long as these words are on offer, we would be very ill-advised to accept anything less. Genuine Scripture is the Word of God; anything else is from *another source* – something that should sound sinister to the believer. It is hoped that this booklet will provide a clear answer to any student who is wondering what is going on, and where genuine Scripture is to be found.

There are two (or more) superficially similar, yet subtly different texts in the world claiming to be the authentic and preserved Scripture. They are fundamentally incompatible: only one can be the genuine article. It is not possible to appeal to the original manuscripts as penned by the inspired writers of the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament, as these documents have long since perished (we presume). But they have been faithfully (and occasionally unfaithfully) copied throughout the centuries. Deciding on what is genuine Scripture is a matter of examining a mass of *evidence* – ancient hand-written copies, translations, and quotations of Scripture. The textual issue is particularly relevant to the New Testament, and that is what this study concentrates on.

The present author has compared the writings of textual critics on both sides of the argument – in particular Burgon and Scrivener on the traditional side, and Aland and Metzger on the modernist side. Burgon and Scrivener published chiefly around 1880-1890. The main works of Aland and Metzger are of around 1975; they perpetuate the school that arose in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with which the names Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort are associated. It is noteworthy that the modernists are unable to dislodge any evidence adduced by the traditionalist<sup>1</sup>. Instead, their counter-plea side-steps matters of evidence, and consists of vacuous self-proclaimed superiority: Aland says, “Despite their clamorous rhetoric, the champions of the Textus Receptus (led primarily by Dean John William Burgon) were defending empty ramparts”.<sup>2</sup> Let the reader decide who deals in rhetoric and who in evidence.

In this study, after an initial introduction, where the basic premise is introduced, the languages of Scripture and early translations, in addition to the sources of the text, will be examined. The central issue of the booklet is then discussed with selected case studies supporting the argument. Some additional case studies show how corruptions in translation entered English Bibles. After a review of some famous text critics, the author presents some conclusions.

Much of the material in this booklet relies heavily on the works of J.W. Burgon; the purpose of this publication is not to render his works superfluous, but to advertise them with the highest commendation.

No knowledge of New Testament Greek or other ancient language is required to be able to read this booklet, although the issue is mainly one of rival *Greek* texts. For completeness and interest, various passages and words of Greek, Latin, Syriac and Hebrew have been included, along with their translations. Where Scripture is quoted in English, the author has endeavoured to give an accurate modern English translation of the Greek. In chapter 2, the English is for convenience a conservative

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<sup>1</sup> The word ‘traditional’ is used in this study to refer to the text of Scripture which has enjoyed by far the widest currency throughout the centuries amongst individual writers and established churches. Similarly a ‘traditionalist’ is a proponent of the traditional *text*. We do not imply either endorsement or deprecation of any traditional *exposition* by these terms – in fact we do not address expositional issues in this study, except in bringing out the contrast occasioned by rival *texts*.

<sup>2</sup> [Aland, p.19]. Aland has also misrepresented Burgon's argument. Burgon does not focus his defence on the ‘Textus Receptus’. Burgon defends the overwhelmingly *best-supported* text. Only indirectly does Burgon vindicate the Textus Receptus, since that text turns out to agree with the great bulk of ancient evidence almost – *but not quite* – everywhere.

revision of *the King James Version*. There is perhaps one significant difference – for the Greek word αἰώνιος, the word *age-abiding* has been used, as the author considers it more accurate than *eternal*. Note, however, that the present book does not set out to defend the King James Version – it sets out to establish the true reading of Scripture whether that is found in the King James Version or not.

## **Acknowledgements**

The author wishes to express his gratitude to the many Christian friends who have encouraged him in writing this book, in particular: Frank Peachey who first suggested the idea of a booklet, Armando Valdes who provided valuable insight on what material was most needful, Chris Sparkes, who first introduced the author to Burgon's works, Fiona Allison who designed the cover, and Brian Sherring. These and others have provided valuable comments on many drafts.

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

The believer is perhaps accustomed to deciding between two schools of thought on the fronts of biblical exposition (e.g. whether the Old Testament is historically reliable and true or to be explained as a set of legends and myths; whether the origin of man is due to creation or the theory of evolution). It will be noted that the teaching of Old Testament Scripture is consistently endorsed by the teaching of the New Testament, and that if the former is ‘broken’, then the latter cannot stand either<sup>1,2</sup>.

A more subtle controversy is found in the claims made as to what *is* genuine Scripture. Let us investigate. There are many English Bibles available in the shops, for example:

- The *King James Version* (also known as the Authorized Version)
- The *New King James Version* (also known as the *Revised Authorized Version*)
- J N Darby's Translation
- The *Revised Standard Version*
- The *New Revised Standard Version*
- The *New International Version*
- The Moffatt Translation
- The *Jerusalem Bible*
- The *Good News Bible*
- The *New Living Translation*
- The *Contemporary English Version*

These Bibles differ quite considerably in many places. We will examine some of the differences presently. As mentioned in the preface, the choice of which Bible to work with is not, in the first instance, a matter of English style: the first concern of a Christian believer must be whether what he or she is reading, and believing, is *genuine Scripture* or not. Genuine Scripture is the precious Word of God. Anything else is from *another source*.

Above all, the present author wishes to ensure that in every discussion, *all* the evidence is on the table. In this respect many a modern critic will be found severely wanting.

Some maintain that the differences are few, are minor, and that doctrines are unaffected. We shall see presently that this is certainly not the case<sup>3</sup>. At a detailed level, almost every verse of the New Testament is subject to corruption in *some* Greek manuscript. A favourite target of the corrupters – one of serious doctrinal import – is the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Others maintain that more than one variant text can be accepted as being from God. For example, Professor D.A.Carson, in his book *The King James Version Debate* writes as follows:

Textual critics now have an abundance of evidence from which it is frequently difficult to decide which text type is superior: why should it be thought better to return to any one text type exclusively when God in his providence has provided us with such wealth?  
(p.54)

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<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to believe Christ without believing Moses. John 5:47 **But if you do not believe his (Moses') writings, how will you believe My words?**

<sup>2</sup> Are we supposed to read 1 Corinthians 15:22 as follows? **For as in fictitious Adam all die, even so in non-fictitious Christ all will be made alive.** Similarly Adam and Jesus Christ in Romans 5. Even the famous John 3:16 is only the second half of a sentence beginning at verse 14 with **And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness** ... Without Adam and Moses, the New Testament cannot stand.

<sup>3</sup> [Burgon-RR, p.107]: Westcott and Hort's Greek text departs from the traditional text nearly 6000 times, almost invariably *for the worse*.

A ‘wealth’ of differing texts! Does not common sense indicate God *cannot* have left us with disparate texts, often totally contradictory (for example in Colossians 2:18 – to be discussed). How can two contradictory texts both be the Word of God?

If Professor Carson's argument is accepted indiscriminately, then we credit God with the provision of not just one, but *two* Jesuses in Matthew 1:16

1) The Jesus of the traditional and Majority text, miraculously born of a virgin:

**And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, Who is called Christ**

<sup>18</sup>...(Mary) was found with child by holy spirit

– and –

2) The Jesus of the Sinaitic Syriac version, a Jesus begotten by Joseph:

**Jacob begot Joseph; Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary the virgin, begot Jesus who is called the Christ.**

Fortunately, the text of the Sinaitic Syriac reading has little support (none of it being Greek), and so has not (yet?) found its way *directly* into the text or footnotes of English Bibles. However, the CEV (*Contemporary English Version*) is perilously close to the Sinaitic Syriac, in that it renders the genealogy in Matthew 1 as a simple list of ancestors without any mention of ‘begetting’ at all<sup>1</sup>. On reading Matthew 1:1-17 in the CEV, the reader will naturally take the names (from Abraham down to Joseph the husband of Mary) as physical ancestors, whereas the traditional text is very precise about who begot whom.

More widely promoted is the following case, which is in a similar vein<sup>2</sup>, though not so explicit. The traditional reading of Luke 2:33 (which is certainly the correct one) is:

**And Joseph and His mother marvelled...**

Modern printed Greek texts and modern translations based on it read:

**The child's father and mother marvelled...**

The danger here is that a new generation of Christians might be led to infer that Joseph is the biological father of Jesus by a reading exhibited in a hopelessly small minority of manuscripts. The Greek manuscript evidence for the modern reading is a paltry 1% of manuscripts<sup>3</sup>, consisting mainly of a notorious cluster about which we shall have more to say later.

In this and many other ways, the choice of which Bible is a choice of *which Jesus*.

The fact that there are so many Bibles to choose from is bound to cause confusion to many. However, God is not the author of confusion [1 Corinthians 14:33]. He has revealed in His Scriptures only *one* Jesus who is the Lord Jesus Christ. The disparity of the various ‘new’ Bibles arouses our suspicion. The concerted focus of certain readings in undermining the true Jesus leads us to the conclusion that we are facing something more than coincidence or carelessness. A study of the textual evidence will show that we are facing an illicit alteration in God's written testimony given to man concerning the Lord and His precious gifts to us (age-abiding life, redemption, forgiveness of sins etc. etc.). The words of the Scriptures themselves are under attack.

The reader may be alarmed at the danger exposed. How are the true Scriptures to be identified? Let the reader be assured that it is not difficult, and take comfort that the true Scriptures have been safeguarded by an overwhelming amount of evidence, when it can be seen through the smokescreen raised by those hostile to it.

<sup>1</sup> The CEV renders extremely freely and inaccurately, under the guise of being ‘crafted to be read aloud without stumbling’. Yet it claims faithfulness to the meaning and accuracy.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph *is* the Lord's father as reckoned by law. Mary refers to Joseph as the Lord's father in Luke 2:49, but note how the Lord refers to His true Father in His reply: “Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business”.

<sup>3</sup> Manuscripts **Σ B D L W** 1 700 1241.

## Chapter 2 Two Greek Texts

This chapter will give some idea of the scale of the problem that lies before us (though even this is only the tip of the iceberg to the discerning reader of Scripture). We show some of the changes the modern versions have made to the traditional text. All the changes below are *contrary to the majority manuscript support* (this will be explained later). Indeed, we conclude that the changes are simply corruptions. The subtlety for the ordinary reader is that the changes have been imposed by the construction of a **new Greek text**<sup>1</sup> thus making it difficult for the layman to assess what is going on. In subsequent chapters we discuss the manuscripts and other witnesses to the text and present specific evidence in some specific case studies. The reader will soon realise that the new Greek text is based on a tiny minority<sup>2</sup> of textual witnesses that can neither claim to be the oldest<sup>3</sup>, nor the most broadly attested throughout time<sup>4</sup>, nor broadly based geographically<sup>5</sup>, nor are they supported by early translations<sup>6</sup>. In addition to the corruptions arising from the new Greek text, there are additional depravations in the various modern versions due to mistranslations<sup>7</sup> and glosses<sup>8</sup> of their own. The following pages in this chapter contrast the traditional and Majority text (exhibited as the unedited text) with the ‘new’ text (exhibited by strikethrough of omissions and other signs of editing)<sup>9</sup>. Not every ‘modern’ Bible has every alteration – they do not all use an identical text – but most modern Bibles will be found to have a large proportion of the corruptions shown.

**Reminder: the underlying text below represents the majority text. The crossings out and other alterations are the damage done to it.**

### Matthew

- 1:25 And did not know her till she had brought forth her ~~firstborn~~ Son.  
5:44 But I say to you, “Love your enemies, ~~bless them that curse you~~, do good to them that hate you.”  
6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: ~~For Thine is the kingdom, and the glory, for ever. Amen.~~  
6:33 But seek first the kingdom ~~of God~~, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.  
8:29 And behold, they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, ~~Jesus~~ You Son of God?”  
9:13 ...For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners ~~to repentance~~.  
~~12:47 Then one said to Him, “Behold, Your Mother and Your Father are standing outside, desiring to speak with You.”~~  
13:51 ~~Jesus said to them~~, “Have you understood all these things?” They said to Him, “Yes, ~~Lord~~.”

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<sup>1</sup> Typical editions of a new Greek text are Westcott and Hort's text and the Nestle-Aland 26<sup>th</sup> edition / United Bible Societies' text. Note also that earlier Nestle-Aland editions underlie many modern translations.

<sup>2</sup> Typically about 1% of manuscripts, e.g. 5 out of 500.

<sup>3</sup> There are many ‘Church Fathers’ who quote Scripture, and who predate the earliest New Testament manuscripts we have. They generally quote the traditional text.

<sup>4</sup> It appears that the corrupt manuscripts have their origin around the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

<sup>5</sup> It appears that the corrupt manuscripts have their origin in Egypt.

<sup>6</sup> Especially the Syriac Peshitto version is important, being of 150 A.D. It generally supports the traditional text.

<sup>7</sup> See the case study on James 1:1 for an example of licentious translation.

<sup>8</sup> A gloss is an explanation or interpretation in the margin or text of a document. The NIV's illicit addition of “with Israel” in Ephesians 3:6 is a good example, which we consider in a case study.

<sup>9</sup> The Burgon books are full of detailed analyses of almost innumerable textual corruptions, including most, if not all, of these. A leaflet entitled “New Eye Opener” published by *The Eye Opener Publishers*, P.O. Box 7944, Eugene, Oregon USA 97401 provides a very useful list of alterations (though the present study does not adopt all entries on the leaflet). The verses in the present study are noted as being in  $\mathfrak{M}$  in NA<sup>26</sup>. More could be sanctioned on the testimony of [Hodges] – see for example the footnote to 1 Thessalonians in this chapter. Another source of textual differences is the New King James Bible published by Thomas Nelson, ISBN 0-564-09043-3, since it footnotes many differences compared to NA<sup>26</sup>. The Moorman books also make a valuable contribution.

- 15:8 This People ~~draws near to Me with their mouth, and~~ honours Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me.
- 16:20 Then He charged His disciples that they should tell no one He was ~~Jesus~~ the Christ.
- ~~17:21 Howbeit this kind does not go out but by prayer and fasting.~~
- ~~18:11 For the Son of man has come to save that which was lost.~~
- 19:9 And I say to you, "Whoever puts away his wife, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery: ~~and whoever marries her who is put away, commits adultery."~~
- 19:17 And He said to them, "Why do you call Me good? There is none good but One, ~~that is, God~~: but if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."
- 20:7 They said to him, "Because no man has hired us." He said to them, "Go also into the vineyard; ~~and whatever is right, that you shall receive."~~
- 20:16 So shall the last be first, and the first last: ~~for many are called, but few chosen.~~
- 20:22 But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, ~~and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"~~ They said to Him, "We are able."
- ~~21:44 And whosoever shall fall on this Stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever It shall fall, It will grind him to powder.~~
- ~~23:14 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore you will receive the greater condemnation.~~
- 25:13 Watch therefore, for you do not know the day or the hour ~~wherein the Son of man comes.~~
- 27:24 When Pilate saw that he could not prevail, but *that* rather a tumult was taking place, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this ~~just~~ Person: you see *to it*."
- 28:9 And ~~as they went to tell His disciples,~~ behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Greetings." And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him.

#### Mark

- 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, ~~the Son of God~~;
- 1:14 Now after John had been put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel ~~of the kingdom~~ of God,
- 1:31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and ~~immediately~~ the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.
- 6:11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when you depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. ~~Verily I say unto you, "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city."~~
- 6:16 But when Herod heard *of it*, he said, "It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen ~~from the dead~~."
- 7:8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men, ~~as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things you do.~~
- ~~7:16 If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.~~
- 9:42 And whoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe ~~in Me~~, it would be better for him that a millstone were hung about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.
- ~~9:44 Where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.~~
- ~~9:46 Where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.~~
- 9:49 For every one shall be salted with fire, ~~and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.~~
- 10:21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: go your way, sell whatsoever you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven: and come, ~~take up the cross~~, and follow Me."
- 10:24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answered again, and said to them, "Children, how hard is it for them ~~that trust in riches~~ to enter into the kingdom of God!"
- ~~11:26 But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father Who is in heaven forgive your trespasses.~~
- 13:33 Take heed, watch ~~and pray~~: for you do not know when the time is.
- 14:68 But he denied *it*, saying, "I don't know or understand what you are saying." And he went out into the porch; ~~and the cock crew.~~
- ~~15:28 And the Scripture was fulfilled, which says, "And He was numbered with the transgressors."~~

~~16:9 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. <sup>40</sup>And she went and told them that had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. <sup>41</sup>And they, when they had heard that He was alive, and had been seen by her, did not believe. <sup>42</sup>After that He appeared in another form to two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. <sup>43</sup>And they went and told it to the rest: but they did not believe them either. <sup>44</sup>Afterwards He appeared to the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe them who had seen Him after He was risen. <sup>45</sup>And He said to them, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. <sup>46</sup>He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that does not believe shall be condemned. <sup>47</sup>And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; <sup>48</sup>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 recover." <sup>49</sup>So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. <sup>50</sup>And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.~~

Luke

- 1:28 And the angel came in to her, and said, "Greetings, you that are highly favoured; the Lord is with you: ~~blessed you are among women.~~"
- 2:14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth ~~peace, good will toward men~~ / peace to men on whom his favour rests
- 2:33 And Joseph <sup>his father</sup> / and His mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of Him.
- 2:43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph ~~and his mother~~ / <sup>his parents</sup> did not know of it.
- 4:4 And Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, ~~but by every word of God.~~"
- 4:8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, ~~Get behind Me, Satan:~~ for it is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."
- 4:41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, "You are ~~Christ~~ the Son of God." And He rebuking *them* did not allow them to speak: for they knew that He was Christ.
- 6:1 And it came to pass on the ~~second~~ sabbath ~~after the first~~<sup>1</sup>, that He went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and ate, rubbing *them* in *their* hands.
- 6:48 He is like a man who built a house, and dug deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was ~~founded upon a rock,~~ / <sup>well built.</sup>
- 9:54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, ~~even as Elias did?"~~
- 11:2 And He said to them, "When you pray, say, 'Our Father ~~Which art in heaven,~~ Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. ~~Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.~~ <sup>3</sup>Give us day by day our daily bread. <sup>4</sup>And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; ~~but deliver us from evil.~~ '"
- 11:29 And when the people were gathered thick together, He began to say, "This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas ~~the prophet.~~"
- ~~22:20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you."~~
- 22:31 ~~And the Lord said,~~ "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat:
- 22:64 And when they had blindfolded Him, they ~~struck Him on the face, and~~ asked Him, saying, "Prophesy, who is it that smote You?"

<sup>1</sup> The deleted word in Greek is δευτερόπρωτος; it has perplexed many. Could the answer to the puzzle lie in the fact that high feast days were also called sabbaths? In Leviticus 23:24 the *first* day of the seventh month (blowing of trumpets) is called a sabbath. In verse 27 the *tenth* day of the month (the day of atonement) is introduced. It is called a sabbath in verse 32. Now the *first* and *tenth* day of the month cannot both fall on the same day of the week, yet both are sabbaths.

~~23:17 (For of necessity he must release one to them at the feast.)~~  
 23:38 And a superscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.  
 23:42 And he said to Jesus, “~~Lord~~, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”  
 23:45 And the sun was ~~darkened~~, <sup>eclipsed</sup> and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.<sup>1</sup>  
 24:6 ~~He is not here, but is risen:~~ remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee,  
~~24:12 Then Peter arose, and ran to the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which had come to pass.~~  
 24:36 And as they thus spoke, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, ~~and said to them, “Peace be to you”.~~  
~~24:40 And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet.~~  
 24:49 And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until you are endued with power from on high.  
 24:51 And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, ~~and carried up into heaven.~~

John

1:27 He it is, who coming after me ~~is preferred before me~~, Whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.  
 3:13 And no man has ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man ~~Who is in heaven~~.  
 3:15 That whosoever believes in Him should ~~not perish, but~~ have eternal life.  
 4:42 And said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of your saying: for we have heard *Him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed ~~the Christ~~, the Saviour of the world.  
 5:3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, withered, ~~waiting for the moving of the water.~~ “~~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.~~  
 6:47 Verily, verily, I say to you, He that believes ~~in Me~~ has age-abiding life.  
 6:69 And we believe and are sure that You are the ~~Christ, the Son of the living God~~ <sup>the Holy One of God</sup>  
 8:16 And yet if I judge, My judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and ~~the Father~~ <sup>he</sup> that sent Me.  
~~7:53 And every man went to his own house. <sup>33</sup>Jesus went to the mount of Olives. <sup>34</sup>And early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down, and taught them. <sup>35</sup>And the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, <sup>36</sup>they said to Him, “Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. <sup>37</sup>Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what do You say?” <sup>38</sup>This they said, tempting Him, that they might have *grounds* to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *His* finger wrote on the ground. <sup>39</sup>So when they continued asking Him, He lifted Himself up, and said to them, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her”. <sup>40</sup>And again He stooped down, and wrote on the ground. <sup>41</sup>And they who heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* to the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. <sup>42</sup>When Jesus had lifted Himself up, and saw none but the woman, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no man condemned you?” <sup>43</sup>She said, “No man, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you: go, and sin no more.”~~  
 9:35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, Do you believe in the Son of ~~God~~ <sup>man</sup> ?  
 11:41 Then they took away the stone ~~from the place where the dead man was laid~~. And Jesus lifted up *His* eyes, and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

<sup>1</sup> The modern Greek texts read *eclipsed*. Moffatt translates using the word ‘eclipse’. But most modern versions (rather dishonestly) weaken the corruption to e.g. *stopped shining* (NIV).

- 16:16 A little while, and you will not see Me: and again, a little while, and you will see Me, ~~because I go to the Father.~~
- 17:12 While I was with them ~~in the world~~, I kept them in Your name: those that You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

### Acts

- 2:30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, ~~according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ~~ to sit on His throne;
- 7:30 And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel ~~of the Lord~~ in a flame of fire in a bush.
- 15:18 Known ~~unto God are all His works~~ from the beginning of the world.
- 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus ~~Christ~~, and you will be saved, and your house.
- 17:26 And has made of one ~~blood~~ all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;
- 20:25 And now, behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom ~~of God~~, will see my face no more.
- 23:9 And there arose a great cry: and the scribes *that were* of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, "We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, ~~let us not fight against God.~~"
- 24:15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection ~~of the dead~~, both of the just and unjust.
- 28:16 And when we came to Rome, ~~the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was allowed to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.~~
- ~~28:29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.~~

### Romans

- 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel ~~of Christ~~: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
- 1:29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, ~~fornication~~, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
- 5:2 By whom also we have access ~~by faith~~ into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
- 8:1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, ~~who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.~~
- 9:28 For He will finish the work, and cut *it* short ~~in righteousness~~: because the Lord will make a short work upon the earth.
- 10:15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel ~~of peace~~, and bring glad tidings of good things!"
- 11:6 And if by grace, then *it is* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. ~~But if it is of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.~~
- 14:6 He that regards the day, regards *it* to the Lord; ~~and he that does not regard the day, to the Lord he does not regard it.~~ He that eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he that does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks.
- 14:21 *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbles, ~~or is offended, or is made weak.~~
- 15:29 And I am sure that, when I come to you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of ~~the~~ ~~gospel~~ of Christ.
- ~~16:24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.~~

### 1 Corinthians

- 1:14 I thank ~~God~~ that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;
- 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed ~~for us~~:
- 6:20 For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, ~~and in your spirit, which are God's.~~

- 7:5 Do not deprive one the other, except *if it is* with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to ~~fasting and~~ prayer; and come together again, so that Satan does not tempt you for your lack of self-control.
- 7:39 The wife is bound ~~by the law~~ as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.
- 10:28 But if any man says to you, "This is offered in sacrifice unto idols," do not eat *it* for the sake of him that showed it *to you*, and for conscience sake: ~~for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness of it~~
- 11:24 And when He had given thanks, He broke *it*, and said, "~~Take it, eat it~~ this is My body, which is broken for you: do this in remembrance of Me."
- 11:29 For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks condemnation to himself, not discerning the ~~Lord's~~ body.
- 15:47 The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* ~~the Lord~~ from heaven.
- 16:23 The grace of the Lord Jesus ~~Christ~~ *be* with you.

## 2 Corinthians

- 4:6 For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of ~~Jesus~~ Christ.

## Galatians

- 1:15 But when it pleased ~~God~~ <sup>him</sup>, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by His grace,
- 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, ~~that you should not obey the truth~~, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you?
- 3:17 And this I say, *that*, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul the covenant, that was confirmed before by God ~~in Christ~~ that it should make the promise of no effect.
- 4:7 Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God ~~through Christ~~.
- 6:15 For ~~in Christ Jesus~~ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creature.
- 6:17 From now on let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of ~~the Lord~~ Jesus.

## Ephesians

- 3:9 And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world has been hidden in God, who created all things ~~by Jesus Christ~~:
- 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father ~~of our Lord Jesus Christ~~,
- 5:30 For we are members of His body, ~~of His flesh, and of His bones~~.
- 6:1 Children, obey your parents ~~in the Lord~~: for this is right.
- 6:10 Finally, ~~my brothers~~, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.

## Philippians

- 3:16 Nevertheless, whatever the *stage* to which we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, ~~let us mind the same thing~~.

## Colossians

- 1:2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father ~~and the Lord Jesus Christ~~.
- 1:28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ ~~Jesus~~:
- 2:11 In whom also you are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body ~~of the sins~~ of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:
- 2:18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he has ~~not~~ seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,
- 3:6 For which things' sake the wrath of God comes ~~on the children of disobedience~~:

## 1 Thessalonians<sup>1</sup>

1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians *which is* in God the Father and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace *be* to you, and peace, ~~from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.~~

## 1 Timothy

1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only ~~wise~~ God, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

2:7 For which I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth ~~in Christ~~, and am not lying;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: ~~God~~ <sup>He</sup> was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

4:12 Let no man despise your youth; but be an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in love, ~~in spirit~~, in faith, in purity.

6:5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: ~~from such withdraw yourself.~~

## 2 Timothy

1:11 To which I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher ~~of the Gentiles~~.

4:22 The Lord ~~Jesus Christ~~ *be* with your spirit. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

## Titus

1:4 To Titus, *my* own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and ~~the Lord~~ Jesus Christ our Saviour.

## Philemon

1:6 That the communication of your faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ ~~Jesus~~.

1:12 Whom I have sent back: ~~therefore receive him~~, that is, my own heart:

## Hebrews

1:3 Who being the brightness of *His* glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had ~~by Himself~~ purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

7:21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but This one *was* with an oath by Him that said to Him, “The Lord swore and will not repent, You *are* a priest for ever ~~after the order of Melchisedec~~.”)

10:30 For we know Him That has said, “Vengeance *belongs* to Me, I will recompense, ~~says the Lord~~.” And again, “The Lord shall judge his people.”

10:34 For you had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that you have ~~in heaven~~ a better and an enduring substance.

11:11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, ~~and was delivered of a child~~ when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful Who had promised.

## 1 Peter

1:22 Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth ~~through the Spirit~~ to unfeigned love of the brothers, *see that you* love one another with a pure heart fervently:

4:1 Forasmuch then as Christ has suffered ~~for us~~ in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin;

4:14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are you*; for the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you: ~~on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified.~~

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<sup>1</sup> In the ‘modernist’ versions, the word *Christ* is omitted from 1 Thes 2:19, 3:11, 3:13; 2 Thes 1:8. [Hodges] includes *Christ* in the last 3 cases but not in 1 Thes 2:19, where it is nevertheless footnoted as attested by a part of the majority manuscripts. NA<sup>26</sup> is silent with respect to  $\mathfrak{M}$  on these passages.

- 5:10 But the God of all grace, Who has called us to His eternal glory by Christ ~~Jesus~~, after you have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle *you*.
- 5:11 To him ~~be glory and~~ dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

### 2 Peter

- 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering towards ~~us~~ <sup>you</sup>, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

### 1 John

- 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus ~~Christ~~ His Son cleanses us from all sin.
- 2:7 Brothers, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you have heard ~~from the beginning~~.
- 4:3 And every spirit that does not confess ~~that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh~~ is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.<sup>1</sup>
- 4:19 We love ~~Him~~, because He first loved us.
- 5:13 These things I have written to you that believe in the name of the Son of God; that you may know that you have age-abiding life, ~~and that you may believe in the name of the Son of God~~.

### Jude

- 1:25 To the only ~~wise~~ God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

### Revelation

- 2:13 I know ~~your works, and~~ where you dwell, *even* where Satan's seat *is*: and you hold fast My name, and have not denied My faith, even in those days in which Antipas *was* My faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwells.
- 20:9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down ~~from God~~ out of heaven, and devoured them.

*Various other deletions in the book of Revelation appear to have taken place, although the manuscripts for this book divide their testimony in these cases.*<sup>2</sup>

- 1:8(ℳ<sup>A</sup>) "I am Alpha and Omega, ~~the beginning and the ending~~," says the Lord, "Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come, the Almighty."
- 1:11(ℳ<sup>A</sup>) Saying, "~~I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last:~~" and, "What you see, write in a book, and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia; to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamos, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."
- 6:1(ℳ<sup>K</sup>) And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, "Come ~~and see~~."
- 16:17(ℳ<sup>K</sup>) And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple ~~of heaven~~, from the throne, saying, "It is done."

<sup>1</sup> It is no good claiming that verse 2 covers the doctrine of verse 3. It does not. Verse 3 is the *converse* of verse 2, not the *contrapositive*. [In logic, if *A* implies *B*, then the converse, *not-A* implies *not-B*, does not follow automatically. It is a separate matter. The contrapositive, however, *not-B* implies *not-A*, does follow automatically. Here, *A* is "the spirit confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh" and *B* is "the spirit is of God".]

<sup>2</sup> Majority manuscripts for the book of Revelation are sometimes divided by NA<sup>26</sup> into two approximately equal categories ℳ<sup>A</sup> and ℳ<sup>K</sup>. We indicate which category gives the Received Text reading. ℳ indicates both categories. Where only one category agrees with the Received Text, and where the opposing reading *omits* words, we assume without absolute certainty that the Received Text is correct (having seen so many examples of unauthorized *omissions*).

### Short epilogue to this chapter

An honest scribe may make a mistake – but a safeguard against that is that independent scribes do not collude to introduce the same error in large numbers of manuscripts. Yet in these last days, Bibles are being produced from exceedingly rare texts, thus without the safeguard. Perhaps, it may be argued, we have an arbitrary series of uncoordinated accidents, which will not lead anyone seriously astray. But this is not the case. Any one corruption may *seem* like an accident, but there is a system in these corruptions. Let us take an important example. One of the most fundamental Christian doctrines is that Christ is (1) fully man, like us (except in respect of sin), and is able to be our *kinsman redeemer* (of which Boaz was a *type*), and (2) fully God, true to His name of “God with us”, and so able to be our *kinsman redeemer* and to save us to the uttermost. Jacob's ladder (Genesis 28:12) is another *type* of Christ, but if we deny (1), our ladder is broken at the bottom, and if we deny (2), our ladder is broken at the top. See how the corrupt Greek text attacks our ladder at both ends (1 Timothy 3:16 and 1 John 4:3).

Note also the words of Revelation 22:18,19:

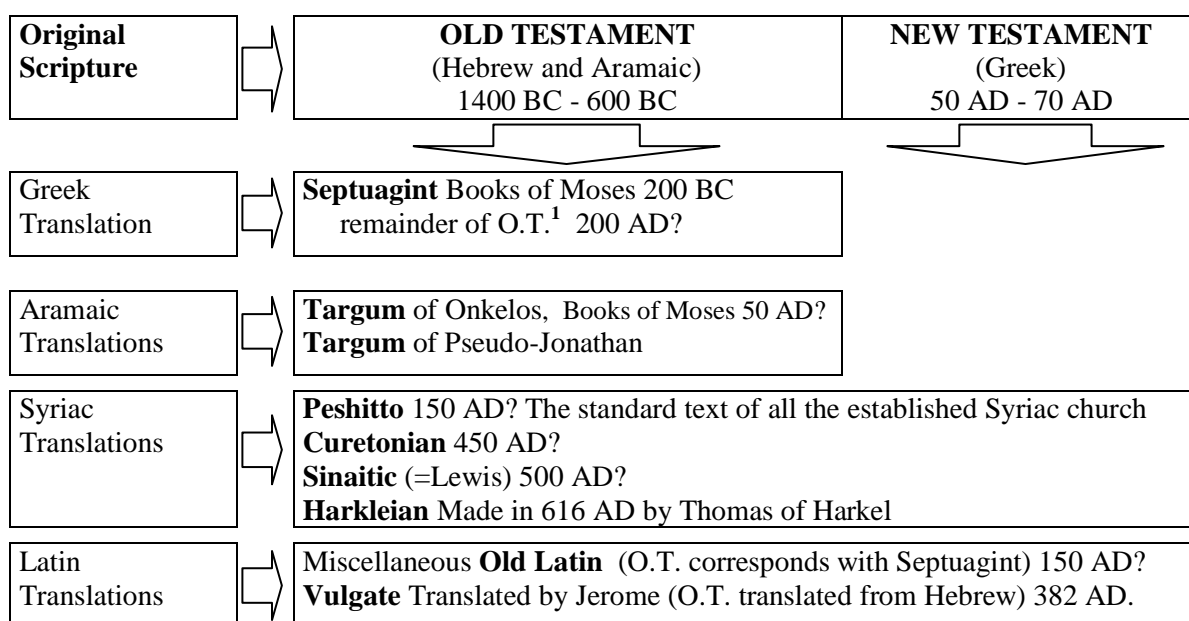
**For I testify to every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book: <sup>19</sup>And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.**

## Chapter 3 The Languages of Scripture and of Early Translations

### *The Biblical Languages*

The Old Testament was written mainly in Hebrew, with about 1% Aramaic (also known as Chaldee). The main Aramaic portions are Ezra 4:8-6:18, Ezra 7:12-7:26 and Daniel 2:4-7:28. The New Testament was written in Greek, although an occasional Aramaic expression is used (e.g. Mark 5:41: Talitha cumi = *Girl, arise*). New Testament Greek is basically the same as classical Greek, but it is generally used in a less complex way than in classical writings. Modern Greek is rather different, especially in grammar.

Clearly, manuscripts of Scripture (or quoting Scripture) in the original Biblical languages are of paramount importance in any textual study. But we must not neglect early translations of Scripture, since these provide evidence as to what text was current at the time when the translation was executed. Moreover, the translations were often handed down for centuries by their own independent line of transmission. A comparison of several translations provides a safeguard against any systematic alteration of texts in any one linguistic area. Also, any scribal errors in copying a document in one language are likely to be of a different nature to errors that might be made in copying the same text in another language. Some important translations are shown below, with approximate dating.



Syriac is very similar to Aramaic. It is still spoken in some parts of Syria and Iraq.

Translations were also made into many other languages in the early centuries A.D. e.g. Coptic, Gothic, Armenian, Ethiopic.

### *Manuscripts*

Manuscripts are hand-written documents. Another word for manuscript is 'codex'. With the invention of printing (about 1475), there was no longer any need to hand-copy books, although the Scriptures continued to be hand-written by some for another century or so.

Some manuscripts are 'palimpsests', that is, they have been scrubbed clean and re-used for another purpose. Their Latin full name contains the word 'rescriptus' (*re-written*). The underlying

<sup>1</sup> The author is not aware of any evidence that the original Septuagint contained any more than the 5 books of Moses. A Greek translation of the remaining Old Testament books, perhaps erroneously considered part of the Septuagint, is incorporated with many manuscripts of the New Testament, but it is not known when the translation was executed.

writing is then usually very difficult to read. Tischendorf used chemical reagents which damaged the manuscripts. Modern investigators use ultra-violet light. A notable palimpsest is C (see below).

### ***Greek Letters***

The Greek New Testament was (we presume) originally written in uncial letters (Greek capital letters):

- Δ Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ Ν Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Χ Ψ Ω

The modern way in which uncials are written is slightly different, as follows:

- Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ Ν Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Χ Ψ Ω

Later (from about the 9<sup>th</sup> century) minuscules (Greek small letters) were used:

- α υ γ δ ε ζ η θ ι κ λ μ ν ξ ο π ρ σ τ υ φ χ ψ ω

The modern way in which minuscules are written is somewhat different, as follows:

- α β γ δ ε ζ η θ ι κ λ μ ν ξ ο π ρ σ τ υ φ χ ψ ω

Another term for uncials is ‘majuscules’. Another term for minuscules is ‘cursives’. Although minuscules seem to appear later on the scene, we must keep an open mind on dating. There was even a Greek cursive script in use before Christ<sup>1</sup>. It is certainly true that the earliest cursive manuscript is well over a hundred years older than the latest uncial one.

### ***A Note on Writing Materials***

Manuscripts may be written on papyrus, parchment or vellum. Papyrus is a reed-like plant. Parchment is animal skin. Vellum is fine parchment. Detail on this subject is outside the scope of this booklet.

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<sup>1</sup> cf. [Scrivener, vol.1, p.41].

## Chapter 4 Sources of the Text

How do we know the text of the New Testament?

- From New Testament manuscripts.
- From early translations. The term ‘version’ also means a translation in the context of textual studies.
- From the ‘Church Fathers’, who were early commentators. A reference to a Church Father is sometimes referred to as a ‘patristic reference’.
- From lectionaries. A lectionary is a book of Bible readings for church service use, arranged according to the date when read. A lectionary may be a list of the verses to be read (an eclogadion or synaxarion) or a book of the full readings (an evangelistarion).

Very few manuscripts are dated, the earliest dated one being a ninth century cursive<sup>1</sup>. In contrast, the dates of Church Fathers are often known precisely.

### *How are manuscripts dated?*

The subject is rather technical and detail would be out of the scope of this booklet. We mention some factors involved:

- writing materials (papyrus / parchment / vellum)
- shape of letters
- use of spacing, verse divisions, breathings and accentuation
- presence/absence of well-known expository notes

It is noted that critics are fairly consistent in their dating of manuscripts, though differences of opinion by 100 years are met with.

### *Manuscript naming and numbering*

Greek Papyri are numbered as follows:  $\mathfrak{P}^1 \mathfrak{P}^2 \mathfrak{P}^3 \mathfrak{P}^4 \mathfrak{P}^5$  etc.

Greek Uncials are numbered by an integer with a leading zero: 01 02 03 04 05 ... 0218 etc.

Many uncials (those that were first catalogued) are also indicated by a capital letter. In addition to Roman capital letters, Greek capital letters are used (where they are clearly distinguishable from Roman ones), and also the Hebrew letter א (aleph). So we have א A B C D ... Γ Δ Θ Λ... etc. Occasionally the same letter denotes two different manuscripts, but only if there is no overlap in the books of the Scriptures they contain.

Greek Minuscules (also known as ‘cursives’) are numbered by an ordinary integer: 1 2 3 ... 2784 2785 etc. In the 19th century minuscules were numbered differently. Scrivener's system, which was widely accepted, is as follows:

- **Evangelion** 1, 2, 3 etc for minuscule manuscripts of the gospels.
- **Apostolos** 1, 2, 3 etc. for those of the Acts, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1 & 2 & 3 John and Jude.
- Scrivener's denotes these by **Acts** – standing for Acts and the Catholic Epistles (i.e. the above-mentioned epistles).
- **Paul** 1, 2, 3 etc. for Paul's epistles (including Hebrews).
- **Revelation** or **Apocalypse** 1, 2, 3 etc.

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<sup>1</sup> For some details of this manuscript, see [Burgon-TT, p.200].

Different critics used different numbering schemes. Where Burgon and Scrivener quote old numbers, they are the *Scrivener* numbers; in such cases the same numbering scheme is used here for ease of traceability. Conversion lists are available<sup>1</sup>.

Latin manuscripts are indicated by a lower case letter (Roman and Greek), with a few lower case composites: a b c d μ π ρ aur gue gig ff<sup>1</sup> ff<sup>2</sup> etc. Some are the Vulgate; some are the ‘Old Latin’.

Syriac manuscripts are classified as follows:

- sy<sup>p</sup> Syriac Peshitto: 2nd century translation. 300 manuscripts (many not complete).
- sy<sup>c</sup> Curetonian Syriac: 5th century translation. 1 fragmentary manuscript.
- sy<sup>s</sup> Sinaitic Syriac: Formerly known as the Lewis codex. 5th century? 1 manuscript.
- sy<sup>h</sup> Harkleian Syriac: Translation executed in A.D. 616. Scrivener enumerates 15 manuscripts of it.
- The Palestinian Syriac (also called the Jerusalem Syriac), which is fragmentary. 5th century?
- The Kharkaphensian Syriac version (also known as Jacobite Massorah), dated 980 A.D.

The Harkleian (or Harklean, or Harklensian) is also known as the Philoxenian, but that name is better reserved for a version executed in 508 A.D. of which we have a record but no surviving manuscripts.

Many Papyri, uncials and other manuscripts also have a name, e.g.:

- ⲡ<sup>66</sup> = Chester-Beatty
- 01 = Ⲭ = Sinaiticus
- 02 = A = Alexandrinus
- 03 = B = Vaticanus
- 04 = C = Codex Syri Ephraemi Rescriptus
- 05 = D = Bezae (Gospels and Acts)
- 06 = D = Claromontanus (Paul's writings, the ‘corpus Paulinum’)

Manuscripts may contain corrections. The writing (and hence reading!) of the first hand of a manuscript is denoted by a superscript asterisk; corrections by numbers – e.g. Ⲭ\* Ⲭ<sup>1</sup> Ⲭ<sup>2</sup>. An unnumbered corrected reading may be denoted by a superscript ‘c’, e.g. Ⲭ<sup>c</sup>. It was common practice for a manuscript to be checked by a corrector straight after it had been written – so corrected readings *may* be entitled to as much weight as that of the first hand. Other corrections may have been made centuries later.

Not all manuscripts contain a complete Bible. Some contain the bulk of Scripture but with significant gaps (called *lacunae*). Others are small fragments with perhaps only an incomplete verse or two.

### ***Disputed Readings***

Where a variant reading is adopted in some textual critics' Greek text, but not in texts maintained by others, it is called a **disputed reading**. Not all verses contain a disputed reading, although for nearly every verse of the New Testament *some* manuscript can be found that is different to the others. In practice, this term is principally used where modern text critics favour a certain reading over the Majority text (see below).

### ***Important Manuscripts***

In summarising the nature of the manuscripts below, we note which way the manuscript aligns itself with respect to disputed readings. For the terms *Majority text* and *Minority text*, see below.

Symbol	Name	Details
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<sup>1</sup> [Aland-KL], [Waltzmn].

Ⲭ (aleph)	Sinaiticus	4th century. Very frequently it contains a unique or Minority text (so we conclude that it is a very corrupt manuscript). Possibly derived from the same original as B <sup>1</sup> . Yet in a good proportion (perhaps a quarter) of the thousands of deflections from the Majority text, Ⲭ is not supported by B.
A	Alexandrinus	About 400 A.D. In disputed verses, it aligns itself about 2/3 the time with the Majority text. It is closer to the Majority text in the Gospels than elsewhere.
B	Vaticanus	4th century. Minority text. Similar comments as to Ⲭ, but B has a tendency to <i>omit</i> rather than <i>vary</i> .
C	Ephraemi	5th century. Palimpsest. In disputed verses, it aligns itself about 1/3 the time with the Majority text.
D	Bezae	6th century. Very wild, paraphrases.
P	Guelpherbytanus <sup>A</sup>	5th century. Mainly supports A in disputed readings.
Q	Guelpherbytanus <sup>B</sup>	6th century. Mainly supports A in disputed readings.
Φ	Beratinus	5th century. Basically contains the Majority text.
Σ	Rossanensis	5th/6th century. Basically contains the Majority text.

### **Majority Text and Minority Texts**

The above table does not by a long way exhaust the 5th and 6th century manuscripts; it covers the best-known ones. Most (typically 99%) of the remaining 5000 or so manuscripts align themselves one way – what we call the ‘**Majority text**’. The 1% we call the ‘**Minority text**’, although even this may be divided into several different variants, so that there may be three or four different readings of a verse. The manuscripts as a whole are currently widely scattered over European museums.

The symbol Ⲙ is used for the Majority text.

The papyri provide divided evidence, with more Minority readings than Majority-text ones<sup>2</sup>, but in a very inconsistent way, (which is a sure sign of a poor witness to the true reading). There are enough Majority-text readings in the papyri to show the clear presence of that text. As far as the author knows, the papyri, as well as Ⲭ and B, all come from Egypt<sup>3</sup>, and so only represent one locality in antiquity, – one that is notorious for Gnosticism and other ‘heretical’ productions and depravations of Scripture.

### **Important versions**

- **Syriac Peshitto:** Has always been the official version of the Syriac church. It mainly supports the **Majority text**.
- **Old Latin:** many disparate manuscripts; **divided** – usually support either way can be found.
- **Vulgate: divided** – sometimes the text supports the Majority text, but frequently not.

### **Church Fathers**

These are commentators, e.g. bishops, from all the early centuries (the 1<sup>st</sup> to, say, the 10<sup>th</sup>) and all parts of Christendom. They provide a valuable witness that is as old as or older than the oldest manuscripts. Even the early ones generally quote the Majority text readings rather than Minority readings. Gnostic and heretical writers, or those influenced by them, tend to account for the Minority readings when found, though not exclusively so.

<sup>1</sup> [JWB-TT, p.233].

<sup>2</sup> Some statistics are given in [JAM-EM, pp.15-19], but they are based on [NA<sup>26</sup>]. If the reliability of papyrus evidence in NA<sup>26</sup> is as poor as it is for uncials in some of our case studies, such as the one on 1 Timothy 3:16, then the figures must be taken with a large pinch of salt.

<sup>3</sup> [JAM-EM, p.15], quoting Edward Hills.

### ***The Received Text (Textus Receptus)***

This is a Greek text prepared in the 16th century. It is basically the Majority text, a major exception being that it contains 1 John 5:7b-8a, which is as good as absent in the Greek manuscripts. This text underlies the 'protestant' Bible translations of the Reformation (such as the *Authorized Version*).

### ***The Nestle-Aland 26<sup>th</sup> edition (adopted as the United Bibles Societies' text)***

Referred to as NA<sup>26</sup>, this is a Greek text purporting to approach the original text of Scripture as closely as possible, but in reality attaching great weight only to **Ⲛ** B and the very small number of manuscripts that lend some support to **Ⲛ** B type readings. The Majority text and the witness of early Church Fathers and early versions are belittled and made to yield to the Minority readings. NA<sup>26</sup> is in the spirit of, but supersedes, famous 19<sup>th</sup> century editions by Lachmann, Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf and others. See reference [NA<sup>26</sup>].

### ***Critical Texts***

This term is used to denote a text (for the New Testament, a Greek text) based on a text critic's judgment as to the best reading. Such editions usually give information on which manuscripts support which reading in a *critical apparatus* (consisting of symbols in the text and an extensive footnoting system). NA<sup>26</sup> is such a text, but as will be seen by comparing its information with the case studies (and vast amounts of Burgon's dissertations), the information given by NA<sup>26</sup> can be grossly misleading or in error.

### ***Eclectic Texts***

The term 'eclectic' means *selected as seeming the best from a number of texts*. In constructing the eclectic text, sometimes the reading of one manuscript is chosen, sometimes that of another. The term 'eclectic text' is frequently used to describe the new Greek text of NA<sup>26</sup>, and has become almost synonymous with it. The introduction to the NIV states that the Greek text used in translating the New Testament was an eclectic one. Although the text is not specified, the NIV has clearly used NA<sup>26</sup> as a basis, with occasional deviations. (NA<sup>26</sup> really has no rival amongst the 'new' Greek texts, since the United Bible Societies have also adopted it as their standard text). Whether this 'eclectic' text really is 'the best' is the subject of this book. Take a look at the front cover of this book again, for example. The 'eclectic' text represents "He was manifest in the flesh", selected from **Ⲛ** and 17 and the mistaken, or rather, *deceitful* claim that up to another six manuscripts support it. Could it be that the new standard 'eclectic text' has somehow often ended up by being worst reading from a number of manuscripts?

## Chapter 5      The Big Issue

Most manuscripts align themselves one way – what we call the **Majority text**. A few manuscripts contain variant texts in many places. For many verses, just one manuscript contains the variant, in which case even the modern critics generally disallow the reading. But quite often two manuscripts, such as **ℵ B**, or a small handful, such as **ℵ B D L 33 81 1739**, conspire in a variant reading. In this case the modern critics generally adopt the Minority reading. Sometimes the difference is serious (e.g. 1 Timothy 3:16, John 1:18). **ℵ B** are probably the oldest manuscripts we possess, and the big question is:

*are they the best (i.e. the closest to the original)?*

An argument in their favour is their great antiquity, but there are many other considerations that show that these manuscripts just *cannot* be the source of accurate Scripture:

### *The discordant testimony of ℵ and B and other old uncials*

The few manuscripts that are frequently at variance with the Majority text are often at variance with themselves. The manuscripts **ℵ** and **B** contain many hundreds of readings unique to just the one manuscript. Where **ℵ** and **B** differ, at least one of them *must* be in error for each difference. If one of them is claimed to be accurate, then the other is automatically condemned.

To illustrate this point another way, imagine a court case where various witnesses are individually called to give their testimony: Alf, Ben, Marjorie, Margaret and Marguerite<sup>1</sup>. The judge asks, “Where did the alleged incident take place”? Alf replies, “In Birmingham”. Ben, Marjorie, Margaret, Marguerite answer, “In London”. The jury rightly concludes that the incident took place in London. The judge asks, “At what time of day did the alleged incident take place”? Ben replies, “At eight in the morning”. Alf, Marjorie, Margaret, Marguerite reply, “At six in the evening”. The jury rightly concludes that the incident took place at six in the evening. Summarizing so far, we have, with *false statements* in bold italics:

	Alf	Ben	Marjorie	Margaret	Marguerite
Where?	<b><i>Birmingham</i></b>	London	London	London	London
When?	6 p.m.	<b><i>8 a.m.</i></b>	6 p.m.	6 p.m.	6 p.m.

The judge asks, “On what day did the incident take place”? Alf and Ben reply, “On Saturday”. Marjorie, Margaret, Marguerite reply, “On Sunday”. Now what is the value of Alf and Ben's combined evidence? We already have an indication of their character, considering they have each already manifestly committed perjury, whereas no such thing can be said of Marjorie, Margaret, Marguerite. Erratic witnesses lose their credibility.

The case study on Luke 2:14 illustrates the general discordance of the ‘old uncials’. Many additional detailed examples could be given<sup>2</sup>. The discordance runs right through these manuscripts. Burgon states that **ℵ** and **B** stand apart so seriously in every page that it is easier to find two consecutive verses in which they differ than two consecutive verses in which they entirely agree<sup>3</sup>. The manuscripts of the *Majority* text have very minor differences among themselves, and just rare excursions by occasional ones to side with Minority readings. As a whole, the Majority-text manuscripts present a solid witness.

### *The quantity of manuscript evidence against ℵ and B*

The quantity of evidence, albeit of later date, against manuscripts **ℵ** and **B** is simply enormous. If 1000 manuscripts from 10 centuries and all parts of Christendom are wrong and just two of similar origin – but still rather discordant – are right, (and even these were in all but oblivion for most of

<sup>1</sup> Alf and Ben stand for manuscripts **ℵ** (aleph) and **B**. All the names beginning with M stand for majority-text manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Burgon on Mark 2:1-12 in [JWB-RR p.30], on Luke 11:2-4 in [JWB-RR p.34].

<sup>3</sup> [JWB-TT, p.33]

their years) then some serious questions can be asked. How this has happened, and how come the inspired Scripture has been virtually unavailable from the 4th to the 19th century?

In our courtroom analogy above, it would have been more accurate to have cast *hundreds* of witnesses along with Marjorie, Margaret, Marguerite. We invite the reader to picture the true numbers in his or her mind.

### ***Evidence from the Church Fathers***

There are many Church Fathers, *predating* **Ⲛ** and B. Each Church Father must generally represent at least one ancient manuscript – perhaps the consensus of several manuscripts. So **Ⲛ** and B should not be spoken of as if they are the earliest *witnesses* to the text. They are two of many witnesses. And they are thoroughly outnumbered by witnesses earlier than or contemporary with themselves, who *generally cite the Majority text*. So we can say that on the basis of antiquity, **Ⲛ** and B *are refuted*.

It is suggested that the reader revisit this section after reading the case study on Luke 2:14 where **ⲚABD** are pitted against every other known Greek manuscript. Burgon produces 11 readings from Church Fathers predating or contemporary with **ⲚB**, and 3 more contemporary with A, all supporting the Majority text<sup>1</sup>. Manuscripts **ⲚABD** are decisively outvoted – *by antiquity*.

### ***Causes of corruption***

The causes of corruption can often be identified and followed through a line of development<sup>2</sup>. A fair knowledge of Greek is needed to follow what has happened in detail – how one corruption led to another because of some grammatical difficulty. It is out of the scope of this booklet to enter into such detail.

A striking explanation for the omission of many verses in some manuscripts is the lectionary practice of omitting the verses in a church service reading. Presumably the scribes only wrote what they were accustomed to hearing in the church services.

A very serious cause of error is a deliberate attempt by heretics to support their pernicious teaching. We give one example: John 1:3-4<sup>a</sup>. The traditional reading is:

**All things were made by Him, and without Him not one thing was made that was made. <sup>4</sup>In Him was life ...**

Manuscripts **Ⲡ<sup>66</sup>ⲚD** and a very few minuscules change one Greek letter. By also adopting a new punctuation<sup>3</sup> to correspond to the change, the text is made to read:

**All things were made by Him, and without Him nothing was made. That which was made in Him was life ...**

This change corresponds to the teaching of heretics such as Valentinus and Heracleon, who, using the corrupt reading, taught that the Word, Christ, was *not* the creator of all things<sup>4</sup>, but that He simply created the perishable things of the earth. In order to support their claim, they made a minute change in Scripture – making Christ a creature, in Whom life was made by His supposed creator. NA<sup>26</sup> adopts the heretical reading. Burgon<sup>5</sup> gives a full discussion.

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<sup>1</sup> [JWB-LT, p.258].

<sup>2</sup> Burgon devotes a whole book to this topic: [JWB-CC].

<sup>3</sup> The change in punctuation is also made in a few other manuscripts which do not make the one-letter textual change. (NA<sup>26</sup> claims C D L W<sup>S</sup> 0150 and a few). This too leads to virtually the same corrupt reading.

<sup>4</sup> Colossians 1:16 corroborates the true reading of John 1:3 –

**For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible things and invisible things...**

<sup>5</sup> [JWB-CC, p.202].

### **ℵ and B refute their own testimony on the Ending of Mark**

Is it possible for a witness to refute his own testimony? The answer is yes – the *form* can refute the *content*. To illustrate this, we return to our courtroom example. Alf and Ben are asked if they are English. Alf replies in a thick French accent:

“But yes, I am Eeng-leeshe, I you eet swearre. I am bornn and brrett in Eeng-lande”.

Ben replies in a thick German accent:

“Yes neturelly em I English – I em living in Lon-don since zet I em a chilt”.

On paper, their testimony is that they are English. They were asked if they were English and they replied in the affirmative. But it would be deceitful to conceal the full story. In pronunciation and grammar their testimony is that they are French and German. It is not to their credit that *form* and *content* are at odds – and who would believe another word they spoke?

Does anything analogous occur in the manuscripts? Yes – in the case of the Ending of Mark. The unusual spacing between letters in the preceding passage in ℵ shows signs of a page having been *rewritten* to disguise a corruption. In B the *layout* contains a unique tell-tale blank column, a witness in *form* to omitted Scripture. The full impact of this will be seen when the reader examines this case study in Chapter 8, and perhaps refers to our references.<sup>1</sup>

### **ℵ and B contain many silly or tasteless readings**

We are back in the courtroom where Alf and Ben are asked about the weather on the day of the incident. Alf replies that it was a clear day, the temperature was twenty degrees Celsius and it was snowing. Ben replies that the weather was musty (not *misty*, but *musty*). The jury, quite understandably, has difficulty in believing them. Does this sort of thing occur in any manuscripts? We give some examples:

- I Corinthians 13:5. The traditional reading is

**(Love) ... does not seek its own *interest***

B (with no support from other manuscripts) reads:

**(Love) ... does not seek what is not its own**

meaning, we suppose, “Love does not steal”, putting grace on the footing of law.

- 1 Corinthians 13:3. The traditional reading is (literally)

**Even if I give my body that I may be burnt (καυθήσωμαι)**

The reading of NA<sup>26</sup> (citing ℘<sup>46</sup> ℵ A B 048 33 1739) and NIV<sub>footnote</sub> is

**Even if I give my body that I may boast (καυθήσωμαι)**

This is out of line with the spirit of self-sacrifice in the context of this passage. And reader, I ask you, how many people do you know of who have given their bodies so that they may boast?

- Romans 5:1. The traditional reading is:

**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:**

ℵ A B C D K L 33 81 read:

**... let us have peace ...**

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<sup>1</sup> [JWB-TT, p.298], [JWB-LT, p.87].

This reading (as if it is *we* who have to make peace with God *after* justification) is abandoned even in NA<sup>26</sup> because it is admitted that Paul is not exhorting but stating facts.

Burgon provides references to many more examples sporadically throughout his writings<sup>1</sup>; many require a fair knowledge of Greek to appreciate.

### ***ℵ and B are sometimes deserted by their patrons***

There is a battle between typical Minority text manuscripts, such as ℵ and B, and ℳ (the Majority text). Modern critics are particularly keen to adopt an ℵB reading in their printed Greek texts. They normally regard a testimony of ℵB, when supported by a small handful of others manuscripts, as being decisively in their favour, even though this will represent just 1% of the manuscripts and typically fly in the face of ancient version, patristic and lectionary evidence too. But there are nevertheless occasions where Minority-text based NA<sup>26</sup> – the new self-styled ‘standard text’ – is forced to desert its favourite manuscripts and side with the Majority text. The following list shows occasions where some *Minority* readings are rejected even by NA<sup>26</sup>, showing the manuscripts concurring in the Minority reading.

- a reading of ℵABCDKL is rejected (i.e. by NA<sup>26</sup>) in Romans 5:1 (cited above)
- a reading of ℵB is rejected in Philippians 1:4 (in the face of evidence of ℘<sup>46</sup>)
- a reading of ℵACD is rejected in Hebrews 2:7
- a reading of ℵB is rejected in 1 Peter 1:5, 1 Peter 3:22 (in the face of evidence of ℘<sup>72</sup>)
- a reading of ℵAB is rejected in 1 Peter 1:16, 1 Peter 3:1 (in the face of evidence of ℘<sup>72</sup>)
- a reading of ℵABC is rejected in 1 Peter 2:5 (in the face of evidence of ℘<sup>72</sup>)

What a strange situation the modern critics are in! They normally claim that accurate Scripture is to be found in manuscripts such as ℵB. This text, they claim, is uncorrupted by later editing of the text and represents the primitive, pure text. But just occasionally they admit that ℵB type texts represent a corruption themselves, and that the allegedly later, ‘edited’ text, which they so frequently reject and despise, actually provides the primitive, pure text. It is as if red means go and green means stop, except on a few limited occasions where it is admitted that this should be the other way around.

Contrarily, the present author maintains that the best-supported text (in terms of manuscripts, versions, Church Fathers etc.) is *always* the genuine text. Nowhere does this occasion textual difficulties. Red always means stop and green always means go.

### ***The question of manuscript preservation***

The question can be raised as to whether we have a fair sample of the ancient manuscripts. Burgon contends that the ancient rogue manuscripts owe their preservation to disuse on account of their depravity. The accurate manuscripts would have been in circulation rather than laid away. We have their testimony through the generations of copies that were made from them. Perhaps, also, we lack good early manuscripts because of the Diocletian persecution (303 AD). This Roman Emperor, in addition to the killing and torture of Christians, had all books (including Scripture) seized and burned. Many details are given in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, page 24. Hence, in the region under Roman dominion, many of the pre-4<sup>th</sup> century manuscripts were destroyed, along with the communities that would otherwise have made numerous copies of them. After the persecutions, the number of accurate manuscripts will have increased again, but, obviously, they are of later date.

Another factor that might be contributing to a disproportionate number of early rogue manuscripts is the fact that the early ones come from Egypt. Egypt has a climate that is favourable to manuscript preservation – but Egypt was a centre of Gnostic and other heretical doctrine.

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<sup>1</sup> There is a rich collection at the following places: [JWB-RR, p.316], [JWB-CC, p.64].

## Chapter 6 Case Study of Matthew 21:28-31

This study will introduce the reader to the fact that the ‘old uncials’ are discordant – which, of course, makes them very suspicious. The true reading will be revealed after the variations have been shown.

Ⲭ reads:

**<sup>28</sup>But what do you think? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go *and* work today in my vineyard. <sup>29</sup>He answered and said, I don't want to, but afterwards he repented, and went. <sup>30</sup>And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I will go, sir, but did not go. <sup>31</sup> Which of the two did the will of *his* father? They said to him, The first....**

B (and Θ with minor variations) inverts the responses:

**<sup>28</sup>But what do you think? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go *and* work today in my vineyard. <sup>29</sup>He answered and said, I will go, sir, but did not go. <sup>30</sup>And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I don't want to, but afterwards he repented, and went. <sup>31</sup> Which of the two did the will of *his* father? They said to him, The last....**

D provides us with a little amusement. Note the last word in this passage and to whom it applies!

**<sup>28</sup>But what do you think? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go *and* work today in my vineyard. <sup>29</sup>He answered and said, I don't want to, but afterwards he repented, and went (...). <sup>30</sup>And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I will go, sir, but did not go. <sup>31</sup> Which of the two did the will of *his* father? They said to him, The last....**

The present author recollects examining this as an exercise at an evening class in 1990 at the Theologische Faculteit, Tilburg, Holland. He thought: “Is reconstructing the original text a matter of choosing between the old uncials ⲬBD in situations like this? Do I have to turn to the books of these irreverent modern critics<sup>1</sup> for guidance? Lord, how do I identify the true text?” Now, ten years on, through the works of John Burgon, the author's prayer has been answered. God *has* given a clear witness in Ⲭ, the Majority text, standing for hundreds of manuscripts and very often a dozen Church Fathers and a few early versions (especially the Peshitto) in defiance of the divergent and unreliable ‘old uncials’.

Which is the true reading? Turning to the remaining manuscripts (perhaps 600 of them) and other sources, which are so often conveniently ignored by the modern critics, we find they almost all exhibit the *first* reading given above. It is often the case that *some* support amongst the ‘old uncials’ is found for the Majority text – which strongly suggests that the Majority text is the common ground from which the discordant variants were derived. On this occasion, Ⲭ sides with the Majority text; in other instances, Ⲭ is the rogue and some of the others will be seen to reflect the Majority text. The danger arises where two or more of the ‘old uncials’ agree with each other but not with the Majority text; in these cases the modern critics often adopt the rogue reading, despite the dreadful track record of discordance of these manuscripts they turn to. Discordant witnesses are not the depositories of God's Truth.

Burgon<sup>2</sup> produces many enlightening statistics about Ⲭ and B. In the Gospels alone, B has 589 readings *quite peculiar to itself*, affecting 850 words, –Ⲭ has 1460 such readings, affecting 2640 words. Collating with the Received Text, Mark's Gospel is found to contain in all 11,646 words: of which A omits 138: B, 762: Ⲭ 870: D, 900. –Luke contains 19,941 words: of which A omits 208: B,

<sup>1</sup> I refer here to some of the names mentioned in Chapter 17, *not* the staff of the Theologische Faculteit Tilburg, for whom I have great respect and in whose stance I seemed to detect an element of shared bewilderment, and even apology.

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-RR, p.319, p.262].

757: ✠ 816: D, no less than 1552. Further statistics of transpositions and substitutions are also revealed by Burgon<sup>1</sup>.

As for the text as published: The traditional reading is, of course, the first one. No editor of modern Greek texts *nowadays* considers the second reading, which is very slenderly supported, to be the true one. However, Westcott and Hort's (WH) Greek text of 1881 and earlier Nestle editions did. These were followed in English translations by Moffatt and the *New English Bible*. However, even the RSV, which is heavily dependent on the WH text, does not follow it on this occasion.

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<sup>1</sup> [JWB-RR, p.249].

## Chapter 7 Case Study of 1 Timothy 3:16

This case is particularly significant, because the critics perceived themselves to be impregnable, and declared this verse to be an example, a test of strength between the opposing schools<sup>1</sup>. There are 3 readings of the this verse<sup>2</sup>:

The traditional reading:

**... and confessedly great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh, justified in spirit, appeared to angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.**

A second reading favoured by modern critics:

**... and confessedly great is the mystery of godliness; He who was manifested in the flesh, justified in spirit, appeared to angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.**

A third reading found mainly in some ancient versions:

**... and confessedly great is the mystery of godliness, which was manifested in the flesh, justified in spirit, appeared to angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.**

In Greek the argument centres on the word **Θεός** (*God*). In uncials this is written **ΘEOC**, but in manuscripts, being a ‘sacred word’ it was contracted to **ΘC**. The Greek word for “he who” is **ὅς**, which in uncials is written **OC**. The Greek word for “which” is **ὃ**, which in uncials is **O**. We are thus dealing with **ΘC**, **OC** or **O**. It is seen that the distinction between **ΘC** and **OC** consists of two lines, one in the first letter, the theta, and one above the word.

Which is the true reading? The resolution of this question is a matter of *evidence*. Let us review it, as *claimed*, and as it *really is*.

***Evidence claimed by the critics in favour of the second reading:***

- Uncials: **Ⲛ** A C F G
- Minuscules<sup>3</sup> : Paul 17 73 181
- Versions: Syriac<sup>Philoxenian</sup>, Coptic, Sahidic, Gothic; 4 other versions which could reflect **ὅς** or **ὃ**.
- 6 Church Fathers.

***Burgon shoots down almost all of this in flames. Here is how:***

- **Ⲛ**. Burgon agrees that the reading is **ὅς**.

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<sup>1</sup> [JWB-RR, p.484]. The whole study relies on [JWB-RR, pp.425-520].

<sup>2</sup> A fourth reading, for which there is not a particle of known evidence, is found in the CEV (*Contemporary English Version*): **Christ came as a human**, and the NLT (*New Living Translation*): **Christ appeared in the flesh**. Such a rendering may be a truism in itself, but it is not what this Scripture says, and it hides another important truth being declared here: *God was manifest in the flesh*. How both these so-called Bibles can with any pretence of honesty claim accuracy (see their prefaces) is beyond the present author's comprehension. Now there is a Bible verse that clearly states that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. It is 1 John 4:2. The following verse, (4:3) reads – **And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God**. But NA<sup>26</sup>, and many modern versions, including the NLT and NIV read – **And every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not of God**. The modern versions have the majority text against them. Do we not see here an attempt by evil powers to eliminate the very test that will expose them?

<sup>3</sup> The old minuscule numbering (Scrivener numbers) is used here, for ease of reference, as that is what Burgon employed. The new numbers of these three minuscules are 33 442 365 respectively.

- **A.** In this manuscript, the ‘old line’ in the Θ, although no longer visible *now*, was seen and described by many people when the manuscript was in better condition: Mill (working 1677-1707): “lineolae ... vestigia ... deprehendi” (*I detected traces of the line*); similarly Wooton (1718), Creyk (1716), Wetstein (1716), Berriman (1737). We see that the critics, in maintaining a denial of the existence of the old line, are trying to conceal history.
- **C.** We are in a strong position to judge this case for ourselves. Scrivener's *Introduction*<sup>1</sup> contains a high-quality facsimile of this verse, with which is sufficient to assess the arguments levelled at the text (angles do not change in facsimiles). We reproduce this facsimile below, in the format of a separate article, and show that the Tischendorf's argument is invalid. Burgon adds that there is musical notation on this manuscript denoting a word of two syllables.
- **FG.** These are twin manuscripts from the same original. They exhibit  $\overline{\Theta C}$ . The critics claim the supralinear line is an aspirate. But the manuscript does not contain any other lines for aspirates, whereas it does contain supralinear lines as marks of contraction. On the page of the manuscript we are considering, there are nine aspirated words, *none* of which has any mark at all above its initial letter. There are eight contracted words (including  $\overline{\Theta C}$ ) which *all* have the symbol of contraction. Burgon draws the *only* logical conclusion: this supralinear line is the sign of contraction, and the reading is **Θεός**. The line in the theta is missing, but that is frequently the case in these manuscripts. The letters C ∈ O Θ are confused throughout – giving rise to such spectacles as ΠΕΝΟΟΥΝΤΕC (for ΠΕΝΘΟΥΝΤΕC =*grieving*) and ΕΚΡΙΖΩΗΤΙ (for ΕΚΡΙΖΩΗΤΙ =*be uprooted*).
- **Paul 17.** The reading is admittedly  $\overset{\circ}{\Theta}$ .
- **Paul 73.** Burgon writes<sup>2</sup>: On enquiry at Upsala, this proves to be merely an abridgement of Ecumenius, who certainly read **Θεός**.
- **Paul 181.** The library at Florence (cited by Scholz) denies ever having had the manuscript.
- **Syriac<sup>Philoxenian</sup>.** The reading is definitely **Θεός**. The critics have mistakenly taken the word for “God” (Syriac ܐܠܗܐ, Greek Θεός,) to be part of the word for “godliness” (Greek εὐσέβεια, Syriac ܐܘܨܝܒܝܐ =*beauty-of-fear*). But the Syriac translation of εὐσέβεια in 12 other instances does *not* include the word ܐܠܗܐ, which must therefore reflect the Greek word Θεός.
- **Coptic and Sahidic.** Strictly speaking, the reading could reflect  $\overset{\circ}{\Theta}$  or  $\overset{\circ}{\theta}$ , but since there is an obvious antecedent to the relative pronoun (the word ‘mystery’), the only natural reading is to take the relative with the antecedent. So the Coptic and Sahidic reflect  $\overset{\circ}{\theta}$ , not  $\overset{\circ}{\Theta}$ .
- **Gothic.** The issue rests on whether the reading is soei ( $\overset{\circ}{\theta}$ ) or saei ( $\overset{\circ}{\Theta}$ ). The *only* Gothic manuscript is “scarcely legible”, or in the words of Massmann in 1857, “altogether obliterated”. The case for reading  $\overset{\circ}{\Theta}$  is conceded, but with some doubt attached.
- **Ethiopic.** Represents  $\overset{\circ}{\theta}$ .
- **Armenian.** Represents  $\overset{\circ}{\theta}$ .
- **Arabic.** Translates as “it is that he”, which represents none of the three readings discussed.
- **The 6 Church Fathers.** A simple reading of “(he) who was manifest” does not point exclusively to 1 Timothy 3:16 and must be regarded as very weak testimony. *No* Church Father reads “...mystery; he who was manifest”.

So much for the critics' claims. They are left with but a fraction of the evidence for  $\overset{\circ}{\Theta}$  that they started with: **Ⲗ**, Paul 17, and, with some doubt, the Gothic.

Burgon insists that A is on positively his side. He clearly feels C could be pressed, but forbears. We however, claim to have demonstrated that codex C reads **Θεός**. Burgon also has a strong case

<sup>1</sup> [Scrivener, vol.1, Plate X, p.121]

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-RR, p.99<sub>footnote</sub>] (so separately from his main dissertation).

with FG. Although he does not press the case with these manuscripts, he certainly disallows them being counted against him.

Burton cites 31 minuscule lectionaries on his side, while he supplies the critics with 3 on their side: Apostolos 12, 85, 86.

***The evidence in favour of the traditional reading:***

- **Uncials:** A K L P Ψ
- **Minuscules:** Paul 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 52, 55, 56, 57, 59, 62, 63, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 74, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 120, 121, 122, 123, 125, 126, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 149, 150, 151, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 188, 189, 190, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 211, 212, 213, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 255, 256, 257, 258, 260, 262, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 272, 273, 274, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 285, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 310, 311, 319, 322, 328, 336, 337, 338
- **Lectionaries:** Apost 2, 52, 69, 5, 7, 11, 22, 23, 25, 30, 33, 13, 14, 18, 38, 49, 45, 46, 51, 57, 62, 65, 58, 77, 82, 84, 89, 119, 123, 125, 128
- **Versions:** Syriac<sup>Philoxenian</sup>, Georgian, Slavonic
- **Church Fathers:** Many Church Fathers have a circumlocution of “God was manifest” (Θεὸς ἐθανερώθη), including Ignatius, A.D. 90, Barnabas (also first century), Hippolytus (second century)<sup>1</sup>. The following witness unequivocally to Θεὸς ἐθανερώθη<sup>2</sup>:
  - III century: Dionysius of Alexandria
  - IV century: Didymus, Gregory (bishop of Nazanianus), Diodorus, Gregory (bishop of Nyssa), Chrysostom, <A title to a summary of 1 Timothy>
  - V century: Cyril (bishop of Alexandria), Theodoret (bishop of Cyrus), an anonymous author, Euthalius (bishop of Sulca), Macedonius II
  - VI century: Severus (bishop of Antioch)
  - VIII century: John Damascene, Epiphanius (deacon of Catana), Theodorus Studita
  - IX century: several ancient scholia<sup>3</sup>
  - X century: Oecumenius
  - XI century: Theophylact
  - XII century: Euthymius

Against this there is no definite claim for ὄς.

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<sup>1</sup> [JWB-RR p.463, p.486].

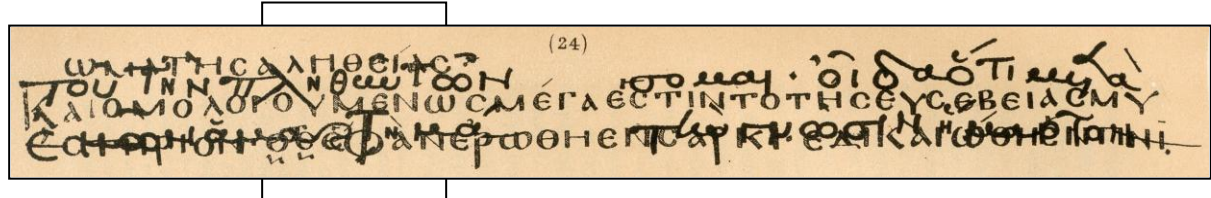
<sup>2</sup> [JWB-RR p.487].

<sup>3</sup> A scholium (or scholion) is a commentary or annotation.

**Codex C: 1 Timothy 3:16**

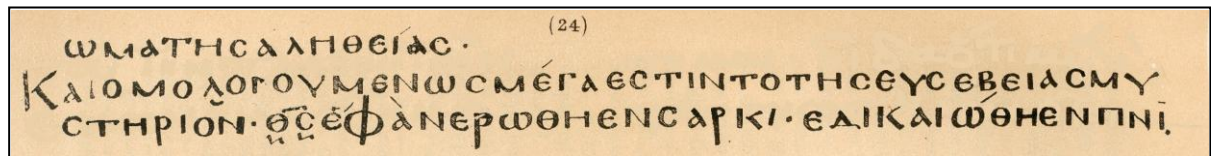
Does Codex C (technically known as *Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus*) read **God** was manifested in the flesh, or as the modern critics claim with absolute certainty, **He** was manifested in the flesh? We are in the fortunate position of having a scan of the manuscript, so we can see with our own eyes what is going on. When reading the Greek manuscripts, we must be aware that certain “sacred” words are always contracted, and written with a line on top, so that *God*, θεος, (*theos*) is written θε̅ς.

Here is a scan of the manuscript, from the facsimile in F.H.A. Scrivener's *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*. It is unfortunately a palimpsest, i.e. it has lower (original) writing, and has been scrubbed and re-used for upper writing. But the lower writing is still clearly visible.

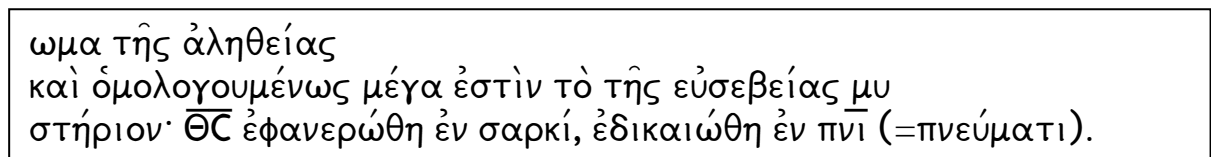


The box marks the contested area, with θε̅ς or ο̅ς or at the bottom left, giving **God** or **He** was manifested in the flesh. We enlarge the box area and study it later.

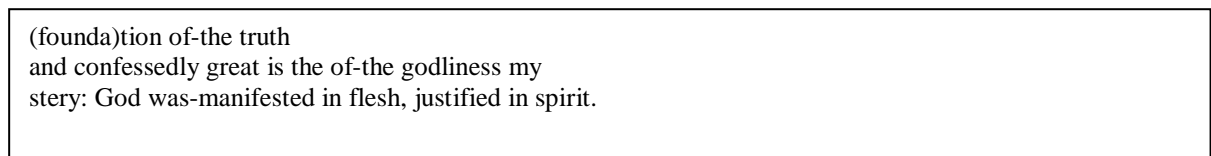
In order to help the reader orientate himself, the following shows the lower scripture text, produced by replacing the upper writing by the background colour. Where the lower text has been overwritten by the upper text, we make a fair guess as to how much black to remove so as to reveal how the lower text stood. *Nowhere has any black been added.*



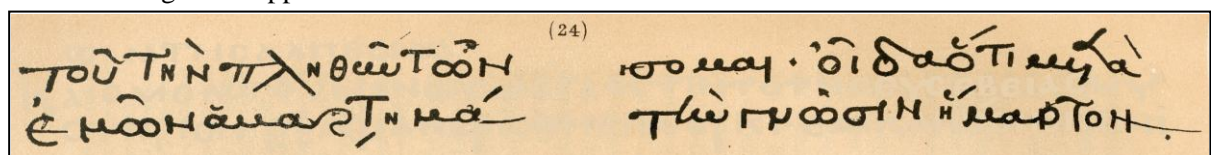
It reads:



A literal translation is:



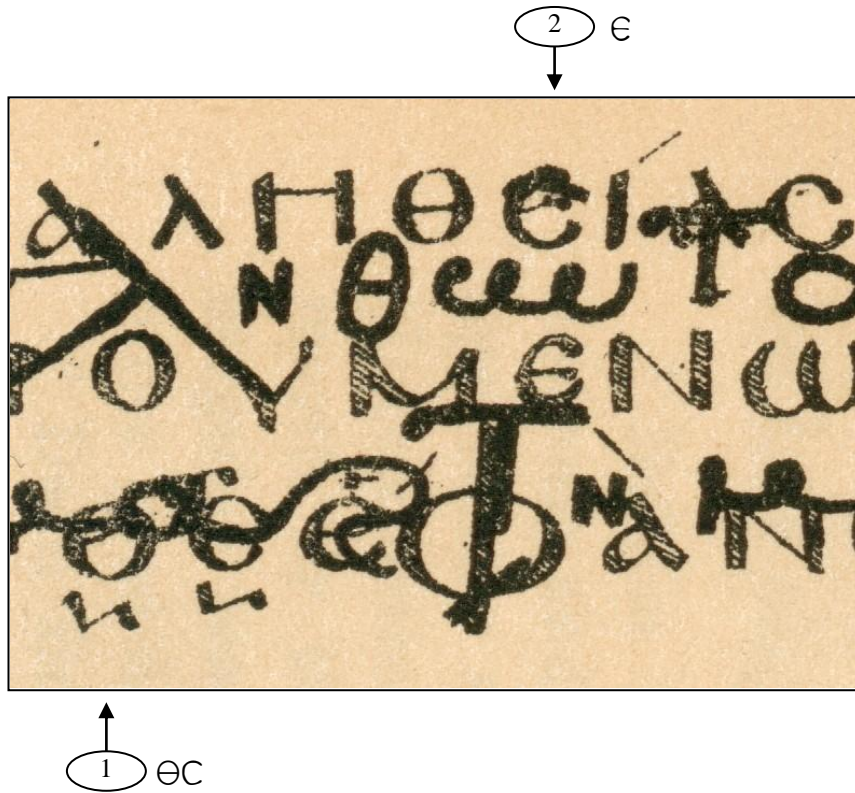
The following is the upper text.



It is, we are informed by Scrivener, a Greek translation of St. Ephraim the Syrian. It reads:

<p>τοῦ τὴν πληθῦν τῶν ἐμῶν ἁμαρτημά</p>	<p>σομαι· οἶδα ὅτι μετὰ τὴν γνῶσιν ἥμαρτον</p>
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Let us examine the contested area in more detail.



Tischendorf (the champion of modern textual criticism) claimed that the horizontal line in the theta of  $\theta\varsigma$  is an addition by a later scribe. His first argument is that the line slopes upwards. But observe the epsilon of ἀληθείας, marked (2). It also slopes upwards - and is in the scribe's thin style, showing that the theta is entirely consistent with the original scribe.

Tischendorf also argues that the line in the theta is grey, – but the whole underlying text is faint, as it always is with a palimpsest.

So Tischendorf's argument collapses. If there were no serious doctrine at stake, is it conceivable that this line would be questioned at all?

The reading in Codex C is established as  $\theta\varsigma = \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma = \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma = \text{God}$  was manifested in the flesh. Despite this, modern critics claim that the original reading in this manuscript is unquestionably  $\omicron\varsigma$  (Cf. Nestle-Aland 26 and Bruce M. Metzger's *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*).

### ***Evidence in favour of the third reading***

This consists of: D, *no minuscules*, Vulgate, Syriac<sup>Peshitto</sup>, Coptic<sup>Memphitic,Sahidic</sup>, Ethiopic, Armenian; 5 Church Fathers.

### ***Recent evidence***

A great many manuscripts have been discovered since Burgon's time. Burgon was not aware of Ψ reading Θεός. The number of minuscules has increased considerably. We can safely infer that all new discoveries read Θεός except (at most) one, since the critics<sup>1</sup> claim just one more minuscule reading ὄς. In the minuscule count, we stick with Burgon's verified evidence.

### ***Weighing the evidence***

The reading for Θεός is overwhelming: 5 uncials (versus 1 of the critics), the vast majority (99%) of minuscules, 31 lectionaries, 3 early versions, and a great number of Church Fathers, including many of earlier date than any manuscripts we have.

The evidence for ὄς is hopeless: Just 1 uncial, just 1 minuscule, 3 lectionaries, 1 early version (to which some doubt is attached), and few, if any Church Fathers.

It might be asked about the case for ὄς. The witnesses are 1 uncial, no minuscules, 5 early versions, and about 5 Church Fathers. Although the version support is very significant, the Greek support is definitely not, nor is the patristic support, and the case as a whole is still hopelessly weak.

Modern critics argue that ὄ presupposes ὄς. Why should this be so, rather than presupposing, say, ὁ Θεός (ὁ Θεός is supported by 4 manuscripts)? Since ὄ is admitted by traditionalist and modern critic alike to be a mutilation of the text, the present author would argue that ὄ alternatively presupposes a carelessness or even willingness on the part of the scribe to alter the sacred deposit, and so the possibility of a deliberate direct change from Θεός to ὄ.

### ***1 Timothy 3:16 in modern Bibles and text-critical books***

The amazing thing is not only that the false reading has been accepted by so many modern Bibles, but the certainty with which the modern critics claim their case. The chairman of the Revised Version committee, Bishop Ellicott, was “*unhesitatingly*”<sup>2</sup> in favour of ὄς. The argument used against Burgon is that he is outnumbered. Compare Ellicott's words<sup>3</sup> – “...the complete isolation of the reviewer's (*i.e.* Burgon's) position.” We see Burgon's scholarship, and mass of hard-earned factual evidence, dismissed with an irrelevance. Burgon is not isolated – he has over 300 manuscript, version and patristic witnesses on his side.

We also note that the critics will not relinquish their invalidated position on manuscripts A C G 73 181 (which they persist in claiming on their side)<sup>4</sup>, nor similarly the Philoxenian Syriac<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [UBS-Comm, p.641].

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-RR, p.430].

<sup>3</sup> [JWB-RR, p.431].

<sup>4</sup> [UBS-Comm, p.641].

<sup>5</sup> [NA<sup>26</sup>].

## Chapter 8 Case Study of The Ending of Mark

Recent Greek New Testament texts and modern translations confidently discredit the last twelve verses of Mark's Gospel. The way they do this – on the basis of what really amounts to *no* evidence – is a stunning example of the extent to which evidence can be distorted by those who do not present it equitably. The result of this study, it will be seen, is to the utter discredit of **⌚** and B.

We rely almost entirely on Burgon's carefully amassed evidence<sup>1</sup>. We start by exhibiting the text in question and variants, then we observe the content of modern critical publications and of Bibles, and finally we examine Greek manuscript and other evidence.

### *The traditional ending:*

**<sup>9</sup>Now when *Jesus* had risen early the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. <sup>10</sup>And she went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. <sup>11</sup>And they, when they had heard that He was alive, and had been seen by her, did not believe. <sup>12</sup>After that He appeared in another form to two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. <sup>13</sup>And they went and told *it* to the rest, *but* they did not believe them either. <sup>14</sup>Afterwards He appeared to the eleven as they sat *at table*, and upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen. <sup>15</sup>And He said to them, “Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. <sup>16</sup>He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he that does not believe shall be condemned. <sup>17</sup>And these signs shall follow those who believe: in My name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; <sup>18</sup>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 recover.” <sup>19</sup>So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. <sup>20</sup>And they went out, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.**

### *The shorter ending*

A very few manuscripts also have the following text<sup>2</sup>:

**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 age-abiding salvation.**

### *Codex Washingtonensis*

For completeness we remark that one manuscript, Washingtonensis, expands on the traditional ending with some spurious material<sup>3</sup> after verse 14:

**And they excused themselves, saying, “This age of 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 those who have sinned, I was delivered over to death, that they may return to the truth, and sin no more, in order that they may inherit the spiritual and incorruptible glory of righteousness which is in heaven.”**

### *Modern Translations*

Most modern translations of the Bible reject the traditional ending of Mark's Gospel (verses 9 to 20). The reason for this can be found in the new Greek text from which the translators worked, which we

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<sup>1</sup> Burgon devotes an entire book to the subject: [JWB-LT].

<sup>2</sup> Printed in [NA<sup>26</sup>] and (in English) in [UBS-GNT].

<sup>3</sup> Printed in [NA<sup>26</sup>] and (in English) in [UBS-GNT].

call the UBS-NA<sup>26</sup> (United Bible Societies / Nestle-Aland) text<sup>1</sup>. The editors of the text do two things to discredit these verses:

- They place them in double square brackets [...]. These brackets are used to enclose passages which are regarded as later additions to the text, but which are retained because of their evident antiquity<sup>2</sup>. In the United Bible Societies' edition, the note at the ending of Mark<sup>3</sup> uses the symbol {A}, which means<sup>4</sup> that the text is virtually certain (i.e. the claim is that the unbracketed text, which excludes verses 9-20, is virtually certain to be the authentic reading).
- They also print the shorter ending in double square brackets [...], but this is rejected by all (as far as the author is aware) as spurious – it has negligible manuscript support. So the traditional ending is put on a par with what can only be called an unauthorised addition.

The editors state<sup>5</sup> that the traditional ending *must be judged by internal evidence to be secondary*. They add<sup>6</sup> that also *on the basis of good external evidence ... it appears that the earliest ascertainable form of the Gospel of Mark ended with 16:8*.

So far we have seen the material at the disposal of a translator working with the standard modern text-critical editions and commentaries of the self-styled new standard text. Let us now examine the repercussions of the UBS-NA<sup>26</sup> text in modern Bible versions.

The *New International Version* (NIV) rules a line after verse 8, then prints the traditional ending, but discredits it with a note as follows: *The most reliable early manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not have Mark 16:9-20*.

The *New King James Version* (NKJV) has a footnote that *Verses 9-20 are bracketed in NU<sup>7</sup> - Texts as not original...*

Some other versions casting doubt on the traditional ending are:

- The *Revised Standard Version* (footnoted *Some of the most ancient authorities bring the book to a close at the end of verse 8...*). The shorter ending is also printed in the footnote.
- J.B.Philips (introduces the ending by the term *An ancient appendix*; also prints the spurious shorter ending).
- The *Weymouth New Testament* (square brackets)
- J.Moffatt (footnoted *...a couple of second century attempts to complete the gospel...*; also prints spurious material in verse 14; also prints the spurious shorter ending).
- The *Jerusalem Bible* (footnoted *Many manuscripts omit verses 9-20...*).
- The *Good News Bible* (square brackets; footnoted *Some manuscripts...do not have this ending to the gospel*; also prints the spurious shorter ending).

From the above, one would infer that the evidence is heavily stacked in favour of a termination of the Gospel at Mark 16:8.

Is it possible that the reverse is the case in reality? Is it conceivable that there is virtually no evidence against the traditional ending? Could it possibly be that the modern critics have used deceit and sleight of hand time and time again in their exposition of the evidence? We shall see. The reader is forewarned for many shocks.

We now examine the claims for the *internal evidence* and *good external evidence*<sup>1</sup>. We prepare to see why, according to the critics, rejection of the traditional ending is *virtually certain*<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> References [UBS-GNT] and [NA<sup>26</sup>]. These editions contain the same Greek text.

<sup>2</sup> [UBS-GNT, p. xii].

<sup>3</sup> [UBS-GNT, p.196].

<sup>4</sup> [UBS-GNT, p. xii].

<sup>5</sup> [UBS-Comm, p.125].

<sup>6</sup> [UBS-Comm, p.126].

<sup>7</sup> *Nestle-Aland / United Bible Societies*

### *The external evidence – Greek manuscripts*

All known manuscripts – about 22 uncials and 600 cursives – *contain the traditional ending* — except two, **Ⲛ** (Sinaiticus) and B (Vaticanus).

The uncial witnesses to the traditional ending are the following<sup>3</sup>:

Burgon lists 17 uncials<sup>4</sup>:

A C D E F G H K L M S U V X Γ Δ Π

to which may be added the following 5:

W Θ Ψ 099 0112

Manuscript 0112 (=083) only has the first two verses of the traditional ending.

A few of these manuscripts contain special markings or spurious material *in addition* to the traditional ending. This hardly invalidates their witness to the traditional ending.

The uncial evidence may appear to be about 22-2 in favour of the traditional ending. But even this is not the full story...

Modern critical works do not publish the whole truth about manuscript B. It is quite staggering. We let Burgon speak<sup>5</sup>:

The scribe, whose plan is found to have been to begin every fresh book of the Bible at the top of *the next ensuing column* to that which contained the concluding words of the preceding book, has at the close of S. Mark's Gospel deviated from his else invariable practice. He has left in this place one column entirely vacant. It is the *only vacant column* in the whole manuscript; – a blank space abundantly sufficient to contain the twelve verses which he nevertheless withheld. *Why* did he leave that column vacant? *What* can have induced the scribe on this solitary occasion to depart from his established rule? The phenomenon, – (I believe I was the first to call distinct attention to it,) – is in the highest degree significant, and admits of only one interpretation. The *older manuscript* from which Codex B was copied must have infallibly *contained* the twelve verses in dispute. The copyist was instructed to leave them out, – and he obeyed: but he prudently left a blank space *in memoriam rei*. Never was blank more intelligible! Never was silence more eloquent! By this simple expedient, strange to relate, the Vatican Codex is made to refute itself even while it seems to be bearing testimony against the concluding verses of S. Mark's Gospel, by withholding them: for it forbids the inference which, under ordinary circumstances, must have been drawn from that omission. It does more. By *leaving room* for the verses it omits, it brings into prominent notice at the end of fifteen centuries and a half, a *more ancient witness than itself*. The venerable Author of the original Codex from which codex B was copied, is thereby brought to view. And thus, our supposed adversary (Codex B) proves our most useful ally: for it procures us the testimony of an hitherto unsuspected witness.

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<sup>1</sup> [UBS-Comm pp.125-6]

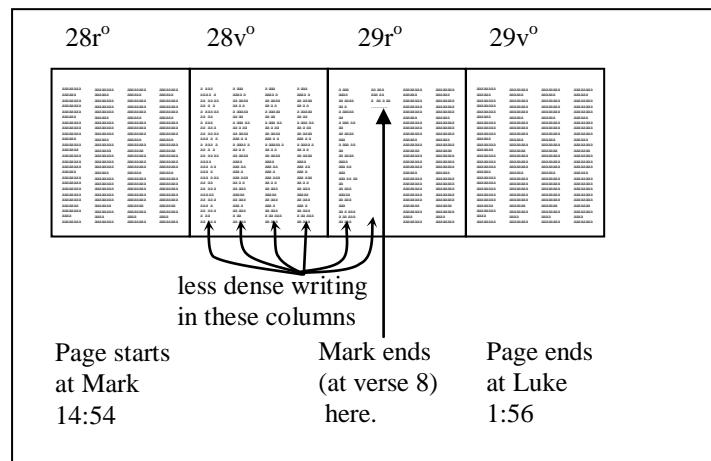
<sup>2</sup> [UBS-GNT p.xii].

<sup>3</sup> The sources are: [UBS-Comm], [NA<sup>26</sup>, Appendix I], [JWB-LT, p.71], [Scrivener, vol.2, p.237].

<sup>4</sup> **Λ** is omitted as Burgon queried it. [Scrivener vol.1, p.160] states that it contains the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John complete, with the subscription to St. Mark.

<sup>5</sup> [JWB-LT, p.87].

Now **ℵ** too appears to have a story to tell<sup>1</sup>. The sheet on which the ending of Mark is written is used to make two leaves, i.e. four pages, numbered using recto and verso notation: 28r<sup>o</sup> 28v<sup>o</sup> 29r<sup>o</sup> 29v<sup>o</sup>, containing Mark 14:54-Luke 1:56. The text is arranged in 4 columns per page, shown schematically in the next figure.



We quote from Burgon<sup>2</sup>:

The page of **ℵ** on which St. Mark ends is the *recto* of leaf 29, being the second of a pair of leaves (28 and 29), forming a single sheet (containing St. Mark 14:54 -16:8, St. Luke 1:1-56), which Tischendorf has shown to have been written not by the scribe of the body of the New Testament in this manuscript, but by one of his colleagues who wrote part of the Old Testament and acted as a *diorthota*, or corrector of the New Testament – and who is further identified by the same great authority as the scribe of B. This person appears to have cancelled the sheet originally written by the scribe of **ℵ**, and to have substituted for it as we now have it, written by himself. A correction so extensive and laborious can only have been made for the purpose of introducing an important textual change, too large to be effected by deletion, interlineation, or marginal note. Thus we are led to infer not only that the testimony of **ℵ** is here not independent of that of B, but to suspect that this sheet may have been thus cancelled and rewritten in order to conform its contents to the corresponding part of B.

This suspicion becomes definite, and almost rises to a certainty, when we look further into the contents of this sheet. Its second page (28 v<sup>o</sup>) exhibits four columns of St. Mark (15:16-16:1); its third page (29r<sup>o</sup>), the two last columns of St Mark (16:2-9) and the two first columns of St Luke (1:1-18). But the writing of these six columns of St Mark is so spread out that they contain less matter than they ought; whereas the columns of St Luke that follow contain the normal amount. It follows, therefore, that the change introduced by the *diorthota* must have been an extensive excision from St. Mark:– in other words, that these pages as originally written must have contained a portion of St Mark of considerable length which has been omitted from the pages as they now stand. If these six columns of St Mark were written as closely as the columns of St Luke which follow, there would be room in them for the omitted twelve verses. –More particularly, the fifth column (the first of page 29 r<sup>o</sup>) is so arranged as to contain only about five sixths of the normal quantity of matter, and the *diorthota* is thus enabled to carry over four lines to begin a new column, the sixth, by which artifice he manages to conclude St Mark not with a blank column such as in B tells its own story, but with a column such as in this manuscript is usual at the end of a book, exhibiting the closing words followed by an 'arabesque' pattern executed with the pen, and the subscription (the rest being left empty). But, by the very pains he has thus taken to conform this final column to the

<sup>1</sup> We draw here on [JWB-TT, p.298 ff.].

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-TT, p.298].

ordinary page of the manuscript, his purpose is betrayed even more conclusively, though less obviously, than by the blank column of B.

Manuscript **ℵ** (Sinaiticus) is held at the British Library in London. It is on display in the exhibition area, and is actually open at the pages where Mark's gospel ends. The visitor can clearly see for him- or herself, as the present author has done, how the text becomes more and more spaced out as the gospel draws to its premature close. The British Library also possesses a high-quality facsimile of **ℵ** (and, incidentally, A, Alexandrinus). Should the original not be available, or if its pages should be turned, the enquirer can consult the facsimile in the manuscript section.

Minuscule 304, is claimed<sup>1</sup> as another witness lacking the ending of Mark. Burgon states<sup>2</sup> that:

with the exception of **ℵ** and B, there is not one Codex in existence, uncial or cursive, – (and we are acquainted with, at least, eighteen other uncials, and about six hundred cursive Copies of this Gospel), – which leaves out the last twelve verses of Mark.

Similarly, Scrivener states<sup>3</sup> that:

All opposition to the authenticity of the paragraph resolves itself into the allegations of Eusebius and the testimony of **ℵ** B.

(We discuss the allegations of Eusebius below).

Manuscript 304 is rather elusive. The modern number 304 is not given in the conversion list by Waltzmann<sup>4</sup>, so it is not clear whether it is the 304 known to Scrivener and Burgon. Scrivener<sup>5</sup> refers to manuscript 304 as containing Matthew and Mark only, as does NA<sup>26</sup>. Burgon<sup>6</sup> also mentions Codex 304. Is it clear that Mark's Gospel ends where the extant part of the manuscript ends? Until an opportunity presents itself for verification of this manuscript, we must leave it with a question mark.

In summary: there is *no* unequivocal Greek manuscript witness to the absence of the traditional ending.

### ***The shorter ending***

According to NA<sup>26</sup>, the four uncial and two minuscule manuscripts that have this ending are L  $\Psi$  099 0112 274<sup>margin</sup> 579. They all have this as an alternative to the traditional ending, which they also exhibit. As far as the author is aware, no-one considers the shorter ending to be authentic. Scrivener rightly describes this ending as *wretched*<sup>7</sup>.

### ***The balance of Greek manuscript evidence***

The Greek manuscript evidence is enormously in favour of the traditional ending. Omitting the evidence of **ℵ** B 304, the balance is 22-0 uncials in favour of the traditional text, and 600-0 minuscules.

It is already incredible that anyone could pronounce against the traditional ending. Yet they do – even on arguments of Greek manuscript testimony. The United Bible Societies – based on the same external evidence as is described above – even has the audacity to speak of *good external evidence*<sup>8</sup>!

Now can it be believed that part of the *good external evidence* of the United Bible for the spuriousness of the *traditional* ending is the existence of the *spurious shorter ending*! The only Greek manuscripts containing the shorter ending are 4 uncials and 2 minuscules, all of which also contain the traditional ending. So according to the United Bible Societies' reasoning, these manuscripts *containing* the longer ending constitute evidence *against* the longer ending!

The present author feels the positions of the contending cases concerning external evidence can be illustrated by considering a football match. Team Trad-Athletic beats team Mod-Pathetic 22-0 in

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<sup>1</sup> [NA<sup>26</sup>] and [UBS-Comm].

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-LT p.71].

<sup>3</sup> [Scrivener, vol.2, p.344].

<sup>4</sup> A web page – reference [Waltzmn].

<sup>5</sup> [Scrivener vol.1, p.228].

<sup>6</sup> [JWB-LT, p.283], [JWB-RR, p.524].

<sup>7</sup> [Scrivener, vol.2, p.337].

<sup>8</sup> [UBS-Comm, p.125-6].

the first half, and 600-0 in the second half, making the final score 622-0. Never was a more resounding defeat heard of in the history of football! Yet the supporters of Mod-Pathetic claim that their team was really the stronger. Asked to justify their claim, they refer to two disqualified goals that their team could have had counted in their favour, if it were not for the fact that the players were off-side.

We pass on, wondering where the army is going to come from that is going to outweigh the evidence so far.

### ***Version evidence***

Burgon states<sup>1</sup> that *all the versions*, without exception, are adverse to the omission of the last twelve verses of Mark.

The versions are<sup>2</sup>:

- **Syriac Peshitto.** This is a 2nd century translation – but very recent critics have moved this date forward. Burgon states that it contains the verses in question.
- **Curetonian Syriac.** This codex is referred by Cureton to the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The translation must have been made at an earlier date, working from a Greek manuscript of an earlier date still. Burgon considers this a vastly more ancient witness than **Ⲭ** or B. It contains the verses in question.
- **Harklensian Syriac** (also known as Philoxenian). This version is the result of two revisions of the Peshitto: the first one on the instructions of Philoxenus (AD 508) and the second by Thomas of Harkel (AD 616). It contains the verses in question.
- **The Latin Vulgate** (Jerome's translation, AD 382). It contains the disputed verses.
- **The Gothic of Ulfilas.** The translation was made in A.D. 350; the earliest copy we have is of the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century. It contains the verses in question.
- **Egyptian versions.** These are the Memphitic (also known as Coptic; 4th or 5th century) and Thebaic (also known as Sahidic; 3<sup>rd</sup> century) versions. They contain the verses in question.
- **Armenian version.** The translation may be of the 5th century, but the manuscripts are of considerably later date. Some manuscripts contain the verses and some do not.
- **Ethiopic version.** (4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>? century translation; codices are comparatively recent). The manuscripts bear constant witness to the verses in question.
- **Georgian version.** (6<sup>th</sup>? century translation; codices are comparatively recent). The manuscripts bear constant witness to the verses in question.

As a single item of Syriac evidence against the traditional reading, Burgon refers to the

- **Jerusalem version**, perhaps of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. He calls it a translation of “the Ecclesiastical Sections”.

To this must be added a manuscript unknown at the time Burgon wrote his book<sup>3</sup>:

- The Sinaitic Syriac. It omits the verses in question. The heretical nature of this manuscript has been sampled in Chapter 1 where the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ was discussed.

The Syriac evidence as a whole in favour of the traditional text outweighs the Syriac evidence against it.

NA<sup>26</sup> is slightly at variance with Burgon, also claiming in its favour one 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> century Latin codex (k, =Bobiensis), and 2 Georgian manuscripts.

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<sup>1</sup> [JWB-LT, p.100].

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-LT, p.33].

<sup>3</sup> i.e. [JWB-LT]. The later book [JWB-TT], edited after Burgon's death by Edward Miller, contains a review of the evidence known at its publication date, (Appendix VII).

In any case it is clear that the version evidence *for each language* is overwhelmingly in favour of the traditional ending, except for the Armenian (a minor witness) which is significantly divided.

### *Patristic evidence*

Burgon points out that Patristic evidence is equivalent to manuscript evidence when the question is not one of the exact wording, but of the *existence* of a portion of text<sup>1</sup>. He produces the following witnesses to the ending of Mark<sup>2</sup>:

- **Papias** (ca. A.D. 100) Papias probably alludes to Mark 16:18 (“and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them”) when he writes concerning Justus surnamed Barsabas, “how that after drinking noxious poison, through the Lord's grace he experienced no evil consequence”.
- **Justin Martyr** (ca. A.D. 150). Justin Martyr writes “and they went forth and preached everywhere” using the same three words, (but in a different order), as in Mark 16:20.
- **Irenaeus** (ca. A.D. 180). Irenaeus quotes and remarks upon Mark 16:19.
- **Hippolytus** (ca. A.D. 200). Hippolytus quotes Mark 16:17-18, and in another place Mark 16:19.
- **Vincentius** (A.D. 256). He quotes Mark 16:17-18.
- The **Acta Pilati** (3<sup>rd</sup> century?). This document contains Mark 16:15-18.
- The **Apostolical Constitutions** (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century). Mark 16:15 is alluded to and Mark 16:16 is quoted identically to the Textus Receptus.
- **Eusebius** (A.D. 325) Eusebius discusses the verses widely and was by no means disposed to question their genuineness.
- **Marinus** (a contemporary of Eusebius). Marinus is the character in Eusebius's writings who asks a question concerning the last twelve verses of Mark, without a trace of misgiving as to their genuineness.
- **Aphraates the Persian Sage** (A.D. 337). Aphraates quotes Mark 16:16-18.
- **Ambrose** (ca. A.D. 385). He quotes Mark 16:15, 16:16-18, 16:20.
- **Chrysostom** (ca. A.D. 400). He quotes Mark 16:19-20.
- **Jerome** (331-420). The verses are in the Latin Vulgate, and Mark 16:9 and 16:14 are quoted in his writings.
- **Augustine** (ca. A.D. 415). Augustine brings the verses forward again and again.
- **Nestorius** (ca. A.D. 430). He quotes Mark 16:20.
- **Cyril of Alexandria** (a contemporary of Nestorius). He accepts Nestorius's quotation in a reply to it.
- **Victor of Antioch**<sup>3</sup> (ca. A.D. 425). He refutes arguments against the genuineness of these verses.
- **Hesychius of Jerusalem**<sup>4</sup> (6<sup>th</sup> century?). He quotes Mark 16:19 at length.
- **Synopsis Scripturae Sacrae** (“much older than any of the later uncials”). This document rehearses in detail the contents of Mark 16:9-20.

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<sup>1</sup> [JWB-LT, p.23].

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-LT, p.23 ff].

<sup>3</sup> [JWB-LT, p.29, and also p.59, p.67].

<sup>4</sup> [JWB-LT, p.29, and also pp.58-59].

### *Errors of the modern critics*

The following are cited by various famous critics as being witnesses hostile to the last twelve verses of Mark, but this is not the case, as is shown below.

- **Gregory of Nyssa**<sup>1</sup>. The homily containing the supposed hostile evidence (but it is not – see below) is identical to a work ascribed to Hesychius. The work can have but one author. To cite Gregory of Nyssa and Hesychius is to perpetrate double counting.
- **Severus of Antioch**<sup>2</sup>. The homily is again identical to the work ascribed to Hesychius. To cite Gregory of Nyssa and Severus of Antioch is again double counting.

Tregelles cites Gregory and Severus (double counting)<sup>3</sup>.

Tischendorf cites Severus and Hesychius (double counting)<sup>4</sup>.

Hesychius is in fact a witness *in favour* of the verses; see below.

- **Eusebius**<sup>5</sup>. The reader is particularly urged to read Burgon for a proper discussion of this issue. A summary is presented here as a resource for readers without Burgon's book (yet).

Eusebius, in a collection of “Inquiries and Resolutions”, answers a question posed by Marinus:

*How is it, that, according to Matthew [28:1], the Saviour appears to have risen ‘in the end of the Sabbath;’ but, according to Mark [16:9], ‘early on the first day of the week’?*

Eusebius gives a twofold answer, firstly introducing someone who is for getting rid of the entire passage, using the following expressions:

- *(verses 9-end) are not met with in all the copies of S. Mark's Gospel*
- *the accurate copies end (at verse 8)*
- *almost all copies end (at verse 8)*
- *(verses 9-end) are met with seldom*
- *(verses 9-end) are met with only in some copies*
- *(verses 9-end) are certainly not met with in all copies*

Observe the ‘escalator’ of exaggerations, and the fictitious nature of this reasoning, which Eusebius dismisses as evading a gratuitous problem. Indeed, Eusebius proceeds to introduce someone who accepts both readings of Matthew and Mark as genuine. Eusebius then discusses a resolution of the apparent contradiction by re-punctuating Mark so that it reads “Now when He was risen, early the first day of the week He appeared...”.

Burgon points out that there really is no contradiction: Eusebius himself explains in the next page that ὄψε σαββάτων (*‘in the end of the Sabbath’* or better: *‘late on the Sabbath’* – *Matthew 28:1*) refers not to the evening of the Sabbath day, but to an advanced period of the ensuing night. Burgon suggests that Eusebius's “solutions” to Marinus are a quotation of an older writer, reproduced because of their ingenuity and interest. It is clear that Eusebius himself has nothing to say against the genuineness of the conclusion of Mark's Gospel. Burgon adds that it is freely conceded that there must have existed at the time of Eusebius many copies of Mark's Gospel which were without the concluding twelve verses, but there is nothing whatever in the circumstance to lead us to entertain one serious doubt as to the genuineness of these verses... – certainly not *in the evidence of Eusebius*.

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<sup>1</sup> [JWB-LT, p.39].

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-LT, p.40].

<sup>3</sup> [JWB-LT, p.41].

<sup>4</sup> [JWB-LT, p.41].

<sup>5</sup> [JWB-LT, pp.41-51].

- **Jerome**<sup>1</sup>. Jerome reproduces the Eusebian “Inquiry and Resolution”, substituting Hedibia for Marinus. This work is simply a translation, almost word for word. Jerome provides proper evidence that he holds the verses to be genuine. He gave them a place in the Vulgate. He quotes the conclusion of Mark's Gospel on more than one occasion.
- **Hesychius**<sup>2</sup>. The Homily in question is another reproduction of the Eusebian “Inquiry and Resolution”. At the end of his discourse, Hesychius quotes the 19<sup>th</sup> verse entire, without hesitation, in confirmation of one of his statements, and declares that the words were written by Mark.
- **Victor of Antioch**<sup>3</sup>. Victor transcribes (but with great licence) the writings of many Church Fathers, in particular Chrysostom and Eusebius. Victor's work contains the Eusebian “Inquiry and Resolution”, and he cites Eusebius by name. But after this, Victor offers his own testimony on the ending of Mark:

Yet we, at all events, inasmuch as in very many we have discovered it to exist, have, out of accurate copies, subjoined also the account of our Lord's Ascension, (following the words ‘for they were afraid,’) in conformity with the Palestinian exemplar of Mark which exhibits the Gospel verity: that is to say, from the words, ‘Now when [Jesus] was risen early the first day of the week,’ etc., down to ‘with signs following. Amen.’

Note: NA<sup>26</sup> *still maintains* Eusebius and Jerome as hostile witnesses to the last twelve verses of Mark!

Burton reveals more blunders of the critics in Ch. 8 of his book, e.g.

- A claimed *asterisk* in codex 757, supposedly denoting *spuriousness*<sup>4</sup> – is in fact a *cross*, denoting an annotation attesting that Mark 16:9-20 is *undoubtedly genuine*.
- A claimed *asterisk* in codex 756, supposedly denoting *spuriousness*, does not exist at all. This codex contains the same annotation as codex 757 attesting that Mark 16:9-20 is *undoubtedly genuine*.
- Scholz claimed codex 23, but had confused the manuscript numbering, so the reference, adopted by his successors, has to be cancelled<sup>5</sup>.
- Scholz claimed codex 41 against the ending of Mark; it has the opposite claim (i.e. that the accurate copies of Mark's Gospel contain these last twelve verses).
- Scholz claims codices 34 and 39, but they do not contain the claimed scholion of Severus of Antioch.
- Of 20 more codices cited, one has been cited in error, and the other nineteen contain mere copies of Victor of Antioch's commentary on Mark, *sixteen* of which contain the attestation that in *most of the accurate copies, and in particular the authentic Palestinian Codex, the last twelve verses of Mark's Gospel were found*.

Later critics adopted the blunders of earlier ones without checking. This explains something of how Tischendorf, Tregelles and others asserted that “there exist about 30 codices which state that from the more ancient and more accurate copies of the Gospel, the last twelve verses of Mark were absent”. Burton<sup>6</sup> shows that there is not so much as *one single codex* that contains such a scholion, and that 24 state *the exact reverse*.

Burton actually disposes of *every* alleged hostile patristic witness<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [JWB-LT, p.51].

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-LT, p.57].

<sup>3</sup> [JWB-LT, p.59].

<sup>4</sup> [UBS-Comm, p.123] .

<sup>5</sup> [JWB-LT, p.121].

<sup>6</sup> [JWB-LT, p.122].

<sup>7</sup> cf. [JWB-LT, p.135].

### ***The Lectionaries***

Burgon shows that lectionaries also provide decisive evidence in favour of the genuineness of the last twelve verses of Mark. All twelve verses are found in every known lectionary of the East<sup>1</sup>.

The oldest lectionary manuscripts happen to be of the 8th century, but it is known that the Eastern and Western lectionary systems were fully established by the 4th century, (if not long before)<sup>2</sup>. Cyril of Jerusalem (AD 348), Chrysostom and Augustine bear witness to the fact. Even earlier testimony is provided by Origen and Clemens Alexandrinus. Burgon argues that the lectionary system dates from Apostolic times<sup>3</sup>.

Now in the Eastern churches (Greek and Syrian) the ending of Mark's Gospel has a distinguished position: it was appointed to be read on Ascension Day, and on Sundays at Matins throughout the year, and daily in Easter week.

Burgon concludes on the lectionaries as follows<sup>4</sup>:

If "the last Twelve Verses" of S. Mark were *deservedly* omitted from certain Copies of his Gospel in the iv<sup>th</sup> century, utterly incredible is it that these same TWELVE VERSES should have been disseminated, by their (i.e. the Ante Nicean Fathers') authority, throughout Christendom; – read, by their command, in all the Churches; – selected, by their collective judgment, from the whole body of Scripture for the special honour of being listened to once and again at EASTER time, as well as on ASCENSION-DAY.

### ***Internal considerations***

The critics claim that the style and phraseology of these verses is not Mark's. Burgon compares the style with Mark 1:9-20 and sees no real difference of style.

The critics appeal to the words that occur in Mark 16:9-20 but not elsewhere in Mark. A text as short as Mark's Gospel will statistically have several such words in a passage of this length. When there is a dramatic change of subject – something as radical as the resurrection of the Lord – it is not surprising that a higher than average number of these words occur. The case of the occurrence of ὁ Κύριος (the Lord) is particularly striking. The critics claim it as a token of non-Marcian spuriousness. Burgon<sup>5</sup> shows how this title is reserved for the resurrected Lord.

He who at His circumcision was named "Jesus", He who at His baptism became "the Christ"; – the same, on the occasion of His Ascension into Heaven and Session at the Right Hand of God, – when (as we know) "all power had been given to Him in Heaven and in Earth" (Matth. 28:28), – is designated by His Name of *Dominion*; "the Lord" Jehovah...

How much more beautiful is the Divine Finger than what the critics prescribe! Burgon further exposes the fallacy of the critics' reasoning by citing two spurious supplements to the Gospel which do fulfil their conditions for a Marcan ending: one uses the name "Jesus" and the other "Christ". This is also the case with the apocryphal material given at the start of this study: the 'shorter ending' and the supplement in codex Washingtonensis.

### ***A possible cause of the corruption in the few ancient copies omitting the text***

The simple reason for the omission of the ending of Mark in a few ancient copies is that a lectionary reading ends at Mark 16:8. This was marked in manuscripts by the words τὸ τέλος (*The End*), and copyists accidentally or on purpose took this to mean the end of the Gospel<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [JWB-LT, p.210].

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-LT, p.203].

<sup>3</sup> [JWB-LT, p.207].

<sup>4</sup> [JWB-LT, p.211].

<sup>5</sup> [JWB-LT, p.185].

<sup>6</sup> cf. [JWB-LT, p.225].

## Chapter 9 Case Study of Luke 2:14

The evidence in this example is taken from Burgon<sup>1</sup>, where far greater detail can be found.

The traditional (and as will be seen, proper) reading is:

δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις θεῶ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία

**Glory to God in the highest  
and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.**

Manuscripts **Σ** A B D and the Vulgate and Gothic add one letter at the end, having the following reading<sup>2</sup>:

δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις θεῶ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας

**Glory to God in the highest  
and on earth peace to men of goodwill.**

This more difficult<sup>3</sup> reading than the traditional one is adopted in the text of NA<sup>26</sup>.

The NIV (*New International Version*) construes a meaning out of this:

**Glory to God in the highest  
and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests.**

Manuscripts **Σ**ABD are the 4 oldest manuscripts (containing the verse in question), and they enjoy the support of the Vulgate and Gothic. The case for their reading, on the evidence of manuscripts and versions, might be considered respectable, though still clearly inadmissible – in view of the massive contrary evidence (shown below).

The traditional reading is attested to by every other manuscript in existence (about 600 of them), including the uncials EGHKLMPSUVΓΔΛΞ, and also by every other version (including the 2nd century Peshitto). Codex A also contains the traditional reading in a hymn at the end of the Psalms. This is a vast amount of evidence, but no Greek manuscript is as old as **Σ**ABD. Can any more ancient evidence be found?

Here is where a little *Burgon magic* – based on solid, factual scholarship – turns the tables completely on **Σ**ABD. The traditional reading is further attested by *two* 3rd century Church Fathers, *nine* 4th century ones and *three* 5th century ones, representing about *eleven* manuscripts as old as or older than **Σ** B, *containing the traditional text*. Burgon gives full references, citing in total about 50 Church Fathers.

The modernist critics *claim* three Church Fathers who cite the reading of **Σ**ABD, but they have nothing on this side in Greek. In fact, where these Church Fathers do have Greek evidence, it turns against the modernists. They are:

- Irenaeus quoting in Latin in conformity with the Vulgate.
- Origen quoting in Latin in conformity with the Vulgate, but in Greek he quotes the traditional reading three times.
- Cyril of Jerusalem, writing in Greek. However, the editor of the book acknowledged having *altered the text* from the traditional reading as found in the manuscripts of Cyril's writings to conform to the **Σ**ABD reading...

Burgon, in order that there should be *no uncertainty whatever* on the true reading of Luke 2:14, gives an analysis of the readings of **Σ**ABCD in the 13 preceding and 1 succeeding verse. He says<sup>4</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> [JWB-LT, p.258] and [JWB-RR, p.41].

<sup>2</sup> NA<sup>26</sup> also claims W and “a few”; Scrivener, to whom W (032) may have been unknown, is that *no other manuscript whatever* agrees with **Σ**ABD adamant [Scrivener vol.2, p.345].

<sup>3</sup> [UBS-Comm, p.133].

<sup>4</sup> [JWB-RR, p.46].

If the old uncials are observed all to sing in tune throughout, hereabouts, well and good: but if on the contrary, their voices prove utterly discordant, *who* sees not that the last pretence has been taken away for placing *any confidence at all* in their testimony concerning the text of verse 14, turning as it does on *a single letter*?

Burgon shows that in these 14 verses **Ⲛ**ABCD are responsible for 56 'various readings': singly, for 41; in combination for 15. In Burgon's words, among their readings they contrive:

to omit 19 words:—to add 4:—to substitute 17:—to alter 10:—to transpose 24. Lastly, these five codices are observed ... to fall into ten different combinations: viz. **BⲚ** for 5 readings, **BD** for 2, **ⲚC**, **ⲚD**, **AC**, **ⲚBD**, **AⲚD**, **ABⲚD**, **BⲚCD**, **ABⲚCD**, for 1 each. A therefore, which stands alone twice, is found in combination 4 times;—C, which stands alone once<sup>1</sup>, is found in combination 4 times;—B, which stands alone 5 times, is found in combination 6 times;—**Ⲛ**, which stands alone 11 times, is found in combination 8 times;—D, which stands alone 22 times, is found in combination 7 times... And now,—for the last time we ask the question,—With what show of reason can the unintelligible εὐδοκίας (of **ⲚABD**) be upheld as genuine, in defiance of the whole body of Manuscripts, uncial and cursive,—the great bulk of the Versions,—and the mighty array of (upwards of fifty) Fathers exhibited above?

The importance of this case study, apart from establishing the genuine reading in this verse, is that it shows that *the four oldest manuscripts incorrectly exhibit the verse*. The principle is established that **antiquity alone is no guarantee for correctness**. **ⲚBD** in particular are shown to be untrustworthy, whilst a random lowly minuscule is shown to be true.

Burgon completes his study by showing how the error came about, but that is out of the scope of this booklet.

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<sup>1</sup> C is only available for comparison down to the end of verse 5. In the nine verses which have been lost, who shall say how many more eccentricities would have been discoverable?

## Chapter 10 Case Study of John 1:18

The traditional reading of John 1:18 is:

Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε· ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς, ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς, ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο.

**No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.**

The reading in NA<sup>26</sup> – the United Bible Societies ‘standard text’ – is:

Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε· μονογενὴς θεὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο.

[Literally] **No man has seen God at any time; only-begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.**

[Alternatively, – see [UBS-Comm] ] **No man has seen God at any time; only-begotten One, God, the One who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.**

The important difference between the traditional reading and the NA<sup>26</sup> reading is that the traditional text reads ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς (*the Only-begotten Son*), while NA<sup>26</sup> reads μονογενὴς θεὸς (*only-begotten God*). In the rest of this article we will refer to the *Huios* (υἱὸς, *son*) reading and the *Theos* (θεὸς, *God*) reading. There are some other variations in the manuscripts, such as the presence of the article before μονογενὴς.

In uncials, the difference between the readings is the difference between the words ΘΕΟC and ΥΙΟC, but these words were abbreviated to ΘC and ΥC. So the difference is in just one letter.

The NIV (*New International Version*) reads

**No-one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.**

This atrocious rendering neither translates nor implies -γενῆς (*begotten*). We now consider the evidence.

### ***The evidence***<sup>1</sup>

The evidence in favour of *Huios*:

- **Uncials:** A C<sup>3</sup> E F G H K M S U V W<sup>S</sup> X Δ Θ Λ Π Ψ 063  
*Note: W<sup>S</sup> contains a variation in the clause*
- **Minuscules:** All except number 33 (many hundreds of them)
- **Versions:** All Latin, Syriac<sup>Curetonian, Harkleian, Palestinian(=Jerusalem)</sup>, Armenian, Ethiopic<sup>Pell Platt and Praetorius</sup>, Georgian, Slavonic, Anglo-Saxon, Arabic

The evidence in favour of *Theos*:

- **Papyri/Uncials:** P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> B C L  
*Note: P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> from NA<sup>26</sup>, not otherwise verified*
- **Minuscules<sup>2</sup>:** 33 (*i.e. manuscript number 33*)

<sup>1</sup> From [Scrivener], [NA<sup>26</sup>], [UBS-GNT], [UBS-Comm]

<sup>2</sup> Scrivener in [Scrivener vol.2, p.358] states that manuscript 33 stands alone of the minuscules; we ask whether Aland can produce more (since he claims a few more). [UBS-GNT] does not exhibit any of the supposed few more, whereas it does go to the trouble of quoting 19 minuscules against its reading (though

- **Versions:** Coptic<sup>Bohairic</sup>, Syriac<sup>Peshitto, Harkleian margin</sup>, Ethiopic<sup>Rome</sup>

About 20 Church Fathers can be found on either side.

The reader may feel that  $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$   $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$  lend significant support to the *Theos* reading. However,  $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$   $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$  are of the erratic  $\mathfrak{K}$  B type of manuscript.  $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$  varies the phraseology in this very place, prefixing  $\acute{\omicron}$  to  $\mu\omicron\nu\omicron\gamma\epsilon\nu\eta\varsigma$   $\theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ .  $\mathfrak{K}$  has its own variation: it omits the words  $\acute{\omicron}$   $\acute{\omega}\nu$  that follow.  $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$  varies an expression in the previous verse (John 1:17), reading  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$   $\delta\grave{\epsilon}$  (*but grace*) instead of  $\acute{\eta}$   $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  (*grace*), in which it stands alone of the Greek manuscripts. We have already met  $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$  with its heretically corrupt reading of John 1:3 (Chapter 5 – in the section discussing “Causes of Corruption”). Yet corrupt manuscripts are often useful in a way because they often refute *other* corrupt readings. In the very next verse, (John 1:19),  $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$   $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$  both side with the Majority text and oppose B C\* and a few minuscules (and NA<sup>26</sup>!) which insert  $\pi\rho\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$   $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu$  (*to him*). Burgon makes a similar point in his imaginary visit back in time to Clemens of Alexandria in the second century where he shows how useful Clemens' text of Mark chapter 10 is, despite being corrupt, in witnessing in favour of the traditional text and against the modern critics<sup>1</sup>.

In weighing the evidence, the reader should consider whether the bulk of the uncials and almost all the minuscules could all be wrong, and take into account the corrupt pedigree that repeatedly comes into view for  $\mathfrak{K}$ , B and 33. We even have a brief account from the hand of Burgon just before he died explaining how the corruption happened.

### *The origin of the corruption*

Burgon<sup>2</sup> shows the origin of the corruption from *Huios* to *Theos*. The men who first systematically depraved the text of Scripture (the heresiarchs) were Basilides (flourished 134), Valentinus (fl. 140), and Marcion (fl. 150). Valentinus denied that “the Word” is also “the Son” of God. So Valentinus produced his own version of John's gospel (in much the same way that Marcion did with Luke's gospel). Burgon devotes a chapter to deliberate corruptions of Scripture in the Gnostic period, many traces of which are evident in some corrupt manuscripts extant in our time.

The traditional *Huios* reading testifies to the Sonship of Christ. The *Theos* reading is claimed by Carson<sup>3</sup> to be a witness to the deity of Christ, and so purportedly supporting the claim that the NIV has the highest number of attestations to the deity of Christ. However, the evidence leads us to conclude that

- NA<sup>26</sup> contains a corrupt reading of John 1:18. Some versions concurring in the error are:

NIV, NEB<sup>Footnote</sup>, Moffatt<sup>(Combines  $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ )</sup>, GNB<sup>(Combines  $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ )</sup>, NKJV<sup>Footnote</sup>, RSV<sup>Footnote</sup>.

- Carson's table of deity-supporting verses is misleading. It is no good robbing Christ of His Sonship, then quoting a mangled translation, all in order to supply a non-genuine attestation to Christ's deity. Two wrongs do not make a right! We will have Christ's deity from genuine Scripture and genuine Scripture only (e.g. 1 Timothy 3:16, which, incidentally, Carson omits from his table).

The issue is not a question of whether there is anything wrong with the notion of a “born God”. Any tampering with Scripture *could* have disastrous results, as man is simply not competent to re-word God's refined Word, or to foresee the consequences. As previously stated, Psalm 12:6 reads

**The words of the LORD are pure words,  
Silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.**

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there are hundreds more). [NA<sup>26</sup>], [UBS-GNT] and [UBS-Comm] generally go to great lengths to exhibit evidence favourable to their case – especially when they know it is weak – and the UBS does admit of doubt in this verse by using the symbol {B}. Indeed, A. Wikgren parts company with the other editors and states that there is “at least a great deal of doubt”. We also note that the list of uncials in favour of *Huios* is in fact far more extensive than is possible to determine from [NA<sup>26</sup>].

<sup>1</sup> [Burgon-RR, pp.326-331].

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-CC, pp.215-218].

<sup>3</sup> [Carson, p.64].

If the present author were challenged to explain what is wrong with the *teaching* that Christ is a “born God”, he would not deny the facts that

- Christ is God
- Christ was born

However, if Scripture chooses not to co-locate these notions in the same clause, there may be a reason. Scripture “likes”, as it were, the combination of *to be born, Son* and *to give*, bringing out the deity aspect separately, later. First the gift, then the full import.

[Isaiah 9:6, KJV] **For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.**

The Sonship of Christ is of course a theme throughout Scripture (e.g. Psalm 2:7, John 1:14, John 3:16, Hebrews 1:5, Hebrews 5:5, 1 John 4:9). Scripture certainly excludes the suggestion that the birth of Christ in any way implied that He came into existence (Psalm. 90:2, 93:2; Isaiah 44:6, 48:12; Micah 5:2; Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 1:8, 1:11, 1:17, 22:13). He has always existed; He transcends time.

[Isaiah 43:10] **You *are* my witnesses, says the LORD, and My Servant Whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I *am* He. Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me.**

## Chapter 11 Case Study of Colossians 2:18

The traditional reading is:

**Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,**

The Nestle Aland text (NA<sup>26</sup>) on which so many modern translations, including the NIV (New International Version), are based, does not have the word for *not* in *which he has not seen*. The NIV proceeds to reinterpret the word for *intruding* in a radical way. Let us take a look at what is going on:

The Received Text<sup>1</sup>, which is in line with the Authorized Version, reads:

μηδεις ὑμας καταβραβευετω θελων εν ταπεινοφροσυνη και θρησκεια των αγγελων,  
α μη εωρακεν εμβατευων, εικη φυσιουμενος υπο του νοος της σαρκος αυτου,

The Nestle-Aland / United Bible Societies (UBS) text<sup>2</sup>, reads:

μηδεις ὑμας καταβραβευετω θελων εν ταπεινοφροσυνη και θρησκεια των αγγελων,  
α εωρακεν εμβατευων, εικη φυσιουμενος υπο του νοος της σαρκος αυτου,

**Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he has seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,**

The difference between εωρακεν (he has seen) and εωρακεν is a matter of spelling and need not concern us.

The difference between α μη εωρακεν (*things which he has not seen*) and α εωρακεν (*things which he has seen*) is more serious, as one is the opposite of the other. What are the grounds cited by the NA<sup>26</sup> critical apparatus? The first-hand manuscript and version evidence *as cited* (but deceitfully incompletely so) is:

In favour of “not”:

- **Greek manuscripts:** C F G Ψ ℞ (F and G using ουκ not μη as the negative)
- **Versions:** none
- **Church Fathers:** Jerome (some manuscripts)

Against “not”:

- **Greek manuscripts:** P<sup>46</sup> K A B D I 6 33 1739
- **Versions:** b Vg<sup>mss</sup>, Coptic
- **Church Fathers:** Origen, Ambrosiaster, Jerome (some manuscripts), Speculum (Pseudo Augustine).

The *manuscript* evidence *against* “not” can be presumed to be exhibited correctly here; Burgon, in a brief discussion<sup>3</sup>, admits to 6 or 7 manuscripts, without naming them. The *manuscript* evidence in favour of “not” is largely concealed in the symbol ℞. Uncial manuscripts K P also contain the

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from [TBS-NT].

<sup>2</sup> Taken from [NA<sup>26</sup>] / [UBS-GNT].

<sup>3</sup> [JWB-RR, p.356<sup>footnote</sup>].



- NA<sup>26</sup> should be explicitly exhibiting the Vulgate as attesting to μη̇.
- NA<sup>26</sup> should be explicitly exhibiting the Syriac as attesting to μη̇.
- NA<sup>26</sup> should be explicitly exhibiting a host of other versions as attesting to μη̇.
  - NA<sup>26</sup> has concealed evidence witnessing against its choice of text.
  - The traditional reading (*which he has not seen*) is the best-supported reading (based on manuscript and version evidence).

### ***Patristic evidence***

Burgon<sup>1</sup> cites the following Church Fathers on the traditional side:

Irenaeus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Chrysostom, Theodoret, John Damascene.

Against the traditional side, Burgon found no Fathers at all:

for Origen once has μη̇ [*not*] ... and once has it not ... ; and once is doubtful ... Jerome and Augustine both take notice of the diversity of reading, *but only to reject it*.

Relying on Burgon, we see again concerning patristic evidence that:

- NA<sup>26</sup> has concealed some evidence witnessing against its choice of text (Jerome and Augustine) – and failed to advert to much more.
- The traditional reading (*which he has not seen*) is by far the best-supported reading among the Fathers.

### ***The next question***

If we omit μη̇, does the sentence make sense? Does it make sense to say:

“intruding into those things which he *has* seen”?

Surely the answer is “no”. Could it be that the word for *intruding* has been translated incorrectly?

The word is ἐμβατεύω. The root verb is ἐμβαίνω (to step in, upon etc.). Liddell and Scott's dictionary gives *only* the following two meanings for ἐμβατεύω

- I. *to step in, on, to frequent, haunt a place, to set foot upon* of tutelary gods.
- II. *to enter on, come into possession of*.

The word is used by Josephus<sup>2</sup> referring to mount Sinai, saying: “The shepherds not daring to intrude upon it” or “the shepherds not venturing to invade it” (οὐ τολμώντων ἐμβατεύειν εἰς αὐτὸ τῶν ποιμένων)<sup>3</sup>. Welch<sup>4</sup> draws attention to this example.

The Septuagint contains the word in Joshua 19:49, 19:51 in the sense of coming into possession of or inheriting the land, translating נחל (to inherit) and קלק (to divide) – but for the latter maybe reading תלל (to walk). In this case, we have an example of the second meaning given by Liddell and Scott<sup>5</sup>.

It is of course instructive to see what the Vulgate and Peshitto translators made of ἐμβατεύω in the very verse we are considering, Colossians 2:18. The Latin *ambulo* means primarily [Lewis & Short] *to walk* or *travel*. The verb appears to be transitive (“*quae non vidit*” being its object). This is perfectly possible – see [Lewis & Short] – and the meaning is *to navigate, pass over*. This meaning is in line with “step into”, “intrude”.

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<sup>1</sup> [JWB-RR, p.356]

<sup>2</sup> Jewish Antiquities, Book II, line 265, alternatively designated by Book II, Chapter 12, line 1

<sup>3</sup> [Jos-IV, p.280]

<sup>4</sup> [Welch, p.223].

<sup>5</sup> [Liddell & Scott].

The Syriac translation of ἐμβρατεύω is ܠܘܘܐ, which Köbert<sup>1</sup> gives as *audeo* or *adorior*, which mean *to dare* and *to attack; to undertake*. “To attack” is not appropriate here; we obtain a flavour of each of the other meanings with *to venture into*. Again, the meaning is clearly in line with “step into”, “intrude”.

Arndt and Gingrich<sup>2</sup> give an additional meaning of *to go into detail about*. For examples of this usage, they refer to 2 Maccabees 2:30 and Philo Plant. 80 Wendl. v.1. The latter is a variant reading of an exegetical commentary. Even the non-variant text does not appear to be available on the web<sup>3</sup>. If Arndt and Gingrich find themselves constrained to such an obscure text, they are hardly making a strong case for their arguments.

Is Arndt and Gingrich's additional meaning a genuine one? We will investigate from the Septuagint... The context of 2 Maccabees 2:30 is the history of the purification of the temple. Comparing this with a master builder building a new house, we read of the need *stand upon every point*<sup>4</sup> or *to occupy the ground*<sup>5</sup> of (plans for?) a new house / the temple.

Now the sense here is not *to report back on every detail*, but *to investigate every detail*. These are very different meanings. The meaning *to investigate every detail* is more or less in line with the meaning of ἐμβρατεύω that we have already seen: *to step into*. And that, I submit, is the meaning in 2 Maccabees.

But the NIV perverts the meaning: *to go into detail* in the sense of *to report back in detail*. This meaning is something new, – what has it got to do with *stepping into?* – and is not sanctioned by the Maccabean reference. There is a world of difference between a detective being told to *investigate in detail* a crime or to *report in detail* on a crime!

If the only remaining reference for the meaning *to go into detail about* is an obscure variant reading of Philo, then the case seems to be very weak indeed, if not hopeless.

Arndt and Gingrich remark that the interpretation of ἃ ἑώρακεν is much disputed. This is hardly surprising if the proposed meaning is (virtually) unattested and if ἃ ἑώρακεν isn't the real text anyway.

### Summary

- The traditional reading (*which he has not seen*) is the best-supported reading, but is rejected by modern critics
- NA<sup>26</sup> has concealed evidence witnessing against its own choice of text
- The exceptional translation of ἐμβρατεύω, which is necessitated by the NA<sup>26</sup> text, is extremely suspicious.

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<sup>1</sup> [Köbert].

<sup>2</sup> [Arndt & Gingrich].

<sup>3</sup> See [Hivolda].

<sup>4</sup> [Brenton-LXX]

<sup>5</sup> Revised Version

## Chapter 12 Case Study of 1 John 5:7b-8a

The reading in the Received Text is:

<sup>7</sup>ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσὶν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ πατήρ, ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα· καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἓν εἰσὶ. <sup>8</sup>καὶ τρεῖς εἰσὶν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῆ, τὸ Πνεῦμα, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ αἷμα· καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσιν.

**<sup>7</sup>For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. <sup>8</sup>And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one.**

The passage from **in heaven** to **in earth** (called the *Johannine Comma*) is absent in every Greek manuscript in the world except numbers 629 (=Scrivener's Acts 162) and 61 (of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century respectively) and two manuscripts with the passage in the margin written by a later hand<sup>1</sup>. The passage is also absent in almost all early versions (so including the Peshitto) except the Latin.

The fact that it is present in early Latin manuscripts cannot be considered to outweigh its absence in all the other the Greek manuscripts (Scrivener lists 6 Uncials and claims 193 minuscules) – distributed over all centuries and all parts of Christendom.

The genuine reading of this passage is therefore:

<sup>7</sup>ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσὶν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες· τὸ πνεῦμα, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ αἷμα· καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσιν.

**For there are three that bear record: the spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one.**

Here is how the Johannine Comma came into the Received Text<sup>2</sup>. Erasmus prepared from manuscripts that were to hand a Greek text, which was to become the basis of the Received Text. Early editions of this text did not contain the Johannine Comma, as it was absent in all Erasmus's manuscripts. Various people objected, but they could only produce Latin manuscripts as evidence of the Johannine Comma. Erasmus publicly declared that if any *Greek* manuscript could be found containing the passage, he would insert it in his revision of the text. And, lo and behold, a hitherto unknown manuscript (now number 61) suddenly appeared between the publication of Erasmus' second (1519) and third (1522) editions of his N.T. Clearly, Erasmus realized he had been tricked, but fulfilled his promise in 1522.

It appears, then, that dishonest men had a Greek manuscript prepared to order from the Latin. We see, as we might expect, that God's truth is not upheld by deceitful practices. It is sad that such an incident has marred the credentials of what is otherwise such an excellent (though still *not quite* perfect) text.

It is sometimes claimed that omitting the Johannine Comma leaves an ungrammatical sentence, with the masculine οἱ τρεῖς (*these three*) referring to three neuter nouns (*spirit, water and blood*). However, it is acceptable to use a masculine adjective when several *different* nouns occur. (It would not be acceptable in a phrase referring to, say, three spirits). Correct grammar is instinctive to native speakers, and is not a memory test on the genders of many preceding words, let alone on the words that are still to come in the sentence. A similar “grammatical difficulty” actually occurs *in the Johannine Comma itself* at the beginning of verse 8:

καὶ τρεῖς εἰσὶν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῆ (followed by 3 neuter nouns)

**and there are three (masc.) that bear witness (masc.) on earth** (followed by 3 neuter nouns)

<sup>1</sup> Codex 88 (=Scrivener's Acts 83), Codex 635 (=Scrivener's Acts 173). See [Scrivener, Vol.II, p.402; Vol.I, p.200].

<sup>2</sup> See [Scrivener, v.1, p.200].

If the grammatical rule is to be strictly applied, why do we not see the neuter form of the numeral, verb and participle, as follows:

καὶ τρία ἐστὶ τὰ μαρτυροῦντα ἐν τῇ γῆ

**and there are three (neut.) that bear witness (neut.) on earth** (*followed by 3 neuter nouns*)

We see that the counter-argument based on grammatical considerations does not stand up.

Let this sad incident not detract from the great value of the Received Text. The reader of the Received Text or translations based on it can easily mark up a correction on the rare occasions that one presents itself. The same cannot be said by any stretch of the imagination of the modern critical texts, which are intrinsically corrupt throughout.

## Chapter 13 Case Study of James 1:1

There are three ways in which an English Bible may have become corrupt:

- through misreading the manuscripts (as in the case of codex A in 1 Tim. 3:16)
- through selecting corrupt manuscripts for the underlying Greek text
- through licentious translation

In this and the subsequent studies we give a few examples of the third of these ways.

The text of James 1:1 reads:

**James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in dispersion, greeting.**

In the *Good New Bible*, this verse reads as follows:

**From James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ: Greetings to all God's people scattered over the whole world.**

Now the reader may or may not agree with the *interpretation* given by the Good News Bible. It certainly changes the face-value meaning. The student of scriptural dispensations, who may be investigating possible distinctions between Jewish and Gentile spheres of blessing, will not be helped by the replacement of a genuine Jewish reference by a fabricated all-embracing one.

But interpretation is another issue. Interpretation and exposition have their place in hermeneutical and expository books. The issue here is whether any one interpretation should be allowed to replace God's inspired words and be presented as the *authentic Word of God*. And the answer must be *no*.

In this study, then, we see a fabricated *removal* of what is effectively 'Israel' from the genuine text of Scripture. In our next study, we will see a fabricated *insertion* of 'Israel' into the genuine text.

## Chapter 14 Case Study of Ephesians 3:6

The text reads:

**That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel:**

The NIV reads:

**The mystery is that though the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise of Christ Jesus.**

Where does the expression **with Israel** come from? It is not in any manuscript, but has been supplied by the translators<sup>1</sup>. Note that **with Israel** is not italicised, which is the practice of the Authorised Version to indicate additional words supplied for the sake of English. Other interpretations might be: **without Israel, with Christ, with each other**. Many bible students regard the presence or absence of Israel as God's people as a key to the identification of 'dispensations'. A corruption such as the above interferes with a proper study, whatever the student's views. The correctness or not of the interpretation is a secondary issue, belonging to expository books, and should in no way result in *adding to Scripture*, passing off some man's (or woman's) thoughts as those of God. If the important word '*Israel*' can be inserted out of the blue, then what is to stop *anything* being added to Scripture when it takes the translator's fancy? What is to stop the word 'Israel' being added or removed *anywhere*? The floodgates are open...

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<sup>1</sup> This fact was kindly confirmed (by e-mail to the author) by Scott Munger of the International Bible Society.



No explanation of the true translation should be *required*. Nevertheless, there is an interesting explanation, expounded in a talk by Oscar Baker, which we gladly supply. It is simply this: we are dealing in 1 Samuel not with Saul's natural years but with his years after he was ***born again*** (cf. John 3:7). These are his years in God's reckoning. These are the years from when, and as long as, he has the “spirit of the Lord” and has become “another man” (1 Samuel 10:6).

## Chapter 16 Case Study of John 1:1

Occasionally an aberrant translation can be theoretically justified, but is so much out of line with the plain meaning and attested usage, that it must be rejected.

The true reading of John 1:1 is:

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

Some versions translate the final word for God (in uncials  $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ , in minuscules  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ , =theos) as if it were an adjective. This is technically possible, but it is unnatural, unclear in meaning, and out of line with New Testament usage. The New Testament word for *divine* is  $\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ , (Acts 17:29, 2 Peter 1:3,4) not  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ .

Moffatt is a case in point; his translation reads:

**The Logos existed in the very beginning,  
the Logos was with God,  
the Logos was divine.**

Worse still is the Jehovah's Witnesses' New World Translation:

**In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.**

This rendering, apart from producing an anticlimax, and contradicting Isaiah 45:21, –

**there is no God else besides Me**

fails to take account of some rules of Greek grammar.

The justification given for the rendering ‘**a god**’ is that there is no definite article<sup>1</sup> with the word  $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ , and that this corresponds to an indefinite article in English. Firstly, we rejoin that no definite article is required with this word (as in English). The use of  $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$  without an article, but meaning “God”, is common enough (e.g. Hebrews 3:12, 1 Timothy 3:16), as is the anarthrous use of  $\text{אֱלֹהִים}$  (Elohim =*God*) in the Old Testament (e.g. Genesis 1:1). The translation “God” is well-established and perfectly natural. What in the context is there to suggest a need to depart from it here?

Secondly, and more importantly, the New World Translation fails to perceive the fact that the word **God** in the clause “and the Word was **God**” is in an unusual position in the Greek. This word **God** is the predicate of the verb *to be*, preceding the verb, and by a grammatical rule it is deprived of its definite article in form, but thereby acquires great stress: “and God (Himself) it is that the Word is”.

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<sup>1</sup> The definite article in English is the word ‘the’; the indefinite article is the word ‘a’.

## Chapter 17 Textual Critics – and some of their Theology

The Modern school are almost always in favour of Minority (⌘ B + a few) readings. We have shown a fair sample of their errors in our studies.

Here are some of the most famous names, with some of their theology.

- Karl Lachmann (1793-1851)
- Samuel Prideaux Tregelles (1813-1875)
- Constantin von Tischendorf (1815-1874)
- Brooke Foss Westcott (1825-1901)  
(John 17:22) Viewed from another point of sight it is the revelation of the divine in man realized in and through Christ. [*The Gospel According to St John: The Authorized Version with Introduction and Notes*, p.246].
- Fenton John Anthony Hort (1828-1892)  
I have no repugnance to the primitive idea of a ransom paid to Satan... anything is better than the notion of a ransom paid to the father. [*Life and Letters of Dr Hort, Vol. I, p.428*].
- Kurt Aland (20th cent.)  
1 Peter and 2 Peter ... were clearly written by two different authors. [*The Text of the New Testament*, p.49].
- Bruce Metzger (20th cent.)  
... out of a matrix of myth, legend and history, there appeared the earliest written form of the story of the saving acts of God from Creation to the conquest of the Promised Land, an account of which later in modified form became a part of Scripture. [*Introduction to the Old Testament*].

The Traditional school is in favour of majority evidence:

- John William Burgon (1813-1888): calls Christ the Holy One, the incarnate Jehovah, our great High Priest, our Lord. [*Causes of Corruption*, p.240].
- Frederick Henry Ambrose Scrivener (19th cent.)  
When God was pleased to make known to man His purpose of redeeming us through the death of His Son,... [*A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, p.1].

Burgon and Scrivener often provide detailed telling evidence that is concealed by the writings of the opposite school.

## Chapter 18 Conclusions

When comparing the studies, we see that the *same* uncials are at fault – especially Ⲙ B and D, and we see the Majority text vindicated again and again. The rogue minuscule 33 (= Paul 17) – Tregelles'/Aland's “Queen of the Minuscules<sup>1</sup>” – is also repeatedly condemned.

Although we have only given a sample of the textual differences, bear in mind that there are *hundreds* of differences (or, counting every word that is different, *thousands* of differences) between the traditional text and the modern editions. Many of the differences are *omissions* in the new editions, and so tend to escape notice except when one is scrutinizing the text. Burgon, in more than 1500 pages of his 4 text-critical books referenced, deals with many hundreds of instances. In almost all cases, many being of great doctrinal importance, the traditional text is the overwhelmingly best-supported reading.

Having established the errors of (Ⲙ B + a few) on the basis of *evidence*, we note that:

*the Minority readings are often detrimental to the exaltation of Christ*

– e.g. Matthew 1:16, Luke 2:33 (Chapter 1), John 1:3 (Chapter 5), 1 Timothy 3:16 (Chapter 7).

It also appears probable that the early rogue manuscripts have their origin in Egypt of around the third century, and that Gnostic teaching is responsible for many of their deprivations.

If the attack is not by means of Minority readings then it may be by translation, as in John 1:1 (Chapter 16). Yet another method of attack, which we mention in passing, is that of ‘conjectural emendation’, which in plain English means altering Scripture without a particle of evidence. An example is furnished by Acts 20:28, concerning the ‘**church of God, which He purchased with His own blood**’. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Dr Hort proposed a conjectural emendation to **the ‘church of God, which He purchased with the blood of His own Son**’<sup>2</sup>. No known manuscript contains the word for ‘Son’. This exercise in fantasy has been revived in the CEV (*Contemporary English Version*), where it is in the main text. In various ways, then, we see the most explicit declarations of the Deity of our Lord under attack.

We also note that the evidence given by the textual critics in favour of Minority readings is frequently very seriously faulty. The studies on 1 Timothy 3:16 and the Ending of Mark are examples of this.

Many modern Bible translations are made from a Greek text (often NA<sup>26</sup>) that is based on the corrupt manuscripts. So the reader must beware.

### What version should you use?

The author recommends:

- Check your version against benchmarks (e.g. 1 Timothy 3:16, Ending of Mark).
- The *King James Version* (also known as the *Authorized Version*) is based on the Received Text.
- The *Companion Bible* contains the *King James Text*, and has good explanations of the meanings of the Greek and Elizabethan English words, – but it does not fully recognize the invalidity of ‘the texts’, i.e. the Greek texts by Westcott and Hort etc. which were contemporary with it.
- Many Greek-English Interlinears are based on the Received Text and provide a fairly good literal translation (see references).
- The *New King James Version* (also known as the *Revised Authorized Version*) is a possibility. It isn't quite what it claims to be – some readings are not taken from the same underlying text as the *King James Version*<sup>3</sup>, and the footnotes cast suspicion on the text, by quoting translations of

<sup>1</sup> [JWB-TT, p.85], where it is called a *mauvaise plaisanterie* (bad joke), and [Aland, p.136].

<sup>2</sup> see [JWB-RR, p.353]

<sup>3</sup> For example in the Old Testament the translators appear to have been willing to deviate from the Masoretic text (which the *King James Version* followed very faithfully) and to adopt suggestions made in the critical

the United Bible Societies text, which is Minority-text based. However, the *New King James Version* text is in principle based on the Received Text.

- The Trinitarian Bible Society publishes the Greek Text underlying the *King James Version*.

In any Bible based on the Received Text, the author suggests striking out 1 John 5:7b-8a. On the other hand, Bibles based on Minority readings are endemically corrupt and cannot feasibly be rectified by marking up corrections.

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apparatus of the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia [BHS]. This may lead to adopting a virtually unattested reading, as in Isaiah 38:3, where מוֹטְרָהּ is replaced by מוֹטְרָהּה, or to a reading of the Septuagint being adopted, as in Isaiah 58:3 where עֲצֵבֵי יָקָם is effectively changed to עֲבֵדֵי יָקָם, bringing it into agreement with the Septuagint (ὑπερχειρίους ὑμῶν).

## Appendix: An Answer to Carson's Chart

The chart we refer to is to be found on page 64 of *The King James Version Debate – A Plea for Realism* by Professor D.A.Carson, published by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. The chart is reproduced from an article by Victor Perry. It purports to show “which versions call Jesus ‘God’ ”. A check (✓) means the version in question does directly ascribe deity to Jesus: a cross (×) means it does not”. A part of the table is shown below.

	John 1:1	John 1:18	Acts 20:28	Rom 9:5	2 Thes 1:12	Titus 2:13	Heb 1:8	2 Peter 1:1
KJV	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×	✓	×
RSV	✓	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	✓
RSV <sup>margin</sup>		✓	×	✓		×	×	×
NIV	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	✓
NIV <sup>margin</sup>		×	×	×	✓			
Moffatt	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓

The full table contains rows for various other versions and their footnotes (NEB, Goodspeed, TEV, MLB, NWT), but the details of these are not essential in this article. Note how good the NIV *looks* in this light; but it is not good, as we shall show.

Professor Carson argues that in all the above translations (except the NWT – *New World Translation*) the doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ is affirmed. This may be true, but one could also argue that a reader taking a small selection of modern Bibles will find *that for every single verse above, the doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ is cast in doubt somewhere*. This state of affairs, *for which there is no justification whatever*, can only lead to uncertainty and confusion on the part of the poor believer. We proceed to explain.

### **The table is based on a misguided approach.**

Carson argues that *all the traditions are orthodox* [p.65, 1.21]. But only one can be the true, God-breathed reading. Others, even if ‘orthodox’, must be man's perversion of it, and they *have no place in further argument in all*. Yet Carson uses true and false readings in his table, marked with ticks or crosses, *not* according to whether they are the true reading or not, but according to whether they purportedly support a particular doctrine. Whilst we wholeheartedly endorse the doctrine of the deity of Christ, we only want it where God has put it, and we will not trade other precious truths (such as Christ's sonship) for an imitation of it. A true table should be based on *which versions support the true reading*. This we provide at the conclusion of this article.

### **Footnotes can cause doubt where none exists**

If in a version a reading is marked in any way as doubtful, then the whole reading loses its value entirely, as no-one can build doctrine upon it. Anyone arguing on the basis of the main text can be countered by reference to the footnote. So when, for example, the NIV footnote offers an alternative to the text in Acts 20:28 and Romans 9:5, it undermines the whole reading. Only a version *without the footnote* genuinely supports the main reading. A footnote giving textual alternatives in an ordinary Bible is only justified where there are reasonable grounds for doubt.

### **Discussion of the verses in question**

We discuss the verses in question, with particular reference to the NIV, as we wish to present a fairer summary of the merits of the NIV at the conclusion of this article.

#### **John 1:18**

The NIV reading is *incorrect*, and deserves a cross, not a tick. See separate study (Chapter 10).

## Acts 20:28

We cannot favour the NIV with a tick in these verses because of the unnecessary doubt caused by the footnotes. The case for the true reading of Acts 20:28 is given below.<sup>1</sup>

KJV Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.

NIV<sup>foot</sup> Keep watch over yourselves, and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of the Lord, which he bought with his own blood.

## Romans 9:5

Again, the NIV does not deserve with a tick in these verses because of the unnecessary doubt caused by the footnotes. The case for the main reading of Romans 9:5 is a matter of translation, or rather punctuation, rather than manuscript evidence, and it stands on its own merits. Burgon calls the manipulations “dishonest shifts”.<sup>2</sup>

KJV Whose *are* the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

NIV<sup>foot-1</sup> Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is over all. God be for ever praised! Amen

NIV<sup>foot-2</sup> Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ. God, who is over all, be for ever praised! Amen

## 2 Thessalonians 1:12

Greek: ... κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

KJV: ... according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NIV: ... according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NIV<sup>foot</sup>: ... according to the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.

There is a certain amount of ambiguity in the construction. We consider the case with Titus 2:13 under the heading of 2 Peter 1:1.

<sup>1</sup> The evidence is divided among three main readings, but it can be stated that there is preponderating evidence for *the church of God*, and certainly for a clear assertion of the deity of Christ. The evidence is

	Uncials	Minuscules	Versions	Fathers
The church of God	ⲚB 056 0142	~19 cursives incl 614 1175 2495 + 8 ex silentio (Scrivener -?). <i>Received text</i>	vg sy <sup>p,h</sup> bo	a majority of Fathers cf. Ignatius AD 107
The church of the Lord and God	C <sup>3</sup> HLP	Ⲛ [100+ later? cursives] θεου, many have του θεου	slav	<i>no early Fathers</i> Theophylact...
The church of the Lord:	ⲡ <sup>74</sup> ACD <sup>*</sup> ESΨ (ⲡ <sup>74</sup> Ψ <i>not verified</i> )	~16 cursives incl. 33 36 453 945 1739	sy <sup>hmg</sup> co	a minority of Fathers

References: [JWB-TT p287] [Scriv v2 p375] [TxtComm] [NA<sup>26</sup>] [JAM-KJVD, p.64] [JAM-EMAV, p.23]. 056 0142 and extra cursives from [JAM-KJVD], but not in NA<sup>26</sup>.

Scrivener: Received text is pretty sure to be correct. On *Lord and God*: It is plainly a device for reconciling the two principal readings... It asserts the divinity of the Saviour almost as unequivocally as θεου could do alone.

<sup>2</sup> [JWB-RR, p.211].

## Titus 2:13

- Greek: προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης  
τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,  
KJV: looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our  
Saviour Jesus Christ;  
NIV: while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and  
Saviour, Jesus Christ.

There is a certain amount of ambiguity in the construction. We consider the case with 2 Thessalonians 1:12 under the heading of 2 Peter 1:1.

## Hebrews 1:8

- Greek: πρὸς δὲ τὸν υἱόν, Ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ Θεός εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος· ῥάβδος  
εὐθύτητος ἢ ῥάβδος τῆς βασιλείας σου  
KJV: But **unto** the Son *He saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of  
righteousness *is* the sceptre of Thy kingdom...  
NIV: but **about** the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and  
righteousness will be the sceptre of your kingdom...”

Now the preposition πρὸς (pros) + accusative means **to** (as in John 2:3), not **about**. If this verse is only **about** the Son, then it is not clear that the Son is being spoken to, and that the words are directly applicable to Him. Perhaps they could conceivably be **to** someone else **about** the Son? Why this weakening? This distortion could be the first step to more serious damage.<sup>1</sup> We decline to give the NIV a tick for its slipshod rendering.

## 2 Peter 1:1

- Greek RT: Σίμων Πέτρος δούλος καὶ ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῖς ἰσότημον ἡμῶν  
λαχοῦσι πίστιν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ  
Χριστοῦ·  
Greek M: Συμεων Πέτρος δούλος καὶ ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῖς ἰσότημον ἡμῶν  
λαχοῦσι πίστιν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ·  
KJV: Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like  
precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:  
NIV: Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through  
righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as  
ours:

The Greek Received Text (RT) – but apparently not the Majority text, which is taken from [Hodges] – separates out the two terms, using ἡμῶν (*of us, =our*) twice, although the first has dropped out in the KJV. The critical editions do not have the second ἡμῶν. This explains why the NIV renders as it does. As with 2 Thessalonians 1:12 and Titus 2:13, there is a certain amount of (perhaps deliberate) ambiguity.

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<sup>1</sup> The *New World Translation* of Jehovah's Witnesses reads:

but **with reference to** the Son: “God is your throne forever, and the scepter of your kingdom is the scepter of uprightness...”

Moffatt is similar. Here, the NT vocative usage ὁ Θεός (O God) has also been obliterated—a far more serious distortion that seems to more easily take root when the preposition is mistranslated. A vocative lies uneasily after *about* or *with reference to*. However, we do not impute the gross errors of the *New World Translation* to the NIV. But we do warn against any deviation from the truth.

## Compare

2Thes 1:12	κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν	καὶ Κυρίου	Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
Titus 2:13	τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ	καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν	Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
2Peter 1:1 <sup>MR</sup>	ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν	καὶ σωτῆρος	Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
2Peter 1:1 <sup>RT</sup>	ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν	καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν	Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
Eph 1:2	καὶ εἰρήνῃ ἀπὸ Θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν	καὶ Κυρίου	Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

The *Titus 2:13* construction inclines perhaps more to being deity-supporting, since *God-and-Saviour* is less broken apart. That it is to some extent ambiguous is admitted by modernists too from the fact that the RV, RSV and NEB all give the alternative in the margin. The *2 Thessalonians 1:12* / *2 Peter 1:1*<sup>MR</sup> / *Ephesians 1:2* construction is to all intents and purposes identical. Now that *this* is ambiguous is effectively admitted by the NIV, which is inconsistent enough to be deity-supporting for 2 Peter 1:1 absolutely, for 2 Thessalonians 1:12 in the footnote, and not for Ephesians 1:2 at all. The KJV is deity-supporting in none, but perhaps it may be forgiven under such ambiguous circumstances? Perhaps a footnote is in its place here. Perhaps the best translation would bring out the ambiguity with an expression such as “of the God and Saviour Jesus Christ of ours”. In the scoring for the Titus verse, we (generously, I feel) credit the NIV with a full tick, while to the disadvantage of the KJV giving it a half-tick (though it has really done nothing wrong), despite the verse's ambiguity. However, we propose to limit the contest there and to omit the other verses as being ambiguous, and as such not the best place to go for a definite statement of the Lord's deity.

## Important missing references on the deity:

### Philippians 2:6

Greek: ὃς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων, οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ

KJV: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

NIV: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped.

NIV<sup>foot</sup>: Who, being in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped.

We protest at the NIV rendering of the second half of the verse. The KJV makes it plain that Christ can claim to be equal with God. The NIV is unclear, and at worst could be interpreted as though Christ had the goodness not to grasp at being equal to God (from a position of being lower than God).

### 1 Tim 3:16

- see separate study, which completely vindicates the KJV and exposes the NIV.

### 1 John 5:20

Both the KJV and the NIV are correct.

KJV And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

NIV We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

**A truer representation: which version is single-mindedly *correct***

	John 1:1	John 1:18	Acts 20:28	Rom 9:5	Titus 2:13	Heb 1:8	Phil 2:6	1 Tim 3:16	1 John 5:20
KJV	✓	✓	✓	✓	1/2	✓	✓	✓	✓
NIV	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	✓

KJV=8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> out of 9

NIV=3 out of 9

Of the above verses, John 1:18 is not deity-supporting.

**Other criticisms of Carson's book**

- The book clouds the Christian's main issue: *what is genuine Scripture?* To assume from the start that the issue is with the King James Version is to detract from this.
- The book is not about ancient *evidence*.
- The terminology is deceitful – e.g. “Byzantine text” [especially Ch. 6, but throughout the book] – for a text that is demonstrably as old as any other, is older than the Byzantine Empire, and is repeatedly vindicated as original and authentic with very few exceptions.

## References

### Recommended books on the Text of Scripture

- [JWB-CC] J.W.Burgon, *Causes of Corruption in the Traditional Text of The Holy Gospels. Arranged, completed and edited by E.Miller*, originally published 1896
- [JWB-LT] J.W.Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*, originally published 1871
- [JWB-RR] J.W.Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, originally published 1883
- [JWB-TT] J.W.Burgon, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels Arranged, completed and edited by E.Miller*, originally published 1896
- [Scrivener] F.H.A.Scrivener, *Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament* (2 volumes), published 1894

The Burgon books are currently published by:

The Dean Burgon Society, Box 354, Collingswood, New Jersey 08108 USA  
<http://www.deanburgonsociety.org/>

Some Burgon publications are also obtainable from:

Penfold Book & Bible House, P.O.Box 26, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX6 8PB,  
Tel. 01869 249574

The Greek Received Text, as underlying the King James Version:

- [TBS-NT] The Trinitarian Bible Society, “H KAINH ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ”, The New Testament Tyndale House, Dorset Rd, London SW19 3NN, Tel 0181-543-7857

The Greek Majority Text (but J.A.Moorman has reservations [DAM-DMT, p.1]). [The present author would say that this text should not be taken as absolutely coextensive with the *true* text, since a proper verdict requires an assessment of *all* evidence].

- [Hodges] The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text  
2nd Edition, edited by Zane C. Hodges and Arthur L. Farstad  
published by Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 1985. ISBN 0-8407-4963-5.

Interlinears based on the Greek Received Text, as underlying the King James Version:

- [Bagster] Samuel Bagster, *The Englishman's Greek New Testament together with an Interlinear Literal Translation*  
published by Samuel Bagster & Sons Ltd., first published 1877
- [Berry] George Ricker Berry, *Interlinear KJV Parallel New Testament in Greek and English* (Hard cover, May 1993). Obtainable from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)
- [Green] Jay P. Green, Sr., (Editor), *Pocket Interlinear New Testament*  
Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

### Books by Jack A. Moorman<sup>1</sup>

- [JAM-EM] Jack A. Moorman, *Early Manuscripts and the Authorized Version – A Closer Look*

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<sup>1</sup> The books by Jack A. Moorman contain a wealth of useful information, including extensive lists of differences between texts. The present author would prefer to centre the issue on *best-supported readings* rather than *Authorized Version readings*, for complete textual accuracy and so that the textual issue is not misconstrued as one of defending archaic turns of phrase. Moorman defends the Johannine Comma; an answer to his grammatical objections to the Majority reading [JAM-DMT, p.116] has been given in this study.

- [JAM-DS] Jack A. Moorman, *Modern Bibles – The Dark Secret*  
 [JAM-ECF] Jack A. Moorman, *Early Church Fathers and the Authorized Version – A Demonstration*  
 [JAM-DMT] Jack A. Moorman, *When the KJV Departs from the “Majority” Text*  
 Available from: The Bible For Today, 900 Park Avenue, Collingswood, NJ 08108

### Books in the modernist camp

- [Aland] Kurt & Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, published 1987 by William B Eerdmans, 255 Jefferson Ave., S.E., Grand Rapids, Mich 49503, USA  
 [Aland-KL] Kurt Aland, *Kurzgefasste Liste*  
 [Arndt & Gingrich] W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich,  
*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*  
 The University of Chicago Press  
 [Carson] D.A. Carson, *The King James Version Debate – A Plea for Realism*  
 Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979  
 [NA<sup>26</sup>] Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 26 Auflage,  
 Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, P.O.Box 810340, 7000 Stuttgart 80, Germany  
 [UBS-Comm] The United Bible Societies, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*  
 published by and obtainable from  
 Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, P.O.Box 810340, 7000 Stuttgart 80, Germany  
 [UBS-GNT] The United Bible Societies, *The Greek New Testament*, 3rd Edition, obtainable from  
 Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, P.O.Box 810340, 7000 Stuttgart 80, Germany

### Other publications referred to

- [BFBS-Syriac]   
*The New Testament in Syriac*  
 British and Foreign Bible Society, currently based at Swindon  
 [BHS] Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia  
 Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, P.O.Box 810340, 7000 Stuttgart 80, Germany  
 [Brenton-LXX] Sir Lancelot C L Brenton, *The Septuagint Version: Greek and English*  
 Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA  
 [Cmp Bible] *The Companion Bible*  
 Zondervan Bible Publishers, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA  
 [DBS-Vulgate] *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*,  
 Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, P.O.Box 810340, 7000 Stuttgart 80, Germany  
 [Foxye] John C. Winston, *Foxye's Book of Martyrs*  
 Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA  
 [Hivolda] <http://www.hivolda.no/asf/kkf/philobio.html>  
 [Jos-IV] Loeb Classical Library, (Edited by G P Gould),  
*Josephus IV, Jewish Antiquities I-IV*,  
 with an English Translation by H St. J Thackeray

- [Köbert] R. Köbert S.J., *Vocabularium Syriacum*  
Pontificum Institutum Biblicum, Roma 1956
- [Lewis & Short] C T Lewis & C Short, *A Latin Dictionary*  
Oxford, at the Clarendon Press
- [Liddell & Scott] (H G) Liddell and Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*  
Oxford, at the Clarendon Press
- [Waltzmn] www.skypoint.com~waltzmn/MSCnv.html
- [Welch] Charles H Welch, *The Testimony of the Lord's Prisoner*  
Berean Publishing Trust, Wilson St Chapel, 52A Wilson St, London EC2A 2ER

### Fonts used:

The main Greek font used is the author's own GGTEphesian.

For uncial Greek, Hebrew, Syriac and transliteration, the fonts SPDoric, SPTiberian, SPEdessa and SPAtlantis have been used. See also SPIonic, a Greek font which is somewhat similar to GGTEphesian. Thanks are due to Jimmy Adair, who produced these when working for the now defunct Scholar's Press. These fonts are currently (2001) available from:

<http://rosetta.atla-certr.org/TC/fonts/>

<http://user.dtcc.edu/~berlin/>

The Greek manuscript-minuscule font is the author's own, GGTColossian-u-p01.

GGTEphesian	α β γ δ ε ζ η θ ι κ λ μ ν ξ ο π ρ σ τ υ φ χ ψ ω ᾶ ᾷ Ᾱ ἄ Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ Ν Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Χ Ψ Ω Ⲁ ⲁ Ⲃ
GGTColossian	ω υ γ δ ε ζ η θ ι κ λ μ ν ξ ο π ρ σ τ υ φ χ † ∞
SPDoric	Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ Ν Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Χ Ψ Ω
SPTiberian	Ⲁ ⲁ Ⲃ ⲃ Ⲅ ⲅ Ⲇ ⲇ Ⲉ ⲉ Ⲋ ⲋ Ⲍ ⲍ Ⲏ ⲏ Ⲑ ⲑ Ⲓ ⲓ Ⲕ ⲕ Ⲗ ⲗ Ⲙ ⲙ Ⲛ ⲛ Ⲝ ⲝ Ⲟ ⲟ Ⲡ ⲡ ⲣ Ⲥ ⲥ Ⲧ ⲧ Ⲩ ⲩ Ⲫ ⲫ Ⲭ ⲭ Ⲯ ⲯ Ⲱ ⲱ Ⲳ ⲳ Ⲵ ⲵ Ⲷ ⲷ Ⲹ ⲹ Ⲻ ⲻ Ⲽ ⲽ Ⲿ ⲿ Ⲁ ⲁ Ⲃ ⲃ Ⲅ ⲅ Ⲇ ⲇ Ⲉ ⲉ Ⲋ ⲋ Ⲍ ⲍ Ⲏ ⲏ Ⲑ ⲑ Ⲓ ⲓ Ⲕ ⲕ Ⲗ ⲗ Ⲙ ⲙ Ⲛ ⲛ Ⲝ ⲝ Ⲟ ⲟ Ⲡ ⲡ ⲣ Ⲥ ⲥ Ⲧ ⲧ Ⲩ ⲩ Ⲫ ⲫ Ⲭ ⲭ Ⲯ ⲯ Ⲱ ⲱ Ⲳ ⲳ Ⲵ ⲵ Ⲷ ⲷ Ⲹ ⲹ Ⲻ ⲻ Ⲽ ⲽ Ⲿ ⲿ
SPEdessa	Ⲁ ⲁ Ⲃ ⲃ Ⲅ ⲅ Ⲇ ⲇ Ⲉ ⲉ Ⲋ ⲋ Ⲍ ⲍ Ⲏ ⲏ Ⲑ ⲑ Ⲓ ⲓ Ⲕ ⲕ Ⲗ ⲗ Ⲙ ⲙ Ⲛ ⲛ Ⲝ ⲝ Ⲟ ⲟ Ⲡ ⲡ ⲣ Ⲥ ⲥ Ⲧ ⲧ Ⲩ ⲩ Ⲫ ⲫ Ⲭ ⲭ Ⲯ ⲯ Ⲱ ⲱ Ⲳ ⲳ Ⲵ ⲵ Ⲷ ⲷ Ⲹ ⲹ Ⲻ ⲻ Ⲽ ⲽ Ⲿ ⲿ
SPAtlantis	ā ä š ś ḥ
GGTSymbol-u-p01	✓ × →