

Matt. 23:3b “observe” (TR & AV) {B}*Preliminary Remarks.*

In some ways I would prefer to discuss Matt. 23:3b and Matt. 23:3c in the same section; but in other ways it is easier to subdivide it up into two sections due to the diverse readings of the manuscripts’ break-ups. Though generally making a distinction between Matt. 23:3b and Matt. 23:3c, I may sometimes consider both (for instance, on the possible origins of *Variant 1, infra*).

Moreover, looked at corporately, I would here note two issues. For these purposes I shall use the break of words as, “*terein* (‘to observe’ = ‘observe,’ AV, word 1) *tereite* (‘[that] ye observe’ = ‘[that] observe,’ AV, word 2) *kai* (‘and,’ word 3) *poieite* (‘ye do’ = ‘do,’ AV, word 4a, imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *poieo*),” i.e., in the wider words (following the AV’s italics for any added word), “whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do” (AV).

Issue 1: The contrast between standard seminary Greek in neatly typed books with spaced out words and standard spellings, compared with “the real world” of Greek manuscripts again confronts us here at Matt. 23:3. The issue of using “*ai*” suffixes in place of “*e*” suffixes as part of a local revowelling again appears in both W 032 and Lectionary 2378. In W 032 this is found in both words 2 and 4. But for those familiar only with standard seminary Greek, the matter takes on an even more difficult twist in Lectionary 2378 where word 2 does not make this change, but word 4 does. Such inconsistencies certainly make the matter harder for those unfamiliar with such possibilities. (Cf. my comments in Commentary Vol. 2, Matt. 15-20, at Matt. 16:8b, “Preliminary Textual Discussion,” “The First Matter.”)

Issue 2: A similar issue arises with “*poieite* (‘ye do,’ word 4a)” and “*poiete* (‘ye do,’ word 4b).” Although *prima facie* the declension of word 4a could also be an indicative active present 2nd person plural verb, from *poieo*, context requires that it is here understood as an imperative, i.e., “*poieite* (‘ye do,’ word 4a, imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *poieo*).” In standard seminary Greek the rule is absolute with regard to declining a contracted verb with a stem in *e* i.e., one which is written in lexicons as an indicative active present 1st person singular verb ending with *eō*, such as *poieō*. The rule is that when adding a suffix starting with an *e*, *e + e = ei*, and so an “*ete*” suffix (active present 2nd person plural verb, for both indicative and imperative), will always become “*ei*” as in “*poieite* (ye do)¹.”

But there is a problem when we come to the Greek manuscripts. It is this. Not

¹ Whittaker’s *New Testament Greek Grammar*, SCM, London, England, UK, 1969, 1975, p. 15.

all scribes followed the standard seminary Greek rules taught in modern day Colleges / Seminaries / Universities. The practical effect of this for our purposes is that the $e + e = ei$ rule that I was taught as a Greek College student in my late teens and early 20s was an absolute rule, in fact *is not always followed by all scribes*. Thus according to Tischendorf (but not Swanson) at *Variant 1* we here find a spelling variant to “*poieite* (‘ye do,’ word 4a)” of “*poiete* (‘ye do,’ word 4b)” in Gamma 036.

Thus as with *Issue 1*, so with *Issue 2* (cf. Tischendorf at Matt. 5:44; 21:3; 26:26-28), (and other such issues,) namely, standard seminary Greek does not prepare one for such *serpens in herba*².

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

Some disagreement appears to exist about the reading of old Latin *f* (6th century) at Matt. 23:3b. On the one hand, Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72) says the most probable reading of old Latin *f* is that of the TR, (i.e., presumably the same Latin reading as old Latin *q*, *infra*.) although the manuscript’s state of preservation makes complete verification of this uncertain. By contrast, Julicher (1938-63) shows old Latin *f* as supporting *Variant 2*; and von Soden (1913) likewise shows all old Latin versions except *q* following *Variant 2*. I have no direct access to this manuscript since I generally use Julicher to learn what the old Latin Gospel readings are. Under the circumstances, I shall make no reference to old Latin *f*, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:3b the TR’s Greek, “*terein* (‘to observe’ = ‘observe,’ AV, active present infinitive verb, from *tereo*),” i.e., “observe” in the wider words, “whatsoever they bid you observe” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also supported as Latin, “*servare* (‘to observe,’ active present imperative verb, from *servo*),” in old Latin Version *q* (6th / 7th century). It is further found in the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754).

Variant 1 reads, “*poiein* (‘to do,’ active present infinite verb, from *poieo*),” i.e., “do” in the wider words, “whatsoever they bid you do.” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codex Gamma 036 (10th century).

Variant 2 omits “*terein* (to observe),” and so reads simply, “whatsoever they bid you.” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 924 (12th century). This omission is also found in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions *a* (4th century), *e* (4th / 5th century), *b* (5th century), *d* (5th century), *ff2* (5th century), *h* (5th century), *aur* (7th century), *1* (7th / 8th century), *g1* (8th / 9th century),

² Latin, “A snake in the grass,” i.e., a hidden danger.

ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Eusebius (d. 339); the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Latin writer, Hilary (d. 367); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text which thus must stand. The origins of the variants are speculative.

Was *Variant 1* an accidental alteration?

In *Codex Freerianus* (W 032), we find at Matt. 24:15 (p. 89) that an attempt was made to squeeze in, “*anagin_osk_on* (readeth) *noe_ito* (let him understand),” so as to start the following verse 16 on a new line. Thus the scribe has the last 3 to 4 letters of “*anagin_osk_on*” protruding to the right; but upon realizing that he had miscalculated and could not get the “*noe_ito*” in, he then put the “*noe_ito*” on the next line by itself; and started the next page (p. 90) with the start of Matt. 24:16. The matter is of particular interest in showing how the last word of a verse or other subdivision being used by a scribe, might be inadvertently lost. W 032 sometimes also abbreviates “*kai*” to a “*K*” with a squiggle something like a ρ coming off the bottom of it, and so only taking up one letter space (e.g., at Matt. 26:51, p. 102).

With regard to *Variant 1*, see also discussion on *Variant 1a* at Matt. 22:3a, *infra*.

Looking at both Matt. 23:3b and Matt. 23:3c corporately, the TR reads, “*terein* (observe) *tereite* ([that] ye observe) *kai* (and) *poieite* (ye do),” in the wider words (following the AV’s italics for any added word), “whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do” (AV). By contrast, Gamma 036 reads, “*poiein* (to do) *poieite* (‘ye do,’ imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *poie_o*),” i.e., “whatsoever they bid you do, ye do.” Therefore, did a scribe wish to make a stylistic “verse” division ending with “*poieite*”? If so, possibly with “*kai*” written as a one letter space abbreviation, did he seek to squeeze in “*terein tereite kai poieite*,” but running out of space due to miscalculation, have to put “*poieite*” on a new line, with “*tereite kai*” jutting out to the right of the normal right-hand justification line of the page? (I.e., something like W 032 at Matt. 24:16.)

Due to a later paper fade / loss, did the original, “*terein tereite kai*” on the first line, come to look something like “*:::ein:::~::~:*”? With reference to the “*poieite* (‘ye do,’ from *poie_o*),” at the start of the next line, did the scribe then “reconstruct” this as “*poiein* (‘to do’ from *poie_o*),” i.e., “*poiein* (to do) *poieite* (ye do)”?

Was *Variant 1* a deliberate alteration? Did a scribe, seeking a reading that was both “more concise” and also “better stylistically balanced” with regard to *poie_o*, deliberately alter the reading?

The likely originator of *Variant 2* is unclear. *Prima facie* it may have been Irenaeus or Origen, but since we are reliant in both instances on later Latin translations of their Greek texts, it is possible that the Biblical citation in one or both of these sources was modified by the Latin translators. The likelihood for this is stronger than normal here at Matt. 23:3b because of the overwhelming support for *Variant 2* in the wider Latin textual tradition. But the matter is not thereby conclusively proven, since it also remains *possible* that the Latin scribes first got this reading from Irenaeus and / or Origen.

Was *Variant 2* an accidental alteration? Was the “*terein* (to observe)” lost in an undetected paper fade?

Was *Variant 2* a deliberate alteration? Did a prunist scribe, seeking “a less wordy” and “more succinct” text, deliberately prune away the “*terein* (to observe)”?

Were these deliberate or accidental alterations? We do not know. But we do know that these were changes to the Received Text here persevered for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR’s reading has powerful support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine text reading dating from ancient times with Manuscript Washington (W 032). It also has some minimal support in the Latin with one old Latin Version dating from early mediaeval times. *Variant 1* has weak support in the Greek and no support in the Latin, and with no good textual argument to commend it may be safely dismissed. *Variant 2* has weak support in the Greek, but strong support in the Latin as the representative Latin text reading. But once again, it has no good textual argument to commend it. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:3b a high level “B” (in the range of 71-74%), i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:3b, “observe” i.e., “whatsoever they bid you observe” (AV), is found in (the independent) Codex 0107 (7th century, Matt. 22-23 & Mark 4-5) and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Harclean h (616) Versions; and translated from the Arabic as Latin, “*ut* (to) *observetis* (observe),” in Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th

century).

Variant 1 which reads, “do” i.e., “whatsoever they bid you do,” is found in Minuscule 700 (11th century, independent).

Variant 2 which omits “observe” i.e., “whatsoever they bid you,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); Minuscule 892 (9th century, mixed text type); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century) and Curetonian (3rd / 4th century) Versions; Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

At Matt. 23:3b the erroneous *Variant 2* entered the NU Text *et al.*

The post Vatican II Council new neo-Alexandrian Papists of the JB and NJB followed *Variant 2* here at Matt. 23:3b. It was a case of, “more of the same old attack on the *Textus Receptus*” that we neo-Byzantine Protestants have known of for centuries; for the post Trent Council and pre Vatican II Council old Latin Papists also followed *Variant 2* in the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims which reads, “whatsoever they shall say to you” (Douay-Rheims).

In following *Variant 2* the ASV reads, “whatsoever they bid you” (ASV). So too the incorrect *Variant 2* is found at Matt. 23:3b in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV. But here at Matt. 23:3b, the relative clarity of the ASV’s erroneous following of *Variant 2*, may be contrasted with what must be a careful decipherment from the “dynamic equivalent” vagaries of the New International Version’s “So you must obey them and do everything they tell you” (NIV), or the Today’s English Version’s “So you must obey and follow everything they tell you to do” (TEV). *Oh the pains and agonies of non-literal versions like the NIV and TEV!* The NIV’s acronym stands for *New International Version* and the TEV’s acronym stands for *Today’s English Version*; but perhaps they might be better renamed, the *New Inaccurate Version* (NIV), and *Today’s Erroneous Version* (TEV)!

Matt. 23:3c “that observe and do” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Remarks & Textual Discussion.

See Preliminary Remarks at Matt. 23:3b.

Bishop Gregory (Bishop of Rome, 590-604) was the second last Bishop of Rome

before the formation of the Roman Papacy, an early mediaeval institution created under Boniface III (Bishop of Rome, 607, First Pope, 607), which thereafter has anachronistically claimed to exist from apostolic times.

Referring to the Bishops of Rome from 607 A.D., (as prophetically typed by those bad bishops of Rome who had a titular primacy from 533 to 565,) Holy Daniel says, “Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers” (Dan. 11:37). For while on the one hand, “many” Popes have “come in” Christ’s name since 607, “saying, I am Christ” (Matt. 24:5) in the form of a vice-Christ or vice-God as, “Vicar of Christ;” on the other hand, the Office of Roman Papacy may also be referred to in the singular *precisely because it is an Office*, for which reason, like Holy Daniel in Dan. 11:37, we find that St. Paul also uses the singular, “that man of sin,” saying of the Roman Pope, “that” as a vice-Christ or vice-God, “he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (II Thess. 2:4). And so too St. John refers to him in the singular as the “Antichrist” (I John 2:18), for the Greek, “*Antichristos* (Antichrist),” means “in the place of Christ,” and so this perfectly equates the Latin papal title “*Vicarius Christi* (Vicar of Christ).”

The combination of this claim to be “Vicar of Christ” with a serious claim to “universal jurisdiction” in the Christian Church, evident in the 607 Decree of Phocas making the Bishop of Rome, “universal bishop,” blasphemously (Rev. 13:1) usurps the position of the Holy Ghost as the universal representative of Christ (John 14:26; 15:26), constituting an unpardonable sin (Matt. 12:31,32). This makes the Pope of Rome “the son of perdition” (II Thess. 2:3), who since 607 has been personally devil possessed by Lucifer himself (Rev. 12:3,9; 13:1; 16:13). Unlike God, the Devil is not omnipresent (everywhere at once,) and so via his legions of devils, he runs his operations from Rome via his unholy and fallen angels (Rev. 18:2). At the time of the Reformation, the *Church of England* broke with Rome under Henry VIII, and the subsequent establishment of the monarch as *Supreme Governor of Church of England*, and associated proclamation of Article 37 of the Anglican 39 Articles that in the *Church of England* the “Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction,” in the Dedicatory words of the King James Version, “hath given such a blow unto that man of sin, as will not be healed.”

But in saying of every individual Pope in the Office of the Roman Papacy founded in 607 A.D., “Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers” (Dan. 11:37), Daniel also bears witness that earlier Bishops of Rome did “regard” “God;” and so too the Apostle Paul describes the events of 607 as part of “a falling away” (II Thess. 2:3) or apostasy, (known as *The Great Apostasy*,) of one who “sitteth in the temple of God” (II Thess. 2:4), that is, the church (II Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21; I Peter 2:5). And so while on the one hand we abominate and condemn every Bishop of Rome from Boniface III in 607 on, and also repudiate *any bad bishops of Rome before this time*, such as those from 533 to 565; nevertheless, we also hold in high regard those godly bishops of Rome from before 607, such as St. Silvester (Bishop of Rome, 314-355) or St. Gregory the Great.

Yet here at Matt. 23:3, we find that the second last good Bishop of Rome, St. Gregory, is at the eye of a storm that raises issues well beyond this reading at Matt. 23:3, specifically, with respect to the citation of all and every church writer. It seems to me

that at Migne 79:118,224,417, in reading, Latin, “*facite* (‘ye do’ = ‘do,’ word 3a),” Gregory is deliberately giving a partial quote of Matt. 23:3, which is why I do not include these references at Matt. 23:3b (although I do give some others), in the Preface section on, “Scripture Citations of Bishop Gregory the Great.” But I do include them for this discussion of Matt. 23:3c with regard to *Variant 1a* in this “Preliminary” section, although my *raison d’être* for this relates to the raising of a potentially controversial issue. Specifically, once again, I do not show citations from Gregory that *prima facie* follow *Variant 1a* (Migne 79:118,224,417) in the “Principal Textual Discussion” section because I consider that in the wider context of Bishop Gregory’s writings which follow the TR’s reading (Migne 76:570,593), the most likely construction to place on this disparity is that St. Gregory is simply giving a reduced quote of Matt. 23:3 rather than intending to endorse *Variant 1a* as a complete reading. However, in view of the standing of *Variant 1a* as a recognized alternative reading in Manuscript Gamma 036, some may wish to dispute this matter.

In citing Bishop Gregory for *Variant 1a* (Migne 79:118,224,417) as opposed to the bishop’s citations of the TR’s reading (Migne 76:570,593), we thus find that this matter acts to raise wider issues of how, more generally, one is meant to know if a church writer is intending to give a partial or full quote? This question “opens the lid” on the proverbially “can of worms.” Ultimately it must come down to a subjective assessment where opinions may vary. Most commonly I am left to simply follow the assessment made by those compiling a textual apparatus, such as that of Tischendorf’s 8th edition. (E.g., I have not checked Tischendorf references to Hilary for both the TR’s reading and that of *Variant 1a*, but which may well raise the same issue.) But in the case of Bishop Gregory, because I am the first one to compile his Scriptural citations in a textual work, I thought it appropriate to pay some special attention to this issue in the context of his writings. (Cf. “Preliminary Textual Discussion” at Matt. 23:8b on Cyprian.)

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:3c the TR’s Greek, “*tereite* (‘[that] ye observe’ = ‘[that] observe,’ AV, word 1a, imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *tereo*) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *poieite* (‘ye do’ = ‘do,’ AV, word 3a, imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *poieo*),” i.e., “*that* observe and do,” in the wider words (following the AV’s italics for any added word), “whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53, with “*ai*” in place of “*e*” suffixes on words 1 & 3) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, with an “*ai*” in place of an “*e*” suffix on word 3) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is further supported as Latin, “*servate* (‘[that] ye observe’ = ‘[that] observe,’ word 1, imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *servo*) *et* (‘and,’ word 2) *facite* (‘ye do’ = ‘do,’ word 3a, imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *facio*),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century, in word order 3,2,1), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of

Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation³; the ancient church Latin writer, Hilary (d. 367); the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754); and (with the same reading as the Vulgate, *supra*), the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

Variant 1a omits words 1 and 2 and so reads simply, Greek, “*poiete* (‘ye do,’ word 3b)” i.e., “do.” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codex Gamma 036 (10th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation⁴; the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407); ancient church Latin writers, Hilary (d. 367) and Augustine (d. 430); and early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754).

Variant 2 is found as Latin, “*facite* (‘ye do’ = ‘do,’ imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *facio*) *et* (‘and,’ word 2) *custodite* (‘ye observe’ = ‘observe,’ word 1, imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *custodio*),” i.e., “do and observe,” in old Latin Version d (5th century). It is also found in the ancient church Latin writer, Hilary (d. 367).

Variant 2 may be reconstructed in the Greek as either *Variant 2a* or *Variant 2b*.

Variant 2a, “*poieite* (‘ye do’ = ‘do,’ word 3a, imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *poieō*) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *tereite* (‘ye observe’ = ‘observe,’ word 1, imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *tereo*),” i.e., “do and observe.” Since “*poieite* (‘ye do’ = ‘do,’ word 3a)” is the representative Byzantine reading, *supra*; and since “*kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *tereite* (observe)” is found in Eusebius as part of *Variant 2b*, *infra*; we cannot rule out the possibility that the combination of these elements in the form of *Variant 2a* is in fact the Greek form from which the Latin of d and / or Hilary is derived.

Variant 2b is Greek, “*poiesate* (‘ye do’ = ‘do,’ word 3b, imperative active aorist, 2nd person plural verb, from *poieō*) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *tereite* (‘observe,’ word 1),” i.e., “do and observe.” This reading is found in the ancient church Greek writer, Eusebius (d. 339).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text

³ Latin, “*audite* (‘ye obey’ = obey,’ imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *audio*), *et* (and) *facite* (‘ye do’ = ‘do’);” Origen in: Migne (Greek Writers Series) (1862 Paris Edition), *PATROLOGIA*, Vol. 13, p. 722 (Latin translation of Greek).

⁴ Latin, “*facite* (‘ye do’ = ‘do’);” Origen in: Migne (Greek Writers Series) (1862 Paris Edition), *PATROLOGIA*, Vol. 13, p. 1610 (Latin translation of Greek).

reading which is thus correct. The origins of the variants are speculative.

With regard to *Variant 1a*, see discussion on *Variant 1* on both Matt. 23:3b and Matt. 23:3c corporately, at Matt. 22:3b, *supra*.

Another issue that may be raised is this. Did either the Manuscript Gamma 036 scribe, or an antecedent scribe in his manuscript line, looking at what was a deliberate partial citation of Matt. 23:3c by, for instance, Bishop Gregory, mistakenly take this to be “the correct reading in full”? If so, did he then deliberately “correct” the TR’s reading at Matt. 22:3 to that of *Variant 1a*?

Was *Variant 2a* an accidental alteration? In Manuscript Washington (W032), a word is sometimes first accidentally left out and then added back in, thus changing the word order (e.g., at Matt. 9:27, *ekeithen* / ‘thence’ in W 032 is so added back after *tō IY* [*Iesou*] / ‘Jesus,’ though in the TR it is before ‘Jesus’). Here at Matt. 23:3c, did a scribe first get confused with the “*eite*” endings of “*tereite* (‘observe,’ word 1) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *poieite* (‘do,’ word 3),” and so by ellipsis write word 3 first? Did he then recognize his mistake, and so write back in the missing words, thus creating word order 3,2,1, thinking, “it means the same thing either way”?

Was *Variant 2a* a deliberate alteration? Did an arrogant scribe take it upon himself to make “a stylistic improvement” because he considered word order 3,2,1 “do and observe” (*Variant 2a*), to his ear “sounded better” than word order 1,2,3, “observe and do” (TR)? Alas, scribes were not always of the requisitely high standard.

To the question, “Which came first, the chicken or the egg?,” on a literal application we creationists know that first came the chicken God created who could produce the egg (Gen. 1). But on a metaphoric application of this question, we do not always know, “Which came first, the chicken or the egg?” This issue of *Variant 2a & 2b* is such an instance. Did *Variant 2a* come first? In my opinion, the fact that it is both in word order 3,2,1, and also constitutes a further variation from the TR with the changing of Word 3a to Word 3b, means that on the balance of probabilities this is the case. (Of course, a person not sharing my neo-Byzantine paradigm may consider that from his paradigm this is not the most probable explanation; but since this is a neo-Byzantine textual commentary, I write on such matters inside a neo-Byzantine paradigm.) And so I shall stipulate that for my purposes, I shall consider that the origins of *Variant 2a* precedes in time the origins of *Variant 2b*.

Was *Variant 2b* an accidental alteration? Was a scribe working on a manuscript line with *Variant 2a*, “*poieite* (‘do,’ word 3a) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *tereite* (‘observe,’ word 1),” i.e., “do and observe”? Did Word 3a come at the end of a line, and due to a paper fade look something like, “*poi:::*”? Or did Word 3a come inside another part of the line, revoweled with an extra letter as “*poieitai*”, and due to a paper fade look something like, “*poi::::*”? Did the scribe then reconstruct this as “*poiesate* (‘do,’ word 3b)”? Was he influenced in this “reconstruction” by the usage of “*poiesate*” at Matt. 3:8; 12:33 (2)?

Was *Variant 2b* a deliberate alteration? Did a scribe working on a manuscript line with *Variant 2a*, consider it a “stylistic improvement” to change “*poieite* (‘do,’ word 3a)” to “*poiesate*”?

Were these variants deliberate or accidental changes to the Received Text here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text reading? The answer to such questions is now lost to us in the historical dark ages of unrecorded textual transmission history. But it does not matter. What matters is that we know that these were changes to the *Textus Receptus* (TR) and so not the correct readings. *We thank God that he undertakes to preserved his Word to us!*

The TR’s reading has rock solid in the Greek textual tradition as the representative Byzantine reading dating from ancient times; and also rock solid support in the Latin textual tradition as the representative Latin reading dating from ancient times. The reading not only has most ancient support from the second century with Irenaeus; but also has the support of the ancient church father, St. Hilary, and early mediaeval church doctor, St. Gregory the Great. By contrast, *Variant 2* has relatively weak support in the Latin with only one old Latin Version, and the citation from Hilary may well be a deliberate partial citation by Hilary given that he elsewhere cites the full TR reading at Matt. 23:3c. In the Greek form of *Variant 2b* support is limited to one ancient church writer; and the Greek form of *Variant 2a* is limited to a reconstruction based partly on the ancient church writer of *Variant 2b*, and partly on the representative Byzantine reading. Taking these factors into account, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:3c an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:3c, “*tereite* (‘[that] ye observe’, word 1) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *poieite* (‘ye do’ = ‘do,’ AV, word 3a),” i.e., “*that* observe and do” (AV), is found in (the independent) Codex 0107 (7th century, Matt. 22-23 & Mark 4-5), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), and 1071 (12th century, independent); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Harclean h (616) Versions; and rendered from the Arabic as Latin, “*servate* ([that] observe) *et* (and) *facite* (do),” in Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

Variant 1a is, “*poiete* (‘ye do’ word 3a, imperative active present, 2nd person

plural verb, from *poieo*),” i.e., “do.” *Variant 1b* is, “*poiesate* (‘ye do’ = ‘do,’ word 3b, imperative active aorist, 2nd person plural verb, from *poieo*), i.e., “do.” *Variant 1b* is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic Version (3rd / 4th century).

Was Variant 1b an accidental change? Was an Alexandrian scribe working with a manuscript originally containing *Variant 2b* as Greek, “*poiesate* (do, word 3b) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *tereite* (‘observe,’ word 1),” i.e., “do and observe”? Due to a paper fade, did this come to look like “*poiesate:::~::~:*”? Did this go undetected by a somewhat slipshod Alexandrian scribe who perhaps yawned and stared through a nearby window at the fleas in his camel? Alas, standards often left a good deal to be desired by those scribes connected with North Africa’s Alexandrian School!

Was Variant 1b a deliberate change? Was an Alexandrian scribe working with a manuscript containing *Variant 2b* as Greek, “*poiesate* (do, word 3b) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *tereite* (‘observe,’ word 1),” i.e., “do and observe”? In harmony with Alexandrian School proclivities towards pruning the text, did he then prune away “the unnecessary wordage” of Words 2,1, in order to just leave “the more succinct text” of Word 3b? Alas, standards often left a good deal to be desired by those scribes connected with North Africa’s Alexandrian School!

Variant 2a, “*poieite* (‘ye do,’ word 3a) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *tereite* (‘ye observe,’ word 1),” i.e., “do and observe” is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in Minuscule 700 (11th century, independent); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.*

Variant 2b, “*poiesate* (‘ye do,’ word 3b) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *tereite* (‘ye observe,’ word 1),” i.e., “do and observe,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century). Amidst the many textual instabilities of the ancient Alexandrian School, one of the Alexandrian scribes further “corrected” the *Variant 1b* reading of Codex Sinaiticus, so as to also make it read, *Variant 2b*. It is further found in (the independent text type) Codex Z 035 (6th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); and (the mixed text type) Minuscule 892 (9th century).

At Matt. 23:3bc the erroneous *Variant 2b* was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Thus the ASV reads (following the ASV’s italics for any added word), “*these* do and observe.” The incorrect *Variant 2b* was also followed at Matt. 23:3c in the NASB, RSV, ESV, and NRSV.

The *New International Version* and *Today’s English Version* are such loose and liberal translations, they could here be “translating” (I use the word loosely with regard to the NIV and TEV,) from either the TR of Matt. 23:3c or *Variant 2b*. But given their

neo-Alexandrian principles, here evident in the fact that they do not follow the TR at Matt. 23:3b, *supra*, they are probably following the neo-Alexandrian NU Text *et al* with their renderings, “So you must obey them and do everything they tell you” etc. (NIV), and “So you must obey and follow everything they tell you to do” etc. (TEV). But can we be sure which readings the NIV and TEV are here following at Matt. 23:3c? No, and nor can any of their benighted devotees.

Matt. 23:4a “For” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter: Greek. I thank God that about 100 years ago, a photolithographic copy was made of *Codex Freerianus* and that copy 158 of 435 copies was kindly sent to Sydney University. Working with such a copy is similar to working with the actual manuscript itself, indeed, having my own photocopy is better than the original because I can make my own pencil marks all over it as I think fit, and this in no way damages either the original or the Sydney University photolithographic copy. By the grace of God I have learnt a lot from the Byzantine text sections of this manuscript that I have photocopied and had bound together with comb-binding from the Gospels of St. Matthew (Matt. 1-28) and St. Luke (Luke 8:13-24:53). (I have at best only a passing interest in this manuscript’s non-Byzantine text sections.)

At Matt. 23:4a my photocopy of the 1912 Michigan University Facsimile of Manuscript Washington (W 032) is difficult to read. But having carefully examined it under a magnifying glass, I am confident that at Matt. 23:4a it follows the variant and reads, “ΔΕ” (*de*). I thus disagree with Swanson who here claims it reads, “ΓΑΡ” (*gar*).

The Second Matter (Diatessaron formatting).

Inside the closed class of sources, the so called “parallel reading” of Matt. 23:4 at Luke 11:46, which in fact I would maintain were simply similar words of Christ said on a quite different occasions, reads in the Vulgate, Latin, “*quia* (because),” thus rendering the Greek “*oti* (for)” of Luke 11:46. This is quite different to the reading of Latin, “*autem* (And),” found in the Greek, “*de* (And),” and so I show the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron following *Variant 2, infra*.

Outside the closed class of sources, chapter 40 of Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron gives the Matt. 23:4a reading contextually linked with other parts of Matthew 23 about midway through the chapter; and then the Luke 11:46 reading contextually linked with other parts of Luke 11 near the end of this chapter. The underpinning Arabic thus does not consider these two events are the same; and in Ciasca’s Latin translation, Matt. 23:4a is rendered “*enim* (For),” whereas Luke 11:46 is rendered “*quia* (because).” Hence I show the Arabic Diatessaron following the TR, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:4a, the TR's Greek, "gar (For)," in the introductory words, "For (*gar*) they bind heavy burdens" etc., is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices K 017 (9th century) and S 028 (10th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D., in one of two readings, p. 146b). It is also supported as Latin, "*enim* (For)," in a minority Vulgate codices reading in Vulgate Codices I (Ingolstadiensis, 7th century, Munich, Germany) and Ep (Epternacensis, 9th century, Paris, France); and old Latin Versions e (4th / 5th century), d (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), and aur (7th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407); and the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754).

Variant 1 omits Greek, "gar (For)," as so reads, "They bind heavy burdens" etc. . This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codex Gamma 036 (10th century) and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D., in one of two readings, p. 65a).

Variant 2, reads Greek, "de (And)," i.e., And (*de*) they bind heavy burdens" etc. . This is a minority Byzantine reading found in e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century)⁵. It is further found as Latin, "*autem* (And)," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). It is also found in the early mediaeval church writer, Pseudo-Chrysostom in a Latin work (6th century).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text reading which must thus stand. The origins of the variants are conjectural.

Was *Variant 1* an accidental omission? Was the TR's "gar (For)," lost in an undetected paper fade? Or was it simply passed over because it was a short word? Might one of these two possibilities best explain the diversity in Lectionary 1968, *supra*?

Alternatively, did *Variant 1* come in time after *Variant 2*? If so, did a scribe using a manuscript with the *Variant 2* reading, "*desmeuosi* (they bind) *de* (And) *phortia* (burdens)," first write "*desmeuosi* (they bind)," and with his eye darting back and forth between this manuscript and his copy, get the "*de*" at the start of "*desmeuosi*" and

⁵ Von Soden says the TR's reading is supported by his K group i.e., c. 90% plus of the K group support the TR, so the combined strength of both *Variants 1 & 2* is something less than c. 10% of Byzantine text manuscripts. But von Soden's textual apparatus is not good enough to tell us what the finer percentage range is within these broad parameters.

following “*de* (And)” mixed up in his mind, and so then just write “*phortia* (burdens)”?

Was *Variant 1* a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe consider that the “*gar* (For)” was “unnecessary wordage,” and so prune it away in order to create “a more succinct” text?

Was *Variant 2* an accidental alteration?

In Lectionary 2378 the “*gar* (For)” which in standard seminary Greek looks in lower case letters like “ $\gamma\alpha\rho$ ” or in capital letters (unicals) “ ΓAP ,” is written in a cursive script. A small gamma joins the standard Lectionary 2378 left to right sloping cursive alpha which looks something like a “d”, and this is followed by a cursive rho which looks something like a “c” that is slightly thicker at the top i.e., something like “rdc”. In Lectionary 1968, but not Lectionary 2378, the “c” shape is sometimes used for epsilon (e.g., “*exedoto*” / “let ... out,” Matt. 21:33b, p. 142a). This means that if a scribe had some familiarity with the way the “c” shape is used in the Lectionary 1968 tradition, and saw “rdc”, he might mistake it for “*de*” with a running writing join at the front of it. However, I am not sufficiently familiar with the history of these different Greek scripts to know if they existed in ancient times when the variant arose; or if they only existed in later times.

Alternatively, was the TR’s “*gar* (For),” first lost in a paper fade / loss? Did a scribe then “reconstruct” this as “*de* (And)”? He was doubtless influenced in this “reconstruction” by the common usage of “*de* (And)” in Matthean Greek; but in particular, was he influenced by the usage of “*de*” in this very verse at, “but (*de*) they *themselves* will not” (AV, shewing / showing AV’s italics)?

Was *Variant 2* a deliberate alteration? Did the whimsical fancy of a scribe regard it as “a stylistic improvement” to alter the “*gar* (For)” to “*de* (And)”?

Were these two variants deliberate or accidental changes, or was one deliberate and the other accidental? We do not know. But we do know that both were changes to the *Textus Receptus* here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has strong support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading; and good support in the Latin with about half of the old Latin Versions dating from ancient times. It also enjoys support from a couple of ancient church writers, including support in the Greek from the church father and doctor, St. John Chrysostom. By contrast, *Variant 1* has weak support in the Greek and no support in the Latin; and *Variant 2* has weak support in the Greek, but good support in the Latin with about half of the old Latin Versions dating from ancient times as well as the Vulgate. Weighing up these factors, and taking into account the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:4a an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:4a, “For,” i.e., “For they bind heavy burdens” etc., is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); Minuscules 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), and 1071 (12th century, independent); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is further found in the Slavic Version (9th century); and Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

Variant 1 which omits “For,” i.e., “They bind heavy burdens” etc., is found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent) and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the Armenian Version (5th century) and Anglo-Saxon Version (8th to 10th centuries).

Variant 2, “And,” i.e., “And they bind heavy burdens” etc., is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); Minuscule 33 (9th century, mixed text type); and the *Family 1 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude). It is also found in the Syriac Curetonian (3rd / 4th century) and Harclean h (616) Versions; as well as the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions.

At Matt. 23:4a *Variant 2* entered the NU Text *et al.* In Greek, “*de*” can act as e.g., a connective conjunction in which case it may be rendered by “and;” or as an explanatory conjunction giving additional information, in which instance it may be rendered by e.g., “you see⁶.” Taking the view that the *Variant 2* “*de*” is an explanatory conjunction, Matt. 23:4a is rendered as “Yea” in the ASV, i.e., “Yea (*de*), they bind heavy burdens” etc. (ASV). By contrast, the NASB (1st ed. & 2nd ed.) takes the view that the *Variant 2* “*de*” is a connective conjunction, i.e., “and.”

The presence of *Variant 2* in the neo-Alexandrian texts makes it likely that it was regarded as present in the Greek, but regarded as “redundant” in English translation, by the NASB (3rd ed.), RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, TEV, and Papists’ JB & NJB. E.g., this seems to be the view of the Moffatt Bible’s, “They talk but they do not act; [*de*, untranslated] they make up heavy loads” etc. . We thus here see a decline in accuracy of the Papistical versions, since the old Latin Papists of the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-

⁶ Wallace’s *Greek Grammar*, pp. 671 & 673.

Rheims, correctly rendered this from the Latin “*enim* (For),” as, “For (*enim*) they bind heavy and insupportable burdens” etc., whereas the new neo-Alexandrian Papists of the RSV [Roman] Catholic Edition, JB and NJB, simply omit it altogether.

But can we be sure that this was their thinking in not rendering into English the “*de*” of *Variant 2*, rather than the possibility that they were following *Variant 1*? No, and this is one of the obvious problems with the neo-Alexandrian versions; for while our neo-Byzantine AV usually, though not always, translates such conjunctions; the conjunctions at the start of a sentence in English are much more commonly omitted by the new neo-Alexandrian versions. Whether negligence or a wilful attack on the creationist Gap School view of Gen. 1:1,2; such omissions start at Gen. 1:2 where the “And (Hebrew *vav* / ו; Greek Septuagint, *de*; Latin Vulgate *autem*) is gratuitously omitted to the great perversion of God’s Word; and then they continue this nonsense throughout much of the rest of these modern versions which in their New Testaments are neo-Alexandrian. Such are the pains and agonies of reading these modern versions which claim to make the Word of God clearer, but in fact, greatly obscure it from their readers.

The Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* (1662), refers in the Preface to “the reigns of several princes of blessed memory since the Reformation” who had revised the “forms of Divine Worship, and the Rites and Ceremonies.” Contextually this celebration of the Reformation refers to Edward VI who reigned from 1547-1553 (Edwardian prayer books of 1549 & 1552), Elizabeth I who reigned from 1558 to 1603 (Elizabethan prayer book of 1559), and James I who reigned from 1603 to 1624 (Elizabethan and Jacobean prayer book of 1559 and 1604)⁷. This same “Preface” states that “portions of holy Scripture” “are now ordered to be read according to the last translation,” i.e., the King James Version of 1611, which was thus thereby made “the Authorized Version.” This means that the Caroline prayer book of 1662 includes in its celebration of “several princes of blessed memory since the Reformation,” the one referred to in the Dedicatory Preface of the King James Version as, “the most high and mighty prince, James.” Let us thank God for his protection of King James from the Papists’ conspiracy of the Guy Fawkes Gunpowder Plot to blow up the Protestant King and Protestant Parliament in 1605. Let us thank God for the clarity and accuracy of this wonderful English translation dedicated to James I in 1611; let us thank God for the *Saint James Version*.

Matt. 23:4b “heavy burdens and grievous to be borne” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. As with Matt. 23:4a, *supra*, inside the closed class of sources, the differences in the Vulgate between Matt. 23:4 and Luke 11:46 are such that I show the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron following the TR, *infra*. Outside the closed class of sources, once again the clear distinction inside chapter 40 of Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic

⁷ The reference is also to the Homilies of the 39 Articles, moderately revised last under James I in 1623; and sometimes either read in place of a sermon, or used for sermon material.

Diatessaron showing Matt. 24:4b and Luke 11:46 as distinctive readings, means I show the Arabic Diatessaron following *Variant 1, infra*.

The Second Matter. In a footnote to the TR's Latin readings at "*importabilia* ('insupportable,' Latin word 4b)," I refer to Allen & Greenough's *New Latin Grammar* (1888, 1903, 2000) and Basil Gildersleeve's *Latin Grammar* (1st ed. 1867, 2nd ed. 1872, 3rd ed. 1895). These (though not necessarily any alterations to them by later persons in subsequent editions, such as the 2000 edition I have,) are two much acclaimed Latin Grammars that have been through numerous reprints with different publishers over the years; and remain well received to this day. Thus while I have both in hard cover editions in my library⁸, there are also numerous popular paper back editions available. Both of these books are certainly very useful Latin works.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:4b, the TR's Greek, "*phortia* ('burdens,' word 1) *barea* ('heavy,' word 2) *kai* ('and,' word 3) *dusbastakta* ('grievous to be borne,' word 4)," is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), O 023 (6th century) E 07 (8th century), G 011 (9th century), Gamma 036 (10th century); Minuscules 1505 (11th century, Byzantine in the Gospels), 2 (12th century), 597 (13th century), and 1342 (13th / 14th century, Byzantine other than in Mark); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings⁹). It is also supported as Latin, "*onera* ('burdens,' word 1) *gravia* ('heavy,' word 2) *et* ('and,' word 3) *inportabilia* ('unbearable,' Latin word 4a¹⁰)," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century); and as "*onera* ('burdens,' word 1) *gravia* ('heavy,' word 2) *et* ('and,' word 3) *importabilia* ('insupportable,' Latin word 4b¹¹)," in old Latin Versions f (6th century), q (6th / 7th

⁸ Allen & Greenough's *New Latin Grammar*, For Schools & Colleges (1888, 1903, 2000), Pullins Company, Focus Publishing, Newbury, Massachusetts, USA, 2000; Gildersleeve & Lodge's Gildersleeve's *Latin Grammar*, 3rd edition, Macmillan & Co., 1895, reprint, Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Wauconda, Illinois, USA, 2000.

⁹ Unlike the first reading (p. 65a), in the second reading (p. 146b) of Lectionary 1968, the "*barea* ('heavy,' word 2)" comes at the end of a line. The last letter on the line is the "*e*" (epsilon), and the "*a*" (alpha) is placed above the "*e*" followed by a backslash, i.e., something like, "*α/*".

¹⁰ The "*in* (= "un")" prefix with "*portabilia* ('bearable,' neuter plural accusative adjective, from *porto*)," gives this the meaning of "*unbearable*."

¹¹ In "*importabilia* ('insupportable,' neuter plural accusative possessive adjective, from *importo* – 'to bring about' or 'to convey')." A passive quality is conveyed by the *-bilis* suffix. See Allen & Greenough's *New Latin Grammar* section 252 (*-bilis* suffix usually passive, but occasionally active); & Gildersleeve's *Latin Grammar* (1895), section 182 (*-bilis* suffix has passive quality), & section 78 (3rd

century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); and from the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the similar reading of Latin, “*onera* (burdens) *gravia* (heavy) *et* (and) *non* (not) *ferenda* (to be borne),” in old Latin Version d (5th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407); and ancient church Latin writers, Jerome (d. 420) and Augustine (d. 430).

However, *Variant 1* omits words 3 and 4 and so reads simply, “heavy burdens.” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 924 (12th century). It is further found in old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), and b (5th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Latin writers, Hilary (d. 367), Ambrose (d. 397), and Augustine (d. 430).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was *Variant 1* an accidental omission? In Manuscript Washington (W 032) we find at a number of pages e.g., page 88 (Matt. 23:34-24:3) how ink markings come through from the opposition side of the page. Either these or other markings that appear can sometimes result in various letters looking like something else e.g., at Luke 18:38 (p. 283) the “*oti* (that) *Iesous* (Jesus)” originally looked something like, “OTI IC” (“IC” with a bar on top = “INCOYC” / *Iesous*). But due to a “\” shaped marking between the two iotas, these now look something like “II” and could upon a quick glance be mistaken for a “N” (nu); although upon more careful inspection, context makes it clear that they have to be “II” (iota, iota) not “N” (nu).

Was a scribe working with a manuscript in which “*barea* (‘heavy,’ word 2) *kai* (‘and,’ word 3) *dusbastakta* (‘grievous to be borne,’ word 4),” was written in uncials as, “BAPEAKAIΔYCBACTAKTA”? Due to some paper markings, did the second last letter of “*dusbastakta*” look something like an “E” (epsilon) rather than a “T” (tau), so that at a quick glance the line looked something like, “BAPEAKAIΔYCBACTAKEA”? After writing, “BAPEA,” did the eye of the scribe jump by ellipsis to what superficially looked like the “EA” ending of “KAIΔYCBACTAKEA”, thus omitting these words accidentally, as he then just kept on writing?

Alternatively, did a scribe looking at a manuscript reading, “*barea* (‘heavy,’ word

declension adjectives, *facilis* declensions in *-ilis* suffix shows how to decline *-bilis* suffix). The adjective or verb *importo* meaning “to bring or convey into, to import; fig[uratively] to bring about” (Woodhouse’s *Latin Dictionary*), gives rise to our English word, “import.”

2) *kai* ('and,' word 3) *dusbastakta* ('grievous to be borne,' word 4) *kai* ('and,' word 5)," first write "*barea* ('heavy,' word 2) *kai* ('and,' word 3)," with his eye then jumping from the "*kai*" of word 3 to the "*kai*" of word 5, thereby accidentally omitting Words 3 and 4?

Was *Variant 1* a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe regard the words, "*kai* ('and,' word 3) *dusbastakta* ('grievous to be borne,' word 4)," as "unnecessarily wordy given that" the passage first states they were "*onera* ('burdens,' word 1) *gravia* ('heavy,' word 2)"? Did he then prune away words 3 and 4 in order to produce "an improved text" that was "more succinct"?

Was *Variant 1* a deliberate or accidental omission? We do not know. But we do know that it was an omission to the text here preserved for us over time, and through time, in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR's reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine text reading against which there is no good textual argument; and strong support in the Latin with about half the old Latin Versions coupled with the impressive support of St. Jerome's Vulgate. It enjoys the further support of the church fathers and doctors, St. John Chrysostom in the Greek, and St. Hierome and St. Austin in the Latin. By contrast, *Variant 1* has weak support in the Greek; although stronger support in the Latin with about half the old Latin Versions; and some ancient church Latin writings. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 23:4b an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:4b, "heavy burdens and grievous to be borne," is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century, with spelling variant of word 4 as *adusbastakta*¹²). It is further found in (the independent) Codex 0107 (7th century, Matt. 22-23 & Mark 4-5), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century,

¹² Greek, "*dusbastakta*" / "*adusbastakta* ('grievous to be borne,' neuter plural accusative adjective, from *dusbastaktos* / *adusbastaktos*)." This same spelling variant as D 05 occurs in Minuscule 700 (11th century, independent). (Minuscule 700 omits words 2 & 3; although I am not more widely considering this variant.)

independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac Harclean h (616) Version, and some manuscripts of the Syriac Palestinian Version; the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version (3rd century); Armenian Version (5th century); Georgian Version (5th century); and Slavic Version (9th century).

Variant 1 which omits words 3 and 4 and reads, “heavy burdens,” is found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century); Minuscules 892 (9th century, mixed text type) and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is also found in the Syriac: Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century), Curetonian (3rd / 4th century), and Pesitto (first half 5th century) Versions; Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); and Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

Variant 2 omits words 3 and 4 but adds Greek, “*megala* (great),” reading “*phortia* (‘burdens,’ word 1) *megala* (‘great’ added word) *barea* (‘heavy,’ word 2),” i.e., “great heavy burdens.” It is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century).

The origins of *Variant 2* are conjectural. Was it an autonomous addition by the scribe of *Codex Sinaiticus* to a manuscript line reading *Variant 1*? Or was it simultaneously both an addition (*megala* / “great”) and subtraction (words 3 & 4) by the same scribe at the same time? Either way, *Codex Sinaiticus* here reminds us that while those of the Alexandrian School are broadly speaking to be remembered as prunists, when it took their fancy they could also be conflationists.

With regard to this conflation (*megala* / “great”), Did this benighted Alexandrian School scribe add “*megala* (great)” at the same time he subtracted “*kai* (‘and,’ word 3) *dusbastakta* (‘grievous to be borne,’ word 4),” regarding this as some kind of “stylistic counter-balance” to his “dynamic equivalent”? Or did this benighted Alexandrian School scribe start with a *Variant 1* manuscript, and add in “*megala* (great)” as “a stylistic improvement” to make the reading “more like” Luke 11:46, but “still different” to it?

The split between the two leading Alexandrian texts here at Matt. 23:4b induced the generally predictable splitting headache amongst those of the Neo-Alexandrian School. After all, “life’s hard” when “you’ve only got two manuscripts you can really trust;” and “they were long lost,” just like the Mormons claim Joseph Smith’s *Book of Mormon* was “long lost;” and then, “like a magician pulling a rabbit from his hat,” they were both “pulled from the hat” in the 19th century¹³.

¹³ While the great Erasmus knew about *Codex Vaticanus* in the 16th century, having dismissed it as an obviously corrupt text, it essentially collected dust in the Pope’s Library till brought back into public gaze in the 19th century. The neo-Alexandrians look to a wider group of texts that just two, for instance, von Soden’s “H” group contains

On the one hand, the neo-Alexandrians wanted to side-shuffle away from the conflation of Codex Sinaiticus, “*megala* (great),” and so “to strengthen their Alexandrian text based hand,” they generally all “pressed together” *Variants 1 & 2*, and so talked about a variant simply omitting words 3 & 4.

This technique allowed Tischendorf to “follow” the reading of his beloved Codex Sinaiticus in Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72). The pull of “the shorter reading” as “the better reading” also appealed to Westcott-Hort (1881), who on this occasion followed Tischendorf and put *Variant 1* in their main text; but being devoted to Codex Vaticanus the way Tischendorf was to Codex Sinaiticus, Westcott-Hort put the TR’s reading as “followed” by Codex Vaticanus in a sidenote. The Westcott-Hort “solution” also appealed to, and was followed by Erwin Nestle in Nestle’s 21st edition (1952).

But then came “the big boys” of our times in the Neo-Alexandrian School, Metzger (d. 2007) and Aland (d. 1994) on the NU Text Committee of five. On the one hand they empathized with the logic of Tischendorf, Westcott-Hort, and Nestle for “the shorter reading;” and also tended to think the similarity of Matt. 23:4b with Luke 11:46 “just has to mean” an “assimilation” to Luke. But on the other hand, this more recent group of neo-Alexandrians tend to put greater weight on “external support” beyond the Alexandrian Texts, especially if the two are divided as they are here. Their solution? *Preserve the ambiguity of the two main Alexandrian Texts*. The idea greatly appealed to all five members of the NU Text Committee. “After all,” Aland possibly said to Metzger half-jokingly as he drew back hard on his cigar¹⁴, “You’d need a *real* textual analyst to try and work this one out!” We thus find Words 3 & 4 placed in square brackets as entirely optional in the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) and UBS’s 4th revised edition (1993) i.e., “*phortia* (‘burdens,’ word 1) *barea* (‘heavy,’ word 2) [*kai* (‘and,’ word 3) *dusbastakta* (‘grievous to be borne,’ word 4)].”

What were the neo-Alexandrian versions to make of all this?

Solution 1. At Matt. 23:4b, only the *Today English Version* (TEV) followed the TR’s reading found in Codex Vaticanus, without any footnote reference to *Variant 1*.

Solution 2. At Matt. 23:4b the ASV adopted the TR’s reading followed by Codex Vaticanus with, “they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne” (ASV).

about 100 manuscripts of interest to the neo-Alexandrians; but at the end of the day, these two Alexandrian texts remain their primary point of focus for both starting and finishing their “textual analysis” resulting in a neo-Alexandrian text.

¹⁴ A Wikipedia article on Kurt Aland shows him about four years before his death, reclining in an armchair and smoking a cigar. The photo is dated to *c.* 1990, and may be clicked on to gain a higher half-page picture size resolution. (“Kurt Aland,” *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurt_Aland).

However, a footnote says, “Many ancient authorities omit ‘and grievous to be borne’” (ASV ftn). This type of format was also followed by the RSV, ESV, and NRSV.

Solution 3. At Matt. 23:4b, *Variant 1* “as followed” in Codex Sinaiticus (which really follows *Variant 2*), with no reference to the TR’s reading in a footnote, was adopted by the NASB, NIV, TCNT, NEB, REB, and Moffatt.

The old Latin Papists of pre-Vatican II Council times, following the Clementine and Douay-Rheims, fairly rendered Matt. 23:4b as, “they bind heavy and insupportable burdens” (Douay-Rheims). But the new neo-Alexandrian Papists of the post Vatican II Council times were squeamish about their Latin text predecessors. Thus at Matt. 23:4b, *Solution 3* i.e., *Variant 1* with no reference to the TR’s reading in a footnote, was adopted in the Papists’ JB and NJB.

Matt. 23:4c “but *themselves* they will” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Remarks.

While the *Authorized Version* is a literal translation, it is also a masterly piece of English literature. As a consequence of the fact it is a great literary work it occasionally uses a moderate dynamic equivalent. We here see such an example in Greek, “*daktulo* (‘with a finger,’ masculine singular dative noun, from *daktulos*),” being rendered clearly and crisply by, “with one of their fingers” i.e., “they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers” (AV). This is certainly clearer English than the more literal, “with their finger” i.e., “they themselves will not move them with their finger” (ASV). The awkward terminology of the *American Standard Version* here at Matt. 24:3c, is presumably an example of “the general intention of the American Revisers to eliminate obsolete, obscure, and misleading terms” “in the Authorized Version” (ASV Preface).

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

When one compares accounts such as Matt. 23:4 with Luke 11:46, it becomes clear that as Jesus moved around in his 3½ year ministry (Dan. 9:27), he repeated the same message multiple times, although he might make adaptations to the situation at hand. Thus one must be wary of so called, “parallel” gospel readings, for looking at the length of the gospels relative to his 3½ year ministry, one gets the impression that if one was one of Jesus’ disciples during this time, one would hear many of the same parables and sayings, many, many, times, of which we get but a sample in the Gospels. Repetition is an important teaching technique, and so we benefit from having all four gospels, with the Synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke poignantly showing us Jesus’ technique of repetition with contextual adaptation.

Of course, some things in the Gospels only happened once e.g., St. John the Baptist was only beheaded once. Although even here, different gospel writers may record some different elements of the same story, and once again, Jesus may have said the same or similar things multiple times at this one event, over a much longer period of

time than it would take to simply read the Gospel account. This same issue arises with e.g., the resurrection accounts of our Lord.

Inside the closed class of sources, the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron does not always recognize this diversity of “parallel” gospel accounts, but sometimes it does. But even where it does, one must be careful of the danger of any possible “assimilation” or “standardization” of accounts. However, here in Edward Siever’s Edition (1892) of the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron, chapter 141 makes a clear distinction between Matt. 23:4c of the Vulgate (Diatessaron 141:2) and Luke 11:46 (Diatessaron 141:25). Bearing in mind that this Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex, this is stylistically justifiable with regard to comparison of the Diatessaron text here with that of the Vulgate. Therefore, I show the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron following the TR’s reading, *infra*.

Outside the closed class of sources, a similar dichotomy emerges in Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron at chapter 40. This shows both Latin, “*unum* (one) *autem* (but) *ex* (out of) *digitis* (the fingers) *suis* (their) *nolunt* (they will not) *admovere* (move) *ad* (about) *ea* (‘the same’ = ‘them,’),” from Matt. 23:4 (Diatessaron 40:4); and later near the end of chapter 40, Latin, “*et* (and) *ipsi* (they themselves),” etc., from Luke 11:46 (Diatessaron 40:46). Therefore I show the Arabic Diatessaron following the TR’s reading, *infra*.

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:4c the TR’s Greek, “*τῷ* (‘with the,’ word 1) *δε* (‘but,’ word 2) *δακτύλῳ* (‘with a finger’ = ‘with one of ... fingers,’ AV word 3) *αὐτῶν* (‘of them’ = ‘their,’ AV, word 4) *οὐ* (‘not,’ word 5) *θελούσι* (‘they will,’ word 6) *κινήσαι* (‘to move’ = ‘move,’ AV, word 7) *αὐτά* (‘them,’ word 8),” i.e., showing “themselves” in italics as added, “but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also found as Latin, “*digito* (‘with a finger’ = ‘one of ... fingers,’ word 3) *autem* (‘but,’ word 2) *suo* (‘their [own],’ word 4) *nolunt* (‘they will not,’ = combined words 5 & 6) *ea* (‘the same’ = ‘them,’ word 8) *movere* (‘move,’ word 7),” i.e., showing “themselves” in italics as added, “but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers,” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century, in word order 3,2,4,5-6,7,8), b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century, in word order 3,2,4,5-6,7,8), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D. combining words 8 + 7 = *eamovere*¹⁵) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writer,

¹⁵ Latin, “*ea* (‘the same,’ word 8, neuter plural accusative pronoun, from *idem-eadem-idem*)” + “*movere* (‘to move,’ word 7, active present infinitive verb, from *moveo*)” = “*eamov[er]e*” (Book of Armagh).

Chrysostom (d. 407); and early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754).

However, a variant adds Greek, “*autoi* (‘themselves’¹⁶),” and then uses word order 2,1,3,4,5,6,7, reading, “*autoi* (‘themselves’ = ‘they themselves,’ added word) *de* (‘but,’ word 2) *tō* (‘with the,’ word 1) *daktulō* (‘with a finger’ = ‘with one of ... fingers,’ word 3) *auton* (‘of them’ = ‘their,’ AV, word 4) *ou* (‘not,’ word 5) *thelousi* (‘they will,’ word 6) *kinesai* (‘to move,’ word 7) *auta* (‘them, word 8),” i.e., showing “themselves” in normal print as part of the variant’s text, “but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 1010 (12th century). It is further found as Latin, “*ipsi* (‘themselves’ = ‘they themselves,’) *autem* (‘but,’ word 2) *digito* (‘with a finger’ = ‘one of ... fingers,’ word 3) *suo* (‘their [own],’ word 4) *nolunt* (‘they will not,’ = Greek words 5 & 6) *movere* (‘move,’ word 7) *ea* (‘the same’ = ‘them,’ Greek word 8),” i.e., showing “themselves” in normal print as part of the variant’s text, “but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers,” in old Latin Version d (5th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation (c. 395); ancient church Latin writers, Ambrose (d. 397) and Jerome (d. 420); and the early mediaeval church writer, Pseudo-Chrysostom in a Latin work (6th century).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading here which thus must stand. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental alteration? In *Codex Freerianus* (W 032) we find that there is an unnumbered “verse” division of about two letter spaces before the TR’s “*tō* (‘with the,’ word 1) *de* (‘but,’ word 2)” etc., which is not a verse division replicated by Stephanus in 1551, and so not a verse division in our AVs; which represents this stylistic break with a semi-colon (;) inside of verse 4. Did a scribe have such a continuous script manuscript in which a stylistic paper existed; and in which the “*tō de*” additionally came at the end of a line? Due to a paper fade, had the “*tōde*” at the end of the line come to look something like “*t::*”? With some reference to the “*autoi* (‘themselves’ = ‘ye themselves’),” of Luke 11:46, did a scribe then “reconstruct” this as “*autoi* (‘themselves’ = ‘they themselves’) *de* (but) *tō* (with the)”?

If so, did the scribe also “reconstruct” the “*de* (‘but,’ word 2) *tō* (‘with the,’ word 1)” from the nearby Luke 11:37 (“*en* [in] *de* [and] *tō* [‘the’ / -]” = “and as [he]”)? If so, from this base did he seek to further check the usage of “*de tō*” in the Matthean Greek of Matt. 5:33 (“*de* [but] *tō* [the]” = “but ... the”), or Matt. 26:44 (“*de* [but] *tō* [‘the’ / -]” = “but”); Matt. 7:3 (which as at Luke 11:37 here uses “*de tō*” with “*en*” i.e., “*de* [but] *en* [in] *tō* [‘the’ / -]” = “but ... in”), or Matt. 13:25 (which as at Luke 11:37 here uses “*de tō*” with “*en*” i.e., “*en* [‘in’ = ‘while’] *de* [but] *tō* [‘the’ / -]” = “but while”)?

Was the variant a deliberate alteration? Was this some kind of semi-assimilation to the so called “parallel gospel reading” of Luke 11:46? And with regard to the

¹⁶ A masculine plural nominative, personal pronoun, from *autos-e-o*.

possibility of any further deliberate semi-assimilation of the nearby “*de tō*” at Luke 11:37; it is notable that as discussed at Matt. 21:30a (see Textual Commentary, Appendix 3), a proclivity to the preferred terminology of “*de tō*” over “*Kai ... tō*” was shown at Matt. 21:30a in the reading of Cyril of Alexandria.

Were these deliberate or accidental changes to the text of the TR? We do not know. But we do know that they were changes to the reading of the Received Text here wonderfully preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has strong support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading dating from ancient times; and correspondingly strong support in the Latin as the representative Latin reading dating from ancient times, including St. Jerome’s Vulgate. It enjoys the further support of the ancient church father and doctor, St. John Chrysostom. By contrast, the variant’s support in both the Greek and Latin textual traditions is extremely weak; although it also has the support of a few ancient church writers in the Latin. Weighing up these factors, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:4c an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:4c, i.e., showing “themselves” in italics as added, “but *themselves* they will,” is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); and is the most probable reading of (the independent) Codex 0107 (7th century, Matt. 22-23 & Mark 4-5), although the manuscript’s state of preservation makes complete verification of this uncertain. It is further found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Syriac Harclean h (616) Version; Armenian Version (5th century); and Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

However, the variant, i.e., showing “themselves” in normal print as part of the variant’s text, “but they themselves will,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century); and Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), and 157 (12th century, independent). It is further found in the Syriac Pesitto Version (first half 5th century); Egyptian Coptic

Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; and the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

In furtherance of the proclivity of the preferred terminology of “*de tō*” over “*Kai ... tō*” at Matt. 21:30a, *supra*, it should be noted that such terminology is also found at Matt. 21:30a at the hands of the two main Alexandrian scribes and main Western scribe (see Textual Commentary, Appendix 3).

At Matt. 23:4c the erroneous variant entered the NU Text *et al.* Thus the erroneous variant entered the ASV, showing “themselves” in normal print as part of the variant’s text, as “but they themselves will not move them with their finger.” This incorrect reading is also found in the NASB. On the one hand, this reading, is *prima facie* also found in the RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, TCNT, NEB, and REB. But on the other hand, the absence of italics in these versions means that neither we nor their benighted devotees can really be sure what reading they are following.

Prima facie the absence of “themselves” may indicate the TEV and Moffatt Bible are following the TR’s reading with e.g., “but they will not stir a finger to remove them” (Moffatt Bible). In the case of Moffatt this is the probable construction because von Soden’s text follows the TR at this point. As for the TEV, it is such a loose’n’liberal translation, it is hard to know what to make of it here.

And then there’s the Papists’ JB and NJB. On the one hand they *prima facie* follow the TR seen in the absence of “themselves” from their texts at Matt. 23:4c. But on the other hand, they do not follow the TR here since they turn these words into a question. So exactly what do these new neo-Alexandrian Papists think they are doing here at Matt. 23:4c? However one answers that question, we can be sure of this. They did not agree with the old Latin Papists of the Clementine and Douay-Rheims, for the Douay-Rheims here reads in what is awkward and stilted English, but nevertheless an accurate translation, “but with a finger of their own they will not move them.”

Good Christian reader. Hast thou finished with the rest? Then go for the best! Go for the Authorized Version of 1611 which here as elsewhere, passes the test!

Matt. 23:5a “: they make broad their phylacteries” (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Remarks.

We here face a translation issue of what to do with the conjunction “*de*.” In this instance, it is not that the AV has left it untranslated, but that it has rendered the stylistic break it refers to by the punctuation mark of a colon (:). By contrast, Tyndale (1526 & 1534) and Cranmer’s Bible (1539) rendered it by a full-stop (.), with a new sentence then starting after it, “They set” etc. . Following the Latin of the variant, “*enim* (for),” it is rendered “for” by Wycliffe (1380) and the Douay-Rheims (1582); and probably from this same source was also rendered as “for” in the Geneva Bible (1557 & 1560).

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

Here at Matt. 23:5a, in his edition of the Book of Armagh, Gwynn supplies Latin, “*enim* (for),” as being necessarily implied. But the matter is open to debate, and so inside the closed class of sources, one could classify this as another variant, i.e., *Variant 2* which simply omits any word here. If so, outside the closed class of sources *Variant 2* is also found in Minuscule 565 (9th century, independent). However, I remind the reader that not all textual variants are discussed in this commentary, and I will not be dealing with *Variant 2, infra*. And no reference will be made to the Book of Armagh, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:5a the TR’s Greek, “*de* (‘:’ = rendered by a colon),” i.e., “: (*de*) they make broad their phylacteries” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D., in one of two readings, p. 65a). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379).

However, a variant reading Greek, “*gar* (for)” instead of “*de* (‘:’),” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscules 1223 (10th century), 660 (11th century), 477 (13th century), and 1604 (13th century); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D., in one of two readings, p. 146b). It is further found as Latin, “*enim* (for),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407); the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text which is thus correct. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental alteration? In Lectionary 2378 (p. 37a), between “*platonousi* (‘they make broad,’ word 1)” and “*de* (‘:’, word 2),” there is a stylistic paper space of about 2 letter spaces which is relatively unusual in the context of this continuous script manuscript. It does not appear to exist for any specific purpose, but simply as a manifestation of the frail and imperfect mind of fallen man. Perhaps the 11th century scribe who wrote it out at Constantinople was momentarily distracted as he looked up and pondered the issues of *The Great Schism* of 1054, to wit, the double procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father (John 14:26) and the Son (John 15:26) (in which the Roman Church was correct and the Greek Orthodox Church incorrect), and the issue of the Roman Pope’s claim to a “universal” jurisdiction (in which the Roman Church was

incorrect, II Thess. 2:4, and the Greek Orthodox Church was correct, Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:19; I Peter 2:25).

Did a scribe have a manuscript that likewise simply had a 1 or 2 letter space paper spaced between the “*platonousi* (‘they make broad,’ word 1)” and “*de* (‘:’, word 2)”? As a consequence of a paper fade, was the “*de* (‘:’)” then lost? Did a scribe then reconstruct this as “*gar* (for),” possibly with some reference to the nearby presence of “*gar* (for)” at e.g., Matt. 23:3, 4 (TR, see commentary at Matt. 23:4a), 8,9?

Was the variant a deliberate alteration? Did a scribe consider it some kind of “stylistic improvement” to here change the “*de* (‘:’)” to “*gar* (for)”? E.g., did he think that it thus “better stylistically matched” the former words of verse 3, “for (*gar*) they say, and do not”?

A deliberate or accidental change? We do not know. But we do know that this was a change to the TR here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine text reading dating from ancient times in *Codex Freerianus* (W 032). It enjoys the further support of the ancient church father and doctor, St. Basil the Great, an orthodox defender of the Holy Trinity, and Bishop of Caesarea from 370 to 379. By contrast, the variant has fairly weak support in the Greek; although it has the monolithic support of the Latin textual tradition and one ancient Greek writer. Weighing up these considerations, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:5a a high level “B” (in the range of 71-74%), i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:5a, i.e., showing “*de*” as a colon (:), “: (*de*) they make broad their phylacteries” (AV), is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century) and (the independent) Codex 0107 (7th century, Matt. 22-23 & Mark 4-5). It is also found in Minuscules 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere) and 579 (13th century, mixed text). A similar reading is further found in the Syriac Curetonian Version (3rd / 4th century).

However, the variant which reads, “*gar* (for)” in place of “*de* (‘:’)” i.e., “for they make broad their phylacteries,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); as well as Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), and 1071 (12th century, independent). It is further found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in

agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude); and the *Family 13 Manuscripts (Swanson)*, which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; and Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

The erroneous variant entered the NU Text *et al.* Thus at Matt. 23:5a the American Standard Version reads, “: for (*gar*) they make broad their phylacteries” (ASV) i.e., considering the “*gar*” justifies both a colon and “for.” The incorrect variant is also found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, and NRSV.

Prima facie the New International Version follows the TR at Matt. 23:5a with its reading, “: They make their phylacteries wide” (NIV); as does the Today's English Version with its reading, “Look at the straps with scripture verses on them which they wear on their foreheads and arms, and notice how large they are!” (TEV). But is this a safe conclusion to draw? How do we know if the NIV or TEV are here following the TR's reading, i.e., with the NIV and TEV translators exercising their non-Alexandrian text pincer arm, or whether they are following the variant but the “for” is simply lost in one of their loose'n'liberal dynamic equivalents? We do not know, and nor can any of their benighted devotees! *Oh the pains of non-literal translations like the NIV and TEV!! Oh the agonies of the NIV and TEV!!!*

Matt. 23:5b “of their garments” (TR & AV) {A}

The TR's Greek, “*ton* (of the) *imation* (garments) *auton* (of them),” i.e., “of their garments” in the wider words, “and enlarge the borders of their garments” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also supported as Latin, “*vestimentorum* (of the garments) *suorum* (of their),” i.e., “of their garments,” in old Latin Versions ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), and q (6th / 7th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the ancient church Greek writers, Basil the Great (d. 379) and Chrysostom (d. 407).

However, a variant omits these words in a Latin reading found in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text which

thus must stand. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variation an accidental omission? As a first scribe wrote “*ton* (of the) *imation* (garments) *auton* (of them),” after he wrote, “*ton*,” did his eye jump by ellipsis to the “*ton*” ending of “*auton*,” thus accidentally omitting “*imation* (garments) *auton* (of them)”? Did a second copyist scribe, seeing this “*ton*,” conclude that it was “a scribal blunder,” and thus omit it, so that by a two-stage process the reading came to be lost?

Alternatively, in Manuscript Washington (W 032), the words “*ton* (of the) *imation* (garments) *auton* (of them),” come at the start of a new line. There is then a 2 to 3 letter space stylistic paper space before the start of Matt. 23:6, indicating that the AV’s verse division formally numbered by Stephanus in 1551, here manifests a more ancient unnumbered Byzantine verse division. But on this same page of Manuscript Washington (Matt. 22:41-23:6, at p. 84), we find that after Matt. 22:42 the verse ends about one-third of the way along the line, and the rest of the line is left blank before verse 43 starts on a new line; and likewise at the end of Matt. 22:46, the verse ends above three-fifths of the way along the line, and the rest of the line is left blank before Matt. 23:1 starts; thus indicating that these too are ancient unnumbered verse divisions.

Did a scribe with this type of manuscript format have a manuscript in which Matt. 23:5 ended with words “*ton* (of the) *imation* (garments) *auton* (of them),” followed by a stylistic paper space that went to the end of the line, with Matt. 23:6 starting on a new line? Due to a paper fade, was the “*ton imation auton*,” then lost? Did the subsequent copyist scribe think that this was simply part of the stylistic paper space, and so the paper fade of these words then went undetected?

Was the variation a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe consider it “a stylistic improvement” to remove the words, “*ton* (of the) *imation* (garments) *auton* (of them),” here at Matt. 23:5b? Was he influenced by some semi-assimilationist comparison with the absence of these words at Luke 11:43; and / or a “gospel standardizing” belief that they were “a contradiction” to the words of Mark 12:38, “*en* (in) *stolais* (long clothing)”?

Was the variant a deliberate of accidental omission? We do not know. But we do know that it was an alteration to the Received Text here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support as the representative Byzantine reading dating from ancient times. It also enjoys the support of about one-quarter of the old Latin Versions, also dating from ancient times; and has the further ancient Greek support of the church fathers and doctors, St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom. By contrast, the variant has no support in the Greek, but has strong support in the Latin. Weighing up these competing considerations, and taking into account the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:5b an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:5b, “of their garments,” is found in (the independent) Codex 0107 (7th century, Matt. 22-23 & Mark 4-5); and Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in all extant Syriac Versions; the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); Armenian Version (5th century); and in Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century) as Latin, “*velamentorum* (of the coverings) *suorum* (of their)” i.e., “of their coverings.”

However, the variant omitting the words, “of their garments,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); and the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is also found in Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Middle Egyptian (3rd century) Versions; and the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The erroneous variant entered the NU Text *et al.* Hence the ASV reads at Matt. 23:5b, showing “of their garments” in italics as added, “and enlarge the borders *of their garments*” (ASV). This same format of using italics is found in the NASB. The words are omitted with no reintroduction of them in any form in the RSV, ESV, and NRSV.

The *New International Version* at Matt. 23:5b made some alterations between their first edition (1978) and second edition (1984), though the basic issue for our purposes is the same, found in the reading of the NIV’s 2nd edition as, “the tassels on their garments long” (NIV). Likewise the *Today’s English Version* (1976 & 1992) reads at Matt. 23:5b, “the tassels on their cloaks” (TEV). Are the key words, “on their garments” (NIV) or “on their cloaks” (TEV) being added in like in the ASV and NASB as “clarifications” not found in their underpinning text, or are the NIV and TEV translators here using their non-Alexandrian text pincer arm and following the TR’s reading? Probably the former rather than the latter. But can we be sure of this? No, nor can any of the blinded devotees of the NIV and TEV. *Let us thank God for our AV’s, which not only uses the best available text, the Received Text, but also uses italics to tell us when things are being added in!*

The post-Vatican II new neo-Alexandrian Papists also follow the variant in their

JB and NJB. “Hasn’t that been said of the Papists afore?” a good Christian reader may ask, “Or am I just suffering from *de ja vu*?” “Good Christian reader,” I reply, “thou art not suffering from *de ja vu*.” This is the same reading adopted by the old Latin Papists of the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims, which here makes this same omission, reading simply, “and enlarge their fringes” (Douay-Rheims). We fought the old Latin Papists here at Matt. 23:5b, just as we now fight the new neo-Alexandrian Papists here at Matt. 23:5b. “There is no new thing under the sun” (Eccl. 1:9).

Matt. 23:7 “Rabbi, Rabbi” (TR & AV) {B}

The TR’s Greek, “*Rabbi* (‘Teacher’ / ‘Master’ / ‘Rabbi’), *Rabbi* (‘Teacher’ / ‘Master’ / ‘Rabbi’),” i.e., “Rabbi, Rabbi” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53, with spelling variant, “*Rabbei, Rabbei*”); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also supported as Latin, “*Magister* (‘Teacher’ / ‘Master’), *Magister* (‘Teacher’ / ‘Master’),” in old Latin Version d (5th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379).

However, a variant reading simply, Greek, “*Rabbi*”, is a minority Byzantine reading found in Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century). It is further found as Latin, “*Rabbi* (‘Teacher’ / ‘Master’ / ‘Rabbi’),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers, Basil the Great (d. 379) and Chrysostom (d. 407).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental omission? In *Codex Freerianus* (W 032) there is a stylistic paper space of about 3 letter spaces after “*Rabbei, Rabbei*” at the end of verse 7 before the start of Matt. 23:8; although on the same page (Matt. 23:6-16, p. 85) there is about a 7 to 8 letter paper space at the end of verse 11 before the start of Matt. 23:12. Did a scribe working with a similar type of manuscript not detect a paper fade of the second “*Rabbi*”? Alternatively, was the second “*Rabbi*” accidentally lost by ellipsis after the scribe wrote the first, “*Rabbi*”, as looking back at this manuscript his eye jumped to the second “*Rabbi*” and he just kept writing?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe consider it was “unnecessarily wordy” to repeat “*Rabbi*”? Did he then simply prune away the second “*Rabbi*” as “a stylistic improvement”?

Was the variant a deliberate or accidental omission? We cannot be sure. But we can be sure that it was a change to the *Textus Receptus* here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR's reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading. It is found in the Latin of ancient times in one old Latin Version; and it also clearly dates from ancient times as seen by both the Greek of *Codex Freerianus* and also the church father and doctor, St. Basil the Great. By contrast, the variant has relatively weak support in the Greek, although St. Basil was aware of both readings. However, the variant has strong support in the Latin. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 23:7 a high level "B" (in the range of 71-74%), i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:7, "Rabbi, Rabbi," is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century, with spelling variant, "*Rabbei, Rabbei*"). It is further found in (the independent) Codex 0107 (7th century, Matt. 22-23 & Mark 4-5); Minuscules 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac: Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century), Curetonian (3rd / 4th century), and Harclean h (616) Versions.

However, the variant which reads, "Rabbi," is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century, with spelling variant, "*Rabbei*"). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex 0138 (13th century, Matt. 21:24-24:15). It is further found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.*; and is the most probable reading of Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), although the manuscript's state of preservation makes complete verification of this uncertain. It is also found in the Syriac Pesitto Version (first half 5th century); Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries); and in Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century) as Latin, "*Magister* ('Teacher' / 'Master')."

At Matt. 23:7 the erroneous variant, Greek, “*Rabbi*,” entered the NU Text *et al* (with spelling variant, “*Rabbei*” in Tischendorf’s 8th edition of 1869-72 and Westcott-Hort of 1881). The incorrect variant was thus adopted at Matt. 23:7 in the ASV, NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV.

The words of Jesus in Matt. 23:7 refer to the vibrant situation in a bazaar such as Nazareth, where amidst the bright rainbow colours of wares in the displays of fruit-stalls, raiment, and shining bangles; amidst the buzz and energy of men moving up’n’down the walkways and shouting out in the bazaar; as the Jewish clergyman walks by shopkeepers and others call out, “*Rabbi! Rabbi!*” It’s a scene of men, women, and children on the move; a scene whose bustling energy and noise is dynamically captured by our Lord in the need for repetition in the words, “*Rabbi, Rabbi.*”

By contrast, the variant’s singular usage, “*Rabbi*,” means the whole energetic atmosphere of the bazaar as captured by Jesus’ words in the Received Text is made to fall horribly flat. Nevertheless, this “flat reading” greatly appealed to the old Latin Papists who fell flat on their faces when they adopted it in the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims. Then some centuries later, once again the new neo-Alexandrian Papists fell flat on their faces when they adopted it in the Jerusalem and New Jerusalem Bibles. So too, apostate Protestant neo-Alexandrians fell flat on their faces, e.g., the flat singular reading was here adopted by the semi neo-Alexandrian, Moffatt. I think being a neo-Alexandrian is like driving a car around with four flat tires. In some ways, it might get one from Point A to Point B; but I think one is really doing it the hard way!

Matt. 23:8b “*Christ*” (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

I thank God for the Greek and Latin volumes of Migne’s church writers. Migne’s work is a truly great treasure, albeit one that is not as widely appreciated as it should be. In consulting it for Matt. 23:8b, I went to one of a number of libraries I use that has Migne, where one of the Librarians has an Office with a glass wall looking out over the Migne Collection in Reference. Over the years, this Librarian has told me that I am “the only one” who ever uses Migne. I am glad that I do have to “fight off a hoard” to get at it! ... Even if I do have to sometimes “blow the dust off” the top of a volume!

Most commonly my references to church writers simply follows the assessment made by those compiling a textual apparatus, such as that of Tischendorf’s 8th edition. Time constraints mean that I generally have no practical alternative but to pursue this methodology. However, on this occasion I happened to check Tischendorf’s citation of Cyprian which he says supports the variant.

But since this citation by Cyprian involves a quote from Matt. 23:6-8 that ends

with the words, “*Unus (one) est (is) enim (for) vobis (your) Magister (Master)*”¹⁷; contextually, it seems clear to me that this is not intended as a full quote of the verse by Cyprian, and so we do not know if he cited the rest of the verse whether he would have included “*Christus (Christ)*” (TR) or not (variant). Therefore I make no reference to Cyprian, *infra*. (Cf. “Preliminary Textual Discussion” at Matt. 23:3b.)

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:8b the TR’s Greek, “*o (-) Christos (Christ)*,” in the wider words, “one is your Master, *even Christ*” (AV, shewing / showing AV’s italics), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and (thrice abbreviating “*Christos*” / “*XPICTOC*” as “*XC*” with a bar on top,) Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is further supported by the ancient church Latin writer, Novatian (d. after 251)¹⁸; and the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754).

However, a variant omitting Greek, “*o (-) Christos (Christ)*,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Pi 041 (9th century). It is further omitted in the Latin in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), l (7th / 8th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers, Basil the Great (d. 379) and Chrysostom (d. 407).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which must thus stand. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental omission? Did the “*o (-) Christos (Christ)*,” possibly written like in Lectionaries 2378 and 1968 as just three letters, “*OXC*”, come at the end of a line? Was it lost in an undetected paper fade?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? In a different variant, Origen reads, “*eis*

¹⁷ St. Cyprian in: Migne (Latin Writers Series) (1844 Paris Edition), *PATROLOGIA*, Vol. 4, p. 735 (Testimonies, 3:5) (Latin).

¹⁸ Latin, “*unus (one) Magister (Master) Christus (Christ)*,” Novatian in: Migne (Latin Writers Series) (1844 Paris Edition, reprint Brepols, Turnholt, Belgium), *PATROLOGIA*, Vol. 3, p. 948 (*De Trinitate*, 30) (Latin); Roberts, A. & Donaldson, J. (Editors), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, American Reprint of the Edinburgh Edition, by A.C. Coxe, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA, 1957, p. 643 (Concerning the Trinity, 30) (English).

(one) *disaskalos* (teacher) *en* (in) *ouranois* (heaven)¹⁹,” i.e., changing the focus from Christ to the Father (cf. the next verse, “one is your Father, which is in heaven”). Why? Because Origen was a Trinitarian heretic who denied the teaching of the equality of the three Divine Persons (John 5:18; 10:30; Philp. 2:6; I John 5:7), claiming instead that the Trinity was graded so that the Second Divine Person was inferior to the First Divine Person; and the Third Divine Person was inferior to both. St. Peter calls such things, “damnable heresies” (II Peter 2:1); and St. Paul says those in such “heresies,” “shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:20,21). Hence the *Athanasian Creed* says, “And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other: none is greater, or less than another; but the whole three Persons are co-eternal together: and co-equal. ... This is the catholick faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.”

Did an assimilationist scribe looking at both Origen’s replacement of “*o* (-) *Christos* (Christ)” with “*en* (in) *ouranois* (heaven),” and the text of the TR, conclude that both “*o* (-) *Christos* (Christ)” (TR) and “*en* (in) *ouranois* (heaven)” (Origen) were different “scribal clarifications” and “therefore both were added”? Did such a scribe therefore think “the shorter reading is the better reading,” and hence regard it as “a stylistic improvement” to “remove both”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We cannot be sure. But we can be sure that this was an alteration to the text of Scripture here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine text reading. It also has clear support from ancient times in the Latin with Novatian, who long before there were any Popes in Rome (First Pope: Boniface III in 607 A.D.²⁰), was for a time one of two rival Bishops of Rome. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek, but strong support in the Latin. Balancing out these considerations, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:8b a “B” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

¹⁹ Tischendorf’s 8th edition; citing Migne 3:182 (i.e., Migne’s 3rd Origen Volume, section 182).

²⁰ The term, “pope,” was used of various Diocesan Bishops long before 607, of which a surviving usage is found in the continuing title of the Coptic Orthodox “Pope.” But usage of the term just for the Bishop of Rome as “the universal bishop,” i.e., with the claimed connotation that the Bishop of Rome had a “universal” jurisdiction in the church as “Vicar of Christ,” so that as a vice-Christ or vice-God, “He as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (II Thess. 2:4), developed after 607. It is in this sense that I mean “the first Pope” was Boniface III.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:8b, “Christ,” is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex 0138 (13th century, Matt. 21:24-24:15). It is also found in Minuscules 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 579 (13th century, mixed text), and 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts (Swanson)*, which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is further found in the Syriac Curetonian Version (3rd / 4th century), and Syriac Harelean Version (616) in an asterisk marked out text (indicating it is not the representative reading of the Harelean Version).

However, a variant omitting “Christ,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the independent) Codex 0107 (7th century, Matt. 22-23 & Mark 4-5) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type) and 565 (9th century, independent); and the *Family 1 Manuscripts (Swanson)*, which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude). It is also found in the representative Syriac Harelean Version (616); Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); and the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Hence the omission of “Christ” is found at Matt. 23:8b in the ASV, NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV.

The omission at Matt. 23:8b is found at the hands of the post-Vatican II new neo-Alexandrian Papists in their Roman “Catholic RSV,” JB, and NJB. Far from this being some “new information” that is supposed by neo-Alexandrians to lead neo-Byzantines to conclude that due to some kind of “improved information” we should now change the reading at Matt. 23:8b, we here see *history repeating itself*. For this reading was earlier found at the hands of the post-Trent and pre-Vatican II old Latin Papists in the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims.

The Douay-Rheims reads, “For one is your master: and all you are brethren.” Quite apart from the issue of accuracy, how much grander in sound is the Authorized Version with its assonance on “even” and “ye” in, “for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all *ye* are brethren” (AV). By contrast, what a debasement of the English language is the New King James Version at Matt. 23:8b with its rendering of, “for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren” (NKJV). Are we to take the glories of the literary beauty of our King James Versions of 1611, and exchange them for the debased English forms of the Papists’ Douay-Rheims Version or Burgonites New King James

Version? I say the words, “God forbid” reverently when I say, “God forbid!” On the one hand, I do not say the AV is a word perfect translation; but on the other hand, I do say it is *by far* the best available English translation of the Holy Scriptures. *As far as English translations go, in 1611 “the wheel was invented” with the AV. Let us not waste our time “trying to reinvent the wheel.”*

Matt. 23:13,14 “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.” (TR & AV)

Matt. 23:13,14: Component 1 (Matt. 23:13a,14a) {A}; &
Component 2 (verse order) {B}.

Preliminary Remarks.

In New South Wales Primary Schools I attended as a boy in the 1960s and early 1970s, I was familiar with a fivefold system of stamps used by school teachers which ranged downwards from the top as, “Excellent,” “Very Good,” “Good,” “Fair,” and “Poor.” Were we using such a marking system for the NT texts we have looked at to date on Matt. 1-23, e.g., among those of the Neo-Byzantine School, Erasmus and Beza would be “Excellent,” and Stephanus would be “Very Good;” whereas the texts of all those of the Neo-Alexandrian School would be “Poor” (although the textual apparatuses they have produced are most useful and valuable).

I may be indifferent to some differences between the texts of Erasmus and Stephanus (see Matt. 21:25, Appendix 3, Volume 3, Textual Commentary). And I do not necessarily consider that later changes by Erasmus in his various editions were always an improvement (see Matt. 20:5b, Appendix 1, Volume 2, Textual Commentary); although they sometimes certainly were (see Matt. 8:13, Appendix 3, Volume 1, Textual Commentary).

The reader will note that on some other occasions I have preferred the text of Erasmus over that of Stephanus (see Matt. 12:32a, Appendix 1, Vol. 1, Textual Commentary; Matt. 13:30, where I agree with Erasmus against both Stephanus and Beza, Appendix 1, Volume 1, Textual Commentary; and Matt. 21:7c, Vol. 3, Textual Commentary). Here at Matt. 23:13,14 we find another such example, since the stylistic feature of Matt. 23 I isolate, *infra*, was evidently recognized by Erasmus (1516 & 1522), Beza (1598), and Elzevir (1633); although lost on Stephanus (1550).

Though in such instances my mind is closer to that of Erasmus than that of Stephanus, the reader would be wrong to thereby conclude that I think poorly of Stephanus. Though in such instances I do not consider his skills of textual analysis were

as good as that great past master of the Neo-Byzantine School, Erasmus of Rotterdam, they were nevertheless still very good overall. While I thank God for the labours of Erasmus, I also thank him for those of Stephanus who gave us our NT verse numbers; and of course, I also thank God for the other great neo-Byzantines of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. There are four variants that will be considered. The two in *Component 1* shall be called, *Variants 1 & 2*; and the two in *Component 2* shall be called, *Variants 3 & 4*. For the purposes of much of the textual analysis of Matt. 23:13,14, my twin concerns are the verse order (*Component 2, Variant 3*) and presence of verse 14 (omitted in *Component 2, Variant 4*). Therefore I shall generally here refer to these verses in a corporate way, omitting reference to secondary internal differences that occur in these verses' readings e.g., the Matt. 23:14 W 032 revowelling of the epsilons ("e") to alpha-iotas ("ai") in "*katēsthiēte* (ye devour)" as "*kataisthiētai*;" or in Lectionary 1968 at Matt. 23:13b "*ouranon* (heaven)" is abbreviated to "*ounon*" with a bar over the "un", and "*anthronon* (men)" is abbreviated to "*anon*" with a bar over the "no." But I shall still discuss a third concern, namely, the *Component 1* primary issue of the first two or three words of both verses 13 and 14 (Matt. 23:13a,14a), preceding Matt. 23:13b,14b in the Received Text, but preceding Matt. 23:14b,13b, in the majority Byzantine text (*Component 1, Variant 2*).

The Second Matter. The *Component 2, Variant 3* reading, is the majority Byzantine text reading; and Green's Textual Apparatus (1986) says 95-100% of all manuscripts support it. In fact, this minimally overstates the known figures. Von Soden (1913) says the verse order of Matt. 23:14b followed by Matt. 23:13b has the support of his K group of about 1,000 manuscripts. More precisely, this subdivides into c. 860 K group *Gospel* manuscripts; but either way, more than c. 90% of the K group manuscripts are Byzantine text. Allowing for a 10% error bar (which Pierpont failed to factor in to his calculations in Green's Textual Apparatus), means the *Component 2, Variant 3* reading has the support of more than c. 90% but less than 100% of all Byzantine manuscripts. If a more precise manuscript count be undertaken, it might turn out that e.g., the *Component 2, Variant 3* reading has the support of more than 99% of the Greek Byzantine manuscripts. However, on the available data from von Soden we cannot with safety go beyond very broad-brush figures.

But for all that, we should be grateful to God for Baron von Soden's uniquely comprehensive manuscript collation of virtually all Greek Codices and Minuscules; although he omitted work on all but about a dozen of the c. 2,300 Greek Lectionaries. Von Soden's research assistants numbered about 40 and laboured for about 15 years; and the sample von Soden collated is clearly large enough to safely make generalist projections from it, notwithstanding the absence of his Greek Lectionary work. Indeed, given the added difficulties of working through Lectionaries relative to Codices and Minuscules, it would have taken von Soden with about 40 research assistants at least about another 20 years to collate the Greek Lectionary data (and work in some areas

would probably not have been possible during World War I, so therefore at least another 25 years would have to be allowed), and given that von Soden died in 1914, had he sought to do this, the whole project may therefore have been lost to us. And so as a fruit of the labours of von Soden and his research assistants (1913), we can certainly say with regard to *Component 2, Variant 3* reading, that the reverse verse order of Matt. 23:14b followed by Matt. 23:13b has the support of more than *c.* 90% of the Greek manuscripts, and the TR's reading less than *c.* 10% of the Greek manuscripts.

The Third Matter. Given that the *Component 1, Variant 2* reading, *infra*, is isolated as a primary matter, and in his edition of the Book of Armagh, Gwynn adds Latin, "*autem* (but)" in italics as added by himself, I show this as being omitted by this manuscript at Matt. 23:13a, *infra*.

The Fourth Matter. Von Soden's (1913) extremely poor and highly inaccurate NT text is matched by a truly excellent textual apparatus, the amazing like of which we have not seen in any textual apparatus before or since. One needs von Soden's bad main text to make sense of his good textual apparatus, and so the good and the bad are here indissolubly joined together. Yet here at Matt. 23:13,14 he takes the view that old Latin q supports *Component 2, Variant 4*, in omitting Matt. 23:14. However, Adolf Julicher's and Kurt Aland's *Italia, Das Neue Testament* (1938-63) (i.e., "Julicher"), which contains the old Latin readings of the Gospels, shows that old Latin q omits Matt. 23:13-28. Therefore I do not agree with von Soden that one can show old Latin q as following *Component 2, Variant 4*, in omitting Matt. 23:14, since this omission involves wider issues of the manuscript's defectiveness at this point. Hence no reference is made to old Latin q, *infra*.

The Fifth Matter. The UBS (3rd, 3rd Corrected, & 4th Revised) textual apparatuses here shows three, not four variants, because they combine as one the TR's complete reading i.e., of both *Components 1 & 2*, with that of *Component 1, Variant 1, infra*. But Julicher shows the readings of e.g., old Latin b, ff2, & h, 1, & c do not contain "But (Latin, *autem*)," at the beginning of Matt. 23:14a, and so the UBS textual apparatuses are wrong to combine these readings.

These UBS textual apparatuses are my source for saying that outside the closed class of sources, *Component 1, Variant 1*, and the TR's *Component 2* (verse order), are also found in some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version. It is to be hoped that they are more accurate here with the Egyptian translation than they are with the Latin translation. But what if they are not? It does not ultimately matter, for we neo-Byzantines do not use any manuscripts outside the closed class of sources for the purposes of composing the Received Text. Our interest in such manuscripts is purely passing, and they are included in this textual commentary primarily in order for the reader to better understand where our main contemporary opponents since the 19th century, the neo-Alexandrians, are coming from. (Although before the Vatican II Council they were one of two main opponents with the old Latin Papists, since the Vatican II Council they are now our main contemporary opponent. For at least to date, they have been far more influential than our other contemporary opponent, the Majority

Text Burgonites, such as Hodges & Farstad or the NKJV's NT textual apparatus.) But if another neo-Byzantine wanted to entirely ignore all manuscripts outside the closed class of sources, then that would be perfectly proper, and would in no way affect the result of the *Textus Receptus*.

The Sixth Matter (Diatessaron formatting). The Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron here contains the words, “*hypochritae* (hypocrites)” and “*Vae* (Woe) *vobis* (unto you), *Pharisei* (Pharisees) *hypochritae* (hypocrites)” (Diatessaron chapter 141), which Edward Sievers (1892) takes to be drawn from Matt. 23:14. However, it is also possible that due to Diatessaron formatting, the scribes of this Vulgate Codex drew them from Matt. 23:13 or elsewhere. Therefore no reference is made to the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron, *infra*²¹.

Principal Textual Discussion.

There are four variants. The two in *Component 1* are called, *Variants 1 & 2*; and the two in *Component 2* are called, *Variants 3 & 4*.

The *Component 1* reading (Matt. 23:13a,14a). At *Component 1* of Matt. 23:13,14, the first three opening words of Matt. 23:13 are Greek, “*Ouai* (Woe) *de* (But) *umin* (unto you)” (Matt. 23:13a), and the corresponding first two opening words of Matt. 23:14 are Greek, “*Ouai* (Woe) *umin* (unto you)” (Matt. 23:14a). This is the majority Byzantine reading, e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is further found as Latin, “*Vae* (woe) *autem* (But) *vobis* (unto you),” in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407); and ancient church Latin writers, Cyprian (d. 258)²² and Hilary (d. 367). It is also manifested in the Greek *Novum Testamentum* (New Testament) editions of Erasmus (1516 & 1522), Stephanus (1550), Beza (1598), and Elzevir (1633).

The TR's reading is also partly supported by the manuscripts and church writers

²¹ The internet edition I use of the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (Eduard Sievers' *Tatien, Lateinisch und altdeutsch*, Druck & Verlag, Paderborn, 1892; printed copy available at King's College, London University, UK, shelf mark: Sion Lib. BS 2500 T2 G3 SIE), has changed its address to <http://users.belgacom.net/chardic/htm/tatien.html>. If it changes again, the interested reader will hopefully be able to locate it by typing in on Google or Yahoo, “Le Diatessaron de Tatien.”

²² Hans Freiherr von Soden's *Das Lateinische Neue Testament in Afrika zur zeit Cyprians*, in Harnack, A, & Schmidt, C., *op. cit.*, pp. 366-588, at p. 414 (Latin same as Vulgate).

of *Component 2, Variant 4, infra*, which while omitting verse 14, nevertheless include in verse 13 the opening words of the TR's Matt. 23:13a. It is also partly supported at this same point of Matt. 23:13a by *Component 1, Variant 1, infra*.

A variant reads “*Ouai* (Woe) *de* (But) *umin* (unto you)” at both Matt. 23:13a and Matt. 23:14a (*Component 1, Variant 1*). This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Lectionaries 673 (12th century) and 547 (13th century).

Another variant, (*Component 1, Variant 2*) at Matt. 23:13a omits the “But (Greek, *de*; Latin, *autem*). This is found in the Latin which reads simply, “*Vae* (woe) *vobis* (unto you),” in old Latin Versions h (5th century) and f (6th century), as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) (*Component 1, Variant 2*); with the initial words of Matt. 23:14a then reading “*Vae* (woe) *autem* (But) *vobis* (unto you),” in old Latin Version f (6th century) (*Component 1, Variant 2*). And connected to this is the issue of Matt. 23:14b then coming before Matt. 23:13b in old Latin Version f (6th century) (*Component 2, Variant 3, infra*).

The *Component 2* reading (verse order). At *Component 2* of Matt. 23:13,14, other than the initial words of *Component 1* (Matt. 23:13a,14a), the TR's verse order which places Matt. 23:13b before Matt. 23:14b is a minority Byzantine reading found in Lectionaries 673 (12th century, Athos, Greece) and 547 (13th century, Rome, Vatican City State). It is further found as a minority Latin Vulgate Codices reading in Codices F (Fuldensis, 6th century, Fulda, Germany), Q (Kenanensis, 7th / 8th century, Dublin, southern Ireland), T (Toletanus, 8th century, Madrid, Spain), and Th (Theodulfianus, 9th century, Paris, France); and in the margins of Codices S (Sangellensis, 6th century, St. Gallen, Switzerland) and H (Hubertianus, 9th / 10th century, London, UK). It is also found in old Latin Versions b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), l (7th / 8th century), s (7th / 8th century), and c (12th / 13th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found in the ancient church Latin writer, Hilary (d. 367). It is also manifested in the Greek *Novum Testamentum* (New Testament) editions of Erasmus (16th century), Beza (16th century), and Elzevir (17th century).

Component 2, Variant 3, has the verse order as verse 14 first (Matt. 23:14b), followed by verse 13 (Matt. 23:13b). This is the reading of the majority Byzantine text, e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is further found in old Latin Version f (6th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407). It is also manifested in the Greek *Novum Testamentum* (New Testament) edition of Stephanus (1550).

Component 2, Variant 4, has Matt. 23:13 (Matt. 23:13a + Matt. 23:13b), but omits Matt. 23:14. This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscules 21 (12th century) and 924 (12th century). *Variant 4* is further found in the majority of Latin Vulgate Codices of Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century); as well as in old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), d (5th century), aur (7th century), g1 (8th / 9th century),

ff1 (10th / 11th century); and the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254), in both the Greek and also a Latin translation; the ancient church Greek writers of the Eusebian Canons (4th century) and Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444); and the ancient church Latin writers Cyprian (d. 258)²³ and Jerome (d. 420).

With respect to *Component 2, Variant 4*, there is no good textual argument against the existence of Matt. 23:14 as found in the representative Byzantine text, so that the existence of verse 14 (as opposed to its location relative to verse 13,) is correct.

Component 1, Variant 1 & 2, will be discussed after first considering *Component 2, Variant 3*.

Let us now consider *Component 2, Variant 3*, i.e., the fact that the verse order is Matt. 23:14b followed by Matt. 23:13b in the majority Byzantine text.

Looking in overview at the style of address used by Jesus in Matt. 23:2-39, we find that he repeatedly uses a technique of first stating a principle, and then elucidating on it with one or more examples.

Statement of Principles in Matt. 23:2-12,16-39	Elucidation Example(s) in Matt. 23:2-12, 16-39
<p>“The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: all therefore they bid you observe, ... but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not” (Matt. 23:2,3).</p>	<p>“For they bind heavy burdens and ... lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers” (Matt. 23:4).</p>
<p>“But all their works they do for to be seen of men” (Matt. 23:5a).</p>	<p>“They make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments” etc. (Matt. 23:5b-7); followed by further elucidation on not being as those whose show of works means they like “to be called,” “Rabbi, Rabbi” (Matt. 23:7-12).</p>
<p>“Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!” (Matt. 23:16).</p>	<p>“Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?” etc. (Matt. 23:17-22).</p>

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 414-415.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law” (Matt. 23:23a).

“Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel” (Matt. 23:24).

Elucidation. The gnat (one example of Lev. 11:23) and “the camel” (Lev. 11:4), were both unclean under the Jewish food rules no longer binding (Mark 7:19; Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:16; I Tim. 4:3-5). But if Jewish Christians keep them as part of their cultural heritage, then Gentile Christians should follow them in any Jewish-Gentile Christian fellowship meal (Acts 15:20,29; 21:25). Likewise, though stronger brethren are free to eat food offered to idols, in any fellowship meal with weaker brethren, all are to abstain from such food (Acts 15:20,29; 21:25; Rom. 14; I Cor. 8). The remaining prohibition of “fornication” in Acts 15:20,29; 21:25; refers to interracial dating or marriage between Jewish and Gentile Christians, since different racial groups are the new tribes of the new Israel (Rev. 7:4-9 cf. Rev. 5:9; 10:11; 13:7; 14:6; 22:2) of the Church (cf. Gen. 6:1-3,9; & Tobit 4:12, Apocrypha.)

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness” (Matt. 23:27).

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because ye build the tombs of the prophets and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of

“Judgement, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone” (Matt. 23:23b).

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also” (Matt. 23:25,26; cf. Luke 11:37-41).

“Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity” (Matt. 23:28).

“Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you [New Testament times’] prophets” etc. (Matt. 23:33-36).

the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers” (Matt. 23:29-32).	
“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” (Matt. 23:37)	“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matt. 23:38,39).

But when we come to Matt. 23:13-15 in the representative Byzantine text we find a clear and obvious textual problem. The statement of principle in Matt. 23:13b, is sandwiched between the elucidation examples of Matt. 23:14b before it, and Matt. 23:15 after it. *Clearly something has gone wrong at this point of textual transmission!* The only way to remedy this textual problem is to place Matt. 23:13b before Matt. 23:14b,15. When this is done we find the following stylistic harmony with the rest of Matt. 23.

Statement of Principles in Matt. 23:13	Elucidation Examples in Matt. 23:14,15
“But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.”	“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.”

Therefore this is the correct order of the verses at Matt. 23:13-15.

A second connected matter is *Component 1, Variant 1 & 2*, i.e., Does the “*de* (But)” of Matt. 23:13a precede Matt. 23:14a with no “*de* (But)”, as in the representative Byzantine text, or not? As previously discussed in this textual commentary, in Matthean Greek, “*de* (but),” is used as a stronger stylistic breaker (see commentary at Matt. 21:7c & Matt. 22:7, *supra*). We cannot doubt that in the stylistic analysis of Matt. 23:2-39, *supra*, that Matt. 23:13-15 forms a stylistic unit, and so to have the “*de* (But)” after the “*Ouai* (Woe)” and before the “*umin* (unto you)” anywhere other than at the start of this unit i.e., at Matt. 23:13a, would *clang on the ears as bad Matthean Greek*. Therefore, the correct sequential order of the Matt. 23:13-15 stylistic unit is: Matt. 23:13a, Matt. 23:13b, Matt. 23:14a, Matt. 23:14b, Matt. 23:15, as found in the Received Text. And in this completed form, it is found only in the Latin (old Latin b, ff2, *et al*).

The origins of the variants are conjectural.

On God's beautiful earth (now sadly sullied by man's sin), when the sky is red the sunlight can temporarily cast an unusually attractive hue of light on the land. So too, an interesting hue of light is here thrown on relevant matters by Sydney University's Lectionary 1968. Dividing verse 18 so as to better understand the issues being considered in this Lectionary, Matt. 23:18 reads, "[18a] *Kai* (And) *os an* (*os* + *an* = 'whosoever'²⁴) [18b] *omose* (shall swear) *en* (by) *tō* (the) *thusiasteriō* (altar) *ouden* (nothing) *estin* (it is). [18c] *Os* (+ the following *an* = 'whosoever') *d'* (= "*de*," But) *an* (see *os*) [18d] *omose* (swaereth) *en* (by) *tō* (the)" etc. . The scribe of Lectionary 1968 first wrote out verse 18a + 18b + 18c. But as the eye of the scribe darted back'n'forth, he got confused by ellipsis with the "*Os* (whosoever) *d'* (But) *an* (*os* + *an*) *omose* (swaereth) *en* (by) *tō* (the)" of verse 18c + 18d, and the similar "*os an* (whosoever) *omose* (shall swear) *en* (by) *tō* (the)" of verse 18a + 18b. Thus after verse 18c's "*Os d' an*", he for the second time wrote the "*omose* (shall swear) *en* (by) *tō* (the) *thusiasteriō* (altar) *ouden* (nothing) *estin* (it is)" of verse 18b.

But as the scribe of Lectionary 1968 wrote out the following "*Os d' an*" of verse 18c, he evidently realized his mistake. He thus "corrected" his mistake by putting a line through the first "[18a + 18b] *Kai* (And) *os an* (whosoever) *omose* (shall swear) *en* (by) *tō* (the) *thusiasteriō* (altar) *ouden* (nothing) *estin* (it is)." But in doing so, he forgot that the start of verse 18a and 18c are different. Thus his remaining "verse 18" starts with the "*Os d' an*" of verse 18c, followed by the "*omose* (shall swear) *en* (by) *tō* (the) *thusiasteriō* (altar) *ouden* (nothing) *estin* (it is)" of verse 18b; followed by verse 18c + 18d etc. . Of course, we can still see this "snapshot photo" of a scribal error because the line through that part of the verse he crossed out is still visible. But if a later subsequent scribe then copied out this section from this manuscript of Lectionary 1968, he would omit all that was crossed out, and so we would simply be left with a reading starting with verse 18c + 18b, followed by verse 18c + 18d. And so it is, that by the hue of light thrown on possible scribal errors here in Lectionary 1968, we may better understand some matters of relevance to us in our following discussion of Matt. 23:13,14.

Were *Component 1, Variants 1 & 2*; and *Component 2, Variant 3 & 4*; all the consequence of an essentially similar accidental loss? Matt. 23:13 starts with the words, "*Ouai* (Woe) *de* (But) *umin* (unto you), *grammateis* (scribes) *kai* (and) *Pharisaoi* (Pharisees), *upokriptai* (hypocrites²⁵), *oti* (for)." At Matt. 23:13 this is followed by,

²⁴ The TR here reads, "*os ean* (whosoever)," see Textual Commentary Appendix 1 at Matt. 21:22a; and Appendix 3 at Matt. 23:18.

²⁵ With the breathing (generally regarded by modern grammarians as an essential part of the word, although not present in some manuscripts known to me such as W 032 which reads, "YΠΟΚΡΙΤΑΙ," and so like Robinson & Pierpont's 1991 edition which never uses them, I do not necessarily show them), '*upokritai* (from '*upokrites*) = *hupokritai* or *hypokrita*, and hence the origins of our English word, "hypocrite" are here evident.

“*kleiete* (ye shut up)” etc.; at Matt. 23:14 by, “*katesthiete* (ye devour),” etc.; and at Matt. 23:15 by “*periatete* (ye compass),” etc. . Let the reader imagine a scribe was looking at something like the following section of Matt. 23:13-15, in which I shall highlight these key common words in bold type. On this occasion, I shall use capital letters (unicals) and continuous script such as one finds in e.g., W 032, to help the reader better understand something closer to the actual look of what such a scribe may have seen, and the type of writing style one sees in W 032. Of course I am using approximations at times e.g., for “ΚΑΙ (and),” the “Κρ” looks *something like* an abbreviation sometimes used for “ΚΑΙ” in W 032²⁶.

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 ΠΙΛΟΤΕΡΟΝΥΜΩΝ

Concerning *Component 1, Variant 1*. Did a scribe get confused at the start of verse 14 with his eye jumping back and forth between the “ΟΥΑΙΔΕΥΜΙΝΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΙCΚΑΙΦΑΡΙCΑΙΟΙΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΑΙΟΤΙ” of Matt. 23:13 and the “ΟΥΑΙΥΜΙΝΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΙCΚΑΙΦΑΡΙCΑΙΟΙΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΑΙΟΤΙ” of Matt. 23:14? Did he thus inadvertently start Matt. 23:14a with the “ΟΥΑΙΔΕΥΜΙΝ” (*Ouai de umin*) of Matt. 23:13a?

Concerning *Component 1, Variant 2*. Did a scribe get confused at the start and with his eye jumping back and forth between the “ΟΥΑΙΔΕΥΜΙΝΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΙCΚΑΙΦΑΡΙCΑΙΟΙΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΑΙΟΤΙ” of Matt. 23:13 and the “ΟΥΑΙΥΜΙΝΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΙCΚΑΙΦΑΡΙCΑΙΟΙΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΑΙΟΤΙ” of Matt. 23:14? Did he first simply write out the entire verse 14 i.e., Matt. 23:14a + Matt. 23:14b? Did he then realize his error? Did he then think, “It doesn’t matter which order these verses are in,” and so just copy out after Matt. 23:14, Matt. 23:13 i.e., Matt. 23:13a + Matt. 23:13b?

²⁶ See W 032 Facsimile (Michigan University, USA, 1912,) at Matt. 15:36 (p. 57) and Luke 20:2 (p. 287), although this is somewhat different to the abbreviation at Matt. 26:51 (p. 102).

Concerning *Component 2, Variant 3* i.e., Matt. 23:13a + Matt. 23:14b; following by Matt. 23:14a + Matt. 23:13b. As the eye of a scribe darted back and forth from copying out the first “ΥΜΙΝΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΙΣΚΑΙΦΑΡΙΣΑΙΟΙΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΑΙΟΤΙ” of Matt. 23:13, did his eye jump by ellipsis to the second “ΥΜΙΝΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΙΣΚΑΙΦΑΡΙΣΑΙΟΙΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΑΙΟΤΙ” of Matt. 23:14? Did he thus accidentally omit verse 13b? After he started to copy out the “ΥΜΙΝΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΙΣΚΑΙΦΑΡΙΣΑΙΟΙΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΑΙΟΤΙ” of Matt. 23:15 part way, did he suddenly realize that he had omitted verse 13b? Did he then think, “It doesn’t matter which order these verses are in”? Did he then jump back to put the remainder in from verse 13b, before going on with verse 15?

Concerning *Component 2, Variant 4*, i.e., the omission of Matt. 23:14. Did a similar thing happen as a scribe started to copy out Matt. 23:14, and as his eye darted back and forth, did it jump by ellipsis from the starting words of Matt. 23:14 to Matt. 23:15? Being less adroit than the scribes of *Component 1, Variant 2* and *Component 2, Variant 3*, did the scribe of *Component 2, Variant 4*, simply fail to detect his error, with the consequence that verse 14 was accidentally lost?

Were the variants the consequence of deliberate omission?

Concerning *Component 1, Variant 1*. Did a second-rate scribe who understood neither the subtleties of Matthean Greek, nor the stylistic unit quality of Matt. 23:13-15, think it some kind of “stylistic improvement” to inject “*de* (but)” as a section marker at Matt. 23:14a? If so, was he influenced in this decision by “the precedent of” Matt. 23:13a, which he thus introduced by assimilation into Matt. 23:14a?

Concerning *Component 1, Variant 2* and *Component 2, Variant 3*. Did a second-rate scribe consider that because in “the parallel” accounts of Mark 12:40 and Luke 20:47, the “parallel” verses of Matt. 23:14 which are Mark 12:40 and Luke 20:47, come immediately after Mark 12:39 and Luke 20:46 which is the “parallel” verse with Matt. 23:6, that it would be “a stylistic improvement” to replicate this in Matt. 23 by reversing the order of verse 13 and 14? I.e., thus bringing Matt. 23:14 *closer to* Matt. 23:6? To the “obvious” objection that any such scribe would “have to be crazy and incompetent to do this;” we must remember that we cannot safely impute sane, sensible, and reasonable judgement to any scribe who would be prepared to so wilfully tamper with the Word of God.

Concerning *Component 2, Variant 4*. Did a third-rate scribe, conscious of the fact that Matt. 23:14 has “a parallel” reading at Mark 12:40 and Luke 20:47, apply his overly-simplistic mind to “textual analysis,” and wrongly conclude that “this must be an interpolation” from one of these two sources, and so omit Matt. 23:14? Was he further influenced in this “brilliant deduction” by knowledge of the *Variant 2* diversity, which he took to be “two different attempts at such an interpolation”? If so, he would have done well to consider instead the words of Ps. 131:1, “Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.”

Were these three variants deliberate or accidental changes? Or were they a combination of both? In my opinion, on the balance of probabilities it looks like the last three (*Component 1, Variant 2*, and *Component 2, Variants 3 & 4*) were accidental alterations; although the likely origins of *Component 1, Variant 1* is not as clear. Thus in at least three of these four variants, and possibly in all four variants, I think we are here seeing “snapshots” of “accident scenes” in “a known accident zone” for “the tricky ellipsis” of the commencement words of Matt. 23:13, Matt. 23:14, and Matt. 23:15.

The TR’s *Component 1* reading (Matt. 23:13a,14a) is strongly supported by textual analysis, *supra*, and has strong support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine text dating from ancient times. It also has strong support in the Latin, and the further support of two church fathers, St. Chrysostom and St. Hilary. By contrast, the *Component 1, Variants 1 & 2* are contrary to Matthean Greek, *supra*; *Component 1, Variant 1* has weak support in the Greek, and no support in the Latin; and *Component 1, Variant 2* has no support in the Greek, and fairly weak support in the Latin. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s *Component 1* reading at Matt. 23:13,14 i.e., Matt. 23:13a,14a, an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

The TR’s *Component 2* reading is strongly supported by textual analysis, *supra*. But the reading has weak support in the Greek, although stronger support in the Latin with a minority of Vulgate Codices, and also half a dozen old Latin versions of which half date from ancient times. It also enjoys the support of the church father, St. Hilary. I note that the Greek-Latin editions of Erasmus’s New Testament (1516 & 1522) have the TR’s reading in verse order 13,14, & 15 in both the left hand Greek column and right hand Latin column. The importance of the Latin to this reading means that the neo-Byzantines of the 16th and 17th century must have reconstructed the completed form of the Greek of the *Textus Receptus* from the Latin. Thus this was an example of the servant maxim, *The Latin improves the Greek*, dutifully bowing down low to its master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, since (unlike the old Latin Papists whose textual analysis was based on *the Latin text*,) any such reconstruction is based on textual analysis *of the Greek text*, which here supports the reading best preserved in the Latin.

In contrast to the TR’s *Component 2*; the *Component 2, Variant 3* reading which follows verse order 14b,13b, has strong support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading and weak support in the Latin; whereas the *Component 2, Variant 4* reading which omits verse 14 has weak support in the Greek, but good support in the Latin. However, *Component 2, Variant 4* lacks any serious textual argument in its favour. *Component 2, Variant 4*, may therefore be safely dismissed on the basis that the representative Byzantine Greek has verse 14. As to the issue of the order of the verses, though the reading of *Component 2, Variant 3*, is the representative Byzantine text, and further supported by an ancient Greek church writer, it poses a serious textual problem and so the verse order of 14b,13b, cannot possibly be correct.

The more perfect form of the TR is here found in the Latin alone. We here see the servant maxim, *The Latin improves the Greek*, like a good wife who calls her husband, “lord” (I Peter 3:6), being in humble “subjection” (I Peter 3:1) to the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*; for our textual analysis is based on the Greek which is given the priority, even though in this instance, it is then found from this Greek textual analysis that it is in fact the Latin that preserves the better overall reading, for which reason we here give all due “honour” (I Peter 3:7) to the Latin. Weighing up all the factors, *supra*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s *Component 2* reading at Matt. 23:13,14 i.e., verse order 13,14, a “B” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Concerning *Component 1*.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct *Component 1* reading of Matt. 23:13,14, “But (Greek, *de*; Latin, *autem*) woe unto you,” (Matt. 23:13a), with the corresponding opening words of Matt. 23:14 being Greek, “Woe unto you” (Matt. 23:14a), is found in (the independent) Codex 0107 (7th century, Matt. 22-23 & Mark 4-5) and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.*

The TR’s reading is also partly supported by the manuscripts of *Component 2*, *Variant 4*, *infra*, which while omitting verse 14, nevertheless include in verse 13 the opening words of the TR’s Matt. 23:13a. It is also partly supported at this same point of Matt. 23:13a by *Component 1*, *Variant 1*, *infra*.

Component 1, *Variant 1*, which reads, “But woe unto you,” at both Matt. 23:13a and Matt. 23:14a, is found in the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is also found in some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version.

Component 1, *Variant 2*, which omits the “But” at Matt. 23:13a and so reads, “Woe unto you” (Matt. 23:13a), is found in Minuscule 700 (11th century, independent). It is also found in Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century), which in rendering the Arabic, reads Latin, “*Vae (Woe) vobis (unto you)*,” at both Matt. 23:13a and Matt. 23:14a.

Concerning *Component 2*.

Component 2 (verse order), that correctly follows the TR's verse order which places Matt. 23:13b before Matt. 23:14b is found in the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is also found in some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version.

Component 2, Variant 3, that has the verse order as verse 14 first (Matt. 23:14b), followed by verse 13 (Matt. 23:13b). This is found in (the independent) Codex 0107 (7th century, Matt. 22-23 & Mark 4-5) and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles, reading in verse 14 Greek, “*mikra*” / “short,” rather than “*makra*” / “long²⁷”), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version; Ethiopic Version (*c.* 500); Slavic Version (9th century); and Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century, reading in verse 13 Latin, “*regnum Dei*” / “kingdom of God,” rather than “*regnum caelorum*” / “kingdom of heaven”).

Component 2, Variant 4, has Matt. 23:13 (Matt. 23:13a + Matt. 23:13b), but omits Matt. 23:14. This is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex 0138 (13th century, Matt. 21:24-24:15) and (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century); Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic Version (3rd / 4th century); Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Middle Egyptian (3rd century) Versions, and some manuscripts of the Bohairic Version; Armenian Version (5th century); and Georgian Version (5th century).

The TR's correct *Component 1*, harnessed to the incorrect *Component 2, Variant*

²⁷ 1243 substitutes “short,” thus reading, “short prayer,” Greek, “*mikra* (‘short,’ neuter plural accusative adjective, from *mikros-a-on*);” for “long” in “long prayer,” Greek “*makra* (‘long,’ neuter plural accusative adjective, from *makros-a-on*).” From these two Greek words we see the origins of some of our English words, found in the terminology that something is, “the *microcosm* of the *macrocosm*.”

4 (Matt. 23:13a + Matt. 23:13b, omitting Matt. 23:14,) was adopted by the NU Text *et al.*

Hence in following *Component 2, Variant 4*, the ASV correctly reads Matt. 23:13, “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering in to enter” (ASV); but then incorrectly omits Matt. 23:14 which it refers to in a footnote, saying, “Some ancient authorities insert here, or after ver. 12, ver. 14 ‘Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows’ houses, even while for a pretence ye make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive greater condemnation’ (ASV fn); and then the ASV has Matt. 23:15.

At Matt. 23:13,14, this same type of format as the ASV is followed in the RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, TEV, NEB, REB; and Papists’ JB and NJB. The NASB places verse 14 in square brackets to “indicate” that the “words” are “probably not in the original writings.” And Matt. 24:14 is omitted without any footnote reference to it in the TCNT and Moffatt Bible; so that in this sense, they resemble the old Latin Papists of the Douay-Rheims Version.

Alas, here at Matt. 23:13,14, the scribes of the ancient Alexandrian School and Western School, like the modern composers of the Neo-Alexandrian School’s texts, have wanted to spread the infection of Origen’s shorter reading around. In this ignoble endeavour, they are like malaria carrying mosquitoes who spread their infection around to a white tourist in black Africa who forgets his mosquito net.

Matt. 23:17 “sanctifieth” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The TR’s Greek is in active voice (i.e., the subject, “the temple,” performs the action), and present tense indicating the event (of sanctifying) occurs at that time. Hence Greek, “*o* (that) *agiazon* (‘sanctifying’ masculine singular nominative, active present participle, from *agiazō*),” means “that sanctifies” (present tense) and so is rendered “that sanctifieth” in the AV. Likewise, other than old Latin d, the Latin is in active voice and present tense. Hence the Latin is, “*quod* (that) *sanctificat* (‘it sanctifieth,’ indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *sanctifico*),” and so rendered in the Douay-Rheims as “that sanctifieth.”

By contrast, the variant’s reading of old Latin d is likewise in active voice and perfect tense, “*qui* (that) *sanctificavit* (indicative active perfect, 3rd person singular verb, from *sanctifico*).” In Latin the perfect tense is regarded by Latin grammarians as “a snapshot” of the action (as opposed to the imperfect in which the action is viewed as on going, or repeated, or habitual²⁸). Thus the Latin would here be rendered into English (somewhat imperfectly) as a past tense, “sanctified.”

²⁸ Wheelock’s *Latin Grammar*, pp. 77-78.

An agreed definition of the aorist has alluded Greek grammarians, but it is described variously as the speaker's overall perception of an event "in its entirety, or as a single whole" (Young), or a "snapshot" of the action (whereas the present and imperfect tenses are like a moving picture) (Wallace)²⁹. Therefore one could reconstruct the Latin variant in similitude with the participle form of the TR's reading as a Greek aorist, "ο (that) *agiasas* ('sanctifying' masculine singular nominative, active aorist participle, from *agiazō*)." Though to the best of my knowledge such a Greek reading is found nowhere inside the closed class of sources. But once again, any such Greek reading would be rendered into English (somewhat imperfectly) as a past tense, "sanctified."

Therefore, I think we can reasonably conclude that the Latin, other than old Latin d, supports the Greek TR; whereas old Latin d constitutes a variant. However, Tischendorf's 8th edition (1869-72) takes the view that the Latin monolithically supports the variant. *Caveat lector!*³⁰

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:17, the TR's Greek, "*agiazon* ('sanctifying' = 'sanctifies' / 'sanctifieth,' masculine singular nominative, active present participle, from *agiazō*)," i.e., "sanctifieth" in the wider words, "for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?" (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is further supported as Latin, "*sanctificat* ('sanctifieth,' indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *sanctifico*)," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592).

However, a variant reading Latin, "*sanctificavit* ('sanctified,' indicative active perfect, 3rd person singular verb, from *sanctifico*)," is found in old Latin Version d (5th century). This may be reconstructed in similitude with the participle form of the TR's reading as Greek, "*agiasas* ('sanctifying' = 'sanctified,' masculine singular nominative, active aorist participle, from *agiazō*)," *supra*.

There is no textual problem with the representative Byzantine reading which must thus stand. Indeed, the variant juts out like a sore thumb when compared with the present tense construction of, e.g., Matt. 23:19, "the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth (*agiazon*, neuter singular nominative, active present participle, from *agiazō*);" or Matt.

²⁹ Wallace's *Greek Grammar*, pp. 554-5; Young's *Greek*, p. 122.

³⁰ A Latin saying meaning, "Let the reader beware!"

23:21, “and whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth (*omnuei*, indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *omnuo*) by it” etc. (see commentary at Matt. 23:21, *infra*). The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental alteration? Did a Latin scribe, looking at a manuscript that originally read, “*quod* (that) *sanctificat* (sanctifieth)” (Latin other than d), due to a paper fade look at something like, “*qu:: sanctifica:*”? Did he “reconstruct” this “from context” as “*qui* (that) *sanctificavit* (sanctified)” (old Latin d)?

Alternatively, did the Latin scribe of d copy from a corrupted Greek text? If so, we cannot be sure of the form of the Greek, but as suggested in similitude with the participle form of the TR’s reading it possibly was Greek, “*o* (that) *agiasas* (sanctified).” If so, did a Greek scribe starting with a manuscript that originally read, “*o* (that) *agiazon* (sanctifieth),” as a consequence of a paper fade, look at something like, “*o agia:::*”? Did he then “reconstruct” this “from context” as “*o agiasas*”?

Was the variant a deliberate alteration? Did a Latin or Greek scribe take the view that it would be “a stylistic improvement” to replace the *present tense* with “a snapshot” of the action (Latin *perfect* form, or Greek *aorist* form)? Was he motivated by the fact that in his mind he thought, “the temple no longer exists since its destruction” in 70 A.D., and so to say, “the temple that sanctifieth” (AV & TR) was “no longer correct”? Did he thus deliberately alter this to Latin, “*quod* (that) *sanctificat* (sanctifieth)” (Latin other than d), or Greek, “*agiasas* (sanctified),” in order to “modernize the terminology”? (Cf. commentary at Matt. 23:21, with regard to the possibility of a deliberate alteration *infra*.)

A deliberate or accidental change? We cannot be sure. But we can be sure that this was a change to the original reading preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in both the Greek and Latin dating from ancient times. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Latin with just one old Latin Version, and no support in the Greek. On the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:17 an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:17, “sanctifieth,” is found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex 0138 (13th century, Matt. 21:24-24:15). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation,

Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; and the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); and Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century), where is rendered from the Arabic in Ciasca's Latin more widely as, "*sanctificat* (sanctifieth)³¹."

However the variant, "sanctified," is found as Greek, "*o* (that) *agiasas* (sanctified)," in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the independent text type) Codex Z 035 (6th century) and Minuscule 892 (9th century, mixed text type).

At Matt. 23:17 the erroneous variant entered the NU Text *et al*.

But the lack of "wider support" for the variant appears to have concerned some neo-Alexandrian and semi neo-Alexandrian translators. Thus the semi neo Alexandrian, James Moffatt, renders Matt. 23:17 as, "Which is greater: the gold, or the sanctuary that makes the gift sacred?" Similar translations are found in the NIV, TEV, NEB, REB, and Papist's JB and NJB. We thus find an interesting convergence among the generally more liberal neo-Alexandrians here, that the non-Alexandrian text pincer arm should be used. And as "pot luck" would have it, on this occasion they appeared to have guessed right. (Cf. my comments on the non-Alexandrian text pincer arm at e.g., Matt. 21:24a.)

However, the variant was adopted at Matt. 23:17 by the ASV which reads, "hath sanctified" in the wider words, "for which is greater, the gold, or the temple that hath sanctified the gold?" (ASV). So too the incorrect variant was adopted by the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, and TCNT.

Matt. 23:19 "Ye fools and blind" (TR & AV) {A}

The TR's Greek, "*Moroi* ('[Ye] fools,' word 1, masculine plural vocative adjective, from *moros*) *kai* ('and,' word 2) *tuphloi* ('[ye] blind' = 'blind,' word 3, masculine plural vocative adjective, from *tuphlos*)," is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is also supported as Latin, "*Stulti* ([Ye] fools) *et* (and) *caeci* ('[ye] blind' = 'blind')," in old Latin Versions f (6th century) and c (12th / 13th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers of the Didache (2nd century) in a Latin translation; and the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation.

However, a variant omitting words 1 & 2, and so reading simply, Greek, "*Tuphloi* ([Ye] blind)," may be reconstructed from the Latin. The Latin reads simply, "*Caeci*

³¹ Ciasca's wider Latin rendering is, "*quod* (that) *sanctificat* (sanctifieth)."

‘[ye] blind’),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), and ff1 (10th / 11th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Latin writers, Cyprian (d. 258)³² and Jerome (d. 420).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct. The broad stylistic similarity of Matt. 23:17 and Matt. 23:19 means that the variant *stick outs like a black Cushite in a light tan woodpile*. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental omission? In *Codex Freerianus* (W 032) there is a stylistic paper space of 1 to 2 letter spaces before one finds in continuous script the words, “*Mōroi* ([Ye] fools) *kai* (and) *tuphloi* (blind),” which comes at the end of a line. But at other times, W 032 leaves the rest of a line black as a stylistic paper space e.g., on this same page (Matt. 23:16-25, p. 86), we find such a paper space at the end of verse 19 of about 9 to 10 letter spaces, before verse 20 starts on a new line.

Was a scribe working from a similar manuscript in which the words, “*Mōroi* ([Ye] fools) *kai* (and)” originally came at the end of one line, with the next line starting with “*tuphloi* (blind)”)? Were the words “*Mōroi* ([Ye] fools) *kai* (and)” lost in a paper fade? Did a copyist scribe then take this paper fade to simply be a stylistic paper space coming after the end of verse 18, before verse 19 started on a new line? Were these words thus accidentally lost?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? “[Ye] fools” is from a Greek adjective which in masculine-feminine-neuter singular nominative gender form, is written as *mōros-a-on*. In its neuter singular nominative form, *mōron*, this gives rise to our English word, “moron.” The Greek adjective, *oxus*, which in masculine-feminine-neuter singular nominative gender form, is written as *oxus-eia-u* means “sharp,” e.g., we read in the Septuagint at Ps. 57:4 of the ungodly whose tongue is as “a sharp (*oxeia*) sword” (LXX); although we are told in Pss. 73:3,8,9 not to be “envious at the foolish” who “speak wickedly” and “set their mouth against the heavens.” The combination of the Greek neuter singular nominative forms *oxu / oxy + mōron*, thus gives rise to our English noun, “oxymoron,” meaning a “sharp fool” i.e., a *fool* who is *particularly good* or *sharp* at being a *fool*.

Did a spiritually weak’n’sickly scribe, who disliked strong Biblical language which condemns sin e.g., “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God” (Ps. 14:1), or “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be

³² Hans Freiherr von Soden’s *Das Lateinische Neue Testament in Afrika zur zeit Cyprians*, in Harnack, A, & Schmidt, C., *op. cit.*, pp. 366-588, at p. 415 (Latin same as Vulgate).

damned” (Mark 16:16), consider that to say once, “Ye fools and blind” in Matt. 23:17, “was more than enough”? With a sick religiously liberal smile on his face which disliked calling sinners “fools” or “morons,” did he then prune away the second instance of “Ye fools” at Matt. 23:19, considering he had thus made “a theological improvement”?

A deliberate or accidental omission? We do not know. But we do know that this was a change to the text of Holy Writ here preserved in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading, dating from ancient times, with no good textual argument against it. It also has notable support in the Latin, both in the translations of the Didache and Origen dating from ancient times (even if, as is possible, though by no means certain, the rendering was changed by Latin scribes in the translation,) followed by a couple of old Latin Versions. By contrast, the variant has no support in the Greek; though strong support in the Latin dating from ancient times. This factor decreases the likelihood that Latin scribes changed the readings of the Didache and / or Origen when translating these earlier Greek writings into Latin, and so correspondingly increases the probability that the later Latin translation of the Didache and Origen in fact reflects an earlier Greek reading from these sources. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:19 an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:19, “[Ye] fools (word 1) and (word 2) blind (word 3),” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); and (the mixed text type) Codex 0138 (13th century, Matt. 21:24-24:15). It is also found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Palestinian (*c.* 6th century) Versions, and the Syriac Harclean Version (616) in an asterisk marked out text (indicating it is not the representative reading of the Harclean Version); Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century), Middle Egyptian (3rd century), and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); Georgian Version (5th century); Ethiopic Version (*c.* 500); and Slavic Version (9th century). It is also found Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron where it is rendered in Ciasca’s 19th century Latin translation of the 12th-14th centuries Arabic, as

Latin, “*Stulti* ([Ye] fools) *caeci* ([and] blind).”

However, the variant which omits words 1 & 2 and reads, “[Ye] Blind (word 3),” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the independent text type) Codex Z 035 (6th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); Minuscules 892 (9th century, mixed text type) and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century) and Curetonian (3rd / 4th century) Versions; a manuscript of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version; and the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The glaring incongruity of the variant at Matt. 23:19 in the wider context of Matt. 23:17 has already been noted, *supra*. Though we neo-Byzantines base our textual analysis on the Greek, and the old Latin Papists based their textual analysis on the Latin, in this particular instance, whether one looks at it in the Greek or Latin, the variant still *sticks out like a black Cushite in a light tan woodpile*. On the one hand, it was still missed by the old Latin Papists of the Clementine Vulgate; but on the other hand, it was picked up by the old Latin Papists of the Douay-Rheims Version, who recognized this self-evident fact, and so rightly followed the minority Latin reading here at Matt. 23:19. Hence the Douay-Rheims reads at both Matt. 23:17 and Matt. 23:19, “Ye foolish and blind: for whether is greater” etc. .

The variant which omits words 1 & 2 was adopted by the NU Text *et al.*, although as a concession to the split nature of the Alexandrian Text, a footnote alternative referring to the TR’s reading as followed by *Codex Vaticanus* is given in all the textual apparatuses i.e., Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72), Westcott-Hort (1881), Nestle’s 21st edition (1952), and the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) and UBS’s 4th revised edition (1993). Why were the neo-Alexandrians so monolithically agreed on this occasion when the two main Alexandrian texts were not in agreement? E.g., the UBS 4th revised edition says the NU text Committee considered, “the text is almost certain.”

In the first place, it seems the neo-Alexandrian maxim, “The shorter reading is the better reading,” played a big part in their thinking. Added to this, there was “the external support” of e.g., the Western Text (D 05), Latin, Syriac (Sinaitic & Curetonian), and in the case of the older neo-Alexandrians, (much to the embarrassment of the newer neo-Alexandrians,) also the Ethiopic (Dillmann). But from the Neo-Alexandrian School’s paradigm, the real “knock-down” argument was delivered by that “intellectual giant” among neo-Alexandrians, Bruce Metzger (d. 2007) of the NU Text Committee, who said, “Apparently the words *mōroi* [fools] *kai* [and] were inserted by copyists from ver. 17, inasmuch as no satisfactory reason can be found to account for their deletion if they had

been original” (Metzger’s *Textual Commentary*, 1971, p. 61; 2nd ed., 1994, p. 50).

Good Christian reader, Did you note well the “knock-down argument” words of the neo-Alexandrian’s “glamour boy,” Bruce Metzger, that “no satisfactory reason can be found to account for their deletion if they had been original”? Now if the skills of textual analysis of the old Latin Papists left something to be desired; but if the old Latin Papists of the Douay-Rheims could still see that the variant *sticks out like a black Cushite in a light tan woodpile*; what does that tell us about the level of textual analytical skills of the neo-Alexandrians?

The variant which omits words 1 & 2 at Matt. 23:19 is found in the American Standard Version as, “Ye blind” (ASV). The erroneous variant is also found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, TEV, TCNT, NEB, REV, Moffatt, and Papists’ JB and NJB. None of these neo-Alexandrian Versions so much as a give a footnote alternative to their reading. Well may we say of these neo-Alexandrians the words of the *Twentieth Century New Testament*, to wit, they are “Blind indeed!” (Matt. 23:19, TCNT).

Matt. 23:21 “him that dwelleth” (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. Green’s Textual Apparatus (1986) which endorses a Burgonite Majority Text methodology, says “80-94% of all manuscripts support the change” of the TR’s reading to that of the variant. Let us scrutinize Pierpont’s figures here through reference to his source book of von Soden’s textual apparatus (1913).

Inside his K group, von Soden says the TR’s reading has the support of his K1 group together with Ki 88 (Codex H 013)³³. (Von Soden’s K1 is known in the Hodges & Farstad textual apparatus as the M1 group, which here at Matt. 23:21 shows this group supporting the TR’s reading.) The K1 group consists of 37 known Byzantine manuscripts or part Byzantine manuscripts³⁴; to which there are a further 15 manuscripts

³³ It is uncertain if 3 manuscripts are or are not in the K1 group: Minuscules 690, (14th century, von Soden’s ε 435); 927 (12th century, von Soden’s δ 251; ? uncertain if K1 in the Gospels; uncertain if Kak in the Gospels; Ia2 in Acts & Pauline Epistles); & 1646 (12th century, von Soden’s δ 267).

³⁴ Codices 0211 (7th century, von Soden’s ε 49), V 031 (9th century, von Soden’s ε 75), Omega 45 (9th century, von Soden’s ε 61), S 028 (10th century, von Soden’s ε 1027); Minuscules 461 (9th century, von Soden’s ε 92), 399 (10th century, von Soden’s ε 94 other than Matthew which is Ia), 1077 (10th century, von Soden’s ε 1139), 1172 (10th century, von Soden’s ε 1036), 272 (11th century, von Soden’s ε 1182), 277 (11th century, von Soden’s ε 166), 476 (11th century, von Soden’s ε 1126), 655 (11th / 12th century, von Soden’s ε 177), 699 (11th century, von Soden’s δ 104, K1 in the Gospels; K in Acts, Pauline Epistles, & Revelation), 711 (11th century, von Soden’s ε 1179), 1006 (11th century, von Soden’s ε 1156, Byzantine outside Revelation), 1045

unclassified outside of von Soden's system³⁵.

Of the 37 known K1 manuscripts, one is not Byzantine text in St. Matthew's Gospel; and more generally, six of the 37 manuscripts or *c.* 16% are Byzantine only in parts. Applying this as a projection to the 15 manuscripts unclassified outside of von Soden's system, 16% of 15 is 2.4, and so we will stipulate 3 of these 15 manuscripts may not be Byzantine text in St. Matthew's Gospel. Therefore of the 37 known manuscripts, less one known to be non-Byzantine text in Matthew, plus 12 of the 15 manuscripts unclassified outside of von Soden's system, plus Ki 88 (H 013), means that *c.* 49 K group manuscripts support the TR's reading.

49 out of 983 K group manuscripts is *c.* 4.98%; or 49 out of 914 exclusively Byzantine K group manuscripts is *c.* 5.4%; or 49 out of *c.* 860 K group *Gospel* manuscripts is *c.* 5.7%. Allowing a 10% error bar means the figures could be out by about 0.5%. Thus notwithstanding the "rubbery" nature of any such calculations based on von Soden's data, in broad terms we can say that about 5% or 6% of manuscripts support the TR's reading, and for our generalist purposes, these type figures are good enough to give us "the big picture."

Furthermore, I have listed in the "Principal Textual Discussion," *infra*, another 20 Byzantine text manuscripts from von Soden's "I" group that support the TR's minority

(11th century, von Soden's ε 1151), 1470 (11th century, von Soden's ε 2014), 57 (12th century, von Soden's δ 255, K1 group in Gospels; Kc group in Acts & Pauline Epistles), 1123 (11th century, von Soden's ε 1152), 1514 (11th century, von Soden's ε 2026), 1556 (11th century, von Soden's ε 1134), 1672 (11th century, von Soden's ε 1149), 2172 (11th century, von Soden's ε 191), 2281 (11th century, von Soden's ε 158), 1191 (11th / 12th century, von Soden's ε 1099), 261 (12th century, von Soden's ε 282), 355 (12th century, von Soden's ε 235), 408 (12th century, von Soden's ε 231), 419 (12th century, von Soden's ε 232), 438 (12th century, von Soden's ε 241), 509 (12th century, von Soden's ε 258), 524 (12th century, von Soden's ε 265), 688 (12th century, von Soden's ε 246), 975 (12th century, von Soden's ε 3024), 2177 (12th century, von Soden's ε 1296), 263 (13th century, von Soden's δ 372, Byzantine outside Pauline Epistles, K1 group in Byzantine Gospels, Ia3 group in Byzantine Acts & non-Byzantine Pauline Epistles), 1087 (13th century, von Soden's ε 2035), & 656 (13th / 14th century, von Soden's δ 463, K1 in the Gospels, Kr in the General Epistles).

³⁵ Minuscules 163 (11th century, von Soden's ε 114, in both K1 group & I group), 345 (11th century, von Soden's ε 119, K1 group & I group), 661 (11th century, von Soden's ε 179), 933 (12th century, von Soden's ε 2004), 974 (12th century, von Soden's ε 2043), 1257 (12th century, von Soden's ε 1104), 1511 (12th century, von Soden's ε 2025), 1575 (12th century, von Soden's ε 1273), 382 (13th century, von Soden's ε 300) 972 (13th century, von Soden's ε 3022), 1372 (14th century, von Soden's ε 4004), 1410 (14th century, von Soden's ε 468, K1 od. Kak), 1440 (14th century, von Soden's ε 1456), 1580 (14th century, von Soden's ε 1432), 1587 (14th century, von Soden's ε 1434).

Byzantine reading. Highlighting the many twists and turns in von Soden's unnecessarily complex system of manuscript classification, this includes Minuscule 399 which is in von Soden's "Ia" in St. Matthew's Gospel and his K1 elsewhere; so that it was omitted from the K1 calculation, *supra*, but included in the manuscripts cited, *infra*. But lest these comments be misconstrued, I say here, as I have said elsewhere, I am most grateful for von Soden's work in manuscript collation of Codices and Minuscules, since the data he gives is truly excellent and without peer.

The Second Matter: Greek and Latin in D 05 & old Latin d. The Greek of the Western Text's D 05 is outside the closed class of sources whereas the Latin of old Latin d is inside the closed class of sources. Both are part of the same Greek-Latin diglot, *Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis* given to Cambridge University in England by Calvin's (d. 1564) successor at Geneva, Switzerland, the great neo-Byzantine textual analyst, Theodore Beza (d. 1605). The Western Greek Text is in an unusual position in that while it had a general accessibility over time and through time, it is still rejected from the closed class of sources because it is so obviously corrupt, and frequently conflated. E.g., the Western Text's Book of Acts is about 10% longer than the canonical Book of Acts in the TR.

Prima facie it would be possible to make similar criticisms about much of the corrupted old Latin d. But the Byzantine Greek is clearly the Greek textual tradition that in broad-brush terms the Holy Ghost preserved over time and through time, so that it can admit no rival without compromising and rendering ineffectual the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*. If the priority is to go to the Greek, the tongue in which the NT was written, it must be the Byzantine Greek manuscripts alone of all Greek manuscripts that we recognize. Such Greek was for centuries both the spoken tongue and language of learning in the civilized world of Eastern Europe and West Asia, even though the growing encroachments of the vicious and violent *sword of Islam* ever more and more replaced it with the barbarian Mohammedan's tongue of Arabic.

By contrast, the Latin in general, being subordinated to the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, is already under tight control with regard to those aberrant elements of it which deviant from the *Textus Receptus*. Thus Latin manuscripts may be more generally used as part of the closed class of sources, since irrespective of their internal Latin text-types (which is correspondingly not of any primary interest to us,) it had general accessibility over time and through time. Latin was a written language of learning recognized throughout the civilized world of Western Europe.

And therefore, while on the one hand, the Western Greek Text of Codex D 05 is outside the closed class of source; by contrast, the Latin Text of old Latin d is inside the closed class of sources. And here at Matt. 23:21 we see that the Greek and Latin of *Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis* is not necessarily the same. Inside the closed class of sources, the Latin of this codex supports the TR's reading (present tense), whereas outside the closed class of sources, the Greek of this codex follows the variant (aorist).

The Third Matter: The Two NT Maxims. As observed, *infra*, the TR's reading is

manifested in the Greek and Latin NT editions of Erasmus (1516 & 1522), as Greek, “*katoikounti* (‘dwelling’ = ‘that dwelleth’)” and Latin, “*qui* (that) *habitat* (dwelleth).” Elzevir’s Textual Apparatus (1624) refers to four gospel manuscripts following the majority Byzantine reading (Gospel manuscripts: v, Cambridge University, Mm. 6.9; w, Trinity College, Cambridge, B. x. 16; H, Harleian. 5598, British Museum; & z, Evangelistarium, Christ’s College, Cambridge, F. i. 8); and none following the minority Byzantine reading of the TR. But he adds, “*non L*” i.e., “not (*non*) the Latin (*L*).” It is possible that some or all of the neo-Byzantines of the 16th and 17th centuries were unaware of any of the Byzantine Greek manuscripts here itemized in support of the TR’s reading, and reconstructed the TR’s reading on the basis of the Latin’s *present tense* and the representative Byzantine text’s Greek form of a masculine singular dative, active participle, from *katoikeo*. If so, this was an instance of the servant maxim, *The Latin improves the Greek*, bowing in humble submission to the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, since the textual analysis was based first and foremost on the Greek.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:21, *Reading 1*, the TR’s Greek, “*to* (the [one]) *katoikounti* (‘dwelling’ = ‘that dwelleth,’ masculine singular dative, active present participle, from *katoikeo*),” i.e., “him that dwelleth” (AV), in the wider words, “And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein” (AV), is a minority Byzantine reading. *Reading 1* is supported by e.g., Codex Phi 043 (*Codex Beratinus*, 6th century, St. Matthew & St. Mark, Tirana, Albania); and Minuscules 399 (10th century, St. Petersburg, Russia), 880 (11th century, Vatican City State, Rome), 1188 (11th / 12th century, St. Catherine’s Monastery, Mt. Sinai, Arabia), 119 (12th century, Paris, France), 120 (12th century, Paris, France), 217 (12th century, Venice, Italy), 485 (12th century, British Library, London, UK), 924 (12th century, Athos, Greece), 2127 (12th century, Palermo, Italy, Byzantine outside Pauline Epistles), 291 (13th century, Paris, France), 477 (13th century, Trinity College, Cambridge University, England), 1604 (13th century, Athos, Greece), 232 (14th century, Escorial, Spain), 578 (14th century, Arras, France), 1354 (14th century, Jerusalem, Israel), 70 (Cambridge University, England, 15th century), 287 (15th century, Paris, France), 288 (15th century, Oxford University, England), 745 (16th century, Paris, France).

The TR’s reading is further supported as Latin, “*eo* (him) *qui* (that) *inhabitat* (‘dwelleth,’ indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *inhabito*),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions 1 (7th / 8th century) and ff1 (10th / 11th century), as well as the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century); as Latin, “*eo* (him) *inhabitat* ([that] dwelleth),” in old Latin Version e (4th / 5th century); and as Latin, “*qui* ([him] that) *inhabitat* (dwelleth),” in old Latin Version ff2 (5th century). It is also supported as Latin, “*eo* (him) *qui* (that) *habitat* (‘dwelleth,’ indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *habito*),” in old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), and g1 (8th / 9th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It

is further supported as Latin, “*illo* (that [one]) *qui* (who) *inhabitat* (dwelleth),” in old Latin Version c (12th / 13th century); and as Latin, “*habitanti* (‘dwelling’ = ‘that dwelleth,’ masculine singular ablative³⁶, active present participle, from *habito*) *eum* (him),” i.e., “him that dwelleth,” in old Latin Version d (5th century). It is also manifested in the Greek and Latin *Novum Testamentum* (New Testament) editions of e.g., Erasmus (1516 & 1522), as Greek, “*katoikounti* (‘dwelling’ = ‘that dwelleth’)” and Latin, “*qui* (that) *habitat* (dwelleth);” and in the Greek *Novum Testamentum* (New Testament) editions of Stephanus (1550), Beza (1598), and Elzevir (1633).

At Matt. 23:21 another reading, *Reading 2*, Greek, “*to* (the [one]) *katoikesanti* (‘dwelling’ = ‘that dwelt,’ masculine singular dative, active orist participle, from *katoike*),” i.e., “him that dwelt,” in the wider words, “And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelt therein,” is followed by the majority Byzantine text. *Reading 2* is found in e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is also found in the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754).

However, there is a textual problem with representative Byzantine text (*Reading 2*) at Matt. 23:21. This emerges in the following stylistic analysis of the Greek aorist and present tense in the Matt. 23:16-22 dissertation on swearing (cf. Exod. 20:7,16).

Aorist Introductory Statement.	Present tense application: once, twice, or thrice.
[16a] Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever <i>shall swear</i> (<i>omose</i> , subjunctive active <u>aorist</u> , 3rd person singular verb, from <i>omnuo</i>) by the temple,	[16b] <i>it is</i> (<i>estin</i> , indicative active <u>present</u> , 3rd person singular verb, from <i>eimi</i>) nothing;
[16c] but whosoever <i>shall swear</i> (<i>omose</i> , subjunctive active <u>aorist</u> , 3rd person singular verb, from <i>omnuo</i>) by the gold of the temple,	[16d] <i>he is a debtor</i> (<i>opheilei</i> , indicative active <u>present</u> , 3rd person singular verb, from <i>opheilo</i>)! [17] Ye fools and blind: for whether <i>is</i> (<i>estin</i> , indicative active <u>present</u> , 3rd person singular verb, from <i>eimi</i>) greater, the gold or the temple that <i>sanctifieth</i> (<i>agiazon</i> (‘sanctifying’ = ‘sanctifieth,’ masculine singular nominative, active <u>present</u> participle, from <i>agiazō</i>) the gold?

³⁶ The “*habitanti*” is preceded by “*in* (‘by,’ preposition with an ablative / accusative),” confirming that “*habitanti*” is an ablative, not a dative (which here is the same declension as the ablative).

<p>[18a] And, Whosoever <i>shall swear</i> (<i>omose</i>, subjunctive active <u>ao</u>rist, 3rd person singular verb, from <i>omnuo</i>) by the altar,</p>	<p>[18b] <i>it is</i> (<i>estin</i>, indicative active <u>pre</u>sent, 3rd person singular verb, from <i>eimi</i>) nothing;</p>
<p>[18c] but whosoever <i>swareth</i> (<i>omose</i>, subjunctive active <u>ao</u>rist, 3rd person singular verb, from <i>omnuo</i>) by the gift that [is] upon it,</p>	<p>[18d] <i>he is guilty</i> (<i>opheilei</i>, indicative active <u>pre</u>sent, 3rd person singular verb, from <i>opheilo</i>). [19] Ye fools and blind: for whether [is] greater, the gift, or the altar that <i>sanctifieth</i> (<i>agiazon</i>, ‘sanctifying’ = ‘sanctifieth,’ masculine singular nominative, active <u>pre</u>sent participle, from <i>agiazō</i>) the gift?</p>
<p>[20a] Whoso therefore <i>shall swear</i> (<i>omosas</i>, masculine singular nominative, active <u>ao</u>rist participle, from <i>omnuo</i>) by the altar,</p>	<p>[20b] <i>swareth</i> (<i>omnuei</i>, indicative active <u>pre</u>sent, 3rd person singular verb, from <i>omnuo</i>) by it, and by all things thereon.</p>
<p>[21a] And whoso <i>shall swear</i> (<i>omosas</i>, masculine singular nominative, active <u>ao</u>rist participle, from <i>omnuo</i>) by the temple,</p>	<p>[21b] <i>swareth</i> (<i>omnuei</i>, indicative active <u>pre</u>sent, 3rd person singular verb, from <i>omnuo</i>) by it, and by him that</p>
	<p>*** [21c (1), <i>Reading 2</i>, the representative Byzantine reading] <i>dwelt</i> (<i>katoikesanti</i>, masculine singular dative, active <u>ao</u>rist participle, from <i>katoike</i>) therein. [OR] *** [21c (2), <i>Reading 1</i>, the minority Byzantine reading] <i>dwelleth</i> (<i>katoikounti</i>, masculine singular dative, active <u>pre</u>sent participle, from <i>katoikeo</i>) therein. ***</p>
<p>[22a] And he that <i>shall swear</i> (<i>omosas</i>, masculine singular nominative, active <u>ao</u>rist participle, from <i>omnuo</i>) by heaven,</p>	<p>[22b] <i>swareth</i> (<i>omnuei</i>, indicative active <u>pre</u>sent, 3rd person singular verb, from <i>omnuo</i>) by the throne of God, and by <i>him that sitteth</i> (<i>to</i> / ‘the [one]’ <i>kathemeno</i> / ‘sitting,’ masculine singular dative, middle <u>pre</u>sent participle, from <i>kathemai</i>) thereon.</p>

It is clear from this pattern of aorist and present tense in Matt. 23:16-22 that the representative Byzantine reading (*Reading 2*) of verse “21c (1),” *supra*, *clangs on the*

ears as contextually bad Matthean Greek, whereas the minority Byzantine reading (*Reading 1*) of verse “21c (2)” is harmonious with Matthean Greek, and contextually is *the natural and expected reading*. Therefore to relieve the crying textual pain created by the majority Byzantine reading (*Reading 2*), it is necessary to adopt the minority Byzantine reading (*Reading 1*) which is thus the correct reading.

The origins of the variant (*Reading 2*) are speculative.

Was the variant (*Reading 2*) an accidental alteration? Was “*katoikounti* (‘dwelling’ = ‘that dwelleth,’ present tense)” written in a manuscript over two lines in continuous script, with one line ending, “*katoikou*” and the next line starting with, “*nti*”? Due to a paper fade, did the first line come to look something like, “*katoik:*”? Was this then “reconstructed” by a scribe as “*katoikesanti* (‘dwelling’ = ‘that dwelt,’ aorist)”? Did he base this on a superficial analysis of the following verse 22 which uses an aorist i.e., “*omosas* (shall swear)”?

Was the variant (*Reading 2*) a deliberate alteration? Did a scribe consider it would be “a stylistic improvement” to replace the *present tense* with “a snapshot” of the action by using an aorist form? Did he think in his mind, “the temple no longer exists since its destruction” in 70 A.D., and so to say, “him that dwelleth (*katoikounti*, present tense)” (AV & TR) was “no longer correct”? Did he thus deliberately alter this to “him that dwelt (*katoikesanti*, aorist),” in order to “modernize the terminology”? (Cf. commentary at Matt. 23:17, with regard to the possibility of a deliberate alteration, *supra*).

A deliberate or accidental alteration? We cannot be sure. But we can be sure that the variant (*Reading 2*) was a change to the original text of Scripture here preserved for us (*Reading 1*) as a minority Byzantine reading and Latin reading.

On the one hand, the reading of the *Textus Receptus* (TR) (*Reading 1*) is strongly supported by textual analysis. It has the support of about 5% of the Byzantine Greek manuscripts and is found in a good cross-section of such Greek manuscripts dating from the 6th to 15th centuries. It also enjoys the monolithic support of the Latin textual tradition, dating from ancient times in both St. Jerome’s Vulgate and several old Latin Versions. But on the other hand, the variant (*Reading 2*) is the majority Byzantine reading with the support of about 95% of the Byzantine Greek manuscripts dating from the 5th century (W 032) and thus ancient times. Weighing up these competing factors, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:21 a “B” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:21, *Reading 1*, “him that dwelleth” (present tense), is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the

mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century), and Minuscule 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere). It is also found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); Armenian Version (5th century); and the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries). It is also found in Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century), where the Arabic is translated in Ciasca's Latin as, "*qui* (that) *habitat* ('dwelleth,' present tense)."

However, the variant, *Reading 2*, "him that dwelt" (aorist), is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex 0138 (13th century, Matt. 21:24-24:15); as well as Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text).

As a consequence of its presence in the two leading Alexandrian texts, for the wrong reasons, the correct reading was adopted by the NU Text *et al*. Hence the correct reading is found at Matt. 23:21 in the ASV as, "him that dwelleth." The correct (present tense) reading is also found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV. So too, because of its monolithic presence in the Latin, the correct reading of the Clementine Vulgate is rendered by the old Latin Papists of the pre-Vatican II Council in the Roman Catholic Douay-Rheims as, "him that dwelleth."

However, at Matt. 23:21, the incorrect variant is found with no footnote alternative in the main text of Robinson & Pierpont's *Byzantine Textform* majority text (2005), which is based on von Soden's K group manuscripts. It is likewise found in the main text of Hodges & Farstad's majority text, which is based on von Soden's I and K groups' manuscripts, where a footnote says the TR's reading is followed by "M1" i.e., von Soden's K1 group; as well as the two leading Alexandrian texts.

We thus find that those following the basic principles of Burgon's Majority Text, (even though both Robinson & Pierpont and Hodges & Farstad are Burgonite revisionists,) here endorse the erroneous variant. Hence we find in the *New King James Version*, which claims in its "Preface" that "The Majority Text ... corrects" the "readings" of "the Textus Receptus;" that in its main text of Matt. 23:21 it shows the TR which reads, "dwells," and then says in a footnote that the "M[ajority]-Text reads 'dwelt'" (NKJV ftn).

Burton claimed, “the ‘*Textus Receptus*’ ..., calls for ... revision,” “upon the” basis of the “majority of authorities;” and thus Burton’s proud boast was this, “Again and again we shall have occasion to point out ... that the *Textus Receptus* needs correction³⁷.” We cannot doubt that with less than 10% of all manuscripts supporting the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:21, that Burton would regard this as one such example, in harmony with the Majority Text footnote of the NKJV.

In the “Introduction” to Hodges & Farstad (1985), these revisionist Burtonites say, “The editors do not imagine that the text of this edition represents in all particulars the exact form of the originals. Desirable as such a text certainly is, much further work must be done before it can be produced. It should therefore be kept in mind that the present work ... is both preliminary and provisional. It represents a first step in the direction of recognizing the value and authority of the great mass of surviving Greek documents. The use made of those documents in this edition must be subjected to scrutiny by competent scholars³⁸.”

Prima facie these are hopeful sounding qualifications, that might lead a Hodges & Farstad Burtonite out of this Majority Text School and into the Neo-Byzantine School of the *Textus Receptus*. However, as one reads further into Hodges & Farstad’s “Introduction,” the picture becomes much bleaker and darker. Hodges & Farstad endorse a “stemma” approach in which they think that with more manuscripts, and more data on some of the existing manuscript, they might be able to reconstruct the correct text in more than just John 7:53-8:11 and the Book of Revelation, where they consider they have the data to do so³⁹. I.e., they deny the doctrine of Divine Preservation, and hope at some point in the future more manuscripts will turn up allowing them to determine a better text.

They further make this frank, though deeply disturbing statement with regard to their “stemma” or “genealogical method.” “*This method remains the only logical one. If Westcott and Hort employed it poorly, it is not for that reason to be abandoned*⁴⁰.” Westcott & Hort had a religiously liberal methodology that denied the doctrine of Divine Preservation. But Hodges & Farstad here say they agree with this element in the methodology of Westcott & Hort, but consider that whereas Westcott & Hort “employed it poorly,” that they would “not for that reason” be prepared to have it “abandoned.” While it must be admitted that this stemma approach is very different when applied through their Burtonite Majority Text principles relative to Westcott & Hort’s neo-Alexandrian principles, at the end of the day, they have still failed to recognize the

³⁷ Burton’s *Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*, pp. 13,15; & *Revision Revised*, p. 21.

³⁸ Hodges & Farstad (1985), p. x.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. xxi-xxiii & xxxii-xli.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. xii (emphasis mine).

Biblical doctrine of Divine Preservation. And both are without any adequate level of gifts and abilities in textual analysis.

On the up-side, Hodges & Farstad are to be commended for their compilation of a majority text based on von Soden's rich storehouse of manuscripts, which given that more than 85% of his I and K group are Byzantine text, will necessarily be a majority Byzantine text. As Hodges & Farstad note in their Preface, persons "of an opposing viewpoint" to "the majority Text," "have largely agreed that it is useful to have such an edition⁴¹." We thank God for their valuable and useful work. Hodges & Farstad are also to be commended for their initial comments that their "present work ... is both preliminary and provisional. It represents a first step in the direction of recognizing the value and authority of the great mass of surviving Greek documents. The use made of those documents in this edition must be subjected to scrutiny by competent scholars."

But on the down-side, their suggestion for how that "scrutiny" should proceed is essentially a dead end, which denies the doctrine of Divine Preservation, and *has a faint hope that at some point in the future the true NT text might yet be recovered.* Hence they say with a flickering glint of hope in their eyes as for what *one day might be*, "The work can never be final until we are assured of holding a replica of the autographs of the New Testament in our hands⁴²." I.e., if Hodges & Farstad are to be believed, some 500 years after the Reformation, *we are still waiting for a reliable New Testament text, and we might have to keep waiting till the Second Advent!* As to the credulity of this ridiculous proposition, I can only say, WHAT A SCREAM!!!⁴³

Good Christian reader. We do not have to wait! We already have it! It is called the Received Text of Holy Scripture! Let those who have dilly-dallied already too long with the Majority Text Burgonites, dilly-dally with them no longer. *Now is the time to cast off the errors of Burgon, the errors of the Majority Text, and the errors of the New King James Version. Now is the time "to come home" to the source of the Received Text and Authorized King James Version of 1611. "May God give any sincere and genuine good Christian reader grace to do so," is my humble prayer "in Jesus' name. Amen."*

Matt. 23:23b "these ought ye to have done" (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter: A comparison and contrast of the Greek and Latin grammar.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. v.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. xliii.

⁴³ "Scream," an Australian colloquialism meaning *something that is very funny.*

The Greek of the TR here reads, “*tauta* (these) *edei* (ought) *poiesai* ([ye] to have done),” i.e., “these ought ye to have done.” Here there is an accusative subject (*tauta*, ‘these things’ = ‘these,’ neuter plural accusative pronoun, from *outos-aute-touto*) of the infinitive (*poiesai*, ‘to have done,’ active aorist infinitive, from *poieo*)⁴⁴. Thus when combined with the verb (*edei*, ‘it behoved’ = ‘ought,’ indicative active imperfect, 3rd person singular verb, from *dei*), since *dei* here refers to a necessity i.e., “ought;” the rendering is “these ought [ye] to have done.”

The Latin of the TR in the Vulgate reads, “*haec* (these) *oportuit* (ought) *facere* ([ye] to have done),” i.e., “these ought ye to have done.” Once again, there is an accusative subject (*haec*, ‘these things’ = ‘these,’ neuter plural accusative pronoun, from *hic, haec, hoc*) of the infinitive (*facere*, ‘to have been done,’ active present infinitive, from *facio*). Though this infinitive is in the present tense, in this type of grammatical structure the present infinitive refers to *the same time* that one finds in the main verb i.e., this is a *contemporaneous infinitive*, here meaning “to have been done” or “to have done”⁴⁵. Thus when combined with the verb (*oportuit*, ‘it behoved’ = ‘ought,’ indicative active perfect, 3rd person singular verb, from *oporteo*), since *oporteo* here refers to a necessity i.e., “ought;” the rendering is “these ought [ye] to have done.”

Therefore on the one hand, both on this issue of an accusative subject with an infinitive; and also on the usage of a 3rd person singular verb, “it behoved,” to indicate a necessity, “ought,” we find a remarkable similarity between the grammatical categories of thought between the Greek and Latin. But on the other hand, the fact that the Greek uses an *aorist* infinitive, whereas the Latin uses a *contemporaneous infinitive* in the present tense with the meaning of the perfect tense, simultaneously shows different categories of grammatical thought between the Greek and Latin⁴⁶. We thus see that while the Greek and Latin have some remarkable grammatical similarities, so that the study of one greatly helps in the study of the other; we also see that these two Aryan languages are not grammatically identical, and so amidst the grammatical similarities, one must exercise care and caution in distinguishing between the grammatical differences of these two great Japhetic tongues.

The Second Matter (Diatessaron formatting). Inside the closed class of sources, the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex, and like the Vulgate reads at Matt. 23:23b, “*haec* (these things) *oportuit* (ought) *facere* ([ye] to have done);” whereas at Luke 11:42 the Vulgate reads, “*haec* (these things) *autem* (but).” Therefore the absence of the “*autem* (but)” in the Sangallensis Diatessaron can only have come from the Matt. 23:23b reading, and hence I show this codex following the TR’s reading, *infra*.

⁴⁴ Wallace’s *Greek Grammar*, p. 192; Young’s *Greek*, pp. 18-19,165.

⁴⁵ Wheelock’s *Latin Grammar*, pp. 164-165.

⁴⁶ On the Greek *contemporaneous infinitive* (generally with *en to*), see Wallace’s *Greek Grammar*, p. 595; Young’s *Greek*, p. 166; and on the Latin *contemporaneous infinitive*, see Wheelock’s *Latin Grammar*, p. 165.

Outside the closed class of sources, Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron *prima facie* supports the TR with its reading in Ciasca's Latin translation of "*haec* (these)." However, the Arabic Diatessaron clearly conflates Matt. 23:23b with Luke 11:42, since we here find added from Luke, in Ciasca's Latin translation the words, "*et* (and) *amorem* (the love) *Dei* (of God)" (Arabic Diatessaron, chapter 20). The TR's reading of Luke 11:42 also lacks the addition of "but (Greek, *de*; Latin, *autem*)," and so one cannot with safety say whether or not the Arabic Diatessaron has here been corrupted by a conflation between Matt. 23:23b and Luke 11:32 in lacking this "but." Therefore no reference is made to the Arabic Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:23b, the TR's Greek, "*tauta* (these)" in the wider words, "these ought ye to have done" (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices U 030 (9th century) and Gamma 036 (10th century); and Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark), and 2 (12th century)⁴⁷. It is also supported as Latin, "*haec* (these)," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions e (4th / 5th century), ff2 (5th century), f (6th century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers, Basil the Great (d. 379) and Chrysostom (d. 407); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

However, a variant adding Greek, "*de* (but)," and so reading, "*tauta* (these) *de* (but)," in the wider words, "but these ought ye to have done," is a minority Byzantine reading found in e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), K 017 (9th century), M 021 (9th century); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is further found as Latin, "*haec* (these) *autem* (but)," in old Latin Versions a (4th century), d (5th century), and h (5th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which thus must stand. Indeed, given the Matthean usage of "*de*" for a stronger stylistic break (cf. commentary at Matt. 21:7c; 22:7; 22:39), the usage of the variant's "*de*" here at Matt. 23:23b looks and sounds like a sledge-hammer crashing down to crack-open a peanut shell. Amidst the pieces of subsequent wreckage, the tiny bits'n'pieces of the peanut which were smashed up are thus intermingled with the remains of the peanut

⁴⁷ Given that the Greek texts usually itemized in Volumes 1-3 to manifest the representative Byzantine reading in these textual commentaries on St. Matthew's Gospel, here all follow the variant, I note that the TR's reading has the residual support of von Soden's K group, and so at least c. 90% of the Greek Byzantine manuscripts.

shell. *The variant really is a very messy botch up of Matthean Greek!*

The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental addition? Did the “*tauta* (these)” come at the end of a line, in which the line above protruded further by one or two letter spaces? Did a scribe, looking at this all too superficially, then conclude that “there must have been a paper fade of a two-lettered word.” Was he influenced in this conclusion by the more common usage of “*de*” in St. Matthew’s Gospel at e.g., the nearby Matt. 23:24,25? If so, he clearly did not appreciate the Matthean nuance of “*de*.”

Was the variant a deliberate addition? If the later Latin translation accurately reflects Origen’s usage of the variant, then its connection with a figure who is notorious for being one of those “which corrupt the word of God” (II Cor. 2:17), increases the probability that this was in fact a deliberate addition. Did a scribe, if so, quite possibly Origen, recognize that there was a natural stylistic break in the discourse of Matt. 23:23 after the words, “*kai* (and) *aphekate* (have omitted) *ta* (the) *barutera* (weightier) *tou* (of the) *nomou* (law), *ten* (-) *krisin* (judgement) *kai* (-) *ton* (-) *eleon* (mercy) *kai* (and) *ten* (-) *pistin* (faith),” i.e., “and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy, and faith” (AV), and before the words, “*tauta* (these) *edei* (‘it is necessary’ = ‘ought’) *poiēsai* ([ye] to have done),” etc. i.e., “these ought ye to have done” (AV) etc. . Having an inadequate grip on Matthean Greek, did he think it “a stylistic improvement,” to “more clearly mark this out in the text” by inserting, “*de* (but)”?

A deliberate or accidental addition? We do not know. We cannot be sure. But we can be sure that this was an alteration to the text of Scripture here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading against which there is no good textual argument. It also has strong support as the majority Latin reading, where it dates from ancient times in St. Jerome’s Vulgate and a couple of old Latin Versions. It has further support in the Greek from ancient times with the church fathers and doctors, St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom; and in the Latin from early mediaeval times with the church doctor, St. Gregory the Great. By contrast the variant is found in less than 10% of Greek manuscripts, and also has relatively weak support in the Latin, although in both instances also dates from ancient times. Moreover, it looks like *the typical sort of silly thing* that the heretic Origen would sometimes do, and there is a reasonable chance, though not a definite certainty, that the variant is in fact a *feather-head brain child* of Origen’s. Weighing up these factors, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:23b an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:23b, “these” in

the wider words, “these ought ye to have done,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); Minuscules 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in a manuscript of the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version; and the Armenian Version (5th century).

However, the variant, “but these,” in the wider words, “but these ought ye to have done,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex 0138 (13th century, Matt. 21:24-24:15). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), and 157 (12th century, independent). It is also found in all extant Syriac Versions, e.g., the Syriac Curetonian Version (3rd / 4th century); Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century), and some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version; as well as the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

With the two leading Alexandrian texts split down the middle at Matt. 23:23b, the claims of the neo-Alexandrians to a serious capacity for textual analysis were once again laid bare, as they tore apart from each other, one guessing this way, and another guessing that way. For Tischendorf there could only be one answer. He would adopt the reading of his beloved Codex Sinaiticus that he had discovered amidst the winds of sandstorms on the Arabian Peninsula, and so for the wrong reasons, the correct reading entered Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72). For the semi-Romanist Puseyites, Westcott & Hort, there could also only be one answer. They would adopt the reading of their beloved Codex Vaticanus, which was the “more neutral” of their two “neutral” Alexandrian texts, as they turned Romeward and homeward, and so the variant entered the text of Westcott-Hort (1881). Erwin Nestle tended to sympathize more with Westcott & Hort than Tischendorf on such matters, and so the variant was also adopted in Nestle’s 21st edition (1952). For “the great brains” on the NU Text Committee the problem was obvious enough. How could they make themselves look like they knew what they were doing amidst such diversity? The “great brainwave” solution was to put the “*de* (but)” in square brackets as optional in the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) and UBS’s 4th revised edition (1993)⁴⁸; as perhaps Metzger and Aland smiled at

⁴⁸ While there are some rare and unusual situations where textual arguments are

each other, and Carlo Martini smiled at both, thinking in his head, “the tricks of Jesuitry are rubbing off on these two ‘Proties’⁴⁹.”

The variant’s incorrect reading, as found in Codex Vaticanus was adopted at Matt. 23:23b by the ASV which thus reads, “but these” (ASV). The erroneous variant was also clearly adopted by the NASB.

As to the other neo-Alexandrian Versions that we generally consider, what their preferred reading was at Matt. 23:23b is an open question. What are we to make of such punctuation marks as a semi-colon in the RSV, or full-stop with a new sentence before the words of this reading in the ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV? Are these renderings of the Greek, “*de*”? Or are they following the TR’s correct reading at Matt. 23:23b, as found in Codex Sinaiticus, and consider that this here justifies such a punctuation mark in the English? Or are they trying to replicate the type of ambiguity found in the square brackets of the NU Text, in which one can interpret the matter one way or the other, or no way at all? The lack of literalness in these neo-Alexandrian versions means we cannot be confident about the “translators” intentions here.

As already noted, the variant’s usage of “*de*” at Matt. 23:23b is a case of *using a sledge-hammer to crack-open a peanut shell*. It really sounds very ridicul-icul-ulous. ... Which is why it no doubt has so greatly appealed to numerous neo-Alexandrians, for whom the concept of genuine textual analysis is as readily understood as was the Greek tongue of the ancient Greco-Roman world to the surrounding barbarians.

Matt. 23:25 “excess” (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Remarks.

The First Matter. While (like Robinson & Pierpont) I generally use just von Soden’s “K” group for determining Byzantine text percentage counts; on this occasion I

so finely balanced as to warrant such square brackets, (for instance, Matt. 19:5b, as “*ton patera [autou],*”) this is certainly not such an instance. It is clear that the NU Text neo-Alexandrians have greatly abused this concept, and that their square brackets here at Matt. 23:23b reflects their lack of genuine textual analytical skills.

⁴⁹ “Proty” or “Proties” is a Roman Catholic Australian colloquialism, used by Papists with a derogatory or negative loading to describe Protestants. Its negative loading derives from the fact that it is used as a word-play on another Australian colloquialism, “potty” or “potties,” which refers to a chamber-pot, especially a cheap plastic one used for younger children under school age. Thus these two words *might* be used together in fairly close proximity, although this is not necessarily done. (Though the Italian Papist, Martini would be unlikely to use such Australian terminology, and I would have no idea as to whether or not anyone in the NU Text Committee ever literally smiled at each other; I here obviously employ some literary license to convey a general point about the NU Text Committee supporting their solution.)

have used his “K” group to determine the big picture parameters; and the king-size Byzantine slice of his “I” group, combined with his “K” group, to try and refine this within some still very broad-brush parameters. (This usage of the “I” and “K” groups is different to Hodges & Farstad’s methodology, but like them in that it uses both of these groups of manuscripts.) While the result is what are still some “rubbery” figures, they are nevertheless good enough to give us a broad overview; and so as always, we are grateful to God for the labours of von Soden and his *c.* 40 research assistants over *c.* 15 years.

Von Soden (1913) says that the majority Byzantine text reading, “*adikias* (iniquity)” (*Reading 8*), has the support of his K group of about 1,000 manuscripts. This means that *Reading 8* has the support of more than *c.* 90%, but less than 100%, of all Byzantine manuscripts. (See Matt. 23:13,14, “Preliminary Textual Discussion,” “The Second Matter.”) Therefore, between them, *Readings 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5* account for less than *c.* 10% of all manuscripts, although von Soden’s data is not good enough for us to be able to give a more definitive precise break-up than this. I.e., these five readings may have considerably different levels of support inside this *c.* 10% or less of manuscripts, or they might all have about the same support. We just do not know.

However, there are 19 “I” group Byzantine manuscripts listed by von Soden for the TR’s *Reading 1, infra* (all those listed below other than the Lectionaries). But von Soden lists a further 18 “I” group manuscripts that are otherwise unclassified outside of von Soden’s system. Since *c.* 90% of “I” group are Byzantine text manuscripts if one includes those that are Byzantine text in part, or *c.* 86% if one considers the exclusively Byzantine text group, then since 86% of 18 is *c.* 15.5, one can say that probably another 15 manuscripts are Byzantine. Thus since $18 + 15 = 33$, there are about this number of Byzantine manuscripts in support of the TR’s *Reading 1*⁵⁰.

This is in a larger “I” group of *c.* 1,360 “I” group manuscripts that are Byzantine text if one includes those that are Byzantine only in parts, or *c.* 1,300 that are completely Byzantine text. Since 33 out of *c.* 1360 is *c.* 2.4%; or 33 out of *c.* 1300 is *c.* 2.5%, we can therefore say that at least *c.* 2.4% or 2.5% of Byzantine text Greek manuscripts support the TR’s *Reading 1*. (This “rubbery” figure includes neither a 10% error bar, nor a subdivision of the “I” group in the greater and dominant Gospel manuscripts from which are subtracted the lesser number of non-Gospel manuscripts in the “I” group.) This “rubbery” figure of at least *c.* 2.5% Greek manuscript support for the TR’s *Reading*

⁵⁰ In my more usual calculations based on von Soden’s “K” group such micro-projections are not normatively undertaken at a given verse in this commentary because inside the K group *c.* 96.5% of manuscripts are Byzantine (949 out of 983), and *c.* 93% are exclusively Byzantine text (914 out of 983 manuscripts); and so in broad-brush terms K is Byzantine text. (Of course, in the macro-projections of this K group dealing with manuscripts otherwise unclassified outside of von Soden, such projections were undertaken for determining the composition of the wider K group, see Volume 2, Matt. 15-20, Preface, “* Determining the representative Byzantine Text.”)

I (determined from von Soden's "I" & "K" group data), which in wider terms must be less than *c.* 10% of the manuscripts overall (determined from von Soden's "K" group data), is mathematically good enough for our generalist purposes.

Von Soden only shows two known Byzantine texts for *Reading 3* (and two "I" group manuscripts otherwise unclassified outside of von Soden's system); one for *Reading 4* (although the UBS 4th revised ed. tells us of another with 180); and one known Byzantine reading for *Reading 5* (and one "I" group manuscript otherwise unclassified outside of von Soden's system). But due to the generalist nature of von Soden's groups, and his selective process of just showing some manuscripts for a reading, here evident in the fact that he does not refer to Minuscule 180 for *Reading 4* even though this manuscript was known to him (von Soden's ε 1498 in his Kx group; and also his α 300), I think it would be unsafe to draw the conclusion that therefore more than 97% of manuscripts support *Reading 8*. The generalist nature of von Soden means that anything between *c.* 90% and *c.* 97% of manuscripts might support *Reading 8*, but it would be unsafe to make any definitive prediction beyond the figure of *c.* 90%. That is because beyond his statement that the "K" groups supports *Reading 8* i.e., at least *c.* 90% of it, he simply illustrates different minority readings, and gives more detail on *Reading 1* because it is of more interest to him. But within this range of up to *c.* 10% of manuscripts, he simply selects some manuscripts to illustrate a reading, and so there is no safe way we can tell what its strength is, beyond saying that the combined strength of *Readings 1-5* is less than *c.* 10%. Von Soden's figures are good, *but not that good*. They can only be safely used in a generalist way to get a broad-brush picture.

Specific confirmation of this issue at Matt. 23:25 comes to us through Swanson, who lists Y 034 in favour of the TR's *Reading 1*. This manuscript was also known to von Soden and it is in his Ik group (von Soden's ε 073). How many other, if any other, such manuscripts in his wider "I" group, did von Soden not list?

The Second Matter (Diatessaron formatting). Inside the closed class of sources, the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron follows *Reading 3* in chapter 141. This Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex, and since the so called "parallel" reading in Luke 11:39 reads in the Vulgate, "*iniquitate* (iniquity)," and thus has the same meaning as *Readings 4 or 8*, the Sangallensis Diatessaron must have drawn this Latin reading from Matt. 23:25. Therefore I show the Sangallensis Diatessaron following *Reading 3, infra*.

Outside the closed class of sources, Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron follows *Reading 6* in chapter 40. For related reasons of Luke 11:39 not reading the same as Matt. 23:25's *Reading 6*, I show the Arabic Diatessaron following *Reading 6, infra*. But what if Ciasca's rendering of the Arabic as Latin, "*injustitia* ([with] injustice)" is incorrect? It does not ultimately matter. The whole thing is outside the closed class of sources and has not impact on the determination of the text here at Matt. 23:25.

The Third Matter. The AV renders Greek *akrasia* as "excess" in Matt. 23:25. The word refers to a lack of self-control and so depending on context, it may e.g., be rendered "incontinency" (I Cor. 7:5). Yet in the context of the "cup," the connotation is

that of “intemperance” characterized as vice in the 2nd century A.D. Shepherd of Hermas’s *Similitudes*, List 1, 9:15:3⁵¹. Hence for those who understand the metaphor, *infra*, the AV’s “excess” is clearly the best possible English rendering. It is thus surely paradoxical that the neo-Alexandrian Versions, who put so much stock on the two leading Alexandrian Text’s one of which, *Codex Sinaiticus*, had bound to it the Shepherd of Hermas’s *Similitudes*, in the main have failed to render this word properly here.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:25, *Reading 1*, the TR’s Greek, “*akrasias* (‘excess,’ feminine singular genitive noun, from *akrasia*),” is a minority Byzantine reading. It is found in *Codex Macedoniensis* (Y 034, 9th century, Cambridge University, UK) and *Codex Petroplitanus* (Pi 041, 9th century, St. Petersburg, Russia); Minuscules 880 (11th century, Vatican City State, Rome), 1188 (11th / 12th century, St. Catherine’s Greek Orthodox Monastery, Mt. Sinai, Arabia), 119 (12th century, Paris, France), 120 (12th century, Paris, France), 217 (12th century, Venice, Italy), 270 (12th century, Paris, France), 924 (12th century, Athos, Greece), 1010 (12th century, Athos, Greece), 2127 (12th century, Palermo, Italy, Byzantine outside Pauline Epistles); 477 (13th century, Trinity College, Cambridge University, England), 232 (14th century, Escorial, Spain), 578 (14th century, Arras, France), 1354 (14th century, Jerusalem, Israel), 70 (15th century, Cambridge University, England), 287 (15th century, Paris, France), 288 (15th century, Oxford University, England), 745 (16th century, Paris, France); and Lectionaries 547 (13th century, Vatican City State) and 184 (1319 A.D., in one of two readings, British Library, London, UK).

It is also supported as Latin, “*intemperantia* (excess),” in *Codex Vercellensis* (old Latin Version a, 4th century), *Codex Claromontanus* (old Latin Version h, 5th century), and *Codex Colbertinus* (old Latin Version c, 12th / 13th century); as Latin, “*intemperentia* (immoderateness),” in *Codex Corbeiensis* (old Latin Version ff2, 5th century); “*intemperantiae* (immoderation),” in *Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis* (old Latin Version d, 5th century); and “*incontinentia* (intemperateness),” in *Codex Palatinus* (old Latin Version e, 4th / 5th century) and *Codex Usserianus I* (old Latin r1, 7th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379).

Reading 2 is Greek, “*akrasias* (excess) *adikias* ([which is] iniquity).” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53, vowelizing the second word as *adikeias*).

Reading 3 is Greek, “*akatharsias* (‘uncleanness,’ feminine singular genitive noun, from *akatharsia*).” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codices Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century) and O 023 (6th century). It is further found as Latin, “*inmunditia*

⁵¹ Danker, F. W. (Editor & Reviser), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament & other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd edition, Chicago University Press, USA, 1957, 2000, p. 38.

(uncleanness),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.), and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century); and “*immunditia* (uncleanness),” in old Latin Versions aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested as “*immunditia* (uncleanness),” in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Clement of Rome (c. 150); and ancient church Latin writer, Jerome (d. 420).

Reading 4 is Greek “*ponerias* (‘wickedness,’ feminine singular genitive noun, from *poneria*).” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscles 180 (12th century, Byzantine other than in Acts) and 998 (12th century). It is also found in the ancient church Latin writer, Quodvultdeus (d. c. 453).

Reading 5 is Greek “*pleonexias* (‘covetousness,’ feminine singular genitive noun, from *pleonexia*).” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codex M 021 (9th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407); and the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754).

Reading 6 is Latin, “*injustitia* ([with] injustice).” This is a minority Latin reading found in old Latin Version f (6th century).

Reading 7 is Greek, “*pases* (all) *adikias* (iniquity).” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 473 (13th century).

Reading 8 is Greek “*adikias* (‘iniquity,’ feminine singular genitive noun, from *adikia*).” This is the majority Byzantine reading. It is found in e.g., Codices E 07 (8th century), K 017 (9th century), and S 028 (10th century); Minuscles 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark), 1006 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Revelation), 1505 (11th century, Byzantine in the Gospels), 2 (12th century), 597 (13th century), 1292 (13th century, Byzantine outside of the General Epistles), and 1342 (13th / 14th century, Byzantine other than in Mark); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407); and the early mediaeval church writer, Pseudo-Chrysostom in a Latin work (6th century).

In the wider words of Matt. 23:25,26 we read using the majority Byzantine text’s “iniquity (“*adikias*,” *Reading 8*), “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and **iniquity**. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also” (emphasis mine).

There is a clear and obvious textual problem in the representative Byzantine reading (*Reading 8*) here at Matt. 23:25,26. There is a contextual need for a specific word whose very action *in terms of the metaphor* makes a cup unclean on both the inside *and outside*, so that if one were to “cleanse” it away, it would *ipso facto* result in a situation in which “the outside of” “the cup and platter” would “be clean also” (Matt. 23:26). I.e., the contents *spill over* to the outside of the cup. This means that the

combination of “extortion (*arpages*)” or “iniquity (*adikias*)” fails to do the job here at Matt. 23:25 since neither of them necessitates the concept of *spilling over* so as to make that which is within the cup and platter act to make the outside of the cup or platter also unclean. (Although at Luke 11:39 where there is nothing equivalent to the requirements of Matt. 23:26, it does not matter that the two words used there do not meet this Matt. 23:25 requirement.)

There are no textual variants to consider at “extortion (*arpages*),” and since we are not at liberty to simply create our own words, but must select any NT amendments to the representative Byzantine text from within the closed class of Greek and Latin sources, it follows that “extortion (*arpages*)” must stand as part of the Received Text.

When we come to the second relevant word, “iniquity (*adikias*)” (*Reading 8*) we find that variants do exist here within the closed class of sources. Specifically, “excess (*akrasias*)” (*Reading 1*); “excess which is iniquity (*akrasias adikias*)” (*Reading 2*); “uncleanness (*akatharsias*)” (*Reading 3*); “wickedness (*ponerias*)” (*Reading 4*); “covetousness (*pleonexias*)” (*Reading 5*); “injustice (Latin, *injustitia*)” (*Reading 6*); and “all (*pases*) iniquity (*adikias*)” (*Reading 7*). Of these seven possibilities, there are *prima facie* only two that will work if applied inside the necessary Matt. 23:25,26 metaphor of something *spilling over from within the cup, or on the platter*, so that the substance within *makes the outside of the cup or platter also unclean*. These are “excess (*akrasias*)” (*Reading 1*) and “excess which is iniquity (*akrasias adikias*)” (*Reading 2*).

The terminology of “*akrasias* (excess) *adikias* ([which is] iniquity)” (*Reading 2*) is as a genitive of simple apposition in which more information is given by the genitive of simple apposition “*adikias* (iniquity)” on the head noun, “*akrasias* (excess)” i.e., “excess which is iniquity”⁵². In determining whether the better reading is “excess (*akrasias*)” (*Reading 1*) or “excess which is iniquity (*akrasias adikias*)” (*Reading 2*), let us first consider a relevant general stylistic overview of Matt. 23:25 in the wider context of Matt. 23:23-28. The literal English of our AVs is close enough to the Greek to generally make the following type of stylistic comparisons from it.

Matt. 23:23-28	Some relevant stylistic considerations.
[23] ... ye pay the tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith	A trilogy of <i>specific</i> lesser things that are tithed <i>under the law</i> (mint, anise, & cummin), are contrasted with a trilogy of <i>specific</i> greater things <i>from the law</i> that are omitted (judgement / justice, mercy, & faith).
[24] Ye ... strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.	A one-on-one contrast between not eating <i>one small unclean animal</i> under the Jewish

⁵² Wallace’s *Greek Grammar*, pp. 94-100; Young’s *Greek*, pp. 39-40.

<p>[25] ... ye make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but within they are full of extortion (<i>arpages</i>) and</p> <p>***</p> <p>[(1), <i>Reading 1</i>] excess (<i>akrasias</i>)</p> <p>[OR]</p> <p>***</p> <p>[(2), <i>Reading 2</i>] excess which is iniquity (<i>akrasias adikias</i>)</p> <p>***</p> <p>[26] Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.</p> <p>[27] Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.</p> <p>[28] Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.</p>	<p>food rules (the gnat, one example of Lev. 11:23) and eating <i>one large unclean animal</i> (the camel, Lev. 11:4).</p> <p>***</p> <p>Couplet of “cup and platter” with a couplet of “extortion ([1] <i>arpages</i>) and excess ([2] <i>akrasias</i>).”</p> <p>[OR]</p> <p>***</p> <p>Couplet of “cup and platter” with a triplet of “extortion ([1] <i>arpages</i>) and excess which is iniquity ([2] <i>akrasias</i> [3] <i>adikias</i>)”</p> <p>***</p> <p>A one-on-one contrast between the “inside” and “outside” of the cup and platter.</p> <p>A double contrast between “white sepulchres” being “full of dead men’s bones,” and what outwardly may “appear beautiful” being inwardly “full of” “all uncleanness.</p> <p>A double contrast between how they “outwardly appear” and their “hypocrisy,” and their appearance of being “righteous” when they are “full of” “iniquity.”</p>
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Looking at this general type of numerical stylistic matching of the Pharisees pretence as opposed to the spiritual reality as exposed by our Lord, when juxtaposed next to the couplet of “cup and platter” in Matt. 23:25, *Reading 2*’s “*akrasias* (excess) *adikias* ([which is] iniquity)” looks incongruous, whereas *Reading 1*’s “*akrasias* (excess)” looks *just right*. Therefore, the correct reading is “excess (*akrasias*)” (*Reading 1*), whereas “excess which is iniquity (*akrasias adikias*)” (*Reading 2*) is evidently a conflation of *Readings 1 & 8*. It is nevertheless instructive to note that for the conflation of *Reading 2*

to have occurred in Manuscript Washington (W 032), it is simultaneously necessary to conclude that both *Readings 1 & 8* existed in ancient times. Therefore W 032 here gives us a perverse testimony i.e., by this conflation, it shows in the Greek manuscript tradition that the TR's *Reading 1* dates to ancient times.

The origins of the seven variants are conjectural.

As observed, *supra*, *Reading 2's* Greek “*akrasias* (excess) *adikias* ([which is] iniquity)” is evidently a conflation of *Readings 1 & 8*.

Was *Reading 2* an accidental conflation? In Manuscript Washington (W 032), which is the only known manuscript to contain this variant, we find that these words come at the end of a line (Matt. 23:25-34 at p. 87). The next line protrudes a further 2 letter spaces relative to line 1, and the line below that a further 3 letter spaces relative to line 1. Was a scribe, if so, possibly the scribe of W 032, copying out from a manuscript in which a stylistic paper space of about 10 or 11 letter spaces occurred after *Reading 1's* “*akrasias* (excess)” at Matt. 23:25, with Matt. 23:26 starting on a new line? Was the scribe aware from another manuscript of *Reading 8's* “*adikias* (iniquity)”? Did he conclude that either the “*adikias* (iniquity)” had been lost in his manuscript line due to a paper fade; or possibly in both manuscript lines due to an ellipsis on the initial alpha (“*a*”), with the “*adikias* (iniquity)” so lost in one manuscript line, and the “*akrasias* (excess)” so lost in the other manuscript line? If so, did he then “reconstruct” *Reading 2* from these *Readings 1 & 8* manuscripts as “*akrasias* (excess) *adikias* ([which is] iniquity)”?

Was *Reading 2* a deliberate conflation? Did a scribe, if so, probably in an antecedent manuscript line that the scribe of W 032 copied from, think it some kind of “stylistic improvement” to conflate *Readings 1 & 8*, so as to make the point that such “excess (*akrasias*)” is “iniquity (*adikias*)”?

If the variant originated with W 032 it seems accidental conflation is the more likely option, since in general terms the scribe of the Byzantine text portions of W 032 (Byzantine text in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) was not a conflationist. But we do not know if *Reading 2* originated with W 032, or was copied out by the scribe of W 032 from a pre-existing manuscript line which might have been compiled by multiple scribes, of which a conflationist scribe was responsible for *Reading 2*.

Reading 3's Greek, “*akatharsias* (uncleanness)” looks to have been drawn from the nearby Matt. 23:27, “... full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness (*akatharsias*).”

Was *Reading 3* an accidental assimilation with verse 27? Was a scribe copying out from a manuscript in which a stylistic paper space of some letter spaces occurred after *Reading 1's* “*akrasias* (excess)” at Matt. 23:25? Due to a partial paper fade, had the “*akrasias*” come to look something like, “*ak:::~::~*”? Did a scribe then “reconstruct” this “from context” as “*akatharsias* (uncleanness)” through reference to verse 27?

Was *Reading 3* a deliberate assimilation with verse 27? Did a scribe, superficially looking at Matt. 23:25, consider that “*akrasias* (excess)” was “too vague,” and that “it would therefore be a stylistic improvement” to alter this to “the clearer” “*akatharsias* (uncleanness)” of verse 27?

Reading 4’s Greek “*ponerias* (wickedness),” looks to be an assimilation with Luke 11:39 (cf. *Reading 8*), “and the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness (*ponerias*).”

Was *Reading 4* an accidental assimilation with Luke 11:39? Due to a partial paper fade, had the original TR’s *Reading 1* “*akrasias* (excess)” come to look something like, “:~::~:ias”? Did a scribe then “reconstruct” this as “*ponerias* (wickedness)” from Luke 11:39?

Was *Reading 4* a deliberate assimilation with Luke 11:39? Did a scribe seeking “standard Gospel readings” in the mistaken belief that without them there were “Bible contradictions,” wilfully alter the “*akrasias* (excess)” of Matt. 23:25 to the “*ponerias* (wickedness)” of Luke 11:39?

The origins of *Reading 5*’s Greek “*pleonexias* (‘covetousness,’ feminine singular genitive noun, from *pleonexia*)” are not clear. While we cannot be sure as to its origins, possibly, though by no means certainly, it *might* have come across as a semi-assimilation with Mark 7:22 where one finds, “thefts (*klopai*, feminine plural nominative noun, from *klopē*)” followed by “covetousness (*pleonexiai*, feminine plural nominative noun, from *pleonexia*).” This is similar in concept to Matt. 22:25 with *Reading 5* where we have the TR’s “extortion (*arpages*, feminine singular genitive noun, from ‘*arpage* / *harpage*),” in which the Greek ‘*arpage*’ carries with it the idea of “robbery,” then followed by “covetousness (*pleonexias*, from *pleonexia*).”

Was *Reading 5* an accidental change? Was a scribe using a manuscript in which “*akrasias* (excess)” had been written over two lines, with “*akras*” on one line, and “*ias*” on the next? Due to a paper fade did the first line come to look something like, “:~::~:”? Did a scribe, possibly noting that at Mark 7:22 Greek *pleonexia* (covetousness) is used after *klopē* (theft), then “reconstruct” this as “*pleonexias* (covetousness)”?

Was *Reading 5* a deliberate change? Did a scribe, superficially looking at Matt. 23:25, consider that “*akrasias* (excess)” was “too vague,” and that “it would therefore be a stylistic improvement” to alter this to “the clearer” “*pleonexias* (covetousness)”? If so, did he do so with some reference to Mark 7:22?

The origins of *Reading 6*’s Latin, “*injustitia* (‘[with] injustice,’ feminine singular ablative noun, from *injustitia*)” are not clear. While we cannot be sure as to its origins, possibly, though by no means certainly, it *might* have come across as a semi-assimilation with Luke 18:11 where one finds the old Latin f’s (and Vulgate’s) “extortioners

(*raptores*, masculine plural nominative noun, from *raptor*),” followed by “unjust (*injusti*, masculine plural nominative adjective, from *injustus*).” This is similar in concept to Matt. 22:25 with *Reading 6* where in the Latin of old Latin f we have “[with] robbery (*rapina*, feminine singular ablative noun, from *rapina*),” followed by “[with] injustice (*injustitia*, from *injustitia*).” (For my limited purposes, on this occasion I shall not discuss the possibility of *Reading 6* originating in a Greek manuscript.)

Was *Reading 6* an accidental change? Was a Latin scribe using a manuscript in which Latin, “*intemperantia* (excess),” was written at the end of a line? Due to a paper fade did this end of the line come to look something like, “*in::::::::::::*”? Did a Latin scribe, possibly noting that at Luke 18:11 *injustus* (unjust) is used after *raptores* (extortioners), then “reconstruct” this as “*injustitia* ([with] injustice)” from the similar though not identical *injustitia*?

Was *Reading 6* a deliberate change? Did a Latin scribe, superficially looking at Matt. 23:25, consider that Latin, “*intemperantia* (excess)” was “too vague,” and that “it would therefore be a stylistic improvement” to alter this to “the clearer” “*injustitia* ([with] injustice)”? If so, did he do so with some reference to the similar though not identical *injustitia* at Luke 18:11?

Reading 7's Greek, “*pases* (‘all,’ feminine singular genitive adjective, from *pas-pasa-pan*) *adikias* (‘iniquity,’ feminine singular genitive noun, from *adikia*, derived from *a* as a negative particle + *dike*)” looks to have been drawn as a semi-assimilation from the nearby Matt. 23:27, “... full of dead men’s bones, and of all (*pases*) uncleanness (*akatharsias*);” possibly with some additional influence by way of a converse “reconstruction” from the words of Matt. 3:15, “all (*pasan*, feminine singular accusative adjective, from *pas-pasa-pan*) righteousness (*dikaiosunen*, feminine singular accusative noun, from *dikaiosune*, derived from *dikaio*s which is derived from *dike*).”

Was *Reading 7* an accidental change? Was a scribe using a manuscript in which 3 or 4 letter spaces protruded in the lines above or below at the end of one line, and the next line started with “*adikias* (iniquity)”? Did the scribe conclude that “there must have been a paper fade”? With some reference to the nearby Matt. 23:27, and possibly also Matt. 3:15, did he then “reconstruct” Matt. 23:25 with the 5 letters of “*pases* (all)”?

Was *Reading 7* a deliberate change? Did a scribe, superficially looking at Matt. 23:25, consider that “*akrasias* (excess)” was “too vague,” and that “it would therefore be a stylistic improvement” to alter this to the type of “clearer” reading one finds at Matt. 23:27 with the usage of “*pases* (all)”? Was he also possibly influenced in this decision by Matt. 3:15?

Reading 8's Greek “*adikias* (‘iniquity,’ feminine singular genitive noun, from *adikia*),” looks to be a semi-assimilation of Matthean Greek with Lucan Greek terminology. In the first instance, it seems to conceptually owe something to Luke 11:39 (cf. *Reading 4*), “and the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness

(*ponerias*).” And in the second instance, it appears to have been further influenced by St. Luke’s usage of *adikias* from *adikia* in one or more of the following references, Luke 13:27 (“all ye workers of iniquity,” *adikias*); 16:8 (“the unjust steward,” *adikias*); 16:9 (“mammon of unrighteousness,” *adikias*); and 18:6 (“the unjust judge,” *adikias*); possibly, though less probably, with some further follow through reference to St. Luke in Acts 1:18 (the reward of iniquity,” *adikias*) and 8:23 (“the bond of iniquity,” *adikias*).”

Was *Reading 8* an accidental change? Was a scribe using a manuscript in which “*akrasias* (excess)” had been written over two lines, with “*akras*” on one line, and “*ias*” on the next? Due to a paper fade did the first line come to look something like, “*a:::*”? Did a scribe, familiar with Lucan Greek and Lucan terminology, then “reconstruct” this as “*adikias* (iniquity)” with reference to Luke 11:39 and one or more Lucan usages of “*adikias*” in Luke 13:27; 16:8,9; 18:6 (and possibly also Acts 1:18; 8:23)?

Was *Reading 8* a deliberate change? Back in ancient times, did a scribe who believed that “dynamic equivalents” “needed to be used in our day’n’age” to “clarify” the “obscure” meanings of Scripture “intended for a former time;” consider in his shallow reading of Matt. 23:25 that “*akrasias* (excess)” was “too vague” for “the more precise and advanced” peoples of “our modern times”? Did he thus think it to be “a stylistic improvement” to alter this to “the clearer” reading of “*adikias* (iniquity),” through reference to Luke 11:39 and one or more Lucan usages of “*adikias*” in Luke 13:27; 16:8,9; 18:6 (and possibly also Acts 1:18; 8:23)?

Were these seven variants in *Readings 2 to 8* deliberate or accidental changes? Were some accidental and others deliberate? We do not know such things. And generally speaking, we cannot know such things. But by the grace of God, we can and do know that these were all changes to the text of Scripture preserved for us over time and through time in the *Textus Receptus* reading of *Reading 1*.

On the one hand, the TR’s *Reading 1*, “*akrasias* (excess),” is strongly supported by textual analysis, and of the eight readings, it is the only one that can realistically be correct. It has the support of more than 2% of the Byzantine Greek manuscripts, and thus is clearly a well established Greek minority reading. It has much stronger textual support in the Latin, with about half the old Latin Versions (old Latin a, e, d, h, ff2, r1, & c), and most of these date from ancient times (a, e, d, h, & ff2). Since the textual analysis in favour of *Reading 1* is based on what is the best reading in the Greek text, it follows that this usage of these Latin sources shows the servant maxim, *The Latin improves the Greek*, in humble and happy obeisance to its master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*. *Reading 1* also has the impressive ancient support of that Greek writing church father and doctor justly celebrated for his orthodox defence of the Holy Trinity, the learned Bishop of Caesarea (370-379), St. Basil the Great.

But on the other hand, *Reading 3* also has some good support in the Latin, with the Vulgate and old Latin versions; as well as some ancient church writers’ support. Moreover, *Reading 8* is the majority Byzantine reading, and has the support of at least c. 90% of the Greek manuscripts, together with some support from ancient church writers.

Weighing up these competing considerations, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 23:25 a middling "B" (in the range of 69% +/- 1%), i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:25, the TR's *Reading 1*, "excess (*akrasias*)," is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles), 1241 (12th century, Alexandrian corruption in General Epistles, Byzantine text in Acts, independent text elsewhere i.e., independent scribal corruption elsewhere e.g., in the Gospels), and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation). It is also found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Armenian Version (5th century); Georgian Version (5th century); and Slavic Version (9th century).

Reading 2 is "excess which is iniquity (*akrasias adikias*).” A similar reading is found in the Syriac Harclean Version (616).

Reading 3, "uncleanness (*akatharsias*)," is found in the Syriac Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century) and Palestinian (c. 6th century) Versions.

Reading 6 is "injustice (Latin, *injustitia*).” This is found as a translation from the Arabic as Latin, "*injustitia*," in Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

Reading 8, "iniquity (*adikias*)," is found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century; and Minuscules 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the Syriac Pesitto Version (first half 5th century).

With the support of the two leading Alexandrian texts, and "external support" in

the Western Text *at al*, for the wrong reasons, the correct TR's *Reading 1*, "excess (*akrasias*)," was adopted by the NU Text *et al*. Hence at Matt. 23:25 the correct reading is found in the ASV as "excess."

But the failure to understand the meaning here of "*akrasias* (excess)," led to the rendering, "self-indulgence," at Matt. 23:25 in the NASB. While this is a possible meaning of the Greek, it is clear from this rendering that the NASB translators have no grip on the textual reasons for why this is the correct Greek reading. Similar issues exist with the RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, TEV, TCNT, NEB, REB, Moffatt, and the new neo-Alexandrian Papists' JB and NJB. We are thus reminded that "one can bring a horse to water, but one cannot make it drink." Because the Alexandrian text's did not alter the TR's reading here, it came through in the neo-Alexandrian texts. Because the ASV tried to keep close to the AV, it here retained the correct meaning, "excess." But because the neo-Alexandrians lack requisite skills of textual analysis, they did not know what they had in the TR's reading; these neo-Alexandrian version here used a translation of the Greek which in a decontextualized vacuum would be a permissible rendering of this Greek word; but which at Matt. 23:25 clearly does not have this contextual meaning.

This same error beset the Majority Text Burgonite translators of the NKJV which also here rendered Matt. 23:25 incorrectly as "self-indulgence." A New King James Version footnote also says, "M[ajority]-Text reads 'unrighteousness'," and according to the NKJV Preface, "The Majority Text ... corrects those readings which have little or no support in the Greek manuscript tradition," i.e., it purportedly "corrects" "the *Textus Receptus*" at various places. All this sounds very familiar. It sounds like Burgon who specifically rejected the usage of e.g., "the Vulgate", or "any ancient Father," e.g., the ancient church Greek writers, "Chrysostom" or "Cyril," contrary to "the whole body of ancient authorities" i.e., contrary to the Majority Text⁵³.

Hence we find that *Reading 8*, "iniquity (*adikias*)," is also found in the main text of the majority texts of Hodges & Farstad (1985) and Robinson & Pierpont (2005). Burgon would no doubt be well pleased with his minions here (even though Hodges & Farstad and Pierpont & Robinson are Burgonite revisionists), for Burgon claimed, "the '*Textus Receptus*' ..., calls for ... revision," "upon the" basis of the "majority of authorities." And his proud boast was this, "Again and again we shall have occasion to point out ... that the *Textus Receptus* needs correction⁵⁴."

These battles with the Burgonites here at Matt. 23:25 as to the correct text, or with most of the neo-Alexandrians as to the meaning of "*akrasias* (excess)" here at Matt. 23:25, are not as some would claim some kind of "new thing." We neo-Byzantines have defended the TR and AV here long afore, for we defended here against the old Latin Papists. With some strong Latin support for it, the old Latin Papists favoured *Reading 3* in its Latin form, "*inmunditia* (uncleanness)," both in the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-

⁵³ Burgon's *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels* (1896), pp. 30-1; 47-50.

⁵⁴ *Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*, pp. 13,15; & *Revision Revised*, p. 21.

Rheims which reads at Matt. 23:25, “full of rapine and uncleanness” (Douay-Rheims).

A metaphor is designed to make a point, but may have some defects in it if taken too literally in all its particulars. A metaphor has primary imagery which must fit to make the metaphor work; but it may contain secondary elements which like a parable, would constitute an absurdity if rigorously pursued. E.g., in the metaphors, “The man was as swift as a horse,” or “Greg can run swiftly like a horse,” the man’s speed which is *as swift as a horse* is the primary element which requires that the man in question can run very fast. Hence were we to find this statement in a manuscript that read, “snail” rather than “horse,” and the context was neither humour nor sarcasm, then we would have to conclude that there was an evident problem with the statement. But it would also be an absurdity to overdevelop this metaphor with secondary applications, and claim e.g., that the man could literally run as quickly as a horse, or that the man looked like a horse, or that the man actually had four legs and a tail like a horse. Like parables, metaphors should not be pulled and contorted beyond their basic point.

In terms of such a metaphor, like the eight tentacles of an octopus, these eight readings here present us with a potentially entangling engagement. Thus if one is not very careful, the fleshly suction caps of this octopus’s eight tentacles might here so overwhelm and overpower a textual analyst, as to lead him into error. Even that tentacle which represents the correct reading of the TR i.e., *Reading 1*, contains danger here for those who do not study it well, since if they do not understand it, they may easily mistranslate it.

The fact that the two main Alexandrian texts and leading Western text did not on this occasion alter the TR’s reading, meant that by a sheer fluke the neo-Alexandrians bumbled, and stumbled, and fumbled their way into the correct reading. Yet even here the fact that they lack skills of textual analysis, and so fail to understand why *Reading 1* is the correct reading, meant that they generally mistranslated it. The old Latin Papists, attracted by a swaying tentacle’s strong Latin support for *Reading 3*, were lured by this tentacle into their deaths. If they had some better skills of textual analysis, it would have been possible for them to have worked out the correct reading, since *Reading 1* also has some strong support in the Latin. Thus they did not escape the potential dangers of this octopus.

So too the Majority Text Burgonites here came to grief. The suction caps of what to them seemed to be “that really big” tentacle at the front of the advancing octopus proved too strong for them, and became their *fatal attraction*. Thus like a victim at the hands of a “blue-ringed octopus,” the Burgonites reading was here poisoned to death by the Majority Text tentacle of this “octopus.” The neo-Alexandrian’s incorrect translation of the correct *Reading 1*, indicating that they did not know why it was the correct reading; and the incorrect readings of the old Latin Papists and Burgonites, means that their painful demise here at Matt. 23:25 reminds us that if by the grace of God we are not wise and prudent, we may “become entangled” with such “an octopus,” much to the decay of the spiritual health and accuracy of the New Testament text or translation we are using.

Matt. 23:26 “the cup and platter ... of them” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. Straining under the mistaken belief that old Latin d inside the closed class of sources is simply a Latin form of the Greek Western Text’s D 05 outside the closed class of sources; the UBS (1993) textual apparatus tries to unconvincingly explain *Variant 3* (old Latin d) as a sub-type of *Variant 4b* (D 05). The reader should be relieved to learn that no such strains and contortions are perpetrated in this textual commentary, *infra*.

The Second Matter. The Clementine is a most useful Latin work for manifesting readings found in the Latin textual tradition. But where, as occasionally occurs, one cannot demonstrate the existence of any underpinning Latin textual support, then the Clementine has no standing in its own right. Here at Matt. 23:26 we find that in broad terms at *Variant 2* the Clementine Vulgate manifests a known Latin reading. But it uses a variant spelling, substituting “o” for “a” in its spelling, “*paropsidis* (the platter).” This is not found in any Vulgate Codices (Merk, 1964), or old Latin Versions (Julicher, 1938).

However, *Variant 2*, is found in the Greek writer, Origen in a Latin translation, where Origen’s translator uses the spelling, “*paropsidis* (the platter)⁵⁵.” Therefore it is fair to conclude that on this occasion the Clementine manifests a known Latin reading.

(Cf. Vol. 2, Preface, “*Old Papists & New Papists: The Clementine Vulgate & Neo-Vulgate;” Matt. 15:14a, “Preliminary Textual Discussion,” “The Second Matter;” and Matt. 15:31c, “Preliminary Textual Discussion.”)

The Third Matter. The issues raised with the possibility of a deliberate change giving rise to *Variant 1*, whether as *Variant 1a* or *Variant 1b*, again reminds us of the need for more work to be done on the Greek Lectionaries. While the UBS (4th revised edition) refers to nine such Lectionaries, I have found the same reading in Lectionary 1968, and so there may well be more Lectionaries with this corrupt reading.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:26, the TR’s Greek is “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup) *kai* (and) *tes* (the) *paropsidos* (platter) ... *auton* (‘of them,’ neuter plural genitive, 3rd person pronoun, from *autos-e-o*),” in the wider words, “cleanse first that which is within the cup and (*kai*) platter (*tes paropsidos*), that the outside of them (*auton*) may be clean also” (AV). This is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is

⁵⁵ Referred to by Tischendorf (1869-72) in Migne 3, 843 & 844; see Origen in: Migne (Greek Writers Series) (1862 Paris Edition), *PATROLOGIA*, Vol. 13, p. 1627 (Latin translation of Greek).

Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), O 023 (6th century), F 09 (9th century), M 021 (9th century), U 030 (9th century), Gamma 036 (9th century) and Pi 041 (9th century); and Minuscules 1006 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Revelation), 1505 (11th century, Byzantine in the Gospels), 180 (12th century, Byzantine other than in Acts), 1010 (12th century), 597 (13th century), 1292 (13th century, Byzantine outside of the General Epistles), and 1342 (13th / 14th century, Byzantine other than in Mark). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379).

Not all variants are necessarily discussed at a given reading, and the minority Byzantine reading of “*entos* (inside)” (*Variant 1b*) rather than “*ektos* (outside)” (TR & *Variant 1a*) is only of secondary interest. Normally I might not even mention it. However, because of the importance of Lectionaries to the issue of a possible deliberate alteration of the text to create *Variant 1*, *infra*, I shall here refer to it. The unifying primary issue of *Variant 1* is that it reads “... the cup and (*kai*) platter (*tes paropsidos*), that the (*to*) ... of it (*autou*) may be clean also.”

Variant 1a follows the TR’s and majority Byzantine text’s “*to* (the) *ektos* (outside),” which in the TR comes immediately before “*auton* (of them),” and in *Variant 1a* comes immediately before “*autou* (of it).” However, in *Variant 1b* “*to* (the) *ektos* (outside),” is changed to “*to* (the) *entos* (inside).” Were I regarding this as the primary issue then this would have to be listed as a separate variant, since the meaning of “outside” and “inside” is quite different. But because I am primarily concerned with the issue of the singular “*autou* (of it),” the two are put together as *Variants 1a & 1b*.

Thus there is an internal variation in *Variant 1*. *Variant 1a* is Greek “*tou* (the) *poteriou* (cup) *kai* (and) *tes* (the) *paropsidos* (platter) ... *to* (the) *ektos* (‘outside,’ an adverb) *autou* (‘of it,’ neuter singular genitive, 3rd person pronoun, from *autos-e-o*),” in the wider words, “cleanse first that which is within the cup and (*kai*) platter (*tes paropsidos*), that the (*to*) outside (*ektos*) of it (*autou*) may be clean also.” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codices E 07 (8th century) and G 011 (9th century); Minuscule 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark); and Lectionaries 751 (11th century), 773 (11th century), 387 (12th century), 1780 (12th century), 547 (13th century), 950 (1289/90 A.D.), and 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379).

Variant 1b is Greek “*tou* (the) *poteriou* (cup) *kai* (and) *tes* (the) *paropsidos* (platter) ... *to* (the) *entos* (‘inside,’ preposition + genitive) *autou* (‘of it,’ neuter singular genitive, 3rd person pronoun, from *autos-e-o*),” in the wider words, “cleanse first that which is within the cup and (*kai*) platter (*tes paropsidos*), that the (*to*) inside (*entos*) of it (*autou*) may be clean also.” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Lectionaries 858 (12th century), 1016 (12th century), and 184 (1319 A.D.).

Thus either way, *Variant 1* reads “... the cup and (*kai*) platter (*tes paropsidos*), that the (*to*) ... of it (*autou*) may be clean also.”

Variant 2 is upon reconstruction, Greek, “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup) *kai* (and) *tes* (the) *paropsidos* (platter),” in the wider words, “cleanse first that which is within the cup and (*kai*) platter (*tes paropsidos*), that the outside may be clean also.” This is found as Latin, “*calicis* (the cup) *et* (and) *parapsidis* (the platter),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions h (5th century), f (6th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); and (in both instances with “*b*” for “*p*” variant spelling, “*parabsidis*”⁵⁶, from *parapsis*), the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592, with “*o*” for “*a*” variant spelling, “*paropsidis*” from *parapsis*). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and in the ancient church Latin writers, Ambrose (d. 397) and Jerome (d. 420).

Variant 3 is Greek, “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup),” in the wider words, “cleanse first that which is within the cup, that the outside may be clean also.” This is found as Latin, “*calicis* (the cup),” in old Latin Version d (5th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Clement of Alexandria (d. before 215).

Variant 4a is upon reconstruction, Greek, “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup) ...*autou* (‘of it,’ neuter singular genitive, 3rd person pronoun, from *autos-e-o*),” in the wider words, “cleanse first that which is within the cup, that the outside of it (*autou*) may be clean also.” This is found as Latin, “*calicis* (the cup) ...*eius* (of it),” in old Latin Versions a (4th century) and e (4th / 5th century).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct. Indeed it would contextually be an awkward reading indicating a textual problem to first use “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup) *kai* (and) *tes* (the) *paropsidos* (platter)” in Matt. 23:25, and then in Matt. 23:26 to read only “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup)” (*Variants 3 & 4*). It would likewise create a stylistic tension to refer to both “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup) *kai* (and) *tes* (the) *paropsidos* (platter)” in Matt. 23:26, followed by the singular “of it (*autou*)” (*Variant 1*), rather than the plural, “of them (*auton*)” (TR). *Variant 1b* (which under normal circumstances I would be unlikely to even mention) clearly removes a contextual contrast evident in the words, “cleanse first (*proton*)” and “also (*kai*),” indicating a sequence, and so presents a textual problem crying out for remedy. While *Variant 2* is a possible reading, it is a Latin reading and for all we know it may never have existed in the Greek. I.e., quite possibly the Greek “of them (*auton*)” was pruned away as part of an all too non-literal rendering of the Greek into the Latin. Therefore, all of these variants are *fairly obvious* alterations to the representative Byzantine reading, and no textual analyst, called and gifted by God as a “teacher” (I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11) in the Neo-Byzantine School, would give any serious probability to any of these variants being correct. The origins of these variants are conjectural.

Was the “*autou* (of it)” of *Variant 1* an accidental alteration? We know from a

⁵⁶ A variant spelling using “*b*” or “*p*” may occur when these letters are inside a Latin word. Gildersleeve’s *Latin Grammar* (1895), section 9 (2), p. 5.

later time with Lectionary 2378 (11th century) that the letters “*o*” (omicron) and “*o̅*” (omega) were sometimes swapped around in local revowellings⁵⁷. Was such a revowelling first made by a scribe of the TR’s “*auton* (of them)” to “*auton* (of them)”?

We also know that variation exists of how to form the letter nu “*n*.” In standard seminary Greek this looks like a “*v*” although in Lectionary 2378 it looks something like a mu (*m*) which is “*μ*”, but without the curve at the bottom right (which is how one distinguishes mu and nu in this Lectionary 2378). And in standard seminary Greek the upsilon (*u*) looks like “*v*”, but in Lectionary 1968 it is sometimes more pointed at the bottom, and so *on some occasions* looks something like the standard seminary Greek nu or “*v*” (although in Lectionary 1968 the nu is the same as in Lectionary 2378).

I do not know enough about the history of these different Greek writing scripts to know if they had equivalents when this variant first originated. However, assuming (perhaps wrongly) for this speculation that they do; did a scribe looking at an omega to omicron revowelled manuscript that ended with a nu (*v*), i.e., looking at something like, “*αυτον* (*auton*);” and who was familiar with multiple Greek letter scripts, including one that used a more pointed upsilon (*v*) that looked more like such a nu (*v*); then wrongly interpret this as “*αυτου* (*autou*)”? Did he thus write this out in a manner that more clearly became e.g., (in unicals / capital letters) “*AYTOY*”?

Alternatively, we know from Lectionary 2378 that when a word such as “*auton* (of them)” comes at the end of a line, that the “*on*” suffix can be abbreviated by a symbol, such as a semi-circle⁵⁸. Did a scribe using a manuscript with such a symbol replacing the “*on*” suffix of “*auton* (of them),” mistakenly read this as “*autou* (of it)” and so write in his manuscript “*AYTOY*”? (Once again I do not know if such an abbreviation system existed at the time this variant arose.)

While I do not know if these first two conjectures are possible inside a Greek script old enough to account for the rise of the *Variant 1*, I note a further possibility that uses data from Manuscript Washington (W 032) which dates to ancient times, and which therefore may be considered. We know from W 032 that when a word such as “*auton* (of them)” comes at the end of a line, the final letter may be abbreviated so it looks something like “*~*” (e.g., Matt. 24-48-25:9, p. 93). Did a scribe using a manuscript with a revowelled omega to omicron, followed by such an abbreviation intended for the removal of the final “*n*” (nu), when looking at something like “*auto~*”, then mistakenly read this as “*AYTOY* (*autou*)”?

Was the “*entos* (inside)” of *Variant 1b* an accidental alteration? In a manuscript,

⁵⁷ See Lectionary 2378 at John 21:1 (*o* to *o̅*) in Appendix 1; and at Matt. 21:33b (*o̅* to *o*) in Appendix 3.

⁵⁸ In Lectionary 2378 at p. 29b, in Matt. 8:30, the “*pollon*” / “*πολλων* (many),” is abbreviated at the end of a line to “*poll*” / “*πολλ*,” and then a semi-circle on top reaches from over the middle of the pi (*p* / *π*) to just after the second lamda (*l* / *λ*).

due to a paper fade did the original “*ektos* (outside)” come to look something like “*e:tos*”? Did a scribe then “reconstruct” this as “*entos*”? Did he get the idea of “*entos* (inside)” from an all too superficial reading of verse 26, which earlier says, “Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within (*entos*) the cup and platter”?

Was the “*autou* (of it)” of *Variant 1* a deliberate alteration? It is notable that there is quite a strong support for *Variant 1*, both in the forms of *variant 1a & 1b*, among the Lectionaries, ten of which are itemized in support of it, *supra*. Certainly this variant is also found outside the Lectionaries in both codices and minuscules. Nevertheless, its greater strength is in the Lectionaries. Why might this be?

The holy Apostle, St. Paul, that is, the Holy Ghost speaking through the holy Apostle, St. Paul, as his penman, forewarns us, “there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you” (I Cor. 11:19). One such heresy involves the turning of the sacrament of Communion into act of idolatry, in which there is such an over focus on the Communion elements, that they are venerated. Thus, for example, the Final Rubric of The Communion Service in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* (1662) says, “adoration ... either unto the sacramental bread or wine ..., or unto any corporeal presence of Christ’s natural flesh and blood, for the sacramental bread and wine remain in their very natural substances, and therefore may not be adored,” is “idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians.” Or the Presbyterian *Westminster Confession* (1649 & 1690, *Church of Scotland*), 29:6 says, “transubstantiation” “is the cause” “of gross idolatries.” Or the Dutch Reform *Heidelberg Catechism* (1563) says the “[Roman] Mass is” “a denial of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ and a condemnable idolatry” (Question & Answer 80).

But did scribes attracted by such idolatrous tendencies, deliberately change the plural form, “*auton* (of them)” i.e., “the cup and platter,” to the singular form, “*autou* (of it),” in order to say “this refers to just the cup”? If so, was their motive for this an extended analogy, in which they then said something like, “We have a Eucharistic centred church service on the Cup of the Eucharist, in distinction to the Cup of the Pharisees which Jesus here condemns”?⁵⁹

Does this type of development also explain a deliberate alteration giving rise to *Variant 1b*, in which the original “*ektos* (outside)” becomes “*entos* (inside)”? I.e., did

⁵⁹ I have e.g., known of Puseyites or semi-Puseyites referring to ‘a Eucharistic centred church service,’ rather than a *Bible centred church service*. Of course, if properly Bible focused in accordance with the doctrine of the 1662 prayer book and 39 Articles, besides being Communion, a Sunday service could also be Matins or Evensong. To “the question of ‘Why?’ Reformed Anglicans upholding the 1662 prayer book do not want the term ‘Eucharist’ used” (due to its religious cultural connotation and loading of consubstantiation and idolatry which can thus lead people into these things, Rom. 14:21; I Cor. 8:7,9-13), see Textual Commentary, Volume 1 (Matt. 1-14), “Dedication: The Anglican Calendar,” section “b) William Laud,” subsection, “Some instances of ‘Laud’s Popery’ as fairly being characterized as Laud’s Innovations,” at “The Canons of 1640.”

some use an extended analogy, in which they then said something like, “We have a Eucharistic centred church service on the Cup of the Eucharist, in distinction to the Cup of the Pharisees which Jesus here condemns. For he says ‘the Cup’ must be ‘clean’ on ‘the inside,’ like a Communion Cup that we use at the Eucharist”?

Does such a deliberate change also act to explain the wider popularity of *Variant 1*, whether as *Variant 1a* or *Variant 1b*, in the Lectionaries? I.e., was this type of thing thus integrated into some impure Church services via the corrupted readings of *Variant 1* their Lectionaries? If so, it should be remembered that ten Lectionaries is still a fairly small number overall. (Although the actual number of all such lectionaries may well be higher than this figure.)

As previously noted, *Variant 2* is a Latin reading and for all we know it may never have existed in the Greek. Was *Variant 2* an accidental alteration? Was it lost in an undetected paper fade in a Greek or Latin manuscript?

Was *Variant 2* a deliberate alteration? Was it pruned away by a prunist Greek or Latin scribe on the basis of “redundancy”? Was it pruned away as part of an all too non-literal rendering of the Greek into the Latin?

Was *Variant 3* an accidental alteration? Did a manuscript suffer damage? Were the words, “*kai* (and) *tes* (the) *paropsidos* (platter)” and “*auton* (of them)” covered in some substance, e.g., ink? Did a first scribe, not sure of what to do, simply leave some spaces or dashes in the hope that the missing words might be filled in later? Did a later scribe, not knowing what these dashes were, simply omit them, thus producing *Variant 3*?

Was *Variant 3* a deliberate alteration? Did a prunist scribe remove these words as a “stylistic improvement” on the basis that “they were redundant”? Given that the earliest reference for this reading is Clement of Alexandria (d. before 215), we must ask, Where did Clement get this reading from? Did he get it from a scribe of the Alexandrian School? Is this an early witness to the existence of the aberrant Alexandrian School of scribes, that fiendish and foolish group whose standing among the “many which corrupt the word of God” (II Cor. 2:17), makes them notorious for their prunist proclivities?

Was *Variant 4a* an accidental alteration? Did a manuscript suffer damage? Were the words, “*kai* (and) *tes* (the) *paropsidos* (platter)” and the “*on*” suffix of “*auton* (of them)” covered in some substance, e.g., ink? Did a first scribe, “reconstruct” the “*auton* (of them)” as “of it (*autou*),” and not sure what to do with the first part, simply leave some spaces or dashes in the hope that the missing words might be filled in later? Did a later scribe, not knowing what these dashes were, simply omit them, thus producing *Variant 4a*?

Was *Variant 4a* a deliberate alteration? Did a prunist scribe remove these words as a “stylistic improvement” on the basis that “they were redundant”?

Were these variants deliberate or accidental changes? Or were some deliberate, and others accidental? We do not know. But we do know that they were variations on the text of Holy Writ here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR's reading has rock solid support as the representative Byzantine reading, over time, and through time, dating from ancient times with *Codex Freerianus* (W 032). It is also cited by the ancient Greek writing church father and doctor, St. Basil the Great. *Variants 1a & 1b* are both slim minority Byzantine readings with no Latin support. *Variant 3* has weak support in the Greek and Latin. *Variant 4a* has weak support in the Latin, and no support in the Greek. *Variants 1a & 1b, 3, & 4a* may thus be fairly quickly dismissed since they have no good textual argument in their favour. *Variant 2* has strong support in the Latin, but no support in the Greek. Bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, this *Variant 2* must also be set aside. If that were the end of the matter, the seriousness with which *Variant 2* would still have to be taken in the absence of any Latin support for the TR's reading, would result on the system of rating textual readings A to E, in a situation where I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 23:26 a high level "B" (in the range of 71-74%). However, on this particular occasion, as I have noted, *supra*, (in the paragraph starting "There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading,") it is very hard to treat any of these variants with any great seriousness. Therefore, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 23:26 an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:26, the TR's "tou (the) poteriou (cup) kai (and) tes (the) parapsidos (platter) ... auton (of them)," in the wider words, "cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also," is found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century, with the same contextual meaning, omitting the "to" / "the" of "to ektos" / "the outside" before "auton" / "of them"). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1071 (12th century, independent i.e., independent scribal corruption), and 579 (13th century, mixed text), and 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels i.e., independent scribal corruption of Gospels). It is also found in the Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Palestinian (c. 6th century) Versions; Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); and Slavic Version (9th century). It is further found in Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century); where it is rendered in Ciasca's translation of the Arabic as Latin, "calicis (the cup) et (and) parapsidis (the platter) ... eorum (of them)."

A similar reading to that of the TR which uses these key words is also found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century). However, it changes the "ektos (outside)" before "auton (of them)," to "entos (inside)," and so at this point resembles the corruption of *Variant 1b*.

Variant 1a's Greek “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup) *kai* (and) *tes* (the) *paropsidos* (platter) ... *to* (the) *ektos* (outside) *autou* (of it),” in the wider words, “cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of it may be clean also,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century). It is further found in Minuscules 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere) and 157 (12th century, independent); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is also found in the Ethiopic Versions (c. 500 & Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

Variant 2's Latin reading which upon reconstruction is Greek, “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup) *kai* (and) *tes* (the) *paropsidos* (platter),” in the wider words, “cleanse first that which is within the cup and (*kai*) platter (*tes paropsidos*), that the outside may be clean also,” is found in the Coptic Middle Egyptian Version (3rd century).

There is an internal variation in *Variant 4*. *Variant 4a* follows the TR's and majority Byzantine text's “*to* (the) *ektos* (outside),” in its wider non TR and non majority Byzantine text reading, “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup) ...*to* (the) *ektos* (‘outside,’ an adverb) *autou* (of it).” But *Variant 4b* reads, “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup) ...*to* (the) *exōthen* (‘outside,’ preposition + genitive) *autou* (‘of it,’ neuter singular genitive, 3rd person pronoun, from *autos-e-o*).” I.e., either way, *Variant 4* reads “cleanse first that which is within the cup, that the outside (*to ektos / exōthen*) of it (*autou*) may be clean also.”

Variant 4a is found in (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); Minuscules 700 (11th century, independent) and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation); and the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.*

Variant 4b is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century).

Variant 4 (i.e., *Variant 4a / 4b*), is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic Version (3rd / 4th century); and Georgian Version (5th century).

Westcott-Hort (1881) reads, “*tou* (the) *poterion* (cup) [*kai* (and) *tes* (the) *paropsidos* (platter)] ... *to* (the) *ektos* (outside) *autou* (of it).” The square brackets mean one could therefore follow either *Variant 1a* (*Codex Vaticanus*) or *Variant 4a*. The optionality of *Variant 1a* reflects the Westcott & Hort bias for their “neutral” Alexandrian text which they considered was generally best preserved in *Codex Vaticanus*. By contrast, their optionality for *Variant 4a* reflects wider neo-Alexandrian principles e.g., “the shorter text is the better text” i.e., remove “*kai* (and) *tes* (the)

paropsidos (platter)”; and “the more awkward or ‘rough’ reading is to be preferred” because “‘corrector’ scribes had a feel for grammatical correctness and proper writing style, whereas silly Bible writers obviously didn’t” i.e., “*autou* (of it)” is preferred over “*auton* (of them),” because “low quality Greek writers like Matthew OBVIOUSLY could and did make this sort of silly mistake in his non-verbally inspired Gospel, whereas the high quality scribes who copied out these manuscripts OBVIOUSLY COULD NEVER POSSIBLY BE SO STUPID.”

Lacking so unqualifiedly strong a belief in the “neutral” Alexandrian text of *Codex Vaticanus*, which on this occasion even Westcott & Hort only somewhat sheepishly put forth as one of two equal possibilities; more widely *Variant 4a* was adopted by Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72), Nestle’s 21st edition (1952), UBS 3rd (1975) and 3rd corrected (1983) editions, and the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) and UBS’s 4th revised edition (1993).

On the one hand, neo-Alexandrian textual principles drove the neo-Alexandrians to hanker for *Variant 4a*. But on the other hand, there was “that nagging doubt.” “Could not just one, but both of our Alexandrian text, possibly be incorrect?” And “what about the fact there isn’t much ‘wider support’ for” *Variant 4a*? It was all very sad and difficult for those of the Neo-Alexandrian School.

The UBS 3rd (1975) and 3rd corrected (1983) editions say at Matt. 23:26, that in selecting *Variant 4a* for their main text, they thought “that there is a very high degree of doubt concerning the reading selected for the text.” They returned to the matter for the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) and UBS’s 4th revised edition (1993). The UBS 4th revised edition of 1993 says at Matt. 23:26, that in selecting *Variant 4a* for the main text of the NU Text, the NU Text “Committee had great difficulty in arriving at a decision” as to which reading to adopt. The “two leading lights” of the NU Text Committee on all three occasions were Bruce Metzger (d. 2007) and Kurt Aland (d. 1994). Yet as we have already noticed, relative to the TR’s reading, *it is very hard to treat any of these variants with any great seriousness*. Therefore, what does this tell us about the level of textual analytical skills of the neo-Alexandrian NU Text Committee in general, and its “two leading lights” of Metzger and Aland in particular?

A form of the Westcott-Hort type conflict between the neo-Alexandrian principles which favour *Variant 4a*, and neo-Alexandrian principles which like to follow *at least one* of the two Alexandrian texts, emerged in the neo-Alexandrian translations.

The fear of departing from at least one of the two leading Alexandrian texts was “just too much” for a number of neo-Alexandrian translators. Scrambling back to “the safety zone” of *Codex Vaticanus*, *Variant 1a* (*Codex Vaticanus*) was adopted by the *American Standard Version* at Matt. 23:26 as, “of the (*tou*) cup (*poterion*) and (*kai*) of the (*tes*) platter (*paropsidos*), that the (*to*) outside (*ektos*) thereof (*autou*) may become clean also” (ASV). It is likewise found in the *New American Standard Bible* as, “of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also” (NASB).

Prima facie, Variant 2 was followed by the RSV, ESV, and NIV. However, given the support for Variant 1a on neo-Alexandrian principles and in the NU Text *et al*, it seems more probable to understand this as a translation of Variant 4a in which the “*autou* (of it)” was omitted as “redundant in English translation.”

Then came “Metzger’s baby,” the NRSV (1989)⁶⁰, or perhaps we might better say, “Metzger’s brat.” “Metzger’s brat” was trying to say, “Don’t put that Variant 1a dummy in my mouth,” as it “spat the dummy” of Variant 1a and adopted Variant 4a. Thus at Matt. 23:26 the *New Revised Standard Version* reads, “First clean the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may become clean” (NRSV), (like the RSV, ESV NIV, and TEV, evidently omitting “*autou*” / “of it” as “redundant”). But as someone “picked up the dummy” of Variant 1a, a footnote says, “other ancient authorities add ‘and of the plate’” (NRSV ftn.).

Then came “Bratcher’s brat,” the TEV (2nd ed. 1992 & 1994). “Bratcher’s brat” wanted to “win the spitting contest” with “Metzger’s brat,” and so it too “spat the dummy” of Variant 1a and adopted Variant 4a. Thus at Matt. 23:26 the *Today’s English Version* reads, “Clean what is inside the cup first, and then the outside will be clean too!” (TEV) (like the RSV, ESV NIV, and NIV, evidently omitting “*autou*” / “of it” as “redundant”). But Bratcher then “waved his finger in the air” and said, “Now don’t anyone DARE pick up that ‘dummy’ of Variant 1a;” and so, *unlike the NRSV*, there is no footnote reference to Variant 1a in the TEV. *Thus Bratcher’s brat, the TEV, beat Metzger’s brat, the NRSV, in this “dummy spitting contest.” ...The “proud father,” Bratcher, smiled ☺.*

Matt. 23:32 “Fill ye up” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

As is always the case, I shall not discuss all minor variants here at Matt. 23:32. Thus e.g., I shall not discuss the indicative active present reading of e.g., old Latin c, (Latin, “*impletis*, ‘ye are filling up,’ indicative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *impleo*”) or Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Latin, “*consummatis*, ‘ye are totalling up,’ indicative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *consummo*”).

Yet that is not the principal reason why I show fewer manuscripts than normal in the section “Outside the Closed Class of Sources,” *infra*. Rather, it is because the neo-Alexandrians who compile the textual apparatuses I use “yawned” when they looked at this reading, and did not take the variant very seriously, that I do not have as much information to give on it as I usually do. (And with regard to the variant I vary the way I

⁶⁰ For this sobriquet, see commentary at Matt. 22:35a.

normally cite sources outside the closed class of sources, thus highlighting those that do provide some useful information on the variant. In doing so, I also note that inside the closed class of sources, Tischendorf's 8th ed. refers to the fact that Minuscule 60 follows the variant.) In fairness to those responsible for the more general lack of information on this reading in the textual apparatuses, I would not have normally included such a variant in these textual commentaries either; but on this occasion, the adoption of the variant by that stubborn old religiously liberal fool, James Moffatt in his Moffatt Bible, meant that I decided to include it.

I well remember how some years ago, a now deceased Anglican clergyman who ended up adopting some of the errors of religious liberalism, told me of how Moffatt used to be broadcast on radio in the 1920s or 1930s in Australia. He told me of how Moffatt used to promote his religiously liberal Moffatt Bible on radio. Both the fact that Moffatt had his religiously liberal errors in a Bible that people could buy, and these radio broadcasts, helped him reach larger numbers of people whom he otherwise could not have reached. In his day, Moffatt did enormous spiritual harm to many persons, and even though the Moffatt Bible has now very largely faded from churches, and no longer gets any general usage, it remains a significant work in that it transported religious liberalism to persons in various churches, and the damage of crippling once sound Protestant Churches, of which the Moffatt Bible was one, though by no means the only factor, continues to plague us today.

For these types of reasons, I take a special interest in the Moffatt Bible in these textual commentaries. And I remind the good Christian reader, that if the Lord tarries, and once again such men as Moffatt arise, just as the neo-Alexandrians have arisen; that just because there is no neo-Byzantine textual analyst "in town" to specifically address their errors, nevertheless, good religiously conservative Protestant Christians should in faithfulness to the Divine Preservation promise of I Peter 1:25 *et al*, maintain their commitment to the *Textus Receptus*. For we neo-Byzantine textual analysts are "a fairly rare breed," since we are supplied by God to the catholic or universal church (Eph. 5:30-32) as one form of "teachers" (Eph. 4:11) on a needs basis, as it best suits the Lord's wisdom. But since the formal composition of the entire Received Text of the New Testament by the great neo-Byzantines of the 16th and 17th centuries, there is not necessarily always a need for this form of teacher because all good Evangelical Christians can simply refer to a compiled copy of the TR such as underpins the AV, and believe in it on the basis that "the Word of the Lord endureth for ever" (I Peter 1:25). Nevertheless, it appertaineth to some elements in the discipline of that which the *Apostles' Creed* calls, "the holy Catholick Church," or the *Nicene Creed* calls the, "one Catholick and Apostolick Church;" and it also appertaineth to the further teaching instruction of those who believe in what the *Athanasian Creed* calls, "the Catholick Faith;" that from time to time the Lord may, if he so wish, raise up a neo-Byzantine textual analyst. And if so, such a catholic teacher may then make inquiry of evil doers such as James Moffatt or neo-Alexandrians such as Bruce Metzger and Kurt Aland, and with knowledge of their offences, justly expose them; that good catholics of the holy Protestant faith may better know and understand the Oracles of the living God.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:32, the TR's Greek, "*umeis* ('ye,' plural nominative, 2nd person plural personal pronoun, from *su-umeis* [singular-plural]) *plerosate* ('fill ye up,' imperative active aorist, 2nd person plural verb, from *pleroo* using the future stem, *pleroso*)," is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is further supported as Latin, "*vos* ('ye,' plural nominative, 2nd person plural personal pronoun, from *tu-vos* [singular-plural]) *implete* ('fill ye up,' imperative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *impleo*)," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century, adding "*ergo*" / "therefore" between these two words), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), and ff1 (10th / 11th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D., with alternative spelling, "*inplete*"⁶¹) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers, Origen (d. 254), Eusebius (d. 339), Chrysostom (d. 407), Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444); the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the ancient church Latin writer, Augustine (d. 430).

However, a variant reading Greek, "*plerosete* ('Ye shall fill up' or 'Ye will fill up,' indicative active future, 2nd person plural verb, from *pleroo*)," is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 60 (13th century). It is also a minority Latin reading found as Latin, "*adimplebitis* ('Ye shall fill up,' indicative active future, 2nd person plural verb, from *adimpleo* = *ad* / 'up to' + *impleo* / 'fill up')," in old Latin Version e (4th / 5th century).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is therefore correct. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental alteration in the Greek? As a result of a paper fade / loss, did the Greek, "*plerosate* ('fill ye up,' imperative active aorist)," come to look something like, "*pleros::te*"? Did a Greek scribe then "reconstruct" this as, "*plerosete* ('Ye shall fill up,' indicative active future, 2nd person plural verb)," superficially from "context." If so, was his "analysis" influenced by the indicative active future 2nd person plural verbs of verse 34, "*apokteneite* ('ye shall kill,' indicative active future, second person plural verb, from *apokteino*) *kai* (and) *staurosete* ('ye shall crucify' = 'crucify' AV, indicative active future, second personal plural verb, from *stauroo*) *kai* (and) ... *mastigosete* ('ye shall scourge' = 'shall ye scourge,' AV, indicative active future, second person plural verb, from *mastigoo*) ...*kai* (and) ... *dioxete* ('ye shall persecute' = 'persecute,' AV, indicative active future, second personal plural verb, from *dioko*)"?

Was the variant an accidental independent alteration in the Latin? As a result of

⁶¹ Latin words starting with "*imp*" may sometimes be spelt with "*inp*."

a paper fade / loss, did the Latin, “*vos (ye) adimpletis* (‘ye are filling up,’ indicative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *adimpleo*),” written at the end of a line, come to look something like, “*vos adimple:::*”? Did a Latin scribe then “reconstruct” this as, “*vos (ye) adimplebitis* (‘Ye shall fill up,’ indicative active future, 2nd person plural verb, from *adimpleo*),” superficially from “context.” If so, was his “analysis” influenced by the indicative active future 2nd person plural verbs of verse 34, e.g., either “*occiditis* (‘ye shall kill,’ indicative active future, second personal plural verb, from *occido*)” (Vulgate *et al*) or “*interficietis* (‘ye shall kill,’ indicative active future, second personal plural verb, from *interficio*)” (old Latin *e*); “*et (and) crucifigetis* (‘ye shall crucify,’ indicative active future, second person plural verb, from *crucifigio*) *et (and)*” “*flagellabit* (‘ye shall scourge’ indicative active future, second person plural verb, from *flagello*) ...”?

Was the variant a deliberate alteration in the Greek?

The idea of the Greek aorist imperative is that it focuses on an activity in its entirety. Hence the entire process is focused on, e.g., in the *Lord’s Prayer* at Matt. 6:11, “Give (‘Thou give’ = ‘Give,’ *dos*, imperative active aorist, 2nd person singular verb, from *didomi*) us this day our daily bread”⁶².

A practical consequence of this is that an aorist imperative *might* have a focus that starts in the present but projects into the future. E.g., in Matt. 14:29 Jesus said to St. Peter, “Come (*elthe*, imperative active aorist, 2nd person singular verb, from *erchomai*). And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.” I.e., the command to St. Peter started in the present, but then continued up to a future point in time. Alternatively, the action of an aorist imperative *might* actually take place in the future, as seen in contrast and comparison between how “*elthe*” is used in Matt. 14:29 and John 4:16. In John 4:16, addressing the woman of Samaria (John 4:7), “Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come (*elthe*, imperative active aorist, 2nd person singular verb, from *erchomai*) hither.” Here the woman is to first go away and find her “husband,” and then at some future point in time, return and “come (*elthe*) hither.”

This raises the following question. Did a scribe first consider that the aorist imperative was being used in Matt. 23:32 as it is in John 4:16 i.e., with respect to something that will take place in the future? Did he then consider that to “more succinctly and unambiguously convey this,” that it would be “a stylistic improvement?” to change this to a future indicative active i.e., “*plerosete* (ye shall fill up)”?

If so, *contextually*, he was surely wrong to do so, since the context refers to the Jews past sins of their “fathers” (Matt. 23:32), such as killing “the prophets” (Matt. 23:30, “If we had been,” *emen*, indicative active imperfect, 1st person plural verb, from *eimi*), continued with the Jews actions in the present (Matt. 23:29, “ye build,” *oikodomeite*, indicative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *oikodomeo*) which witness to their lineage (Matt. 23:31), as do their present actions e.g., “Ye ... strain (*diulizontes*, masculine plural vocative, active present participle, from *diulizo*) at a gnat,

⁶² Young’s *Greek*, p. 142.

and swallow (*katapinontes*, masculine plural vocative, active present participle, from *katapino*) a camel” (Matt. 23:24), as will as their future actions (see Matt. 23:34, *infra*). And so the natural construction to place on the aorist imperative at Matt. 23:32 of “*umeis* (ye) *plerosate* (‘fill ye up,’ imperative active aorist, 2nd person plural verb, from *pleroo*),” is that these sinful actions of the Jews have started in the past (vs. 30), are presently continuing (vss. 24,29,31), and will continue into the future (vs. 34) since contextually they have not yet filled “up the measure of your fathers;” but when they do and the Jews’ iniquity is full, then God will judge them. But of course, the radical decontextualization necessary to give the aorist imperative at Matt. 23:32 an *exclusively* future tense sense, such as would lead a corrupter scribe to then alter this to a future indicative active for the purposes of “clarification,” does not necessarily stop a corrupter scribe, who if he did so would by definition be deficient in various requisite skills, perceptions, and abilities.

Was the variant a deliberate alteration in the Latin?

The idea of the Latin present tense is that of *continuance* in the *present*; whereas the future tense conveys the idea of *continuance* in the *future*⁶³. Sometimes the present tense can have a future tense connotation⁶⁴. Did a scribe first consider that this was the sense of the present tense here? Did he then consider that to “more succinctly and unambiguously convey this,” that it would be “a stylistic improvement?” to change this to a future indicative active i.e., “*vos adimplebitis* (‘Ye shall fill up’)?”

Or did a Latin scribe consider that this was not the meaning of the present tense here at Matt. 23:32, “but really it should be”? Did he thus think it would be “a stylistic improvement” to change the “Fill ye up” of “Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers” (Matt. 23:32) from an action of *continuance* in the *present* (“*vos adimpletis*” / “ye are filling up,” indicative active present, 2nd person plural verb, from *adimpleo*) to an action of *continuance* in the *future* (“*vos adimplebitis*” / “Ye shall fill up,” indicative active future, second personal plural verb, from *adimpleo*)?

If so, in either instance, did he reach this conclusion through some reference to the similar indicative active future 2nd person plural verbs of verse 34, *supra*, e.g., “*crucifigetis* (‘ye shall crucify,’ indicative active future, second personal plural verb, from *crucifigio*)” and “*flagellabit* (‘ye shall scourge’ indicative active future, second person plural verb, from *flagello*)”? If so, was he motivated by a theological desire to “more closely link” verses 32 and 34 so as to apply verse 34 to Christ’s crucifixion (Acts 2:36) and the subsequent persecution of Christians by Jews (e.g., Acts 7)?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? Did it occur independently in the

⁶³ Gildersleeve’s *Latin Grammar* (1867 & 1895, reprint 2000, *op. cit.*, section 223:1 (present) & 223:2 (future), p. 154.

⁶⁴ Allen & Greenough’s *New Latin Grammar* (1888, 1903, 2000), *op. cit.*, section 286.

later Greek and earlier Latin manuscripts, or does the earlier Latin represent an earlier change in an earlier Greek manuscript or manuscript line? There is much that we do not know from the unrecorded “dark ages” of textual transmission. But whether the variant stems from one or multiple textual corrupters of Matt. 23:32, we know that the variant was an alteration to the true reading of the *Textus Receptus* (TR) here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine text reading with no good textual argument against it; and rock solid support in the Latin as the representative Latin reading found in, e.g., St. Jerome’s Latin Vulgate. It enjoys the further support of e.g., the Greek writing church father, St. Cyril, and the church fathers and doctors, St. John Chrysostom in the Greek, and St. Augustine in the Latin. By contrast, the variant has weak support in both the Greek and Latin, and no good textual argument to commend it. On the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:33 an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:32, “Fill ye up” (Greek, imperative active aorist; Latin, imperative active present), is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscule 579, and the *Family 13 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is further found in the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century).

However, the variant, “Ye shall fill up” or “Ye will fill up” (Greek & Latin, indicative active future), is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century). It is also found in the Arabic and Persian Versions used in Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72); and Syriac Curetonian and Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Versions used in Von Soden (1913).

Even though the two main Alexandrian texts are split on this reading, what from the neo-Alexandrian paradigm is the general lack of “external support” i.e., outside the Alexandrian texts, for the variant; and its rank contextual inappropriateness (see, “Was the variant a deliberate alteration in the Greek?,” *supra*), meant that even the neo-Alexandrians were, in general, able on this occasion to select the correct reading of the TR which they here found in Codex Sinaiticus. Thus for a mixture of good and bad reasons, the correct reading at Matt. 23:32 was adopted in the NU Text *et al.* But to this must be made the qualification that Westcott & Hort, who looked less to such “external support” than most neo-Alexandrians, and who claimed the Alexandrian texts were “neutral,” were more baffled than most of their fellow neo-Alexandrians by this matter.

This was particularly acute in their instance since of the two main Alexandrian texts, they generally preferred Codex Vaticanus over Codex Sinaiticus. To resolve their confusion they placed the variant of Codex Vaticanus in one of their relatively rare sidenotes as an alternative reading in their Westcott-Hort text (1881) which underpins the RV, ASV, and TCNT.

The neo-Alexandrian translators appear to have generally dismissed these concerns by Westcott & Hort as “hiccups.” Thus at Matt. 23:32, the correct reading of the TR (as found in Codex Sinaiticus), is found in the ASV as “Fill ye up” in (with what is the same reading as the AV,) “Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers” (ASV). The correct reading is also found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV. Although showing the hazardous difficulties of working out any underpinning Greek from so called “dynamic equivalents,” we find that the *Today’s English Version* here (very much like the NEB & REB, and to a lesser extent something like the Papists’ JB & NJB,) reads, “Go on, then and finish off what your ancestor started!” (TEV, my underlining for Greek, “*umeis*” / “ye” “*plerosate*” / “fill ye up”).

To the question, “What addled brain could possibly take this variant seriously?,” the answer comes back on this occasion, “None other than that disgrace of Scotland, ... James Moffatt” (d. 1944). The rank inappropriateness of the future tense here at Matt. 23:32 has already been discussed, and the fact that this requires a radical decontextualization of Matt. 23:32 (see, “Was the variant a deliberate alteration in the Greek?,” *supra*). Yet there was something about the variant’s presence in such highly unreliable versions as the Syriac Curetonian, Egyptian Coptic Sahidic, Arabic, and Persian, that somehow titillated the mind of Moffatt. There was something about the gross and radical decontextualization required for so improbable a reading as the variant of Matt. 23:32, that reached out and grabbed the warped brain of James Moffatt. It took and pandered to his religiously liberal fancy, and he liked it very much indeed 😊. In fairness to the man, it must be said plainly that he lacked any even rudimentary grip on the proper principles of textual analysis. And thus we find that at Matt. 23:32 the semi neo-Alexandrian Moffatt Bible reads in the future tense, “And you will fill up,” with a footnote that says, “Reading *plerosete* [‘ye shall fill up’]” (Moffatt Bible ftn.).

Matt. 23:34 “and” in “and some of them ye shall kill” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. I here remind the reader that unless stated otherwise, the Latin Vulgate edition I follow for the NT is Wordsworth & White (1911). While this NT edition here follows the TR’s reading with Latin, “*et* (and);” this is not the case with Weber-Gryson’s edition of the Latin Vulgate (1969, 5th edition, 2007) which I also sometimes consult, and which here follows the variant. Fortunately, on this occasion, (for like other textual apparatuses it is selective and does not always provide the relevant information,) the Weber-Gryson textual apparatus shows that its preferred reading is a minority Vulgate reading, and cites the relevant Latin codices from its wider selection of Vulgate Codices (three of about a dozen gospel codices, in which they classify the Book

of Armagh as a Vulgate Codex, and old Latin g1 as G in Matthew).

On this occasion, to help the reader better understand the issue of underpinning Vulgate manuscripts, I itemize some of the Weber-Gryson Latin Vulgate Codices for the Gospels, although I note some differences exist with Merk's (1964) dates. E.g., Vulgate Codex A is dated by Merk as 7th / 8th century, but by Weber-Gryson as 8th century; or Codex Z is dated by Merk as 6th / 7th century, but by Weber-Gryson as 6th century (and it is more generally usually dated to the last quarter of the 6th century). Of course, the present location of Latin (or Greek) manuscripts does not necessarily reflect the place of their origins. E.g., the *La Cava Bible* or *Codex Cavensis* now housed at the Benedictine Abbey of Cava (Badia di Cava) near Cava de' Tirreni in Salerno, southern Italy, comes from 9th century Spain. Or *Codex Harleianus* (Z or Jz), now housed in the British Library, London, UK (Manuscript Harley 1775), comes from northern Italy.

One might think from Weber-Gryson's textual apparatus that the Book of Armagh (D, *Codex Dubliensis* or *Codex Durmachensis*, early 9th century, Trinity College, Dublin, southern Ireland) followed the TR's reading. However, since I use the *Church of Ireland* Dean of Raphoe's edition of this manuscript (John Gwynn, 1913), I find this "*et* (and)" to be in italics as added, and thus I show it following the variant, *infra*.

The Second Matter: The Return of a Diatessaron Conundrum (Diatessaron formatting). Inside the closed class of sources, at both Matt. 23:34 and Luke 11:49, the Vulgate reads "*et* (and)." Neither Wordsworth & White (1911), Merk (1964) nor Weber-Gryson (2007) refer to any Vulgate codices diversity at Luke 11:49, but the selective nature of their textual apparatus means that this is anything but conclusive. We are thus reminded *of the long-standing need for a Latin NT (and OT) with a comprehensive textual apparatus!* However, alone among old Latin Versions, old Latin d omits the "*et* (and)" at Luke 11:49.

Against this backdrop, we find that the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron also omits the "*et* (and)" (Sangallensis Diatessaron, chapter 141). Given that the Sangallensis Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex, and there is a known diversity of readings among Vulgate Codices at Matt. 23:34 but not Luke 11:49, it might be *prima facie* possible to stipulate that the Sangallensis Diatessaron is here following the variant at Matt. 23:34. Indeed, as a general rule I work on the presupposition that because the Sangallensis Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex, one can determine whether or not a reading is conflated with two or more Gospel readings on the basis of the readings in the Vulgate.

However, to this general rule I have already referred in these commentaries to relatively rare instances where the Sangallensis Diatessaron does not follow the Vulgate (e.g., Matt. 8:13c, 9:34), and in such instances, this may include following the same reading as old Latin d (Matt. 9:27a). Therefore, it is *just possible* that the Sangallensis Diatessaron is here reflecting a conflation with Luke 11:49 based on an old Latin Version. Under these fascinating but unresolved circumstances, I shall make no reference to the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century), *infra*. (Cf. my comments in Vol. 1, at Matt. 11:17b, "Preliminary Textual Discussion: A Diatessaron conundrum.")

As to the objection that I generally regard the Sangallensis Diatessaron as a Vulgate Codex, and so I do not usually make such a qualification, I reply that I raise this Diatessaron conundrum from time to time to alert the reader of it, and so to give transparency to the fact that I normally work on the presupposition that one can determine such matters from comparison with the Vulgate. (Indeed, if I had to “make a call” on this one, I would, as is my normative custom of reference to the Vulgate readings, consider that on the balance of probabilities the Sangallensis Diatessaron is here following the variant at Matt. 23:34.) Thus while on this occasion I am inconsistent not to do so, my reason for this interlude to my normative methodology is to point out an element of the necessarily subjective qualities employed in my more general usage of the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron.

On the one hand, I am often exercising subjective assessments in my treatment of the underpinning readings in the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron, and so on given occasions another analyst may possibly disagree with my views as to which reading I consider is the underpinning one. But on the other hand, without such subjective assessments, one would have to cease to use the Sangallensis Diatessaron altogether in these commentaries. The fact that some textual apparatuses have either reduced references to different Diatessarons (UBS 4th revised edition, reduced references from UBS 3rd & 3rd corrected editions), or omit reference to any Diatessaron altogether (Nestle-Aland 27th edition), to some extent reflects this issue (although it also includes other matters of Diatessaron controversy as well). But for those of us who find some value in Diatessaron studies, such subjective assessments will necessary form a part of the usage of any Latin Diatessaron. In turn, such subjective assessments thus become part of the wider, and seemingly ever escalating, Diatessaron controversy.

As I noted in Volume 1, “Diatessaron studies are controversial, and it seems *everyone wants to make something of the Diatessaron, but no-one can agree with anyone else as to exactly what to make of the Diatessaron.*”⁶⁵

The fact that the underpinning Greek “*kai* (and)” is found at both Matt. 23:34 and Luke 11:49; means that when we go to outside the closed class of sources with Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron, we cannot be sure from which of these two sources the Arabic word rendered by Ciasca’s Latin as, “*et* (and),” comes from (Arabic Diatessaron, chapter 41). Therefore no reference is made to the Arabic Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:34, the TR’s Greek, “*kai* (and),” in the wider words, “and (*kai*) some of them ye shall kill” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices E 07 (*Codex Basiliensis*, 8th century, Basel, Switzerland), U 030 (*Codex Nanius*, 9th

⁶⁵ Textual Commentary, Volume 1 (Matt. 1-14), Preface, Section “2) The Diatessaron.”

century, Venice, Italy), X 033 (*Codex Monacensis*, 10th century, Munich, Germany); Minuscles 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in The Gospel of Mark; Paris, France) and 2 (12th century, Basel, Switzerland); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D., *Sidneiensis Universitatis*, twice in two different readings, Sydney, Australia). It is also found as Latin, “*et* (and),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), being found in e.g., Vulgate Codices M (*Codex Mediolanensis*, 6th century, Milan, Italy), S (*Codex Sangallensis*, 6th century, St. Gallen, Switzerland), and C (*Codex Cavensis*, 9th century, La Cava, Italy); as well as in old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writers Didymus (d. 398) and Chrysostom (d. 407); the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation, and the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the ancient church Latin writer, Lucifer of Cagliari (d. 370).

However, a variant omitting Greek, “*kai* (and),” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), M 021 (9th century), and Pi 041 (9th century). It is also a minority Latin reading among Vulgate Codices, being found in Vulgate Codices F (*Codex Fuldensis*, 6th century, Fulda, Germany), Z (*Codex Harleianus*, 6th / 7th century, London, UK), and A (*Codex Amiantus*, 7th / 8th century, Florence, Italy); as well as in old Latin Versions e (4th / 5th century) and q (6th / 7th century); and also the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which thus must stand. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental omission? In Manuscript Washington (W 032) there is a stylistic paper space of about one letter space where the “*kai* (and)” is missing. Did a scribe use a manuscript in which a one to two letter space abbreviation was used for “*kai*” e.g., W 032 elsewhere uses such abbreviations (rarely), for instance, at Matt. 15:36 one that looks something like “K̄”. Was this lost in an undetected paper fade? Might this be the origins of the stylistic paper space in W 032, so that we here see “a snapshot” of a textual accident, as the scribe of W 032 inadvertently copied out what he wrongly took to be a stylistic paper space?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Human nature has not changed since the Fall of Adam (Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:12; 7:18), Christ except (Heb. 4:15; I Peter 1:19), who as the Second Adam (I Cor. 15:45) came with the sinless human nature of Adam (Eccl. 7:29, NKJV) before the Fall (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:12; 6:23), and overcame where Adam failed (II Cor. 5:21). Did a prunist scribe in ancient times, if so, probably Origen, consider that “the over usage of the conjunction ‘and (*kai*),’ is something that belongs to a former era, because we moderns want more concise language”? Did he then prune away the “*kai* (and)” as a “stylistic improvement”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We do not know. We cannot know. But we can know that this was an omission to the Received Text here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR's reading has rock solid support in the Greek and Latin textual traditions. It is also supported from ancient times in the Greek writings of the church father, Archbishop John Chrysostom of Constantinople, remembered at Matins and Evensong in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* (1662) with the recitation of, "A Prayer of Saint Chrysostom." It has further support from ancient times in the Latin writings of Lucifer of Cagliari, whose name, "Lucifer," meaning "light-bearer," comes from an *earlier* cultural context in which this could mean *good* light, and so his name should not be confused with the *later idea* that the name of "Lucifer" should be reserved for the Devil who "is transformed into an angel of light" (II Cor. 11:14; cf. Isa. 14:12). Indeed, Bishop Lucifer Calaritanus of Cagliari in Sardinia, north-west Italy, was a defender of orthodoxy with regard to Christ's Divinity against Arian heretics. By contrast, the variant has relatively weak support in both the Greek and Latin, and looks like it may well have come from the hand of the unreliable Origen. On the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 23:34 an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:34, "and," in "and some of them ye shall kill" etc., is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century); Minuscules 700 (11th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is further found in the Syriac Harclean h Version (616); Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

However, the variant omitting "and" is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is also found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); and Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), and 157 (12th century, independent). It is further found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude); and the *Family 13 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is also found in the Armenian Version (5th century).

At Matt. 23:34 the erroneous variant entered the NU Text *et al.* Hence the "and," is omitted in the ASV which reads simply, "some of them shall ye kill" etc. (ASV). The

incorrect variant is also adopted at Matt. 23:34 in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV.

In accordance with the TR's strong Latin support, the old Latin Papists of pre-Vatican II Council times adopted the correct reading in both the Clementine and Douay-Rheims, which reads at Matt. 23:34, "and (Latin, *et*) some of them you will put to death" etc. (Douay-Rheims). But the new neo-Alexandrian Papists of post-Vatican II Council times here adopted the incorrect variant in their JB and NJB. To the proposition, "Rome doesn't get better," perhaps we should add this qualification, "She gets worse!"

Meditation. Christ here refers to Christian martyrs and confessors at the hands of Jews, saying, "and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city" (Matt. 23:34). So too, Scripture tells of how Rome, both Pagan and Papal, would "wear out the saints of the most High" (Dan. 7:25). Bearing in mind our Protestant hagiology in such works as *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, let us never forget, for example, the fires of Smithfield in London, where under the reign of Bloody Mary various Protestants gave their bodies to be burnt at the stake (I Cor. 13:3); or those Protestants butchered to death in the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 1572 in Paris. Or as God poured out his "judgment," to "take away" the "dominion" (Dan. 7:26) of the Papal States of Italy between 1860 and 1870, and so by a unified Italy end the Pope's power to generally persecute Protestants in those parts of Western Europe where the 1260 day-years had not been "shortened" (Matt. 24:22); at the very terminus of the 1260 years (on inclusive reckoning) from 607 to 1866 (Dan. 7:25; Rev. 12:14; 13:5), the 1866 Protestant martyrs of Barletta in Italy.

Let us also remember that St. John the Divine foretold that the Pope's "deadly wound" would in a qualified way be "healed" (Rev. 13:3) with the Vatican City State of 1929. And that just afore Christ's return, the Pope will again greatly persecute the saints of God, requiring "that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed" (Rev. 13:15). Thus will the Pope command upon pain of death that men violate the Second Commandment (Exod. 20:4-6) of the Holy Decalogue (Exod. 20:1-17), though St. Paul says, "Flee from idolatry" (I Cor. 10:14), and St. John says, "Keep yourselves from idols" (I John 5:21). While we cannot now be sure what that "image" will be, on presently available data I think the most likely possibility is a Marian statue, whose capacity "to give life" and "speak" (Rev. 13:15) is now found in a much paler form in the Devilish miracles (II Thess. 2:9) of "the weeping Madonnas" of Popery⁶⁶. But whatever form it takes, let us not forget the religious freedom we now have to worship God and evangelize will again be taken from us (as indeed it is now in some parts of the world today e.g., in various places under Mohammedanism and

⁶⁶ See my work *The Roman Pope is the Antichrist* (2006, 2nd edition 2010), With a Foreword by the Reverend Sam McKay, Secretary of the Protestant Truth Society (1996-2004), Appendix: "The Mark of the Beast - 666." Available on the internet via Yahoo and Google at "Gavin McGrath Books," or direct at <http://www.gavinmcgrathbooks.com>.

Communism). Let us “work” “while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4).

Matt. 23:35b “son of Barachias” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

I show fewer manuscripts than normal in the section “Outside the Closed Class of Sources.” That is because the neo-Alexandrians who compile the textual apparatuses I use were generally not as interested in this reading’s variants as they are in some others. Nevertheless, the issues raised by this reading in a number of both Papist and apostate Protestant so called “Study Bibles,” which seek to promote religious liberalism at this verse, *infra*, result in an enhanced interest in this verse to me. It is of note that in the defence of religiously conservative Protestantism at this verse, we encounter the fact that sinful, fallen, human nature has not changed since the fall; and the type of Biblical “criticism” nowadays associated with the religious liberals as a so called “modern” idea, can in fact be found back in what is the probable origins of the variant recorded by Eusebius in ancient times.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:35b, the TR’s Greek, “*Zachariou* (of Zacharias) *uiou* (son) *Barachiou* (of Barachias),” is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is further supported as Latin, “*Zachariae* (of Zacharias) *fili* (son of) *Barachiae* (Barachias),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions d (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). In a variety of different Latin forms, this reading is also found in old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), and c (12th / 13th century). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254); the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation (c. 395).

However, a variant omitting Greek “*uiou* (son) *Barachiou* (of Barachias),” and so reading simply, Greek “*Zachariou* (of Zacharias),” is found in the ancient church Greek writer, Eusebius (d. 339).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which therefore is correct. The origins of the variant are necessarily speculative.

Was the variant an accidental omission? Was the “*Zachariou* (of Zacharias)”

written at the end of a line at the end of a page, with the “*uiou* (son) *Barachiou* (of Barachias)” just “squeezed in” underneath? Was the “*uiou Barachiou*” then lost in either an undetected paper fade, or damage of the manuscript?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a scribe seeking “standardized gospel” readings, deliberately prune away the “*uiou* (son) *Barachiou* (of Barachias)” as a semi-assimilation with Luke 11:51 which simply reads, “*Zachariou* (of Zacharias)”?

Alternatively, were the words, “*uiou* (son) *Barachiou* (of Barachias)” removed by a prunist scribe who considered that “they were inaccurate”? The 39 canonical Books of our Christian Old Testament are the same as those of the 39 canonical Books of the Jewish Scriptures. But the stylistic arrangement is different. In the Jewish order of NT times, as in the Christian order, first comes *The Pentateuch* (Genesis to Deuteronomy); then *The Prophets*, subdivided into *The Prior Prophets* (Joshua to II Kings, with Ruth after Judges on the same scroll, I & II Samuel on the same scroll, and I & II Kings on the same scroll), and *The Latter Prophets* (Isaiah to Ezekiel, with Lamentations after Jeremiah on the same scroll, and the Twelve Minor Prophets on one scroll); and then *The Hagiographa*, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon; Esther, Daniel, Ezra & Nehemiah on one scroll, and I & II Chronicles on one scroll. This gave the Jews twenty-two scrolls, signified by the 22 letters of Hebrew alphabet. (This is slightly different to that of later, and hence contemporary, Judaism⁶⁷.)

This threefold format is found in Luke 24:44,45 where the *Hagiographa* is referred to simply by the name of its first scroll, *Psalms*. Thus Jesus refers to the Old Testament “Scriptures” as comprising of that which is “written in the law of Moses” i.e., *The Pentateuch*, “and in the prophets” i.e., *The Prophets*, “and in the Psalms” i.e., *The Hagiographa* named after its first scroll of Psalms. We also find this threefold division in the inter-testamental times Apocrypha Book of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus, where the son of Sirach says, “For the same things uttered in Hebrew, and translated into another tongue, have not the same force in them; and not only these things, but *the law* itself [i.e., *The Pentateuch*], and *the prophets* [i.e., *The Prophets*], and *the rest of the books* [i.e., *The Hagiographa*], have no small difference, when they are spoken in their own language” (Ecclesiasticus / Sirach, *Prologue*, Apocrypha⁶⁸).

⁶⁷ The Jews later removed Ruth from the Prior Prophets and Lamentations from the Latter Prophets. They then transferred these to the Hagiographa, rearranging them with Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and Esther, by putting these five in the new order of: Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther, and calling these five, “The Megilloth.” They then counted 24 scrolls rather than 22 scrolls. But as with the later Christian stylistic rearrangement of our OT, this stylistic rearrangement of later Judaism kept the same 39 canonical books intact as our Protestant OT.

⁶⁸ Article 6 of the Anglican 39 Articles accepts as “canonical” only the 39 Books of the OT Hebrew Scriptures, and the 27 Books of the Greek New Testament. Concerning the “other Books” of the Apocrypha, “as Hierome saith,” i.e., Jerome (d. 420), “the Church doth read [them] for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine.”

This threefold division of the Hebrew Scriptures is important for understanding the words of Luke 11:51, “from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple” etc. . Abel was killed near the start of the OT in the Book of Genesis (Gen. 4:8), and Zecharias was killed near the end of the OT in the Book of II Chronicles (II Chron. 24:20,21). Thus Jesus is referring to all the martyrs from the start to the end of the Old Testament.

The Zecharias or Zechariah in II Chronicles 24:20,21 is “Zechariah the son of Jehoida” (II Chron. 24:20). But Matt. 24:35 refers to “Zecharias the son of Barachias” whom we find near the end of *The Prophets* in Zech. 1:1 which refers to “Zechariah the son of Berechiah.” Some have taken the view that this is “Zecharias the son of Barachias” in Matt. 24:35, and so Jesus must be only here referring to *The Pentateuch* and *The Prophets* in the Old Testament, and if so, then this is our only source for saying that this Zecharias (Zechariah) of Zech. 1:1 was a martyr (View 1). Others have taken the view that the Zechariah of II Chron. 24:20 was the grandson of Jehoida, and the son of a Berechiah, and this is the Zecharias (Zechariah) of Matt. 24:35 (View 2).

I agree with the first view that Matt. 24:35 requires the conclusion that Zechariah the son of Berechiah” (Zech. 1:1) was a martyr, and this is therefore our only Scriptural source for knowing this; and I also agree with the second view that the reading of Matt. 24:35 which refers to a “Zecharias” “whom ye slew between the temple and the altar,” is most naturally applied to “Zechariah the son of Jehoida” (II Chron. 24:20,21). But I consider that neither of these two views which assert one element of the meaning to the negation of another element of the meaning, correctly gets the overview of what is meant in Matt. 23:35,36.

Therefore a third view, which I have formed after studying the matter, and which to the best of my knowledge has not previously been put forth by anyone, is both somewhat similar and somewhat different to these other two more presently accepted views. One of the literary devices found in St. Matthew’s Greek Gospel is the chiasm. It is named after the Greek letter Chi, i.e., “χ” which looks like our “X,” and is transliterated as “Ch” e.g., “χριστος” = “*Christos*” = “Christ.” This NT literary device occurs in Scripture addressing both Jewish and Gentile Christians, but it seems to have been more common in addressing Jewish Christians. While all of Scripture is for all Christians, both Jewish and Gentile Christians, the fact that in the first instance St. Matthew’s Gospel seems to have been written to Jewish Christians (but thereafter to both Jewish and Gentile Christians) and St. Mark’s Gospel and St. Luke Gospel in the first instance to Gentile Christians (but thereafter to both Jewish and Gentile Christians), thus reflects this fact because the chiasm is more common in St. Matthew’s Gospel than the other two Synoptic Gospels.

To work out a chiasm, one first reads the sentence as it is presented to us; but then one re-reads it a second time, and divides the sentence into two different “A-B” sections *infra*, and then links as synonyms what is said in a “X” shape from the top left “A” and bottom right “A”, and then links as synonyms what is said in the top right “B” and

bottom left “B.” Context determines which of the sections are designated “A” and “B” on the basis of the relevant parallelism in the text, and which of the “A” and “B” in the sections in the chiasm comes first on the read back. Hence this may vary between different chiasms i.e., a chiasm may be written in a “A-B-B-A” format, or a “A-B-A-B” format, and on the re-read in one chiasm one might read the first or second “A” or “B” either first or second, depending on context.

A	B
B	A

E.g., in an “A-B-B-A” format chiasm also found in Mark 10:31 and Luke 13:30 addressed in the first instance to Gentile Christians (but thereafter to both Jewish and Gentile Christians), we read in Matt. 19:30 addressed in the first instance to Jewish Christians (but thereafter to both Jewish and Gentile Christians), “[A] But many that are first [B] shall be last; [B] and the last [A] shall be first.” In the A-B-B-A chiasm (X) this is:

“[A] But many that are first”	“[B] shall be last;”
[B] and the last	“[A] shall be first.”

First this is read as, “[A] But many that are first [B] shall be last; [B] and the last [A] shall be first;” and then reading this back through the chiasm this is read as, “But many that are first shall be first, and the last shall be last.”

The NT refers to “the churches of the Gentiles” (Rom. 16:4) as opposed to Jewish Christian congregations such as the ones addressed in the first instance to Jewish Christians by St. James (Jas 1:1) and St. Peter (I Peter 1:1), although thereafter these epistles address both Jewish and Gentile Christians since all of Scripture is for all Christians. By contrast, at the international trade city of Corinth there was some kind of internal church segregation among a wide variety of different groups (I Cor. 14:16), including Jews and Gentiles (I Cor. 12:13). This was consistent with the three groups referred to of “Jews” “Gentiles” and “the church of God” (I Cor. 10:32), which requires a conceptual division between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians; and indeed in manifestation of God’s wider prohibition on racially mixed marriages (Gen. 6:1-4,9,10; Dan. 2:43,44; Matt. 24:37-39; Acts 15:20,29; 21:25, cf. Tobit 4:12, Apocrypha), these two groups in the Corinthian Church were specifically forbidden to intermarry (I Cor. 7:17-20; cf. Ezra 10:3; & I Macc. 1:15, Apocrypha).

In this wider NT context, the NT Book of “Hebrews” is so named because in the first instance it is addressed to “Hebrew” or Jewish Christians, although thereafter this epistle is address to both Jewish and Gentile Christians since all of Scripture is for all Christians. In an “A-B-A-B” format chiasm we read in Heb. 4:16 addressed in the first instance to Jewish Christians (but thereafter to both Jewish and Gentile Christians), “[A] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, [B] that we may obtain mercy, [A] and find grace [B] to help in time of need.” In the chiasm (X) this is:

“[A] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace,”	“[B] that we may obtain mercy,”
“[B] to help in time of need.”	“[A] and find grace”

Reading this back through the chiasm, this is read as, “[A] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace,” “[A] and find grace”, “[B] that we may obtain mercy,” “[B] to help in time of need.”

In unraveling the chiasm, after having first read it through as it stands in the text, one must sometimes make a *partial selection* in order to determine the parallelism i.e., leaving out some words. E.g., in an “A-B-A-B” format chiasm not found in Luke 12:4 addressed in the first instance to Gentile Christians (but thereafter to both Jewish and Gentile Christians), we read in Matt. 10:28 addressed in the first instance to Jewish Christians (but thereafter to both Jewish and Gentile Christians), “[A] And fear not them which kill the body, [B] but are not able to kill the soul: [A] but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body [B] in hell.” In the chiasm (X) this is:

“[A] And fear not them which kill the body,”	“[B] but are not able to kill the soul:”
“[B] in hell.”	“[A] but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body”

First this is read as, “[A] And fear not them which kill the body, [B] but are not able to kill the soul: [B] but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul [A] and body in hell;” and then reading this back through the chiasm this is read, *leaving out some words once the parallelism is determined*, as “[A] And fear not them which kill the body,” “[A] but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body;” for they “[B] are not able to kill the soul” “[B] in hell.”

Sometimes a chiasm can go over multiple verses and be quite long. E.g., in an “A-B-A-B” format chiasm not found in Luke 6:43,44 addressed in the first instance to Gentile Christians (but thereafter to both Jewish and Gentile Christians), we read in Matt. 7:15-20 addressed in the first instance to Jewish Christians (but thereafter to both Jewish and Gentile Christians), “[A] Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? [B] Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. [A] A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. [B] Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” In the chiasm (X) this is:

“[A] Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?”	“[B] Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.”
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“[B] Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”	“[A] A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.”
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Reading this back through the chiasm, and *leaving out some words once the parallelism is determined*, this is read as, “[A] Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?” “[A] A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.” For “[B] every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit;” and “[B] Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

Let us now apply this literary device *genre* of the chiasm to better understand Matt. 23:35,36. In reading this chiasm it is also important to also keep in mind the threefold division of the OT Hebrew Scriptures into: *The Pentateuch* (Gen. - Deut.); *The Prophets* - containing the *Prior Prophets* (Josh. - II Kgs) and the *Latter Prophets* (Isa. - Mal. except for Daniel, in which the story of the killing of “Zechariah the son of Berechiah” is in the second last book at the end of *The Prophets*); and the *Hagiographa* (the rest of the OT arranged with Psalms at the beginning and I & II Chron. at the end, which contains near the end the killing of “Zechariah the son of Jehoida” in II Chron. 24:20,21). In an “A-B-B-A” format chiasm we read in Matt. 23:35,36 addressed as a Gospel in the first instance to Jewish Christians (but thereafter to both Jewish and Gentile Christians), with reference to Jews of Jesus’ day who rejected Christ, “[A] That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, [B] from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, [B] whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. [A] Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.” In the chiasm (X), highlighting in capitals the relevant parallelisms this is:

“[A] THAT UPON YOU MAY COME all the righteous blood shed upon the earth,”	“[B] from the blood of righteous Abel unto THE BLOOD OF ZACHARIAS son of Barachias,”
“[B] WHOM YE SLEW BETWEEN THE TEMPLE AND THE ALTAR.”	“[A] Verily I say unto YOU, ALL THESE THINGS SHALL COME UPON this generation.”

First this is read as, “[A] That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, [B] from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, [B] whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. [A] Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation,” i.e., Jesus here refers to martyrs starting at the beginning of *The Pentateuch* in Genesis with Abel (Gen. 4:8), and ending with “Zacharias son of Barachias” at the end of *The Prophets*, and so this requires the conclusion that the Minor Prophet author of the Book of Zechariah (Zech. 1:1) was a martyr, even though Matt. 23:35b is the only place in Scripture that we are told about this. (Cf. Heb. 11:37 where this is the only place in Scripture that we are told of how the

OT prophet Isaiah was “sawn asunder⁶⁹.”)

But then, reading this back through the chiasm, and *leaving out some words once the parallelism is determined*, specifically here, “son of Barachias,” this is read as, “[A] Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation”, “[A] That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth;” “[B] from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias,” “[B] whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.” Thus in broad overview, our Lord here uses the literary device of the chiasm to refer to martyrs from the beginning of *The Pentateuch* with “Abel” (Gen. 4:8) through to the end of *The Prophets* with “Zacharias son of Barachias” (Zech. 1:1), and then through to the end of the *Hagiographa* with “Zacaharias” “whom ye slew between the temple and the altar” (II Chron. 24:20,21). This same thing is said in a much less cryptic form that is more readily understandable to Gentile Christians *without a chiasm* in Luke 11:51, which simply goes from “Abel” at the start of *The Pentateuch* (Gen. 4:8) through to “Zacharias” at the end of the *Hagiographa* (II Chron. 24:20,21).

Having considered the meaning of Matt. 23:35,36, let us now return to our initial two questions concerning the omission of the words, “son of Barachias” in the variant of Matt. 23:35, *supra*, namely, “Was the variant a deliberate omission?” and, “were the words, “*uiou (son) Barachiou (of Barachias)*” removed by a prunist scribe who considered that “they were inaccurate”? We know that our Lord sometimes encoded his sayings in a *genre* not understandable to “outsiders,” so that “in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive,” “Lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (Matt. 13:14,15).

Did our Lord here set “a spring loaded trap” at Matt. 23:35,36, so that Bible critics, or religious liberals, would “spot an error” to their own damnation? It is notable that, e.g., the Papists’ *Jerusalem Bible* (1966) and *New Jerusalem Bible* (1985) both contain footnotes at Matt. 23:35b claiming that the words “son of Barachias” may be either “the result of confusion with another Zechariah,” or “may be a copyist’s gloss.” So too, one of the two neo-Alexandrian’s most recent “glamour boys” of the NU Text Committee, Bruce Metzger (d. 2007), claims in the *Revised Standard Version Ecumenical Study Bible* (1977), “The identifying words ‘son of Barachiah’ (not in Lk. 11.51) probably were mistakenly added to the text of Matthew at an early date because of confusion over which ‘Zechariah’ was meant⁷⁰.”

⁶⁹ Though mentioned nowhere else in Scripture but Heb. 11:37, Jewish tradition also taught that Isaiah died by being sawn in two (*Ascension of Isaiah*, 5, Pseudepigrapha).

⁷⁰ Herbert May (Old Testament Editor) and Bruce Metzger (New Testament Editor), *An Ecumenical Study Bible, The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*, Revised Standard Version, Containing the Second Edition of the New Testament and an Expanded Edition of the Apocrypha, Oxford University Press, New

These kind of heretical statements by the Papists (JB & NJB) and apostate Protestants far gone in religious liberalism (Metzger in RSV Ecumenical Study Bible), deny both the Divine Inspiration (II Tim. 3:16) and Divine Preservation (I Peter 1:25) of Scripture. They remind us that, “there must be ... heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you” (I Cor. 11:19).

We are thus left to ask, did a copyist, as devoid of the guidance of the Holy Ghost (John 14:26) as were the Papists of the JB and NJB, or Metzger of the RSV Ecumenical Study Bible, conclude that the words, “*uiou* (son) *Barachiou* (of Barachias)” were “incorrect,” and so prune them away as “a stylistic improvement”? If so, did he do so with some reference to the reading of Luke 11:51 which lacks these words?

Was the variant an accidental or deliberate omission? Probably the latter, but possibly the former; we can be sure about thing, namely, that it was an omission of the full words of Holy Scripture here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text. (Cf. comments at Matt. 25:2)

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading dating from ancient times (W 032) with no good textual argument against it. It also has rock solid support in the Latin as the representative, and indeed, monolithic, Latin reading, being found in, e.g., St. Jerome’s Latin Vulgate. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek, and no support in Latin. Hence on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 23:35b an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:35b, “Zacharias son of Barachias,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); as well as Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude). It is further found in Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century) as Latin, “*Zachariae* (of Zacharias), *fili* (son of) *Barachiae* (Barachias).”

However the variant, “Zacharias,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century).

The TR’s reading as found in Codex Vaticanus was adopted in the NU Text *et al.* Hence at Matt. 23:35b the correct reading is found in the ASV as, “Zachariah son of

York, USA, 1962 & 1977 (Library of Congress Catalogue Card No: 76-42682), pp. ix & 1203 (at Matt. 23:35).

Barachiah.” The correct reading is also found in the NASB, RSV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV. While the correct reading is also found in the main text of the *English Standard Version*, alone among the neo-Alexandrian versions considered in this commentary, an ESV footnote says, “Some manuscripts omit ‘the son of Barachiah’” (ESV ftn).

With the two main Alexandrian texts split down the middle, the question must be asked, Why is it that the TR’s reading as found in Codex Vaticanus was followed in the NU Text *et al*? Was it the lack of so called “external support” beyond Codex Vaticanus? If so, then why did Westcott & Hort who were not generally in agreement with other neo-Alexandrians on this matter, and who more generally claimed that the two Alexandrian texts were “the neutral text,” not place one of their relatively rare sidenotes at Matt. 23:35b showing the variant of Codex Sinaiticus as an alternative reading?

This uniform agreement on the reading of Codex Vaticanus is also notably present in “Metzger’s baby” of the NRSV (1989)⁷¹; which like the ESV (2001) is a revision of the RSV (OT 1952; NT 1946 & NT 2nd ed., 1971), but unlike the ESV lacks any footnote reference to those manuscripts which follow the variant’s omission. The reason why this is notable is because of Metzger’s stated views that these words of the TR and Codex Vaticanus “probably were mistakenly added to the text of Matthew at an early date because of confusion over which ‘Zechariah’ was meant,” *supra*. If Metzger really believed this, then why did he not follow what he regarded as “the correct” reading of the variant found in Codex Sinaiticus? Why does he not so comment on it in his NU Text textual commentary (Metzger’s *Textual Commentary*, 1971; 2nd ed., 1994,) the way he does in the *RSV Ecumenical Study Bible* (1977)?

Under strict scrutiny it looks to me as though there is only one probable or likely explanation for this neo-Alexandrian uniformity on their following of the TR and Codex Vaticanus here at Matt. 23:35. And that is the reason referred to above at the so called “study Bible” footnotes of the Papists’ JB and NJB, and apostate Protestant *RSV Ecumenical Study Bible* commentary by Metzger. I.e., religious liberals want to follow Codex Vaticanus here which they think is wrong, rather than Codex Sinaiticus which they think is right, even though at least some of them think the TR’s words “of Barachias,” in Metzger’s words “probably were mistakenly added to the text of Matthew at an early date because of confusion over which ‘Zechariah’ was meant,” *supra*, *precisely so that can point to so called “Bible blunders.”* What other construction can we reasonably place on the fact that on the one hand, Metzger believes that these words “probably were mistakenly added to the text of Matthew at an early date because of confusion over which ‘Zechariah’ was meant;” and then on the other hand, in both his NU Text textual commentary and the NRSV he does follow the variant reading of Codex Sinaiticus at Matt. 23:35, which on his religiously liberal neo-Alexandrian paradigm would be “the more accurate” reading?⁷²

⁷¹ For the propriety of this designation, see commentary at Matt. 22:35a.

⁷² Metzger definitely had the freedom to do so in his textual commentary; and his powerful symbolic position on the NRSV Committee amidst so many dotting neo-Alexandrian lackeys, means there was a very good chance, though not a definite

We are thus here presented with an intriguing paradox. Precisely because these neo-Alexandrians are not called by God to be “teachers” (Eph. 4:11) with respect to textual analysis, they are “wild and out of control,” being “dangerous drivers” who know not which readings to follow at this or that verse, and so they make a huge number of errors in the process of their “dangerous driving” away from the *Textus Receptus*. In this religiously liberal process, at least in some instances, not because they think Codex Vaticanus is the correct reading, but because they think it is the wrong reading, they have adopted it so as to provide “a proof text” from which they then hope to develop religiously liberal form criticism principles. But the paradox is, that the reading of Codex Vaticanus is in fact the correct reading, and they simply lack the spiritual insight to understand what it is saying!

Now precisely because these religious liberals are always looking for such so called “Bible contradictions,” it *is also possible* that some such warped “critic” of these textual commentaries will at some point in the future also note that I here have first used a text of Scripture saying “the Holy Ghost ... shall teach you” (John 14:26), and then one saying the church has human “teachers” (Eph. 4:11). Will he also say this is “a Bible contradiction”? If so he is wrong again, for God uses both means. But though God may use preachers (Rom. 10:15) and teachers (Eph. 4:11) to present a truth, it is only the power of the Holy Ghost that can ever convict a man of any truth (John 14:26; 16:7-11). Be sure of this, good Christian reader; there are no errors in the Bible, for Christ said, “the Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35), there are only errors of men’s interpretations.

Meditation: The passage of Matt. 23:34-end is set as the Gospel Reading at *The Communion Service* of the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer (1662)* on Saint Stephen’s Day (26 Dec.), with Acts 7:55-end for the Epistle. This applies the words of Christ, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee” (Matt. 23:37), to the fact that the Jews killed to St. Stephen; and *The Collect* (prayer) addresses the “Lord” Christ and refers to “the example of thy first Martyr Saint Stephen, who prayed for his murderers to thee, O blessed Jesus, who standest at the right hand of God to succour all those that suffer for thee, our only mediator and advocate.”

Traditionally people’s holidays have included the period between Christmas Eve and New Year, and it is notable that the 1662 prayer book has a succession of red-letter days designed for this Christmas period. Thus St. Stephen’s Day on 26 December remembers the first Christian martyr who died because he *proclaimed the Gospel*; then Saint John the Evangelist’s Day on 27 December again reminds us of the role of the four evangelists of the four Gospels in proclaiming the gospel of Christ; then on The Innocents’ Day of 28 December we are reminded of the efforts to STOP this Gospel by attempting to kill Christ as a baby (Matt. 2:13-18). The rubric at Saint Stephen’s Day says, “the Collect of the Nativity” “shall” also “be said continually unto New Year’s

certainty, that he could have gotten some kind of footnote reference to this effect if he had wanted to, even if the other NRSV Committee members did not agree with him.

Eve” (followed by *The Circumcision of Christ* remembered on 1 Jan.).

This Collect referred to in the St. Stephen’s Day rubric for “the Nativity of our Lord, or the birth-day of Christ commonly called CHRISTMAS DAY,” says with regard to being “born again” (John 3:7), “Almighty God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever on God, world without end. *Amen*” (emphasis mine). We are thus reminded in this Collect, that while we are “justified by his grace” (Titus 3:7) and “saved by the washing of regeneration” (Titus 3:5), by his “grace” receiving “the adoption of children” (Eph. 1:5,6), that such justification, regeneration, and adoption, is a *once performed act*. By contrast, our sanctification or holiness of living, is *an ongoing process*, for “in Christ Jesus our Lord,” we are to “die daily” (I Cor. 15:31), so that “the inward man is renewed day by day” (II Cor. 4:16), as we “are changed” “from glory to glory,” “by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Cor. 3:18).

Thus in this gospel message, an emphasis is kept on the incarnation through this week containing a succession of red-letter days. Liturgically, this gives a strong focus to the Gospel from Christmas Day which emphasis the fact that the world finds the gospel so offensive that they will kill people to stop it, whether Herod with the Innocents, or the Jews with St. Stephen. So what is so offensive about the Gospel of Christ that leads to all this hatred and murder to try and stop it? The answer to that question is found in the Epistle and Gospel readings of St. John the Evangelist’s day, which are I John 1:1-end and John 21:19-end. The Epistle includes the words of I John 1:9-10, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” And the Gospel reading reminds us that there will be a Day of Judgement at the Second Advent, seen in the reference to Christ’s Second Coming in the words of John 21:19-end.

Contextually, *The Communion Service* of the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* includes recitation of the TEN COMMANDMENTS of Exodus 20:1-17, and the statements of the *Nicene Creed*, “I believe ... in one Lord Jesus Christ, ... who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, ... and was made man, and was crucified also for us He suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead And I believe in ... the remission of sins ... ” (emphasis mine). The Gospel of Christ confronts us with the reality of our own sins, and our inability to ever satisfy God for our sinful debt. It requires that we accept our sinfulness, turn to Christ in saving faith, recognizing that he died in our place and for our sins, rose again the third day, and now intercedes for us at God’s right hand. It points to a day of judgement when those who have not turned from their sins will be judged by Christ. Christ “is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Heb. 8:1), and “he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession

for them” (Heb. 7:25). Hence the words of I John 2:1, found after the Confession at *The Communion Service*, “If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins.”

When God commissions “ambassadors for Christ,” their message is, “he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” For this is “the grace of God” “in the day of salvation” (II Cor. 5:20-6:2). But in the well-known saying, “The world is no friend of grace,” men resist the idea that they should turn to God and repent of their sins as set forth chiefly, though not exclusively, in The Ten Commandments. The words of the Litany are not liked by such men, “From fornication, and all other deadly sin ..., *Good Lord, deliver us,*” for the deadly sins of Scripture as set forth in such passages of Scripture as I Cor. 6:9,10; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:3-5 (cf. 4:31,32); I John 3:15; Rev. 21:8,27; 22:14,15; are greatly liked by sinful men, who see no need for themselves or others to repent of suchlike. For example, “idolatry” (Gal. 5:20) violates the Second Commandment (Exod. 20:4-7), such as that of heathen religions like Buddhism or Hinduism, or apostate forms of Christianity such as the Romanist Proper (transubstantiation) or semi-Romanist (consubstantiation) Laudian and later Puseyite “adoration” of the consecrated Communion elements by nodding or genuflecting at them, which the Final Rubric of the Communion Service in the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* says is, “idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians.” Or being “covetous” (I Cor. 6:10), which violates the Tenth Commandment, “Thou shalt not covet” (Exod. 20:17), protects against forbidden lusts, such as women Ministers who lust after men’s roles contrary to e.g., I Tim. 2:8-3:13, or drunkenness, fornication, adultery, or sodomy (I Cor. 6:9,10).

The Evangelical Movement arose in the late 18th and early 19th centuries as a Biblical based God honouring force inside of Protestant Churches, in order to refocus people on both the outer broad tenants of the Reformation, and also to maintain a special focus on the gospel message. I.e., the gospel of man’s alienation from God due to sin; the fact that God the Father sent God the Son into the world to die in our place and for our sins at Calvary, before rising the third day, ascending to heaven where he now intercedes for us at the Father’s right hand, and from where he shall return at the Second Advent. This focus includes the need to repent of sin as found chiefly, though not exclusively, in the Ten Commandments, and turn in saving faith to Christ as Saviour and Lord, accepting that God’s salvation procured by Christ alone, is given by God’s grace alone, and accepted by faith alone (Eph. 2:5,8,9); for which our final authority for this and all other matters is Scripture alone (II Tim. 3:16).

And so the 1662 prayer book reminds us in the red-letter days of 25 to 28 December of how men have killed, or attempted to kill those involved in advancing this Gospel, such is the offensiveness of this message about sin to them. Like the Collect of *The First Sunday in Advent* which is “repeated every day with the other Collects in Advent, until Christmas Eve⁷³,” the Gospel reading of 27 Dec. returns to the theme of the

⁷³ “Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son

Second Advent, reminding us that the season of Advent is not just about the first Advent with Christ's nativity, but also the Second Advent with Christ's return and the Day of Final Judgement. Though this reality is part of the message remembered in the 1662 prayer book at Christmas time, it is an unpopular element of the Christmas message, not found in the worldly secular remembrance of the season, which likes the tinsel and glitter and giving of presents, but does not want to talk about the issues of sin and judgement that the Gospel resolves by saving faith in Jesus Christ. Well did our Lord say, "Woe unto you, ... for ye ... have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy, and faith" (Matt. 23:23).

Matt. 23:38 "desolate" (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex. While the TR's Latin, "*deserta* (desolate)," is present in the Vulgate at Matt. 23:38; in "the parallel" reading of Luke 13:35 the Vulgate lacks "*deserta* (desolate)." Therefore, as is my more normative practice of using the Vulgate as the benchmark for determining such matters (see comments on the Diatessaron Controversy at Matt. 22:34, "Preliminary Textual Discussion," "The Second Matter," *supra*.) on this occasion I take the view that the Sangallensis Diatessaron is drawing this reading from the Vulgate's Matt. 23:38. Hence I show the Sangallensis Diatessaron following the TR, *infra*.

Outside the closed class of sources, Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron uses in Ciasca's translation of the Arabic, Latin, "*deserta* (desolate)." But given the TR's usage of "*eremos* (desolate)" at both Matt. 23:38 and Luke 13:35, both may well have been rendered into the manuscripts behind the Arabic Diatessaron. Therefore no reference is made to the Arabic Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 23:38 the TR's Greek, "*eremos* (desolate)," in the wider words, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate (*eremos*)" (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is further supported as Latin, "*deserta* (desolate)," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D., with variant spelling, "*diserta*") and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for

Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. *Amen*" (Collect for The First Sunday in Advent).

this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers, Clement of Alexandria (d. before 215), Origen (d. 254), Eusebius (d. 339), Basil the Great (d. 379), Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444), and Hesychius of Jerusalem (d. after 450); the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation; ancient church Latin writers, Hilary (d. 367), Ambrose (d. 397), Jerome (d. 420), and Augustine (d. 430); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

However, a variant omits Greek, “*eremos* (desolate),” thus making the reading simply, “Behold, your house is left unto you.” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Lectionary 184 (1319 A.D.). It is further omitted in old Latin Version ff2 (5th century). It is also omitted in the ancient church Greek writers, Origen (d. 254) and Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444); and ancient church Latin writers, Cyprian of Carthage (d. 258) and Zeno of Verona (d. 4th century).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental omission? In *Codex Freerianus* (W 032), there is a paper space of about 3 or 4 letter spaces following “*eremos* (desolate)” at the end of verse 38, before the start of verse 39; and in both readings of Lectionary 1968, a “+” here follows “*eremos*.” As any general perusal will show of St. Matthew’s Gospel in Manuscript Washington (W 032) from the 5th century or Lectionary 1968 from about 1,100 years later (1544 A.D.), the verse divisions formally numbered by Stephanus in 1551, generally have antecedents before this time in the stylistic paper spaces (W 032) or marking “+” (Lectionary 1968) earlier used for unnumbered “verse” divisions. While those in St. Matthew’s Gospel of W 032 or Lectionary 1968 do not correlate with Stephanus’s verse numbers in 100% of instances, on an impressionistic basis (rather than as one who has specifically gone through and mathematically counted them,) I would estimate that at least *c.* 90% of our verse numbers in St. Matthew’s Gospel could be found in one or both of these two manuscripts, both of which predate Stephanus’s verse numbers of 1551.

Was a scribe using a manuscript with a stylistic paper space after the “*eremos* (desolate)” at the end of verse 38, such as one finds in W 032? Was the “*eremos*” then lost in an undetected paper fade which was taken to simply be a larger paper stylistic space indicating the end of an unnumbered verse?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? This omission leaves a fairly obvious textual problem since in the wider context of the preceding words of verse 37, the words of Christ “fall flat” to simply say, “Behold, your house is left unto you.” I.e., the preceding words, e.g., “how often would I have gathered thy children together,” “and ye would not!” anticipate some kind of thunderous condemnation in verse 38, which is then lacking in the variant’s “Behold, your house is left unto you,” but clearly present in the TR’s reading, “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate (*eremos*).”

Or did Origen simply make a partial quote of Matt. 23:38? Did a later prunist, aware of both readings by Origen and “looking for an excuse to prune away the text,” then seize upon this partial quote of Origen’s, to claim it was “the better reading,” because “the shorter reading is generally the better reading”? Did he then use this as his dubious justification to prune away the “*eremos* (desolate)”?

Or did Origen, who refers to both readings, first deliberately make this omission? The damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed against heretics, infidels, and heathens, “may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture” (Article 8, Anglican *39 Articles*). This is so with regard to heretics who profess and call themselves, “Christians,” (“heresies,” Gal. 5:20,21; “damnable heresies,” II Peter 2:1), unbelievers who are infidels i.e., they believe in monotheism but deny the Trinity and make no claim to being Christians (cf. John 20:28; I Cor. 12:3); and unbelievers who are heathens (relevant to both infidel and heathen unbelievers, see the “damned,” Mark 16:16; “salvation in” “none other name” than “Jesus,” Acts 4:10,12; “no hope,” Eph. 2:12; “unbelieving,” Rev. 21:8). Thus (per e.g., Matt. 24 & 25; Acts 1:11; Heb. 1:3,) it is heresy to deny that Christ “ascended into heaven, he sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty: from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies: and shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting: and they that have done evil into everlasting fire. This is” a part of “the Catholick” or universal Christian “Faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved” (*Athanasian Creed*, Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* of 1662).

Did Origen, as a consequence of his heretical universalist beliefs, which deny this teaching, and thus Article 8 of the *Apostles’ Creed*, “... he shall come to judge the quick and the dead;” deliberately prune away the “*eremos* (desolate)” of Matt. 23:38? In doing so, was he seeking to produce “a less condemnatory text;” and one “more attuned” to the multi-religions’ world “in which we live”? If so, did he think the New Testament writers were so silly as not to know of heretics (I Cor. 11:19); or infidels (II Cor. 3:13-15; cf. I Cor. 12:3); or heathens, for “there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (I Cor. 7:5,6)? The orthodox position is, “I believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, ...by whom all things were made And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead ... ” (*Nicene Creed*, Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* of 1662).

Origen and Cyril of Alexandria were evidently aware of both readings. Cyril was from Alexandria in North Africa; Cyprian was from Carthage in North Africa, and. Zeno of Verona is thought to have gone to Verona in Italy from North Africa. These factors mean that the variant looks suspiciously like one that originated with Origen, and thereafter was well received by the prunists in the North African School of Alexandria, from which Cyril, Cyprian, and Zeno, then learnt of it.

Was this variant a deliberate or accidental omission? We do not know enough from the historical dark ages of unrecorded textual transmission to be confident of this. But we do know enough to be confident that the variant is an omission to the original text of the autographs, faithfully preserved for us in the apographs of the Received Text, and here found at Matt. 23:38 in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR's reading has strong support in both the Greek and Latin dating from ancient times. It enjoys the support of the Greek writing church fathers, St. Basil the Great and St. Cyril; as well as the Latin writing four doctors of the Western Church, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and St. Gregory the Great. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek and Latin textual traditions; looks like the type of thing that Origen would do; and looks like it was then "laundered through" some North African scribes, quite possibly in connection with that dark group of Alexandrian School scribes from the dark Continent, notorious for their prunist penchant. Therefore, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 23:38 an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 23:38, "desolate," is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; and the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Harclean h (616) Versions, and some manuscripts of the Syriac Palestinian Version; Coptic Middle Egyptian Version (3rd century), and some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version; Armenian Version (5th century); Georgian Version (5th century); Slavic Version (9th century); and Ethiopic Versions (c. 500 & Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

However, the variant which omits "desolate," is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century); as well as (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century). It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic Version (3rd / 4th century); Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version (3rd century), and some manuscripts of the Egyptian

Coptic Bohairic Version.

The split between the two Alexandrian texts caused painful rifts and splits among the neo-Alexandrians. On the one hand, from the neo-Alexandrian paradigm, the “lack of external support” favoured the TR’s reading of Codex Sinaiticus. But on the other hand, the idea that “the shorter reading is the better reading,” and “the harder reading is the better reading” since the reading looks and sounds so silly without the “*eremos* (desolate),” acted to favour the variant’s reading of Codex Vaticanus.

The matter was simple enough for Constantine Tischendorf. He would, as per usual, follow his beloved Codex Sinaiticus that he discovered in Arabia, and so for the wrong reasons, the right reading entered Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72). The matter was also simple enough for Brook Foss Westcott and Fenton Hort. As per usual, these semi-Romanist Puseyites would turn Romeward and homeward, and follow their beloved “most neutral text,” Codex Vaticanus, and so the variant entered Westcott-Hort (1881). The other neo-Alexandrians wanted “to follow the leader.” But which one? “I know,” said, Erwin Nestle, who followed Westcott-Hort in following the variant of Codex Vaticanus in Nestle’s 21st edition (1952). “No, No, we know” said the NU Text Committee with Bruce Metzger and Kurt Aland standing overtly at the helm; and the Jesuit, “sneaky freaky” Carlo Martini, covertly hiding in the shadows down at the back of the ship in a lower-deck room where he could try to tinker with the rudder; as the NU Text Committee followed Tischendorf in following the TR’s reading of Codex Sinaiticus in the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) and UBS’s 4th revised edition (1993).

This confusion was reflected in the neo-Alexandrian Versions at Matt. 23:38.

Solution 1: Follow the reading of the TR found in *Codex Sinaiticus*, which has wide “external support.” At Matt. 23:38, without the literary beauty or elegance of the Authorized Version’s “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate” (AV); the English Standard Version reads like a paper-boy standing on the corner of a street and yelling out the headlines, “See, your house is left to you desolate” (ESV). This format was also followed by the NASB (2nd ed. 1977 & 3rd ed. 1995) and NIV.

Solution 2: Put the TR’s reading in the main text (Codex Sinaiticus), with a footnote referring to the variant (Codex Vaticanus). At Matt. 23:38, the ASV reads, “desolate;” but a footnote says, “Some ancient authorities omit ‘desolate’” (ASV ftn). This format was also followed by the NASB (1st ed. 1960-1971), RSV, NRSV and REB.

Solution 3: the New English Bible (NEB) in a confusing dynamic equivalent and confusing set of footnotes, follows the variant found in *Codex Vaticanus* in the main text, with a footnote referring to the TR’s reading (Codex Vaticanus). The confused and confusing NEB translators would seemingly have us believe that “desolate (*eremos*),” is a synonym for “left unto you,” and so to “add it in after this” is a “redundant expansion” i.e., equivalent to saying, “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate and desolate.” Quite apart from telling us these NEB translators therefore had at best second rate skills

in both textual analysis and translation of Greek into English, this evidently links to a similar view they formed about Luke 13:35 where the TR's "*eremos* (desolate)," is further omitted in both *Codices Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus*. Thus in their dynamic equivalents they render both Matt. 23:38 and Luke 13:35 the same in their main texts. Does some of this sound confusing? Such are the some of the painful difficulties of trying to unravel the "dynamic equivalents" of the NEB and other such versions (like the NIV or TEV). Far from clarifying the Word of God, these translations obscure it relative to a literal translation like the AV.

Comparison of the NEB with its successor, the Revised English Bible (REB), shows that the decision to adopt *Solution 3, supra*, was later changed in the REB to *Solution 2, supra*. So what happened between the time of the NEB's 1st edition of 1961 and 2nd edition of 1970 which adopted *Solution 3*; and the REB of 1989 which adopted *Solution 2*? When it was decided that the *New English Bible* was no longer "new" enough, the new *New English Bible* known as the *Revised English Bible* had a new group of Committee members on it, and one group of neo-Alexandrians does not necessarily agree with another group of neo-Alexandrians on such matters. So where does this leave what they would have us believe is "the word of God"? Like the neo-Alexandrian Greek texts, *supra*, if the Lord tarries, simply at the beck'n'call of the next group of Committee members. ... Well, ... if the Lord tarries, at least, that is, till they in turn are replaced by yet another group of Committee members. *Ad infinitum*? Well on present trends, at least until the Lord returns. Let us thank God that we have the "pure words" "of the Lord" in the Received Text (Ps. 12:6); and that, "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps. 119:89).

Matt. 24:2a "And Jesus said" (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. I here remind the reader that a number of minor variants are not considered in this textual commentary. E.g., here at Matt. 24:2a, inside the closed class of sources the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) contains such a minor variant. Also inside the closed class of sources, the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron here conflates and unites Matt. 24:2 and Mark 13:2 as part of its Diatessaron formatting, and so no reference is made to the Sangallensis Diatessaron, *infra*.

Outside the closed class of sources, a similar possibility of conflation exists in Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron between Matt. 24:2 and Mark 13:2 as part of its Diatessaron formatting. Therefore no reference is made to the Arabic Diatessaron, *infra*.

The Second Matter. I here remind the reader that a lot of work remains to be done in classifying the detailed text type of many Minuscules. E.g., here at Matt. 24:2a, *Variante 3* is found in a Greek form in Minuscule 1346 (Swanson). But outside of von Soden's system (von Soden's ε 1089 in his Ika group, 10th century, Jerusalem, Israel) this manuscript remains unclassified. Is it a Byzantine text manuscript inside the closed

class of sources, or a non-Byzantine text manuscript outside the closed class of sources?

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:2a the TR's Greek, "ο ('the,' redundant in English translation) *de* (And) *Iesous* (Jesus) *eipen* ('he said' = 'said')," i.e., "And Jesus said" (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53; abbreviating "IHC OYC" to "IC" with a line on top) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings; in both instances abbreviating "IHC OYC" to "IC" with a line on top) and 1968 (1544 A.D.; abbreviating "IHC OYC" to "IC" with a line on top). It is further supported as Latin, "*Iesus* (Jesus) *autem* (and) *dixit* ('he said' = 'said')," in old Latin Version f (6th century).

Variant 1, Greek, "ο ('the [one]' = 'he') *de* (And) *eipen* ('he said' = 'said')," i.e., "And he said," is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 2 (12th century). It is further found as Latin, "*Ipse* (he) *autem* (And) ('he said' = 'said') *dixit* ('he said' = 'said')," in old Latin Version 1 (7th / 8th century).

A reading the same, at least in part, to either the TR's reading or *Variant 1*, in that it lacks the "*apokritheis* ('answering' = 'answered')" of *Variants 2 & 3* is also found in Codex H 013 (9th century) and Minuscule 655 (11th / 12th century)⁷⁴.

Variant 2 is Greek "ο ('the [one]' = 'he') *de* (And) *apokritheis* ('answering' = 'answered') *eipen* ('[and] he said' = '[and] said')," i.e., "And he answered and said." It is found as Latin, "*Ipse* (he) *autem* (And) *respondens* ('answering' = 'answered') *dixit* ('[and] he said' = '[and] said')," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), aur (7th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found as Latin, "*Qui* (who) *autem* (And) *respondens* ('answering' = 'answered') *dixit* ('[and] he said' = '[and] said')," in old Latin Version d (5th century); and as Latin, "*Ille* (that [one]) *autem* (And) *respondit* (he answered) *et* (and) *dixit* ('he said' = 'said')," in old Latin Version e (4th / 5th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer,

⁷⁴ Von Soden's main text follows *Variant 2*; and he says that the "*apokritheis* ('answering' = 'answered')" is lacking in H 013 (von Soden's ε 88 in his Ki group) and Minuscule 655 (von Soden's ε 177 in his Ki group). However, we cannot from this data be sure as to the extent to which these two manuscripts follow the rest of von Soden's main reading (*Variant 2*), because of the selective nature of the way he does or does not illustrate variants. E.g., at this reading he also shows support from old Latin f, which we know from Julicher in its wider reading follows the TR; as well as old Latin l, which we know from Julicher in its wider reading follows *Variant 1*. Thus on this occasion, von Soden's data is simply not detailed enough to know exactly where to place these two Byzantine manuscripts.

Chrysostom (d. 407).

Variant 3, may be reconstructed from the Latin as Greek, “*o* (‘the,’ redundant in English translation) *de* (And) *Iesous* (Jesus) *apokritheis* (‘answering’ = ‘answered’) *eipen* (‘[and] he said’ = ‘[and] said’),” i.e., “And Jesus answered and said.” This is possibly a minority Byzantine reading, if so, it may be found in Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and / or 21 (12th century)⁷⁵. It is certainly found as Latin, “*Iesus* (Jesus) *autem* (And) *respondens* (‘answering’ = ‘answered’) *dixit* (‘[and] he said’ = ‘[and] said’),” in old Latin Versions a (4th century) and q (6th / 7th century). It is also followed by the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the early mediaeval church writer, Pseudo-Chrysostom in a Latin work (6th century).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which thus must stand. The origins of the three variants are conjectural.

Was *Variant 1* an accidental omission? In a manuscript in which “*Iesous* / IHCOYC (Jesus)” came at the end of a line and was abbreviated to the first and last letters, i.e., “*Is* / IC”, was there a paper fade? Did this go undetected thus giving rise to *Variant 1*?

Was *Variant 1* a deliberate omission? Because the name of “Jesus (*Iesous*)” appears at Matt. 24:1, did a prunist scribe consider the repetition of “*Iesous* (Jesus)” at Matt. 24:2 was “unnecessarily wordy”? Did he therefore prune it away?

Was *Variant 2* an accidental alteration? We know from Manuscript Washington (W 032) that in St. Matthew’s Gospel a stylistic paper space was often made at those places that since Stephanus’s work of 1551 have become the verse numbers of our Authorized Versions. Were the words, “*o* (-) *de* (And) *Iesous* (Jesus) *eipen* (said),” originally on a line with a large stylistic paper space before the commencement of this verse 2 as an unnumbered verse, in which following the last word of verse 1, “*ierou* (temple),” the line looked something like, “*IEPOY OAEIC*” with the next line starting with “*EIIHEN*”? Did some foreign substance partially mar the “*OAEIC*” over the “*OAE*” in such a way that it was still, with difficulty, readable? Did a first scribe then rewrite the “*OAE*” in the earlier space, and cross out the damaged part still further, so that the line now looked something like “*IEPOY OAE ###IC*”? Did a subsequent scribe looking at this, detect that the letter before the “*IC*” (whose bar had faded) was an “*E*,” and conclude that a combination of “a paper fade and damage” meant “something was

⁷⁵ See previous footnote. Von Soden says “*Iesous* (Jesus)” is found before “*apokritheis* (‘answering’ = ‘answered’)” in Minuscules 28 (von Soden’s ε 168 in his Ia group) and 21 (von Soden’s ε 286 in his Ia group). But we cannot be certain as to the rest of the readings of these manuscripts from this data, although von Soden also shows old Latin q and Origen following this reading, and we know that both of these do follow the wider *Variant 3*. A further complicating factor is that Swanson here shows Minuscule 28 following the TR’s reading. Who is correct on what Minuscule 28 reads, von Soden or Swanson?

here lost”? Noting the “*apokritheis* / ΑΠΟΚΡΙΘΕΙC (‘answering’ = ‘answered’)” of the nearby verse 4; as he copied out this line, did this second scribe then “reconstruct” this as “ΑΠΟΚΡΙΘΕΙC (answered)”?

Was *Variant 2* a deliberate alteration? Did a scribe prepared to both add and subtract from the Word of God as “stylistic improvements,” consider that in the first instance, because the name of “Jesus (*Iesous*)” appears at Matt. 24:1, its repetition at Matt. 24:2 was “unnecessarily wordy”? Did he in the second instance consider that the usage of “*apokritheis* (answered)” at verse 4 was “a clearer” form than the Matthean form of verse 2? Did he therefore both prune away “Jesus (*Iesous*),” and import in the “*apokritheis* (answered)” of verse 4 in order to create his “stylistic improvement” of *Variant 2*?

Variant 3 looks like a conflation of the TR’s reading and *Variant 2*, and so acts to perversely testify to the antiquity of both of these readings. It is found at the hand of Origen in a later Latin translation, raising the question of whether *Variant 3* originated with Origen, or whether it originated at the hand of a later Latin scribe translating Origen, whose work is now preserved by what is possibly a yet later scribe of our Latin translation who simply copied it out from the earlier Latin scribe.

Was *Variant 3* an accidental conflation of the TR’s reading and *Variant 2*? Did a scribe with manuscripts showing both the TR’s reading and *Variant 2*, wrongly conclude that “both manuscripts must have suffered in transmission,” and so conflate the two as a sincerely misguided “reconstruction”?

Was *Variant 3* a deliberate conflation of the TR’s reading and *Variant 2*? Did a scribe with manuscripts showing both the TR’s reading and *Variant 2*, consider “one of these manuscript lines must be right, and one wrong. But who cares? It’d be a great stylistic improvement to fuse them together and so make the reading, ‘*o (de) (And) Iesous (Jesus) apokritheis (answered) eipen ([and] said)*’”? Did he thus deliberately conflate the readings of the TR and *Variant 2*?

Were these deliberate or accidental alterations, or some combination thereof? We cannot be sure. But we can be sure that they were all alterations to the “pure” “Word” of the “Lord” (Ps. 119:137,140), here preserved for us at Matt. 24:2a through time, and over time, in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine text *through time* e.g., 5th century (Codex W 032) to 11th century (Lectionary 2378) to 16th century (Lectionary 1968), and over time e.g., from the late 5th / 6th century (Codex Sigma 042) to our time, dating from ancient times (Codex W 032). It also has some minimal direct support from the old Latin Versions (old Latin f). But its strength is even greater than this, since the conflation of the TR’s reading and *Variant 2* to form *Variant 3*, means that a perverse testimony is thereby given to the existence of the TR’s reading by two more old Latin Versions (old Latin a & q), one of which dates from ancient times (old Latin a); as well as Origen in a Latin translation.

By contrast, *Variant 1* has weak support in the Greek and Latin. *Variant 2* has weak support in the Greek and strong support in the Latin, but with no good textual argument based in the Greek to support it, the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, acts to effectively trounce this reading. *Variant 3*, when standing alone in its own right, has at best weak support in the Greek, and *possibly* no support in the Greek; and relatively weak support in the Latin. Thus for similar reasons to *Variant 2*, *Variant 3* is also trounced by the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*. Weighing up these factors, and giving all due weight to the strong Latin support for *Variant 2*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 24:2a a high level "B" (in the range of 71-74%), i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:2a, "And Jesus said," in the wider words, "And Jesus said unto them" (AV), is found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century) and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is further found in the Syriac Harclean h Version (616).

Variant 2, "And he answered and said," in the wider words, "And he answered and said unto them," is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century); and Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type) and 700 (11th century, independent). It is further found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts (Swanson)*, which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude); and the *Family 13 Manuscripts (Swanson)*, which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is also found in the Syriac Curetonian Version (3rd / 4th century); Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); Armenian Version (5th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

With its support in the two main Alexandrian Texts, and "external support" in the Western Text *et al*, unsurprisingly, *Variant 2*, entered the NU Text *et al*.

Variant 1, "And he said," in the wider words, "And he said unto them," is found at Matt. 24:2 in the *New American Standard Bible* as "And He said to them" (NASB, 3rd ed. 1995), and in *Today's English Version* simply as "he said" (TEV). But a number of factors, namely, the NASB's 1st and 2nd editions followed *Variant 2*, the underpinning neo-Alexandrian texts for the NASB and TEV follow *Variant 2*, and the NASB's 3rd

edition and TEV seek to remove as “redundant” various translations of conjunctions etc.; means that in all likelihood this was “an English stylistic decision” to “improve” the English of the NASB and TEV. Nevertheless, even though this was in all probability a deliberate *modern* pruning of *Variant 2* in order to form *Variant 1*, rather than following the older *mediaeval* alteration that formed *Variant 1*, it is still an adoption of *Variant 1* by the NASB and TEV.

Variant 2 reads at Matt. 24:2a in the American Standard Version, “But he answered and said unto them” (ASV). It is likewise found in the NASB (1st ed. 1971 & 2nd ed. 1977). A form of it is found in the new neo-Alexandrian Papists’ *Jerusalem Bible* (JB) and *New Jerusalem Bible* (NJB); and in this respect they are like the old Latin Papists of the Clementine Vulgate, who were attracted to it because of its strength in the Latin, with their Douay-Rheims reading, “And he answering, said to them.”

The RSV, ESV, and Moffatt Bible all prune away “and said” from *Variant 2*. E.g., at Matt. 24:2 the *English Standard Version* reads, “But he answered them” (ESV), or the Moffatt Bible reads, “but he replied to them.” This same type of pruning of *Variant 2* is found in the *New English Bible* (NEB) and its successor, the *Revised English Bible* (REB) (both of which also prune away the initial “And” / “But” i.e., Greek *de*). And an even looser form of *Variant 2* is found in the *Twentieth Century New Testament* with, “was his answer” (TCNT).

Variant 4. The Greek “*apokritheis* (‘answering’ = ‘answered,’ masculine singular nominative, passive aorist) comes from *apokrinomai* meaning to *reply* or *answer* or *respond*. Therefore at Matt. 24:2, the *New Revised Standard Version’s* reading, “Then he asked them” (NRSV), or the *New International Version’s* reading, “he asked” (NIV) appears to be a new variant, created only in *modern* times. It is presumably premised on the idea that *apokrinomai* here means to *continue* a discourse, which is then “contextually” interpreted to mean this is done by specifically *asking* a question. *While I accept that Jesus here asks a question, I think this is still an unjustified rendering of “apokritheis.”* It does not matter that we can fairly confidently say that the NRSV or NIV translators started with the Greek of *Variant 2*, since it is clear that they have gone well beyond it. Thus I consider they have here created a new variant, to wit, *Variant 4*.

When we look at these neo-Alexandrian Versions here at Matt. 24:2, in the first place we see “the butcher’s axe” hacking away at the “Jesus” of the TR’s reading, and then “chopping off” the “*apokritheis* (answered)” of the nearby Matt. 24:4 so as to add it in here at Matt. 24:2, as preserved in the “bloody and gory” reading of *Variant 2* found in the NU Text *et al* and manifested in the ASV and NASB (1st ed. & 2nd ed.); as well as the Papists’ JB, NJB, and Douay-Rheims.

But “the butcher’s axe” then “went berserk” at the translators’ hands of the remaining neo-Alexandrians, and in the case of Moffatt the hand of a semi neo-Alexandrian. With a “blood’n’guts” fury the NASB and TEV hacked away at their *Variant 2* till it was pulverised into *Variant 1*. Exhibiting this same type of insatiable “blood lust,” the RSV, ESV, NEB, REB, TCNT, and Moffatt Bible, cut and splattered

their *Variant 2* left, right, and centre. And evidently wanting an even greater “blood gush” from their selected *Variant 2*, the NRSV and NIV bashed and smashed and cut and hacked at it to the point that it became so mutilated as to form a new reading, *Variant 4*. All this butchery certainly “isn’t a pretty sight;” as the bang of “blood lust” in their neo-Alexandrian brains, deafens their ears to the hearing of God’s Word found in the TR’s reading.

From whence cometh all this wild and vicious hatred of the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:2, “And Jesus said unto them” (AV & TR)? Why do these beautiful words, “And Jesus said unto them” (AV & TR), send the neo-Alexandrians into such craziness that they wish to avoid them at all costs? Their neo-Alexandrian aversion to them reminds me of the words of the “two possessed with devils” in “the country of the Gergesenes,” who “cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” (Matt. 8:28,29). Of the *Textus Receptus* we read, “Thy word,” “O Lord,” “is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it” (Ps. 119:137,140). But while we neo-Byzantines “love” the “pure” “Word” (Ps. 119:140), these neo-Alexandrians evidently much hate it. So much so, that even once they have diced and sliced the Word of God to form *Variant 2*, most of them then wanted to continue the process and corrupt the Word of God even further in their “translations.” Such are some of the unrewarding antics, and some of the unbridled passions, of the “many which corrupt the Word of God” (II Cor. 2:17).

Matt. 24:6 “all” (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. E.g., the UBS 3rd corrected (1983) and 4th revised (1993) editions, have here multiple variants by claiming the reading of the Latin, “*haec* (these [things]),” in for instance, old Latin f’s “*haec* (these [things]) *omnia* (all) *fieri* (must come to pass),” or the Vulgate’s “*haec* (these [things]) *fieri* (must come to pass),” is qualitatively different to the Greek of the TR and variant respectively, due to the absence of the Greek, “*tanta* (these [things]),” which is found in Luke 21:9. But I find this an unlikely claim.

While to bolster this assertion, reference is made to the reading of either Greek, “*tauta* (these [things]),⁷⁶” or “*panta* (all) *tauta* (these [things]),⁷⁷” in a small number of manuscripts; it would seem to me that these are independent corruptions of Matt. 24:6, probably rival scribal confluents with “the parallel reading” of Luke 21:9. But with

⁷⁶ Inside the closed class of sources: Greek Lectionaries 387 (11th century), 211 (12th century), and 866 (1174 A.D); and outside the closed class of sources, Minuscule 565 (9th century, independent).

⁷⁷ Inside the closed class of sources: Greek Lectionaries 950 (1289/90 A.D.) and 890 (1420 A.D.); and outside the closed class of sources, Minuscule 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels).

regard to the Latin, I think the most natural construction to place on the “*haec* (these [things]),” is that in the same way that the English translators of the AV found it necessary to add in italics, “*these things*” as part of English translation; so likewise, most of the Latin translators added “*haec* (these [things])” as part of their Latin translation, but on their principles of translation they did not use italics here or elsewhere in their translations for such added words.

While old Latin *d* lacks the “*haec* (these [things])” and reads simply, “*fieri* (must come to pass),” so that as in the Greek this must be implied in its Latin rendering, this should not surprise us since it is clear that more generally the Western Latin scribes of old Latin *d* tended to use more complex Latin forms whereas e.g., Jerome in the Vulgate tends to use more simple and readily understood forms. (Although on this occasion the same words as old Latin *d* at Matt. 24:6 are found in the Vulgate at Mark 13:7.) This more readily understandable element of the Vulgate, evident here at Matt. 24:6, is part of the reason why the Latin Vulgate historically enjoyed a widespread popularity that old Latin *d* never did. I.e., while for centuries Latin was misused to lock the Word of God up to the masses who should have been given the Word of God in their own tongue, as indeed occurred in Wycliffe’s translation from the Latin (1380) or later Reformation translations from the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, (with Latin used from inside the closed classes of OT and NT sources in both OT and NT Received Texts respectively, subject to their respective master maxims,) such as our Authorized Versions (1611); paradoxically, for those who could read Latin, the Vulgate is put in a fairly simple and straightforward form. Thus the common Latin of the Latin Vulgate (*Vulgate / Vulgata* from *Vulgatus* is Latin for, “common,”) is a Latin equivalent of the common Greek of the Koine (“*koine*” is Greek for “common”) Greek New Testament.

Therefore I show e.g., old Latin *f* following the TR, and the Vulgate following the variant, *infra*.

The Second Matter (Diatessaron formatting). The Vulgate reads at both Matt. 24:6 and Luke 21:9, Latin, “*haec* (these [things]) *fieri* (must come to pass).” Since the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex, we cannot be sure where its reading of “*haec fieri*” comes from, and so no reference is made to the Sangallensis Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:6, the TR’s Greek, “*panta* (all),” of “*dei* (must) *gar* (for) *panta* (all) *genesthai* (come to pass),” i.e., “for all (*panta*) *these things* must come to pass” (AV, shewing / showing AV’s italics), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codex W 032 (*Codex Freerianus*, 5th century, which is Byzantine in Matthew 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53, Washington, D.C., USA), and the purple parchment Codex Sigma 042 (*Codex Rossanensis*, late 5th / 6th century, Rossano, Italy); and the two Sydney University Lectionaries written in brown ink with colourful bright red illumination of key letters and section markers, namely, Lectionary 2378 (*Sidneiensis Universitatis*, 11th century, twice in two different readings; Sydney, Australia) and Lectionary 1968 (*Sidneiensis*

Universitatis, 1544 A.D., twice in two different readings; Sydney, Australia). It is also supported as Latin, “*omnia* (all),” in old Latin Version f (6th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407).

However, a variant which omits Greek, “*panta* (all),” may be reconstructed from the Latin as Greek, “*dei* (must) *gar* (for) *genesthai* (come to pass),” i.e., (showing added words in italics,) “for *these things* must come to pass.” This is found as Latin, “*oportet* (must) *enim* (for) *fieri* ([these things] must come to pass),” in old Latin Version d (5th century); as Latin, “*oportet* (must) *enim* (for) *fieri* (must come to pass) *haec* (these [things]),” in old Latin Versions a (4th century) and b (5th century); and as Latin “*oportet* (must) *enim* (for) *haec* (these [things]) *fieri* (must come to pass),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century), as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). From the Latin support for the reading found in the Vulgate *et al*, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Latin writer, Cyprian (d. 258); and the early mediaeval church writer, Pseudo-Athanasius (6th century) in a Latin work.

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text which is thus correct. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental omission? In a Greek manuscript did the “*panta* (all),” or in a Latin manuscript did the “*omnia* (all),” come at the end of a line? Was it “squeezed in” at the end of the line, and lost in an undetected paper fade?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a conflationist Greek or Latin scribe omit the “all (Greek, *panta*; Latin, *omnia*),” through a conflation with “the parallel reading” of Luke 21:9?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We cannot be sure. But we can be sure that it was an omission at Matt. 24:6, the correct reading of which is here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading against which there is no good textual argument. It is found in the Greek texts over time and through time, dating from ancient times (W 032). It also has some minimal Latin support in one old Latin Version. It enjoys the further support from ancient times of the church father and doctor, St. John Chrysostom, sometime Archbishop of Constantinople. By contrast the variant has no known support in the Greek; although it has strong support in the Latin as the representative Latin reading. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:6 a high level “B” (in the range of 71-74%), i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:6, “all,” in the wider words, “for all *these things* must come to pass” (AV, showing AV’s italics), is found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex 0138 (13th century, Matt. 21:24-24:15). It is also found in Minuscules 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Harclean h (616) Versions.

However, the variant which omits “all,” and so reads “for *these things* must come to pass,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century), Middle Egyptian (3rd century), and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; and Ethiopic Versions (the Takla Haymanot, c. 500; Roman edition 1548-9; Pell Platt, based on the Roman edition of Rome 1548-9; & Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The erroneous variant entered the NU Text *et al.* Hence at Matt. 24:6 the ASV reads, “for *these things* must needs come to pass” (showing ASV’s italics). This incorrect variant is also found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV.

The new neo-Alexandrian Papists of the post Vatican II Council likewise adopted the pruned down variant in their JB and NJB. In this they resemble the post Trent Council and pre-Vatican II Council old Latin Papists who omitted it in the Clementine Vulgate and also in the Douay-Rheims Version which reads, “For these things must come to pass.” The *Book of the Chronicles of Neo-Byzantine Defence of the Received Text* records that following the publication of the Jerusalem Bible (1966), some old Latin Papists came to some of the new neo-Alexandrian Papists, and pointing to this reading at Matt. 24:6 “vigorously patted them on the back,” saying, “We’ve fought those neo-Byzantine Protestants of the *Textus Receptus* here at Matthew 24:6 for about 400 years, and we’re pleased that you fellas will now keep up the fight against them.” “Oh yes,” the neo-Alexandrian Papists said smiling, “and the bonus is we’ve now netted a whole lot

of apostate Protestants in through our beloved *Codex Vaticanus* which we keep here at Rome” ☺ .

Matt. 24:7 “pestilences, and” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. In Lectionary 1968, at both readings of Matt. 24:7 (pp. 68a & 143a), the words, “*kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *loimoi* (‘pestilences,’ word 3)” are enclosed in stylistic dots (at p. 68a, a dot something like ’ before these two words, and a large circular dot something like ● after these two words; and at p. 143a, a circular dot in the middle of the line, something like ●, both before and after these two words). The meaning of these calligraphy symbols is open to interpretation since there is no such thing as a “symbols page” in this Lectionary. But in view of the fact that there is a known textual variant which omits these words, I think the most likely interpretation on the data presently available to me, is that this is a textual apparatus indicator that while the scribe supports the inclusion of the words, some omit them. (Whether one considers the “*kai*” of word 2 is omitted, as did the scribe of Lectionary 1968; or it is the “*kai*” of word 4 that is omitted, as I do; makes no difference for these immediate purposes.)

The Second Matter (Diatessaron formatting). Inside the closed class of sources, the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron is a Latin Vulgate Codex. While the Vulgate lacks “*pestilentiae* (‘pestilences,’ word 3) *et* (‘and,’ word 4)” at Mark 13:8, it has it at both Matt. 24:7 and Luke 21:11; and these words are also found in the Sangallensis Diatessaron. Since it is possible that it got this from the Matthean and / or Lucan Vulgate readings, no reference is made to the Sangallensis Diatessaron, *infra*.

Outside the closed class of sources, similar issues with the presence in Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron of what Ciasca renders from the Arabic as Latin, “*pestilentiae* (‘pestilences,’ word 3) *et* (‘and,’ word 4),” mean that no reference is made to the Arabic Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:7, the TR’s Greek, “*limoi* (‘famines,’ word 1) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *loimoi* (‘pestilences,’ word 3) *kai* (‘and,’ word 4) *seismoi* (‘earthquakes,’ word 5⁷⁸),” i.e., “famines, and pestilences (*loimoi*), and (*kai*) earthquakes” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53; in word order 3,4,1,2,5, word 5 variant spelling, “*sismoï*”) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century; word 5 variant spelling, “*sismoï*”); Lectionary 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings).

⁷⁸ Masculine plural nominative noun, from *seismos*. Greek *seismos* (earthquake) + *graphē* (writing) = English “seismograph,” an instrument for recording the size of an earthquake.

It is also supported as Latin, “*fames* (‘famines,’ word 1) *et* (‘and,’ word 2) *pestes* (‘pestilences,’ word 3) *et* (‘and,’ word 4) *terrae motus* (‘earthquakes,’ = Latin word 5a: *terrae* / “earth” + Latin word 5b: *motus* / “quakes,” 2 Latin words = Greek word 5⁷⁹) in old Latin Versions h (5th century) and q (6th / 7th century); or in word order 3,4,1,2,5, as Latin “*pestilentiae* (‘pestilences,’ word 3) *et* (‘and,’ word 4) *fames* (‘famines,’ word 1) *et* (‘and,’ word 2) *terrae motus* (‘earthquakes,’ = Latin word 5a: *terrae* / “earth” + Latin word 5b: *motus* / “quakes,” 2 Latin words = Greek word 5) in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions ff2 (5th century, with word 1 as “*famis*” = “famines”), f (6th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); and the Book of Armagh (812 A.D., with the compound Latin word 5, “*terraemotus*” = “earthquakes”). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in word order 3,4,1,2,5, in the Clementine Vulgate (1592, following the Book of Armagh with Latin compound word 5). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writers, Hippolytus (d. 235) and Eusebius (d. 339); the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and ancient church Latin writer, Jerome (d. 420, in word order 3,4,1,2,5).

However, a variant omitting words 3 and 4, and thus reading simply words 1,2,5, Greek, “*limoi* (‘famines,’ word 1) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *seismoι* (‘earthquakes,’ word 5),” i.e., “famines, and earthquakes,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codex E 07 (8th century). It is also found as Latin, “*fames* (‘famines,’ word 1) *et* (‘and,’ word 2) *terrae motus* (‘earthquakes,’ = Latin word 5a: *terrae* / “earth” + Latin word 5b: *motus* / “quakes,” 2 Latin words = Greek word 5) in old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century, with Latin word 5a spelling variant of “*terre*” = “earth”), b (5th century), and d (5th century). It is further found in the ancient church Latin writers Cyprian (d. 258, in word order 5,2,1), Hilary (d. 367), and Arnobius (d. after 455); and is also the most probable reading of a manuscript by the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254), where stylistic and contextual factors do not permit complete certainty.

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which must thus stand. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental omission? The fact that for the words, “*limoi* (‘famines,’ word 1) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *loimoi* (‘pestilences,’ word 3) *kai* (‘and,’ word 4) *seismoι* (‘earthquakes,’ word 5),” Manuscript Washington (W 032) is in word order 3,4,1,2,5, means that it looks like the eye of the copyist first past by ellipsis from words 1 & 2, “*limoi kai*” to the similar looking words 3 & 4, “*loimoi kai*” which he wrote down, and then suddenly realizing his error, he went back and wrote back in words 1 & 2 after words 3 & 4, thinking, “the order doesn’t matter, it still means the same thing.” Given that a number of manuscripts likewise have this altered word order 3,4,1,2,5, as reflected

⁷⁹ Latin word 5a: *terrae* / “earth” + Latin word 5b: *motus* / “quakes,” are found as these two words in the old Latin Versions and Wordsworth & White’s edition of the Vulgate (1911); but they may also form one compound Latin word, “*terraemotus* (‘earthquakes,’ Latin word 5),” as in Weber & Gryson’s edition of the Vulgate (5th edition, 2007), the Book of Armagh, and the Clementine.

in the Latin, e.g., the Vulgate, it is clear that this was “a tricky ellipsis” that claimed a number of scribes, who were fortunately like the scribe in the *Codex Freerianus* (W 032) line in that they were then adroit enough to add the words they first omitted back in.

Did a similar thing happen with a scribe first writing words 1 & 2, “*limoi kai*,” and then his eye jumping by ellipsis to the end of the similar looking words 3 & 4, “*loimoi kai*”? Being less adroit than the scribes of *Codex Freerianus et al*, did he not realize his mistake, and so just keep writing words 5 and following? Were words 3 & 4 thus accidentally lost?

Two minor variations on this theme of a possible accidental loss by ellipsis come to us from the two readings of Matt. 24:7 in Lectionary 2378 (11th century). This Lectionary was sent to Bulgaria from Constantinople in the 11th century, and acquired by Sydney University in the 20th century.

In Lectionary 2378 (1st of two readings, p. 38a), Matt. 24:7 is written in the second of two columns on the page. It has at the end of one line (using for “*kai*” / “*καί*” an abbreviation that looks *something like* “*κα*”), “*λιμοικα λοι*” and over the top of the “*λοι*” an abbreviation for the “*μοι (moi)*” of “*λοιμοι (loimoi, word 2)*” something like the sideways “E” in the following box,



; and then on the next line, protruding to the left of the second column of this reading, an abbreviation for the “*καί (kai, word 4)*” that looks something like “*ϛ*”, followed by word 5. Did a manuscript with these type of, or similar abbreviations exist at a much earlier time? (I do not know enough about the history of these forms to know if this is possible.) If so, on an “*οι*” ellipsis of the “*λιμοικα λοι*”, was the “*κα λοι (kai loimoi)*” accidentally lost?

Yet another similar possibility comes to us from the second reading of Lectionary 2378 (2nd of two readings, p. 65a), where Matt. 24:7 is written in the first of two columns on the page. It reads, (using for “*kai*” / “*καί*” an abbreviation that looks *something like* “*ϛ*”), “*λιμοι ϛλοιμοι ϛ*” etc. . Did a scribe use a manuscript something like this? After writing, “*λιμοι ϛ*,” did his eye jump by ellipsis from the “*μοι ϛ*” (or “*μοι και*”) ending of “*λιμοι ϛ*” (or “*λιμοι και*”) to the “*μοι ϛ*” (or “*μοι και*) ending of “*λοιμοι ϛ*” (or “*λοιμοι και*”), and then did he just keep writing? Was the “*λοιμοι ϛ*” (or “*λοιμοι και*,” “*pestilences, and*”) thus accidentally omitted?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Were words 3 & 4, “*loimoi* (‘*pestilences*,’ word 3) *kai* (‘*and*,’ word 4),” pruned away as an assimilation with Mark 13:8 by a prunist scribe seeking to “eliminate differences” in order to produce a more “standardized gospel” reading at Matt. 24:7?

A deliberate or accidental omission? We cannot be sure. But we can be sure that it was an omission to the text here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR's reading has rock solid support in the Greek textual tradition over time and through time, as the representative Byzantine reading dating from ancient times in *Codex Freerianus*. It also has strong support in the Latin, being found in both St. Jerome's Vulgate and about two-thirds of the old Latin Versions, once again dating from ancient times (old Latin h & ff2). It further enjoys the support of several ancient church writers, including the church father and doctor, St. Jerome. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek, though some stronger support in the Latin with about one-third of the old Latin Versions; as well as the support of several ancient church writers. Weighing up these factors; the strong testimony for "a tricky ellipsis" evident in those manuscripts supporting the TR's reading but using word order 3,4,1,2,5; and the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 24:7 an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:7, "pestilences, and," in the wider words, "*limoi* ('famines,' word 1) *kai* ('and,' word 2) *loimoi* ('pestilences,' word 3) *kai* ('and,' word 4) *seismoi* ('earthquakes,' word 5)," i.e., "famines, and pestilences (*loimoi*), and (*kai*) earthquakes" (AV), is found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century; in word order 3,4,1,2,5), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex 0138 (13th century, Matt. 21:24-24:15). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type; in word order 3,4,1,2,5, the manuscript at word 5 is damaged and unreadable after the first three letters), 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), 1241 (12th century, Alexandrian corruption in General Epistles, Byzantine text in Acts, independent text elsewhere), 579 (13th century, mixed text; in word order 3,4,1,2,5), and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation). It is also found in the *Family I Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Harclean h (616) Versions; Coptic Middle Egyptian Version (3rd century); Armenian Version (5th century); Georgian Version (5th century); Slavic Version (9th century); and the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

However, the variant which omits words 3 & 4, "*loimoi* ('pestilences,' word 3) *kai* ('and,' word 4)," and so reads simply words 1,2,5, Greek, "*limoi* ('famines,' word 1) *kai* ('and,' word 2) *seismoi* ('earthquakes,' word 5), i.e., "famines, and earthquakes," is

found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century; variant spelling word 1 as “*leimoi*”) and London Sinaiticus (4th century; word order 5,2,1); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century; variant spelling word 1 as “*leimoi*”); and Minuscule 892 (9th century, mixed text type). It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic Version (3rd / 4th century); and Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version (3rd century).

The erroneous variant entered the NU Text *et al.* Hence at Matt. 24:7 the ASV reads, “famines and earthquakes.” This incorrect reading is also found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV (with a footnote referring to the TR’s reading), NIV, and TEV.

Following the majority Latin text reading, the old Latin Papists of the *Council of Trent* (1545-63) to *Vatican II Council* (1962-5) era, adopted the TR’s reading in word order 3,4,1,2,5 in the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims which reads, “pestilences and famines and earthquakes.” But following a neo-Alexandrian text, the new neo-Alexandrian Papists of the post *Vatican II Council* era, omitted words 3 & 4 in their [*Roman*] Catholic RSV (1965), *Jerusalem Bible* (1966), and *New Jerusalem Bible* (1985). The *Book of the Chronicles of Neo-Byzantine Defence of the Received Text* records that following the *Vatican II Council* the neo-Alexandrian Papists said to the old Latin Papists, “You’re rendering of Matt. 24:7 still sounds too much like the religiously conservative Protestant Received Text for our liking.” And so in the spirit of the ancient Alexandrian prunist scribes, they said, “We’re gonna’ shack-up with the religiously liberal Protestants, and so we’re just gonna’ shear those words away⁸⁰.”

Matt. 24:18 “his clothes” (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. The majority text of Hodges & Farstad (1985) which is based on von Soden’s I & K groups of about 1,500 manuscripts, of which more than 85% are Byzantine text, here says there is “a substantial division within the Majority Text tradition” between the reading of the “TR” and the variant⁸¹; and therefore within the majority Byzantine text. By contrast, the majority text of Robinson & Pierpont (2005) which is based on von Soden’s K group of about 1,000 manuscripts, of which more than 90% are Byzantine Text, shows the TR’s reading in the main text as the majority Byzantine text with no sidenote indicating any doubt about its status as the representative Byzantine reading. Under the circumstances it is necessary to consult the source book of von Soden (1913) directly.

⁸⁰ As in all references to the *Book of the Chronicles of Neo-Byzantine Defence of the Received Text*, I write these things in the genre of a religiously allegorical novel. The decent society vernacular terminology of “shack-up” refers to those who “live in sin” i.e., a *de facto* relationship; and this imagery is in harmony with some forms of spiritual “fornication” that Rome engages in (Rev. 17:2).

⁸¹ Hodges & Farstad (1985), pp. xiv & 82.

Inside his K group, von Soden shows the variant supported by his Kr sub-group. Overall, the Kr group is *c.* 21% of K group manuscripts, and allowing a 10% error bar for von Soden's generalist groups, we can still say this is *c.* 20% or one-fifth of manuscripts. More precisely, on a count of just manuscripts that cover the Gospels, Kr contains *c.* 22.5-25% of the Gospel manuscripts. Hence this is a sizeable minority Byzantine reading⁸². However the majority Byzantine reading of the TR enjoys the support of *c.* 75-77.5% of manuscripts, and with about three-quarters of the Byzantine manuscripts in its favour, it is clearly and indisputably the representative Byzantine reading.

The Second Matter (Diatessaron formatting). The Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex and reads, “*vestimentum* (‘cloke’ / ‘garment,’ singular) *suum* (his)” (Sangallensis Diatessaron 147:3). This is the same reading as the Vulgate’s Mark 13:16. This is different to the Vulgate’s reading of Matt. 24:18 which is “*tunicam* (‘cloke,’ singular) *suam* (his).” Therefore no reference is made to the Sangallensis Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:18 the TR’s Greek, “*ta* (‘the,’ neuter plural accusative, definite article from *to*) *imatia* (‘clothes,’ neuter plural accusative noun, from *’imation / himation*) *autou* (of him),” i.e., “his clothes” (AV), is the majority Byzantine reading e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), M 021 (9th century), and Gamma 036 (10th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is also supported as Latin, “*vestimenta* (‘clothes,’ neuter plural accusative noun, from *vestimentum*) *sua* (his),” in old Latin Version f (6th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers, Athanasius (d. 373) and Chrysostom (d. 407).

However, a variant Greek, “*to* (‘the,’ neuter singular accusative, definite article from *to*) *imation* (‘cloke’ / ‘cloak’ / ‘garment,’ neuter singular accusative noun, from *’imation / himation*) *autou* (of him),” i.e., “his cloke” or “his garment,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in e.g., Codices Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), K 017 (9th century), and Pi 041 (9th century). It is also found as Latin, “*tunicam* (‘cloke’ / ‘cloak,’ feminine singular accusative noun, from *tunica*) *suam* (his),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found as Latin, “*vestimentum* (‘cloke’ / ‘garment,’ neuter singular accusative noun, from *vestimentum*) *suum* (his),” in old Latin Version e (4th / 5th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers, Hippolytus (d. 235), Isidore (d. 435), and Caesarius (5th century); the ancient

⁸² See the Kr figures in Volume 1 (Matt. 1-14), at Matt. 5:31a.

church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the ancient church Latin writers, Cyprian (d. 258) and Hilary (d. 367).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was this an accidental alteration? Due to the presence of a foreign substance e.g., some spilt ink, did the original “*ta imatia* (‘clothes,’ plural)” come to look something like, “*t# imat#*”? Did a scribe, looking to what he took to be “the parallel” reading at Mark 13:16 which is “*to imation*,” then “reconstruct” this at Matt. 24:18 as “*to* (the) *imation* (‘garment,’ singular)”?

Was this a deliberate alteration?

In his Olivet Discourse, our Lord no doubt expanded on various points over time, of which we have but selected excerpts in different Gospel writers. If this is understood, then there is no conflict between the Matthean account which records that Jesus said, “neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes (*ta imatia*, plural)” (Matt. 24:18); and the Marcan account which records that Christ said, “And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment (*to imation*, singular)” (Mark 13:16). This would be a silly as suggesting that in the last sentence I “had contradictory” statements because before the Matt. 24:18 quote I say, “Jesus said,” whereas before the Mark 13:16 quote I say, “Christ said.”

Nevertheless, did a scribe whose competence left something to be desired, wrongly think in an overly simplistic manner that there was some kind of “contradiction” between the plural form of “clothes (*ta imatia*)” in Matt. 24:18, and the singular form of “garment (*to imation*)” in Mark 13:16? Did he then deliberately assimilate the Matt. 24:18 reading to that of Mark 13:16 by putting Matt. 24:18 in the singular?

Was this variant a deliberate or accidental assimilation with Mark 13:16? We cannot be certain. But we can be certain that it was an assimilation with Mark 13:16 and thus an alteration to the original text here Providentially preserved for us at Matt. 24:18 in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has strong support in the Greek with about three-quarters of the Byzantine manuscripts testifying to it, and these date from ancient times (W 032). It also has some relatively weak Latin support (old Latin f). It further enjoys the impressive support of the ancient church Greek writing fathers and doctors, St. Athanasius and St. John Chrysostom. By contrast, the variant is a strong minority Byzantine reading with the support of about one-quarter of the Byzantine manuscripts. It further has strong support in the Latin as the majority Latin reading dating from ancient times; and also is followed by half a dozen ancient church writers. Weighing up these factors, and taking into account the superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:18 a “B” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:18, “his clothes” (plural), is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); and Minuscules 1071 (12th century, independent), 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is further found in the Syriac Harclean Version (616); and Armenian Version (5th century).

However, the variant, “his garment” (or “his cloke,” singular), is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the independent text type) Codex Z 035 (6th century), (the mixed text type) Codex 094 (6th century, Matt. 24:9-21), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; and also the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century) and Pesitto (first half 5th century) Versions; all extant Coptic Versions e.g., the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); and the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al*. Thus at Matt. 24:18 the ASV reads, “cloak.” The incorrect singular reading of the variant is also found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV.

The pre-Vatican II old Latin Papists followed the singular form of the majority Latin text in the Clementine Vulgate, and this is also found in the Latin based Douay-Rheims Version as “coat.” The post Vatican II new neo-Alexandrian Papists likewise followed the singular form in their [*Roman*] Catholic RSV (1965), *Jerusalem Bible* (1966), and *New Jerusalem Bible* (1985). So what has changed? Much indeed! For when the old Latin Papists came at the Protestants here at Matt. 24:18 in the olden time, those of the holy Protestant faith stood firm and resolute in defence of the correct plural reading of the *Textus Receptus*. But now, large numbers of apostate Protestants, falling away from the Biblical teaching of the Divine Preservation of Holy Scripture (Pss. 12:6,7; 119:140; Matt. 5:18; I Peter 1:25), join the Papists in attacking the Word of God here at Matt. 24:18 and elsewhere. The Motto of the First Stage of the Reformation, the Lutheran Reformation, encapsulated the fundamental importance of the doctrine of the Divine Preservation of Scripture to all other elements of the Reformation in the words of

I Peter 1:25, *Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum!* “The Word of the Lord Endureth Forever!” Let us by the grace of God not depart from this fundamental Protestant teaching!

Matt. 24:27 “also” (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. The von Soden based majority text of Hodges & Farstad (1985) says that at Matt. 24:27 there is “a substantial division within the Majority Text tradition” between the reading of the “TR” and the variant⁸³; and therefore within the majority Byzantine text. Likewise, the von Soden based majority text of Robinson & Pierpont (2005) says “the manuscripts comprising the Byzantine Textform are significantly divided” between the TR’s and variants readings⁸⁴.

Von Soden (1913) says that inside his K group, the TR’s reading which includes the “*kai* (also),” has the support of 2 manuscripts in his K1 group, 67 of 171 manuscripts counted in his Kx group, and his Kr group.

Von Soden’s Kr group contains *c.* 189 manuscripts which are exclusively Byzantine inside a wider K group that has 914 exclusively Byzantine manuscripts. Or on a more precise count of Gospel manuscripts in the K group, out of *c.* 860 K group Gospel manuscripts; inside Kr there are *c.* 175 Gospel manuscripts (plus or minus an error bar of *c.* 10% for von Soden’s generalist groupings).

Von Soden’s Kx group contains 513 manuscripts out of the 983 K group manuscripts. But only 171 of these were counted for this reading, *infra*. Subtracting the 513 Kx manuscripts in von Soden’s K group from the 983 manuscripts, yields a total of 470 manuscripts; and then adding back in the 171 from the Kx group counted for this reading, means a total of 641 manuscripts are of relevance to us here at Matt. 24:27. Or on a more precise count of Gospel manuscripts in the K group, out of *c.* 860 K group Gospel manuscripts; inside Kx there are *c.* 500 Gospel manuscripts. Subtracting *c.* 500 that are Kx subgroup Gospel manuscripts yields *c.* 360 manuscripts, and then adding back in the 171 from the Kx group counted for this reading, means a total of 531 manuscripts are of relevance to us here at Matt. 24:27 (plus or minus an error bar of *c.* 10% for von Soden’s generalist groupings).

When we put together the Gospel manuscripts support for the “*kai* (also)” in von Soden’s K group at Matt. 24:27, we thus have 2 manuscripts from K1 + 67 manuscripts from Kx + *c.* 175 manuscripts from Kr = a total of 243 manuscripts out of a total K count of 531 Gospel manuscripts here used in the K count. This is 45.76% of the count, or *c.*

⁸³ Hodges & Farstad (1985), pp. xiv & 82.

⁸⁴ Robinson & Pierpont (2005), pp. xviii & 55.

46%, so that the variant reading which omits the “*kai* (also)” has *c.* 54% support. When one further recognizes an error bar of *c.* 10% for von Soden’s generalist groupings, not applicable in this case for the more precisely counted sample from Kx, but still relevant to the wider Kr count, 10% of the Kr’s 175 out of 531 = 10% of 37% of these manuscripts (i.e., Kr is 189 out of 513 manuscripts = 36.8% = *c.* 37%). Thus (unlike the usual error bar of *c.* 10%) in this instance we can give a figure for the TR of *c.* 46% - minus 0%-*c.* 3.7% (*c.* 42.3-46%) for the reading, “*kai* (also);” and a corresponding figure of *c.* 54% minus 0%-*c.* 3.7% (*c.* 50.3-54%) for the variant reading which omits the “*kai* (also).” If e.g., all the *c.* 3.7% of the variant went to the TR which held all of its *c.* 46%, this would be *c.* 49.7%. As to what the actual figures are we cannot be certain.

On these generalist and “rubbery” figures, the count is clearly *too close to call*. Thus the Byzantine Text is fairly evenly divided between these two readings.

The Second Matter (Diatessaron formatting). Inside the closed class of sources, the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex. The Vulgate has the TR’s “*et* (also),” at Matt. 24:27, but lacks it at the “parallel” gospel reading of Luke 17:24. But the readings are also different in other particulars, such as the usage of “*adventus* (the coming)” at Matt. 24:27 but not Luke 17:24 (this is also relevant for identifying the first of two Gregory citations of the variant, *infra*). Therefore I consider its presence in the Sangallensis Diatessaron reflects the Vulgate’s reading at Matt. 24:27, which I show supporting the TR, *infra*.

Outside the closed class of sources, Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron reads in Ciasca’s 19th century Latin translation, “*ita* (so) *erit* (shall ... be) *adventus* (the coming) *Filii* (of the Son) *hominis* (of man)” i.e., “so shall the coming of the Son of man be.” Once again, the general similarity with Matt. 24:27 as opposed to Luke 17:24, and both of these and surrounding words; means that I think we can on this occasion ascribe the underpinning Arabic to Matt. 24:27, as indeed Ciasca here did (Arabic Diatessaron, chapter 42). Hence I show the Arabic Diatessaron following the variant, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:27 the TR’s Greek, “*kai* (also),” in the wider words, “so shall also (*kai*) the coming of the Son of man be” (AV), is supported by about half of the Byzantine texts e.g., Codex W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is also found as Latin, “*et* (also),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), f (6th century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Hippolytus (d. 235), Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386), and Chrysostom (d. 407); the ancient church Latin writer, Cyprian (d. 258); and the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754).

However, a variant which omits the “*kai* (also),” and so read simply, “so shall the

coming of the Son of man be,” is also supported by about half of the Byzantine texts e.g., Codices Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century) and X 033 (10th century); and Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century). It is further found in old Latin Versions a (4th century), d (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), and ff1 (10th / 11th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

Given the fairly even split in Byzantine text manuscripts here at Matt. 24:27, it is necessary to consider relevant wider stylistic features of Matthean Greek in general, and the Olivet Discourse of Matt. 24 in particular. The words “*outos* (so) *estai* (shall ... be) *kai* (also) *e* (the) *parousia* (coming) *tou* (of the) *uiou* (Son) *tou* (-) *anthropou* (of man),” i.e., “so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (AV), are the readings of the Received Text and representative Byzantine text at both Matt. 24:37 (e.g., W 032, Sigma 042, & Lectionaries 2378 & 1968) and Matt. 24:39 (e.g., W 032, Sigma 042, & Lectionary 1968⁸⁵), and with no good textual argument against them, correct.

With regard to the terminology of “*outos* (so) *estai* (shall ... be)” found here at Matt. 24:27,37,39, we find that when joined to “*en* (in),” as “*outos* (so) *estai* (shall it be) *en* (in),” that this forms a general though not exact stylistic doublet at Matt. 13:40 and Matt. 13:49 i.e., “*outos* (so) *estai* (shall it be) *en* (in) *te* (the) *sunteleia* (end) *tou* (-) *aionos* (of world) *toutou* (this),” i.e., “so shall it be in the end of this world” (Matt. 13:40, AV) and “*outos* (so) *estai* (shall it be) *en* (in) *te* (the) *sunteleia* (end) *tou* (of the) *aionos* (world)” i.e., “so shall it be in the end of the world” (Matt. 13:49, AV). But the doublet is not identical since Matt. 13:40 has “*toutou* (this)” whereas Matt. 13:49 does not. But these two usages are surrounded by some other stylistic differences e.g., whereas Matt. 13:40 *ends* a sub-thought, before starting the connected thought of Matt. 13:41; by contrast, Matt. 13:49 commences a sub-thought with the rest of this verse. Other connected terminology is also sufficiently different for one to allow that some internal differences within this terminology may also reasonably occur i.e., both the presence of the “*toutou* (this)” at Matt. 13:40 and its absence at Matt. 13:49 *contextually* stands as a stylistically reasonable diversity.

Moreover, we need to be careful since we find that the terminology of “*outos* (so) *estai* (shall ... be)” has the conflation of a “*kai* (also)” added to it in some manuscripts at Matt. 12:40 (“so shall the Son of man be), seemingly on analogy with Matt. 24:27,37,39. However, immediate stylistic factors at Matt. 12:40 do not find the intrusion of the “*kai* (also)” justified here when one looks at the wider context of the similar though not identical terminology of Matt. 12:40-42⁸⁶. Of course, that is not to say that such a “*kai*

⁸⁵ In Lectionary 1968 at Matt. 24:39 the “*kai*” / “*καί*” comes at the end of a line. The scribe wrote the “*κ*” (kappa) on the line, and directly above the “*κ*” the “*α*” (alpha), and to its right the iota as a long letter something like the English “*j*” without a dot on top of it, coming down from above the line down to the line and next to the kappa. (Lectionary 2378 does not include Matt. 24:39 among its readings.)

⁸⁶ See Matt. 12:40 in Textual Commentary Vol. 1 (Matt. 1-15), Appendix 3.

(also)” is necessarily a conflation, for we find in the Received Text at Matt. 12:45 the words, “*outos* (so) *estai* (shall it be) *kai* (also),” in the wider words, “Even so (*outos*) shall it be (*estai*) also (*kai*) unto this wicked generation.”

But here at Matt. 24 the situation is quite different. At all three verses, 27,37, & 39, we find a close stylistic similarity both in terms of the location of the terminology at the end of a sub-thought, and also in terms of it coming immediately after a comparison. For our purposes, the AV is sufficiently literal here to look at the matter in its English in order to make the point found in the underpinning Greek.

Matt. 24:27,37,39 preceding comparison	Matt. 24:27,37,39 concluding sub-thought
<p><u>Matt. 24:27:</u> “For as the lighting cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west:”</p>	<p>“so shall also (<i>kai</i>) the coming of the Son of man be.”</p>
<p><u>Matt. 24:37:</u> “But as the days of Noe were,”</p>	<p>“so shall also (<i>kai</i>) the coming of the Son of man be.”</p>
<p><u>Matt. 24:39:</u> “And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away;”</p>	<p>“so shall also (<i>kai</i>) the coming of the Son of man be.”</p>

The practical effect of this stylistic comparability is that of the two readings that the Byzantine text fairly evenly divides over, we can confidently select the reading, “so shall also (*kai*) the coming of the Son of man be.” That is because in view of this stylistic similarity of Matt. 24:27 with both Matt. 24:37 and Matt. 24:39, there would be a clear and obvious textual problem with adopting the reading, “so shall the coming of the Son of man be” here at Matt. 24:27. (Cf. commentary at Matt. 24:37 & Matt. 24:39, *infra*.)

The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was this an accidental omission? In Manuscript Washington (W 032) at Matt. 24:37, the “*kai* (also)” comes at the start of a new line on a new page (Matt. 24:37-48 at p. 92). In a similar manner, did a manuscript come to the end of a line with Matt. 24:27, with a scribe “squeezing in” the “*kai* (also)” possibly as an abbreviation, something like the “κϛ” sometimes used in W 032? Was this then lost in an undetected paper fade?

Was this a deliberate omission? Is there a *prima facie* proclivity to try and prune away the “*kai* (also)” as “redundant,” also evident in the fact that at Matt. 24:37 a minority Byzantine reading (e.g., U 030, 9th century; & old Latin h, q, & ff1), traceable to Origen, also prunes away the “*kai* (also)”)? Is this pruning also replicated in the absence of the “also (Greek *kai*; Latin, *et*)” at Matt. 24:39 (e.g., old Latin h, q, & ff1)?

Did a scribe prune away the “*kai* (also)” here at Matt. 24:27 on the basis of “redundancy”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We cannot be sure. We do not know. But we do know that it was an omission from the text of Scripture here preserved for us in the Received Text as one of two Byzantine readings with the support of about half the Byzantine text manuscripts.

On the one hand, in the Greek the variant has the support of about half the Byzantine text manuscripts. It also has the minority Latin support of about one-third of the old Latin Versions. But on the other hand, in the Greek, the TR’s reading has the support of about half the Byzantine text manuscripts dating from ancient times (W 032). It is also the majority Latin reading, with the support of about two-thirds of the old Latin Versions, as well as St. Jerome’s Latin Vulgate. It enjoys the further support of several ancient church writers, including the Greek writing church father, St. Chrysostom, and the Latin writing church father, St. Cyprian. Moreover, the TR’s reading is strongly supported by textual analysis; and correspondingly its omission in the variant looks like the supercilious type of thing that a giddy-headed Origen would do when his mood-swings “swung him senseless” into one of his “silly-season” periods in which his head went “wirly-twirly” like “a spinning-top that would not stop.” Balancing out these considerations, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:27 a high level “B” (in the range of 71-74%), i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:27, “also,” in the wider words, “so shall also (*kai*) the coming of the Son of man be,” is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); Minuscules 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent); and the *Family 13 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is further found in the Syriac Harclean h Version (616); and the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

However, a variant omitting “also,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); and Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 700 (11th century, independent), 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1071 (12th century, independent), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); and Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th

centuries; Latin 19th century).

The erroneous variant is found in the NU Text *et al.* Hence the ASV reads at Matt. 24:27, “so shall be the coming of the Son of man.” So likewise the incorrect variant is found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV.

Following the Vulgate and majority Latin textual tradition, the old Latin Papists of pre-Vatican II Council times included the TR’s “also (Latin, *et*)” in their Douay-Rheims Version. By contrast, it was omitted by the new neo-Alexandrian Papists of post-Vatican II Council times who followed the variant in their [Roman] Catholic RSV, JB, and NJB. Thus we here find that at Matt. 24:27, the old Latin Papists were more accurate than are the new neo-Alexandrian Papists.

Matt. 24:28 “For” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. Inside the closed class of sources the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex. At both Matt. 24:28 and Luke 17:37 the Vulgate reads, “*Ubi cumque* (Wheresoever) *fuerit* (shall be) *corpus* (the carcass / body),” i.e., “Wheresoever the carcass shall be.” This is also the reading of the Sangallensis Diatessaron (at chapter 147). Therefore no reference is made to the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron, *infra*.

The Second Matter. Christ says here in Matt. 24:28, “For wheresoever the carcass (or ‘body,’ Greek *ptōma*) is, there will the eagles be gathered together.” In his Olivet Discourse of Matt. 24, among other things Christ warns of the “many” who “shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ” (Matt. 24:5), and his teaching on these “false Christs” (Matt. 24:24) thus constitutes important teaching on the Antichrist.

The Pope of Rome, “as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (II Thess. 2:4) as a vice-God or “vicar of God,” in his claim to be “Vicar of Christ,” with a universal jurisdiction; and thus the Latin, “*Vicarius* (Vicar) *Christi* (of Christ),” equates the Greek, “*antichristos* (antichrist)” in I John 2:18,22; 4:3; II John 7, since the meaning of both is one who puts himself “*in place of*” or “*instead of*” (Greek, *anti*; Latin, *Vicarius*) “*Christ*.” This contextually requires a figure of significance to the universal or catholic church, and the Pope of Rome uniquely fulfils this in his claim to a “universal” jurisdiction which must be taken seriously during the time of his temporary titular primacy under the Byzantine Emperor, Justinian, from 533-565 A.D., and from the time of the start of his governing primacy over the Patriarchate of Constantinople under the Byzantine Emperor, Phocas, dating from 607 A.D. . Thus both the Roman Papacy as we know it, and the Office of Antichrist, dates from 607 (or some use an Anglican Annunciation Day Calendar which starts the year on 25 March to date this event to 606⁸⁷). Hence the first Pope was Boniface III (Bishop of Rome 607; First Pope 607).

⁸⁷ I.e., counting New Year’s Day as Annunciation Day (25 March). Before 24

There were Bishops of Rome before this time, and indeed some Pope-like Bishops of Rome from 533 to 565, but the Popes of Rome date from 607.

Notably, St. John isolates one of the Antichrist's teaching as a Trinitarian heresy that denies the humanity of Christ (I John 4:2,3; II John 7). This is found in the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, which falsely claims that Christ's very body and blood are in the Roman Mass. But in the words of the Final Rubric at The Communion Service of the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* of 1662, "the sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very substances, and therefore must not be adored; (for that were idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians;) and the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and not here; it being against the truth of Christ's natural body to be at one time in more places than one."

On the one hand, we cannot doubt that as touching upon his Divinity, Christ is spiritually omnipresent, and hence he says, "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). But on the other hand, as touching upon his humanity, Christ's body is in heaven until the Second Advent (Matt. 26:11; John 16:28; Acts 1:11; 3:21; I Cor. 11:26). In this context, the words of our Lord in Matt. 24:28 are very pertinent, "For wheresoever the carcase (or 'body,' Greek *ptoma*) is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Christ here gives us a test that we can use if someone claims that he is bodily present somewhere. Of course, there would be various possible applications of this test, but *one* application, though *by no means the only possible application* of it, would be to the Romish claim of transubstantiation. The eagles here in Matt. 24:28 symbolize angels (see Ezek. 1:10 & Rev. 4:7). I.e., one will know when Christ bodily returns because his body will be surrounded by angels, for "he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. 24:31).

Jesus thus here gives us an infallible test that if anyone claims the human body of Christ is somewhere after his Ascension (Acts 1:11), then if it is not clearly surrounded by the visible presence of angels (Matt. 24:28), the claim is unquestionably false. Therefore on application of these principles, we are inexorably led to the conclusion that the absence of the visible presence of angels at the Roman Mass means that the transubstantiation heresy is a hoax, and that Christ's human body is not in fact corporeally present as the Romanists claim. Hence we must conclude that this shows yet again that a long succession of Popes in their claims to be vice-Christ on earth as

George II, chapter 23, (1750), the new year started in e.g., England on *Annunciation Day*. Thus e.g., in Ireland, the *Church of Ireland's Book of Common Prayer* of 1666, as printed in 1700 says at the bottom of "A Table of Moveable Feasts, Calculated for Forty Years," "Note the Supputation of the Year of our Lord in the Church of Ireland, beginneth the Five and twentieth day of March" (*The Book of Common Prayer ... According to the use of the Church of Ireland*, Printed by and for Andrew Crook, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, at the Stationers-Arms in Castle Street, Dublin, 1700; full text copy online at Sydney University).

“Vicars of Christ” with a “universal” jurisdiction, are in fact “false Christs” (Matt. 24:24), who are part of the “many” that Jesus said would “come in” his “name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many” (Matt. 24:5).

This fact takes on an added significance because both here at Matt. 24:28 and at Luke 17:37, the Greek word, “*aetoi* (‘eagles,’ masculine plural nominative noun, from *aetos*),” is correctly rendered in the AV as “eagles.” Thus Luke 17:37 also reads, “Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.” However, this is inaccurately rendered as “vultures” in a number of the “new” versions e.g., the New Revised Standard Version at Matt. 24:28.

In the OT the vulture was an unclean animal (Lev. 11:14; Deut. 14:13), and in the NT unclean animals are sometimes used to symbolize devils (Rev. 16:13; 18:2). To this there is a notable exception, in that the eagle, which was also an unclean animal (Lev. 11:13; Deut. 14:12) is sometimes used for the good unfallen angels. The context of Ezek. 1:10 and Rev. 4:7 tells us that the reason for this is that the eagle is the king of the birds⁸⁸. Thus because of the eagle’s noble status it is sometimes used for the unfallen angels, and this fact is relevant to understanding its usage here at Matt. 24:28 as well as Luke 17:37. The difference between rendering “*aetoi*” in Matt. 24:28 and Luke 17:37 as “eagles” (AV) or “vultures” (most “new” or “modern” versions), is the difference between heaven and hell. It is the difference between referring to the unfallen angels of God who are typed by the king of birds, the eagle; and devils who are typed by such “unclean and hateful” birds (Rev. 18:2) as “the bat” (Lev. 11:19) and “the vulture” (Lev. 11:14). We thus find that the AV translators better understood the contextual meaning of “*aetoi*” in Matt. 24:28 and Luke 17:37 than do most “new” or “modern” versions.

These same type of problems exists in other historicist passages in the “new” or “modern” versions, which are translated by preterist or futurists of much lesser spiritual insight than the King James translators, who in their Dedicatory Preface to King James refer to the Pope as “that man of sin” (II Thess. 2:3). E.g., in II Thess. 2:7 “until he be taken out of the way” refers to the removal of the Imperial Roman Empire ruled over by the Caesars of Rome (Rev. 17:9), which Roman Empire was divided following the death of the Emperor, Theodosius the Great in 395 A.D., into the Eastern Roman Empire (under Constantinople) and Western Roman Empire (under Rome). Thus the Biblical focus on the City of the Seven Hills, Rome (Rev. 17:9), requires that the focus moves to the Western Roman Empire from this time. Hence it is after the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 that the Bishop of Rome starts to arise, in prophetic type with a temporary titular primacy under Justinian from 533 to 565, then in fuller form from 607,

⁸⁸ Church tradition sometimes uses these four creatures to symbolize the four gospels i.e., the idea that the four angels are in some way representing a fourfold depiction of Christ in the four gospels. In this context, (while there is some variation among interpreters as to which creature symbolizes which Gospel,) the eagle has generally been linked with St. John’s Gospel. E.g., St. Augustine’s fourfold break-up was: the lion for St. Matthew’s Gospel, the man for St. Mark’s Gospel, the ox / calf for St. Luke’s Gospel, and the eagle for St. John’s Gospel.

and in his fullest form from 756 when he gained temporal power with the first of the Papal States. But this is changed to a reference to the Holy Ghost in the New King James Version, which reads in II Thess. 2:7, “until He is taken out of the way” (NKJV), although an NKJV footnote gives the historicist reading, “Or ‘he’” (NKJV ftn.)⁸⁹.

Likewise the fact that the Antichrist is an apostate Christian (II Thess. 2:3; I Tim. 4:1), is relevant to the fact that “he shall not regard the God of his father” (Dan. 11:37, AV), and while this reading is preserved in the NKJV’s main text, it’s footnote reading, like so many of the “modern” or “new” versions, wrongly reads, “the gods of his fathers” (NKJV ftn.). So to the reference to the Antichrist honouring “the God of” spiritual and temporal “forces” in Dan. 11:28, such as saint mediators, is perverted in the NKJV as it is in so many of the “modern” or “new” versions to “a god of fortresses” (NKJV).

Other examples of this exist in both the NKJV and the other “modern” or “new” versions, so that the correct Historical School of Prophetic Interpretation readings of the King James Version are removed. Therefore, let us thank God for our King James Versions which accurately convey the Protestant’s Historicist School of Prophetic Interpretation in these passages, and for our immediate purposes here at Matt. 24:28, as at Luke 17:37, the correct reading of “eagles” (AV) and not “vultures”⁹⁰.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:28 the TR’s Greek, “*gar* (For),” in the wider words, “For (*gar*) wheresoever the carcase is” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is also supported as Latin, “*enim* (For),” in ff2 (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), and c (12th / 13th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers, Hippolytus (d. 235) and Chrysostom (d. 407); and the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation.

⁸⁹ A minority historicist view, most notably followed by Calvin, here agrees with the NKJV and considers it is the Holy Ghost who “is taken out of the way” to allow for the Pope’s arising (MacKenzie, R., translator, *Calvin’s Commentaries, The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, Great Britain, 1961). But the better majority and traditionalist historicist view is that this refers to the removal of the temporal power of Rome when the Western Roman Emperor was “taken out of the way” following the fall of Rome in 476 so as to allow for the Pope’s arising.

⁹⁰ See my work *The Roman Pope is the Antichrist* (2006, 2nd edition 2010), With a Foreword by the Reverend Sam McKay, Secretary of the Protestant Truth Society (1996-2004), Appendix: “The Mark of the Beast - 666.” Available on the internet via Yahoo and Google at “Gavin McGrath Books,” or direct at <http://www.gavinmcgrathbooks.com>.

However, a variant omitting Greek, “*gar* (For),” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscules 399 (9th / 10th century) and 924 (12th century). The omission of Latin, “*enim* (For),” is further found in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Latin writer, Cyprian (d. 258); the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation (c. 395); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which therefore must stand. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was this an accidental omission? Did the “*gar* (For),” come at the end of a line in a manuscript? Was it lost in an undetected paper fade? Alternatively, was it simply skipped over by a scribe inadvertently because it is a short word?

Was this a deliberate omission? Was it omitted by a prunist scribe because it was regarded as “unnecessarily wordy” and so “redundant”? Alternatively, was it omitted by an assimilationist scribe seeking more “standard gospel readings” as a semi-assimilation to Luke 17:37 which lacks this “*gar* (For)”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? The answer is lost to us in the unrecorded pages of a dark age in textual transmission history. But what is not lost to us is the fact that this was an omission in the *Textus Receptus* here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading. It also has the support of three old Latin Versions, dating from ancient times. It enjoys the further support of a few ancient church writers, including the church father and doctor, St. John Chrysostom. By contrast, the variant has very weak support in the Greek, but strong support in the Latin. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:28 an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:28, “For,” in the wider words, “For wheresoever the carcase is,” is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well

as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac Harclean h Version (616); Coptic Middle Egyptian Version (3rd century); and Armenian Version (5th century).

However, a variant omitting “For,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 700 (11th century, independent), and 1071 (12th century, independent); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century) and Pesitto (first half 5th century) Versions; Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; and the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The erroneous variant entered the NU Text *et al.* Hence at Matt. 24:28 the ASV reads, “Wheresoever the carcass is.” The incorrect variant is also found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV.

For we neo-Byzantines of the *Textus Receptus* this omission is not some “new” idea. The old Latin Papists of pre-Vatican II times omitted the “For” in their Douay-Rheims which reads, “Wheresoever the body shall be;” and it was then omitted in post-Vatican II times in the new neo-Alexandrian Papists’ JB and NJB. It looks like the Papists are up to their old tricks here at Matt. 24:28. They are seeking to break the contextual nexus of the “For” clearly linking this to the Son of man’s body, and so create a corrupted text that *does not as obviously* lend itself to the teaching that when Christ’s body returns it will be surrounded by angels (“eagles”), thus striking down and rendering as an obvious ruse, the Popish claims of transubstantiation in which it is so claimed that Christ’s body has returned to the earth. (See “The Second Matter” at “Preliminary Textual Analysis,” *supra*).

We neo-Byzantines of the *Textus Receptus* have fought the Papists here afore, as we fight them now. We will never surrender, but will continue to defend the Divinely Inspired and Divinely Preserved Word of God against them and any allies they may now form with apostate Protestants who have cast away the Biblical Reformation doctrine on the Divine Preservation of Holy Writ. And by the power and grace of God, we shall fight these opponents of the Received Text unflinchingly and unrelentingly. For we maintain the Motto of the First Stage of the Reformation, *Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum!*⁹¹

⁹¹ Latin Motto of the Lutheran Reformation, drawn from I Peter 1:25 in St.

Matt. 24:31 “a sound” (TR & AV) {B}*Preliminary Textual Discussion.*

Gwynn’s edition (1913 A.D.) of the *Book of Armagh* (812 A.D.) supplies in italics “*et*,” and so regards the reading as following *Variant 1*, “*tuba* (a trumpet) *et* (and) *voce* (a voice) *magna* (great),” i.e., “a trumpet and a great voice.” But if the *Book of Armagh* is allowed to stand without these added italics, the reading is, “*tuba* (a trumpet) *voce* (‘with sound,’ feminine singular ablative noun, from *vox*) *magna* (‘great,’ feminine singular ablative adjective, from *magnus*),” i.e., “a trumpet with a great sound.” The question then arises, does “with a great sound” refer to an autonomous “great sound,” in which instance Gwynn is correct to add “*et* (and)” and make this read as *Variant 1*; or does “with a great sound” refer back to the trumpet, in which instance the meaning is the same as that of the TR’s “with a great sound of a trumpet”? It would be possible to argue this matter back and forth “till the hens come home.” But for my purposes I shall simply stipulate that on this occasion, no reference is made to the *Book of Armagh, infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:31 the TR’s Greek, “*phōnes* (a ... sound)” in the wider “*salpiggos* (a trumpet) *phōnes* (a ... sound) *megales* (great),” i.e., “with a great sound of a trumpet” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), K 017 (9th century), M 021 (9th century), U 030 (9th century), Gamma 036 (9th century), Pi 041 (9th century), and X 033 (10th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark), 1006 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Revelation), 2 (12th century), 180 (12th century, Byzantine other than in Acts), 597 (13th century), 1292 (13th century, Byzantine outside of the General Epistles), and 1342 (13th / 14th century, Byzantine other than in Mark); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers, Gregory of Nyssa (d. 394) and Asterius of Amasea (Amaseia) (d. c. 410).

Variant 1 adding Greek “*kai* (and)” in “*salpiggos* (a trumpet) *kai* (and) *phōnes* (a ... voice) *megales* (great),” i.e., “with a trumpet and a great voice,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 1010 (12th century); and Lectionaries 127 (11th century) and 773 (11th century). It is further found as Latin, “*tuba* (a trumpet) *et* (and) *voce* (a voice) *magna* (great),” i.e., “a trumpet and a great voice,” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century, reading “*voce*” / “voice” for “*voce*” / “voice”), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Latin writers, Hilary (d. 367), Jerome (d. 420), Augustine (d. 430), and *Speculum* (d. 5th century); the early

Jerome’s Latin Vulgate, “The Word of the Lord Endureth Forever.”

mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

Variant 2 omitting Greek, “*phones* (a ... sound)” in “*salpiggos* (a trumpet) *megales* (great),” i.e., “with a great trumpet” or “with a loud trumpet⁹²,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codex W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53); and Lectionaries 292 (9th century), 859 (11th century), 858 (12th century), and 184 (1319 A.D.). It is further found as Latin, “*tuba* (a trumpet) *magna* (‘great’ or ‘loud’),” i.e., “with a great trumpet” or “with a loud trumpet,” in old Latin Version e (4th / 5th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers, Eusebius (d. 339), Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386), and some manuscripts differing from the main text of Gregory of Nyssa (d. 394); the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the ancient church Latin writers, Cyprian (d. 258) and Hilary (d. 367).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct. The origins of the variants are speculative.

I Thessalonians 4:16 says, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice (*phone* from *phone*⁹³) of the archangel, and with the trump (*salpiggi* / *salpingi* from *salpigx* / *salpinx*⁹⁴) of God” etc.; and Matt. 24:31 says, “a great sound (*phones* from *phone*⁹⁵) of a trumpet (*salpiggos* / *salpingos* from *salpigx* / *salpinx*⁹⁶).” Matt. 24:31 becomes in *Variant 1*, “a trumpet and (*kai*) a great voice.” This addition of the “*kai* (and)” looks to be some kind of semi-assimilation to I Thess. 4:16, which allows the “great voice” of Matt. 24:31’s *Variant 1* to then be interpreted as “the voice of the archangel” from I Thess. 4:16.

Was *Variant 1* an accidental alteration? Did “*salpiggos* (a trumpet)” come at the

⁹² Greek “*megales* (feminine singular genitive adjective, from *megas*),” generally means “great” or “large,” but with reference to a sound it can mean, “loud.”

⁹³ Feminine singular genitive noun, from *phone*.

⁹⁴ I do not always follow transliteration conventions. However, Greek *salpingi* (Greek σαλπιγγι = *salpiggi* = by transliteration convention “gg” becomes “ng” and hence *salpingi*), is a feminine singular dative noun, from *salpinx* (Greek σαλπιγξ = *salpigx* = *salpinx* because by transliteration convention “gx” becomes “nx”).

⁹⁵ Feminine singular dative noun, from *phone*.

⁹⁶ I do not always follow transliteration conventions e.g., I refer to “*salpiggos*” to give a more literal transliteration, *supra*. However, Greek *salpingos* (Greek σαλπιγγος = *salpiggos* = *salpingos* because by transliteration convention “gg” becomes “ng”), is a feminine singular genitive noun, from *salpinx* (Greek σαλπιγξ = *salpigx* = *salpinx* because by transliteration convention “gx” becomes “nx”).

end of a line, with a letter space remaining? Did a scribe, thinking about I Thess. 4:16, wonder if a “*kai* (and),” abbreviated to look *something like* “Κϛ” (as in Matt. 15:36 & Luke 20:2 in W 032; & Matt. 24:7 in Lectionary 2378) had been lost in a paper fade? In consultation with I Thess. 4:16 did he then conclude that “this must have been what happened”? Did he then “reconstruct” the “*kai* (and)” here to form *Variant 1*?

Was *Variant 1* a deliberate alteration? Did a conflationist scribe deliberately conflate Matt. 24:31 with I Thess. 4:16 because he believed that this was “a legitimate” form of “clarification” or “correction” to make to the text of Scripture?

Was *Variant 2* an accidental omission? Here at Matt. 24:31 the scribe of Lectionary 1968 first wrote, “*angelous* (more literally, *aggelous*, ‘angels’) *autou* (his) *meta* (with) *ϱ*,” and then repeated “*angelous* (angels) *autou* (his).” Realizing his mistake, he then put a line through the “*meta* (with) *ϱ* (-, a scribal blunder) *angelous* (angels) *autou* (his),” and rewrote the “*meta* (with)” followed by “*salpiggos* (of a trumpet) *phones* (a ... sound) *megales* (great),” etc. . We do not know how the scribe came to make such a blunder. Was he fatigued? Was he distracted? Whatever the reason, we are reminded that scribal accidents of this kind could sometimes occur.

Moreover, we know from W 032 that a scribe could sometimes omit a short word, and then realizing his mistake, add it back in as a sidenote. E.g., at Luke 12:30, after “*ta* (the) *ethne* (nations),” he first omitted, “*tou* (of the) *kosmou* (world),” and wrote, “*epizetei* (seek after),” and then realizing his mistake, put a mark in between the last letter of “*ethne*” and first letter of “*epizetei*” above the line that looks something like “./,” and then making the same “./” mark in the right-hand side column, wrote the words, “*tou kosmou*” so a reader would know where to add these words back in.

Therefore, bearing in mind that “*phones* (a ... sound),” is a short word, did a scribe simply omit it by accident? If so, he was less adroit than the scribe of W 032 at Luke 12:30, since he did not then pick up his mistake.

Was *Variant 2* a deliberate omission? Possibly after considering the absence of “sound” with “a trumpet (*salpiggos*)” at Rev. 1:10 & 4:1, did a prunist scribe consider “*phones* (a ... sound)” was “redundant” because “everyone knows that if a trumpet is present it will make a sound”? Did he then remove “*phones* (a ... sound)” to produce *Variant 2*’s “*salpiggos* (a trumpet) *megales* (‘great’ or ‘loud’)”?

Were these variants deliberate or accidental alterations, or was one deliberate and the other accidental? We do not know. But we do know that these were alterations to the text of Scripture here preserved for us at Matt. 24:31 in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek over time and through time; and it clearly dates from ancient times as seen in the witness of the ancient church Greek writers, Gregory of Nyssa and Asterius of Amasea (Amaseia). However, it lacks any clear support in the Latin (see comments on the *Book of Armagh, supra*). *Variant 1* has

very weak support in the Greek, but very strong support in the Latin. *Variant 2* has very weak support in both the Greek and Latin textual traditions; but is followed by several ancient church writers. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 24:31 a "B" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:31, "a ... sound," in the wider words, "with a great sound of a trumpet," is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century). It is also found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac Palestinian Version (c. 6th century), and the Syriac Harclean Version (616) in an asterisk marked out text (indicating it is not the representative reading of the Harclean Version); Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version (3rd century); and the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

Variant 1 adding "and," i.e., "with a trumpet and a great voice," is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in Minuscules 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles) and 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels).

Variant 2 omitting "a ... sound," i.e., "with a great trumpet" or "with a loud trumpet," is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); Minuscules 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century) and Pesitto (first half 5th century) Versions; Egyptian Coptic Middle Egyptian (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); Georgian Version (5th century); and Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

Though Westcott-Hort (1881) follow *Variant 2* in their main text (Codex Sinaiticus), *infra*, they give one of their relatively rare sidenote alternatives showing the

reading of the TR found in their preferred text of Codex Vaticanus. With the two main Alexandrian texts split some division has occurred among the neo-Alexandrians. After all, on neo-Alexandrian principles, is there not “good external support” for Codex Vaticanus in the Syriac and Egyptian Versions? And for the older neo-Alexandrians, what about the Ethiopic Version of Dillmann? Hence at Matt. 24:31 the ASV translators went the other way to Westcott-Hort, and put the TR’s reading followed by Codex Vaticanus in their main text as, “with a great sound of a trumpet” (TR & W-H sidenote alternative); but put a footnote saying, “Many ancient authorities read ‘with a great trumpet’ ...” (*Variant 2* & Codex Sinaiticus).

The erroneous *Variant 1* is found in the old Latin Papists’ Clementine Vulgate (1592) and Douay-Rheims Version (NT, 1582). The latter of which reads at Matt. 24:31, “a trumpet and a great voice” (Douay-Rheims).

On what they foolishly think of as “the brilliant deduction” of the Neo-Alexandrian School that “the shorter reading is the better reading,” at Matt. 24:31 most of the neo-Alexandrians preferred the erroneous *Variant 2* (Codex Sinaiticus) over the TR’s reading (Codex Vaticanus) in the NU Text *et al.* Hence at Matt. 24:31 the New American Standard Bible reads, “with a great trumpet” (NASB). The incorrect *Variant 2* is also found in the RSV, ESV, NRSV, and NIV; as well as the new neo-Alexandrian Papists’ JB and NJB.

What is one to make of the *Today’s English Version’s* reading at Matt. 24:31, “The great trumpet will sound”? Should we call it a modern created *Variant 3*? I hope this helps the reader to understand why I find the TEV such a PAINFUL translation to work through relative to any Greek text.

We Protestants test all things by Scripture, and so Article 8 of the Anglican *39 Articles* says, “The ... Nicene Creed, ... and ... the Apostles’ Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed: for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture.” Article 9 of the *Apostles’ Creed* says, “I believe in the Holy Ghost;” and the *Nicene Creed* says, “I believe in the Holy Ghost, ... who spake by the prophets.” Speaking through Holy Moses, the Holy Ghost says “the Lord thy God” says, “What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it” (Deut. 12:31,32). Yet we here see in the old Latin Papists of the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims Version who endorsed *Variant 1*, an example of those who “add thereto;” and in the various neo-Alexandrian texts and versions which endorse *Variant 2*, an example of those who “diminish from” the Word of God. When will men learn “to walk humbly with” “God?” (Micah 5:8). “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (I John 5:3).

Matt. 24:36b “not the angels of heaven” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron reads “*neque* (nor) *Filius* (the Son).” But this

is a Vulgate Codex, and the Vulgate has these same words at Mark 13:32. Therefore these words could have been derived from Mark 13:32 as part of Diatessaron formatting. Given that the Vulgate places these words after, “*neque* (not) *angeli* (the angles) *in* (in) *caelo* (heaven),” at Mark 13:32, whereas the Sangallensis Diatessaron places “*neque* (neither) *Filius* (the Son)” before these words (Sangallensis Diatessaron, 156:6), surely increases this likelihood. Therefore no reference is made to the Sangallensis Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:36b, the TR’s Greek, “*oude* (not) *oi* (the) *angeli* (angels)⁹⁷ *ton* (of) *ouranon* (‘heavens’ = ‘heaven’),” i.e., “not the angels of heaven” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); Minuscules 2 (12th century), 1010 (12th century), 597 (13th century), and 1342 (13th / 14th century, Byzantine other than in Mark); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings⁹⁸) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings⁹⁹). It is also supported by Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions 1 (7th / 8th century) and g1 (8th / 9th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Latin writers, Phoebadius (d. after 392) and Jerome (d. 420); as well as in Greek manuscripts according to the ancient church Latin writers Ambrose (d. 397) and Jerome (d. 420).

However, a variant, adding “*oude* (neither) *o* (the) *Yios* (Son),” so as to read, “*oude* (not) *oi* (the) *angeli* (angels) *ton* (of) *ouranon* (heaven) *oude* (neither) *o* (the) *Yios* (Son),” i.e., “not the angels of heaven, neither the Son,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark), and 1505 (11th century, Byzantine in the Gospels); and Lectionary 547 (13th century). It is also found as Latin, “*neque* (neither) *Filius* (the Son),” in Vulgate Codices J (6th / 7th century,

⁹⁷ I do not always follow transliteration conventions. However, Greek *ἄγγελοι* = *aggeloi* = *angeli* by a transliteration convention in which “gg” becomes “ng”.

⁹⁸ In Lectionary 2378 at the first reading (p. 38b), the “*ton* (of)” is written with the definite article abbreviated to a tau “τ” with a half semi-circle something like the following box,



over the top of the final iota (i) of the previous word, “*angeli* (angels)” and also this tau “τ”; although this half semi-circle then ends in a squiggle something like a dingle ~, over the top of which is another very small half semi-circle (like the bigger one, *supra*) on the top right of this ~ shape. Then the “*ouranon* (heaven),” is abbreviated to “*ounon*.” But at the second reading (p. 67a), this is written out in full without any abbreviations.

⁹⁹ In Lectionary 1968 the “*ouranon* (heaven),” is abbreviated to “*ounon*” with a bar on top at both the first (p. 70a) and second (p. 149a) readings.

Cividale), O (7th century, Oxford), X (7th century, Cambridge), and B (9th century, Bamberg); and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found as Latin, “*nec* (neither) *Filius* (the Son),” in old Latin Versions b (5th century), d (5th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century, preceded by “*sed*” / “and indeed”), and c (12th / 13th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers, Chrysostom (d. 407) and Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444); the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation, and the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Latin writers, Hilary (d. 367), Ambrose (d. 397), Augustine (d. 430), and Varimadum (d. 445 / 480); as well as in Latin manuscripts according to the ancient church Latin writer Jerome (d. 420).

There is no good textual reason against the representative Byzantine reading which must thus stand. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was this an accidental conflation of Matt. 24:36b with Mark 13:32? We know from Manuscript Washington (W 032) that part of a word (Matt. 13:10, “*tois*” from “*autois*” / “unto them;” Matt. 15:27, “*ton*” from “*auton*” / “their”), or a full word (Matt. 7:20, “*autous*” / “them”) might be “squeezed in,” or made to extend well beyond the right-hand justification of the page (Matt. 25:9, “*untas*” of “*polountas*” / “that sell”). Did a scribe with this type of background knowledge, using a manuscript in which “*ouranon* (heaven)” came at the end of a line, and familiar with the words of Mark 13:32, “*oude* (neither) *o* (the) *Yios* (Son),” which may be written with “*Yios* / *YIOC* (Son)” abbreviated to two letters as “*Ys* / *YC*” with a bar on top; then decide that originally these seven letters must have been “squeezed in” and subsequently “lost in a paper fade”? Did he then “add them back in” in his manuscript line, thus giving rise to this variant?

Was this a deliberate conflation of Matt. 24:36b with Mark 13:32? Did a conflationist scribe think it “a stylistic improvement” to create “a balanced statement” in which there was an “*oude ... oude*’ ring” with “*oude* (not) *oi* (the) *angelois* (angels) *ton* (of) *ouranon* (heaven) *oude* (neither) *o* (the) *Yios* (Son)””? Did this quirky scribe then add in the words of Mark 13:32 as “a stylistic improvement”?

Alternatively, was this conflation the result of “theological considerations”?

Concerning “the authority of General Councils” (also sometimes called, “Ecumenical Council”), Article 21 of the Anglican *39 Articles* says, “when they be gathered together, (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God,) they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of holy Scripture.” Subsequent to this teaching of Anglican Protestantism, Reformed Anglicanism has historically recognized the Trinitarian and anti-Pelagian teachings of “the first four General Councils, or such others as have only used the words of the Holy

Scriptures”¹⁰⁰; which in practice has meant that the Trinitarian formulas further clarifying the condemnation of monophysitism *et al* in the 5th general council of *Constantinople II* (553, against the Nestorian heresy) and 6th general council of *Constantinople III* (681, against the monothelite heresy which is a derivative heresy of monophysitism, since like the Monophysitists Proper, the semi-monophysitist Monothelites effectively deny that Christ was “perfect man,” *Athanasian Creed*), are also accepted as Biblically sound. Therefore Article 35 of the 39 Articles says in Homily 2, Book 2, (Part 2), “Constantine, Bishop of Rome [708-715], assembled a Council of bishops in the West Church, and did condemn ... the heresy of the Monothelites, not without a cause indeed, and very justly.”

Applying the Biblically sound methodology of Article 21 of the *39 Articles*, it is clear that while the 5th and 6th General Councils were a mix of truth and error, their Trinitarian statements are correct¹⁰¹. The monophysitists denied the full humanity of Christ, though not his full Divinity (*Council of Chlacedon*, 451). The monothelites claimed that *unlike the monophysitists*, they accepted the teaching that Christ had both a human and Divine nature, but then tried to *reintroduce elements of monophysitism* by saying Christ had only one “Divine human operation or will.” But the semi-monophysitist teaching of the monothelites is contrary to the Biblical teaching that Christ subjected his human will to his Divine will (Luke 2:52, “increased in wisdom ... and in favour with God;” Philp. 2:8, “became obedient;” Heb. 5:8, “yet learned he obedience”). Thus the Council of Constantinople III (681) rightly says against the monothelites, “We also preach two natural wills in him and two natural operations, without division, without change, without separation, without partition, without confusion. ... And two natural wills, not contrary ... as the impious heretics assert, but his human will following his Divine and omnipotent will, not resisting it nor striving against it, but rather subject to it.

¹⁰⁰ Blackstone’s *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, Vol. 4, p. 48. I.e., Nicea (325), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431), and Chalcedon (451).

¹⁰¹ On the one hand, the condemnatory “anathema” of the fifth General Council of Constantinople II (553) against those who rightly rejected the teaching of an “ever-virgin Mary” (Bettenson’s *Documents*, p. 92) (contrary to e.g., Matt. 1:25; 12:46-50); or the unBiblical claim of the sixth General Council of Constantinople III (681) to Divine “inspiration” for general councils as possessing “God-inspired fathers” (Greek *Theopneuston pateron*) (Tanner, N.P., Editor, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, Steed & Ward, London, UK and Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., USA, 1990) (contrary to the teaching that prophets existed only in Bible times e.g., Luke 11:49-51; Eph. 2:20); are examples of where these fifth and sixth Councils taught error, i.e., “when” “General Councils” “be gathered together, (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God,) they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God” (Article 21, *39 Articles*). But on the other hand, their Trinitarian teachings were correct in condemning Nestorianism (553) and monophysitism in the form advanced by the Monothelites (681); but these correct pronouncements only have “strength” and “authority” in keeping people out of heresy (Gal. 5:20; 21; II Peter 2:1), because “it may be declared that” it was “taken out of holy Scripture” (Article 21, *39 Articles*).

For the will of the flesh had to be moved, but to be subjected to the Divine will, according to ... Athanasius. For ... he himself says, 'I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of' 'the Father' 'that sent me' [John 6:37,38], calling his own will that will of the flesh, since the flesh also was made his own¹⁰²."

Thus while Christ "is God and man," being "perfect God, and perfect man," he is "equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead: and inferior to the Father, as touching his manhood" (*Athanasian Creed*). For though as touching upon his Divinity, the Father and Son are "equal" (John 5:18; Philp. 2:6); yet as touching upon his humanity, Christ says, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of" "the Father" "that sent me" (John 6:37,38); "my Father is greater than I" (John 14:28); and "of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32). That he subjected his human will to the Divine will of God the Father, is evident in the fact that, e.g., he did not use his Divine powers when thrice tempted to by the Devil in Matt. 4:1-11, but waited for God the Father to send "angels" who "ministered unto him" (Matt. 4:11). Had he done otherwise, then his human will, would not have been subject to the Divine will of God the Father, and he thus would have fallen where the first Adam fell. The same is true of, e.g., his agonies (Luke 22:42-44) in "Gethsemane" (Matt. 26:36; Mark 14:32) on the lower part of "the Mount of Olives" (Luke 22:39), which once again require that as the Second Adam Christ had a distinctive human will that he here subjected to the God the Father's will.

The Arian heretics wrest such Scriptures concerning the fact that as touching upon his humanity Christ was inferior to the Father, misapplying them to his Divinity where he is equal to the Father. The monothelite heretics were a spin-off from the monophysitist heretics; who failed to recognize that Christ had both a human will as part of his human nature, and a Divine will as part of his Divine nature, and that he subjected his human will to his Divine will. This meant that the monothelite heretics who denied that Christ had a human will (as part of his human nature) and a Divine will (as part of his Divine nature), and that he subjected his human will to his Divine will; resembled the Aryan heretics who denied Christ's Deity; in that neither group could understand how a fully Divine Christ could possibly subject his will to the Father. Thus neither monothelites nor Aryans could properly understand the meaning of Christ's words with regard to the subjecting of his will to the Father in such statements as: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39); "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42); "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me" (John 4:34); "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5:30); or "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of" "the Father" "that sent me" (John 6:37,38).

Thus when it is properly understood that as part of his two natures Christ subjected his human will to his Divine will, there is complete clarity in these various

¹⁰² Bettenson's *Documents*, pp. 92-93.

Christological and Trinitarian Scriptures. Hence e.g., Christ only manifested his Divine Attributes (e.g., Matt. 9:4; John 5:17,18) subject to the Father's "will" (John 4:34). Therefore he said, "of that day and that hour knoweth ... not ... the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32).

When this is understood, there is no conflict between Matt. 24:36b and Mark 13:32. In Matthew 24:36 our Lord says, "of that day and hour knoweth no (*oudeis*)" etc. . Greek "*oudeis*" here is a masculine singular nominative adjective from *oudeis*, and contextually carries with it the meaning of "no *man*." Hence the AV rightly adds in italics, "*man*," so that it more fully reads, "of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. 24:36). Thus if we accept the full humanity of Christ, and contrary to the monothelite heresy, that he subjected his human will to his Divine will, it follows that Christ is here included in the generic description of "no *man*." But since "no *man*" is a generic, it would be possible to itemize one or more such men, and so in the words of Christ preserved for us in Mark 13:32 we have such an elucidation with our Lord's words, "of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

Nevertheless, a slipshod scribe, who had not carefully thought through this matter, may have wrongly concluded that the absence of the words, "neither the Son" at Matt. 24:36b, presented some kind of "doctrinal difficulty," of a type and kind that monophysitist and / or monothelite heretics might exploit. I.e., such heretics might ignore Mark 13:32; claim that Christ was "not fully man" (monophysitists) and so "not included" in the "no *man*" of Matt. 24:36b; or claim that Christ is not here named because he had only one "Divine human operation or will" (monothelites) and so like the Father he did know; and thus either monophysitists or monothelites might then use Matt. 24:36 to deny that Christ's human will was subject to his Divine will. Though the conflation of Mark 13:32 with Matt. 24:36b may thus have been intended as a way to ease "the obvious doctrinal difficulty" of the TR's reading at Matt. 24:36b, for those better versed in Holy Scripture there is surely no such "doctrinal difficulty" here or anywhere else in Holy Writ, either on this matter, or any other matter. *There are no errors in Scripture, only errors of interpretations*¹⁰³.

¹⁰³ On the one hand, in this conjecture I do not wish to deny the generally accepted fact that the monothelites rose to prominence after Chalcedon (451) as a kind of "half-way house compromise" between the orthodox of Chalcedon and unorthodox monophysitists, in a bid to try and unite the two groups. I certainly allow for the fact that the monothelites may not have existed before this time i.e., at the time this variant at Matt. 24:36 arose. If so, the concern may have been exclusively with Monophysitists Proper claiming that the "knoweth no *man*" was not inclusive of Christ. But on the other hand, in this conjecture, I also allow for the possibility that this monothelite idea may have been circulating earlier than Chalcedon as a more detailed and not well publicized element of some semi-monophysitist's thinking. If so, then their ideas were given greater coverage after Chalcedon condemned monophysitism (451); which in turn then required their more specific condemnation at Constantinople III (681). But the *possible* existence of the monothelites at this earlier time is conjectural, lacks any corroborating

On the one hand, the TR's reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading over time and through time, with no good textual argument against it. It also has strong support in the Latin with St. Jerome's Vulgate and a couple of old Latin Versions. It enjoys the further support of a number of ancient church writers, including testimony of its presence in Greek manuscripts by the church fathers and doctors, St. Ambrose (remembered on 4 April in a black letter day on the 1662 Anglican prayer book Calendar) and St. Jerome (remembered on 30 September in a black letter day on the 1662 Anglican prayer book Calendar). Moreover, the variant looks like a typical sort of conflation, here brought over from Mark 13:32. But on the other hand, though the variant has weak support in the Greek, it has strong support in the Latin. Weighing up these competing factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 24:36b an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:36b, "not the angels of heaven," is found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century) and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels), 579 (13th century, mixed text), and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac: Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century), Pesitto (first half 5th century), and Harclean h (616) Versions; Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century), Middle Egyptian (3rd century), and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; and Georgian "A" Version (5th century).

However, the variant which adds, "neither the Son," i.e., "not the angels of heaven, neither the Son," is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); and the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543

proof, and may be an incorrect speculation. Either way, Matt. 24:36 could still be misused by monophysitists, i.e., whether by Monophysitists Proper or Semi-Monophysitist Monothelites. The heresy of Monophysitism Proper remains active in the Oriental Orthodox Churches (e.g., Armenian Orthodox and Coptic Orthodox).

(12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is also found in the Syriac Palestinian Version (c. 6th century); Armenian Version (5th century); Georgian “1” & “B” Versions (5th century); and Ethiopic Versions (c. 500 & Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

Here at Matt. 24:36b Moffatt exercised his very unpredictable non-Alexandrian text pincer arm, which as a Semi Neo-Alexandrian he used far more frequently than a Neo-Alexandrian Proper, although he still used it less than 10% of the time. Moffatt’s reasoning here was probably a mix of good and bad. On the up side, he probably realized quite correctly that the addition of “neither the Son” at Matt. 24:36b looks very much like a conflationist’s assimilation to Mark 13:32. But on the down side, he was probably attracted by the neo-Alexandrian idea that “the shorter reading is the better reading;” and he probably saw in “such diverse testimony” as e.g., the Latin Vulgate, the Syriac, together with L 019 and Minuscule 33, what he regarded as “good textual reasons” in favour of the TR’s reading. Moffatt thus here “fluked” the right answer, since in broad terms his methodology was not sound. Nevertheless, on this occasion he got the right answer, in spite of, and not because of, his methodology, found in his reading at Matt. 24:36b, “not even the angels in heaven, but only my Father” (Moffatt Bible). (Cf. my comments on the non-Alexandrian text pincer arm at Matt. 21:24a.)

At Matt. 24:36b the erroneous variant entered the NU Text *et al.* Hence the ASV reads, (gratuitously adding, “even,”) “not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son” (ASV); although a footnote says, “Many authorities, some ancient, omit ‘neither the Son’” (ASV fn). This same format of following the variant in the main text with a footnote reference to the TR’s reading is also found in the RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, TEV, and Papists’ JB and NJB. The incorrect variant is also found without any footnote reference to the TR’s reading in the NASB, TCNT, NEB, and REB.

Correctly following the Vulgate, on this occasion the old Latin Papists of pre-Vatican II Council times, while incorrectly omitting the “my” of “my Father” (Matt. 24:36c, *infra*,) nevertheless correctly with regard to Matt. 24:36b, here read in their Douay-Rheims Version, “no, not the angels of heaven, but the Father alone.” By contrast, the new neo-Alexandrian Papists of post-Vatican II Council times adopt the incorrect variant here at Matt. 24:36b in their JB and NJB. Whether it is the old Latin Papists omitting the “my” of Matt. 24:36c, *infra*; or the new neo-Alexandrian Papists both adding in the conflated variant of Matt. 24:36b and also omitting the “my” of Matt. 24:36c, *infra*; the lesson is clear. The Papists will attack the Received Text of Holy Writ *every which way they can*. They are the implacable enemies of God’s holy Word.

Matt. 24:36c “my Father” (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

Prima facie the reading of the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron as “*Pater* (the Father),” supports the variant. However, the Sangallensis Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex and the Latin Vulgate reads at both Matt. 24:36c and Mark 13:32, “*Pater* (the

Father).” Therefore it might be drawn from either source as part of Diatessaron formatting. Hence no reference is made to the Sangallensis Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:36c the TR’s Greek, “*o* (the) *Pater* (Father) *mou* (of me),” i.e., “my Father” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53; abbreviating the “*pater*” to “*per*” with a bar on top); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings; abbreviating the “*pater*” to “*per*” with a bar on top) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings, abbreviating the “*pater*” to “*per*” with a bar on top¹⁰⁴). It is also supported as Latin, “*Pater* (Father) *meus* (my),” in old Latin Version f (6th century). It is further supported by the mediaeval Greek church writer, Theophylact of Ochrida (d. 1109).

However, a variant omitting Greek “*mou* (of me),” and so reading “*o* (the) *Pater* (Father),” i.e., “the Father,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in e.g., Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century) and Minuscule 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark). The omission is also found in the Latin, “*Pater* (the Father),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers, Basil the Great (d. 379), Didymus (d. 398), Chrysostom (d. 407), and Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444); the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation, and the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Latin writer, Ambrose (d. 397); and the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental omission? The Greek reads, “*o* (the) *Pater* (Father) *mou* (of me) *monos* (only),” i.e., “my Father only.” Did a scribe first write the first two letters of the “*mou*” i.e., “*mo*”? Was he then momentarily distracted, perhaps by the flickering light of a candle? Did his eye then jump by ellipsis to the “*mo*” of “*monos*”, and then did he complete the “*mo*” with “*nos*” and keep writing? Did he thus accidentally omit the “*mou*”?

¹⁰⁴ In Lectionary 1968 this bar over the “*per*” is clear in the second reading (p. 149a). But it is not shown at the first reading (p. 70a) in my photocopies made from either the positive or negative microfilm forms. Therefore I inspected the original in the Rare Books section at Sydney University (Greek Lectionary: RB Stewart Ms. No. 1), and found that at p. 70a the first reading also has a bar on top but it is faded and so now very faint.

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a semi assimilationist scribe seeking a “more standard” Gospel reading and / or “a more succinct text,” semi-assimilate Matt. 24:36c to Mark 13:32 which lacks the “*mou* (of me)”? If so, the scribe was inconsistent in that he left the “*monos* (only)” at Matt. 24:36c which is also not present at Mark 13:32. But we cannot assume that such “a loose gun” scribe would necessarily act in a consistent manner. Such are the fleeting fancies and idiotic inconsistencies of “many, which corrupt the Word of God” (II Cor. 2:17).

The TR’s reading has strong support in the Greek over time and through time, as the representative Byzantine reading dating from ancient times. It also has the support of one old Latin Version. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek textual tradition, but strong support in the Latin textual tradition. It also has the support of a number of ancient church Greek and Latin writers. Weighing up these factors, and taking into account the unending superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:36c a “B” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:36c, “my Father,” is found in Minuscules 1071 (12th century, independent), 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels), and 579 (13th century, mixed text).

However, the variant, “the Father,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); and Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), and 157 (12th century, independent). It is further found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude); and the *Family 13 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Hence at Matt. 24:36c the ASV reads, “the Father.” So too the incorrect variant is found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV.

As discussed at Matt. 24:36b, *supra*, both the old Latin Papists of the Douay-Rheims, and the new neo-Alexandrian Papists of the JB and NJB, here omit the “my.” Yet the Old and New Testaments completed with the Book of Revelation, “are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed” (Rev. 11:4,5). The *Textus Receptus* here *slays all its enemies*, for the Word of God stands, and we know that he who said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matt. 24:35), also said in the next verse, “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only” (Matt. 24:36). Thanks be to God that he undertakes to not only give us his infallible Word, but to also preserve his infallible Word. For he that said through his pen-man Paul, “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (II Tim. 3:16), said also through his pen-man Peter, “the Word of the Lord endureth forever” (I Peter 1:25). *Divine Inspiration and Divine Preservation are the two sides of the one coin!*

Matt. 24:37 “also” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Remarks.

The Greek-Latin diglot, *Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis* divides into a Latin text which is inside the closed class of sources (old Latin d), and a Western Greek text that is outside the closed class of sources (D 05). For while there was an accessibility to the Western Greek text over time, it is clearly a corrupt text relative to the mass of Byzantine Greek manuscripts and so outside the closed class of sources. Here at Matt. 24:37 this contrast between the Greek and Latin in this diglot is starkly highlighted, for we find that old Latin d follows the variant, whereas Greek D 05 follows the TR.

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

Inside the closed class of sources, the fact that the Vulgate lacks “*et* (also)” at Luke 17:24, but has it at Matt. 24:37, means that its presence in the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron indicates it is following the TR, *infra*.

By contrast, the fact that the TR has “*kai* (also)” at both Matt. 24:37 and Luke 17:24, means that outside the closed class of sources, its omission in Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron means that I shall include it as following the variant, *infra*. This decision on the Arabic Diatessaron may be reasonably disputed on the basis that a number of manuscripts omit the “*kai* (also)” at Luke 17:24, and so the Arabic Diatessaron may be coming from such a corrupt reading of Luke 17:24. But on this occasion I shall exercise a discretion in favour of the view that it is following Matt. 24:37, *infra*, to some extent based on wider stylistic factors at this point.

If this type of potentially controversial discretion is not used, then one would have to reduce reference to the Arabic Diatessaron. What if I am wrong? It does not ultimately matter since manuscripts outside the closed class of sources are not used to

determine the text of Scripture. Like e.g., the Alexandrian texts, or Dillmann's Ethiopic Version, the Arabic Diatessaron is of no value for determining the NT text.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:37, the TR's Greek, "*kai* (also)," in the wider words, "so shall also (*kai*) the coming of the Son of man be" (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also found as Latin, "*et* (also)," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), f (6th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the early mediaeval church writer, Pseudo-Chrysostom in a Latin work (6th century).

However a variant which omits "*kai* (also)," is a minority Byzantine reading found in U 030 (9th century) and Gamma 036 (10th century). It is further omitted in old Latin Versions d (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century). It is also omitted in the ancient church Greek writers, Clement of Rome (c. 150), Origen (d. 254), and Didymus (d. 398).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which must therefore stand. The origins of the variant are conjectural. (Cf. commentary at Matt. 24:27, *supra*, & Matt. 24:39, *infra*.)

Was the variant an accidental omission? The wider words at Matt. 24:37 are, "*estai* ('it shall be' = 'shall ... be,' AV) *kai* (also)." After writing "*estai*," did the eye of a scribe jump by ellipsis from the "*ai*" ending of "*estai*" to the "*ai*" ending of "*kai*"? Did he then just keep writing, thereby accidentally omitting the "*kai*"?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Looking at the words, "But as (*osper*) the days of Noe were, so shall also (*kai*) the coming of the Son of man be;" did a prunist scribe consider that because the verse already contains the word, "*osper* (as)," at the beginning of the verse, that it "was redundant" to also say, "*kai* (also)," here? Did he then prune away the "*kai* (also)" as "a stylistic improvement"?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We do not know. But we do know that it was an omission to the *Textus Receptus* here Providentially preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR's reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading against which there is no good textual argument. It dates in the Greek from ancient times (W 032), and enjoys strong support in the Latin from both St.

Jerome's Latin Vulgate and most old Latin Versions. By contrast, the variant has relatively weak support in the Greek, though is followed in several old Latin Versions. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 24:37 an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:37, "also," in the wider words, "so shall also (Greek, *kai*) the coming of the Son of man be," is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); and Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family I Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Syriac Harclean h (616) Version; and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

However, the variant omitting "also," is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century); and Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), and 700 (11th century, independent). It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century) and Pesitto (first half 5th century) Versions; Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); Armenian Version (5th century); and Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

At Matt. 24:37 the erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al*. Hence the ASV reads, "so shall be the coming of the Son of man." The incorrect variant is also found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV.

In harmony with the majority Latin textual tradition, the old Latin Papists correctly followed the TR's reading here in both the Clementine and Douay-Rheims, the latter of which reads, "so shall also (Latin, *et*) the coming of the Son of man be." By contrast, the new neo-Alexandrian Papists omit the "also (Greek, *kai*; Latin, *et*)" from their JB & NJB. Thus the new neo-Alexandrian Papists of the post Vatican II Council first drew a dagger and "jabbed hard" into the backs of the old Latin Papists here at Matt. 24:37, and then turned their bloodied knife onto the much hated Protestant's Received

Text. But all to no avail. The *Textus Receptus* and our Saint James Bibles still has the correct reading here at Matt. 24:37. What? Hast thou not heard? Or hath it not been told unto thee? *Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum!*¹⁰⁵

Meditation:

... The marriages between “the sons of God” and “daughters of men” contextually occur immediately after the genealogies of Cain’s race and Seth’s race, thus identifying them as the two groups in question. The claim of some that Gen. 6:2 refers to angel-human unions is not sustainable. God said he would destroy “man” in Gen. 6:7, i.e., Hebrew ‘*adam*, and if these were angel-human hybrids they would not be Adamites but half-men or half-’*adam*. Objections also exist to angel-human hybrids based on genetics in sexual reproduction.

The broad-brush antediluvian picture of mixed marriages (Gen. 6:1-4) and “violence” (Gen. 6:11,13) is immediately addressed in the post-diluvian world with murder being a capital crime (Gen. 9:6; Rev. 13:10), and the creation of race based nations, with racial “families” segregated by language and geography (Gen. 10; 12:3; Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:8). Since the remedy to the mixed marriages is racially segregated nations e.g., Caucasian nations (races) from Japheth (Gen. 10:1-5), Negroid nations (races) from Cush (Gen. 10:7), or segregated servant races (Gen. 9:25-27; Matt. 15:22,16,27); this shows the concern of Gen. 6:1-4 was inter-racial marriage, in contrast to Noah who was “perfect in his” racial “generations” i.e., he begat full-blooded Sethites not half-castes (Gen. 6:9,10).

... Likewise just before the Second Advent is characterized by the immorality of racial desegregation and miscegenation attacking race based nationalism (Dan. 2:43,44; Matt. 24:37-39); then from “every kindred,” and “nation” (Rev. 5:9) the Lord forms race based nations on the new earth (Zech. 14:16,17; cf. Isa. 60:11,12; 66:22-24; Rev. 21:24-26; 22:2)¹⁰⁶.

Therefore let us be careful to consider the words of Matt. 24:37-39, that “as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating [i.e., gluttony, cf. Matt. 11:19] and drinking [i.e., drunkenness, cf. Matt. 11:19; 24:49], marrying and giving in marriage [i.e., racially mixed marriages, Gen. 6:1-4,9,10], until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

As a child I was given Paul Hamlyn’s *The Children’s Bible* (1964) by my mother.

¹⁰⁵ Latin Motto of the Lutheran Reformation, drawn from I Peter 1:25 in St. Jerome’s Latin Vulgate, “The Word of the Lord Endureth Forever.”

¹⁰⁶ Extract from McGrath, G.B. (myself), “Sons of God,” *British Church Newspaper*, No. 178, 12 Feb. 2010, p. 9.

One of the pictures that I used to repeatedly look at, and meditate on, was that of the rains coming down on Noah's Ark; with some animals being swept away in the waters, and some antediluvians standing on rocks and looking at the ark, realizing too late that they had "missed the boat." Another picture from this book I used to repeatedly meditate on was that of Christ's crucifixion, which showed the Roman soldiers parting Christ's garments, as Jesus hung on the cross. My childhood meditations on these pictures are now part of my fond childhood memories. By the grace of God, let us never "grow too old," to meditate on sin and our need for repentance, and the solution to the sin problem *in the cross*¹⁰⁷. "In the cross, in the cross, Be my glory ever; Till my raptured soul shall find, Rest beyond the river"¹⁰⁸.

Matt. 24:38b "the days" (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. Rather than the TR's "*tais* (the [ones])," in the TR's "*tais* (the) *emerais* (days) *tais* ('the [ones]' = 'that,' feminine plural dative, definite article from *e*) *pro* (before)," i.e., "the days that ... before;" at its first reading (p. 70a), Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D.) reads, "*tou* ('of the [one],' masculine singular genitive, definite article from *o*)." Was this an accidental alteration with the scribe of Lectionary 1968 getting this from the immediately following, "*pro* (before) *tou* (the)," i.e., with his eye darting back'n'forth, did write the later "*tou* (the)" both before and after the "*pro* (before)," without stopping to think that what he had done was wrong?

Or is it a semi-assimilation to the "*emera* (days) *tou* (of) *Noe* (Noe)" in Matt. 24:37, i.e., "*tais* (the) *emerais* (days) *tou* ('of the [one]')," in which "the [one]" is Noah? If such a semi-assimilation, was it an accidental alteration, being a "reconstruction" following a paper fade / loss. Or was this a deliberate alteration, semi-assimilating this to Matt. 24:37 as a "stylistic improvement"?

Did this variant originate with the scribe of Lectionary 1968, or was he copying out from a manuscript that already contained it? Either way, to the best of my knowledge, this variant at the first reading (p. 70a) in Lectionary 1968 has never before been recorded. By contrast, at its second reading (p. 149a), Lectionary 1968 follows the TR's reading.

The Second Matter (Diatessaron formatting). As at Luke 17:27, reference to Latin, "*diebus* (the days)," is removed in the reading found outside the closed class of sources in Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron. Therefore no reference is made to the

¹⁰⁷ *The Children's Bible in Colour, The Old Testament & the New Testament*, Paul Hamlyn Ltd, London, 1964, pp. 26-27 (picture of Noah's flood I meditated on as a child), pp. 460-461 (picture of Christ's crucifixion I meditated on as a child).

¹⁰⁸ "Jesus, Keep me near the cross" (hymn), by Fanny Crosby (1823-1915); music, William Howard Doane (1832-1915).

Arabic Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:38b, the TR's Greek, "*tais* (the) *emerais* (days)," in the wider words, "*tais* (the) *emerais* (days) *tais* ('the [ones]' = 'that,' feminine plural dative, definite article from *ē*) *pro* (before)," i.e., "the days that ... before," in the still wider words, "For as in the days that were before the flood" (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D., in one of two readings). It is also found as Latin, "*diebus* (the days) *ante* (before)," i.e., "the days ... before," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), q (6th / 7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254), in both the Greek and also a Latin translation; and the ancient church Latin writer, Jerome (d. 420).

However, a variant, Greek, "*tais* ('the,' redundant in English translation) *emerais* (days) *ekeinai* ('those,' feminine plural dative, pronoun from *ekeinos-ē-o*)," i.e., "those days," in the wider "*tais* (-) *emerais* (days) *ekeinai* (those) *tais* ('the [ones]' = 'that') *pro* (before)," i.e., "those days that ... before," in the still wider words, "For as in those days that were before the flood," is a minority Byzantine reading found in Lectionary 524 (12th century). It is further found as Latin, "*diebus* (days) *illis* (those) *ante* (before)," i.e., "those days ... before," in old Latin Versions b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), aur (7th century), and c (12th / 13th century). It is also found in the ancient church Latin writer, Speculum (d. 5th century).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is therefore correct. The origins of the variant are speculative. (For a wider *ekeinos* adding scribal proclivity in St. Matthew's Gospel, see comments at Textual Commentary Vol. 2 at Matt. 18:26a & Vol. 3 at Matt. 22:7.)

We find the terminology of "those days" with *ekeinos* at Matt. 24:19,22 (twice), and 29 (*ekeinon*); and the declension of *ekeinos* at Matt. 24:19 is the same as that of the variant. At Matt. 24:19, "*ekeinai* (those) *tais* (-) *emerais* (days)," i.e., "those days" refers to the Destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. . At Matt. 24:22, "*ai* (-) *emerai* (days) *ekeinai* ('those,' feminine plural nominative, pronoun from *ekeinos-ē-o*)" (twice) refers to the 1260 days which on the prophetic day-year principle (Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:6), starts in 607 and goes till 1866 (on inclusive reckoning¹⁰⁹), terminating with the "judgement" on the Papal States between 1860 and 1870 (Daniel 7:26). In this, 1866 is highlighted

¹⁰⁹ I.e., the first year (607) is counted as year 1; just like the first day (Good Friday) is counted as day 1 in the teaching that Jesus rose "on the third day" i.e., on Easter Sunday.

both because of the martyrdom of Protestants by Papists at Barletta in Italy that year, and due to political events relating to the fall of the Papal States. But Christ also says in Matt. 24:22, “those days shall be shortened,” and this happened in parts of Western Europe with the Reformation.

Then in Matt. 24:29, “*ton* (-) *emeron* (days) *ekeinon* (‘those,’ feminine plural genitive, pronoun from *ekeinos-e-o*),” refers back to the terminus of the 1260 days; and while it is true that to “shake the heavens, and the earth” with its “stars,” “sun,” and “moon,” refers to emblems of different types of rulers being judged (Isa. 13:10-13), so that this refers to the loss of the remaining Papal States from 1866 to 1870; it also refers to the atmospheric events that occurred in Rome in 1870.

The Protestant evangelist and writer, H. Grattan Guinness (1835-1910), was educated at New College, London University (in the 1850s, then in the region of St. John’s Wood / Swiss Cottage), founded by the great (Congregational) Protestant theologian, J. Pye Smith (1774-1851)¹¹⁰. In the first place, Grattan Guinness notes: “In 1866 the Romish empire of Austria was worsted by Protestant Prussia at the memorable battle of Sadowa, a battle the results of which were as decisive as those of Waterloo. Austria received a shock ... and was obliged to cede Venetia which was annexed to the kingdom of Italy¹¹¹.” This acquisition of more territory clearly strengthened the Italian unifiers political position. Writing at the time, Gregorovius was surely correct when he said, the “battle of Sadowa” “will probably prove” to be “one of the most important” battles “in history.” “The consequences of the battle of Sadowa are,” among other things, “the consummation of Italian independence” and “the fall” “of France from the dominion which she has usurped over Europe. Napoleon III has reached his zenith¹¹².”

In 1863 the French ambassador, Plombieres, stated that Napoleon III “has constantly declared himself to maintain the Pope at Rome” and “had often said and still says that he wishes to recall his troops from Rome, but he has always added that he will

¹¹⁰ The earlier Homerton College, London, (of which Pye Smith was Principal,) was a Congregationlaist College which was then split into Homerton College, London (a teacher’s college 1852-1894, which moved to Cambridge in 1894, and became part of Cambridge University from 1978), and (at various London locations) New College (1850-1924, becoming Hackney & New College, 1924-1936, then reverting back to New College, 1936-1977). Following its 1977 closure, various books and artifacts, including a bust and excellent artwork of Pye Smith, were then transferred to Dr. Williams; Library, 14 Gordon Square, London, WC1. I have visited all these sites.

¹¹¹ Guinness, *Light For the Last Days*, 1888, p. 87. (There is much prophetic interpretation that I would not agree with in this work; but as a historicist, I find some useful material in it.)

¹¹² Althaus, F. (Editor), & Hamilton, G.W. (Translator), *The Roman Journals of Ferdinand Gregorovius 1852-1874*, George Bell & Sons, London, 1907, p. 257 (*Diary Entry*: Rome, July 14, 1866).

do it only on the indispensable condition of leaving the Pope in possession of Rome and the patrimony of St. Peter” (meaning the Papal states of southern Italy)¹¹³. But a second event now happened in 1866. As Moore fairly puts it, “The withdrawal of the French from Rome in December 1866 opened the way for Garibaldi to commence anew his campaign against the Papacy¹¹⁴.”

With the French gone, Garibaldi’s armies advanced into the Papal states in 1867. Once again Napoleon III sent a force to help the Pope, which in alliance with the Papal army managed to stop Garibaldi north-east of Rome in November 1867. This French garrison then remained in Rome. Then while it is the “Almighty” “God” who has “perfection” (Job 11:7), in 1870 Pope Pius IX (Pope 1846-1878), full of arrogance and impiety, took upon himself the Divine Attribute of perfection in the form of Infallibility at the *First Vatican Council*. Judgment followed swiftly. Guinness refers to this council’s decree that “the occupant of the Papal chair is, in all his decisions with regard to faith and morals, infallible.” He then records, “Arrangements had been made to reflect the glory around the person of the Pope by means of mirrors at noon, when the decree was made (July 18th, 1870); but the sun shone not that day. A violent storm broke out over Rome, the sky was darkened by tempest, and the voices of the council were lost in the rolling of the thunder¹¹⁵.” Thus in a more literal sense was “the sun darkened and the moon” did “not give her light,” “and the powers of the heavens” were “shaken” (Matt. 24:29). Then in a metaphoric sense (Isa. 13:10-13) the words of Matt. 24:29 were again fulfilled when on 20 July 1870 the French troops were withdrawn following the outbreak of the Franco-German war. Napoleon III was taken prisoner at Sedan, Italy. On 20 September 1870, the Italian armies advanced into Rome and the citizens of Rome supported their liberators in a subsequent plebiscite¹¹⁶. The Papal states were no more. For “the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away” the Pope’s temporal “dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end” (Dan. 7:26). (Although with the Vatican City State in 1929, in a qualified way i.e., without the great temporal “dominion” of the former Papal States, the Pope’s “deadly wound was healed,” Rev. 13:3).

We thus find that in Matt. 24, the terminology of “those days” is thrice used to isolate the 1260 days of Daniel and Revelation (Matt. 24:22,29), and once used to isolate the Destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (Matt. 24:19). This stylistic similarity seems to indicate that the “flight” (Matt. 24:21) of Christians out of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. was at

¹¹³ Nigra to Minghetti, April 1863; quoted in Scott, I., *The Roman Question and the Powers 1848-1865*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, Netherlands, 1969, p. 327.

¹¹⁴ Moore, T.E., *Peter’s City, An Account of the Origin, Development, and Solution of the Roman Question*, Harding & Moore, London, 1929, p. 57.

¹¹⁵ Guinness, *Light For the Last Days*, p. 87; referring to the Reverend W. Arthur’s *The Pope, the Kings, and the People*.

¹¹⁶ *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 14, p. 267; *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, “States of the Church,” p. 662.

least to some extent a prophetic type of the “flight” of so many Christians from Papal persecutions during the 1260 day-years, such as the brave Waldenses and Albigenses of the Continent¹¹⁷, or the Lollards of England. It is therefore notable that in this Olivet Discourse of Matt. 24, “those days” always had a future prophetic application; as indeed does, “*tes* (-) *emerai* (day) *ekeines* (that),” i.e., “that day” at Matt. 24:36.

By contrast, even though by analogy they have an application to events preceding the Second Advent, the words of Matt. 24:38 are set in the past, “For as in the days that were before the flood.” In this context, “*tais* (the) *emerais* (‘days,’ feminine plural dative noun, from *emera*)” of Matt. 24:38b, most naturally forms a stylistic couplet with, “*ai* (the) *emerai* (‘days,’ feminine plural nominative noun, from *emera*)” of Matt. 24:37.

Therefore with what for the Matthean Greek is a clear stylistic incongruity, it looks like the variant at Matt. 24:38b has been deliberately brought over as a semi-assimilation with the “those days” of Matt. 24:19,22 (twice), 29, and the “that day” of Matt. 24:36. What was the scribe’s motive for this? Did he think the usage of “those days” here at Matt. 24:38b was “more pointed” and so “sounded better”? Or lacking a proper appreciation of Matthean Greek in the Olivet Discourse of Matt. 24, did he think that “an original ‘*ekeinai*’ just had to have been lost by ellipsis on the ‘*ais*’ suffixes of ‘*tais* (-) *emerais* (days) *ekeinai* (those) *tais* (that)’”? We cannot enter the head of another; but whatever the scribe’s reasoning was, he ought not to have tampered with the Word of God, here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading over time and through time, dating from ancient times in Manuscript Washington (W 032). It also has strong support in the Latin with St. Jerome’s Vulgate and about half the old Latin Version, once again, dating from ancient times. It enjoys the further support of the church father and doctor, St. Jerome in citation. By contrast, the variant has very weak support in the Greek, though some better support in the Latin. Weighing up these factors, and recognizing the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:38b an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:38b, “the days,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century). It

¹¹⁷ The relevant group of Albigenses were in fact a group of Waldenses in the region of Albi in France, and should not be confused with Cathars also in Albi at the same time. But by Protestant tradition this group of Albi Waldenses are called “the Albigenses” because of the particular persecution they came under from Papal Rome, who taught her murderous minions not distinguish between these orthodox Waldensian Albigenses and the unorthodox Cathar Albigenses, referring to them all simply as “Albigenses.” Such are the cunning deceits of Rome. See Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*.

is also found in (the independent text type) Codex 067 (6th century, Matt. 14; 24-26), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent text type) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 700 (11th century, independent), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels), and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation). It is also found in the *Family I Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; together with the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Egyptian Coptic Middle Egyptian (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); and Slavic Version (9th century).

However, the variant, “those days,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century); and Minuscule 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the Syriac Harclean h (616) and Palestinian (*c.* 6th century) Versions; Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version (3rd century); and Ethiopic Version (*c.* 500).

The Matt. 24:38b split in the two leading Alexandrian texts split any chance of “unity” among the neo-Alexandrians. After all, when so much hangs on just two manuscripts, what is one meant to do when they disagree? “I know,” said Tischendorf, who followed his beloved Codex Sinaiticus, and thus by a fluke, the correct reading of the TR, in Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72). “No, No,” we know said Westcott & Hort, who put the variant “*ekeinai* (those)” in square brackets as optional, thus allowing that either of their “neutral” texts could be right or wrong in Westcott-Hort (1881). “Oh,” said Erwin Nestle, who like other neo-Alexandrians had no real skills in textual analysis, “that’s a great idea,” and so the Westcott-Hort solution was followed in Nestle’s 21st edition (1952). “They say two’s company and three’s a crowd, but make it a threesome anyway, Westcott-Hort, Nestle’s 21st, and the NU Text,” said Metzger & Aland *et al* on the NU Text Committee, with this “solution” being also adopted in the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) and UBS’s 4th revised edition (1993).

What were the neo-Alexandrian Versions to make of this neo-Alexandrian textual mess at Matt. 24:38b? The *Book of the Chronicles of Neo-Byzantine Defence of the Received Text* further records that the neo-Byzantines here beheld an interesting spectacle.

The neo-Alexandrians in alliance with the old Latin Papists, decided to have “a tug-of-war” match here at Matt. 24:38b. The “two anchor-men,” were both Papists. On

one side, “the anchor man” of the old Latin Papists whose Latin based Douay-Rheims here has the correct reading of the TR; and on the other side, “the anchor man” of the new neo-Alexandrian Papists who follow the variant in their JB and NJB. For the wrong reasons, lining up on the right side with the old Latin Papists as their “anchor man;” the TR’s reading in Codex Sinaiticus was followed by the NIV, TEV, NEB, REB, and Moffatt. Lining up on the wrong side with the new neo-Alexandrian Papists as their “anchor man;” the variant’s reading in Codex Vaticanus was followed in the ASV, NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, and TCNT. Both sides pushed’n’pulled, and squeaked’n’squealed. But neither side could prevail. It seems that what is “the correct reading” at Matt. 24:38b is a case of “permanent tension” between the neo-Alexandrians.

Matt. 24:39 “also” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. Some 1100 years after his Irish manuscript was written out, the *Church of Ireland* John Gwynn’s edition (1913) of the Book of Armagh (812), places the “*et* (also),” in italics as added here at Matt. 24:39. Therefore I show the Book of Armagh following the variant, *infra*.

The Second Matter (Diatessaron formatting). I do not regard Luke 17:30 as a “parallel” reading with Matt. 24:39. But even if one did, the fact that Luke 17:30 lacks “*et* (also),” whereas the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron whose general stylistic structure is that of Matt. 24:39, includes the “*et* (also),” (Sangallensis Diatessaron 147:1), would be enough to show it is following the Vulgate at Matt. 24:39. Thus inside the closed class of sources, I show this Vulgate Codex supporting the TR’s reading, *infra*.

Outside the closed class of sources, Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron also lacks the Latin, “*et* (also),” at what looks stylistically like Matt. 24:39 in contradistinction to Luke 17:30. Moreover, the Arabic Diatessaron then cites Luke 17:30 some three verses after Matt. 24:39, thus indicating that the Diatessaron formatter regarded these two verses as distinctive (Arabic Diatessaron, 42). Therefore I show the Arabic Diatessaron following the variant, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:39, the TR’s Greek, “*kai* (also),” in the wider words, “so shall also (*kai*) the coming of the Son of man be” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also found as Latin, “*et* (also),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions e (4th / 5th century), ff2 (5th century), f (6th century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), and c (12th / 13th century); and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writer, Didymus (d. 398); and the ancient church Greek writer,

Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation.

However a variant, omitting what on reconstruction of the Greek from the Latin is Greek, “*kai* (also),” is found in Latin Vulgate Codices Z (6th / 7th century, London, UK) and P (6th / 7th century, The Split, Croatia)¹¹⁸; as well as old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), and ff1 (10th / 11th century); and the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which must thus stand. The origins of the variant are conjectural. (Cf. commentary at Matt. 24:27 & Matt. 24:37, *supra*.)

Was the variant an accidental omission? At its second reading (p. 149b), Lectionary 1968 has a normative “*kai* (and).” But at its first reading (p. 70b), it ends on the line with a “*k*” or kappa “κ”, and above the “κ” is an “*a*” or alpha “α”, which is joined to a long downward stroke that looks something like “l”, which reaches from this upper row right down to the line that the “κ” is written in and ends next to it. Thus the “*kai* (and)” takes up two letter spaces, not three letter spaces. Did a scribe use a manuscript in which this, or some other abbreviation for “*kai* (and)” had reduced it to 2 letter spaces? Was this then lost in an undetected paper fade?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Looking at the words, “so (*outos*) shall also (*kai*) the coming of the Son of man be;” did a prunist scribe consider that because the verse already contains the word, “*outos* (so),” “just two words before the ‘*kai* (also),” that therefore it “was redundant” to also say, “*kai* (also),” here? Did he then prune away the “*kai* (also)” as “a stylistic improvement”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We do not know. We cannot know. But we can know that this was an omission to the text of Scripture here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading, where it dates from ancient times. It further enjoys the support of St. Jerome’s Latin Vulgate, and about half of the old Latin Versions. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek; although better support in the Latin where it is followed by about half of the old Latin Versions. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:39 an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:39, “also,” in

¹¹⁸ Latin Codex P as designated in Weber-Gryson (2007) rather than Merk (1964).

the wider words, “so shall also (*kai*) the coming of the Son of man be,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the independent text type) Codex 067 (6th century, Matt. 14; 24-26), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type) and 700 (11th century, independent); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; and the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Syriac Harclean h Version (616) and Armenian Version (5th century).

However, the variant which omits “also” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century); and Minuscule 892 (9th century, mixed text type). It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century) and Pesitto (first half 5th century) Versions; Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century); and the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

Seemingly influenced by a combination of the Neo-Alexandrian School rule with regard to “weakness of external support” outside the Alexandrian texts for the reading of Codex Vaticanus (not a Neo-Alexandrian rule that some other Neo-Alexandrians think much of); coupled with an obsessive fondness for his “baby” of Codex Sinaiticus, for all the wrong reasons, Tischendorf happened to adopt the right reading of the TR here at Matt. 24:39 in Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72). The pull of the Neo-Alexandrian School rule with regard to the “weakness of external support” for the variant, on this occasion proved too strong for Erwin Nestle who also adopted the correct reading in Nestle’s 21st edition (1952).

Seemingly influenced by the Neo-Alexandrian School rule that “the shorter reading is the better reading;” their general non-compliance with the rule of some other neo-Alexandrians with regard to the desirability of “external support;” and the variant’s presence in the “more neutral text” of Codex Vaticanus, the variant was adopted here at Matt. 24:39 by Westcott-Hort (1881).

On the one hand, the pull of the Neo-Alexandrian School rule with regard to the “shorter reading being the better reading,” was keenly felt by Metzger, Aland, *et al* on the NU Text Committee. But on the other hand, the tug of the Neo-Alexandrian School rule with regard to the “weakness of external support” outside the Alexandrian texts, was also acutely felt by Metzger, Aland, *et al* on the NU Text Committee. As they were “pulled’n’tugged” this way and that, what were these benighted neo-Alexandrians to do? With the dubious “benefits” of a black-robed Jesuit, Carlo Martini, also on the NU Text Committee, the answer was “obvious enough.” Why not employ a bit of Jesuit-like

cunning? Did Cardinal Martini think in his head, “After all, wouldn’t the Jesuit’s black pope approve?” Thus the NU Text Committee decided to “ride the storm” in their two Alexandrian texts by putting “the troublesome” word, “*kai* (also)” in square brackets, thus making its adoption or omission entirely optional in the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) and UBS’s 4th revised edition (1993).

What were the neo-Alexandrian versions to make of all this dodging, side-stepping, and somersaulting, in the neo-Alexandrian texts here at Matt. 24:39? The old Latin Papists of the Douay-Rheims had followed the Vulgate, and with the Clementine, read, “so also shall the coming of the Son of man be” (Douay-Rheims). But the new neo-Alexandrian Papists adopted the variant in their JB & NJB.

In the flutter and confusion, the TR’s reading was followed in the *New Revised Standard Version* which reads at Matt. 24:39, “so too (*kai*) will be the coming of the Son of Man” (NRSV).

But for most neo-Alexandrian translators, the pull of the brutal maxim, “the shorter reading is the better reading,” held sway. Thus the variant was followed in the ASV as, “so shall be the coming of the Son of man.” So too, the variant was followed at Matt. 24:39 in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NIV, TEV, NEB, REB, TCNT, and Moffatt.

Matt. 24:40 “the one” and “the other” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Remarks & Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. On the one hand, I think that in *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (1996), in overview Daniel Wallace has produced a valuable Greek grammar. Thus in general terms I am happy to use it as one of a select group of grammars I cite in these commentaries. But on the other hand, I have already made it clear that Wallace is not beyond criticism, both respect to stylistic matters of his work and certain associated values which I repudiate (see Textual Commentary, Vol. 2, Matt. 15-20, Appendix 3, footnote at Matt. 18:28b), and also with respect to some errors of Greek grammar he embraces (see Textual Commentary, Vol. 2, Matt. 15-20, at Matt. 17:3).

Before considering the issue here at Matt. 24:40 in the “Principal Textual Discussion,” it is necessary to explode another of Wallace’s errors of Greek grammar. In doing so, I admit that such errors are fairly rare in Wallace’s work (and if they were not, I would not be generally using this Greek grammar in these commentaries).

In discussing the definite article, Wallace makes the claim:

... the KJV translators often erred in their treatment of the [definite] article. They were more comfortable with the Latin than with the Greek. Since there is no article in Latin, the KJV translators frequently missed the nuances of the Greek article. Robertson points out: “The translators of the King James Version, under the influence of the Vulgate, handle the Greek article loosely and

inaccurately. A ... list of such sins ... [includes] ‘a pinnacle’ for *to pterugion* (Mt. 4:5). Here the whole point lies in the article, the wing of the temple overlooks the abyss. So in Mt. 5:1 *to oros* was the mountain right at hand, not ‘a mountain.’ On the other hand, the King James translators missed the point of *meta gunaikos* (Jo. 4:27) when they said ‘the woman.’ It was ‘a woman,’ any woman, not the particular woman in question ...¹¹⁹.”

Not only do I reject the Latin-phobic tone and sentiment of these preposterous neo-Alexandrians’ comments, I also repudiate the basic claim that the AV translators were “under the influence of the Vulgate,” with the consequence that they then went on to “handle the Greek article loosely and inaccurately.” With regard to the New Testament, the AV translators were neo-Byzantine past masters of both the Latin and the Greek. And with regard to the Old Testament, the Authorized Version translators were past masters of the Hebrew, the Aramaic, the Latin, and the Greek.

Dealing first with the second matter raised by Wallace and Robertson, namely, the usage of “*meta* (with) *gunaikos* (woman)” in John 4:27, i.e., “And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman” (AV) etc., the claim that this is referring to the disciples having “marvelled” that Christ would speak to “any woman” is certainly nor correct. In John 2:1-11 we see Jesus talking in public with his mother.

Nor was suchlike unknown to his disciples in a wider context. E.g., St. Mark’s Gospel starts with Jesus healing “Simon’s wife’s mother” who lay sick of a fever” (Mark 1:30,31), and immediately thereafter this specifically named example is followed by the statement that “he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils” (Mark 1:34). Are we to believe that none of these were woman? Are we to believe that if they were woman, Jesus did not speak to them? Did our Lord not speak to the “woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years,” (Matt. 9:20), saying to her in public, “Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made the whole” (Matt. 9:22). Or of “Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils” (Luke 8:2); and is it not clear from the Gospel that he knew and spake with women (John 19:25)? The clear teaching of Mark 1:30-34 is fatal to Wallace and Robertson’s claim, which is basically part of a revisionist history that seeks to anachronistically portray Jesus as promoting sex role perversion, commonly called “feminism,” and so tries to read this kind of nonsense into passages such as John 4:27.

Indeed, the correct meaning of the passage is also clear in the immediate context of John 4 where the emphasis is on the fact that she was “a woman of Samaria” (John 4:7), and “the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans” (John 4:9). I.e., it is this Jewish-Samaritan religious and racial divide, in which Jesus upholds the rights of the Jews over the Samaritans, saying, “we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22), that contextually underpins the disciples astonishment in John 4:27.

¹¹⁹ Wallace’s *Greek Grammar*, p. 208; citing Robertson, A.T., *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, 4th edition, Hodder & Stoughton, New York, USA, 1923, pp. 756-7.

Therefore, contrary to the claims of Wallace and Robertson, this is most accurately captured in the rendering of the King James Version, “And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman” (AV).

On the one hand, I do not say that the AV is a word perfect translation, since only the OT and NT Received Texts are without error. Although I do regard the AV as the best available English translation that we have. But on the other hand, the more general claim of Wallace and Robertson that the AV translators “often erred in their treatment of the [definite] article. They were more comfortable with the Latin than with the Greek,” and “frequently missed the nuances of the Greek article,” because they were “under the influence of the Vulgate,” is *absolute balderdash!* It’s the type of rubbish that has become all too common in absurd and ridiculous “critiques” of the AV, by those who are forever of a lower intellectual and spiritual order than the AV translators.

I now come to the first matter raised by Wallace and Robertson, namely, what they evidently see as their “crushing” and “knock down” examples of “*to oros*” at Matt. 5:1 and “*to pterugion*” at Matt. 4:5. I refer the reader to my discussion of “The Definite Article,” “a) The Definite Article (‘the’) in Matthew 4:21; 8:23; 9:1; 13:2; 14:22d,” in Appendix 3 of these Textual Commentaries, Vol. 1 (Matt. 1-15). I there state, “Notably, where the definite article exists it may best be untranslated as it is distinguishing one person or thing from others¹²⁰. Thus *where the definite article exists in Greek it is not always translated into English.*” I then give as an example of this Matt. 5:1. I note that on the one hand, it would be possible to render it as “*to (the) oros (mount)*” as seen in “the traditionally entitled, ‘Sermon on the (*to*) Mount (*oros*);’ from the words of Matt. 5:1, ‘*anebe* (he went up) *eis* (into) *to (the) oros (mount).*’ This traditional title, might be taken to mean that *a particular* mountain was known as ‘*the* mountain’ or ‘*the* mount’.” But on the other hand, I also note that at “Matt. 5:1, the alternative view is that the definite article here isolates *one class* of geographic objects i.e., mountains, from *other classes* of geographical objects e.g., valleys and plains. This is the view found ... in the AV, which ... translates Matt. 5:1 as Jesus going up ‘a mountain’ i.e., otherwise unidentified.” Therefore Wallace and Robertson miss this ambiguity in the Greek. It is they, not the AV translators, who have *missed the nuances of the Greek*. Therefore the AV translators are not incorrect at Matt. 5:1. Rather, they have given one of two possibilities. The Greek may be translated either as “the mount / mountain” or “a mountain,” and neither rendering is incorrect as such, since both are within the bounds of what is *reasonably* possible.

This inability to understand *the nuances of the Greek*, and so see that the Greek is open to different English renderings, is thus a hallmark of Wallace and Robertson’s defective analysis. This again emerges in their second example of Matt. 4:5; as indeed it will also again emerge as a more general issue in the “Principal Textual Discussion,” *infra*. Their second example, is “‘a pinnacle’ for *to pterugion* (Mt. 4:5).” Once again, at Matt. 4:5 it would be possible to argue that in, “*to (-) pterugion (pinnacle)*,” the definite article here isolates *one class* of temple objects i.e., a pinnacle, from *other classes* of

¹²⁰ Young’s *Greek*, p. 56.

building objects of “the holy city,” i.e., other edifices in Jerusalem. If so, then the correct rendering is, “Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple” (AV). Alternatively, one could like Wallace and Robertson argue that this is to be rendered, “the pinnacle,” on the basis that the “point” being made by the definite “article,” is that “the wing of the temple overlooks the abyss.” Once again then, Wallace and Robertson give *one possible rendering* of the Greek, but fail to recognize that *the nuances of the Greek* may reasonably be interpreted differently.

On the one hand, Wallace has entitled his book, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, and designed it for second or third year College students after they have learnt the basics of Greek grammar. But on the other hand, his dogged insistence that the definite article must in these type of contexts be rendered as “the,” in fact is the type of overly simplistic view that one associates with a College student still learning “the basics” of “Greek.” Thus I think Wallace’s and Robertson’s citations and criticisms of the Authorized Version, *supra*, are the comments of “cheeky pups.”

In view of Wallace’s accident prone tendencies flowing from his (and Robertson’s) failure to understand *the full range of the Greek nuances*, perhaps it was just as well for him, that having gotten “the bull by the horns,” he then stopped at the three example he here itemized of Matt. 4:5; 5:1; & John 4:7. I too shall now stop at these three examples here in the “Preliminary Textual Discussion,” but having introduced the reader to the relevant issues at stake, I shall in due course return with other examples in the “Principal Textual Discussion.”

The Second Matter. There is no textual problem in the Greek here at Matt. 24:40 that can be beneficially resolved by consulting the Latin. Notwithstanding the supercilious comments of Wallace and Robertson to the contrary, *supra*, we neo-Byzantines do most assuredly distinguish between the Latin and the Greek. Given the absence of the definite article in the Latin, which in both the Vulgate and old Latin Versions twice reads, “*unus* (‘one’ or ‘the one’);” no reference shall be made to the Latin, *infra*. (Although von Soden refers to some minor variants we are not considering here at Matt. 24:40 in which the Latin is relevant.)

The Third Matter. In referring to the fact that Lectionary 1968 follows the TR’s reading in one of its two readings, and *Variant 2* in the other of its two readings, I refer to “some of the complications that arise in the Lectionaries,” *infra*. Once again, this also highlights the need for *much more work to be done on all the Greek Byzantine text Lectionaries*, in order for us to get a better picture of the frequency of such matters.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:40 the TR’s Greek is, “*o* (the) *eis* (one) *paralambanetai* (shall be taken), *kai* (and) *o* (the) *eis* (one) *aphietai* (left),” i.e., the more probable rendering of this is literally, “the (*o*) one (*eis*) shall be taken, and the (*o*) one (*eis*) left,” or in better English, “the (*o*) one (*eis*) shall be taken, and the (*o*) other (*eis*) left” (AV); and the less probable rendering of this is “one (*o eis*) shall be taken, and one (*o eis*) left.” This is

supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D., in one of two readings, p. 149b). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Caesarius (5th century).

Variant 1 omits the first occurrence of the definite article, “*o* (the)” before the “*eis* (one),” and the second occurrence of the “*eis* (one),” before the “*o* (the),” thus reading, “*eis* (one) *paralambanetai* (shall be taken), *kai* (and) *o* (the [one]) *aphietai* (left),” i.e., given that the introductory words “*eis* (one)” lack the definite article, the more probable rendering of this is literally, “one (*eis*) shall be taken, and the [one] left;” or in better English, “one (*eis*) shall be taken, and one (*o*) left;” and the less probable rendering of this is, “the one (*eis*) shall be taken, and the [other] (*o*) left.” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century).

Variant 2 twice omits the definite article, “*o* (the)” before the “*eis* (one),” thus reading, “*eis* (one) *paralambanetai* (shall be taken), *kai* (and) *eis* (one) *aphietai* (left),” i.e., the more probable rendering of this is “one (*eis*) shall be taken, and one (*eis*) left;” and the less probable rendering of this is literally, “the one (*eis*) shall be taken, and the one (*eis*) left;” or in better English, “the one (*eis*) shall be taken, and the other (*eis*) left.” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscules 262 (10th century), 270 (12th century), 924 (12th century), 998 (12th century), 1200 (12th century), 1355 (12th century), 1375 (12th century), 291 (13th century), and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D., in one of two readings, p. 70b).

Here at Matt. 24:40 there is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct.

The origins of the two variants are speculative. However with regard to *Variant 1*, on the balance of probabilities, the double occurrence of the omission of first the definite article “*o*” connected with the first “*eis*,” and then the omission of the second “*eis*” connected with the second “*o*,” acts to make it look like it was a deliberate omission. Likewise, with regard to *Variant 2*, on the balance of probabilities, the double occurrence of the omission of the definite article “*o*” twice when preceding the first and second “*eis*,” once again acts to make it look like it was a deliberate omission.

I refer the reader to the above “Preliminary Textual Discussion.” The definite article is sometimes used to distinguish *one class* of objects from *other classes* of objects. E.g., at Luke 18:13 we read, “*moi* (to me) *to* (masculine singular dative, definite article from *o*) *amartolo* (a sinner),” in the wider words, “God be merciful to me a sinner” (AV). I.e., one person, “a sinner,” is here distinguished from everybody else¹²¹. While it might be theoretically possible to render the definite article here at Luke 18:13 as “the (*to*)” i.e., “the sinner” (NASB), so that one could not say the NASB was here *beyond the bounds of possibility* with regard to how the Greek *might* be translated, nevertheless, I would say that at Luke 18:13 (in what is a translation issue as opposed to a textual issue,) context

¹²¹ Young’s *Greek*, p. 56.

strongly favours the reading of the Authorized Version over that of the New American Standard Bible.

Here at Matt. 24:40 a similar issue arises with the reading of the TR. In the wider Greek words, “*o* (masculine singular nominative, definite article from *o*) *eis* (one) *paralambanetai* (shall be taken), *kai* (and) *o* (masculine singular nominative, definite article from *o*) *eis* (one) *aphietai* (left),” two possibilities emerge. Either, one could argue that on both occasions, the definite article is functioning to make the “*eis* (one)” definite in the common sense i.e., “the (*o*) one shall be taken, and the (*o*) one left,” or to put this into more acceptable English, “the (*o*) one shall be taken, and the (*o*) other left” (AV). Or, one could argue that the definite article here at Matt. 24:40 (twice), is distinguishing *one class* of objects i.e., those “taken,” from *other classes* of objects i.e., those “left.” Thus the rendering would be, “one shall be taken, and one left.”

In following this second possibility, did the scribes of both *Variants 1 & 2* then consider that, “the definite article in the terminology of ‘*o eis*’ on these two occasions is redundant” at Matt. 24:40, “since with or without it the meaning is still ‘one shall be taken, and one left’?” On this basis, did one prunist scribe then remove the first definite article “*o*” before the first “*eis*,” but wanting to “retain something of the original linguistic flavour” of Matt. 22:40, then prune away the second “*eis*” following the second “*o*” (*Variant 1*)? For this same basic reason, did another prunist scribe then remove the definite article “*o*” after the “*eis*” twice (*Variant 2*)? Did such “stylistic improvements” designed in both instances to bias the Greek nuance to mean “one shall be taken, and one left;” proceed on the inaccurate and overly simplistic presupposition that this was “the only realistic” meaning of the Greek here at Matt. 24:40? If so, it would appear that *Variants 1 & 2* are two different prunist scribal “solutions” to the same basic issue and seeking the same basic outcome, but arrived at autonomously in two different ways in two different manuscript lines. Such are some of the permeations and perversions of the “many which corrupt the Word of God” (II Cor. 2:17).

However, the fact that Lectionary 1968 follows the TR’s reading in one of its two readings, and *Variant 2* in the other of its two readings raises some other issues. Was the scribe of Lectionary 1968 aware of these two readings, and so used one for one reading and another for the other reading, as a form of “textual apparatus” statement that both readings existed inside the Byzantine textual tradition? Alternatively, we cannot doubt that in former times when paper or other parchment was much more scarce and expensive than it now is, that scribes were sometimes looking “for ways to save space.” This is seen in e.g., the usage of continuous script, or “squeezing in” words at the ends of lines. Therefore, did the scribe of Lectionary 1968 omit the definite article “*o*” twice in the first reading as some kind of “paper saving device”? If so, did he simply not think the matter through very carefully with respect to the change of nuance that this created in his first reading? Such are some of the complications that may arise in the Lectionaries.

Both the renderings, “the one shall be taken, and the other left” or “one shall be taken, and one left;” are possible translations for all three readings at Matt. 24:40. However, the most probable rendering from the TR’s Greek is, “the one shall be taken,

and the other left;” and the most probable rendering from the Greek of *Variants’ 1 & 2’s* is, “one shall be taken, and one left.” Therefore the effect of these two variants is to reverse the probability of what is the most likely meaning, and thus for our immediate purposes, the most likely English translation. Hence the alteration to the Greek text in these two variants on this occasion raises more subtle issues than normal.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine text reading, over time, and through time, dating from ancient times (W 032), against which there is no good textual argument. It enjoys the support of *c.* 90% plus of the Byzantine manuscripts¹²². By contrast, though *Variant 2* is better attested to than *Variant 1*, both variants have relatively weak support in the Greek. It seems difficult to treat either *Variants 1 or 2* seriously. On the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:40 an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:40, “the one” and “the other,” in the wider words, “the (*o*) one shall be taken, and the (*o*) other left” (AV), is found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts (Swanson)*, which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent).

However, *Variant 2*, which twice omits the definite article, “*o* (the),” thus reading, “one shall be taken, and one left,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), and 700 (11th century, independent); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts (Swanson)*, which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude).

Variant 3 reading, “*eis* (‘the one’ or ‘one’) *paralambanetai* (shall be taken), *kai* (and) *o* (the) *eis* (one) *aphietai* (left),” is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). This is an obscure variant and I would not normally refer to suchlike in these commentaries. But on this occasion I do so as it illustrates an example of how the first “*o*” *might* have been lost in an undetected paper fade. Thus it provides an interesting contrast and comparison with both *Variants 1 & 2* where the double occurrence of the omissions means that on the balance of probabilities they were deliberate, *supra*.

¹²² Von Soden (1913) shows it supported by his K group.

The erroneous *Variant 2* was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Thus at Matt. 24:40 the ASV reads, “one is taken, and one is left” (ASV). So too, the incorrect *Variant 2* is found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, and NRSV.

The complexities and intricacies of both the Greek and English are seen in the desire of the NIV and TEV to render *Variant 2* in what they regard as a better form of English. At Matt. 22:40 the more literal rendering of *Variant 2* would be that of the *Twentieth Century New Testament* which reads, “one will be taken and one left” (TCNT); whereas the *New International Version* reads, “one will be taken and the other left” (NIV), and likewise the *Today’s English Version* reads, “one will be taken away, the other will be left behind” (TEV). Though the NIV and TEV thus open themselves up to the theoretic possibility that they followed *Variant 3*, such a possibility is sufficiently improbable as to be safely dismissed. The matter nevertheless once again focuses our attention on the unusual subtleties that we must consider here at Matt. 22:40, relative to the more normative TR readings and variants we consider in the main part of these commentaries, where there is a simple and clear-cut difference of Greek meaning and English translation connected to, and manifested by, them.

Matt. 24:42 “hour” (TR & AV) {A}

The TR’s Greek, “*ora* (hour),” in the wider words, “ye know not what hour (*ora*) your Lord doth come” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices F 09 (9th century) and Pi 041 (9th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, thrice in three different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., thrice in three different readings). It is also found as Latin, “*hora* (hour),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writers, Athanasius (d. 373), Chrysostom (d. 407), Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444), and Theodoret of Cyrus (Cyrillus) (d. 460); the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the ancient church Latin writers, Ambrosiaster (d. after 384) and Jerome (d. 420).

Variant 1, Greek, “*emera* (day),” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Lectionaries 563 (9th century), 1552 (985 A.D.), 858 (12th century), and 547 (13th century). It is further found as Latin, “*die* (day),” in old Latin Versions d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), and f (6th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386); and the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation.

Variant 2, is Greek, “*poia* (what) *emera* (day) *e* (or) *ora* (hour).” It is found as Latin, “*qua* (what) *hora* (hour) *aut* (or) *qua* (what) *die* (day),” in old Latin Version e (4th

/ 5th century); or Latin “*qua* (what) *die* (day) *vel* (or) *qua* (what) *hora* (hour),” in the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers, Hippolytus (d. 235) and Basil the Great (d. 379).

There is no clear and obvious textual problem with the representative Byzantine reading which therefore must stand. The origins of the variants are speculative.

Was *Variant 1* an accidental alteration? There is a partial paper-fade of the omega or “*ω*” of “*ωρα* (hour)” in the third reading of Lectionary 2378 (p. 100b), although the reading is perfectly clear at the first (p. 38b) and second (p. 67a) readings. This reminds us of the problem of paper-fades. Was the original “*ωρα* (hour)” written in a manuscript over two lines, with “*ω*” at the end of one line, and “*ρα*” at the start of the next line? Due to a paper fade, loss, or damage, was the original “*ω*” on the first line obscured or lost? Did a scribe whose eye scanned down to the beginning of verse 50, seeing the “*εμερα* (day)” there, read no further but simply conclude that “this must be what was lost” at verse 42, and so “reconstruct” “*εμερα* (day)” at Matt. 24:42?

Was *Variant 1* a deliberate alteration? Did a scribe think that “*ωρα* (‘hour,’ from *ora*)” was “too vague to convey the meaning”? Did he think “*εμερα* (‘day,’ from “*εμερα*)” “more succinctly expressed the true meaning of the text”? Was he influenced in this “stylistic conclusion” by Matt. 25:13, which refers to “the day (*εμεραν*, from *εμερα*)” and “the hour (*ωραν*, from *ora*),” by concluding that “the more detailed ‘hour’ (*ora*) only made sense if the more general ‘day’ (*εμερα*) came first”? If so, he was certainly wrong to make this conclusion, since the usage of ‘hour’ at Matt. 24:42 is perfectly clear. But some scribes left something to be desired and nowhere was this more so than with wilful corrupter scribes.

Variant 2 on the balance of probabilities is a deliberate conflation of the TR’s reading with *Variant 1*, seemingly with some reference to the style of Matt. 25:13, *supra*. Was the scribe of *Variant 2* influenced by the same type of factors that may have influenced the scribe of *Variant 1* to make a deliberate alteration? I.e., did he likewise think that to semi-conflate this reading with Matt. 25:13 would somehow “help to clarify the meaning” of Matt. 24:42? If so, he was once again wrong to do so. Alas, such seem to have been the arrogant attitudes of some of the “many which” did set about to “corrupt the Word of God” even from apostolic times (II Cor. 2:17).

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading over time and through time. It further enjoys the support of St. Jerome’s Vulgate and about two-thirds of the old Latin Versions. It clearly dates from ancient times as seen from, for example, such learned and holy church fathers as St. Athanasius, St. Chrysostom, St. Cyril, and St. Jerome. By contrast, both *Variants 1 & 2* have weak support in the Greek, though better, albeit still minority support, in the Latin. Weighing up these factors, and taking into account the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:42 an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:42, “hour,” is found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century); and Minuscles 565 (9th century, independent), 700 (11th century, independent), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles), 1071 (12th century, independent), 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels), 579 (13th century, mixed text), and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation). It is further found in the Syriac Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century) and Pesitto (first half 5th century) Versions; a manuscript of the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version, and some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version; Armenian Version (5th century); Ethiopic Version (c. 500); Slavic Version (9th century); and Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

Variant 1, “day,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the independent text type) Codex 067 (6th century, Matt. 14; 24-26), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscles 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), and 157 (12th century, independent); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscles 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is also found in the Syriac Harclean h (616) and Palestinian (c. 6th century) Versions; some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version, and some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version; and the Georgian Version (5th century).

Variant 2, “day or hour,” is found in the Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The erroneous *Variant 1* was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Hence at Matt. 24:42 the American Standard Version reads, “ye know not on what day your Lord cometh” (ASV). So likewise, the incorrect *Variant 1* is found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV (with a footnote referring to the TR’s reading), NIV, and TEV.

Following the majority Latin text reading, the old Latin Papists of the Douay-Rheims and Clementine Vulgate here followed the correct reading of the TR in the rendering, “you know not what hour (Latin, *hora*) your Lord will come” (Douay-Rheims). Perhaps it was due a twinge of conscience, that when the new neo-Alexandrian Papists adopted the erroneous *Variant 1* in their Jerusalem Bible (1966), they added a footnote referring to the Vulgate’s reading of the TR. But time can further dull a conscience not subject to God’s Word, and so when about 20 years later the new

neo-Alexandrian Papists produced their New Jerusalem Bible (1985), they kept the incorrect *Variant 1* but “ditched” the JB’s footnote reference.

Matt. 24:48a “that evil servant” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

Diatessaron formatting. Inside the closed class of sources, the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron *prima facie* supports the TR with its reading, “*servus* (servant) *ille* (that).” However, this Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex, and the Vulgate contains this reading at both Matt. 24:48a and Luke 12:45. Since it therefore may have acquired the “*ille* (that)” as part of Diatessaron formatting, no reference is made to the Sangallensis Diatessaron, *infra* (even though the monolithic support of the Latin textual tradition in favour of the TR’s reading means that such a scribe would on the balance of probabilities been using a Vulgate that followed the TR at Matt. 24:48a).

Outside the closed class of sources, similar issues of Diatessaron formatting with regard to the presence of “that (Greek, *ekeinos*; Latin, *ille*),” at both Matt. 24:48b and Luke 12:45, exist in the Latin translation of the Arabic as “*servus* (servant) *ille* (that)” in Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron. Therefore no reference is made to the Arabic Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:48a the TR’s Greek, “*o* (-) *kakos* (evil) *doulos* (servant) *ekeinos* (that),” i.e., “that (*ekeinos*) evil servant” (AV), i.e., “that evil servant” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century); and Lectionary 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is also supported as Latin, “*ille* (that),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

However, a variant omitting “*ekeinos* (that),” and thus reading simply, “*o* (the) *kakos* (evil) *doulos* (servant),” i.e., “the evil servant,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codex Gamma 036 (10th century); Minuscules 243 (14th century) and 58 (15th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century¹²³) and 184 (1319 A.D.). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407); the ancient church Greek writer,

¹²³ In Lectionary 2378 (at p. 67a, column 2), the “*doulos*” / “*δουλος*” is written with the “c” following the “λ” and the “o” placed above the line between the “λ” and “c”.

Irenaeus (2nd century) in a Latin translation (c. 395); and ancient church Latin writer, Augustine (d. 430).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which thus must stand. Indeed, it is the stylistically expected reading given the presence of “*ekeinos* (that)” in Matt. 24:46 i.e., “*o* (-) *doulos* (servant) *ekeinos* (that),” i.e., “that (*ekeinos*) servant.” The origins of the variant are necessarily conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental omission? In the two-column pages of Lectionary 2378, the “*o* (-) *kakos* (evil) *doulos* (servant)” comes at the end of the right-hand column of one page (p. 67a), and the text then continues with, “*en* (in) *te* (the) *kardia* (heart) *autou* (of him),” etc., in the left-hand column of the opposite page (p. 67b). Was the “*ekeinos* (that),” inadvertently lost as the scribe went from one column to the next? In some form, does this type of thing also explain the origins of the loss in the manuscript lines underpinning the variant?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a scribe consider that because the addition of “*ekeinos* (that)” here at Matt. 24:48a was “unnecessarily wordy, given the earlier usage of ‘*ekeinos* (that)’” at Matt. 24:46? If so, he failed to recognize that in fact this is not correct, and indeed its presence in verse 46 makes it stylistically expected here. But of course, some scribes, most especially those which set about to deliberately tamper with the Word of God, clearly left something to be desired in terms of their skills and capacity with respect to such matters.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support as representative Byzantine text reading with no clear and obvious textual problem. It is also the representative Latin text reading with overwhelmingly strong support in the Latin textual tradition. Of the eight great ancient and early mediaeval church doctors of the Christian Church, four of the Western Church (the Latin writers, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, & St. Gregory) and four of the Eastern Church (the Greek writers, St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzus, & St. Chrysostom), only two bear as part of their names the title, “Great,” to wit, St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory the Great. And both of these celebrated “Great” church doctors here support the reading of the *Textus Receptus*. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek; and no support in the Vulgate Codices or old Latin Versions; although it is found in a few ancient church writers. Weighing up these factors, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:48a an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:48a, “that evil servant,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the independent text type) Codex 067 (6th century, Matt. 14; 24-26), (the mixed text type)

Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is further found in the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century).

However, the variant, “the evil servant,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century); (the mixed text type) Codex 0204 (7th century, Matt. 24:39-42,44-48) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic Version (3rd / 4th century); and Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Middle Egyptian (3rd century) (3rd century) Versions.

At Matt. 24:48a the split between the two main Alexandrian texts split the neo-Alexandrians. After all, on neo-Alexandrian principles, is not “the shorter reading the better reading,” and thus the variant of Codex Sinaiticus “the better reading”? But on neo-Alexandrian principles, is not “the external support” with the TR’s reading of Codex Vaticanus which is thus “the better reading”?

For Tischendorf there could be no doubt about the matter. He would follow his “beloved” Codex Sinaiticus that he “discovered” in Arabia, and so the variant appears in Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72). For Westcott & Hort there could be no doubt about the matter. As semi-Romanist Puseyites, they would turn Romeward and homeward to their “beloved” more “neutral text” of Codex Vaticanus, and so for the wrong reasons, the TR’s reading appears in Westcott-Hort (1881). Issues of “external support” with e.g., the Western Text’s D 04, the Latin, the Family 1 & 13 Manuscripts, and the Coptic Bohairic Version, were probably “the clincher” argument for both Nestle’s 21st edition (1952), and the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) and UBS’s 4th revised edition (1993); which for the wrong reasons, thus adopted the correct reading of Codex Vaticanus here at Matt. 24:48a.

At Matt. 24:48a, for the wrong reasons, the Westcott-Hort based *American Standard Version* thus followed the correct reading, “that evil servant” (ASV). The correct reading is likewise also found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, and NIV

However, in place of the *Authorized Version*’s, “But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart” (AV & TR); at Matt. 24:48a the *Today’s English Version* broadly follows the variant in its reading, “But if he is a bad servant, he will tell himself” etc. (TEV). Similar readings are also found in the TCNT, NEB, and REB. E.g., the *Twentieth Century New Testament* reads, “But, should he be a bad servant, and say to

himself” etc. (TCNT). Is it reasonable to here conclude that the TEV, TCNT, NEB, or REB, follow the variant; or are their “dynamic equivalents” too loose to really know where they are coming from in the Greek? Good Christian reader, I ask, “Are the TEV, TCNT, NEB, and REB frustratingly loose’n’liberal versions, or are the TEV, TCNT, NEB, and REB frustratingly loose’n’liberal version?”

The variant is followed in the Papists’ JB and NJB.

That notorious “mad rat,” the semi neo-Alexandrian, James Moffatt (d. 1944), also follows the variant. Here at Matt. 24:48a the Moffatt Bible reads, “the bad servant” in the wider words, “But if the bad servant says to himself” etc. (Moffatt). The crazy brain of James Moffatt here gives us “the insider’s story” as to the reason for such an omission in a footnote which says, “Omitting ‘*ekeinos* [that],’ a harmonistic gloss from Luke xii. 45” (Moffatt Bible ftn.). After all, on Neo-Alexandrian Principles, (and though Moffatt was a Semi Neo-Alexandrian he *usually* followed the same thinking as Neo-Alexandrians Proper,) “Is not the shorter reading the better reading?”

Matt. 24:48b “his coming” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Remarks.

The translation “his coming” in the AV does not here use italics for “his.” Literally, the Greek would read more like, “My lord, he delayeth to come.” This of course, would be unacceptable as an English translation. We are thus reminded of a fine line, involving a discretion, as to when italics are or are not used. In broad terms, the general rule is that one keeps a translation as word-for-word literal as one reasonably can, providing it is still good English, like the AV, and unlike the NASB which was at its worst in its 1st (1975) and 2nd (1977) editions. (This rule is only departed from in relatively rare and unusual circumstances for some very good reason¹²⁴.) Thereafter, if to convey the actual translation requires a modest dynamic equivalent, such as here, then italics are not used. In my opinion, here at Matt. 24:48b the AV translators correctly discharged their onerous responsibility with regard to when to use italics, by not using them in this instance. We are thus reminded that translation can be a difficult art.

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

¹²⁴ E.g., it would have been possible for the AV translators to give a one word equivalence of “sodomites” for “*arsenokoitai* (masculine plural nominative noun, from *arsenokoitēs*)” at I Cor. 6:9 or “*arsenokoitais* (masculine plural dative noun, from *arsenokoitēs*)” at I Tim. 1:10, just as they elsewhere use “sodomite” (Deut. 23:17) or “sodomites” (I Kgs 14:24; 15:12; 22:46; II Kgs 23:7). But there was a good reason for them to use, “abusers of themselves with mankind” (I Cor. 6:9) and “them that defile themselves with mankind” (I Tim. 1:10), as discussed in Textual Commentaries Vol. 1 (Matt. 1-14), at Matt. 11:8, “Preliminary Textual Discussion,” “The Third Matter.”

Inside the closed class of sources, with a change to a tense¹²⁵, the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron follows the Vulgate's reading of, "*Moram* (Delay) *facit* (he maketh) *dominus* (lord) *meus* (my) *venire* (to come)," i.e., "My lord delayeth his coming" (Vulgate), as found in both Matt. 12:48 and Luke 12:45. Therefore no reference is made to the Sangallensis Diatessaron, *infra*.

Outside the closed class of sources, with a change to a tense¹²⁶, once again the "*venire* (to come)," of Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron could derive from Matt. 12:48 or Luke 12:45. Thus no reference is made to the Arabic Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:48b, the TR's Greek, *Reading 1a*, "*Chronizei* ('he delayeth' = 'delayeth,' word 1) *o* ('the,' word 2) *kurios* ('lord,' word 3) *mou* ('of me,' word 4) *elthein* ('to come' = 'his coming,' word 5, active aorist infinitive, from *erchomai*)," i.e., "My lord delayeth his coming," is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53, abbreviating word 3 to "*ks*" with a bar on top, and word 5 at the end of a line to "*elthei*"); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, abbreviating word 3 to "*ks*" with a bar on top) and 1968 (1544 A.D.). Word 5 is also found as Latin, "*venire* (to come)," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407); the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

Reading 1b is a similar reading to the TR in word order 1,2,3,4,5a, with word 5a, Greek, "*erchesthai* ('to come,' middle / passive [= active]¹²⁷ present infinitive, from *erchomai*)," i.e., "My lord delayeth his coming." *Reading 1b* is a minority Byzantine reading found in Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century). It is also found in the ancient church

¹²⁵ Vulgate's "*Moram* ('Delay,' feminine singular accusative noun, from *mora*) *facit* ('he maketh,' indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *facio*)," i.e., "he delayeth;" becomes Latin Diatessaron's "*Moram* (Delay) *fecit* ('he hath made,' indicative active perfect, 3rd person singular verb, from *facio*)," i.e., "he hath delayed."

¹²⁶ Arabic Diatessaron reads, Latin, "*Moram* (Delay) *faciet* ('he shall make,' indicative active future, 3rd person singular verb, from *facio*)," i.e., "he shall delay."

¹²⁷ I.e., a deponent middle / passive with an active voice meaning; cf. "*erchesthai*" at Luke 12:45. Wallace's *Greek Grammar*, pp. 428-30 (middle deponents) & 441 (passive deponents); Young's *Greek*, pp. 135 (middle deponents) & 136 (passive deponents).

Greek writers, Origen (d. 254) and Basil the Great (d. 379).

However, a variant, omitting word 5, and using word order 1,4,2,3, Greek, “*Chronizei* (‘he delayeth’ or ‘he tarrieth’ = ‘tarrieth,’ word 1) *mou* (‘of me,’ word 4) *o* (‘the,’ word 2) *kurios* (‘lord,’ word 3),” i.e., “My lord tarrieth,” is found in the ancient church Greek writer, Irenaeus (2nd century). A similar reading is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental alteration? Did a scribe first fumble’n’stumble over words 2 & 3, writing word 4 after word 1, then realizing his error, add back in words 2 & 3, omitting word 5 in the sloppy process? After copying out the previous verse of Matt. 24:47, did he go to lunch? Did he first violate the good work practice of not drinking either before or while on duty (Lev. 10:9), and then further violate the Word of God by drinking to “excess” (Eph. 5:18)? Having begun to “drink with the drunken” (Matt. 24:49) in a bout of lunch-time drinking, did he then return in the afternoon “a little bit tipsy”? As he entered the work-room, did he call out something like, “Hold this door steady, as I come on through”? As he sat down at his stable desk, did he say to someone nearby with regard to his stable desk something like, “Hold this wobbling desk steady, as I write down these words”? Did he then make this shocking mess of the text here at Matt. 24:48b? Did the observer he spoke to, shake his head from left to right, as after this mess-up, the drunken scribe stood up and moved off to lie down and sleep of his drowsy drunkenness somewhere, thus preserving the remaining text from similar further damage? Did this drunken scribe return the next day with “a bit of a hangover,” and completely forgetting about what he had done the afternoon before, then just keep writing? Alas, so much detail is lost to us in the unrecorded historical dark ages of textual transmission!

Was the variant a deliberate alteration? Did a prunist scribe consider the usage of “*elthein* (his coming),” here at Matt. 24:48b was “redundant” given the earlier usage of “BOTH” “*erchetai* (cometh)” at Matt. 24:44 and “*elthon* (when he cometh)” at Matt. 24:46? Did he then prune away “*elthein* (to come)” here at Matt. 24:48b as “a stylistic improvement,” designed to remove “such flowery language”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental alteration? We do not know. We cannot know. We only know that it was an alteration to the text of Scripture, here Providentially preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR’s reading is supported by both the representative Greek and representative Latin texts. It enjoys the support of the church doctors, St. John Chrysostom and St. Gregory the Great. Moreover, when Origen is good, he is very good, and we may all be enriched from his orthodox teachings; but when he is bad, he is very bad, and we must all guard against his destructive heresies; and at times Origen is also something in between. Hence with such clear support for the TR support, the

further early citation by Origen is sufficiently qualified for us to say that it too is notable. In this sense, Origen's citation of the TR's *Reading 1a* may be distinguished from Origen's citation of the similar *Reading 1b*, since *Reading 1b* has weak support in the Greek, and no support in the Latin. So too, the variant has weak support in the Greek, and no support in the Latin. Weighing up these factors, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 24:48b an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:48b, *Reading 1a's* "his coming (Greek word 5, *elthein*)," which in the Greek uses word order 1,2,3,4,5, in the wider words, "My lord delayeth his coming;" is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); and Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), and 1071 (12th century, independent). It is also found in the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.*

The TR's basic reading is further found in the Greek in word order 1,4,2,3,5 in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century); (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century). It is also found in Minuscules 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), and 579 (13th century, mixed text).

The TR's reading is further found in all extant Syriac Versions; the Coptic Middle Egyptian Version (3rd century), and some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version.

Reading 1b, "his coming (Greek word 5a, *erchesthai*)," which in the Greek uses word order 1,2,3,4,5a; is found in Minuscule 157 (12th century, independent); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts (Swanson)*, which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude).

The variant which omits, "his coming," and so reads simply, "My lord tarrieth," which in the Greek uses word order 1,4,2,3; is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), and 700 (11th century, independent). It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions.

At Matt. 24:48b the incorrect variant, with what from the Neo-Alexandrians School's paradigm would be very slim "external support" beyond the two main Alexandrian texts, was nevertheless adopted by the NU Text *et al.*; a fact which reminds us that to a large extent the concept of "external support" is disingenuous "padding out" of

their two main Alexandrian texts. Although in fairness to the Neo-Alexandrians, if and when there is a split between these two texts, *some* of the neo-Alexandrians *might* “eat their words” and use their concept of “external support” in a more genuine manner (although at least *in general*, others do not, for instance, Tischendorf tends to follow Codex Sinaiticus whereas Westcott-Hort tends to follow Codex Vaticanus in such situations)¹²⁸.

At Matt. 24:48b, we find that the *New American Standard Bible* (3rd ed. 1995) translates “*Chronizei* (‘he delayeth’ or ‘he tarrieth’ = ‘delayeth’ / ‘tarrieth,’ word 1)” as “is not coming for a long time” after the words “My master” (NASB). Thus the NASB follows the variant but manages to *sound more like* the TR’s “My lord delayeth his coming” (AV). But this is ultimately a hollow, albeit cleverly crafted, deception, calculated to catch the unwary reader off-guard with respect to what is in fact *yet another* departure from the *Textus Receptus*. This basic idea behind type of deception did not originate with the NASB translators, but was earlier crafted by the religiously liberal, James Moffatt, who in his *Moffatt Bible* rendered Matt. 24:48b as, “My lord and master is long of coming.” Moreover, while a word-for-word translation is not always possible, this is the goal of a good translation other than in rare and unusual circumstances where there is a reasonable justification for departing from this. But the decision here of the NASB translators to depart from such a word for word translation is without reasonable justification, and so greatly comprises their professed commitment to word for word literalness. By contrast, the NASB’s father, the *American Standard Version* (1901), more literally renders “*Chronizei* (‘he delayeth’ or ‘he tarrieth’ = ‘delayeth’ / ‘tarrieth,’ word 1)” as one word with “tarrieth,” in “My lord tarrieth” (ASV).

The erroneous variant here at Matt. 24:48b is also found in the RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV. Though the *Today’s English Version* (2nd ed. 1992, Australian usage revised ed. 1994) has something of the NASB’s qualities in its “translation” of Matt. 24:48b as, “he will tell himself that his master will not come back for a long time” (TEV); both here and elsewhere, the TEV is such a loose’n’liberal “translation” we cannot be as surprised about it as we are with the NASB, *supra*. Indeed, the surprising thing about the TEV would be if it did give a literal and reliable rendering of anything!

Whatever one might think of the standard of English translation in the old Latin Papists’ Douay-Rheims, “My lord is long a coming (Latin, *venire*),” like the Clementine, it follows the Latin textual tradition which here at Matt. 24:48b correctly manifests the *Textus Receptus* (TR). By contrast, the new neo-Alexandrian Papists follow the variant in their [Roman] Catholic RSV, JB, and NJB. We thus find that here at Matt. 24:48b, the old Latin Papists of pre-Vatican II Council times were more accurate than their successors of post Vatican II Council times. Well did that eminent “council father” of Vatican II (1963-5), the French Archbishop, Marcel Lefebvre (1905-1991), who was nominated by the Pope to be a member of the Central Preparatory Commission for the *Vatican II Council*, say of his fellow “council fathers” some two years before Rome excommunicated him in 1988, “the *Council Fathers felt guilty themselves* at not being in

¹²⁸ The colloquialism, “disgenuine,” means “non-genuine.”

the world and *at not being of the world*" (cf. John 17:15,16; I John 2:15-17)¹²⁹.

Matt. 24:49a "fellobservants" (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron in Siever's (1892) edition as found on the internet¹³⁰, reads in a section incorrectly marked out as "Lc 12 ... 49" (Luke 12:49), i.e., in the section in fact being drawn from Luke 12:45 and Matt. 24:49, the words of the variant, "*conservos* (fellobservants) *suos* (his)." The Sangallensis Diatessaron is a Vulgate Codex and these are the same words as the Vulgate's reading of Matt. 24:49, in contradistinction to the Vulgate's reading of Luke 12:45 which is, "*peuros* (menservants) *et* (and) *ancillas* ('maidens' or 'maidservants')." Therefore I show the Sangallensis Diatessaron following the variant, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:49a, the TR's Greek, "*sundoulos* (fellobservants)," which in the AV's italics requires the addition of "*his*," i.e., showing the AV's italics, "And shall begin to smite *his* fellobservants" etc. (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), E 07 (8th century), and Gamma 036 (9th century); and Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379).

However, a variant adding in "*autou* ('of him' = 'his')" after "*sundoulos* (fellobservants)," i.e., "*his* fellobservants," is a minority Byzantine reading found in Lectionaries 2378 (11th century) and 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is further found as Latin, "*conservos* (fellobservants) *suos* (his)," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers, Basil the Great (d. 379) and John Chrysostom (d. 407); the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text which

¹²⁹ Lefebvre, M., *Open Letter to Confused Catholics*, Angelus Press, USA, 1986, see pp. 100,102,105, emphasis mine.

¹³⁰ Edward Siever's 1892 edition, (Druck & Verlag, Paderborn,) (www.hypotyposeis.org/weblog/2006/01/codex-sangallensis-online.html).

must thus stand. The origins of the variant are speculative.

On the balance of probabilities, this looks like it was a deliberate scribal addition of Greek “*autou* (his)” or Latin, “*suos* (his).” In the case of the Latin, was it deemed a part of the act of translation into what scribes regarded as “intelligible Latin”? If so, it would not have been intended by such Latin scribes as an endorsement of the Greek variant, “*autou* (his),” of which some, or all, may have been entirely ignorant.

Why did one or more Greek scribes regard the addition of “*autou* (his)” here as “a stylistic improvement”? To what extent were they influenced by the commonality of “*autou* (his)” in the surrounding verses i.e., “*oikian* (house) *autou* (his)” or “his house” (Matt. 24:43), “*kurios* (lord) *autou* (his)” or “his lord” (twice) (Matt. 24:45,46), “*uparchousin* (goods) *autou* (his)” or “his goods” (Matt. 24:47), “*kardia* (heart) *autou* (his)” or “his heart” (Matt. 24:48), or “*meros* (portion) *autou* (his)” or “his portion” (Matt. 24:51)?

We cannot be sure as to the exact reasons as to why some Greek scribes may have thought it a “stylistic improvement” to here add “*autou* (his),” but we can be sure that it was added to the text, here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid in the Greek as the representative Byzantine text reading over time, and through time, with no good textual argument against it, and dating from ancient times in *Codex Freerianus* (W 032). Though St. Basil refers to both the TR’s reading and the variant, these citations nevertheless further manifest the TR’s reading in ancient times. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek, and *prima facie* strong support in the Latin as the monolithic Latin reading. But bearing in mind that the Latin “*suos* (his)” may have been added in some, or all instances, by Latin scribes as part of the act of translation, further complicates the issue of how strong the Latin support really is. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Latin reads the same as the variant; and that two ancient church Greek writers also refer to the variant. Weighing up these factors, and *for these purposes* giving the benefit of the doubt to those who consider the Latin supports the variant, i.e., stipulating *for these assessment purposes* that full credence will be given to the Latin as supporting the variant; when then subjecting this stipulation with regard to the Latin to the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:49a a “B” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:49a, showing “*his*” in italics as added, “And shall begin to smite *his* fellowservants,” is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); and Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text).

However, the variant which adds “his,” i.e., “his fellowservants,” is found in one

of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the independent text type) Codex 067 (6th century, Matt. 14; 24-26), and (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is also found in the Armenian Version (5th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

A similar reading to the variant's Greek, "*autou* ('of him' = 'his,' masculine singular genitive, personal pronoun from *autos-e-o*)," is found as "*eautou* ('of himself' = 'his,' masculine singular genitive, personal pronoun from *eautou-es-ou*¹³¹)," in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century).

At Matt. 24:49a, the erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Hence the ASV reads, "and shall begin to beat his fellow-servants." So too, the incorrect variant is found in the NASB. Unlike the ASV and NASB, italics are not used for added words in the translations listed below, raising the question, "How can we be sure which of the two readings are followed in them, since their translators might simply be adding 'his' in, for example, the ESV?" On the one hand, the monolithic support of neo-Alexandrian texts for the variant indicates that most, if not all of them, follow the variant. But on the other hand, given that occasionally the neo-Alexandrians use a non-Alexandrian text pincer arm, means that it is *certainly possible*, that one or more of them followed the TR's reading.

Good reader, do you think I raise an unlikely possibility when I say that "one or more of" the above translations may be following the TR? Then note well that the TR's reading without adding in "his," i.e., "shall begin to smite the fellowservants," is in fact the reading found in both the *New English Bible*, and its successor, the *Revised English Bible*. In the first place, they were no doubt troubled by the split between the two main Alexandrian texts, in which one reads "*autou* (his)" (*Codex Vaticanus*) and the other reads "*eautou* (his)" (*Codex Sinaiticus*). And in the second place, they then evidently resolved this split between their two texts by concluding it had been added in by falling back on the Neo-Alexandrian School's rule, "The shorter reading is the better reading." Hence on this occasion, for various wrong reasons, both the NEB and REB fluked the correct reading. (Cf. my comments on the non-Alexandrian text pincer arm at Matt. 21:24a.)

And so I return to ask, amidst all the confusions and problems caused by the non-

¹³¹ Not used in the nominative, hence here shown in genitive singular declensions of masculine-feminine-neuter.

use of italics for added words here at Matt. 24:49a, what is one to make of the RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, TEV, TCNT, Moffatt, and the Papists' JB and NJB? All of these *prima facie* follow the variant, but all or some of these, may in fact be simply adding the word of the variant in as part of their translation style in which they do not employ italics for added words? We can guess that probably most, and possibly all of them, followed the trend of the neo-Alexandrian texts, and so adopted the reading of the variant. But in the final analysis, we just do not know if one or more of them in fact agreed with the NEB and REB type of thinking, and favoured the TR. (Cf. my comments at Matt. 25:6b.)

In contradistinction to all these types of Neo-Alexandrian School confusions and errors, let us thank God for our Neo-Byzantine School *Authorized King James Versions*, which not only use the best text, but also use italics for added words, thus bringing much greater clarity to them.

Matt. 24:49b “and to eat and drink” (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. In Matthew to Jude, Hodges & Farstad's majority text (1985) is based on von Soden's I and K groups of *c.* 1,500 manuscripts, of which more than 85% are Byzantine text, so that in practice their majority text is a majority Byzantine Text; and Robinson & Pierpont's majority text (2005) is based on von Soden's K group of *c.* 1,000 manuscripts, of which more than 90% are Byzantine text, so that in practice their majority text is also a majority Byzantine Text. Here at Matt. 24:49b, Hodges & Farstad say that the majority text is “seriously divided”¹³² between the TR's reading which they put in their main text of, “*esthiein* (to eat) *de* (‘and,’ 1) *kai* (‘and,’ 2) *pinein* (to drink),” i.e., “to eat and drink” (AV); and the Variant 2's reading, of “*esthiē* (he may eat) *de* (‘and,’ 1) *kai* (‘and,’ 2) *pinē* (he may drink),” i.e., “and eat and drink.” By contrast, Robinson & Pierpont put the TR's reading in their main text, and do *not* say that the majority text is “significantly divided”¹³³. Under the circumstances it is necessary to consult von Soden first hand.

Von Soden (1913) shows only the TR's reading and *Variant 2*. He says that inside the K group, the TR's reading has the support of his Kx and Kr sub-groups. Von Soden's Kx group contains 513 manuscripts out of the 983 K group manuscripts. Or on a more precise count of Gospel manuscripts in the K group, out of *c.* 860 K group Gospel manuscripts there are *c.* 500 Kx Gospel manuscripts. Von Soden's Kr group contains *c.* 189 manuscripts which are exclusively Byzantine inside a wider K group that has 914 exclusively Byzantine manuscripts. Or on a more precise count of Gospel manuscripts in the K group, out of *c.* 860 K group Gospel manuscripts, there are *c.* 175 Kr Gospel manuscripts. This means that *c.* 702 manuscripts (513 Kx + 189 Kr) out of 983

¹³² Hodges & Fartsad (1985), pp. xxi & 84.

¹³³ Robinson & Pierpont (2005), pp. xviii & 56.

manuscripts i.e., *c.* 71%; or on a more precise count of Gospel manuscripts, *c.* 675 manuscripts (500 Kx + 175 Kr) out of 860 Gospel manuscripts i.e., *c.* 78.5%, support the TR's reading.

Allowing an error bar of *c.* 10% for von Soden's generalist groupings, which on the Gospel manuscript count would be 10% of 78.5% i.e., *c.* 7.85%, it is clear that the TR's reading has the support of at least *c.* 71% or about seven-tenths of the K group manuscripts, and possibly as many as *c.* 79% or about eight-tenths of these manuscripts. Whatever the exact percentage is cannot be safely determined from von Soden's generalist groups, but the "rubbery" figure of *c.* 71-79% is clearly *good enough* to safely say that the TR's reading is supported by the majority Byzantine text.

This means that the *Variant 2* reading could have anything between *c.* 21-29% support. But we know from the textual apparatuses of Tischendorf and Swanson, of the additional existence of *Variant 1, infra*. On this occasion, von Soden did not regard this variant as sufficiently significant to itemize it, and so on his generalist groups, one can say that it has less than *c.* 10% support, but how much less is unknown. I.e., von Soden's generalist group figures mean that an unlisted variant like this might e.g., have *c.* 10% support, or *c.* 5% support, or less than 1% support. We simply do not know. But we do know that it is a minority reading with less than *c.* 10% support. (See Preface, "What ever happened to von Soden's papers?")

The Second Matter. Parts of the Lectionary 2378's writing is unclear at Matt. 24:49b in my photocopies made from both the positive and negative microfilm copies (p. 67b). Therefore I inspected the original in the Rare Books section at Sydney University (Greek Lectionary: RB Add. Ms. No. 40). Though now faint, the original *appears* to have read, "εσθHυ" (*esthein*) (although one would need an electronic scanning device detecting the old ink markings to be totally sure as to what the original read); but this was "rubbed out" and changed by a "corrector" scribe with a higher "θ" (theta) over part of the old "θ" so as to read, "εσθιHυ" (*esthien*).

The origins of both of these readings is necessarily speculative. But looking at the original "εσθHυ" (*esthein*), did the later "corrector" scribe conclude that "the original copyist must have gotten the 'Hι' order mixed up in his mind, so that this is meant to read, 'εσθιHυ'" in a local dialect in which nu ("ν") is an optional letter i.e., *Variant 2* (*esthien* = *esthie*, 'he may eat'), *infra*?

If so, this corrector scribe's conjectured speculation is not the only possible account for the origins of the original reading in Lectionary 2378. One might also ask the following conjectural question. Was the scribe of this Lectionary working from a manuscript that contained *Variant 1*, Greek, "*esthie* ('he eateth') in which in a local dialect there was a final nu ("ν") as an optional letter? Looking at the original "ECθIEIN" in which the "I" before the "EI" was faded, and the "EI" had a central bar joining the "I" so that it looks something like "H" (eta), did this original scribe thus copy this as "εσθH" and then conclude that "an iota must have dropped out" and so supplied this before the nu, thus writing "εσθHυ"? (Cf. my comments on W 032 at "Was *Variant*

2 an accidental change?," *infra*.)

Does the original reading of Lectionary 2378 thus support *Variant 1*, *Variant 2*, or something else? The original meaning of the scribe's "εσθHυv" at Matt. 24:49b is thus "as clear as mud." Whatever his original meaning was, in the "Principal Textual Discussion," *infra*, I shall only make reference to that which is clearer, namely, that the later "corrector" scribe took the view that the passage should here follow *Variant 2* with an optional letter "n" (nu) supplied as part of a local dialect variation.

It is also notable that the "*pine* ('he may drink') of this Lectionary 2378 reading has a fairly light final optional letter local dialect added nu ("v"). Is this reading of "πHυv" best understood as a scribe adding in this final nu ("v") in what happened to be a stylistic space left after the "πHυ" so that the two subjunctive active present, 3rd person singular verbs, "*esthie* ('he may eat')" and "*pine* ('he may drink')" would thus "match" as, "*esthien*" and "*pinen*"? If so, was the "πHυv" the work of the original Lectionary scribe in which the final nu ("v") has simply faded; or is it lighter because it came from another hand, and if so, was this the same "corrector" scribe who altered the reading to the *Variant 2*'s "εσθHυv" (*esthien* = *esthie*, 'he may eat'), or was this from a second "corrector" scribe?

The Third Matter (Diatessaron formatting).

Inside the closed class of sources, the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron contains the same reading as the Latin Vulgate at Matt. 24:49a, which is that of *Variant 2*, *infra*. At the so called "parallel reading" of Luke 12:45, (I think Matt. 24:49a and Luke 12:45 were said on quite different occasions,) the Vulgate uses active present infinitives i.e., "*et* (and) *edere* ('to eat,' active present infinitive, from *edo*), *et* (and) *bibere* ('to drink,' active present infinitive, from *bibo*)." Therefore I show the Sangallensis Diatessaron following *Variant 2*, *infra*.

Outside the closed class of sources, Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron also uses active present infinitives in the Latin translation, "*manducare* ('to eat,' active present infinitive, from *manduco*) *et* (and) *bibere* ('to drink,' active present infinitive, from *bibo*)." Since Luke 12:45 also uses active present infinitives one cannot confidently rule out the fact that due to Diatessaron formatting, the Arabic Diatessaron may here be getting this from the Matthean and / or Lucan readings. Therefore no reference is made to the Arabic Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 24:49b the TR's "*esthien* ('to eat,' active present infinitive, from *esthio*) *de* ('and,' 1) *kai* ('and,' 2) *pinein* ('to drink,' active present infinitive, from *pino*)," i.e., "and (*de*) to eat (*esthien*) and (*kai*) to drink (*pinein*)," in the wider words, "and to eat (*esthien*) and drink (*pinein*) with the drunken" (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century); and Minuscules 28 (11th century,

Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century). It is also supported in old Latin Version a (4th century) as Latin, “*manducare* (‘to eat,’ active present infinitive, from *manduco*) *autem* (‘and,’ 1) ...,” at which point the rest of verse 49 is missing in this manuscript. It is further supported by the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754).

Variant 1, Greek, “*esthie* (‘he eateth / eats,’ indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *esthio*) *de* (‘and,’ 1) *kai* (‘and,’ 2) *pinei* (‘he drinketh / drinks,’ indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *pino*),” i.e., “and eateth and drinketh,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codices M 021 (9th century) and Omega 045 (9th century). It is further partially found in old Latin Version aur (7th century) as Latin, “*manducat* (indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *manduco*) *autem* (‘and,’ 1) *et* (‘and,’ 2) ...,” although the other latter relevant element of verse 49 here follows *Variant 2* in this manuscript, *infra*.

Variant 2, Greek “*esthie* (‘he may eat,’ subjunctive active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *esthio*) *de* (‘and,’ 1) *kai* (‘and,’ 2) *pine* (‘he may drink,’ subjunctive active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *pino*),” i.e., “and eat and drink” or “and eateth and drinketh,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in, e.g., Codices E 07 (8th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (made “*esthien*” from a formerly uncertain reading by a “corrector” scribe of this 11th century manuscript, and written with a local dialect added optional “n” / nu at end, *supra*; and also having a matching local dialect added optional “n” / nu at end of “*pine*” as “*pinen*,” *supra*) and 1968 (1544 A.D.). It is also found as Latin, “*manducet* (‘he may eat,’ subjunctive active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *manduco*) *autem* (‘and,’ 1) *et* (‘and,’ 2) *bibat* (‘he may drink,’ subjunctive active present, 3rd person singular verb, from *bibo*),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions e (4th / 5th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further partially found in old Latin Version aur (7th century) as Latin, “...*autem* (‘and,’ 1) *et* (‘and,’ 2) *bibat* (he may drink),” although the other prior relevant element of verse 49 here follows *Variant 1* in this manuscript, *supra*. It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers, Basil (d. 379) and Chrysostom (d. 407); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604)¹³⁴.

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is therefore correct. The origins of the two variants are conjectural.

Stylistically, the fact that St. Matthew records our Lord’s words as, “*esthiein* (‘to eat,’ active present infinitive, from *esthio*) *de* (‘and,’ 1) *kai* (‘and,’ 2) *pinein* (‘to drink,’ active present infinitive, from *pino*),” i.e., “and (*de*) to eat (*esthiein*) and (*kai*) to drink

¹³⁴ Gregory’s reading is the same as the four words cited from the Vulgate, *supra*.

(*pinein*),” means that the TR’s first active present infinitive, “*esthiein* (to eat),” is contextually congruous with the matching couplet active present infinitive, “*pinein* (to drink).” This is the same with regard to the two variants i.e., the two indicative active present, 3rd person singular verbs of *Variant 1* likewise match up (“*esthieī*” / “he eateth” and “*pineī*” / “he drinketh”); and the two subjunctive active present, 3rd person singular verbs of *Variant 2* also match up (“*esthiē*” / “he may eat” and “*pine*” / “he may drink”).”

Prima facie, this may indicate that *Variants 1 & 2* were deliberate changes. But the matter is not necessarily so simple.

Was *Variant 1* an accidental change? Did a scribe think that the “n” (nu) on the end of the TR’s active present infinitives was the usage of an optional “n” (nu) as found in either a local dialect, or an individual scribal usage? Did he think this after possibly one “n” (nu) had been lost in an undetected paper fade? Did he then remove either “n” (nu) twice, or if one had been lost in a paper fade, just once, as his “reconstruction” of Matt. 24:49b?

Was *Variant 1* a deliberate change? Did a scribe think it was “a stylistic improvement” to change the TR’s active present infinitives to *Variant 1*’s indicative active present, 3rd person singular verbs?

Was *Variant 2* an accidental change? In the capital letters (uncials) of Codex W 032, “IIINEIN” (“*pinein*” / “to drink”) has an “EI” whose central “E” bar joins the “I” so that it looks something like “H” (eta). In a given manuscript, did this happen not once, but twice? Especially if the final “N” (nu) was lost on either “ECθIEIN” (“*esthiein*” / “to eat”) or “IIINEIN” (“*pinein*” / “to drink”), but still possibly if this was not the case; did a scribe take the final “N” to be either a local dialect, or individual scribal usage, of an optional “N” (nu) on the end of the subjunctive active present, 3rd person singular verb form, i.e., comparable to the commonly recognized optional “N” (nu) on the end of the subjunctive active present, 3rd person plural verb form, or the commonly recognized optional “N” (nu) on the end of the indicative active imperfect, 3rd person singular verb form, or indicative active (first and second) aorist, 3rd person singular verb forms?

In this context, it should be noted that Codex G 011 (9th century) reads, “*esthiein* (‘to eat,’ per TR) ... *pinen* (‘he may drink,’ per *Variant 2*)”? Given this usage of *Variant 2*’s “*pinen*” / “πινην” / “IINHn,” might this change have been a two-step process? I.e., did a scribe first make this mistake of thinking the “EI” was a “H” so as to accidentally write out his manuscript like G 011 as, “*esthiein* (to eat) ... *pine* / *pinen* (he may drink)”? Or perhaps *vice versa* as “*esthiē* / *esthiēn* (he may eat) ... *pinein* (to drink)”? If so, did a subsequent scribe then realize that to have one of these words as an active present infinitive, and the other words as subjunctive active present, 3rd person singular verb, clangs on the ears as contextually incongruous Greek, and so looks like the scar mark of some scribal copyist’s blunder? Did he then “correct” this “rough-shod” reading by standardizing both to the subjunctive active present verb of the *Variant 2*, as his “reconstruction” of Matt. 24:49b?

Some further manuscript evidence in support of this type of thing is e.g., found in the reading, S 028 (10th century), “and he eateth (*esthie*, per *Variant 1*) and he may drink (*pine*, per *Variant 2*).” Does this reflect a copyist’s confusion in first changing the TR’s second “*EIN*” suffix to a “*HN*” suffix; in which this or a later scribe then further removed the “*N*” at the end of both words on the basis “it must be” a “local dialect” or “individual scribal usage” of the optional “*n*” (nu)?

Alternatively, did a scribe see a manuscript where “*EI*” had accidentally gone to “*H*” twice i.e., “*ECθIHN*” and “*ΠINH*”? Did he then remove what he took to be the “local dialect” or “individual scribal usage” of the optional “*n*” (nu)? Did he thus create the *Variant 2*’s “*ECθIH*” (“*esthie*”) and “*ΠINH*” (“*pine*”)? Was the variant thus a combination of a first *accidental* alteration by one scribe, followed by *Variant 2*, as a second scribe’s accidentally incorrect “reconstruction” of Matt. 24:49b? Is this type of thing the best conjecture to also place on S 028, *supra*, thus lending further manuscript support for this speculation?

Was *Variant 2* a deliberate change? Notably, inspection of Codex Pi 041 (9th century) shows that it originally had the TR’s reading. But it also shows the damaging physical scars of having been corrupted to *Variant 2*’s reading by a later so called, “corrector” scribe. Did an earlier scribe from ancient times think it was “a stylistic improvement” to change the TR’s active present infinitives to *Variant 2*’s subjunctive active present, 3rd person singular verbs?

Were these two variants accidental or deliberate changes, or was one accidental and the other deliberate? We do not know. But we do know that the correct reading of the Received text has been preserved for us here in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support as the representative Byzantine text, over time and through time, dating from ancient times (W032). It is found in more than 70% of the Greek manuscripts, and it has no clear and obvious textual problem with it. It also has some further support in the first part of the reading in the incomplete Latin manuscript of an ancient old Latin Version; and is further found in an early mediaeval Greek writer. By contrast, *Variant 1* has less than *c.* 10% support in the Greek manuscripts, and some further support in the first part of the reading of an early mediaeval old Latin Version; and *Variant 2* has between *c.* 21-29% support in the Greek manuscripts, although it enjoys the overwhelming majority support of the Latin textual tradition, together with two ancient church writers, and an early mediaeval Latin writer. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 24:49b a “*B*” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 24:49b, “and to eat (*esthiein*, active present infinitive) and to drink (*pinein*, active present infinitive),” i.e.,

“and to eat and drink” (AV) is found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere, reading “*te*” / “and” for “*de*” / “and”¹³⁵), and 700 (11th century, independent, reading “*te*” / “and” for “*de*” / “and”).

Variant 1, “and he eateth (*esthie*, indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb) and he drinketh (*pinei*, indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb),” i.e., “and eateth and drinketh.” See the first parts of Minuscules 1071 and 579, and the second part of Minuscule 33, *infra*.

Variant 2, “and he may eat (*esthie*, subjunctive active present, 3rd person singular verb) and he may drink (*pine*, subjunctive active present, 3rd person singular verb),” i.e., “and eat and drink” or “and eateth and drinketh,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century, with variant spelling of “*peine*”) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century, with variant spelling of “*peine*”). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century, reading “*te*” / “and” for “*de*” / “and”), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude); and the *Family 13 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). And see the first part of Minuscule 33, and the second parts of Minuscules 1071 and 579 *infra*. It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); Armenian Version (5th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

As a further development to matters raised inside the closed class of sources, *supra*, the readings of Minuscules 33, 1071, and 579 which are a mix of *Variants 1 & 2* may be of some interest to the reader.

Minuscule 33 (9th century, mixed text type, reading “*te*” / “and” for “*de*” / “and”), reads “and he may eat (*esthie*, per *Variant 2*) with “and he drinketh (*pinei*, per *Variant 1*). Does this reflect a copyist’s confusion in first changing the TR’s first “*EIN*” suffix to a “*HN*” suffix; in which this or a later scribe then further removed the “*N*” at the end of both words on the basis “it must be” a “local dialect” or “individual scribal usage” of the optional “*n*” (nu)?

Minuscules 1071 (12th century, independent) and 579 (13th century, mixed text) read, “and he eateth (*esthie*, per *Variant 1*) and he may drink (*pine*, per *Variant 2*).” See comments as Codex S 028, at “Was *Variant 2* an accidental change?,” *supra*.

At Matt. 24:49b *Variant 2* was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Hence this is rendered in the *American Standard Version* as, “and shall eat and drink” (ASV), or in the

¹³⁵ The “*te*” appears to be an assimilation from Luke 12:45.

New American Standard Bible as “and eat and drink” (NASB), or in the *English Standard Version* as “and eats and drinks” (ESV). Likewise the erroneous *Variant 2* is found at Matt. 24:49b in the RSV and NRSV.

What are we to make of the rendering “to eat and drink” found at Matt. 24:49b in both the *New International Version* and *Today’s English Version*? Is this an exercise by them of the non-Alexandrian text pincer arm? (Cf. my comments on the non-Alexandrian text pincer arm at Matt. 21:24a.) Or is this an example of how they can start with one reading in the Greek, here *Variant 2*; and then via their loose’n’liberal “dynamic equivalents” change it to quite another reading, here that of the TR? Given that Luke 12:45 also uses infinitives, the Neo-Alexandrian mind would tend to think that Matt. 24:49b was an “assimilation” to Luke 12:45; and with both Alexandrian texts, and most of the “external support” also favouring *Variant 2*, it would strike me as a *highly unlikely point* for one from the Neo-Alexandrian School to use their non-Alexandrian pincer arm. Hence I would say that in all probability we are here looking at the NIV and TEV using a loose’n’liberal “dynamic equivalent” for their *Variant 2* reading which paradoxically creates the same reading as that of the TR. If someone had specifically pointed this fact out to them at the time of their translations, they would probably have been so mortified at the prospect of appearing to support the TR here against *Variant 2*, that after their initial “shock’n’horror,” they would have changed it at once; almost “breaking a finger” as they pounded down with their pen on their sheet to quickly erase this “TR looking” reading. Such are potential pains of being a Neo-Alexandrian!

Variant 2 is found in the old Latin Papists’ Clementine Vulgate, and also their Douay-Rheims as, “and shall eat and drink.” The new neo-Alexandrian Papists of the JB and NJB turn these into participles. Is this a new *Variant 3*, or is this an example of how they can start with one reading in the Greek, here *Variant 2*; and then via their loose’n’liberal “dynamic equivalents” change it to quite another reading, here that of a new variant? Presumably the latter.

Here at Matt. 24:49a, the NIV, TEV, and Papists’ JB and NJB, once again show us the hazards of non-literal translations; which I find to be most PAINFUL when seeking to disentangle them to the point of working out what their underpinning Greek is, or *might* be. Let us thank God for the “straight-shooting” literal translation of the King James Version, which also uses the best text, the *Textus Receptus*.

Matt. 25:1c “the bridegroom” (TR & AV) {A}

The TR’s Greek, “*tou (the) numphiou (bridegroom),*” i.e., “the bridegroom” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), E 07 (8th century), G 011 (9th century), and Pi 041 (9th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark), 1006 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Revelation), 1505 (11th century, Byzantine in the Gospels), 2 (12th century), 180 (12th century, Byzantine other than in Acts), 1010 (12th century), 597 (13th century), 1292 (13th century, Byzantine outside of the General Epistles), and 1342 (13th / 14th century, Byzantine other than in Mark); and Lectionaries

2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writers, Methodius (d. c. 250 or c. 257 or c. 311), Basil the Great (d. 379), Chrysostom (d. 407), Theodoret of Cyrus (d. 460); the ancient church Latin writer, Augustine (d. 430); and the early mediaeval church Greek writer, John of Damascus (d. before 754).

However, a variant reading, “*tou* (the) *numphiou* (bridegroom) *kai* (and) *tes* (the) *numphes* (bride),” i.e., “the bridegroom and the bride,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codices Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century) and X 033 (10th century); and Minuscule 262 (10th century). It is also found as Latin, “*sponso* (the bridegroom) *et* (and) *sponsae* (the bride),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found as “*sponsi* (the bridegroom) *et* (and) *sponsae* (the bride),” in old Latin Version d (5th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Latin writers, Tyconius (d. after 390) and Jerome (d. 420); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604)¹³⁶.

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text which thus must stand. The origins of the variant are conjectural. However, the addition of so many words looks very much like a conflation, and so on the balance of probabilities we can say that this was a deliberation addition.

The style of the variant perfectly reproduces the words of Rev. 18:23. The variant therefore looks like it was probably influenced by the style of Rev. 18:23. Though we cannot be sure of the *raison d’être* for this, it seems likely that it was done in order to create some kind of “spiritual comparison and contrast” between “*tou* (the) *numphiou* (bridegroom) *kai* (and) *tes* (the) *numphes* (bride)” of Matt. 25:1c and Rev. 18:23. But did the variant originate with Tyconius or Origen?

Was Tyconius the variant’s originator, with the later Latin translator of Origen then including it in his “translation” of Origen in harmony with the wider Latin textual tradition that followed this variant? As far as we can be sure, the earliest record of this variant is with Tyconius, a Donatist who denied the efficacy of the sacraments when administered by an unworthy Minister. (Such views are contrary to Article 26 of the Anglican 39 Articles¹³⁷.) He formulated the so called, “Seven Rules of Tyconius.”

¹³⁶ Gregory uses the same three words as the Vulgate *et al, supra*.

¹³⁷ Article 26, entitled, “Of the Unworthiness of the Ministers, which hinders not the effect of the Sacrament;” says, “Although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments, yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ’s, and do minister by his commission and authority, we may use their Ministry,

These classified allegorical interpretations as: 1) Christ and his church; 2) true and false believers; 3) promise and law; 4) genus and species; 5) numerical significance; 6) recapitulation, & 7) the devil and his followers¹³⁸. Therefore, was Tyconius seeking under his allegorical interpretations with respect to, for instance, 1) Christ and the Church and 2) true and false believers, to draw out some kind of allegorical “spiritual comparison and contrast” between Matt. 25:1c and Rev. 18:23 by conflating these two readings through adding the “*kai* (and) *tes* (the) *numphes* (bride)” of Rev. 18:23 after the commonality of “*tou* (the) *numphiou* (bridegroom)” at Matt. 25:1c?

Was Origen the originator of the variant? Did the variant originate with Origen who was also attracted to allegorical interpretations? If so, did Origen conflate these two readings for similar reasons of creating an allegorical “spiritual comparison and contrast” between Matt. 25:1c and Rev. 18:23? If so, did Tyconius then later adopt the variant for his own allegorical reasons, *supra*?

Whether originating with Origen or Tyconius, does Tyconius’ usage of this variant help to explain its favourable adoption into the Latin textual tradition? Notwithstanding some of his errors, the allegorical interpretations found in “The Seven Rules of Tyconius,” gained some notable support from both Ambrose of Milan (d. 397) and Austin of Hippo (d. 430), even though on this occasion we know that Austin followed the Received Text’s reading at Matt. 25:1c, *supra*. Therefore, did the general favour generated by these two Latin writing Western church doctors for such allegorical interpretations, act to influence Latin scribes to adopt this variant because it was known to have been used by Tyconius, and thus with it some kind of associated allegorical “spiritual comparison and contrast” between Matt. 25:1c and Rev. 18:23? Does this further explain why “*sponso* (the bridegroom)” of the Vulgate *et al* was changed to “*sponsi* (the bridegroom)” in old Latin d, i.e., the exact Latin form of Rev. 18:23 in the Vulgate, Tyconius, *et al*?¹³⁹

both in hearing the Word of God, and in receiving of the Sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ’s ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God’s gifts diminished from such as by faith and rightly do receive the Sacraments ministered unto them; which be effectual, because of Christ’s institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men. Nevertheless, it appertaineth to the discipline of the Church, that inquiry be made of evil Ministers, and that they be accused by those that have knowledge of their offences; and finally being found guilty, by just judgement be deposed.”

¹³⁸ See e.g., *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Multimedia Edition, CD, International Version 1999, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. 1994-1999, at “Biblical Literature and its Critical interpretation: The Critical Interpretation of Biblical Literature; exegesis and hermeneutics; The development of Biblical exegesis and hermeneutics in Christianity; The patristic period.”

¹³⁹ Gryson, R., *Vetus Latina*, Apocalypsis Johannis, Verlag Herder Freiburg, Germany, 2000, p. 639.

The TR's reading has rock solid support in the Greek over time and through time, as the representative Byzantine reading dating from ancient times with no clear and obvious textual problem. It further enjoys the support of the Greek writing church fathers and doctors, St. Basil the Great and St. Chrysostom, together with the Latin writing church father and doctor, St. Austin. This support of St Augustine is particularly noteworthy given his development of Tyconius's type of allegorical interpretation, since he here seems to have exercised a care and caution more generally lacking in the Latin textual tradition, in which he detected that the variant is the type of thing Tyconius would cite *for all the wrong reasons* of coming up with something to fit in with his "Seven Rules." By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek, though correspondingly very strong, indeed near monolithic support, in the Latin. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, I consider the extraordinary support of the TR's reading by St. Austin in the Latin, on this occasion *just brings* the TR's reading "over the line" of a high level "B" in the range of 71-74%, and into the range of a 75-76% "A." Thus on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 25:1c an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:1c, "the bridegroom," is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the independent text type) Codex Z 035 (6th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles), 1071 (12th century, independent), 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels), 579 (13th century, mixed text), and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac Palestinian Version (c. 6th century); the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Georgian "A" Version (5th century); and Ethiopic Versions (c. 500 & Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

However, the variant, "the bridegroom and the bride," is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts* of Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), and 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere). It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century) and Pesitto (first half 5th century) Versions, and the Syriac Harclean

Version (616) in an asterisk marked out text (indicating it is not the representative reading of the Harclean Version); Coptic Middle Egyptian Version (3rd century); Armenian Version (5th century); Georgian “1” & “B” Versions (5th century); Slavic Version (9th century); and Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

Due to its support in the two main Alexandrian texts, for the wrong reasons, the right reading was adopted in the NU Text *et al.* However the strength of the “external support” in both the Western Text’s D 05, as well as e.g., the Latin, the Family 1 manuscripts, and the Syrian and Egyptian Versions, caused some concern for Westcott-Hort, who to some extent abandoning their “neutral Alexandrian Text” position put the variant in one of their relatively rare sidenotes. I.e., they were here attracted to the possibility of using their non-Alexandrian text pincer arm, but ultimately “shied away” from doing so here.

Hence at Matt. 25:1c the correct reading of “the bridegroom” is found in the ASV; and the correct reading is also found in the other neo-Alexandrian Versions we generally consider, namely, the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV. But like Westcott-Hort, a footnote is added referring to the variant in the RSV, ESV, NRSV, and Papists’ JB and NJB, e.g., at Matt. 25:1c, the main text of the New Revised Standard Version reads, “the bridegroom” (NRSV), but a footnote says, “Other ancient authorities add ‘and the bride’ (NRSV ftn.)

The convergence of so many neo-Alexandrians “itching” to use their non-Alexandrian text pincer arm here is notable, as is the fact that the power of the two main Alexandrian texts was, on this occasion, enough to stop them from putting this variant in the main text. (Cf. my comments on the non-Alexandrian text pincer arm at Matt. 21:24a.)

But an insight into their crazy thinking is found in the mad Scotsman’s Moffatt Bible.

At Matt. 25:1c we find that the semi neo-Alexandrian Moffatt was sufficiently distant in his thinking from the Neo-Alexandrians Proper, for him to “play the lunny tune” in his main text, which some of the Neo-Alexandrians Proper were only prepared to put in a footnote. Moffatt here exercised not his Alexandrian text pincer arm, but his non-Alexandrian text pincer arm with his reading at Matt. 25:1, “the bridegroom and the bride” (Moffatt Bible). He here provides a footnote explaining his thinking, “The words *kai* [and] *tes* [the] *numphes* [bride] are added by [the leading Western Text’s] D [05] [the Byzantine Text’s] X [033] [and the mixed text type] Theta [038], the Latin and Syriac versions etc. Their omission may have been due to the feeling of the later church that Jesus as the Bridegroom ought alone to be mentioned” (Moffatt Bible footnote to Matt. 25:1). This type of unsubstantiated argument which postulates for no valid reason that there might have been a “feeling” around “that Jesus as the Bridegroom ought alone to be mentioned,” is a long way short of anything that can be regarded as serious textual analysis of the Greek. It is only if textual analysis first determines a reading that one

might postulate possibilities for a variant. Moffatt here puts the cart before the horse!

Moreover, it shows how Moffatt sometimes favoured the Western Text when it had “external support” in “the Latin and Syriac versions,” together with some, albeit very slim, support elsewhere. It also shows how Moffatt was affected by a religiously liberal disposition in which the representative Byzantine text reading could be set aside on the basis of an unsubstantiated and indeed quite ridiculous theory about some “feeling” that he theorized from thin air might have been around, “that Jesus as the Bridegroom ought alone to be mentioned.”

Good Christian reader. Let us be perfectly frank about this matter. James Moffatt (1870-1944) was a Scottish Presbyterian who was never disciplined for his religious liberalism by the *Church of Scotland*. “Don’t hit us with the ‘Moffatt Bible rap’,” I hear good religiously conservative Presbyterians saying; and indeed it must be admitted that James Moffatt was a total disgrace to the true *Church of Scotland* Presbyterian tradition, which unlike Moffatt, historically upheld Biblical authority. But it also has to be admitted that the *Church of Scotland* was prepared to not only tolerate, but actually celebrate, a man in such “heresies” (I Cor 11:19). Presbyterians cannot have it both ways. Either they must accept “the ‘Moffatt Bible rap’,” or denounce as “apostate” the *Church of Scotland’s* hierarchy which harboured this heretic and refused to discipline him. I am pleased to say that there are some good Presbyterians who do the latter, but I am saddened to say that there are other Presbyterians who do the former. Either way, I condemn the Moffatt Bible, and the wider “academic” tradition of religious liberalism that it manifests. (On Moffatt and the Western text, cf. Commentary Vol. 4, at Matt. 26:22.)

Of course, this fight over the conflated reading of Matt. 25:1c is nothing new to we Neo-Byzantine defenders of the *Textus Receptus*. Following the majority Latin textual tradition which adopts the variant, as manifested in the old Latin Papists’ Clementine Vulgate, the old Latin Papists’ Douay-Rheims also reads at Matt. 25:1c, “the bridegroom and the bride.” We are fighting the religiously liberal semi neo-Alexandrian Moffatt where we fought the old Latin Papists afore in the Douay-Rheims & Clementine Vulgate. In the words of King Solomon, “there is no new thing under the sun” (Eccl. 1:9). Anglicans were aware of this type of thing when they declared in Article 19 of the Anglican 39 Articles, “The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached;” as were Presbyterian’s when they said in their *Westminster Confession* at 1:8, that the Scriptures were “immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages” (emphasis mine). In the words of Ps. 119:140, “Thy Word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.”

Matt. 25:2b “five of them were wise, and five were foolish” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Remarks & Textual Discussion.

In Lectionary 2378 at both the first reading (p. 39b) and second reading (p. 67b), an abbreviation is used for the “καὶ (*kai*, word 2)” that looks something like “ϛ”. While

the first reading follows the majority Byzantine text's word 4 as "*pente* ('five,' indeclinable in standard seminary Greek, feminine plural nominative adjective)"¹⁴⁰; in the second reading, Lectionary 2378 has declined word 4 as "*pentai*," either on the same adjective declensions used in standard seminary Greek for the majority Byzantine text's word 5, "*morai* ('foolish,' feminine plural nominative adjective, from *moros-a-on*"); or some other adjective declensions that uses the "*ai*" suffix for the feminine plural nominative adjective¹⁴¹. This declension of word 4 in the second reading of Lectionary 2378 at Matt. 25:2b as "*pentai*," is to the best of my knowledge a minority Byzantine variant not previously documented.

Moreover, the variant contains the majority Byzantine text's word 1, and this is declined in the majority Byzantine text in standard seminary Greek, "*phronimoi* ('wise,' feminine plural nominative adjective, from *phronimos*)"¹⁴². But Sigma 042 has declined word 1 as, "*phronimai*," either on the same adjective declensions used in standard seminary Greek for the majority Byzantine text's word 5, "*morai* ('foolish,' feminine plural nominative adjective, from *moros-a-on*"); or some other adjective declensions that uses the "*ai*" suffix for the feminine plural nominative adjective¹⁴³.

These Matt. 25:2b diversities on the declensions of word 4 (Lectionary 2378, 2nd reading) and word 1 (Sigma 042) remind us that when "we look at the manuscripts," we find that "in the real world," the declensions of standard seminary Greek are not always followed. As noted in previous volumes of this Textual Commentary, this type of thing raises thorny philosophical grammatical questions with regard to the issue, "Who determines such matters?" (Cf. Latin, "*fructus*" in Textual Commentary Vol. 1 at Matt. 3:8; and Greek "*eroton*" in Textual Commentary Vol. 2 at Matt. 15:23 in App. 3). We thank God that we are fortunate to live in an age where one can pick up various Lexicons such as Mounce's *Analytical Lexicon to the Greek NT* (1993) or Liddell & Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon*; but this was not possible in former eras such as the one Lectionary 2378 was written in. Therefore, how is one to best assess something like the Lectionary 2378 declension of word 4 as "*pentai*"? Is it best characterized as "a local dialect variant," or "an individual scribal variant," or "a scribal error"? Of course, related issues of multiple spellings of given words that varied between writers formerly existed in the English tongue, and to this day, some local dialect variations still occur between e.g., American English and Australian English. (Cf. my comments at Matt. 25:9b, "Preliminary

¹⁴⁰ Mounce's *Analytical Lexicon to the Greek NT* (1993), pp. 13 & 365.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-12 & 325.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 12 & 475. Such adjectives are declined from a nominative singular base with suffixes *-os* (masculine / feminine) or *-on* (neuter).

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-12 & 325. If e.g., following the form of *moros-a-on*, such adjectives are declined from a nominative singular base with suffixes *-os* (masculine), *-a* (feminine), or *-on* (neuter). No reference is made to such a declension form as found in Sigma 042 being used for *phronimos* in Liddell & Scott (p. 1956).

Remarks & Textual Discussion.”)

In this context I further note that Liddell & Scott’s *Greek-English Lexicon* says that “*pente*” is indeclinable with “*oi* [masculine plural declensions], *ai* [feminine plural declensions], *ta* [neuter plural declensions].” Thus here at Matt. 25:2b where is it “*ai* (the) *pente* (five),” this means that in standard Greek one would not, as in the second reading of Lectionary 2378, decline this as “*ai* (the) *pentai* (five).” But Liddell & Scott also state that “*pente*” became “*pempe*” in Aeolic, and that it was declined in Aeolic¹⁴⁴.

“Aeolic” refers to any of several local dialects of ancient Greek that (as far as we know) were first spoken in European Thessaly, Boeotia, in northern Greece, south of Greek Macedonia. Aeolic was then later spoken after c. 1,000 B.C. in Asiatic Aeolis (or Aeolia). Aeolis was a region with numerous cities on west coast Asia Minor (modern Turkey) along the Aegean Sea, e.g., Smyrna (Rev. 1:11; 2:8) (modern Izmir), extending in the north from Hellespont (modern Dardanelles) down south to the Hermus River (modern Gediz River), and also included some Greek speaking islands such as Lesbos and Tenedos.

The Aeolis region became and remained part of the Greek speaking Christian Byzantine Empire until its fall to the Arabic speaking locust horde of Mohammedans who in the 15th century came with the brutal and violent sword of Islam. Significantly then, Lectionary 2378 is an eleventh century Constantinople Lectionary from the Byzantine Empire that was sent to Greek speakers in Bulgaria. While Constantinople is north of the starting point of Aeolis in the Dardanelles, it is in relative proximity to the south of Constantinople. This *might* account for a Byzantine Empire scribe in Constantinople having an interest in its Greek speaking history; and *it is even possible*, though by no means certain, to speculate that he was either born and bred in this region before moving to the capital city of Constantinople, or he had some later acquired interest in, and personal knowledge of, this area of Aeolis. Therefore, does the second reading in Lectionary 2378 of “*ai* (the) *pentai* (five),” reflect the scribe’s interest in ancient Greek with some special reference to Aeolis which was then still part of the Greek speaking Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire? Did he thus create a semi-Aeolic dialect form of “*ai* (the) *pentai* (five),” in which he retained the standard Greek root form of “*pente*” rather than the Aeolic root form of “*pempe*,” while simultaneously declining it in some kind of “‘Aeolic’ way”? Did he intend this as some kind of scribal “textual trademark”? It seems “the real world” of manuscripts might sometimes raise more questions than answers! (Cf. my comments at Matt. 25:9b, “Preliminary Remarks & Textual Discussion.”) As usual in such instance, we have more questions than answers.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:2b the TR’s Greek, “*phronimoi* (‘wise,’ word 1) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *ai* (‘the,’ word 3, redundant in English translation; feminine nominative plural, definite article from *e*) *pente* (‘five,’ word 4) *morai* (‘[were] foolish,’ word 5),” i.e., “wise, and

¹⁴⁴ Liddell & Scott, p. 1361.

five *were* foolish” in the wider words, “five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish” (AV, showing AV’s italics), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices M 021 (9th century) and X 033 (10th century); Minuscles 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings, *supra*) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also supported as Latin, “*prudentes* (‘wise,’ word 1) ... *fatuae* (‘foolish,’ word 5),” in old Latin Version f (6th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers, Basil the Great (d. 379) and Chrysostom (d. 407).

A similar reading to the TR, omitting word 3, but containing words 1,2,4,5, and thus conveying the same basic meaning as the TR’s reading, is a minority Byzantine reading. Thus also showing the relevant order of words as Greek “*phronimoi* (‘wise,’ word 1) ... *morai* (‘[were] foolish,’ word 5),” this minority Byzantine reading is found in e.g., W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and K 017.

However, a variant omitting word 3, and with a different word order of 5,2,4,1, is a minority Byzantine reading. This variant showing the relevant order of words as Greek “*morai* (‘foolish,’ word 5) *kai* (‘and,’ word 2) *pente* (‘five,’ word 4) *phronimoi* (‘[were] wise,’ word 1),” i.e., “foolish, and five *were* wise” in the wider words, “five of them were foolish, and five *were* wise,” is found in Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century, declining word 1 as “*phronimai*,” *supra*) and Minuscule 12 (11th century). It is also found as Latin, “*fatuae* (‘foolish,’ word 5) ... *prudentes* (‘wise,’ word 1),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found as Latin, “*stultae* (‘foolish,’ word 5) ... *sapientes* (‘wise,’ word 1),” in old Latin Version d (5th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604)¹⁴⁵.

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text which is therefore correct. The origins of the variant are speculative; but on the balance of probabilities I think we can here stipulate that the changed word order was a deliberate alteration.

Was the omission of word 3 accidental? Due to ellipsis, did a scribe’s eye jump from the “*ai*” ending of word 2, “*kai* (‘and,’ word 2)” to the “*ai* (‘the’)” of word 3, thus accidentally omitting it?

Was the omission of the word 3 deliberate? Did a scribe consider that word 3 was “redundant and so unnecessary,” and then prune it away? Was this done at the same time as the rearrangement of the word order from 1,2,3,4,5 to 1,2,4,5, or was it done autonomously to this?

¹⁴⁵ Gregory uses the same words as the Vulgate *et al, supra*.

Concerning the changed word order which on the balance of probabilities I consider was a deliberate alteration. As previously discussed (see comments at Matt. 24:35, *supra*), in St. Matthew's Gospel there is a higher usage of the literary device of the chiasm that in the other three Gospels. Here at Matt. 25:2-4 we read in an "A-B-B-A" format chiasm:

"[A] And five of them were <u>wise</u> "	"[B] and five of were <u>foolish</u> ."
"[B] They that were <u>foolish</u> took their lamps, and took no oil with them:"	"[A] But the <u>wise</u> took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

First this is read in an A-B-B-A format as, "And five of them were wise and five of were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps." Then reading this back through the chiasm, and *leaving out some words once the parallelism is determined*, this is read as, "[A] And five of them were wise" and "[A] the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps." "[B] And five ... were foolish," and "[B] they that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them."

Did a copyist scribe who did not understand the usage of the chiasm in Matt. 25:2-4 think that because verse 3 refers to the "foolish" and verse 4 to "the wise," that it would "therefore be a stylistic improvement" to rearrange the order in verse 2 so that it reflected this same order, i.e., first the "foolish" and then the "wise"? Any such scribe whose arrogance led him to think that he could improve upon the Word of God was necessarily of an inferior quality. But alas, such bad scribes were sometimes found among the "many which corrupt the Word of God" (II Cor. 2:17).

The TR's reading has weak support in the Latin; but has strong support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine text reading over time, and through time. Its antiquity is also testified to by the ancient church fathers and doctors, St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom. The Received Text's usage of the chiasm is also typical of wider stylistically features of St. Matthew's Gospel. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek, but strong support in the Latin. But its clumsy failure to understand the contextual chiasm, looks like the type of blunder Origen might make, and so there is a reasonable chance, though not a definite certainty, that the later Latin translation of Origen reflects its origins with Origen. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, I consider this textual factor of the chiasm on this occasion *just brings* the TR's reading "over the line" of a high level "B" in the range of 71-74%, and into the range of a low level "A" of 75% plus. Therefore, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 25:2b an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:2b, "wise ...

foolish,” in the wider words, “five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish,” is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); and Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), 579 (13th century, mixed text); and the *Family 13 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is further found in Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

However, the variant, “foolish ... wise,” in the wider words, “five of them were foolish, and five were wise,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the independent text type) Codex Z 035 (6th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type, due to damaged text one can only read, “*m ...*” of “*morai*” / “foolish,” word 5; and this is later followed by “*phronimoi*” / “wise,” word 1), 157 (12th century, independent); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude). It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); Armenian Version (5th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Hence at Matt. 25:2b the ASV reads, “five of them were foolish, and five were wise.” So too, the incorrect variant is found in the NASB, RSV, NRSV, ESV, NIV, and TEV.

The neo-Alexandrian’s brainwashed minions like to talk about how “scholarship has improved” since the *Textus Receptus* was composed, as if human wisdom were the paramount ingredient in the preservation of God’s Word. But while they may thus “chirp’n’squeak” about how this variant’s reading as found in e.g., the post *Vatican II Council* (1962-5) new neo-Alexandrian Papists’ Roman *Catholic RSV* (1965), *Jerusalem Bible* (1966), or *New Jerusalem Bible* (1985), is thus “more accurate” than the *Authorized Version* (1611) based on the *Received Text*, the reality is very different indeed. This type of thing is nothing new. Neo-Byzantines fought the pre-*Vatican II Council* old Latin Papists precisely at this point here at Matt. 25:2b in the olden times following the *Romish Council of Trent* (1545-63), since the erroneous variant is also found in the *Clementine Vulgate* (1592) and the *Douay-Rheims* (1582) as, “five of them were foolish and five wise” (*Douay-Rheims*). It was a bad variant back then, and it is still a bad variant now. God’s truth does not change, for “Jesus Christ” is “the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Heb. 13:8). Therefore, let us thank him for his “Word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15) as found in the OT and NT *Received Texts*, “For” “the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord” (Ps. 117:2).

Matt. 25:3a “They that *were* foolish” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The Latin here presents us with some unusual difficulties. E.g., old Latin Version q (6th / 7th century) reads, “*Fatuae* (the foolish) *autem* (But / And / For),” and old Latin Version ff1 (10th / 11th century) reads, “*Stultae* (the foolish) *autem* (But / And / For).” Latin “*autem*” most commonly would mean “But,” though it can mean “And” (e.g., Matt. 24:49, Vulgate) or “For” (e.g., Luke 20:38, Vulgate). In my opinion, any of these might be the meaning of Latin “*autem*” here, and so it might be reconstructing Greek, “*kai* (And),” “*de* (But),” or “*gar* (For).” Hence I make no reference to these old Latin Versions, *infra*.

The reading, “*Sed* (But) *quinque* (five) *fatuae* (the foolish),” i.e., “But the five foolish” etc., is found in the Vulgate and old Latin Versions b (5th century), f (6th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), and c (12th / 13th century), as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D., writing “*quinque*” as Roman numeral “u” not “v” i.e., “5”¹⁴⁶), Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century); and early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604). Is “*Sed* (But) *quinque* (five)” one act of textual corruption i.e., does it constitute a separate *Variant 4* so that it is therefore a different variant to the “*Sed* (But)” of *Variant 1, infra*? If so, this is a sufficiently loose’n’liberal “dynamic equivalent” for us to be reasonably unsure as to what the original Greek text would have read. Or is “*Sed* (But) *quinque* (five)” the work of two quite different corrupter scribes, so that the “*Sed* (But)” element is the same as, and may be cited in support of, *Variant 1, infra*? Which of these two possibilities is correct? While this reading is found in the old Latin Papists’ Clementine Vulgate, and Douay-Rheims as, “But the five foolish” etc., on this occasion, I shall exercise a discretion to leave out certain variants, and so not discuss this reading, *infra*.

For a different view to mine on the general value of the Latin at this reading, see the textual apparatuses of Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72) and von Soden (1913). Suffice to say that “grabbing hold of” most of the Latin texts here at Matt. 25:3a and saying exactly which Greek readings they “support” reveals them to be “slippery” in “the grabber’s hand.” The relationship between most of the Latin texts and the underpinning Greek texts that they are coming from at Matt. 25:3a, and therefore the value of most of the Latin texts here, is at best open to diverse interpretations, and at worst, is

¹⁴⁶ Here at Matt. 25:3 the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (chapter CXLVIII) reads “*quinque* (five);” but at Matt. 25:16 the Book of Armagh again reads “u” (twice) whereas the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (chapter CXLIX) reads “V” (first time, and “*quinque*” second time). For such purposes, “u” and “v” are entirely interchangeable. Thus e.g., in calculating the number in Roman numerals of the semi-formal Papal title, Latin, “*Vicarius* (Vicar) *Filii* (of the Son) *Dei* (of God),” the “u” of “*Vicarius*” is given the value of 5. See my work *The Roman Pope is the Antichrist* (2006, 2nd edition 2010), Appendix: “The Mark of the Beast – 666” (<http://www.gavinmcgrathbooks.com>).

controversial. I thus make little use of the Latin at this reading, *infra*.

Similar issues to whether the Vulgate *et al* inside the closed class of sources is *Variant 4* or a further corruption *Variant 1*, exists outside the closed class of sources in Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron. What is one to make of the origins of the reading rendered from the Arabic by Ciasca's Latin as, "*istae* (those) *autem* (But) *fatuae* (the foolish)" i.e., "But those foolish" etc.? Is this a *Variant 5* or a further corrupted *Variant 1*? Therefore no reference is made to the Arabic Diatessaron, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:3a the TR's Greek, "*aitines* ('Whosoever' = 'They that,' AV, feminine plural nominative pronoun, from '*ostis / hostis* *mōrai* ([were] foolish)," i.e., "They that *were* foolish" (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53) and X 033 (10th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings¹⁴⁷) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers, Basil the Great (d. 379) and Chrysostom (d. 407).

Variant 1, may be reconstructed as Greek, "*ai* (the) *de* (But) *mōrai* (foolish)," i.e., "But the foolish" etc. . This is found as Latin, "*Sed* (But) *fatuae* (the foolish)," in old Latin Version h (5th century).

Variant 2, may be reconstructed as Greek, "*ai* (the) *oun* (Then) *mōrai* (foolish)," i.e., "Then the foolish" etc. . This is found as Latin, "*Stultae* (the foolish) *ergo* (Then)," in old Latin Version d (5th century); and as Latin, "*Fatuae* (the foolish) *ergo* (Then)," in old Latin Version ff2 (5th century).

Variant 3, Greek, "*ai* ([when] the) *gar* (For) *mōrai* (foolish)," i.e., "For *when* the foolish," is a minority reading found in Codices Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century) and Phi 043 (6th century, Matthew & Mark).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct. The origins of the variants are conjectural.

Was *Variant 1* an accidental alteration? Due to a paper fade / loss, did the original "*aitines* ('They that') *mōrai* ([were] foolish)," come to look something like "*ai::: mōrai*"? Was this then "reconstructed from context" by a scribe as "*ai* (the) *de* (But) *mōrai* (foolish)"? If so, was he influenced in this by the style of the immediately following verse 4 which starts, "*ai* (the) *de* (But) *phronimoi* (wise)"?

¹⁴⁷ First reading (p. 39b), first word spelt "*aitines*;" but in the second reading (p. 67b) revowelling the epsilon ("e") to alpha iota ("ai") i.e., "*aitinai*." This is a well-established local dialect revowelling, cf. my comments at e.g., Volume 1 (Matt. 1-14) at Matt. 5:44a & Matt. 5:44b; or Volume 2 (Matt. 15-20) at Matt. 16:8b. Why is it so revowelled in Lectionary 2378 at the second reading, but not the first?

Was *Variant 1* a deliberate alteration? Did a scribe seeking to create “a stylistic balance” with the “*ai* (the) *de* (But) *phronimoi* (wise)” of Matt. 25:4, deliberately alter Matt. 25:3a to “*ai* (the) *de* (But) *mōrai* (foolish)”?

Was *Variant 2* an accidental alteration? Due to a paper fade / loss, did the original “*aitines* (‘They that’) *mōrai* ([were] foolish),” come to look something like “*ai::: mōrai*”? Was this then “reconstructed from context” by a scribe as “*ai* (the) *oun* (Then) *mōrai* (foolish)”? Was he influenced in this “stylistic” decision by the presence of “*oun* (therefore)” in Matt. 25:27,28? Did he cross-apply in his mind the general style of “*ei* (If) *oun* (then)” at Matt. 7:11; 22:45 to “*ai* (the) *oun* (Then)”? If so, did he do so with some reference to the “*oun* (so) *ai* (the) *geneai* (generations)” at the very beginning of St. Matthew’s Gospel (Matt. 1:17)?

Was *Variant 2* a deliberate alteration? Did a scribe think it “a stylistic improvement” to use the conjunction “*oun* (Then)”? Did he erroneously think “it made the passage flow better”?

Was *Variant 3* an accidental alteration? *Variant 3*’s “*ai* (the)” is a feminine plural nominative definite article (from *ē*), and so matches the suffix of “*mōrai* (foolish),” which is a feminine plural nominative adjective (from *mōros*¹⁴⁸). Therefore, did the original “*aitines* (‘They that’) *mōrai* ([were] foolish),” after a paper fade / loss, go from “*aitines mōrai*” to look something like “*ai::: mōrai*”? Was this then “reconstructed from context” by a scribe as “*ai gar mōrai*”? If so, did he get the “*gar*” of “*ai* ([when] the) *gar* (For) *mōrai* (foolish),” from the nearby verse 14, “For (*gar*) the kingdom of heaven is as a man” etc.? Was he influenced in his thinking by the type of construction we find at Matt. 19:14, “*ton* (‘the,’ redundant in English translation, neuter plural genitive definite article, from *to*) *gar* (for) *toiouton* (‘of such,’ neuter plural genitive pronoun, from *toioutos*)” i.e., “for of such”? (Cf. Matt. 6:34; 11:30; 14:3; 15:4.) If so, he would have done better to look closer to home, and see the “*aitines* (which)” of Matt. 25:2 (cf. Matt. 27:55). Alas, so much is lost to us in the unrecorded “dark ages” of textual transmission history that we just do not know. ... *So many questions. ... So few answers.*

Was *Variant 3* a deliberate alteration? Did a scribe think it “a stylistic improvement” to use the conjunction “*gar* (For)”? Did he erroneously think “it made the passage flow better”?

Were these three variants deliberate or accidental alterations, or some combination thereof? We do not know. But we do know that they were changes to the reading of the *Textus Receptus* here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative

¹⁴⁸ The (singular nominative) neuter form of *mōros-a-on* i.e. *mōros* (masculine) – *mōra* (feminine) – *mōron* (neuter), gives rise to our English word, “moron.”

Byzantine reading over time, and through time, dating from ancient times (W 032). With no good textual argument against it, it enjoys the further support of the Greek writing ancient church fathers and doctors, St. Basil the Great and St. Chrysostom. By contrast, *Variants 1 & 2* have weak definite support in the Latin, and no support in the Greek; although depending on how one argues the origins of *Variant 1*, some may conjecture *Variant 1* has some stronger support in the Latin; and *Variant 3* has weak support in the Greek, and no support in the Latin. Taking these factors into account, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 25:3a an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:3a, "They that (*aitines*) were foolish," is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 1071 (12th century, independent), 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is further found in the Syriac Harclean h Version (616); and Armenian Version (5th century).

Variant 1, "But (*de*) the (*ai*) foolish," is found in (the independent text type) Codex Z 035 (6th century) and Minuscule 157 (12th century, independent).

Variant 2, "Then (*oun*) the (*ai*) foolish," is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century).

Variant 3, "For (*gar*) when the (*ai*) foolish," is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and Minuscule 33 (9th century, mixed text type). It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century).

The incorrect *Variant 3* entered the NU Text *et al.* Thus at Matt. 25:3a the ASV reads, "For the foolish, when" etc. . So too the erroneous *Variant 3* is found in the NASB, RSV, and ESV.

What is one to make of the of the type "translation" of Matt. 25:3a found in the *New English Bible*, *Revised English Bible*, and *New Revised Standard Version*, and rendered in e.g., the NRSV as, "When the foolish" etc. (NRSV)? It looks like a trimmed down form of *Variant 3*. Is it trimmed down on the basis of translation philosophy removing "unnecessary conjunctions," or on the basis of religiously liberal form criticism? Probably the former, but possibly the latter, with religiously liberal

“translations” like the NEB, REB, and NRSV, one just never really knows.

What is one to make of the type “translation” of Matt. 25:3a found in the *Twentieth Century New Testament*, *New International Version*, and *Today’s English Version*, as well as the Papists’ *Jerusalem Bible* and *New Jerusalem Bible*, and rendered in e.g., the NIV as, “The foolish ones” etc. (NIV)? On the basis of the neo-Alexandrian textual “love affair” with the Alexandrian text’s *Variant 3*, as with the NRSV, we can fairly safely guess that the TCNT, NIV, TEV, JB, and NJB, are based on *Variant 3*, and that this is a “dynamic equivalent” that removes “redundant conjunctives such as ‘gar (for)’.” But of course, such a loose’n’liberal philosophy of “translation” could just as easily make the same claim, and so achieve the same translation, from the starting point of the conjunctions in *Variants 1 & 2*. So how is one to know for sure if the TCNT, NIV, TEV, JB, and NJB, are based on *Variant 1*, *Variant 2*, or *Variant 3*? Perhaps the only thing we can say with definitive certainty about the TCNT, NIV, TEV, JB, and NJB here at Matt. 25:3a, is that like the NRSV, *they certainly do not follow the correct reading of the TR!*

What is one to make of the type “translation” of Matt. 25:3a found in Moffatt’s Bible as, “For although the stupid” etc.? Certainly the “For” comes from *Variant 3*, but from whence cometh the “although”? Presumably from the dark fantasizing recesses of the religiously liberal mind of that “mad rat,” James Moffatt.

Why so much “fudging with fancy footwork” here at Matt. 25:3a by “translations” such as the NEB, REB, NRSV, TCNT, NIV, TEV, JB, NJB, and Moffatt Bible? The answer lies in the fact that they do not believe in either the verbal Divine inspiration of Scripture (II Tim. 3:16), nor the Divine Preservation of Scripture (I Peter 1:25), and so how they render their *Variant 3* is very much, *comme ci, comme ça*¹⁴⁹.

Matt. 25:4a “their vessels” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Remarks & Textual Discussion.

Here at Matt. 25:4a, inside the closed class of sources, old Latin Version d supports the TR’s reading, whereas outside the closed class of sources, Greek D 05 follows the variant. This fact once again reminds us that while we find value in the Latin text of the Greek-Latin diglot, *Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis*; we find no such value in the unreliable Western Greek text readings of its Greek text. Though the Western Greek Text had a general accessibility over time, it is clearly a corrupt text, and so was rightly rejected by the great neo-Byzantine textual analysts of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Therefore we use the Western Greek text no more for determining the NT text than we use the non-Byzantine Greek text parts of manuscripts containing both Byzantine Greek text and non-Byzantine Greek text components. E.g., we only use the

¹⁴⁹ From the Latin language of French, “comme (like) ci (this), comme (like) ça (that),” meaning, “so-so.”

Byzantine text sections of *Codex Alexandrinus* (A 02, 5th century, Byzantine text in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25; Alexandrian text in Acts to Revelation) or *Codex Freerianus* (W 032, 5th century, Byzantine text in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53; Alexandrian text in Luke 1:1-8:12 & John; Western text in Mark 1:1-5:30; and for those who consider there is a “Caesarean” text, “Pre-Caesarean” text in Mark 5:31-16:20; or for those who do not consider there is a “Caesarean” text, mixed text type in Mark 5:31-16:20).

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:4a the TR’s Greek, “*tois* (‘the,’ word 1, redundant in English translation) *aggeiois* (‘vessels¹⁵⁰, word 2) *auton* (‘of them’ = ‘their,’ word 3),” i.e., “their vessels” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53; word 2 spelt as, “*aggiois*”), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century; word 2 spelt as, “*aggiois*”), and X 033 (10th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings¹⁵¹) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also found as Latin, “*vasis* (vessels) *suis* (their),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), f (6th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.¹⁵²) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers, Basil the Great (d. 379) and Chrysostom (d. 407); ancient church Latin writer, Augustine (d. 430); and early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the

¹⁵⁰ By transliteration convention (which I generally do not follow), the “gg” of “*aggeiois*” is usually transliterated as “ng,” i.e., “*angeiois*.”

¹⁵¹ In Lectionary 2378’s first reading (p. 39b) word 2 is written something like, “*qγγειοιc*”; but at the second reading (p. 67b), it is written something like, “*dΓΓ*” followed by a symbol for “*ει* (*ei*)” in this Lectionary that looks something like a “6” and “j” joined together but without the dot of our “j”, i.e., something like 6j (joined together), followed by what *prima facie* looks like “*ειc*” i.e., overall something like “*dΓΓ6jειc*”. But what *prima facie* looks like an epsilon, “*ε*”, is in fact an omicron, “*ο*”, in which the running-writing join of the “*ο*” is made lower, something like in a theta, “*θ*”, and the scribe failed to join up the bottom part of the “*ο*”, so that the “*οιc*” *prima facie* looks like “*ειc*”. Such are the types of issues one may encounter in handwritten manuscripts. The difference between something like “*qγγειοιc*” (“*aggeiois*” in first reading) and something like “*dΓΓ6jειc*” (“*aggeiois*” in second reading), highlights the diversity of script one can find even internally in some handwritten manuscripts such as this Lectionary.

¹⁵² As occurs with a variety of compound words found in the Book of Armagh, from the Vulgate’s “*in* (in) *vasis* (vessels) *suis* (their),” this manuscript unites the “*in vasis*” into the compound word, “*invasis*” i.e., “*invasis* (in vessels) *suis* (their).”

Great (d. 604)¹⁵³.

However, a variant omitting word 3 and so reading, Greek, “*tois* (‘the,’ word 1) *aggeiois* (‘vessels,’ word 2),” i.e., “the vessels,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 924 (12th century). It is further found as Latin, “*vasis* (the vessels),” in old Latin Versions h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), and aur (7th century). It is also found in the ancient church Latin writer, Arnobius (d. after 455).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text which thus must stand. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental omission? The Greek “*auton* (of them)” is sometimes abbreviated when it comes at the end of a line to four letters in W 032 as “*auto~*”¹⁵⁴; or in Lectionary 1968 to four letters, “*auon*” with the “*t*” on top over the “*o*”¹⁵⁵; or in Lectionary 1968 to two letters, “*av*” above which in the middle of these two letters is the “*τ*,” above which is a large “*~*” shape, above which is a smaller “*^*” shape¹⁵⁶. Particularly if it was abbreviated in this or other similar fashion at the end of a line, but even if it was unabbreviated at the end of a line, was the “*auton*” lost in an undetected paper fade?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe consider that “the addition of ‘*auton*’ is unnecessarily wordy”? Did he thus arrogantly and impiously decide to prune it away?

Was the omission deliberate or accidental? We do not know. But we do know that the correct reading has here been preserved for us at Matt. 25:4a in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has strong support in both the Greek and Latin textual traditions. It enjoys the further support of the ancient church fathers and doctors, St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom in the Greek, together with St. Austin in the Latin; as well as the support of the early mediaeval church doctor, St. Gregory the Great in the Latin. By contrast, the variant has very weak support in the Greek, and relatively weak support in the Latin. On the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 25:4a an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

¹⁵³ Gregory uses the same words as the Vulgate *et al, supra*.

¹⁵⁴ E.g., at Matt. 25:3b (see Appendix 1 footnote).

¹⁵⁵ E.g., at Matt. 21:7b (see Appendix 3 footnote).

¹⁵⁶ See Matt. 25:4b, (see Appendix 3 footnote, for second reading, p. 150a).

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:4a, “their vessels,” is found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the largely independent but also mixed text type) Codex 0249 (Matt. 25:1-9, 10th century). It is also found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac Harclean h Version (616); Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

However, the variant, “the vessels,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the independent text type) Codex Z 035 (6th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); and is the most probable reading of Codex 892 (9th century, mixed text type), although the manuscript’s state of preservation makes complete verification of this uncertain. It is further found in Minuscule 700 (11th century, independent); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts* (*Swanson*), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude). It is also found in the Syriac Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century) and Pesitto (first half 5th century) (616) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); and Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

The erroneous variant was adopted at Matt. 25:4a by the NU Text *et al.*

Influenced by e.g., (the mixed text type) Codex C 04, Syriac Harclean and Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Versions, and possibly also Dillmann’s Ethiopic Version; the RV, ASV, TCNT, and Moffatt Bible translators decided to set aside their Alexandrian pincer arm and exercise their non-Alexandrian text pincer arm here at Matt. 25:4a. Hence they did not here follow the neo-Alexandrian Westcott-Hort text (RV, ASV, & TCNT), or highly inaccurate von Soden’s Greek main text (Moffatt); so that for the wrong reasons, they adopted the correct reading, “their vessels” (RV, ASV, & Moffatt) or “their jars” (TCNT). Of course, in the case of the TCNT and Moffatt, the fact that they do not use italics for added words, means that it is also possible that they are following the variant and then adding back in “their” as part of one of their “dynamic equivalents.” Such are the confusions and frustrations caused by the TCNT and Moffatt Bible.

But on the other hand, most of the neo-Alexandrian Versions we consider in these commentaries went with the neo-Alexandrian texts, and hence the incorrect variant is

found at Matt. 25:4a in the NASB, RSV, NRSV, ESV, NIV, TEV, NEB, and REB.

The pre-Vatican II old Latin Papists here adopted the correct reading in both the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims. Thus the Douay-Rheims correctly reads at Matt. 25:4a, “their vessels.” By contrast, the post Vatican II neo-Alexandrian Papists here adopted the erroneous variant in their JB and NJB.

To the questions at Matt. 25:4a, “What fool would here jettison the sparkling glories of Eastern Christendom’s majority Greek Text and Western Christendom’s majority Latin text found in, for example, St. Jerome’s Vulgate; and exchange it for the trimmed down reading found in the mangy old corrupted Syriac Sinaitic and Armenian Versions?” Or “What fool would here set aside the glistening glories of a reading supported by the church doctors, St. Basil the Great, St. John Chrysostom, St. Augustine, and St. Gregory the Great; and in its place put the prunists’ reading centring on a couple of scruffy old corrupt texts from Alexandria?” To these questions, back comes the answer, “Only the spiritually blinded and intellectually shallow, neo-Alexandrians!” Certainly as far as we neo-Byzantines are concerned, when it comes to composing the New Testament Greek text, we “don’t give a brass farthing” for what manuscripts outside the closed class of sources say, such as e.g., the Armenian Version, Arabic Diatessaron, or the Alexandrian text’s Codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus.

Matt. 25:6a “the bridegroom cometh” (TR & AV) {A}

The TR’s Greek, “*o* (‘the,’ word 1) *numphios* (‘bridegroom,’ word 2) *erchetai* (‘cometh,’ word 3),” is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and Pi 041 (9th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also supported as Latin, “*sponsus* (the bridegroom) *venit* (cometh),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century, “*sponsus* [the bridegroom] *est* [is] *venit* [coming]”), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers, Methodius (d. c. 250 or c. 257 or c. 311), Basil the Great (d. 379), and Chrysostom (d. 407); the early mediaeval church writer, Pseudo-Chrysostom in a Latin work (6th century); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604)¹⁵⁷.

However, a variant omitting word 3 and so reading, Greek, “*o* (‘the,’ word 1) *numphios* (‘bridegroom,’ word 2),” is found in the ancient church Greek writers, Methodius (d. c. 250 or c. 257 or c. 311) and Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444). It is also found as Latin, “*sponsus* (the bridegroom),” in old Latin Version d (5th century).

¹⁵⁷ Gregory uses the same words as the Vulgate *et al, supra*.

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is thus correct. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental omission? The TR reads, “*o* (the) *numphios* (bridegroom) *erchetai* (cometh) *exerchesthe* (go yet out)” etc. . Did the eye of a scribe become confused due to a form of ellipsis between the “*erche*” of “*erchetai*” and the “*erche*” in “*exerchesthe*”? In a moment of time, without thinking much about the matter, as his eye darted back’n’forth, did he first go from the “*erche*” of “*erchetai*” to the “*erche*” in “*exerchesthe*,” and then “correcting himself” back to the “*ex*” of “*exerchesthe*,” which he then copied down, thereby accidentally omitting the “*erche*”?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a corrupter scribe think “it sounded more dramatic” to prune away the “*erchetai* (cometh),” so that it read simply, “Behold, the bridegroom”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We do not know. We cannot know. But we can know that it was an omission.

The reading of the *Textus Receptus* (TR) has rock solid support in both the Greek and Latin textual traditions. It enjoys the further support of such church writers as the ancient church fathers and doctors, St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom in the Greek; and the early mediaeval church doctor, St. Gregory the Great in the Latin. By contrast the variant has weak support in the Greek and Latin, and no good textual argument to commend it. Weighing up these factors, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 25:6a an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the TR’s correct reading at Matt. 25:6a, “the bridegroom cometh (*erchetai* from *erchomai* i.e., ‘cometh’),” is found in a similar reading in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century, reading *exerchetai* from *exerchomai* = *ex* / ‘out’ + *erchomai* i.e., “cometh out”). It is further found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is also found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude); and the *Family 13 Manuscripts* (Swanson), which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is further found in the Armenian Version (5th century); Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th

century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

However, the variant, “the bridegroom,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as at the hand of a later “corrector” scribe of the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05. It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the independent text type) Codex Z 035 (6th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century); and Minuscule 700 (11th century, independent). It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions.

At Matt. 25:6a the erroneous various was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Hence the ASV reads, “Behold the bridegroom!” But by changing the Authorized Version’s, “Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him” (AV), to the American Standard Version’s, “Behold the bridegroom! Come ye forth to meet him;” the unwary reader might be tripped up by the ASV’s “Come ye (*exerchesthe*)” replacing the AV’s “go ye (*exerchesthe*),” so as to miss the dropping of the “cometh” (AV) from “Behold the bridegroom!” (ASV). Are these the deliberately devious ways of the ASV translators seeking to try and cloak from their readers the full extent of the injury and harm that they have done to the Received Text’s reading of the AV? Is it just a quaint coincidence that this devious craftiness was also followed by the ASV’s sons, the NASB and RSV, and ASV’s grandsons, the NRSV and ESV?

The incorrect variant was also followed at Matt. 25:6a by the NASB, RSV, NRSV, ESV, NIV, and TEV.

The old Latin Papists followed the correct reading in the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims Version. Hence at Matt. 25:6a the Douay-Rheims reads, “Behold the bridegroom cometh. Go ye forth to meet him.” By contrast, the new neo-Alexandrian Papists adopted the erroneous variant’s reading in their [Roman] Catholic RSV, JB, and NJB.

We know from “Vindication of Protestants” by the *Church of England* Canon du Moulin (1610-1684) of Canterbury Cathedral, that during the 1640s and 1650s civil war era, Popish Jesuits entered England, palmed themselves off as Puritans, and joined the Roundhead’s army. Thus following the Battle of Worcester in 1651, in which King Charles II’s army was made up of godly Scottish Puritan Presbyterian Protestants; when Charles II hid in the Royal Oak at Boscobel so that Cromwell’s revolutionary republican Roundheads could not find and kill him, and a Roundhead walked under that tree in search of Charles II, we cannot be sure if that Roundhead was a covert Papist or an apostate Protestant Puritan. So too, we can never be sure if neo-Alexandrian attacks are coming from Papists or apostate Protestants. The Papists’ Jerusalem Bible and apostate Protestant Puritan’s Moffatt Bible, both first prune the text at Matt. 25:6a in harmony with the variant, and also by further omitting, “Behold;” and then conflate the text with some additional words. E.g., Moffatt adds “here is” in his reading, “Here is the bridegroom” (Moffatt Bible). Such are the mad ravings of Papist and apostate Protestant alike.

Matt. 25:6b “him” (TR & AV) {A}*Preliminary Remarks.*

I refer the reader to the Preface of this Volume 3, section, “Codex Alexandrinus’s Byzantine Text Gospels: ‘The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church’.” We now say, “Bonjour” (French, “Hi” / “Goodday,” Australian colloquialism) to *Codex Alexandrinus* or Manuscript London; and it is notable that in the combination of *Codex Alexandrinus* (A 02) and *Codex Freerianus* (W 032), we have almost all of the four Gospels in two fifth century A.D. Byzantine texts. Codex A 02 (*Codex Alexandrinus*, 5th century, London) is missing a number of folios but is Byzantine text in its incomplete Gospels which cover St. Matthew 25:6b-28:20, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25. This manuscript comes to us through the hands of two holy martyrs of the Protestant Christian faith, Cyril Lucar (m. 1638) and King Charles I (m. 1649).

As I say in the Preface: “Tertullian (d. after 220), coined the now well known saying, ‘The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church’ I pray God that the blood of these two noble martyrs, through whose hands passed this *Codex Alexandrinus*, may not be spilt in vain; but that among other things, God might bless the wonderful treasures that this manuscript has in its Byzantine text Gospels to the hearts and minds of all good Christian readers.”

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

Von Soden (1913) says in his textual apparatus that the variant is found in his $\text{I}\pi$ group except for ϵ 17 (von Soden’s Vol. II, p. 97). *Prima facie* there are four identifiable Byzantine manuscripts in this $\text{I}\pi$ group, N 022 (6th century, Matt-John incomplete, von Soden’s ϵ 19), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century, von Soden’s ϵ 18), O 023 (6th century, St. Matthew’s Gospel incomplete, von Soden’s ϵ 21), Phi 043 (6th century, St. Matthew’s & St. Mark’s Gospels, purple parchment, von Soden’s ϵ 17). As N 022 and O 023 are vacant at this place (von Soden’s Vol. 1:1, pp. 121-2); and von Soden excludes his ϵ 17 (Phi 043), this leaves us with Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century, von Soden’s ϵ 18).

However, it is clear to me from my printed copy of Sigma 042 (Harnack, 1882/3, reprint 1991), that in fact the “*autou* (him)” is present in this manuscript. I.e., since it seems unlikely that Harnack would here add an “*autou*,” I think Harnack’s printed manuscript of Sigma 042 is in all probability reliable here. This fact reminds us that while the broad general work of von Soden is most useful, at the level of the individual itemization of this or that manuscript at this or that reading, von Soden made some mistakes. But we neo-Byzantines do not make the mistake of Jack Moorman and the USA based *Dean Burgon Society*, of “throwing the baby” of von Soden’s macro-manuscript work “out with the bathwater” of some of his inaccurate micro-manuscript work¹⁵⁸. Thus while this micro-manuscript error of von Soden with regard to Sigma 042

¹⁵⁸ See Textual Commentary Vol. 2 (Matt. 15-20), Preface, “* Determining the

at Matt. 25:6b does not impinge on “the big picture” of his work with regard to determining the representative Byzantine text from his excellent macro-manuscript work, so that we can with confidence use Hodges & Farstad’s or Robinson & Pierpont’s von Soden based majority texts in St. Matthew to Jude (other than where von Soden shows a substantial manuscript division in Matthew to Jude and so this means these majority texts are exercising a discretion in their “majority text” reading, in which instance the matter requires further analysis of both von Soden’s data and relevant textual matters)¹⁵⁹; nevertheless, it does mean that at the micro level, his itemization of this or that manuscript at this or that reading may be in error.

Of course, this same issue of having to generally accept von Soden’s micro references exists more widely, unless that is one can replicate the work of his *c.* 40 research assistants going out for *c.* 15 years to collate the data on virtually all codices and minuscules. I also note that the variant is established in the Greek through reference to two ancient church writers (Tischendorf’s 8th ed.), of which one is also referred to by von Soden (Cyril of Alexandria).

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:6b the TR’s Greek, “*autou* (‘of him’ = ‘him’),” in the wider words, “go ye out to meet him (*autou*)” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and K 017 (9th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also supported in the Latin, “*ei* (‘to him’ = ‘him’),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writers, Methodius (d. *c.* 250 or *c.* 257 or *c.* 311), Basil the Great (d. 379), and Chrysostom (d. 407); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604)¹⁶⁰.

However, a variant omits Greek, “*autou* (him),” i.e., requiring that this word be supplied as part of English translation as seen in the following added italics, “go ye out to

representative Byzantine Text;” and “* ‘Riding the great white stallion’ that is ‘stabled’ at von Soden’s ‘Ohio ranch’.”

¹⁵⁹ I put in abeyance the issue of determining the representative Byzantine text for the Book of Revelation till a future volume (probably the first textual commentary volume on Revelation).

¹⁶⁰ Gregory uses the same word as the Vulgate *et al, supra*.

meet *him*.” It is found in the ancient church Greek writers, Methodius (d. c. 250 or c. 257 or c. 311) and Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which thus must stand. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental omission? E.g., in Manuscript Washington (W 032) at Matt. 15:27 (p. 56), the first two letters of “*auton* (their)” are written at the end of a line on a page, and then the last three letters are “squeezed in” underneath at what is the far right of the line above. With regard to the variant here at Matt. 25:6b, was the “*autou* (him)” likewise “squeezed in” at the end of a line on a page by being written under the line to the far right? Was the ink perhaps a bit lighter because the scribe did not dip his nib as he rushed to finish off this page? Was it then lost in a subsequent undetected paper fade?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe consider that the “*autou* (him)” was “redundant” because “anyone with half a brain could infer the word from context”? Did he then arrogantly prune it away? If so, this scribe was “a real butcher,” because in doing so he produced such a mutilated text here at Matt. 26:6b, that it textually “cries out loudly” due to the pain here inflicted upon it.

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We cannot be sure. But we can be sure that this was an omission of the text here faithfully preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine text over time and through time; and monolithic support in the Latin textual tradition; in both instances dating from ancient times. It enjoys the further support of the ancient church fathers and doctors St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom in the Greek; and the early mediaeval church doctor St. Gregory the Great in the Latin. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek, no good textual argument to commend it, and no support in the Latin. On the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 25:6b an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:6b, “him,” is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the largely independent but also mixed text type) Codex 0249 (Matt. 25:1-9, 10th century). It is further found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family I Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582

(12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; and the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

However, the variant omitting "him," is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as Minuscule 700 (11th century, independent).

The textual data here presented something of a problem for the neo-Alexandrians. On the one hand they wanted to follow the two main Alexandrian texts. But on the other hand, the lack of "external" support, and the curtness of omitting "*autou* (him)," looks so much like a prunist's "rough-shod" "rough riding," that even the neo-Alexandrians balked at it. What were the neo-Alexandrians to do? "I know," said Tischendorf, "I'll follow Codex Sinaiticus," and so the variant is found at Matt. 25:6b in Tischendorf's 8th edition (1869-72). "We know," said Westcott & Hort, "we'll follow the very neutral text of Codex Vaticanus," and so the variant is found at Matt. 25:6b in Westcott-Hort (1881). "That all sounds good to me," said Erwin Nestle, and so the variant is found at Matt. 25:6b in Nestle's 21st edition (1952). "Oh, ... We wish we knew," said NU Text Committee members in 1975, 1983, and 1993, such as Bruce Metzger and Kurt Aland in the foreground, and the black-robed Jesuit, Carlo Martini lurking in the background; so that the "*autou* (him)" was put in square brackets as entirely optional in e.g., the UBS 3rd (1975) and 3rd corrected (1983) editions, and the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland's 27th edition (1993) and UBS's 4th revised edition (1993).

What were the neo-Alexandrian versions to make of this matter at Matt. 25:6b? The *American Standard Version* translators of 1901 were swayed by the arguments in favour of using their non-Alexandrian text pincer arm over their Alexandrian pincer arm, and so rendered this as "him" in bold print rather than italics (ASV). But the *New American Standard Bible* revisers of the ASV took a different view, and rendered this as "*him*" in italics (NASB), thus following the variant.

What did the RSV, NRSV, ESV, NIV, TEV, TCNT, NEB, REB, Moffatt, and Papists' JB and NJB do here at Matt. 25:6b? Do they agree with the ASV (TR's reading) or NASB (variant)? *Prima facie* they could follow either, since none of them use italics for added words. (Cf. my comments at Matt. 24:49a.) So e.g., when Moffatt uses "him," is he using his non-Alexandrian text pincer arm on the basis of, for instance, the Western text, as he does at e.g., Matt. 25:1c, *supra* i.e., agreeing with the ASV? Or when Moffatt uses "*him*," is he using his Alexandrian text pincer arm, as he does at e.g., Matt. 25:3a, *supra* i.e., agreeing with the NASB? As with these other non-italics using versions, we just do not know. Their meaning is "as clear as mud." Such are the realities of the modern versions, which while claiming to improve on the clarity of the AV, in fact go the other way and show far less clarity than the AV.

Matt. 25:9b “but” (TR & AV) {B}*Preliminary Remarks & Textual Discussion.*

The variant is here found in A 02. Notably though, the omitted word, “*de* (but),” is preceded by “*poreuesthe* (go ye),” and in A 02 has been revowelled from an “*e*” suffix to a local dialect “*ai*” suffix i.e., “*poreuesthai* (go ye).” Thus it seems that this local dialect revowelling, already found in e.g., W 032 (e.g., Matt. 16:8b & 21:2a) and Lectionary 2378 (e.g., Matt. 21:41), will be with us as we traverse the Gospels in A 02.

I have already observed at Matt. 21:2a (in Appendix 3), that in Lectionary 1968, the main text has a Greek word with the localized vowel spelling suffix of “*ai*,” but then above the “*a*” (alpha) of the “*ai*” (alpha, iota) suffix, is the letter “*e*” (epsilon). Hence I say, “Thus Lectionary 1968 provides a textual apparatus giving both spellings.”

Seemingly something similar is happening here at Matt. 25:9 in W 032 which reads in the main text, “*phronimoi* (wise),” and above the “*oi*” (omicron, iota) is the letter “*a*” (alpha). Once again, this seems to be some kind of textual apparatus indicating that the word “*phronimoi* (wise),” can also spelt, “*phronimai*.” But what does this all mean?

Swanson claims it means that a “corrector” scribe changed the reading from “*phronimoi*” to “*phronimai*”¹⁶¹; but this strikes me as an improbable interpretation since the scribe of W 032 does not cross out, or seek to erase the “*o*” but simply writes “*a*” above it. Indeed, as far as we know, this “*a*” over the “*o*” is part of the original script, although I am also open to the possibility that it was added by a later scribe. But either way, the scribe seems to be creating a textual apparatus showing two readings. On the one hand, Horrocks does not refer to vowel changes from “*o*” to “*a*”¹⁶²; but on the other hand, this is by no means conclusive evidence against such a revowelling since Horrocks list is not comprehensive, as he does not, for instance, refer to the “*oi*” stem revowelling to “*e*” found in Lectionary 2378 at Matt. 22:4 (see Appendix 3).

But is a simple revowelling the best explanation? In my opinion, the more general absence of such “*oi*” or “*ai*” alternatives in the Byzantine parts of W 032 I have looked at, indicates that this is probably not the intended meaning here at Matt. 25:9b.

Greek “*phronimoi* (wise),” is a feminine plural nominative adjective from *phronimos*. I have already observed at Matt. 25:2 (see my comments there at “Preliminary Remarks & Textual Discussion,”), that Sigma 042 declines *phronimos* on adjective declensions that use the “*ai*” suffix for the feminine plural nominative adjective

¹⁶¹ Swanson’s *New Testament Greek Manuscripts* (1995), p. 246.

¹⁶² Horrocks’s *Greek: A History of the Language & its Speakers* (1997), pp. 62-3.

i.e., as “*phronimai*”¹⁶³. It seems to be that the most probable explanation of this “A” (alpha) over the “O” (omicron) of “ΦΡΟΝΙΜΟΙ” (*phronimoi*, “wise”) here at Matt. 25:9b is thus the same as with Sigma 042 at Matt. 25:2 i.e., these are alternative adjective declensions given in a W 032 textual apparatus format. Once again this points us to the prickly philosophical grammatical issue formerly raised, Who determines such matters?¹⁶⁴ It also raises the localized W 032 manuscript issue, Why does the scribe in W 032 provide this textual apparatus alternative for “*phronimoi* (wise)” at Matt. 25:9, but not at Matt. 25:2,4? Once again, it seems that first hand study of the manuscripts may raise more questions than answers! (Cf. my comments at Matt. 25:2, “Preliminary Remarks & Textual Discussion.”)

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:9b, the TR’s Greek, “*de* (but),” in the wider words, “but (*de*) go ye rather to them that sell” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text found in about two-thirds to three-quarters of the Byzantine manuscripts e.g., Codices W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), M 021 (9th century); Minuscule 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings)¹⁶⁵. It is also found as Latin, “*sed* (but),” in old Latin Version ff2 (5th century). It is further found in the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379).

However, a variant omitting Greek, “*de* (but),” is a minority Byzantine reading found in about one quarter to one-third of the Byzantine manuscripts e.g., Codices A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), V 031 (9th century); and Minuscule 2 (12th century). It is further found in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), d (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and

¹⁶³ Mounce’s *Analytical Lexicon to the Greek NT* (1993), pp. 10-12 & 475. No reference is made to such a declension form as found in Sigma 042 being used for *phronimos* in Liddell & Scott (p. 1956).

¹⁶⁴ See my discussions of Latin, “*fructus*” in Textual Commentary Vol. 1 at Matt. 3:8; Greek “*eroton*” in Textual Commentary Vol. 2 at Matt. 15:23 in App. 3; and Greek “*phronimoi*” / “*phronimai*” in Textual Commentary Vol. 3 at Matt. 25:2.

¹⁶⁵ Von Soden (1913) says that inside his K group, the MBT has the support of the Kx and Kr subgroups, which in broad terms are c. 68-72% of the K group. Thus the minority Byzantine reading has the support of c. 90% + of these i.e., 90% of 68 = c. 61 (61.2)% and 90% of 72% = 65 (64.8) %, so these are base figures. Hence in broad terms the MBT has the support of at least about three-fifths to two-thirds of the Byzantine manuscripts, and the minority reading has the support of about one quarter to one-third of them.

Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; the ancient church Latin writer, Augustine (d. 430); the early mediaeval church writer, Pseudo-Chrysostom in a Latin work (6th century); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine Greek text reading which is thus correct. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental omission? Was the “*de* (but)” lost in an undetected paper fade? Or was it lost on an “*e*” (epsilon) ellipsis in which the eye of a copyist scribe reading, “*poreuesthe* (go ye) *de* (but),” jumped from the “*e*” ending of “*poreuesthe*” to the “*e*” ending of “*de*,” thus accidentally omitting the “*de*”?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe consider that the “*de* (but)” here was “redundant” and “unnecessarily wordy in our modern times” of the ancient world in which “we need to reduce the number of unnecessary conjunctions”? Though such arrogance would not be beyond Origen, the strong attestation for the variant in the Latin, on this occasion suggests that if it may well have been a later Latin scribe translating Origen’s Greek work who made this omission in the Origen citation, so as to assimilate the Origen quote to the generality of the Latin textual tradition.

The TR’s reading has strong support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading, over time, and through time, found in at least about three-fifths to two-thirds of the Greek manuscripts, dating from ancient times in W 032. It has weak support in the Latin, although it is notable that the one old Latin Version supporting the TR also dates from ancient times. It enjoys the further impressive support in the Greek of that fourth century Cappadocian father from Asia Minor who was a great defender of Trinitarian orthodoxy, the church father and doctor, St. Basil the Great of Caesarea. By contrast, though the variant has no good textual argument to commend it; in the Greek it is a strong minority Byzantine reading; and it has close to, though not quite, monolithic support in the Latin. Weighing up these competing considerations, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 25:9b a “B” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:9b, “but,” in the wider words, “but go ye rather to them that sell,” is found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), and 1071 (12th century,

independent). It is also found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts (Swanson)*, which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude); and the *Family 13 Manuscripts (Swanson)*, which contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent). It is further found in some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version.

However, the variant omitting “but,” and so reading simply, “go ye rather to them that sell,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and Minuscule 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version; the Armenian Version (5th century); Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Hence the omission of “but” is found at Matt. 25:9b in the ASV’s “go ye rather to them that sell.” The incorrect variant is also found in the NASB, RSV, NRSV, ESV, NIV, and TEV.

The post Trent Council (1545-63) and pre-Vatican II Council (1962-5) old Latin Papists of the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims Version followed the variant, so at Matt. 25:9b the Douay-Rheims reads, “go ye rather to them that sell.” The post Vatican II Council new neo-Alexandrian Papists likewise follow the variant in their JB and NJB. Such are the shiftless movements of the Romanists here at Matt. 25:9b as they resolutely set their face against the “pure” “word” of God (Ps. 119:140), in their long post Trent Council battle in which we see the fury of the Romanists both here and elsewhere against the much hated *Textus Receptus* that helped to unleash the Protestant Reformation, much to their Popish chagrin.

Matt. 25:13 “wherein the Son of man cometh” (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Remarks & Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. The UBS 4th revised edition (1993) makes reference to some Vulgate manuscripts that support the TR’s reading. Unfortunately it does not identify them beyond this general reference, and nor is this information given in other textual apparatuses I have. Once again, this shows the need for the creation of a high quality textual apparatus for the Latin textual tradition.

The Second Matter. Gregory refers to Matt. 25:13 twice in Migne. On one occasion this is contextually part of the wider passage of Matt. 25:1-13 (Migne 76:1118), and so I consider one can confidently say that Gregory’s Latin is here following the variant. But on the other occasion this is a citation of Matt. 25:13 that could be simply a

reduced quote (Migne 75:792). Therefore I make no usage of this shorter citation (Migne 75:792) in my reference to Gregory following the variant (Migne 76:1118), *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:13, the TR's Greek, "*en* (in) *e* (which) *o* (the) *Yios* (Son) *tou* (-) *anthropou* (of man) *erchetai* (he cometh)," i.e., "wherein the Son of man cometh" (AV), in the wider words, "for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices E 07 (8th century), F 09 (9th century), Gamma 036 (10th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark), 1006 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Revelation), 1505 (11th century, Byzantine in the Gospels), 2 (12th century), 180 (12th century, Byzantine other than in Acts), 1010 (12th century), 1292 (13th century, Byzantine outside of the General Epistles), and 1342 (13th / 14th century, Byzantine other than in Mark); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings¹⁶⁶) and 1968 (1544 A.D., with abbreviation "*anou*" with a line on top for "*anthropou*" twice in two different readings)¹⁶⁷. It is further found as Latin, "*qua* (in which) *filius* (the Son) *hominis* (of man) *venturus est* ('about to come'¹⁶⁸ + 'he is' = will come)," i.e., "wherein the Son of man will come," in the Latin Lectionary, *Liber Comicus* (7th to 9th centuries, Iberian Peninsula, Western Europe¹⁶⁹); and also in some Latin Vulgate manuscripts.

However, a variant omitting Greek, "*en* (in) *e* (which) *o* (the) *Yios* (Son) *tou* (-) *anthropou* (of man) *erchetai* (he cometh)," and thus reading simply, "for ye know neither the day nor the hour," is a minority Byzantine reading found in A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and X 033 (10th century); Minuscule 597 (13th century); and

¹⁶⁶ In Lectionary 2378's first reading (p. 40b) there is no abbreviation of "*anthropou* (of man);" but at its second reading (p. 68a) this is abbreviated to "*anou*" with a line on top.

¹⁶⁷ Von Soden (1913) says this reading has the support of his K group i.e., in the context of his generalist groups, c. 90%+ of the Byzantine text manuscripts.

¹⁶⁸ Latin, "*venturus*," is a (masculine singular nominative,) future active participle (from *venio*). More generally, the future active participle may, depending on context, be translated with such terminology as e.g., "about to come," or "intending to come" (John Collins' *A Primer of Ecclesiastical Latin*, *op. cit.*, p. 144, section 96). As occurs here, the future participle is often used in older Latin with *sum-esse* in the *periphrastic tense* or the *active periphrastic conjugation* i.e., "he is about to come" for "he will come" (Basil Gildersleeve's *Latin Grammar* 3rd ed. 1895, *op. cit.*, p. 427, section 669; Allen & Greenough's *New Latin Grammar*, 1903 & 2000, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103 sections 193-195, and p. 304, section 498).

¹⁶⁹ Morin, D.G. (Editor), *Liber Comicus*, *op. cit.*, p. 263 (Matthew 25:1-13).

Lectionary 127 (9th century). It is further found in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers, Athanasius (d. 373) and Chrysostom (d. 407); the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; ancient church Latin writers, Hilary (d. 367), Jerome (d. 420), and Augustine (d. 430); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which thus must stand. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental omission? Did a scribe have a manuscript that looked something like the following, with the words, neither "OIAATE (ye know) THN (the) HMERAN (day) OUAΕ (nor) THN (the) ωPAN (hour) EN (in) H (which) O (the) YIOC (Son) TOY (-) ANθPωΠOY (of man) EPXETAI (he cometh)"?

OIAATETHNHMERANOUΔETHNωPAN
ENHOYIOCTOY ANθPωΠOYEPXETAI

Was the final "AF" of "EPXETAI (he cometh)" badly written, with the cross bar on the "A" either faint or very high, and the "T" so close to the "A" that it looked like an "N"; was the scribe *prima facie* looking at something like the following?

OIAATETHNHMERANOUΔETHNωPAN
ENHOY IOCTOY ANθPωΠOYEPXETN

Did his eye then jump by ellipsis from the final "N" of "ωPAN (hour)" to what he took to be the "N" of the line beneath, and did he then keep writing, thus accidentally omitting, "EN (in) H (which) O (the) YIOC (Son) TOY (-) ANθPωΠOY (of man) EPXETAI (he cometh)"? Alas, the diligence of some scribes left something to be desired.

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe arrogantly consider that these words were "a pedantic addition," unnecessary given that "Christ has already said" in Matt. 24:44, "be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the (o) Son (Yios) of man (*anthropou*) cometh (*erchetai*)"? "Professing" himself "to be wise" (Rom. 1:22), did he then deliberately prune away these words so as to produce what he took to be a "more energetic" reading?¹⁷⁰

¹⁷⁰ Elements of such a bizarre, shallow, and superficial "textual analysis" are evident in Metzger's *Textual Commentary* (2nd ed., 1994, p. 63), where in preferring the variant, he describes the TR's reading as "a pedantic addition" from Matt. 24:44, in which the variant is said to be "more energetic without it."

The TR's reading has strong support in the Greek as the majority Byzantine reading found in at least about 90% of Byzantine text manuscripts, against which there is no good textual argument. Indeed, it might be remarked that the similarity of terminology with Matt. 24:44 acts to echo the authenticity of this reading at Matt. 25:13 as being consistent with Christ's words in Matthean Greek. It also enjoys further support from the Latin Lectionary, *Liber Comicus*, which is the oldest known Lectionary from the Iberian Peninsula of Western Europe (modern Spain and Portugal), and dated variously from the 7th to 9th centuries. However, the TR's earliest known attestation is from early mediaeval times in either the 7th century (if one takes the earliest date given for *Liber Comicus*), or the 8th century (E 07, if one take a later date of the 8th or 9th century for *Liber Comicus*). While the variant has relatively weak support in the Greek, being found in about 10% or less of Byzantine text manuscripts; it nevertheless has the support of some ancient Greek manuscripts; the near monolithic support of the Latin textual tradition; and half a dozen ancient church writers in both the Greek and Latin.

We neo-Byzantine like to show a reading over time and through time, i.e., across time, but this ideal is not always attainable. This is one such case in point, and with the earliest attestation for the TR's reading coming from early mediaeval times in either the 7th or 8th century, the rating must necessarily suffer, since with ancient support from one writer inside the closed class of sources, this reading would attract a high level "B" (in the range of 71-74%). Thus weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 25:13 a lower level "B" that it would otherwise have received, *supra*, i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty. But if perchance, I should in the future receive information showing this reading in an ancient source inside the closed class of sources, then I am prepared to revise this rating in the upwards direction.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:13, "wherein the Son of man cometh," in the wider words, "for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh," is found in Minuscules 700 (11th century, independent), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles), 1071 (12th century, independent), 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in a manuscript of the Syriac Palestinian Version; Ethiopic Version (the Takla Haymanot, c. 500); and some manuscripts of the Slavic Version.

However, the variant omitting the words, "wherein the Son of man cometh," and

so reading simply, “for ye know neither the day nor the hour,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is also found in the Syriac: Sinaitic (3rd / 4th century), Pesitto (first half 5th century), and Harclean h (616) Versions, as well as some manuscripts of the Syriac Palestinian Version; the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century), Middle Egyptian (3rd century), and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; the Armenian Version (5th century); Georgian Version (5th century); some manuscripts of the Slavic Version; Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century); and the Ethiopic Versions (Pell Platt, based on the Roman edition of Rome 1548-9; & Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

At Matt. 25:13 the erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Hence the ASV reads simply, “for ye know not the day nor the hour.” The incorrect variant is also found at Matt. 25:13 in the NASB, RSV, NRSV (with a footnote referring to the TR’s reading), ESV, NIV, and TEV.

The pre-Vatican II old Latin Papists followed the variant at Matt. 25:13 in both their Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims Version. Thus the Douay-Rheims reads simply, “because you know not the day nor the hour.” The post-Vatican II new neo-Alexandrian Papists were evidently well pleased with the way their predecessors had carved out *seven words* from the Greek *Textus Receptus* at Matt. 25:13 i.e., Greek “*en* (in) *e* (which) *o* (the) *Yios* (Son) *tou* (-) *anthropou* (of man) *erchetai* (he cometh).” Smiling in approval at so audacious an attack on the much hated Protestant’s *Received Text*, these new neo-Alexandrian Papists decided to do likewise, and cut out from Scripture these seven words in the Roman *Catholic* RSV, JB, and NJB.

Thus here at Matt. 25:13, both Papist and apostate Protestant united against the *Textus Receptus* and “cut it with the penknife” (Jer. 36:23) so as to remove these seven Greek words, “*en* (in) *e* (which) *o* (the) *Yios* (Son) *tou* (-) *anthropou* (of man) *erchetai* (he cometh).” They thought that they had “cast it into the fire,” so that these words were “consumed in the fire” (Jer. 36:23). But they were soon frustrated and frowning. For he who said, “heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matt. 24:35), has Divinely Preserved his Divinely Inspired Bible, and so “the word of the Lord came” to “take” “again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll” (Jer. 36:28). And thus we find in both the *Textus Receptus* and our King James Bibles, *the full* Word of God at Matt. 25:13, “Watch therefore, for ye know neither the

day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh” (AV & TR). What? Hast thou not heard of Divine Preservation? Or hath it not been told unto thee? Hear then the words of the Latin motto of the first stage of the Reformation, *Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum!*¹⁷¹

Matt. 25:16a “Then” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. The NU Text Committee’s UBS 4th revised edition (1993) textual apparatus would here have us believe that the Latin does not support the TR’s reading (*Reading 1a*), but rather that of an obscure variant (*Reading 1b*) which reads Greek, “*de* (‘Then’ / ‘And,’ word 2) *poreutheis* (‘going’ = ‘went,’ AV, word 1),” as opposed to the TR’s word order, “*poreutheis* (‘going’ = ‘went,’ AV, word 1) *de* (‘Then’ / ‘And,’ word 2).” This “much ado about nothing”¹⁷² claims that because the Latin of e.g., the Vulgate reads, “*Abiit* (‘he went,’ word 2) *autem* (‘And,’ word 1),” that it is therefore following the obscure Greek variant’s word order 2,1 (*Reading 1b*), rather than the TR’s Greek word order of 1,2 (*Reading 1a*). Of course, the meaning is the same in both of these readings; but the far more probable explanation is surely that the word order changed in the Latin as part of the act of translation.

And here I note that the AV translators rendering, “*poreutheis* (‘going’ = ‘went,’ AV, word 1) *de* (‘Then’ / ‘And,’ word 2),” likewise changed the word order as part of the act of translation into English i.e., “Then (*de*, word 2) ... went (*poreutheis*, word 1)” etc. . I think the UBS textual apparatus is here “grasping at straws” to try and avoid what they find to be the painful probability that in general the Latin textual tradition here supports the Greek TR. The comparability of the readings is to some extent seen in the notable fact that Lectionary 1968 uses both of them in different Lectionary readings. (While the 1993 UBS textual apparatus tells us that *Reading 1b* is in one of two readings in Lectionary 1016, it does not tell us what the other reading of this Lectionary is.) Thus while I shall make a distinction between *Reading 1a* and *Reading 1b*, I take the view that either way, the Latin of the Vulgate *et al* is supporting the Greek *Textus Receptus, infra*.

Likewise, outside the closed class of sources, I make no distinction between *Reading 1a* and *Reading 1b* beyond of the Greek. While I am not familiar with e.g., the Syriac tongue, and while the UBS claims *Reading 1a* is followed by e.g., the Syriac Pesitto Version in distinction to *Reading 1b* followed by the e.g., Syriac Palestinian Version; it seems to me that on general principles of translation known to me, a translator’s discretion in rendering from one tongue to another might also be the reason; and either way, I see both *Reading 1a* and *Reading 1b* as following the basic reading of

¹⁷¹ Motto of the Lutheran Reformation taken from I Peter 1:25, “The Word of the Lord Endureth Forever.”

¹⁷² Terminology derived from title of William Shakespeare’s play, “Much Ado [= to do] About Nothing” (c. 1599 +/- 1 year).

the TR (*Reading 1a*).

What if my lack of knowledge of such tongues as e.g., Syriac, Egyptian (Coptic), or Ethiopic, means that in the section outside the closed class of sources I have missed something and am wrong? What if knowledge of e.g., Syriac, Egyptian (Coptic), or Ethiopic, in some ways helps one to discern the difference between Greek *Reading 1a* and *Reading 1b*? It does not ultimately matter, because for our primary purposes of determining the Received Text of the New Testament we put no weight whatsoever on anything but the Greek and Latin. For unlike the neo-Alexandrians, we neo-Byzantines look to a closed class of sources which had accessibility over time and through time from which to determine the New Testament text. And since for the New Testament only the Greek and Latin that was in the Byzantine Greek textual tradition, Latin textual tradition, or Greek and Latin church writers, had such accessibility over time and through time, only these two NT languages of Greek and Latin have been used by God for the NT purposes of his promise, “the Word of the Lord endureth for ever” (I Peter 1:25).

The Second Matter. Gwynn’s type printed edition (1913) of the handwritten Book of Armagh (812) reads, “Abiit (‘he went,’ word 2) *autem* (‘And,’ word 1),” in which “*autem*” is placed in italics as added. I thus show the Book of Armagh following the variant, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:16a the TR’s Greek, “*de* (‘Then’ / ‘And’),” is supported by the majority Byzantine text as “*poreutheis* (‘going’ = ‘went,’ AV, word 1) *de* (‘Then’ / ‘And,’ word 2)” (*Reading 1a*), in the wider words of Matt. 25:15 & 16, “and straightway (*eutheos*) took his journey. Then (*de*) he (*o*) ... went (*poreutheis*),” in e.g., Codices A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and U 030 (9th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark), 1006 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Revelation), 1505 (11th century, Byzantine in the Gospels), 2 (12th century), 180 (12th century, Byzantine other than in Acts), 1010 (12th century), 597 (13th century), 1292 (13th century, Byzantine outside of the General Epistles), and 1342 (13th / 14th century, Byzantine other than in Mark); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., in one of two readings, p. 151a). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379); the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the ancient church Latin writer, Jerome (d. 420).

The TR’s reading is also supported with the same meaning in word order 2,1 as Greek, “*de* (‘Then’ / ‘And,’ word 2) *poreutheis* (‘going’ = ‘went,’ AV, word 1)” (*Reading 1b*), as a minority Byzantine reading in Lectionaries 253 (1020 A.D.), 1016 (12th century), and 1968 (1544 A.D., in one of two readings, p. 71b).

The TR’s reading is also supported as Latin, “*Abiit* (‘he went,’ word 2) *autem*

(‘And,’ word 1),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions *aur* (7th century) and *1* (7th / 8th century); as well as the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported as Latin, “*pergens* (‘going’ = ‘went,’ word 2) *autem* (‘And,’ word 1),” in old Latin Version *d* (5th century); as Latin, “*autem* (‘And,’ word 1) *abiit* (‘he went,’ word 2),” in old Latin Versions *h* (5th century), *f* (6th century), *q* (6th / 7th century), and *c* (12th / 13th century); and as Latin, “*Et* (‘And,’ word 1) ... *abiit* (‘he went,’ word 2),” in old Latin Version *ff1* (10th / 11th century). It is further found in the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604)¹⁷³.

However, a variant which omits Greek, “*de* (‘Then’ / ‘And,’ word 1),” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscules 1187 (11th century), 655 (11th / 12th century), and 21 (12th century). It is further found as omitting Latin, “*autem* (‘And,’ word 1),” in old Latin Versions *b* (5th century) and *g1* (8th / 9th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation.

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is therefore correct. The origins of *Reading 1b* and the variant are speculative.

The rearranged word order of *Reading 1b* in the Greek looks like a typical “stylistic improvement” by a scribe thinking the conjunction “*de* (‘Then’ / ‘And,’ word 2)” “should be” at the start of the sentence. Thus on the balance of probabilities I consider this was a deliberate change, although one not affecting the basic meaning of the text.

Was the variant an accidental omission? Was the “*de* (‘Then’ / ‘And,’ word 2)” lost in an undetected paper fade?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a scribe consider it was “a stylistic improvement” to eliminate the conjunction between the two co-ordinate sentences of Matt. 25:15 and Matt. 25:16, in order to make “a more pointed and less wordy” (asyndetic) introduction into the second co-ordinate sentence of Matt. 25:16? If so, was he aware that in doing so, he in fact created a greater ambiguity in the text since the word before the “*poreutheis* (‘going’ = ‘went,’ AV, word 1) *de* (‘Then’ / ‘And,’ word 2)” is “*eutheos* (‘straightway’ or ‘immediately’),” and once the conjunction “*de* (‘Then’ / ‘And,’ word 2)” is pruned away, instead of attaching this to verse 15 i.e., “and straightway (*eutheos*) took his journey;” it becomes more readily possible to argue for its attachment to verse 16 i.e., “Straightway (*eutheos*) he that had received the five talents” etc.? Was this desire to attach the “*eutheos* (straightway)” to verse 16 a prunist scribe’s deliberate intent, or was it an unforeseen accidental bi-product of his deliberate pruning?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We do not know. But we do know that it was an omission to the correct reading here Providentially preserved for us

¹⁷³ Gregory uses the same two words here as the Vulgate *et al, supra*.

in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR's reading has strong support in both the Greek and Latin textual traditions. It further enjoys the support of the ancient church fathers and doctors, St. Basil the Great in the Greek, and St. Jerome in the Latin; as well as the early mediaeval church doctor, St. Gregory the Great in the Latin. By contrast, the variant has relatively weak support in both the Greek and Latin, and no good textual argument to commend it. It looks like the type of silly thing that Origen would do when his unstable mind fluctuated into "the silly season" *modus operandi* "on one of his bad days;" and so it is quite possible that he was the variant's originator. On the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 25:16a an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:16a, "Then (or 'And')," in the wider words of Matt. 25:15 & 16, "and straightway (*eutheos*) took his journey. Then (*de*) he ... went (*poreutheis*)," is found as *Reading 1a* (Greek word order 1,2) in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found as *Reading 1a* in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is further found as *Reading 1a* in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 1243 (11th century, independent outside of the General Epistles), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels), and 579 (13th century, mixed text); as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is also found as *Reading 1b* (word order 2,1) in Minuscules 700 (11th century, independent) and 205 (15th century, independent in the Gospels & Revelation); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac: Pesitto (first half 5th century), Harclean h (616), and Palestinian (c. 6th century) Versions; the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Middle Egyptian (3rd century) Versions; Georgian "A" Version (5th century); Ethiopic Versions (the Takla Haymanot, c. 500; Pell Platt, based on the Roman edition of Rome 1548-9); Slavic Version (9th century); and Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

However, the variant, lacking "Then (or 'And')," and so reading simply at Matt. 25:16a, "he ... went," is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is also found in the Syriac Curetonian Version (3rd / 4th century); and Georgian "1" & "B" Versions (5th century).

At Matt. 25:16a, the incorrect variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al.*

As noted above (see “Was the variant a deliberate omission?,” *supra*), the variant facilitates transferring the “*eutheos* (straightway)” of Matt. 25:15 to Matt. 25:16. Following the variant and making such a transfer, the ASV reads at Matt. 25:15,16, “and he went on his journey. Straightway (*eutheos*) he ... went (*poreutheis*)” etc. . So too this combination of the variant and transference of “*eutheos* (straightway)” from Matt. 25:15 to Matt. 25:16 is also found in the NASB, RSV, NRSV, ESV, NIV, TEV, NEB, REB, TCNT, Moffatt, and Papists’ Roman *Catholic RSV*, JB, and NJB. E.g., the Moffatt Bible reads at Matt. 25:15,16, “Then the man went abroad. The servant who had got the twelve hundred pounds went at once and traded with them” etc. .

Moffatt’s usage of “twelve hundred pounds” (Moffatt Bible) in place of the AV’s “five (*pente*) talents (*talanta*),” raises difficulties of estimating such sums. E.g., the RSV footnote saying that a talent was worth around 350 pounds, was deleted in the Roman *Catholic RSV* which included a different footnote saying a talent was worth more than 15 years of a labourer’s wages. Or the TEV says at Matt. 25:16, “The servant who had received five thousand coins went at once and invested his money” etc. . Given such ambiguities, might it not be best to follow the AV’s lead and leave such matters to a commentary? After all, what e.g., is the TEV’s 5,000 coins meant to mean anyway? Does it e.g., mean 5,000 one cent coins i.e., \$50.00 (fifty dollars); or 5,000 \$2.00 coins i.e., \$10,000 (ten thousand dollars)? Does this type of “clarification” by the TEV really clarify anything?

Following the correct reading of the Latin Vulgate as manifested in the Clementine, the old Latin Papists correctly read at Matt. 25:15,16 in the Douay-Rheims Version, “and immediately (Latin, *statim*) he took his journey. And (Latin, *autem*) he ... went (Latin, *abiit*)” etc. . By contrast, the new neo-Alexandrian Papists adopted the incorrect variant in their Roman *Catholic RSV*, JB, and NJB.

In adopting the erroneous variant, the NU Text Committee of the United Bible Societies’ 3rd (1975) and 3rd corrected (1983) editions said that “there is a considerable degree of doubt whether the text of the apparatus” i.e., the variant, “or the apparatus” i.e., the TR’s reading, “contains the superior reading.” But in adopting this same erroneous variant, the NU Text Committee of the United Bible Societies’ 4th revised edition (1993) said that “the text” i.e., the variant “is almost certain.” So what changed between 1983 and 1993? Some NU Text Committee members. While all three NU Text Committees had on them the neo-Alexandrian “glamour boys” of Bruce Metzger and Kurt Aland, together with the sneaky Jesuit, Carlo Martini lurking in the shadows; the 1975 and 1983 Committees also had two others who left and were replaced by another two in 1993. These new two were evidently more easily made putty in the hands of Metzger, Aland, and Martini, who strengthened their position on this variant. But Metzger (d. 2007) and Aland (d. 1994) are now deceased. So what will happen in the future when the NU Text Committee Members have changed again? Your guess as to the future instabilities of the NU Text or any other neo-Alexandrian text that may arise in the future is as good as

mine! But what we do not have to guess about is this. The neo-Byzantine *Textus Receptus* of our King James Bibles will not be changing because its meaning is stable.

Matt. 25:16c “made” (TR & AV) {B}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. According to Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993), A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels) originally followed the variant, but was later changed by a “corrector” scribe to the TR’s reading. But according to Tischendorf (1869-72) and Swanson (1995) the opposite is the case, and A 02 originally followed the TR’s reading, and was then later changed by a “corrector” scribe to the variant’s reading.

Von Soden (1913) only specifically shows manuscripts referring to the variant here at Matt. 25:16c i.e., the TR’s reading has the residual support of his mainly Byzantine K group. Von Soden does not include A 02 in the I group manuscript he shows following the variant (A 02 = von Soden’s δ 4 which in its Byzantine text Gospels is in his $I\kappa\alpha$ group; and in its non-Byzantine text Acts to Revelation is in his H group). However, this is anything but conclusive since at a given reading, von Soden may show all variants; a selection of variants; or if their support is less than *c.* 10%, no variants. Which of the first two possibilities is here applicable is therefore not known. Thus it is impossible to say if on the one hand, von Soden considered A 02 followed the TR and hence it was not included in his list following the variant; or if on the other hand, von Soden considered A 02 followed the variant, but he did not include it in his limited selection of I group manuscripts used to demonstrate the variant.

Baron von Soden is without peer and absolutely excellent for getting the big broad-brush picture of where Byzantine manuscript support is on a given reading in Matthew to Jude, and he is also very good for providing a number of listed manuscripts for various readings. *But one must understand the limits of von Soden, and if one expects more than this from his most valuable textual apparatus, then one will surely go awry.* Thus the only things one can say with certainty from von Soden here at Matt. 25:16c are that with the residual support of the K group, the TR’s reading has the support of *c.* 90%+ of the Byzantine manuscripts; and that the Greek Codices and Minuscules of the variant I itemize below follow the minority Byzantine reading. (The two Lectionaries I itemize below for the variant come from the Nestle-Aland apparatus as von Soden’s work was mainly on Codices, Minuscules, and a selection of writers; with less than a dozen Lectionaries consulted by his *c.* 40 research assistants in their most valuable labours of *c.* 15 years).

While I work from a photocopy of a facsimile of A 02, and at Matt. 25:16c this *prima facie* looks like, “*enerdesen*”, I here come to the limits of using such a copy. That is because I would need to consult the original to have any chance of resolving this disagreement of interpretation; and of course, with the limited means of a magnifying glass (such as I use on various matters when consulting the originals of the two Sydney University Lectionaries), such a resolution may or may not be satisfactorily possible to

my mind. Under the circumstances, I have decided to make no reference to A 02, *infra*.

The Second Matter. The text-type manuscript classifications I generally follow for Codices and Minuscules are those found in Kurt Aland's *The Text of the New Testament* (1989). Although (per update 2015, Vol. 5 on Mark 1-3, Corrigenda, Appendix 6,) upon review of the selection of readings I have seen from St. Matthew's Gospel and the early part of St. Mark's Gospel, I have come to disagree with Aland's assessment that Minuscule 69 (15th century) is "category III" meaning "an independent text" "in Paul, but V" meaning "purely or predominantly Byzantine" "elsewhere"¹⁷⁴." Rather, I have come to the conclusion that in those parts of Matthew and Mark I have looked at, it is a mixed text type, and so like the other Family 13 Manuscripts, it is outside the closed class of sources in Matthew and the early parts of Mark (and as at 2015, I have not examined other parts of it with regard to the issue of text type). (This also raises the question, Are the statements found in Aland's *The Text of the New Testament* a typographical error in this work's publication? Or do they represent Aland's view that what I consider to be mixed text type in Matthew and the early parts of Mark are what Aland considers to be "Byzantine" text type?) Outside the closed class of sources, the group used by the NU Text for the *Family 13 Manuscripts* contains Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*; whereas the *Family 13 Manuscripts (Swanson)*, contain e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 13 Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee*) Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text) and 13 (13th century, independent).

The NU Text in Nestle-Aland's text (1993) shows the Family 13 manuscripts following the variant, "*ekerdesen* (he gained);" whereas Swanson (1995) shows the Family 13 manuscripts following the TR's reading, "*epoiesen* (he made)." Under the circumstances, I have decided to make no reference to the Family 13 manuscripts, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:16c, the TR's Greek, "*epoiesen* ('he made,' indicative active aorist, 3rd person singular verb, from *poieō*)," i.e., "made" in the wider words, "and made (*epoiesen*) them other five talents" (AV, shewing / showing AV's italics), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices W 032 (*Codex Freerianus*, 5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53, Washington, D.C., USA) and X 033 (*Codex Monacensis*, 10th century, Munich, Germany); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark, National Library, Paris, France) and 2 (12th century, Basel, Switzerland); and Lectionaries 2378 (*Sidneiensis Universitatis*, sent to Bulgaria from Constantinople, 11th century, twice in two different readings, Sydney University,

¹⁷⁴ Kurt Aland *et unum*, *The Text of the New Testament*, An Introduction to the Critical Editions & to the Theory & Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, translated by E.F. Rhodes, 2nd ed., Eerdmans, Michigan, USA, 1989, pp. 106 & 129.

Australia¹⁷⁵) and 1968 (*Sidneiensis Universitatis*, from Cyprus, 1544 A.D., twice in two different readings, Sydney University, Australia). It is also supported as Latin, “*fecit* (‘he made,’ indicative active perfect, 3rd person singular verb, from *facio*),” in old Latin Version q (6th / 7th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379).

However, a variant, Greek, “*ekerdesen* (‘he gained,’ indicative active aorist, 3rd person singular verb, from *kerdaino*),” i.e., “gained” in the wider words, “and gained (*ekerdesen*) other five talents,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codices Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century) and 074 (6th century, Matt. 25, 26, & 28; Mark 1, 2, & 5); Minuscles 262 (10th century), 1187 (11th century), 1188 (11th / 12th century), 270 (12th century), 924 (12th century), and 1010 (12th century). It is further found as Latin, “*lucratus est* (‘having gained,’ *lucratus*, masculine singular nominative, perfect participle from *lucror*; + *est*, indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb, from, *summe-esse*¹⁷⁶),” i.e., “gained,” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions d (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D. reading simply, “*lucratus*”) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604)¹⁷⁷.

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text which must thus stand. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was this an accidental alteration? Did a scribe have a manuscript in which “*epoiesen* (he made)” was written over two lines, in which “*epoi*” was on the first line, and “*esen*” on the second line? Due to a paper fade / loss, did the end of the first line come to look something like, “*e:::*”? Did a copyist scribe then “reconstruct” this “from context” as “*ekerdesen* (he gained)”? Did he do so with reference to the immediately following verse 17 where we read, “And likewise, he that had received two, he also gained (*ekerdesen*, or with the optional “*n*” at the end, *ekerdesen*) other two”?

Was this a deliberate alteration? Did a scribe deliberately assimilate the

¹⁷⁵ In both Lectionary 2378’s first (p. 39a, column 1) and second (p. 68a, column 1) readings, the second last epsilon, here written as a “c”, is elevated above the line in between the sigma and nu, and this sigma here joins this final nu.

¹⁷⁶ The Latin verb *to be*, *sum-esse*, is used with the perfect participle to form the perfect passive voice. See Allen & Greenough’s *New Latin Grammar* (1888, 1903, 2000), *op. cit.*, p. 72, section 158 c) 2); & Basil Gildersleeve’s *Latin Grammar* (1st ed. 1867, 2nd ed. 1872, 3rd ed. 1895), *op. cit.*, pp. 165-6, section 250.

¹⁷⁷ Gregory uses the same two words here as the Vulgate *et al, supra*.

terminology of verse 16, “and made (*epoiēsen*) them other five talents,” to the terminology of verse 17, “he also gained (*ekerdese*) other two,” as “a stylistic improvement” to “better balance” and “parallel” the terminology of these two verses?

The variant looks suspiciously like the type of thing Origen would do in one of his “featherhead mood swings,” a factor making it more likely, though by no means certain, that it was a deliberate alteration. While we cannot be sure as to whether this was a deliberate or accidental alteration, we can be sure that it was an alteration to the Received Text Providentially here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The *Textus Receptus* (TR) reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading over time, and through time, dating from ancient times (W 032). Though it has some weak support in the Latin; it further enjoys the support of the ancient church father and doctor, St. Basil the Great of Caesarea. By contrast, the variant has relatively weak support in the Greek, but correspondingly strong support in the Latin. Balancing out these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 25:16c a high level “B” (in the range of 71-74%), i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:16c, “made,” in the wider words, “and made (*epoiēsen*) them other five talents,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is also found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 700 (11th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is further found in the Syriac Harklean Version (616).

However, the variant, “gained,” in the wider words, “and gained (*ekerdēsen*) other five talents,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is also found in the Syriac Pesitto Version (first half 5th century), and the margin of the Syriac Harklean h (616) Version; the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version (3rd century); the Armenian Version (5th century); Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century); and Ethiopic Version

(Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The split in the two main Alexandrian texts here at Matt. 25:16c split the neo-Alexandrians this was and that. Thus the majority neo-Alexandrian textual critics preference proved to be the opposite of the neo-Alexandrian translators' preference.

For the wrong reason, namely that it was found in his beloved Codex Sinaiticus, the correct reading of the TR was adopted in Tischendorf's 8th edition (1869-72). By contrast, because it was found in their beloved Codex Vaticanus, the variant was adopted by Westcott-Hort (1881). Erwin Nestle whose "general instinct" was "to follow Westcott-Hort," also adopted the variant in Nestle's 21st edition (1952); and so too the NU Text Committee adopted the variant in the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland's 27th edition (1993) and UBS's 4th revised edition (1993). But these later neo-Alexandrians would have given more weight in their decision to the "external support" beyond the Alexandrian text of their choice, found in e.g., the Western Text's D 05, the Syriac Pesitto, and the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic; than would have Westcott & Hort who would have simply regarded Codex Vaticanus as the more "neutral" of the two "neutral" Alexandrian texts.

But of course, it is also possible on Neo-Alexandrian School principles to argue for "external support" beyond the Alexandrian text of Codex Sinaiticus, in e.g., the Syriac Harclean Version. And thus at Matt. 25:16c, for the wrong reasons, the TR's reading of Codex Sinaiticus was adopted by the *American Standard Version* which reads, "and made (*epoiesen*) other five talents" (ASV). This correct reading is also found in the RSV, NRSV, ESV, and Papists' JB and NJB. By contrast, the variant of Codex Vaticanus is found at Matt. 25:16c in the NASB, NIV, and TEV. E.g., the *New International Version*, further omitting the word, "talents (*talanta*)" (see Matt. 25:16d, *infra*), reads, "and gained five more" (NIV). Such are the frequent splits and splashes of neo-Alexandrian half-wits and textual bashers when their two main Alexandrian texts are in disagreement.

Of course, knowledge of the variant is nothing "new" to we of the Neo-Byzantine School. We fought against it in older times against the old Latin Papists who adopted it in the Clementine Vulgate, and their Latin based Douay-Rheims Version which (also omitting "talents," per Matt. 25:16d, *infra*) reads at Matt. 25:16c, "and gained (*lucratus est*) other five."

Matt. 25:16d "talents" (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

Outside the closed class of sources, the group used by the NU Text for the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, contains Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; whereas the *Family 1 Manuscripts* (Swanson), contains e.g., (in agreement with the *Family 1*

Manuscripts of the NU Text Committee), Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere) and 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude)

The NU Text in Nestle-Aland's text (1993) shows the Family 1 manuscripts following the TR's reading, "*talanta* (talents);" whereas Swanson (1995) shows the Family 1 manuscripts following the variant and omitting "*talanta* (talents)." Under the circumstances, I have decided to make no reference to the Family 1 manuscripts, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:16d, the TR's Greek, "*talanta* (talents)," in the wider words, "and made *them* other five talents (*talanta*)" (AV, showing AV's italics), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and Pi 041 (9th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings¹⁷⁸) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also supported as Latin, "*talenta* (talents)," in old Latin Versions d (5th century), f (6th century), and q (6th / 7th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379); and the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation.

However, a variant which omits Greek, "*talanta* (talents)," is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 1010 (12th century) and 1375 (12th century). The omission of Latin, "*talenta* (talents)," is also found in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the early mediaeval church writer, Pseudo-Chrysostom in a Latin work (6th century); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is therefore correct. The origin of the variant is speculative.

Was the variant an accidental omission? In Manuscript Washington (W 032) there is a stylistic paper space of about three letter spaces after the "*talanta* (talents)" which ends verse 16, before the start of verse 17. This reminds us that many of the verse numbers that we find in our King James Bibles dating from the time of Stephanus's 1551 work, in fact reflect more ancient unnumbered verse divisions. In such a manuscript,

¹⁷⁸ At Lectionary 2378's second reading (p. 68a, column 1), this is written out in full (over two lines with the final "*ta*" on the second line); but in the first reading (p. 39a, column 1), the tau "τ" is on the first line with the alpha, "α" above it, and then the rest of the word on the second line.

was the “*talanta* (talents)” lost in an undetected paper fade which was mistaken by a subsequent scribe as a larger stylistic paper space dividing verse 16 from verse 17?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe consider that the “*talanta* (talents)” was “unnecessarily wordy”? Did he then prune it away as “a stylistic improvement”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We cannot be sure. But we can be sure that it was an omission to the Received Text of Scripture here Providentially preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Byzantine Greek textual tradition over time, and through time, dating from ancient times in Manuscript London (A 02, *Codex Alexandrinus*, London, UK) and Manuscript Washington (W 032, *Codex Freerianus*, Washington, D.C., USA). It also has the support of a few old Latin Versions, once again, dating from ancient times (old Latin d). It enjoys the further support of the ancient church father and doctor, St. Basil the Great. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek, although strong support in the Latin. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on this occasion, I consider that the Latin support dating from both ancient times and early mediaeval times, is enough to *just bring* the TR’s reading “over the line” of a high level “B” in the range of 71-74%, and into the range of a 75-76% “A.” Thus on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 25:16d an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:16d, “talents,” in the wider words, “and made *them* other five talents,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac Harclean Version (616); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

However, the variant omitting the word, “talents,” is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); as well as Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type) and 892 (9th

century, mixed text type). It is also found in the Syriac Pesitto Version (first half 5th century); the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); and Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

The split in the two main Alexandrian texts causes a splitting headache amongst neo-Alexandrians at Matt. 25:16d.

Tischendorf somewhat predictably followed his "great discovery" of Codex Sinaiticus, and so for the wrong reasons, adopted the correct reading in Tischendorf's 8th edition (1869-72). With a similar kind of general though not absolute predictability, Westcott & Hort followed the "more neutral" of their two "neutral" Alexandrian texts, to wit, Codex Vaticanus, and hence adopted the erroneous variant. And as is more often the case than not, Erwin Nestle in effect said, "I've got a ring through my nose like a prize bull, and so I usually just let Westcott and Hort lead me by the nose on these type of questions," as he too adopted the incorrect variant in Nestle's 21st edition (1952). Likewise, the incorrect variant was adopted by the NU Text Committee in the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland's 27th edition (1993) and UBS's 4th revised edition (1993); although on the one hand, they would have been more influenced by such "external support" beyond the Alexandrian text of their choice in e.g., the Syriac; but on the other hand, like Westcott & Hort and Nestle, they would have been influenced by the general neo-Alexandrian rule, "The shorter reading is the better reading."

When it came to the neo-Alexandrian versions confusion continued to reign as to which of the two neo-Alexandrian texts was to be followed here. In fairness to the neo-Alexandrians, they lack any generally appreciable skills in textual analysis, and so when their two main Alexandrian texts are split, it's "a bob each way bet" for them, as to which of the two is "correct"¹⁷⁹.

The American Standard Version was evidentially impressed by the "external support" for Codex Sinaiticus in e.g., the Western and Syriac texts, and so for the wrong reasons, correctly reads at Matt. 25:16d, "and made other five talents" (ASV). The correct reading was also adopted here by the NASB, RSV, NRSV, and ESV.

By contrast, evidentially impressed by the "external support" for Codex Vaticanus in e.g., the Latin and Syriac texts, and the general neo-Alexandrian rule, "The shorter reading is the better reading;" the variant was adopted by the NIV, TEV, TCNT, and Moffatt Bible. For example, the *Twentieth Century New Testament* reads, "The man who had received the three thousand pounds ... made another three thousand" (TCNT); and Moffatt reads, "The servant who got the twelve hundred pounds went ..., making

¹⁷⁹ The terminology of, "a bob each way," is an Australian colloquialism still in use even though it originates from before the time of decimal currency in 1966, when "a bob" was a shilling coin (approximately equal to a 10 cents coin in Australian decimal currency); and so "a bob each way" refers to "an even bet" when someone has no idea of what the outcome of something will be.

another twelve hundred” (Moffatt Bible). Thus the neo-Alexandrian supporting reader is left to ask, “Was it ‘three thousand’ pounds as in the TCNT, or ‘twelve hundred’ pounds as in the Moffatt Bible?” We leave that further confusion for the neo-Alexandrians to sort through for themselves, as they read through their so called “modern” versions which purportedly “make the meaning clearer.”

The *Book of the Chronicles of Neo-Byzantine Defence of the Received Text* here records that in pre Vatican II Council times, the Protestant neo-Byzantine defenders of the Received Text and Authorized Version, here did battle with the old Latin Papists who adopted the variant in both the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims Version, the latter of which reads at Matt. 25:16d, “and gained other five.” It further records that in post Vatican II Council times, the new neo Alexandrian Papists decided to put the philosophy of “a bob each way bet” into clear practice. “I know,” said the Papists’ of the Roman *Catholic RSV*, “we’ll follow the reading of Codex Sinaiticus” at Matt. 25:16d, “and if someone thinks that’s the right reading, just point them to our Popish RSV edition.” “Great idea!,” said the Papists of the *Jerusalem Bible* and *New Jerusalem Bible*, “and then we’ll follow the reading of Codex Vaticanus” at Matt. 25:16d, “and if someone thinks that’s the right reading, just point them to our Popish JB and NJB.” The neo-Alexandrian Papists then smiled at each other and said, “With fingers crossed; it’s a bob each way bet, we *just can’t loose!*”

But what saith the Word of the Lord? “If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?” (I Cor. 14:8). And so it is, that the *Book of the Chronicles of Neo-Byzantine Defence of the Received Text* further records that the Papists here were “too smart by half,” and later fell into battle with each other. As their dead neo-Alexandrian carcasses lay on the ground, it was “a fairly easy” process for the neo-Byzantine Protestants to come on through in “a moping up operation” that once again saw the triumph of the Received Text and Saint James Version here at Matt. 25:16d. Let us thank God for the reliable and dependable sword of our Authorized Versions!

Matt. 25:17a “And” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. The reading of A 02 as Greek, “*de* (indeed) *kai* (and),” or old Latin h (and old Latin r1) as, “*autem* (indeed) *et* (and),” i.e., “And indeed likewise he that *had received* two” (showing italics for added words) etc., highlights some differences of perception from the neo-Byzantine and neo-Alexandrian paradigms. Those of the Neo-Alexandrian School, favouring the shorter reading which omits the TR’s “*kai* (And),” conceive both the TR’s Greek “*kai* (And)” and Latin “*et* (and)” as “an addition,” and hence think of A 02’s and old Latin h’s Greek, “*de* (indeed) *kai* (and)” and Latin “*autem* (indeed) *et* (and)” respectively, as “a different addition.” Thus these are shown as two different readings in the neo-Alexandrian Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72), Nestle’s 21st edition (1952), Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993), and Swanson (1995).

By contrast, from the perspective of the Neo-Byzantine School, the variant

removing the TR's Greek "*kai* (And)" and Latin "*et* (and)" is an example of those who "diminish" "the word" (Deut. 4:2); whereas the addition of the Greek, "*de* (indeed)" and Latin "*autem* (indeed)," is an example of those who "add unto the word" (Deut. 4:2). Hence I would think of A 02's and old Latin h's Greek, "*de* (indeed) *kai* (and)" and Latin "*autem* (indeed) *et* (and)" respectively, as additions to the TR's reading of Greek "*kai* (And)" and Latin "*et* (and)" which is still found in A 02's Greek and old Latin h's Latin.

This difference in neo-Byzantine and neo-Alexandrian paradigm perceptions here at Matt. 25:17a acts to raise what are arguably circular questions about, "What is a presupposition?" as opposed to, "What is a 'neutral' conclusion flowing from the 'established facts'?" Consideration of such issues might be extremely long, and I shall not now enter such a dissertation. But suffice for our purposes to note, that because the neo-Alexandrians have hijacked the universities and colleges, (in most instances by persons who are simply unthinking brain-washed puppets of the Neo-Alexandrian School,) they project their initial neo-Alexandrian paradigm as "neutral" or "correct" or "the academically defensible position;" and hence they claim that their "corresponding conclusions" which flow from this are likewise "neutral" or "correct" or "the academically defensible position." Though they seek to be "a little bit more realistic" that Westcott and Hort's daydreaming about a "neutral" Alexandrian text, they are only most minimally removed from the Westcott-Hort philosophical position.

This commentary is necessarily written from a Neo-Byzantine School paradigm (since by the grace of God, I am the first neo-Byzantine textual analyst in over three hundred years). I have no allusions or delusions about "neutrality," for "his servants ye are to whom ye obey" (Rom. 6:16). Therefore I show A 02 and old Latin h supporting the TR's reading, *infra*.

The Second Matter. The Book of Armagh is said by Merk (1964) (Merk's Latin Codex D), to follow the TR's reading. But in Gwynn's edition of the Book of Armagh (1913), the Latin, "*et* (and)," is shown in italics as an editorial addition. Therefore I show the Book of Armagh following the variant, *infra*.

The Third Matter. Outside the closed class of sources, as at Matt. 25:16c and Matt. 25:16d, so too here at Matt. 25:17a, we find the two main Alexandrian texts, Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus in disagreement. In fact, notwithstanding absurd neo-Alexandrian claims of these Alexandrian texts being some kind of *neutral text* (Westcott & Hort) or *near neutral text* (Neo-Alexandrian School), there are in fact many disagreements between these two codices. The interested reader will find these in a work I have previously referred to, Herman Hoskier's *Codex B [Codex Vaticanus] & its Allies, A Study and an Indictment* (Bernard Quaritch, London, UK, 1914, in 2 volumes).

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:17a the TR's Greek, "*kai* (And)," in the wider words, "And (*kai*) likewise he that *had received* two" (AV, showing AV's italics) etc., is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is

Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and K 017 (9th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings, *infra*) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also supported as Latin, “*et* (And),” in a minority of Latin Vulgate Codices, namely, F (*Codex Fuldensis*, 6th century, Fulda, Germany), P (6th / 7th century, The Split, Croatia)¹⁸⁰, L (*Codex Lichfeldensis*, Matt.-Luke 3, 7th / 8th century, Lichfield, England), H (*Codex Hubertianus*, 9th / 10th century, London, UK), and W (*Codex Willelmi*, 1245 A.D., London, UK); as well as old Latin Versions d (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379); the early mediaeval church writer, Pseudo-Chrysostom in a Latin work (6th century); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

However, a variant omitting the “And” (Greek, “*kai*,” Latin, “*et*”), is found in most Latin Vulgate Codices of Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), and aur (7th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation.

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text which must thus stand. The origins of the variant are speculative. There are no Greek manuscripts with the variant, raising the question, Did the variant originate in the Greek of which a form is preserved in the Latin, or did the variant originate in the Latin? Moreover, was this lost on multiple occasions in different manuscript lines, or do all manuscripts with this omission stem from one original corrupt manuscript?

Was the variant an accidental omission? In Lectionary 2378’s second reading (p. 68a, column 1), the TR’s reading is written as “*κα*” (*kai*); but at its first reading (p. 39a, column 1), this is written in one letter space as an abbreviation that looks something like our letter “S”, although it is more extended as the bottom, something like “*Ϛ*”. Either did a Greek manuscript have a one letter abbreviation for “*kai* (And);” or a Latin manuscript simply read “*et* (and)” at the end of a line? Was this lost in an undetected paper fade?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a Greek or Latin prunist scribe regard the Greek “*kai* (And)” or Latin “*et* (And)” as “redundant”? Did he then prune away this “unnecessary conjunction” as “a stylistic improvement”?

A deliberate or accidental omission? We do not know. At this distance, we cannot know. But we can know that this was an omission to the original text.

¹⁸⁰ Latin Codex P as designated in Weber-Gryson (2007) rather than Merk (1964).

The *Textus Receptus* (TR) reading has rock solid support in the Greek over time and through time, dating from ancient times. Indeed, on the presently available data, it has monolithic support in the Byzantine Greek textual tradition (although it always remains possible that a small number of Greek manuscripts not itemized by von Soden, or Greek Lectionaries whose readings are not yet itemized, may one day turn up with this variant). It also has the support of about two-thirds of the old Latin Versions, and a small number of Vulgate Codices. It further enjoys the support of the ancient church father and doctor, St. Basil the Great in the Greek; and the early mediaeval church doctor, St. Gregory the Great in the Latin. By contrast, the variant has no support in the Greek, relatively weak support in the Latin, and looks like the type of thing that may well have originated with Origen (and if so, this variant would have originally been in the Greek). On the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 25:17a an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:17a, "And," in the wider words, "And likewise he that *had received* two" (AV) etc., is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century) and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family I Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; and the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in all extant Syriac Versions; the Egyptian Coptic Middle Egyptian (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions, and some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version; and Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

However, the variant omitting "And," and so reading, "Likewise he that *had received* two" etc., is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); as well as Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), and 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere). It is also found in some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version; and a manuscript of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version.

This split in the Alexandrian texts at Matt. 25:17a was resolved by Tischendorf in

his normative way of following his “great discovery” of Codex Sinaiticus, and thus adopting the variant in Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72). This split in the Alexandrian texts was resolved by Westcott & Hort in their normative way of following the “more neutral” of their two “neutral” texts and so for the wrong reasons, putting the correct reading of Codex Vaticanus in their main Westcott-Hort (1881) text. But on this occasion Westcott & Hort used one of their relatively rare side-notes to give the variant of Codex Sinaiticus as an alternative reading; “After all,” they probably mused, “is not the shorter reading the better reading, and is not the variant the shorter reading?” Erwin Nestle, anxious to tell the world he was “not a total lackey of Westcott & Hort,” rushed to follow the variant in Nestle’s 21st edition (1952). After all, had he not “spotted something” that “Westcott and Hort missed,” namely, that “the shorter reading is the better reading”? So too the variant was adopted by the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) and UBS’s 4th revised edition (1993).

With the two main Alexandrian texts split down the middle, neo-Alexandrian translators were left asking themselves “which way should” they “jump”? Some of these “jumping boxes” jumped the way of Codex Vaticanus, and thus for the wrong reasons, adopted the right reading at Matt. 25:17a. Thus the correct reading is found at Matt. 25:17a in the *American Standard Version* (1901) which reads, “In like manner he also (Greek, *kai*) that received the two” etc. (ASV). The correct reading is also found in the RSV, NIV, and TCNT.

But others of these “jumping boxes” jumped the other way, and thus the incorrect reading of Codex Sinaiticus is found at Matt. 25:17a in the *New American Standard Bible* (1995) which reads, “In the same manner the one who had received the two” etc. (NASB). The incorrect reading is also found in the NRSV, ESV, TEV, and Moffatt Bible.

The old Latin Papists of the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims followed the correct reading here at Matt. 25:17a. Thus the Douay-Rheims reads, “And (Latin, *et*) in like manner he that had received the two” etc. . By contrast, the new neo-Alexandrian Papists of the JB and NJB here adopted the variant.

Matt. 25:17b “he also” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The textual apparatus of the UBS 3rd (1975) and 3rd corrected (1983) editions regard as different readings that of old Latin d which has the TR’s “*et* (also) *ipse* (he)” before “*lucratus est* (gained),” and old Latin h which has *et* (also) *ipse* (he)” after “*lucratus est* (gained),” both of which Latin readings are inside the closed class of sources. While it is possible that the Latin is here following a Greek manuscript that altered the position of these words, it is also possible that they were altered as part of the act of translation from Greek to Latin. Either way, I regard them as saying the same basic thing as the TR here at Matt. 25:17b, *infra*.

Outside the closed class of sources, the UBS 3rd (1975) and 3rd corrected (1983) editions also regard as different readings that of the Western text's D 05 (a Greek-Latin diglot which also contains old Latin d, *supra*¹⁸¹) which places “*kai* (also) *autos* (he)” before “*ekerdese* (‘he gained’ = ‘gained,’ AV)” rather than after it (TR). But once again, I do not consider this changed word order alters the basic fact that D 05 here follows the TR’s words, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:17b the TR’s Greek, “*kai* (also) *autos* (he),” i.e., “he also” in the wider words, “he that *had received* two, he (*autos*) also (*kai*) gained other two” (AV, showing AV’s italics), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and M 021 (9th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark), 2 (12th century), and 1242 (13th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is further supported as Latin, “*et* (also) *ipse* (he),” i.e., “he also gained other two” in old Latin Versions d (5th century) and h (5th century); and as Latin, “*et* (also),” i.e., “also gained another two,” in old Latin Version f (6th century).

Variant 1 omits Latin, “*et* (also) *ipse* (he),” and reads instead Latin, “*in* (‘in’ = ‘with’) *eis* (them),” i.e., “with them gained another two.” This is found in old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century).

Variant 2 omits Greek, “*kai* (also) *autos* (he),” and so reads simply, “gained other two.” This is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 1010 (12th century). It is further found in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), and g1 (8th / 9th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Basil the Great (d. 379); the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine text which is thus correct. The origins of the variants are conjectural; although *Variant 1* looks to be a Latin originating alteration.

¹⁸¹ The Western Greek texts are not excluded from the closed class of sources because they lacked general accessibility over time, and through time; but because relative to e.g., the Byzantine Greek, they are clearly a very corrupt Greek textual tradition.

Was *Variant 1* an accidental alteration? In the wider words, Latin, “*lucratus est* (gained) *et* (also) *ipse* (he) *alia* (‘other’ / ‘another’) *duo* (two)” i.e., “he also gained other two,” due to a paper fade, had this come to look something like, “*lucratus est ::::: alia duo*”? Looking at the immediately preceding verse at Matt. 25:16, Latin, “*et* (and) *operatus est* (having worked¹⁸²) *in* (‘in’ = ‘with’) *eis* (them) *et* (and) *lucratus est* (‘having gained’ = ‘gained’¹⁸³) *alia* (‘other’ / ‘another’) *quinque* (five);” did he conclude that “similar stylistic factors” meant that “the missing words must be the same as the “*in* (‘in’ = ‘with’) *eis* (them)” of this verse 16? Did he thus “reconstruct” these missing words from verse 16? If so, this Latin scribe gave a perverse testimony to the presence of something in his original text with the same approximate number of letter spaces as the reading of the *Textus Receptus*.

Was *Variant 1* a deliberate alteration? Did a Latin scribe think it would be “a stylistic improvement” to assimilate the terminology of verse 16 to verse 17? Did he thus deliberately erase the TR’s reading of Latin “*et* (also) *ipse* (he)” at verse 17, and put in its place the words of verse 16, “*in* (‘in’ = ‘with’) *eis* (them)”?

Was *Variant 2* an accidental omission? In Lectionary 2378’s second reading (p. 68a, column 1¹⁸⁴), “*kai* (also) *autos* (he)” is written in four letter spaces at the end of one line. One letter space has the “*kai* (also)” as an abbreviation that looks something like our letter “S”, although it is more extended as the bottom, something like “ς”. Then the “*autos* (he)” is written as “αυτ” with the “ο” above the “τ” followed by a back sloping line “\”. On the next line, the next word, “*alla* (other)” was first left out, so that the line starts with “*duo* (two),” but the word “*alla* (other)” has then been added back in with three letter spaces as, “αλλ” with the final “α” above the final “λ”, so that the “*alla* (other)” juts out three spaces to the left of the left-hand justified writing column. And in Lectionary 1968’s first reading (p. 71b), this is written in five letter spaces as “καίαν”, and then above the “αυ” the remaining “τοσ (*tos*)” is written in various abbreviations.

These two Lectionaries both come from a much later era than *Variant 2*. But did an earlier Greek manuscript using some similar type of abbreviations to Lectionaries 2378 and 1968, have a reduced “*kai* (also) *autos* (he)” in just four letter spaces like

¹⁸² Latin “*operatus est* (‘having worked,’ *operatus*, masculine singular nominative, perfect passive participle from *opero*; + *est*, indicative active present, 3rd person singular verb, from, *summe-esse*.)” The Latin verb *to be*, *sum-esse*, is used with the perfect participle to form the perfect passive voice. See Allen & Greenough’s *New Latin Grammar* (1888, 1903, 2000), *op. cit.*, p. 72, section 158 c) 2); & Basil Gildersleeve’s *Latin Grammar* (1st ed. 1867, 2nd ed. 1872, 3rd ed. 1895), *op. cit.*, pp. 165-6, section 250.

¹⁸³ See previous footnote and footnote on “*lucratus est*” at Matt. 25:16c.

¹⁸⁴ Though this reading is unclear in my photocopy from the positive microfilm copy form, it is clear in my photocopy from the negative microfilm copy form (Sydney University microfilms, Rare Books, RB Add. Ms. No. 40, Micro 015).

Lectionary 2378, or just three letter spaces with a one letter space abbreviated “*kai* (also)” like Lectionary 2378 and a two letter space abbreviated “*autos* (he)” like Lectionary 1968? Did these words simply come at the end of a line like in Lectionary 1968, or did they like the “*alla* (other)” of Lectionary 2378, jut out to the left of the writing column because it had first been accidentally left out, and then added back in? Either way, did the “*kai* (also) *autos* (he)” then suffer from a paper fade? Were these words thus lost in an undetected paper fade?

Was *Variant 2* a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe consider that the words “*kai* (also) *autos* (he),” were “unnecessarily wordy”? Did he thus prune these words away from the TR’s “he (*autos*) also (*kai*) gained other two” in order to produce “a more succinct text” reading simply, “gained other two”?

Were these deliberate or accidental alterations, or was one deliberate and the other accidental? We do not know. We cannot know. But we can know that these were alterations to the text of Scripture here Providentially preserved for us in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading over time and through time, dating from ancient times (A 02 & W 032), against which there is no good textual argument. It further enjoys the support of two ancient old Latin versions (d & h), as well as an early medieval old Latin version (f). By contrast, *Variant 1* has no support in the Greek, and given its probable origins as an accidental or deliberate assimilation of the same Latin words in verse 16, on the presently available data it looks very much like an intra-Latin textual tradition reading rather than one potentially brought over from the Greek. *Variant 2* has weak support in the Greek, though stronger support in the Latin. Weighing up these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on this occasion, I consider that the Latin support dating from both ancient times and early mediaeval times, is enough to *just bring* the TR’s reading “over the line” of a high level “B” in the range of 71-74%, and into the range of a 75-76% “A.” Thus on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 25:17b an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:17b, “he (*autos*) also (*kai*),” in the wider words, “he that *had received* two, he also gained other two” (AV, showing AV’s italics) etc., is found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century)¹⁸⁵. It is also found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 700 (11th century, independent), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), 579

¹⁸⁵ Altering word order 1,2,3 of “*ekerdese* (‘gained,’ word 1) *kai* (‘also,’ word 2) *autos* (‘he,’ word 3)” (TR) to word order 2,3,1 (D 05).

(13th century, mixed text), and 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels). It is also found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Syriac Harclean Version (616).

Variant 2 which omits “he also,” and reads simply, “gained other two,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century); as well as Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), and 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere). It is also found in Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Palestinian (c. 6th century) Versions; the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); Georgian Version (5th century); Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The erroneous variant entered the NU Text *et al*. Hence at Matt. 25:17b the ASV reads, “he ... that *received* the two gained other two” (showing ASV’s italics). Likewise the incorrect variant is found in the NASB, RSV, NRSV, ESV, NIV, and TEV.

The old Latin Papists of the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims here followed *Variant 2*. Thus at Matt. 25:17b the Douay-Rheims reads, “he that had received the two gained other two.” So too, the new neo-Alexandrian Papists follow *Variant 2* in their JB and NJB. The *Book of the Chronicles of Neo-Byzantine Defence of the Received Text* here records that the old Latin Papists and new neo-Alexandrian Papists here “did a Jack and Jill Popish number.” Both “climbed the hill” of “textual analysis” at Matt. 25:17b, but the old Latin Papists then “fell down and broke their crown;” and the new neo-Alexandrian Papists “came tumbling after.”

Matt. 25:20 “beside them” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) shows no support from the Latin textual tradition for the TR’s reading here, but rather attributes the Latin to other readings, *infra*. Von Soden (1913) shows the Latin generally supporting the variant with no specific Latin support for the TR’s reading; and Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72) also claims that the Latin of the Vulgate *et al* supports the variant. But will these claims withstand careful scrutiny?

The Vulgate reads, “*et* (and) *ecce* (behold) *alia* (other) *quinque* (five) *superlucratus sum* (I have gained over and above¹⁸⁶).” The prefix of “*superlucratus*” is “*super*” and here means “over and above.” In the Vulgate, *super*, is often used to render the Greek, *epi*. E.g., in Matt. 5:15, “on” or “over (Greek *epi*; Latin *super*) a candlestick;” in Matt. 5:45, “on” or “over (Greek *epi*; Latin *super*)” “the evil and” “good” and “the just and” “unjust;” Matt. 9:18 in, “lay thy hand upon” or “over (Greek *epi*; Latin *super*) her;” Matt. 10:13 in, “let you peace come upon” or “over (Greek *epi*; Latin *super*) it;” Matt. 10:27, “preach ye upon (Greek *epi*; Latin *super*) the housetops;” etc. .

With regard to the specific terminology we find in the TR here at Matt. 25:20 of, “*ep*’ (beside) *autois* (them),” in the wider words, “behold, I have gained beside them five talents more;” we also find at Revelation 11:10, “And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over (ep’) them (autois)” etc. . The Greek, “*ep*’ (over) *autois* (them)” of Revelation 11:10 is rendered in the Latin Vulgate as “*super* (over) *illos* (‘those [ones’ = ‘them’).”

Therefore, it seems to me that if the Vulgate was not translating the Greek TR’s reading, rather than reading, “*superlucratus*,” it would reading simply “*lucratus sum*” i.e., “I have gained,” as in old Latin g1 (and r1), or “*adquisivi*” i.e., “I have acquired,” as in old Latin ff1. While I admit that translation is not always a precise art, even between two broadly similar grammatical languages such as Latin and Greek, and this reading at Matt. 25:20 is a good example of that fact; it nevertheless seems to me that the Vulgate *et al* are clearly rendering the TR’s Greek, “I have gained beside (ep’) them (autois)” with the “*super*” prefix of “*superlucratus sum*” in “I have gained over and above.” Therefore, contrary to the specific claims of von Soden (1913) and Tischendorf (1869-1872), I show the Vulgate *et al* supporting the TR with a similar reading, *infra*; but old Latin g1 and ff1 following the variant. Thus using but reinterpreting the data from Tischendorf’s textual apparatus, I further show the “*superlucratus sum*” of Origen in a Latin translation as supporting the TR’s reading, but the “*lucratus sum*” reading of Ambrose (Migne, Latin, 16:651) following the variant.

Outside the closed class of sources, I likewise disagree with von Soden who sees the Greek “*epekerdesa* (‘I have gained over [and above]),’ of D05 and Theta 038 (von Soden’s Iα δ5ff) following the variant; and Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72) which also shows D 05 following the variant. I further disagree with Nestle-Aland’s 27th edition (1993) which sees this Greek reading as an autonomous variant, further found inside the closed class of sources in the Vulgate and a part of the old Latin Versions textual tradition i.e., as “*superlucratus sum*,” *supra*. Rather, I consider these manuscripts all follow the TR’s reading. As to how this change occurred in the Greek is speculative. Given that its earliest known Greek form is D 05 and this is a Greek-Latin diglot in which

¹⁸⁶ Latin “*superlucratus* (masculine singular nominative, perfect participle, from *lucror* + prefix *super* = ‘over and above’) *sum* (indicative active present, 1st person singular verb, from *sum-esse*).” However, the verb to be, “*sum*” is also used with nominative perfect participles to form the perfect passive voice, such as here.

the Latin reads, “*superlucratus sum*,” is the Greek of D05 a scribal assimilation to the Latin of old Latin d?

The Second Matter. With regard to this reading and variant, compare Matt. 25:22c, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:20 the TR’s Greek, “*ep*’ (‘over [and above]’ or ‘beside’¹⁸⁷) *autois* (them),” in the wider words, “behold, I have gained beside them five talents more” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and U 030 (9th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also supported in a similar Latin reading in the “*super* (over and above)” suffix of Latin, “*superlucratus sum* (I have gained over and above),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D., written as three words, “*sup[er]lucratus sum*,) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604)¹⁸⁸.

However, a variant which omits Greek, “*ep*’ (‘over [and above]’ or ‘beside’) *autois* (them),” and so reads simply, “behold, I have gained five talents more,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 127 (11th century). It is also found as Latin, “*lucratus sum* (I have gained),” in old Latin Version g1 (8th / 9th century); and as Latin, “*adquisivi* (I have acquired),” in old Latin Version ff1 (10th / 11th century). It is also found in the ancient church Latin writer, Ambrose (d. 397).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which thus must stand. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental omission? In the Greek, the words “*ep*’ (‘over [and above]’ or ‘beside’) *autois* (them),” come at the very end of verse 20. In *Manuscript London* (A 02) this is written out in full at the end of a line, with verse 21 starting on the next line, in which the first letter of Matt. 25:21 protrudes one letter space to the left and is written in slightly larger print. Elsewhere on this same page of *Manuscript London*, stylistic paper spaces are left in this continuous script manuscript. E.g., between the end

¹⁸⁷ Greek preposition *epi* + dative (*autois*, neuter plural dative, personal pronoun from *autos-ē-o*) = “over,” “beside,” *et al*.

¹⁸⁸ Gregory uses the same two words here as the Vulgate *et al, supra*.

of Matt. 25:18 and the start of Matt. 25:19, there is a stylistic paper space of about 3 letter spaces (column 1, p. 26); or between the end of Matt. 25:29 and Matt. 25:30, there is a stylistic paper space of about 11 letter spaces (column 2, p. 26). So too in *Manuscript Washington* (W 032), there is a stylistic paper space of about 4 letter spaces between the end of Matt. 25:20 and start of Matt. 25:21. These facts remind us that the AV's verse division as formally numbered by Stephanus in 1551, in fact manifests a more ancient unnumbered Byzantine verse division.

In a given manuscript, were the words “*ep*” (‘over [and above]’ or ‘beside’) *autois* (them),” lost in a paper fade? Did a copyist scribe take this to simply be part of a stylistic paper space coming at the end of verse 20 and before verse 21?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe regard these as “redundant” and “flowery words”? Did he then arrogantly prune them away as “a stylistic improvement”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental change? Alas, such matters are lost to us in the unrecorded dark ages of textual transmission history. But we do know that this was a change to the *Textus Receptus* here Providentially preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR's reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Greek reading over time, and through time, dating from ancient times. It also has strong support as a similar Latin reading, best explained as a Latin translation of the Greek TR's reading, which is the representative Latin reading over time, and through time, dating from ancient times. The TR's reading thus further enjoys the support of the early mediaeval church doctor, St. Gregory the Great, who was a pious Bishop of Rome (590-604) before, as part of the great “falling away” (II Thess. 2:3) in which men did “depart from the faith” (I Tim. 4:1), that Bishopric of Rome became the Office of Antichrist following the formation of the Roman Papacy in 607 by decree of the Emperor Phocas, making the Bishop of Rome, “universal bishop.” By contrast, the variant has very weak support in the Greek, and relatively weak support in the Latin. On the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 25:20 an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:20, “over [and above] (*ep*) them (*autois*)” or “beside (*ep*) them (*autois*),” in the wider words, “behold, I have gained beside them five talents more” (AV), is found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century) and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century,

independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Harclean h (616 Versions).

In changing the TR's Greek "*ekerdēsa* ('I have gained,' indicative active aorist, 1st person singular verb, from *kerdainō ep'* ('over [and above]' or 'beside') *autois* (them),' to the similar reading of Greek, "*epekerdēsa* ('I have gained over [and above],' indicative active aorist, 1st person singular verb, from *epikerdainō = epi /* 'over [and above]' + *kerdainō /* 'to gain'),' it is also found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century); as well as (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century) and Minuscule 700 (11th century, independent). It is further found in Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron, which in Ciasca's 19th century Latin translation of the 12th-14th centuries Arabic, so reads in the suffix "*super* (over and above)" of his Latin rendering, "*superlucratu sum* (I have gained over and above)."

However, the variant omitting these words and so reading simply, "behold, I have gained five talents more," is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century); together with Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type) and 892 (9th century, mixed text type). It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century).

At Matt. 25:20 the erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al*. Hence the ASV reads, "lo, I have gained other five talents." The incorrect variant is also found in the NASB, RSV, NRSV, ESV, NIV, and TEV.

Matt. 25:21 "Then his master said unto him"

(TR & Tyndale 1534 & Geneva Bible 1557 & 1560) {A}

Preliminary Remarks.

Tyndale (1526) here reads, "His master said unto him;" and both Cranmer (1539) and the King James Version (1611) read, "His lord said unto him." This resembles the Latin based translations of Wycliffe (1380) and the Douay-Rheims (NT, 1582) both of which also read, "his lord said unto him." By contrast, Tyndale (1534) and the Geneva Bible (1557 & 1560), all read, "Then his master said unto him."

While the AV generally translates the conjunctions "*de*" and "*kai*," due to English stylistic factors it does not always do so since it is a great piece of English literature¹⁸⁹. But in my opinion this is not justified in this instance here at Matt. 25:21, and so I here

¹⁸⁹ See e.g., my comments at Matt. 6:12 in Volume 1 (Matt. 1-14).

prefer the reading of Tyndale’s 1534 edition in which he improved upon his earlier 1526 edition at this verse, and the Geneva Bible editions of 1557 and 1560, all three of which render the “*de*” as “Then.” The Authorized Version of 1611 is not word perfect, but it is the best available English translation¹⁹⁰. As a package deal I endorse the AV, even though (like Tyndale, 1526 and Cranmer, 1539,) I think its translators erred here at Matt. 25:21 in not following Tyndale in 1534 and the Geneva Bible in 1557 and 1560, in translating the “*de*” as “Then.” We are thus reminded that only the underpinning OT and NT Received Texts are the infallible Word of God, not the translations made from them. Hence for the purposes of showing an English translation of the TR’s reading here at Matt. 25:21, I cite the neo-Byzantine text based translations of Tyndale (1534) and the Geneva Bible (1557 & 1560), *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:21 the TR’s Greek, “*de* (‘Then’ or ‘And’),” in the wider words, “Then (*de*) his master said unto him” (Tyndale 1534 & Geneva Bible 1557 & 1560), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), and H 013 (9th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century). It is also supported as Latin, “*et* (And),” in old Latin Versions f (6th century) and ff1 (10th / 11th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writers, Clement of Alexandria (d. before 215), Origen (d. 254), Eusebius (d. 339), Athanasius (d. 373), Basil the Great (d. 379), Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386), and Chrysostom (d. 407).

However, the Greek, “*de* (Then),” is omitted in a minority Byzantine reading found in e.g., Codices Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century) and K 017 (9th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings)¹⁹¹. It is further omitted in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th

¹⁹⁰ Cf. my sermon comments, “in Genesis 25:18, we read that the Ishmaelites dwelt on the Horn of Africa [correction, not ‘Horn of Africa’ but ‘Arabian Peninsula’] between their Hamitic brethren in Egypt and their Semitic brethren. Now overall the Authorized Version is the best available English translation, but it’s not word perfect. The AV says of Ishmael, ‘He *died* in the presence of his brethren,’ but the Hebrew word, *naphal*, here rendered, ‘died,’ means ‘to fall,’ and so it might be better rendered as he ‘fell’ in the sense of ‘he settled’ in the presence of his brethren [Hebrew, *naphal*, active perfect, masculine 3rd person singular kal verb, from *naphal*]. Hence I think the better rendering of this verse is the one found in the Geneva Bible of 1560 which says, ‘dwelt in the presence of all his brethren’” (My sermon, “Biblical Apologetics 3/4: OT prophecies on cities and nations,” Mangrove Mountain Union Church, N.S.W., Australia, Thursday 15 July, 2010; recording at <http://www.sermonaudio.com/kingjamesbible>; printed copy at Textual Commentaries Volume 3, “Appendix 8: A Sermons Bonus.”)

¹⁹¹ Von Soden gives the TR’s reading the residual support of his K group other than one manuscript, and so this minority reading is supported by c. 10% or less of the Byzantine Greek manuscripts.

century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is therefore correct. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental omission? Both Manuscript London (A02) and Manuscript Washington (W 032) are written in continuous script capital letters (unicals). Sometimes a poorly formed unical can look like another letter. E.g., in Manuscript Washington at Matt. 15:12 (p. 55), the delta “Δ” of “ΟΙΔΑC (Knowest thou)” looks like an alpha “Α”. In unicals (capital letters) Matt. 25:21 reads, “ΔΕ (*de*, ‘Then’) ΑΥΤΩ (*auto*, ‘unto him’).” Did a scribe have a manuscript in which the “Δ” was poorly formed and looked like an “Α”? Due to an ellipsis on such a poorly formed delta in a continuous script manuscript reading, “ΔΕΑΥΤΩ”, looking at something like “ΑΕΑΥΤΩ”, did a scribe’s eye jump from the “Α” looking “Δ” to the “Α” of “ΑΥΤΩ”, thus accidentally omitting the “ΔΕ (*de*)”?

Alternatively, in Lectionary 2378 which here follows the variant, at both readings of Matt. 25:21 the previous word comes at the end of a line and there is a bit of a stylistic unevenness on the right-hand side of left-hand justified column. Was the “*de*” lost from such a manuscript in an undetected paper fade?¹⁹²

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe think the “*de*” was “redundant” and “unnecessary”? Did he then prune it away as “a stylistic improvement”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We cannot be sure. But we can be sure that it was an omission of the reading preserved for us here in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading over time and through time, dating from ancient times, and (based on projections from von Soden’s K group of c. 1,000 manuscripts,) is found in at least c. 90% of the Byzantine Greek manuscripts. It also has the support of a couple of old Latin

¹⁹² Due to this possibility having also occurred in Lectionary 2378 itself, rather than rely on my microfilm photocopies which are not good enough to pick up any such paper fade here, I checked both readings in the original at Sydney University. However, I found there was no such omicron fades of “*de*” apparent for this word at either Lectionary 2378’s reading 1 (p. 39a, column 2) or reading 2 (p. 68a, column 2).

versions, one from early mediaeval times; and it enjoys impressive support among the ancient church Greek writers. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek and corresponding strong support in the Latin. But bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on this occasion, I consider that the strength of its citation among such ancient Greek writers as the church fathers and doctors, St. Athanasius, St. Basil the Great, and St. John Chrysostom; its clear antiquity in such ancient church Greek writers as Clement of Alexandria and Origen; and its presence in the early mediaeval Latin of old Latin *f* in the sixth century; all combine to *just bring* the TR's reading "over the line" of a high level "B" in the range of 71-74%, and into the range of a 75-76% "A." Thus on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 25:21 an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:21, "Then" or "And" in the wider words, "Then his master said unto him" (Tyndale 1534 & Geneva Bible 1557 & 1560), is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family I Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Syriac Harclean Version (616); and Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century).

However, the variant which omits "Then" or "And" is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), 700 (11th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 1241 (12th century, Alexandrian corruption in General Epistles, Byzantine text in Acts, independent text elsewhere i.e., independent scribal corruption elsewhere e.g., in the Gospels). It is also found in the Syriac Pesitto Version (first half 5th century); the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Middle Egyptian (3rd century) Versions; Armenian Version (5th century); and Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

At Matt. 25:21 the erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al*. It was found in former times in the old Latin Papists' Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims

Version; as it is in contemporary times in the new neo-Alexandrian Papists' Roman *Catholic RSV*, *JB*, and *NJB*.

While conjunctions in the underpinning Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, are generally translated by the ASV, one of the notable features of the later neo-Alexandrian and Burgonite Versions is their gratuitous removal of many conjunctions. Sometimes this very clearly changes the theological meaning of the text, as seen by the removal of the “And (Hebrew, “vav” / ו; Greek Septuagint, *de*; Latin Vulgate, *autem*),” in “And the earth was without form and void” (AV) of Genesis 1:2 in e.g., the neo-Alexandrians' NASB, RSV, ESV, and NRSV, or the Burgonites' NKJV. This tampering with God's Word at Gen. 1:2 on the very first page of the Bible, perverts the Word of God in such a way as to inhibit a Gap School creationist understanding of the passage, in which between the first two verses of Genesis there is a succession of “worlds” or ages (Heb. 1:2; 11:3), involving multiple “generations of the heavens and of the earth” (Gen. 2:4) over millions and billions of years, under the “One that inhabiteth eternity” (Isa. 57:15).

At other times, no such very clear change in the general theological meaning of the text accompanies the removal of a conjunction, such as here at Matt. 25:21. Given this general stylistic feature of the neo-Alexandrian Versions we consider (other than the RV and ASV) to gratuitously prune away these conjunctions, and thus detach their readers from a more literal understanding of the text, the question naturally arises, Which of these two readings are e.g., the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV following here at Matt. 25:21 when they read something like, “His lord said unto him” (ASV) or “His master said to him” (ESV)? While the general removal of conjunctions from most of the modern versions means we cannot be sure on the basis of their English rendering whether they here follow the TR or variant at Matt. 25:21, *on the basis that the neo-Alexandrian texts have monolithically followed the variant*, we can in this instance reasonably say that they *most probably are following the variant*. *But then arises the doubt*. Given that neo-Alexandrians sometimes use a non-Alexandrian text pincer arm, can we be absolutely certain that at least one or more of them might not have here so used their non-Alexandrian pincer arm? We cannot be sure; and nor can any of their deceived readers. (Cf. my comments on the non-Alexandrian text pincer arm at Matt. 21:24a.)

Matt. 25:22b “that had received” (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Remarks: Book Binding of Lectionary 1968.

This is not a textual matter, but as part of my work on the two Sydney University Lectionaries I note the following matter of book binding style in Lectionary 1968. The TR's “*labon* (that had received),” is found at the very start of a page in the second reading of Lectionary 1968 at p. 151b. Going from the left hand side of p. 151a over to the top left of this right hand side of p. 151b, one notices in the microfilm photocopies that I use, a large marker in between pages 151a and 151b. The original held at Sydney University reveals that this is a piece of page-binding sometimes inserted in between pages in this Lectionary to help hold the pages together.

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter: Greek & Latin Inside the Closed Class of Sources. The TR's reading here highlights the fact that even though the Greek and Latin are very grammatically compatible languages, they are certainly not identical¹⁹³. The TR's Greek aorist participle (*labon*, "receiving" = "that had received"¹⁹⁴), is rendered by a Latin pluperfect verb (*acceperat*, "he that had received" = "that had received"¹⁹⁵). The idea of the pluperfect is something that was completed before a past time. E.g., "Last Sunday, the 20th of March 2011, was both *Lent 2* and the *Eve of Thomas Cranmer's Day*. At the 3 p.m. *Book of Common Prayer* Evensong Service at St. Swithun's Pymble, after the choir, followed by the Minister, followed by the Bishop, processed out of the church past the place where I was standing in the pew, I knelt down on the pew kneeler to pray (past time); and shortly before this time the Bishop had pronounced (pluperfect) the Trinitarian Blessing found in *The Book of Common Prayer* of 1662."

Like old Latin Version a (4th century), the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) is here missing verses 22 and 23. Therefore no reference is made to them either here at Matt. 25:22b, or in the next reading at Matt. 25:22c, *infra*.

The Second Matter: Codex Sinaiticus Outside the Closed Class of Sources. There seems to be some uncertainty as to what *Codex Sinaiticus* originally read here at Matt. 25:22b. Tischendorf (1869-72) says it originally followed the variant, but was then changed by a "corrector" scribe to the TR's reading. Von Soden (1913) simply says that the variant is followed by his H group *except* for *Codex Sinaiticus* i.e., he considers it follows the TR's reading here. Nestle-Aland (1993) simply shows *Codex Sinaiticus* following the TR. Swanson (1995) considers *Codex Sinaiticus* followed the TR both originally, and also after a "corrector" scribe came to it.

What this manuscript actually said originally is of precisely no consequence to the correct reading of the New Testament text here at Matt. 25:22b, because for we neo-Byzantines such manuscripts outside the closed of sources have no impact upon the NT Text's determination. Therefore, if one is wrong in one's attribution of this or that reading, it has no impact on the NT Text. Hence "the pressure is off" with regard to such certainties when dealing with e.g., the highly corrupt Alexandrian texts. But with these important qualifications, I have decided to follow the majority view of the textual apparatuses in showing *Codex Sinaiticus* following the TR, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

¹⁹³ More generally, see e.g., Carl Buck's *Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin*, Chicago University, Chicago, Illinois, USA, 1933.

¹⁹⁴ Masculine singular nominative, active aorist participle, from *labano*.

¹⁹⁵ Indicative active pluperfect, 3rd person singular verb, from *accipio*.

At Matt. 25:22b, the TR's Greek, "*labon* ('receiving' = 'that had received')," in the wider words, "He also that had received two talents" (AV) etc., is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices K 017 (9th century), M 021 (9th century), and X 033 (10th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also found as Latin, "*acceperat* (that had received)," in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), f (6th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation; and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604)¹⁹⁶.

However, Greek, "*labon* (that had received)," is omitted in a minority Byzantine reading found in A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), and Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which must thus stand. The origins of the variant are conjectural.

Was the variant an accidental omission? Was the "*labon* (that had received)," "squeezed in" at the end of a line? Was it then lost in an undetected paper fade?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Because in the words, "*o* ('he,' masculine singular nominative, definite article from *o*) *ta* ('the,' redundant in English translation, neuter plural accusative, definite article from *to*) *duo* ('two,' indeclinable except for plural dative, acting as a neuter plural accusative adjective) *talanta* ('talents,' neuter plural accusative noun, from *talanton*)," if the following word, "*labon* (that had received)," is omitted, one still has a straightforward grammatical structure of a nominative for a subject in "*o* (he)" with an accusative for a direct object in "*ta* (-) *duo* (two) *talanta* (talents);" did a scribe conclude that one could grammatically construct the idea of "he (*o*) with two (*ta duo*) talents (*talanta*)," or "he (*o*) that had two (*ta duo*) talents (*talanta*);" so that "the '*labon*' was unnecessary"? Did he then prune it away as "a stylistic improvement"?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We do not know. We cannot now know. But we can know that it was an omission to the *Textus Receptus* (TR) here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR's reading has strong support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading with no good textual argument against it. In an example of the servant maxim,

¹⁹⁶ Gregory uses the same word here as the Vulgate *et al, supra*.

The Latin improves the Greek, diligently bowing down low before its Greek master, we find that the Latin textual tradition here compliments the Greek by providing ancient attestation to this reading in e.g., old Latin Versions b (5th century) and h (5th century). The TR's reading is thus established over time, and through time, dating from ancient times. It further enjoys the support of the early mediaeval church doctor, St. Gregory the Great. By contrast, the variant has weak support in the Greek and no support in the Latin. Balancing out these considerations, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 25:22b an "A" i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:22b, "that had received," in the wider words, "He also that had received two talents" (AV), is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is also found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is further found in some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version; the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); Armenian Version (5th century); Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

However, the variant which omits, "that had received," is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century). It is also found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century), (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century), (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century), and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); and Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), and 1241 (12th century, independent in Gospels). It is further found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is also found in the Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Harclean h (616) Versions; and some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic Version.

Codex Sinaiticus apparently requires some level of interpretation at Matt. 25:22b in order to determine what the effect of a "corrector" scribe was, and Tischendorf first formed the view that his "beloved" *Codex Sinaiticus* followed the variant, a view not held by others (see "Preliminary Textual Discussion," "The Second Matter," *supra*), and he then adopted the erroneous variant in Tischendorf's 8th edition (1869-72). In following the neo-Alexandrian rule, "The shorter reading is the better reading," the incorrect variant

was also adopted by Westcott-Hort (1881), Nestle's 21st edition (1952), the UBS 3rd (1975) and 3rd corrected (1983) editions, and the contemporary NU Text of Nestle-Aland's 27th edition (1993) and UBS's 4th revised edition (1993).

Hence at Matt. 25:22b, the *American Standard Version* reads, "he also that *received* the two talents" (ASV, showing AV's italics); and so too italics are used in the ASV's son, the *New American Standard Bible*, to show that the variant is being followed. The incorrect variant is also found in the RSV, ESV, NRSV, and NIV.

But *prima facie* with the alternative view to that of Tischendorf i.e., the view that *Codex Sinaiticus* follows the TR's reading, the *Today's English Version* reads at Matt. 25:22b, "The servant who had been given two thousand coins" (TEV, emphasis mine) etc. . Or did the TEV really follow the variant, and these words are simply added as part of one of the TEV's many "dynamic equivalents." Sadly, with such a loose'n'liberal "translation" as the TEV, one is never able to be sure about such things. Similar issues beset the *Twentieth Century New Testament* which here reads, "Then the one who had received the twelve hundred pounds" (TCNT, emphasis mine) etc. . Is the TCNT simply adding in "who had received" much like the ASV and NASB, but because it does not use italics for added words, putting this in normal type, or is the TCNT following the TR's reading? If the latter, is it because its translators agreed with Tischendorf that this is the reading of *Codex Sinaiticus*? *The lack of clarity in the TCNT means we cannot know the answer to these questions, and nor can any readers who put their trust in the TCNT.*

In both their Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims Version, the old Latin Papists correctly followed the TR's reading which is monolithically found in the Latin textual tradition. Hence the Douay-Rheims reads, "he also that had received (Latin, *acceperat*) the two talents" etc. . By contrast, the new neo-Alexandrian Papists incorrectly followed *Codex Vaticanus* from Rome and thus the variant in their Roman *Catholic RSV*, JB, and NJB.

Matt. 25:22c "beside them" (TR & AV) {A}

Preliminary Textual Discussion.

The First Matter. With regard to this reading and variant, compare Matt. 25:20, *supra*; and also of relevance here at Matt. 25:22c, see my comments at Matt. 25:20, "Preliminary Textual Discussion," "The First Matter."

The Second Matter. Minority Byzantine readings are one of the fascinating pieces of data that we can gain from an enhanced understanding of the c. 2,300 to 2,400 Greek Lectionaries, of which only between 100 and 200 have presently been looked at in greater detail. Hence when it is complete, on the present figures my work on the two Sydney University Lectionaries will comprise between 1%-2% of all such more detailed itemization work done on the Byzantine Greek Lectionaries. (See Preface to this Volume 3, "Sydney University Lectionaries.")

Here at Matt. 25:22, in the words, “*duo* (‘two,’ word 1) *talanta* (‘talents,’ word 2) *ekerdesa* (‘I have gained,’ word 3),” word 2 is present in the first reading of Lectionary 2378 (p. 39a, column 2), but is omitted in the second reading of Lectionary 2378 (p. 68a, column 2). While the omission of word 2 is a known minority Byzantine reading (e.g., V 031, 9th century) and also a Latin reading (e.g., the Vulgate); its further documentation in Lectionary 2378 helps give us a better understanding of the Byzantine Greek textual tradition.

The fact that Lectionary 2378 contains both the majority Byzantine reading at its first reading, and this minority Byzantine reading at its second reading, also acts to raise a number of questions. Was this a deliberate decision in which comparison of the two readings act as a form of “textual apparatus” in which both readings are referred to? Was this an unintentional decision in which a scribe used a majority Byzantine line manuscript for the first reading, and a minority Byzantine line manuscript for the second reading? If so, how many different manuscripts might this or another scribe use when compiling a Lectionary? Was the loss of word 2 in Lectionary 2378 an independent replication of the omission elsewhere? If so, was it accidental or deliberate?

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:22c the TR’s Greek, “*ep* (‘over [and above]’ or ‘beside’¹⁹⁷) *autois* (them),” in the wider words, “behold, I have gained two other talents beside them” (AV), is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and U 030 (9th century); Minuscule 2 (12th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also supported in a similar Latin reading in the “*super* (over and above)” suffix of Latin, “*superlucratus sum* (I have gained over and above),” in old Latin Versions d (5th century) and f (6th century). It is further supported in the main manuscript tradition of his writings by the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604) as Latin, “*superlucratus sum* (I have gained over and above),” *infra*.

However, a variant which omits Greek, “*ep* (‘over [and above]’ or ‘beside’) *autois* (them),” and so reads simply, “behold, I have gained two talents more,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Minuscule 127 (11th century). It is also found as Latin, “*lucratus sum* (I have gained),” in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions b (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is further found as Latin, “*adquisivi* (I have acquired),” in old Latin Version ff1 (10th / 11th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writer, Origen (d. 254) in a Latin translation as Latin,

¹⁹⁷ Greek preposition *epi* + dative (*autois*, neuter plural dative, personal pronoun from *autos-ē-o*) = “over,” “beside,” *et al.*

“*lucratus sum* (I have gained);” and in the minority manuscript tradition of his writings, the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604) as Latin, “*lucratus sum* (I have gained),” *infra*.

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which is therefore correct. The origins of the variant are speculative.

The words, “*ep*’ (‘over [and above]’ or ‘beside’) *autois* (them),” come at the very end of verse 22. In *Codex Alexandrinus* (A 02), the last three letters of the “*AYTOIC*” decrease in size at the end of a line, so as to “squeeze it in” with a new verse starting on the next line with a capital letter about twice the normal size protruding to the left of the left-hand justified column. In *Codex Freerianus* (W 032) these words also come at the end of a line; thus both Manuscripts London (A 02) and Washington (W 032) remind us that the AV’s verse division as numbered by Stephanus in 1551, in fact manifests a much more ancient unnumbered Byzantine verse division.

In a given manuscript, were the words “*ep*’ (‘over [and above]’ or ‘beside’) *autois* (them),” lost in a paper fade? Did a copyist scribe take this to simply be part of a stylistic paper space coming at the end of verse 22 and before verse 23?

Was the variant a deliberate omission? Did a prunist scribe regard these as “redundant” and “flowery words”? Did he then wickedly prune them away as “a stylistic improvement”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental change? We do not know. But we do know that it was a change to the Received Text here preserved for us in the representative Byzantine reading.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading over time, and through time, dating from ancient times. It also has the support of two old Latin versions, one of which is ancient, the other of which is early mediaeval; and in the main Latin manuscript tradition of his writings by the early mediaeval church doctor, St. Gregory the Great (Migne 76:1105 & 1106). By contrast, the variant has very weak support in the Greek, though very strong support in the Latin. Considering these factors, and bearing in mind the perpetual superiority of the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on this occasion, though its additional support beyond the Greek indisputably consists of only two old Latin Versions, one of which is ancient, and the other of which is from early mediaeval times, I consider that this is enough to *just bring* the TR’s reading “over the line” of a high level “B” in the range of 71-74%, and into the range of a 75-76% “A.” Thus on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 25:22c an “A” i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a high level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:22c, “over [and

above] (*ep'*) them (*autois*)” or “beside (*ep'*) them (*autois*),” in the wider words, “behold, I have gained two other talents beside them” (AV), is found in (the mixed text type) Codex C 04 (5th century) and (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century). It is further found in Minuscules 565 (9th century, independent), 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 157 (12th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al*; as well as the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al*. It is further found in the Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Harclean h (616 Versions).

In changing the TR’s Greek “*ekerdesa* (‘I have gained,’ indicative active aorist, 1st person singular verb, from *kerdaino*) *ep'* (‘over [and above]’ or ‘beside’) *autois* (them),” to the similar reading of Greek, “*epekerdesa* (‘I have gained over [and above],’ indicative active aorist, 1st person singular verb, from *epikerdaino* = *epi* / ‘over [and above]’ + *kerdaino* / ‘to gain’),” it is also found in the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century); and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century). It is further found in Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron, which in Ciasca’s 19th century Latin translation of the 12th-14th centuries Arabic, so reads in the suffix “*super* (over and above)” of his Latin rendering, “*superlucratus sum* (I have gained over and above).”

However, the variant omitting the words “over [and above] (*ep'*) them (*autois*)” or “beside (*ep'*) them (*autois*),” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century); and Minuscules 33 (9th century, mixed text type), 892 (9th century, mixed text type), and 700 (11th century, independent). It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version (3rd century); Armenian Version (5th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

At Matt. 25:22c the erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al*. Hence the ASV reads, “lo, I have gained other two talents.” The incorrect variant is also followed in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV.

Protestant neo-Byzantines of the *Textus Receptus* and King James Bible, did battle here at Matt. 25:22c with the old Latin Papists of the post *Council of Trent* and pre *Vatican II Council* era, who followed the variant in both the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims Version. Hence the Douay-Rheims here reads, “Behold, I have gained other two.” Thus we neo-Byzantines are fighting where we fought afore, when we find that the new neo-Alexandrian Papists of the post *Vatican II Council* era also follow the variant at Matt. 25:22c in their Roman *Catholic RSV*, JB, and NJB.

Matt. 25:31 “holy angels” (TR & AV) {B}*Preliminary Textual Discussion.*

The reading of Lectionary 1968 here shows a marking between the Greek, “*hagioi* (holy)” and “*angeloi* (angels),” with the final iota running into this mark and so making it unclear in my photocopies of microfilm forms. I inspected the original at Sydney University and found that this was an ink smudge, and that there were other less damaging ink smudges on this page e.g., there was one two lines above. We are thus reminded of the way an ink smudge might potentially alter a letter, and at best this may result in difficulty in reading it, or at worst, might make it look like something else. Such are the hazards one must negotiate when privileged to deal with original manuscripts.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:31 the TR’s Greek, “‘*agioi* (*/ hagioi*, ‘holy’),” in the wider words, “*oi* (the) *hagioi* (holy) *angeloi* (*/ aggeloi*, angels),” is supported by the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and Omega 045 (9th century); Minuscules 28 (11th century, Byzantine other than in Mark) and 2 (12th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is also supported as Latin, “*sancti* (holy),” in the wider words, “*sancti* (holy) *angeli* (angels),” in old Latin Version f (6th century). It is further supported by the ancient church Greek writer, Chrysostom (d. 407).

However, a variant omitting Greek “*hagioi* (holy),” and so reading simply, “the angels,” is a minority Byzantine reading found in Codex Pi 041 (9th century). The omission is further found in Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), h (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), 1 (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). From the Latin support for this reading, it is manifested in the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers, Origen (d. 254), Eusebius (d. 339), Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386), Didymus (d. 398), Chrysostom (d. 407), and Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444); the ancient church Latin writer, Cyprian (d. 258); and the early mediaeval church Latin writer, Gregory the Great (d. 604).

There is no good textual argument against the representative Byzantine reading which thus must stand. The origins of the variant are speculative.

Was the variant an accidental omission? In looking at “*oi* (the) *hagioi* (holy) *angeloi* (angels),” did a scribe get confused by “the tricky ellipsis” on the “*oi*” endings?

Hence having written down “oi”, did his eye then jump to the “oi” ending of “*hagioi*”, and did he then just keep writing from “*angeli*” on, thus accidentally omitting “*hagioi*”?

Was the variant a deliberate omission?

On the one hand, I consider the *Trinitarian Bible Society* does a lot of very good and commendable work for the AV and TR; and in broad terms I support and pray for their good work. But on the other hand, they have also made some errors. For example, I have formerly noted that, “The Puritan (Reformed) Baptist Chairman of the *Trinitarian Bible Society*, Malcolm Watts, ... says in 2009 he is happy to join ... Puritan cultural vandals of our King James Version, in removing ‘the abbreviation <St.>’ Watts says, in ‘the new Windsor Text Bibles,’ ‘the abbreviation <St.>, as in <St. Matthew,> etc., ... has no Biblical authority,’ and has ‘already been removed.’ Such Puritans who now smash and bash the literary beauty of the King James Version, remind me of the old civil war English Puritans who used to smash Anglican stained-glass windows on similar types of grounds. For whereas the Anglican usage of natural law (godly reason) holds that a practice may be used which the church has found useful and good, and which *is not contrary to Scripture*, the Puritan says there must be a specific Scriptural command for something¹⁹⁸.” Thus with regard to this removal of the honorific titular prefix, “Saint” or “St.” for the four Gospels in their “Windsor Text” edition, we see a Puritan theologically guided change to the Anglican produced King James Version, exhibiting something of this Puritan dislike for the usage of “Saint” or “holy” (although the matter is not identical to the pruning here at Matt. 25:31 since the Windsor Text edition leaves in “The Revelation of St. John the Divine,” due to the presence of relevant manuscript support).

Similar issues exist more widely between Anglican Protestants and Puritan Protestants with respect to the usage of “holy.” E.g., while I generally refer to “Communion” or “the Lord’s Supper,” I less commonly refer to “Holy Communion,” and in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* of 1662 that which is titled on top of each page as “The Communion” i.e., *The Communion Service*, is also referred to at the beginning as, “The Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion.” E.g., on Christmas Day, Saturday 25 Dec. 2010, I attended a 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* service at St. Philip’s Church Hill, York Street (near the Harbour Bridge), in the City of Sydney. After singing the Christmas Carol, “Angels from the Realms of Glory¹⁹⁹,” before saying the Lord’s Prayer at the beginning of the Communion Service, Bishop Smith first said, “The Service of Holy Communion. Let us pray²⁰⁰.”

¹⁹⁸ Textual Commentaries Vol. 2 (Matt. 15-20), “*Robinson & Pierpont’s (1991) new edition Byzantine Textform (2005);” citing *TBS Quarterly Record*, April-June, 2009, No 587, Trinitarian Bible Society, London, p. 14.

¹⁹⁹ Written by the British hymnwriter, James Montgomery (1771-1854) in 1816; Music by Henry Smart (1813-1879) in 1867 (an Anglican organist at St. Mary’s & St. Paul’s Blackburn, Lancashire, England; and thereafter a London organist at St. Giles’ Cripplegate, St. Luke’s Old Street, and St. Pancras New Church).

²⁰⁰ The Rt. Rev. (Right Reverend) Ray Smith is a retired (Low Church

By contrast, in my experience Puritans would only ever use the terminology of “Communion” or “Lord’s Supper,” never “Holy Communion.” Likewise, in *The Communion Service*, we find the terminology of “holy Gospel” at the Collect and Lessons, “*Then shall he read the Gospel (the people all standing up) saying, The holy Gospel is written in the --- Chapter of ---- beginning at the --- verse. And the Gospel ended, shall be sung or said the [Nicene] Creed following, the people still standing as before.*” And because in the Lectionary in the 1662 BCP “THE GOSPEL” reading always starts with “S.” e.g., on Good Friday it reads, “THE GOSPEL. S. John 19:1-37”, since “S.” is an abbreviation for “Saint,” this should be read as, “The holy Gospel is written in the nineteenth Chapter of St. John beginning at the first verse.”

This terminology of “the holy gospel” is also found later at *The Prayer of Consecration* where the Minister says, “Christ” did “suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption,” and “made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death, until his coming again” etc. . Or in the *Absolution or Remission of sins pronounced by the Minister at Matins & Evensong*, the Minister pronounces that “God ... pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel” etc. . Once again, in the Reformed (Low Church Evangelical) Anglican tradition and Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* of 1662, “holy Gospel” would be far less common than “Gospel.” E.g., at *Morning Prayer* before the Hymn *Benedictus* (Luke 1:68-79), the rubric says the alternative psalm of the *Jubilate Deo* (Ps. 100) will always be used “when that shall happen to be read” “for the Gospel on Saint John Baptist’s Day,” i.e., one of the red-letter Saints’ Days which have their own Collect and readings “For the Epistle” and “The Gospel” provided in the prayer book’s lectionary is *Saint John Baptist’s Day* (24 June), and in this prayer book lectionary “The Gospel” reading is Luke 1:57-80, which thus covers the lesser section of the *Benedictus* (Luke 1:68-79) which is therefore not to be used on this red-letter day. Thus while both “holy gospel” and “gospel” are used, as with the usage of both “Communion” and “Holy Communion,” the fact that in the Anglican 1662 prayer book some usage of “holy Gospel” is made, is once again different to Puritans who in my experience do not use such terminology.

The significant point to emerge from this, is that for theological reasons some people object to the usage of “Saint” or “Holy” before a name, e.g., “Saint Matthew” or “Holy Matthew,” or terminology such as e.g., “Holy Communion” or “holy Gospel.” While the Puritan pruning of our King James Bibles’ usage of the honorific titular prefix, “Saint” from the four Gospels is a modern example of this (although this Puritan pruning also reflects other Puritan beliefs that militate against the literary qualities of the AV), whereas any change to the text here at Matt. 25:31 obviously occurred in ancient times

Evangelical) Bishop who now assists at St. Philip’s Church as Senior Associate. He has assisted part-time at St. Philip’s since 2004, and after being consecrated as a bishop in 1993 (by the Archbishop of Sydney), was formerly *Bishop of Liverpool* in western Sydney (1993-2001).

(and lacks this element of not accepting an Anglican view with respect to the AV as a great piece of English literature NOT TO BE TOUCHED AND TAMPERED WITH in the “Windsor Text” edition type of way), it nevertheless acts to raise the question, Did a scribe with theological objections to using the terminology of “holy (*hagioi*)” before “angels (*angeloi*),” here prune away the text as “a theological improvement,” much like the Trinitarian Bible Society’s “Windsor text edition,” has gratuitously pruned away the honorific titular prefix “Saint” from the titles of the four Gospels in the Authorized Version of “Saint Matthew,” “Saint Mark,” “Saint Luke,” and “Saint John”?

Was this a deliberate or accidental omission? We do not know. We cannot know. We only know that it is an omission to the *Textus Receptus* here preserved for us at Matt. 25:31 in the representative Byzantine text.

The TR’s reading has rock solid support in the Greek as the representative Byzantine reading over time, and through time, dating from ancient times. It is further found in an early mediaeval old Latin Version from the sixth century; and enjoys the support of the ancient church Greek writing church father and doctor, St. John Chrysostom. By contrast, the variant has weak Greek support in the Byzantine textual tradition, but correspondingly strong support in the Latin textual tradition. It also has the support of half a dozen ancient Greek writers, including Chrysostom in a diverse citation, and some ancient and early mediaeval Latin writer support. Weighing up these factors, and giving full force to the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR’s reading at Matt. 25:31 a high level “B” (in the range of 71-74%), i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:31, “holy,” in the wider words, “the holy angels,” is found in (the independent) Codex Delta 037 (9th century); and Minuscles 1424 (9th / 10th century, mixed text type in Matthew and Luke, independent in Mark, Byzantine elsewhere), 700 (11th century, independent), 1071 (12th century, independent), and 579 (13th century, mixed text). It is also found in the *Family 13 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscles 788 (11th century, independent text), 346 (12th century, independent), 543 (12th century, independent), 826 (12th century, independent), 828 (12th century, independent), 983 (12th century, independent), 13 (13th century, independent), *et al.* It is further found in the Syriac Pesitto (first half 5th century) and Harclean h (616) Versions; some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version; Slavic (Slavonic) Version (9th century); and Ciasca’s Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century).

However, the variant omitting “holy” and so reading simply, “the angels,” is found in the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century) and London Sinaiticus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century) and (the mixed text type) Codex Theta 038 (9th century); and Minuscles 33

(9th century, mixed text type), 565 (9th century, independent), and 157 (12th century, independent); as well as the *Family 1 Manuscripts*, which contain Minuscules 1 (12th century, independent text in the Gospels, Byzantine elsewhere), 1582 (12th century, independent Matt.-Jude), 209 (14th century, independent in the Gospels and Revelation, Byzantine elsewhere), *et al.* It is also found in the Syriac Curetonian Version (3rd / 4th century); the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Middle Egyptian (3rd century), Versions, together with some manuscripts of the Egyptian Coptic Bohairic Version; the Armenian Version (5th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

At Matt. 25:31 the incorrect variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Thus the ASV reads, “the angels.” So too, at Matt. 25:31 the erroneous variant is found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and TEV.

On the one hand, the apostate Protestant of Puritan derivation, James Moffatt, follows the pruned down variant in his Moffatt Bible. And on the other hand, the Papists also follow the pruned down variant in both the old Latin Papists’ Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims Version, and the new neo-Alexandrian Papists’ Jerusalem and New Jerusalem Bibles.

Meditation. Like Matt. 25:31, the Collect in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* (1662) for *Saint Michael and All Angels Day* (29 Sept.), refers to “holy Angels.” “O everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the service of Angels and men in a wonderful order: mercifully grant that, as thy holy Angels always do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*” (emphasis mine).

Matt. 25:31,32,46 says, “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats;” and some “shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” These wonderful truths of the Second Advent and Final Judgement are found in the three creeds, *Nicene*, *Athanasian*, and *Apostles’*, used in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* (1662) and upheld in Article 8 of the Anglican 39 Articles. The *Nicene Creed* says, “I believe ... in one Lord Jesus Christ And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: whose kingdom shall have no end. ... And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.” The *Creed of Saint Athanasius* says, “For the right faith is that we believe and confess: that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, ... ascended into heaven, he sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty: from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies: and shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting: and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.” And the *Apostles’ Creed* says, “I believe ... in Jesus Christ ... our Lord, who ... sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in ... the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.”

Matt. 25:44 “him” (TR & AV) {B}*Preliminary Remarks.*

The textual apparatuses I use are generally less interested, or not interested at all, in this reading. The consequence *Inside the Closed Class of Sources* is some uncertainty as to the full number of Latin manuscripts supporting the TR, but on the presently available data I shall refer to “less than a dozen Latin manuscripts,” *infra*²⁰¹. This lack of textual apparatus interest also results in a much reduced section *Outside the Closed Class of Sources*, but this is of no real concern, since manuscripts *Outside the Closed Class of Sources* have no impact on composing the neo-Byzantine NT Greek text of the TR. Their consultation is entirely optional and could at any time, or all times, be discarded altogether, either if one so wished to, or if one did not have access to them.

Also *Outside the Closed Class of Sources*, Swanson says the Alexandrian text’s Codex Sinaiticus reads “*auto* (him),” but is then corrupted over the next couple of words. Some ambiguity exists as to how to interpret this, since while e.g., one could argue that it is here following the TR, by contrast, Tischendorf seems to think it supports the variant. While it would be possible for me to make a better judgement on this by looking at a photolith copy of Codex Sinaiticus, given that this manuscript is *Outside the Closed Class of Sources*, I simply do not regard it as important enough to expend such research time and energy on. Most textual apparatuses make no reference to Codex Sinaiticus here at Matt. 25:44, and I shall do likewise, *infra*.

Principal Textual Discussion.

At Matt. 25:44 the TR’s Greek, “*auto* (him),” in the wider words, “Then shall they also answer him (*auto*), saying,” (AV) etc., is supported upon reconstruction of Greek, “*auto* (‘unto him’ = ‘him,’ masculine singular dative, personal pronoun from *autos-e-o*),” from the Latin, “*ei* (‘unto him’ = ‘him,’ masculine singular dative, personal pronoun from *is-ea-id*).” It is supported as Latin, “*ei* (him),” in a minority of Latin Vulgate Codices, namely, D (7th century, *Codex Durmachensis*, Trinity College, Dublin, southern Ireland), C (9th century, *Codex Cavensis*, produced in Spain, now at La Cava, Salerno, southern Italy), Th (9th century, *Codex Theodulfianus*, Paris, France), and W (1245 A.D., *Codex Willelmi*, London, UK); and old Latin Versions h (5th century, *Codex Claromontanus*, Rome, Vatican City State), f (6th century, *Codex Brixianus*, Brescia, Lombardy, northern Italy), and r2 (8th / 9th century, *Codex Usserianus II*, Trinity College, Dublin, southern Ireland²⁰²). From the Latin support for this reading, it is

²⁰¹ Beyond that which I more directly consulted in Julicher’s and Aland’s old Latin versions (1938-63), the Vulgate, Sangallensis Diatessaron, and Book of Armagh; Tischendorf’s 8th edition (1869-72) refers to a small number of Latin manuscripts; though I do not here count any in Merk (1964) from the hand of a “corrector” scribe. Von Soden (1913) and Weber-Gryson (2007) were also consulted.

²⁰² Named in honour of Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656) (cf. Matt. 21:30b, “Preliminary Textual Discussion,” “The Second Matter: The Latin.”).

manifested in both the Sixtinam Vulgate (1590) and the Clementine Vulgate (1592). It is also manifested in both the Greek and Latin *Novum Testamentum* (New Testament) editions of Erasmus (1516 & 1522); and the Greek *Novum Testamentum* (New Testament) editions of e.g., Stephanus (1550), Beza (1598), and Elzevir (1633).

However, a variant omitting Greek, “*auto* (him),” is followed in the majority Byzantine text e.g., Codices A 02 (5th century, Byzantine in Gospels, Matt. 25:6b-28:20, Mark, Luke, John 1:1-6:50a; 8:52b-21:25), W 032 (5th century, which is Byzantine in Matt. 1-28; Luke 8:13-24:53), Sigma 042 (late 5th / 6th century), and G 012 (9th century); and Lectionaries 2378 (11th century, twice in two different readings) and 1968 (1544 A.D., twice in two different readings). It is further found in most Latin Vulgate Codices of Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (5th century), and old Latin Versions a (4th century), b (5th century), d (5th century), ff2 (5th century), q (6th / 7th century), aur (7th century), l (7th / 8th century), g1 (8th / 9th century), ff1 (10th / 11th century), and c (12th / 13th century); as well as the Book of Armagh (812 A.D.) and Sangallensis Latin Diatessaron (9th century). It is also found in the ancient church Greek writers of the Apostolic Constitutions (3rd or 4th century); and ancient church Latin writer, Cyprian (d. 258).

There is a textual problem with the representative Byzantine Greek text here at Matt. 25:44. In the wider context of this passage of Matt. 25:31-46, let the reader note well the stylistic usage of *to* (*tois*) and *autos* (*auto* & *autois*) in the contextual stylistic parallelism of the passage. For these purposes, the AV is sufficiently literal to use to make the big point.

Those on the right hand: Matt. 25:34,37,40 (AV) (emphasis mine)	Those on the right hand: Matt. 25:41,44,45 (AV) (emphasis mine)
1A) verse 34: “Then <u>shall</u> the King <u>say</u> (<i>erei</i>) <u>unto them</u> (<i>tois</i> , ‘unto the [ones],’ = ‘unto them,’ masculine plural dative, definite article, from <i>to</i>),” etc. .	2A) verse 41: “Then <u>shall he say</u> (<i>erei</i>) also <u>unto them</u> (<i>tois</i> , ‘unto the [ones],’ = ‘unto them,’ masculine plural dative, definite article, from <i>to</i>),” etc. .
1B) verse 37: “Then <u>shall</u> the righteous <u>answer</u> (<i>apokrithesontai</i>) <u>him</u> (<i>auto</i> , masculine singular dative, personal pronoun from <i>autos-e-o</i>),” etc. .	2B) verse 44: “Then shall they also <u>answer</u> (<i>apokrithesontai</i>),” plus in the Latin reading, “ <u>him</u> (upon reconstruction of minority Latin reading, “ <i>ei</i> ,” this is Greek, <i>auto</i> , <i>supra</i>)” etc.,
1C) verse 40: “And the King <u>shall answer</u> (<i>apokrithes</i>) and <u>say unto them</u> (<i>autois</i> , masculine plural dative, personal pronoun from <i>autos-e-o</i>),” etc. .	2C) verse 45: “Then <u>shall he answer</u> (<i>apokrithesetai</i>) <u>them</u> (<i>autois</i> , masculine plural dative, personal pronoun from <i>autos-e-o</i>), saying,” etc. .

While the parallelism between what is said to those on the right hand (the sheep),

is not identical in terms of antithetical parallelism with that which is said to those on the left hand (the goats), it is nevertheless clear that in something as broad as the A-B-C stylistic structure of those on the right hand (Matt. 25:34,37,40), compared with those on the left hand (Matt. 25:41,44,45), the natural stylistic expectation is that Matt. 25:44 will contain an “*auto* (‘unto him’ = ‘him’).” Thus the absence of such an “*auto*” here in the majority Byzantine text is unexpectedly curt and abrupt, and its brevity makes it look like a corrupt text. It looks like “a pimple on a pumpkin head.” Clearly something is stylistically wrong with the representative Byzantine text reading here at Matt. 25:44; and for this painful sore in the text to be alleviated, requires that the soothing balm of the minority Latin reading be brought in to bring the passage back into stylistic kilter.

We thus here see a good example of the servant maxim, *The Latin improves the Greek*, bowing in humble and dutiful submission to the master maxim, *The Greek improves the Latin*, for the neo-Byzantine textual analysis is on the Greek, not the Latin.

By contrast, the old Latin Papists of pre-Vatican II Council times, used to unnaturally elevate the servant maxim, *The Latin improves the Greek*, so that it stood in its own right, not being subject to its lawful master, *The Greek improves the Latin*; and so they used it to determine a NT Latin text such as that of the Clementine Vulgate on the basis of Latin texts (although within certain parameters, this was a general, not absolute, rule²⁰³). It is thus surely an intriguing paradox, that one could from even the paradigm of the old Latin Papists, perceive in the Latin, “*his* (‘unto these [ones]’ = ‘unto them’)” of verses 34 and 41; “*ei* (unto him)” of verse 37, and “*illis* (‘unto those [ones]’ = ‘unto them’),” of verses 40 and 45; that an “*ei* (unto him)” was missing in verse 44, so that to their credit, the old Latin Papists manifested the “*ei* (him)” at Matt. 25:44 in both their Sixtinam (1590) and Clementine (1592) Vulgates (retained in Merk’s Clementine revision of 1964). *Great indeed must be the textual turbulence caused by the wind storm of a corrupt text upon the seas of Matt. 25:44 by the variant’s omission, if even the old Latin Papists, working purely from the Latin, could still “see it from a mile away”!*

On the one hand, the TR’s reading is strongly supported by textual analysis, and it can be shown to exist in the Latin textual tradition over time, and through time, dating from ancient times with *Codex Claromontanus* (5th century), and early mediaeval times with *Codex Brixianus* (6th century) and *Codex Durmachensis* (7th century). But on the other hand, the variant is the majority Byzantine reading in the Greek, and as far as we know on presently available data, the monolithic Byzantine reading in the Greek. The variant is also the majority Latin reading; whereas, as far as we know on presently available data, the TR’s reading is found in less than a dozen Latin manuscripts.

²⁰³ See my comments on the Clementine seemingly using the Tuscan and Venetian Italians Diatessarons at Matt. 15:14a in Volume 2 (Matt. 15-20), “Preliminary Textual Discussion,” “The Second Matter;” and also my comments in this Volume 3 (Matt. 21-25) on the spelling the Clementine adopts at Matt. 22:35b, in “Preliminary Textual Discussion,” “The Second Matter;” and at Matt. 23:26 in “Preliminary Textual Discussion,” “The Second Matter.”

Weighing up these factors, on the system of rating textual readings A to E, I would give the TR's reading at Matt. 25:44 a low level "B" (in the range of 66% +/- 1%), i.e., the text of the TR is the correct reading and has a middling level of certainty.

Textual History Outside the Closed Class of Three Witnesses.

Outside the closed class of sources the correct reading at Matt. 25:44, "him," in the wider words, "Then shall they also answer him (*auto*), saying," etc., is found in Minuscule 700 (11th century, independent).

However, the variant which omits "him," is found in one of the two leading Alexandrian texts, Rome Vaticanus (4th century); as well as the leading representative of the Western text, Codex D 05 (5th century). It is further found in (the independent text type) Codex 067 (6th century, Matt. 14; 24-26) and (the mixed text type) Codex L 019 (8th century). It is also found in the Egyptian Coptic Sahidic (3rd century) and Bohairic (3rd century) Versions; Gothic Version (4th century); Armenian Version (5th century); Ciasca's Latin-Arabic Diatessaron (Arabic 12th-14th centuries; Latin 19th century); and Ethiopic Version (Dillmann, 18th / 19th centuries).

The erroneous variant was adopted by the NU Text *et al.* Hence at Matt. 25:44 the ASV reads simply, "Then shall they also answer, saying" etc. . The incorrect variant is also found in the NASB, RSV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, NEB, REB, TCNT, and Moffatt Bible.

Prima facie the correct reading of the TR is found in the *Today's English Version* reads at Matt. 25:44, "Then they will answer him" (TEV). But given the monolithic neo-Alexandrian text support for the variant which omits "him," and the evident lack of textual analytical skills by the TEV translators, the most natural construction to place on this is that the TEV translators considered they were here "adding in" the "him."

A footnote in the Majority Text Burgonites' *New King James Version* (1979-1982) says that at Matt. 25:44, "NU-Text and M[ajority]-Text omit *Him*" (NKJV fn); and the "Preface" of the NKJV claims that, "The Majority Text" "Corrects those readings" of "the Textus Receptus" "which have little or no support in the Greek manuscript tradition." Thus we find that in Green's Textual Apparatus (1986), Pierpont's whose work is based on von Soden manuscript data (1913), gives his highest "Level 3" rating to the variant, on the Burgonite Majority Text basis that "95-100% of all [Greek] manuscripts support the change – a very strong majority".

As already noted, in post Trent Council and pre-Vatican II Council times, the old Latin Papists of the Clementine detected the problem inside of the parameters of their Latin texts, and hence the correct reading was adopted in both the Clementine Vulgate and Douay-Rheims. Thus as Matt. 25:44 the Douay-Rheims includes "him (Latin, *ei*)," in its reading, "Then they also shall answer him, saying" etc. . By contrast, the post Vatican II Council new neo-Alexandrian Papists followed the variant in their Roman *Catholic RSV*, JB, and NJB. It seems that a textual problem that is so obvious that the

old Latin Papists, working purely from the Latin, could still “see it from a mile away,” *supra*, is altogether lost on the new neo-Alexandrian Papists. More generally, what does this tell us about the textual analytical skills of neo-Alexandrians, who tend to fall back onto the application of a handful of anti-supernaturalist and circular Neo-Alexandrian School “hacker” rules such as, e.g., “Follow the two main Alexandrian texts,” “If the two main Alexandrian texts disagree look for ‘external support’,” and “The shorter reading is the better reading”?

According to von Soden (1913), no itemized Byzantine text manuscripts contain the reading of the TR here at Matt. 25:44, and although he refers to Minuscule 700 outside the closed class of sources that does, and on von Soden’s selective principles it is possible that there may or may not be more manuscripts that do have this reading up to *c.* 10% of all manuscripts, it is still clear that on Burgonite Majority Text principles that the TR’s reading is a slim minority reading. Thus on the generalist nature of von Soden’s groups, we can only say for sure that *c.* 90%+ of the Byzantine manuscripts here follow the variant of the majority Byzantine text, even though the number *might be* well below 1% of the manuscripts, or even 0% of the Byzantine Greek manuscripts. Whatever the number is, where it is definitely found inside the closed class of sources, namely, in the Latin, it is clearly a minority Latin reading. Furthermore, on the *any Greek texts will do, but only Greek texts will be counted*, revisionist Burgonite majority text principles found in e.g., Hodges & Farstad (1985), Robinson & Pierpont (2005), and the *New King James Version* (1979-1982), the variant is the reading that the Burgonites here adopt, a fact reflected in a NKJV footnote at Matt. 25:44, *supra*. So likewise, it is the reading adopted by the Neo-Alexandrians; although on this occasion I think the evident antiquity of the variant and widespread nature of the variant throughout the Byzantine Greek textual tradition is such, that it looks like a textual corruption that predates the Alexandrian text produced by the prunists of the Alexandrian School.

Thus here at Matt. 25:44, Majority Text Burgonites and Neo-Alexandrians consort and conspire together to attack, and if such a thing were possible, expunge the reading of the *Textus Receptus*. But the alliance of their combined ranting and raving against the Received Text here is all to no avail, for though they are ignorant of this fact, in their strivings to attack the Received Text they are found to “fight against God” (Acts 23:9), and not man. What? Hast thou not heard? Or hath it not been told unto thee? *Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum!*²⁰⁴

A closing Meditation at the end of Volume 3. The textual corruption of the variant evidently occurred quite early in the textual transmission history of Matt. 25:44, as seen by both the variant’s early attestation in the 3rd century by Cyprian; and also the fact of its definite limitation to less than *c.* 10% of the Byzantine manuscripts, and indeed what as far as we know on presently available data, is the total omission of the reading of the neo-Byzantine *Textus Receptus* here at Matt. 24:44 in the Byzantine Greek textual tradition. (Of course, there may be a relatively small minority of Byzantine text

²⁰⁴ Latin Motto of the Lutheran Reformation, drawn from I Peter 1:25 in St. Jerome’s Latin Vulgate, “The Word of the Lord Endureth Forever.”

manuscripts von Soden chose to not itemize in his selection, and there may also be a relatively small number of some as yet uncollated Greek Lectionaries with this reading. Though neither of these two possibilities is by any means certain.) Yet the problem of textual corruption is older than this again, for even in New Testament times there were “many which corrupt the Word of God” (II Cor. 2:17); so that were one to foolishly put one’s confidence in the neo-Alexandrian’s concept of “the older text is the better one,” then upon, e.g., discovery of an even more pruned down corrupt manuscript from even more ancient times than Codex Vaticanus or Codex Sinaiticus, the neo-Alexandrian type of textual critics would, like slap-stick humour buffoons, fall over themselves in the rush to embrace these further corruptions also.

But let us thank God that he who first Divinely Inspired his Word (II Tim. 3:16), further undertakes to Divinely Preserve his Word (I Peter 1:25). That Word is remarkably preserved for us here at Matt. 25:44 in less than a dozen Latin manuscripts, over time, and through time, dating from ancient times. That the pure Word of God would be preserved in so small a number of manuscripts, reminds us of how in Exodus 1 “the children of Israel, which came into Egypt,” were so small a group as to be as a rounded number, just “seventy souls” (Exod. 1:5), or as a mathematically precise number, just “threescore and fifteen souls” (Acts 7:14). As this small number of just 70 Israelites walked up and down parts of Egypt, it was from this group that God had determined the Promised Messiah would come (Gen. 3:15; 12:3; 22:8; 28:14; Gal. 3:16); as would the Old Testament Oracles (Rom. 3:2).

So much hanging on just 75 people! What if this group of about 70 people were all murdered by the Egyptians? In purely human terms, such a possibility could not be deemed inconceivable. But “the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men” (Dan. 4:32), and he undertook to preserve a sufficient number of these 70 people as to ensure his purposes would be fulfilled. So too, this same great God undertook to preserve a sufficient number of less than a dozen Latin manuscripts that we know of, (and possibly a small number of other manuscripts that we do not presently know of,) that here at Matt. 25:44 his purposes would be fulfilled. Let us thank God for his gracious provision, and for graciously raising up the great neo-Byzantine textual analysts of the 16th and 17th centuries, to formally compose the entire New Testament text, such as we now have it in the Received Text of our King James Bibles.

And let us also thank God, that after a period of more than 300 years, in the early 21st century he called forth another neo-Byzantine textual analyst, “one” who unlike St. Paul was *not* “born out of due time” (I Cor. 15:8), but one who was *born in due time*, since my work comes in the context of a long and sustained attack upon the Received Text. But I am, like St. Paul, without question “the least” (I Cor. 15:9) among my fellows; in my instance, not St. Paul’s fellow “apostles” (I Cor. 15:7) since apostles, like prophets, ceased to exist after the “foundation” period of New Testament times (Eph. 2:20); for “the blood of all the prophets” was required of the “generation” of those alive in c. 30 A.D. (Luke 11:47-51). But rather, I am one who is *the least* among his fellow neo-Byzantine textual analysts. For they undertook the great work of formally compiling the NT Received Text in the 16th and 17th centuries; whereas my work is on

that already completed great task. And this calling of mine to be one of the Lord's holy church's "teachers," he did "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12). And this "body" (Eph. 4:12) embraces all true believers who are religiously conservative Protestant Christians, for it is the universal "body" of Christ (Eph. 5:30-32), and is called in Article 10 of the *Apostles' Creed*, "the holy catholick church," and in the *Nicene Creed*, the "one catholick and apostolick church." *Good Christian reader, if thou shouldst read this while my work on these commentaries is still ongoing, I beseech thee, pray for me* (II Thess. 5:25), *and for that which is already done, make "thanksgivings unto God"* (II Cor. 9:11). *And if the Lord tarries, and thou shouldst read this at a future time when my work on these commentaries is finished, I beseech thee, make "thanksgivings unto God"* (II Cor. 9:11).