THE WORLD'S OLDEST BIBLE:
RELIABLE OR A LIABILITY?

by
James Edward Snapp Jr.

(NOTE: I object to the publication of two different English translations, based on two different base-texts, being both called the "New International Version." It is misleading. I only use this terminology because it is expedient.)

Front Cover: Codex Sinaiticus – Quire 75 Folio 6 (detail)
Monastery of Saint Katherine – Mount Sinai

for
Sir Frank Turek

"The World's Oldest Bible" (Codex Sinaiticus): Reliable or a Liability?

James Edward Snapp Jr.

"A person who reads the New Testament as found in Codex Sinaiticus and applies sound exegetical methods to its text will come to the very same conclusions as anyone reading a Byzantine manuscript written a thousand years later."

That's what James R. White stated in 2009 on page 74 of his error-enriched book *The King James Only Controversy* (second edition, © James R. White, published by Bethany House Publishers, Bloomington Minnesota USA).

Just use sound exegesis, and you will reach the same conclusions about what the text means, whether you read Codex Sinaiticus or a medieval Byzantine manuscript. The very same.
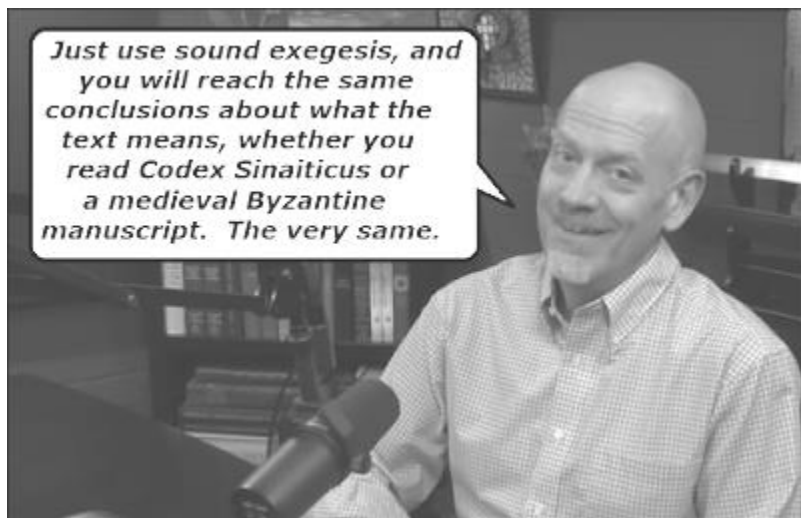
[James R. White of Alpha & Omega Ministries – now of Apologia Church]

I am not a King-James-Onlyist, and issues regarding the quality of the King James (Authorised) Version are subjects best left for another book in the near future. Here I test Dr. White's claim and demonstrate how wrong Dr. White (and no doubt most of his gullible worldwide audience) is.

Foolish and preposterous statements like James R. White's unrealistically minimize the differences between the Alexandrian text (the New Testament base-text of most major English versions such as the NRSV, NIV, ESV, CSB, and NLT) and the Byzantine Text (which is in general –

do not let those words, "in general" go by without noticing them – the base-text of the KJV and NKJV and the Eastern Orthodox New Testament and the often-overlooked Modern Literal Version).

Saint Paul instructed the Thessalonian Christians to test all things (5:21).

I tested Dr. White's claim. I conclude that it is not something that an honest competent apologist would say. It is only something that an a dismally misinformed doofus would say to build his readers' confidence in a compilation of the Greek New Testament that does not deserve their confidence.

The Greek text to which I refer is the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* (now in its 28th edition), also published as the United Bible Societies' *Greek New Testament* (now in its 5th edition). This compilation or earlier compilations are the primary base-text of the NRSV, NIV, ESV, CSB, and NLT.

In this book I do not address the important issue of which English version is superior. I openly acknowledge that I prefer my own translation of the Greek text that I have personally compiled, and in the parts of the Greek New Testament that I have not compiled, I tend to defer to the readings which are both supported by a vast majority of Greek MSS and attested in church writings produced before the 400s. I consider the

Eastern Orthodox New Testament, the King James Version, the New King James Version, the World English Bible, and the Evangelical Heritage Version to be acceptable English translations of the 27 books of the New Testament. But it is not a simple question and it is not the focus here.

Here I compare the text that was written by the main copyist of the New Testament books in the manuscript known as Codex Sinaiticus (represented by the Hebrew letter Aleph, א) – before anyone came along later and made corrections – and the Byzantine Text as found in the Robinson-Pierpont compilation.
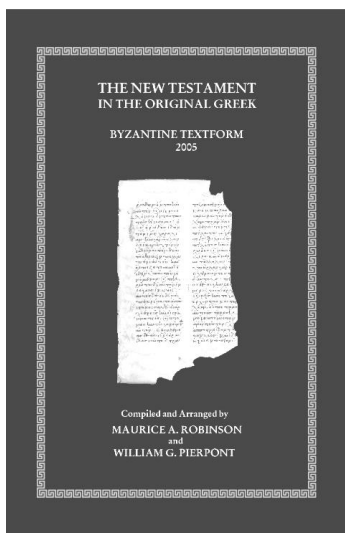
Codex Sinaiticus is one of the two MSS ("MSS") which were given paramount importance (or, in technical terms, were assigned special weight) by scholars in the late 1800s when the King James Version was rejected in favor of the Revised Version. Although practically no congregations still use the 1881 Revised Version anymore as their primary English version of choice, the same approach to the Greek text of

the New Testament remains in place; the Greek text of the New Testament now published as the basis for the NRSV, NIV, ESV, CSB, and NLT differs from the 1881 Revised Text to a minimal degree (at about 700 places out of 5,000).

All that sounds a little complex, so I will conclude these prefatory remarks by asking, "Does it looks to you like Codex Sinaiticus conveys exactly the same message that is found in most Greek MSS in Matthew, in Mark, in Luke, and in John?"

Let the evidence, arranged book-by-book, speak for itself.

("Byzantine Text" refers to what is read in 85% or more – usually much more – of the Greek MSS known to exist.)

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT MATTHEW

● 1. Was Asaph a descendant of David?
(see Matthew 1:8)

Byzantine Text: **no**.
Sinaiticus: **yes**.

To avoid attributing a bad error to Matthew, the person who uses sound exegetical methods will perceive that the Alexandrian Text actually refers to Asa but resorts to a non-standard spelling that happens to produce the

same name as the name of a contemporary of David (Asaph) to whom several Psalms are attributed. Whether this perception is firmly grounded in reality is a separate issue. (See Appendix A where I sort this out.)

● 2. Was Amos descended from David?
(see Matthew 1:10)
     Byzantine Text: **no**.
     Sinaiticus: **yes**.
     To avoid attributing a bad error to Matthew, the person who uses sound exegetical methods will perceive that the Alexandrian Text actually refers to Amon but resorts to a non-standard spelling that happens to produce the same name as the name of an Old Testament prophet (Amos). Whether this perception is firmly grounded in reality is a separate issue. (See Appendix A where I sort this out.)

● 3. In Matthew 5:22, did Jesus prohibit being angry with a brother, unless there was a reason, or did Jesus prohibit being angry with a brother, without qualification?
     Byzantine Text: Jesus prohibited being angry with a brother without a cause
     Sinaiticus: Jesus prohibited being angry with a brother, without qualification.

Inasmuch as Jesus is plainly said to be angry in Mark 3:5, those who utilize both sound exegetical methods and the Alexandrian Text are left with the task of defending the premise that Jesus was consistent with His own teachings, or else saying that Jesus was a hypocrite.

● 4. In Matthew 5:19, did Jesus affirm that the person who does what the law says, and teaches others to do so, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven?
    Byzantine Text: **yes**
    Sinaiticus: **no**
    The text of א skips the second half of the verse, very likely because the scribe of א's line of sight drifted from the first occurrence of "in the kingdom of heaven" in the verse to its second occurrence, skipping all the words in between.

● 5. Did Jesus instruct His disciples to pray, "For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever," or not? (See Matthew 6:13)
    Byzantine Text: **yes**, Jesus did this.
    Sinaiticus: **no**, Jesus did not do this.

● 6. In Matthew 7:27, did Jesus mention that "the floods came"?
    Byzantine Text: **yes**
    Sinaiticus: **no**

The scribe of ℵ accidentally skipped the phrase due to a parableptic error (when his line of sight shifted from the letters -μοι at the end of ποτα**μοι** to the same letters at the end of ανε**μοι**).

● 7. In Matthew 8:3, did Matthew mention that the leper was cleansed **immediately** when Jesus touched him?
    Byzantine Text: **yes**
    Sinaiticus: **no**

● 8. Did Matthew report in 8:13 that the centurion went to his house and found that the servant had been healed?
    Byzantine Text: **no**
    Sinaiticus: **yes**

● 9. Where did Matthew say that the demoniacs were encountered in 8:28?
    Byzantine Text: the country of the Gergesenes
    Sinaiticus: the country of the Gazarenes
    The reading in the Byzantine Text is supported by Origen in the 200s, before Sinaiticus was produced. "Gazarenes" (Γαζαρηνων) appears exclusively in Codex Sinaiticus.

● 10. In Matthew 8:29, did the demoniacs address Jesus by name?
　　　Byzantine Text: **yes**
　　　Sinaiticus: **no**

● 11. In Matthew 9:15, did Jesus say, "But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them"?
　　　Byzantine Text: **yes**
　　　Sinaiticus: **no**
　　　The scribe of א carelessly skipped some text again, skipping from the first occurrence of νυμφιος in this verse to the second occurrence of the same word.

● 12. Did Matthew report (in 9:24) that the people at the home of the young girl who had died knew that she was dead?
　　　Byzantine Text: **no**
　　　Sinaiticus: **yes**

● 13. Does Matthew 9:35 say that people followed Jesus after He healed them?
　　　Byzantine Text: **no**
　　　Sinaiticus: **yes**

● 14. Does Matthew 10:3 affirm that Lebbaeus was also named Thaddeus?
　　　Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: **no**

● 15. Did Jesus tell the apostles not to provide themselves with silver as He sent them to preach in Mathew 10:9?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 16. Does Matthew 10:12 say that Jesus told the apostles, when entering a house, to greet those within with the blessing, "Peace to this house"?
      Byzantine Text: **no**
      Sinaiticus: **yes**

● 17. Did Matthew record (in 10:39) that Jesus said, "He who finds his life will lose it"?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 18. Did Jesus say, in Matthew 11:29, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me," or merely "Take My yoke upon you, and learn"?
      Byzantine Text: "learn of Me."
      Sinaiticus: "Learn."

● 19. In Matthew 12:13, when Matthew described how Jesus healed the man with the withered hand, did he say that the hand that had been withered became as whole as the other?

Byzantine Text: **yes**
Sinaiticus: **no**

● 20. Did Matthew say that one of Jesus' disciples told Him, as He was speaking to the crowds, that His mother and brothers stood outside waiting to see Him? To put it another way: does Matthew 12:47 belong in the text?
        Byzantine Text: **yes**
        Sinaiticus: **no**

● 21. Does Matthew 13:35 say that the prophet Isaiah wrote Psalm 72?
        Byzantine Text: **no**
        Sinaiticus: **yes**
        In Matthew 13:35, Sinaiticus' text says that Isaiah the prophet is being quoted. The quotation that is given, however, is from Psalm 78. Now, there is another passage – Mark 1:2 – where Isaiah's name appears in the Alexandrian Text where it does not belong, and in that case, "sound exegetical methods" provide a sort of loophole, so that even though the first part of the quotation is from Malachi rather than Isaiah, eagle-eyed exegetes can perceive that Mark combined two prophetic passages, and only named the more prominent of the two; Malachi's material being connected in a thematic way.

Here in Matthew 13:35 there is no such loophole. The Psalms are not the domain of Isaiah, and are not bundled together with Isaiah's book. The author of Psalm 78 is explicitly identified as Asaph. Thus the person who applies sound exegetical methods to the text faces an irreconcilable contradiction in the text of Codex Sinaiticus, and down falls the doctrine of inerrancy. I propose that a better option is to realize that some early copyists occasionally added Isaiah's name where it didn't belong, and that Mark 1:2 and Matthew 13:35 are two of those places. I propose (for my friends compiling the next Greek New Testament) Snapp's Canon: **the less specific reading is to be preferred.**

● 22. Did Jesus explain, in Matthew 13:39, that the harvest is the end of the age?
    Byzantine Text: **yes**
    Sinaiticus: **no**

● 23. Did Matthew record, in Matthew 13:41, that Jesus said that the angels are "His" angels?
    Byzantine Text: **yes**
    Sinaiticus: **no**
    This is an interesting reading in ⲁ, because there is no readily obvious mechanism to elicit it. Vaticanus and other Alexandrian witnesses include "his" (αυτου).

● 24. Did Jesus **immediately** make His disciples get in the boat after the feeding of the five thousand, according to Matthew 14:22?

     Byzantine Text: **yes**
     Sinaiticus: **no**
     Like the preceding comparison, this one shows another passage in which the scribe of ℵ seems to have arbitrarily dropped a word that was not essential to the sense of the sentence. Vaticanus and other Alexandrian witnesses include "immediately" (ευθεως).

● 25. Did Jesus send the crowds away before went up a mountain to pray in Matthew 14:23?

     Byzantine Text: **yes**
     Sinaiticus: **no**

● 26. In Matthew 14:30, was Peter intimidated when he saw that the wind was boisterous, or simply when he saw the wind?

     Byzantine Text: when he saw that the wind was boisterous
     Sinaiticus: when he saw the wind
     The Alexandrian Text's core witnesses share an error.   An early copyist's line of sight skipped from the letters -ον in ανεμον ("wind") to the identical letters at the end of the next word, ισχυρον ("boisterous").

● 27. In Matthew 15:31, did the multitudes marvel when they saw that the maimed were made whole?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**

      Sinaiticus: there is no mention of this

● 28. In Matthew 16:2-3, did Jesus rebuke the Pharisees and Sadducees because they could discern the meaning of certain weather patterns, but could not discern the signs of the times?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**

      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 29. In Matthew 17:15, did the father of the boy with an unclean spirit address Jesus as "Lord"?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**

      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 30. In Matthew 17:21, did Jesus tell His disciples, "But this kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting"?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**

      Sinaiticus: **no**. (The entire verse is absent)

● 31. In Matthew 18:11, did Jesus say, "For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost"?

Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: **no**. The entire verse is absent

● 32. In Matthew 18:12, in the parable of the lost sheep, does Jesus mention that the shepherd leaves the ninety-nine sheep **upon the mountain** when he goes to search for the lost sheep?

Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: **no.** There is no mention of "upon the mountain"

● 33. In Matthew 19:9, did Jesus say, "And whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery"?

Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: **no**.

● 34. In Matthew 19:18, does Jesus include "Do not commit adultery, do not steal" among the commandments that one should keep?

Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: **no**

● 35. In Matthew 19:20, does the young man say that he has kept the commandments since his youth?

Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: **no**

● 36. In Matthew 20:7, as Jesus told the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, did he repeat the master's statement, "And what is right, you shall receive"?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 37. In Matthew 20:16, does Jesus say, "For many are called, but few are chosen"?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 38. In Matthew 20:22, does Jesus ask James and John if they are able to be baptized with the baptism with which He is baptized? And does Jesus affirm in 20:23 that they will be baptized with the baptism with which He is baptized?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 39. In Matthew 20:30, did the two blind men at Jericho address Jesus as "Lord"?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 40. In Matthew 21:12, does Matthew refer to the temple as "the temple of God" or simply as "the temple"?

      Byzantine Text: the temple of God

Sinaiticus: the temple

● 41. Does Matthew 22:15 mention that the Pharisees plotted how they might trap Jesus **in His words**?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 42. In Matthew 23:4 did Jesus say that the scribes and Pharisees devised burdens that were "hard to bear"?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 43. In Matthew 23:8, did Jesus forbid His disciples to be called "Rabbi"?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**.

● 44. In Matthew 23:35, is Zechariah identified as the son of Berechiah?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**
      This comparison is particularly interesting, because it catches the scribe of an old witness (Sinaiticus) removing a difficulty, whereas the vast majority of Byzantine scribes left it untouched.

● 45. In Matthew 24:7, what does Jesus say will happen before the end of the world?

      Byzantine Text: famines, pestilences, and earthquakes

      Sinaiticus: earthquakes and famines

● 46. In Matthew 24:10, did Jesus say that in the last days, many will hate one another?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**

      Sinaiticus: **no**.

      Sinaiticus says that people will hand over one another *to tribulation* and then verse 11 commences.

● 47. Did Jesus say in Matthew 24:35, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away"?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**

      Sinaiticus: **no**.

● 48. In Matthew 24:36, did Jesus specifically acknowledge that the Son does not know the day of His return?

      Byzantine Text: **no**

      Sinaiticus: **yes**

● 49. In Matthew 25:22, does the servant address his master as "Lord"?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: **no**

● 50. In Matthew 25:42, does the King tell the goats, "I was naked, and you did not clothe Me"?
    Byzantine Text: **yes**
    Sinaiticus: **no**

● 51. As Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper in Matthew 26:28, did He say, "This is My blood of the new covenant," or "this is My blood of the covenant"?
    Byzantine Text: new covenant
    Sinaiticus: covenant
    The Byzantine Text's reference to the "new covenant" can theoretically be accounted for as a harmonization to First Corinthians 11:25. It is however a very widespread and very early reading. The Alexandrian reading interlocks suspiciously well with Marcionite theology.

● 52. In Matthew 26:62, what does the high priest say to Jesus?
    Byzantine Text: "Do You answer nothing? What is it that these men testify against You?"
    Sinaiticus: nothing. The second half of the verse is absent.

● 53. In Matthew 26:63, does Matthew say that Jesus was silent when questioned by the high priest?

　　　Byzantine Text: **yes**
　　　Sinaiticus: **no**.
　　　The first half of the verse is absent. (This is the result of another mistake; the copyist of ℵ accidentally skipped from "said to Him" in 26:62 to the identical phrase in 26:63, losing all the words in between).

● 54. Does Matthew 27:45 specify that there was darkness "over all the land"?

　　　Byzantine Text: **yes**
　　　Sinaiticus: **no**

● 55. Does Matthew 27:49 state that Jesus was pierced with a spear before He died, and that water and blood came forth from Jesus' body before He died?

　　　Byzantine Text: **no**
　　　Sinaiticus: **yes**
　　　In Matthew 27:49 – when Jesus is on the cross, and has cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" – Codex Sinaiticus includes a passage which says that one of the soldiers took a spear and pierced His side, and that water and blood flowed from the wound.

After this, in Matthew 27:50, Jesus cries out again with a loud voice, and dies.

This contradicts what is stated in John 19:30-34: John reports that Jesus died (in 19:30), and that the soldiers pierced His side afterwards, confirming that He was already dead. A person who applies sound exegetical methods to the text of Codex Sinaiticus cannot maintain the doctrine of inerrancy, whereas a person reading the Byzantine Text can. Editors of most English translations have avoided pointing this out in a footnote.

● 56. Does Matthew 27:52 report that when the earth quaked and the rocks were split, the graves were opened?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 57. Does Matthew 27:56 name Mary Magdalene as one of the women who witnessed Jesus' crucifixion from afar?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 58. In Matthew 28:6, does the angel invite the women at the empty tomb to "Come, see the place where He lay," or, "Come, see the place where the Lord lay"?

Byzantine Text: Come, see where the Lord lay.

Sinaiticus: Come, see where He lay.

● 59. Does Matthew 28:9 begin by mentioning that "As they went to tell His disciples," Jesus met the women?

Byzantine Text: **yes**
Sinaiticus: **no**

● 60. Does Matthew 28:17 specify that when the disciples saw Jesus, they worshiped Him, or does it simply say that they worshiped?

Byzantine Text: they worshiped Him
Sinaiticus: they worshiped

I deduce that the sermons of a Christian preacher in the early church who used the Byzantine Text of the Gospel of Matthew certainly would not and **could not** be the same as the sermons prepared by a preacher who used Codex Sinaiticus, even if their methods of exegesis were identical.

A preacher using Codex Sinaiticus' errant text of Matthew 13:35 and 27:49 would not reach the same conclusion about the veracity of the text as a preacher using the inerrant Byzantine text of Matthew 13:35 and 27:49. In passages such as Matthew 5:19, 6:13, 9:15, 10:39, 12:47, 15:31,

17:21, 18:11, 19:9, 20:16, 23:8, 24:10, 24:35, and 26:62-63, the difference between what was written by the copyist of Sinaiticus and what was written by Byzantine scribes is the difference between no text and a text.

A sermon preached by a preacher using Codex Sinaiticus would differ from a sermon preached by a preacher using the Byzantine Text because the Byzantine Text does not contain the harmonizations and expansions that corrupt the text of Codex Sinaiticus in passages such as Matthew 8:13, 9:24, 9:35, 10:12, 13:35, and 27:49. The idea that anyone, however sound their exegetical methods may be, will interpret *nothing* the same way he would interpret *something*, and draw the same conclusions, is ***absurd***. This is particularly true when one reading conveys an error and a rival reading does not (as is the case in Matthew 13:35 and 27:49).

This comparison shows that the text of Matthew in Codex Sinaiticus and the text of Matthew in the Byzantine Text are so different from one another that they do **not** elicit the "very same conclusions" from their readers. **Such a thing is not remotely possible.**

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT MARK

Here is a list of 60 translation-impacting differences between Sinaiticus and the Byzantine Text in the text of Mark.

● 1. In Mark 1:1, does Mark, as narrator, refer to Jesus as the Son of God?
       Byzantine Text: **yes**
       Sinaiticus: **no**

● 2. In Mark 1:2, did Mark state that it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face"? (The quotation is from Malachi 3:1.)
       Byzantine Text: **no**
       Sinaiticus: **yes**
       (See Appendix B for details)

● 3. In Mark 1:28, at the beginning of His ministry as described in Mark chapter 1, did Jesus preach in the synagogues of Galilee, or on the synagogues of Judea?
       Byzantine Text: Galilee
       Sinaiticus: Judea
       Inasmuch as Galilee and Judea are not the same place, these two variants do not say the same thing, and one must be incorrect.

● 4. In Mark 1:32, were demon-possessed individuals brought to Jesus for healing?

Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: this is not stated

The copyist of ℵ skipped the second half of Mark 1:32, all of Mark 1:33, and the first part of verse 34, when his line of sight drifted from "and" (καɩ) in the middle of verse 32 to the same word in the middle of verse 34.

● 5. In Mark 1:33, was all the city gathered at the door?

Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: this is not stated

The same kind of mistake that affected the text of ℵ in v. 32 has affected it here, resulting in the loss of verse 33.

● 6. In Mark 1:34, does Mark state that Jesus healed many who were sick with various diseases?

Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: **no**

● 7. In Mark 2:12, what did the people say after Jesus healed the paralytic and forgave his sins?

Byzantine Text: we never saw anything like this

Sinaiticus: Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel

The text of ℵ here is corrupted by a harmonization. Its wording was taken from Matthew 9:33.

● 8. In Mark 3:8, were Idumeans mentioned among the people who came to Jesus?
    Byzantine Text: **yes**
    Sinaiticus: **no**
    The copyist of ℵ accidentally skipped the phrase that mentions people from Idumaea; his line of sight drifted from καɩ ("and") to καɩ.

● 9. In Mark 3:15, does Mark say that when Jesus appointed the twelve, they were given power to heal sicknesses?
    Byzantine Text: **yes**
    Sinaiticus: **no**

● 10. Did Jesus conclude Mark 4:24 with the words, "it shall be added to you," or, "it shall be added to you who hear"?
    Byzantine Text: "it shall be added to you who hear."
    Sinaiticus: "it shall be added to you."

● 11. Does Mark 4:28 include the phrase "then an ear"?
    Byzantine Text: **yes**
    Sinaiticus: **no**

(Apparently the copyist of א accidentally skipped the phrase when his line of sight skipped from ειτα ("then") to ειτα.)

● 12. In Mark 6:4, did Jesus say, "and among his relatives"?
  Byzantine Text: **yes**
  Sinaiticus: **no**

● 13. In Mark 6:7-8, as Jesus sent forth the twelve, did He give them authority over unclean spirits?
  Byzantine Text: **yes**
  Sinaiticus: **no**

● 14. In Mark 6:11, did Jesus say that it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than it will be for a city that rejects the apostles?
  Byzantine Text: **yes**
  Sinaiticus: **no**

● 15. Does Mark 6:22 describe the young woman who danced in Herod's presence – the young woman who is also identified in Matthew 14:6 as the daughter of Herodias – as "the daughter of Herod"?
  Byzantine Text: **no**
  Sinaiticus: **yes**

See Appendix C for details.

● 16. Did Mark report in 6:27-28 that a soldier beheaded John the Baptist in the prison?
    Byzantine Text: **yes**
    Sinaiticus: **no**
    The copyist of ℵ skipped the second half of verse 27 and the first segment of verse 28 when his line of sight drifted from "his head" (την κεφαλην αυτου) in verse 27 to the same words in verse 28. (Amazingly, this omission in the text of ℵ was never corrected.)

● 17. In Mark 6:36, as the disciples said that the crowds should be dismissed, did the disciples also say specifically that the people did not have anything to eat?
    Byzantine Text: **yes**
    Sinaiticus: **no**

● 18. Did Mark note in 7:3 that the Pharisees wash *with the fist* (so as to wash the entire hand, according to a certain custom), or that the Pharisees wash *often*?
    Byzantine Text: with the fist
    Sinaiticus: often
    Note: the KJV agrees with the rare reading found in ℵ. The 1611 KJV had a margin-note offering an alternative rendering ("diligently") and

mentioning that the original text means "with the fist," which was understood by the commentator Theophylact to mean "up to the elbow."

● 19. Does Mark 7:4 describe immersions, or acts in which water was poured over various objects?
     Byzantine Text: immersions (βαπτίσωνται)
     Sinaiticus: acts in which water was poured (ῥαντίσωνται)

● 20. Did Jesus say "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" in Mark 7:16?
     Byzantine Text: **yes**
     Sinaiticus: **no**

● 21. Does Mark 8:7 say that Jesus commanded that the fish was to be set before the people, or did Jesus set the fish before the people?
     Byzantine Text: Jesus commanded that the fish was to be set before the people
     Sinaiticus: Jesus set the fish before the people

● 22. Does Mark 8:25 say that Jesus, when He laid hands on the blind man, made him look up?
     Byzantine Text: **yes**
     Sinaiticus: **no**

● 23. In Mark 8:26, did Jesus tell the man whose sight was restored that he was not to tell anyone in the village?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**

      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 24. In Mark 8:29, did Peter say, "You are the Christ," or "You are the Christ, the Son of God"?

      Byzantine Text: "You are the Christ."

      Sinaiticus: "You are the Christ, the Son of God."

      The text in א has been expanded via a partial harmonization to Matthew 16:16.

● 25. In Mark 9:3, did Mark describe the clothing worn by Christ during the Transfiguration as "very white, like snow" or simply as "very white"?

      Byzantine Text: "very white, like snow"

      Sinaiticus: "very white"

● 26. In Mark 9:9, did Jesus tell Peter and James and John that they should tell no one about the Transfiguration when the Son of Man is risen from the dead?

      Byzantine Text: **no**. Jesus said to tell no one until then

      Sinaiticus: **yes**

The copyist of ℵ deleted the words ει μη due to a concern that readers might misconstrue the double negative construction in the verse.

● 27. Were the Pharisees mentioned in the question in Mark 9:11?
      Byzantine Text: **no**
      Sinaiticus: **yes**

● 28. In Mark 9:24, did the father of the afflicted child cry out **with tears**?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 29. In Mark 9:29, did Jesus say that a particular kind of unclean spirit could only be exorcised with prayer **and fasting**?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**
      This textual contest is particularly interesting because (considering the textual contest in Matthew 17:21) the text of Sinaiticus is incapable of teaching the same thing that the Byzantine Text teaches on the subject of exorcism.

● 30. In Mark 9:42, did Jesus refer to little ones who believe **in Me**, or simply to little ones who believe?

Byzantine Text: little ones who believe in Me

Sinaiticus: little ones who believe

● 31. Are Mark 9:44 and 9:45*b*-46 included in the text, repeating for emphasis what is stated in 9:48?

Byzantine Text: **yes**
Sinaiticus: **no**

● 32. Does Mark 9:49 conclude with the words, "And every sacrifice shall be salted with salt"?

Byzantine Text: **yes**
Sinaiticus: **no**

● 33. Does Mark 10:7 include the phrase "and cleave unto his wife"?

Byzantine Text: **yes**
Sinaiticus: **no**

● 34. In Mark 10:24, did Jesus say that it is hard **for those who trust in riches** to enter into the kingdom of heaven, or did He say that it is hard to enter into the kingdom of heaven?

Byzantine Text: it is hard for those who trust in riches
Sinaiticus: it is hard

The word for "is," εστιν, ends with the same two letters as the last word in the disputed phrase, "riches," χρήμασιν.

● 35. How does Peter's statement in Mark 10:28 end?

Byzantine Text: we have left everything and followed You.

Sinaiticus: Therefore, what shall be ours?

The text of ℵ has been expanded via a harmonization to Matthew 19:27.

● 36. Is one's wife included in the list in Mark 10:29?

Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: **no**

● 37. In Mark 10:30, what is included in the list of what may be received?

Byzantine Text: houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands – with persecution.

Sinaiticus: nothing is in the verse between "in this time" and "and in the world to come, life eternal."

● 38. Are the scribes mentioned in Mark 10:33?

Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: **no**

● 39. In Mark 10:35, what do James and John say, and how does Jesus answer in verse 36?

Byzantine Text: they say, "Teacher, we desire that You grant to us whatsoever we desire," and Jesus replies, "What is it that you desire Me to do for you?"

Sinaiticus: they say, "Teacher, we desire."

The rest of verse 35 is missing. All of verse 36 is also missing, and the first part of verse 37 is also missing. The text resumes with "that one may be seated on Your right hand."

● 40. How does Mark 10:40 end?

Byzantine Text: "for whom it has been prepared."

Sinaiticus: "for whom it has been prepared by My Father."

The text of א has been expanded via harmonization to Matthew 20:23.

● 41. How did Jesus describe the village where the disciples were to find the colt in Mark 11:2?

Byzantine Text: "across from you" (also rendered as "opposite you")

Sinaiticus: there is no particular description; it is just "the village"

● 42. Does Mark 11:23 end with the phrase "whatever he shall say"?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 43. What does Jesus say in Mark 11:26?

      Byzantine Text: "But if you do not forgive, neither shall your Father who is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

      Sinaiticus: nothing.

      An early copyist's line of sight drifted from the words τα παραπτώματα υμων ("your trespasses") at the end of verse 25 to the same words at the end of verse 26, skipping all the words in between.

● 44. In Mark 12:25, does Jesus affirm that in the resurrection, no one marries?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**

      Sinaiticus: **no**; Jesus only affirms that no one is given in marriage

      The words ουτε γαμουσιν are absent in ℵ.

● 45. Is the phrase "and with all the soul" in Mark 12:33?

      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 46. How many times is Jesus called "Teacher" in Mark 13:1?
          Byzantine Text: **once**
          Sinaiticus: **twice**

● 47. It is easier to simply describe the weirdness of Sinaiticus' text of Mark 13:8 than to present it in a simple comparison to the Byzantine Text.
          The copyist of ℵ wrote "kingdom" instead of "kingdom against kingdom," and after "earthquake" (σεισμοι), a segment of text is missing. The text resumes with αρχη ωδείνων ταυτα ("These are the beginnings of sorrows"). The copyist of ℵ was very inattentive. Besides omitting "kingdom against," his line of sight drifted from the letters at the end of σεισ**μοι** to the same letters at the end of λι**μοι**.

● 48. In Mark 13:14, does Jesus affirm that the abomination of desolation is mentioned by the prophet Daniel?
          Byzantine Text: **yes**
          Sinaiticus: **no**

● 49. Does Mark 14:19 include the phrase, "And another, 'Is it I?'"
          Byzantine Text: **yes**
          Sinaiticus: **no**

● 50. In Mark 14:22, in what order does Jesus give thanks for the bread, and break it?

  Byzantine Text: He blessed it, and broke it
  Sinaiticus: he broke it, and blessed it

● 51. In Mark 14:30, did Jesus mention that the rooster would crow two times?

  Byzantine Text: **yes**
  Sinaiticus: **no**

● 52. Do the false witnesses in Mark 14:58 say that they heard Jesus saying something?

  Byzantine Text: **yes**
  Sinaiticus: **no**
  Somewhere in the transmission-stream of ℵ, a copyist accidentally skipped from οτι at the beginning of the verse to its next occurrence, thus losing the words in between. Another copyist attempted to salvage the omission by inserting ειπεν.

● 53. What did the high priest ask in Mark 14:61?

  Byzantine Text: Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?

  Sinaiticus: Are you the Christ, the Son of God?

● 54. Does Mark 14:68 say that a rooster crowed?

  Byzantine Text: **yes**

Sinaiticus: **no**

● 55. In Mark 14:71, did Peter say, "I do not know that man of whom you speak," or, "I do not know the man"?
      Byzantine Text: I do not know that man of whom you speak.
      Sinaiticus: I do not know the man

● 56. Does Mark 14:71 say that a rooster crowed a second time?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**

● 57. Does Mark 15:28 mention the fulfillment of a prophecy from Isaiah 53:12?
      Byzantine Text: **yes**
      Sinaiticus: **no**
      In א the entire verse is absent.

● 58. Does Mark affirm that Jesus was seen by Mary Magdalene after He arose from the dead?
      Byzantine Text: **yes** (in Mark 16:9)
      Sinaiticus: **no**
      The text of Mark on the replacement-sheet in Sinaiticus stops at the end of 16:8.

● 59. In the Gospel of Mark, does Jesus instruct His disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel?

      Byzantine Text: **yes** (in Mark 16:15)

      Sinaiticus: **no**.

      The text of Mark on the replacement-sheet in Sinaiticus stops at the end of 16:8.

● 60. Does Mark record that Jesus ascended to the right hand of God?

      Byzantine Text: **yes** (in Mark 16:19, as affirmed by Irenaeus in the 100s.)

      Sinaiticus: no.

      The text of Mark on the replacement-sheet in Sinaiticus stops at the end of 16:8.

      In two places (1:28 and 6:22), the Byzantine Text of the Gospel of Marl is inerrant where the text in Codex Sinaiticus is clearly errant.

      When one goes from the Byzantine Text of Mark to the text of Mark written by the copyist of Sinaiticus, much more than Mark 16:9-20 disappears. Practically a whole chapter's worth of verses in Sinaiticus have been significantly changed due to scribal corruptions.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT LUKE

● 1. In Luke 1:26, is Nazareth located in Judea, or in Galilee?

     א: Judea

     Byz: Galilee

● 2. In Luke 1:28, does the angel tell Mary, "Blessed are you among women?"

     א: **no**

     Byz: **yes**

● 3. Does Luke 1:65 say that people **spoke of all** these things in the hill-country of Judea?

     א: **no**

     Byz: **yes**

● 4. At the end of Luke 2:14, does the angel say, "Peace on earth; goodwill to men," or "Peace on earth to men with whom God is pleased"?

     Byz: Peace on earth; goodwill to men

     א: Peace on earth to men with whom God is pleased

● 5. According to Luke 2:37, how many years had Anna been a widow?

     א: about 74 years

     Byz: about 84 years

● 6. Does Luke 2:43 refer to Joseph and Mary as His "parents," or as "Joseph and His mother"?

     א: parents

     Byz: Joseph and His mother

● 7. In Luke 2:44, did they look for Jesus among His kinsfolk and acquaintances, or are only his kinsfolk mentioned?

     א: kinsfolk

     Byz: kinsfolk and acquaintances

● 8. In Luke 3:1, in what territory did Pontius Pilate serve as governor?

     א: the text does not say

     Byz: Judea

● 9. Does Jesus' genealogy in Luke 3:32 mention Boaz and Salmon, or Balls and Sala?

     א: Balls and Sala

     Byz: Boaz and Salmon

● 10. In Luke 3:33, was Adam the father of Admin?

     א: **yes**

     Byz: **no**

● 11. Does Luke 4:4 include the phrase "but by every word of God"?

     א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 12. Does Luke 4:5 say that the devil took Jesus up on a high mountain?

א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 13. In Luke 4:8, does Jesus say "You get behind me, Satan"?

א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 14. Does Luke 4:18 include the phrase "to heal the broken-hearted"?

א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 15. In Luke 5:14, did Jesus tell the healed leper to show himself to the priest?

א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 16. Besides tax collectors, did others sit down in Luke 5:29?

א: others are not mentioned

Byz: **yes**

● 17. Does Luke 5:38 include the phrase, "and both are preserved together"?

‭א‬: **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 18. Does Luke 6:17 mention people from Perea?

‭א‬: **yes**
Byz: **no**

● 19. Does Jesus say in Luke 6:44 that people do not gather grapes from a **bramble-bush**, or that people do not gather grapes from a **sprout**?

‭א‬: from a sprout
Byz: from a bramble-bush

● 20. In Luke 6:48, did Jesus say that the house "was well-built," or that it was "built upon the rock"?

‭א‬: it was well-built
Byz: it was built upon the rock

● 21. In Luke 8:37, where was the multitude from?

‭א‬: around the country of the Gergesenes
Byz: around the country of the Gadarenes

● 22. Does Luke 8:40 say that the people in the crowd were all looking for Jesus, or that they were all looking for God?

‭א‬: for God (τον Θν)

Byz: for Jesus (αυτον, Him)

● 23. Does Luke 8:47 include the statement that the women saw that she was not hid?

ℵ: **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 24. Does Luke 8:47 say that the woman told the crowd why she had touched Jesus?

ℵ: **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 25. Does Luke 8:54, referring to those who mocked, mention that Jesus put them all out?

ℵ: **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 26. Does Luke 8:55 say that the girl who had been dead arose immediately?

ℵ: **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 27. Does Luke 9:7 describe Herod as a tetrarch?

ℵ: **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 28. Does Luke 9:10 mention Bethsaida by name?

צ: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 29. In Luke 10:32, does the Parable of the Good Samaritan include a Levite?

צ: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 30. At the end of Luke 12:37, did Jesus say that the master, when he comes, will serve his faithful servants?

צ: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 31. Does Jesus say in Luke 12:39 that the master of the house would have watched if he had known when the thief was coming?

    א: **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 32. In Luke 12:52, did Jesus say that there shall be five in one house divided?

    א: **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 33. Does the ruler of the synagogue say in Luke 13:14 that it is fitting for man to work six days a week?

    א: **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 34. Does Jesus say in Luke 13:25 that some people shall stand outside when they ask for the door to be opened?

    א: **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 35. In Luke 14:15-16, does someone say, "Blessed are those who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God"?

    א: **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 36. In Luke 15:13, does Jesus mention that the prodigal son wasted his wealth **on riotous living**?

    א: **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 37. Does Luke 16:16 say that everyone is pressing into the kingdom of God?

    א: **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 38. Does Jesus conclude Luke 17:9 with the comment, "I know not"?

    א: **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 39. In Luke 17:10, does Jesus make a statement about what should be done when everything that was commanded has been done?

    א: **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 40. In Luke 17:12, does Luke mention that the ten lepers stood afar off?

    א: **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 41. In Luke 17:35, does Jesus say that two shall be grinding; one shall be taken and the other shall be left?

א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 42. In the parable in Luke 18:11, does the Pharisee in the temple pray "with himself"?

א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 43. Does Luke 18:24 report that Jesus became very sorrowful?

א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 44. In Luke 20:23, does Jesus ask a question?

א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 45. In Luke 20:28, did the Sadducees mention the qualification about a man dying childless?

א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 46. In Luke 20:30, did the Sadducees specifically say that the second brother took the woman as his wife, and died childless?

א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 47. In Luke 21:8, does Jesus predict that many will come and say, "The time is near"?

    א: **no**
    Byz: **yes**

● 48. Does Luke 22:6 mention that Judas made a promise?

    א: **no**
    Byz: **yes**

● 49. In Luke 22:53, did Jesus tell those arresting Him, "This is **your** hour"?

    א: **no**
    Byz: **yes**

● 50. Does Luke 22:64 mention that Jesus was being struck on the face?

    א: **no**
    Byz: **yes**

● 51. In Luke 23:5, did the people say that Jesus had been **teaching** throughout all of Judea?

    א: **no**
    Byz: **yes**

● 52. In Luke 23:42, did the repentant thief address Jesus as "Lord"?

א: **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 53. Does Luke 24:1 report that the women at the tomb had some others with them?
  א: **no**
  Byz: **yes**

● 54. In Luke 24:12, did Peter see the linen clothes lying **by themselves**?
  א: **no**
  Byz: **yes**

● 55. According to Luke 24:13, how far was Emmaus from Jerusalem?
  א: one hundred and sixty stadia
  Byz: sixty stadia

● 56. Does Luke 24:27 say that Jesus explained **all** of the Scriptures about Him?
  א: **no**
  Byz: **yes**

● 57. In Luke 24:31, does Luke say that when the two travelers' eyes were opened, they knew Him?
  א: **no**
  Byz: **yes**

● 58. Does Luke 24:42 say that Jesus ate a piece of honeycomb?

> א: **no**
> Byz: **yes**

● 59. In Luke 24:46, does Jesus say that it was fitting for the Messiah to suffer?

> א: **no**
> Byz: **yes**

● 60. Does Luke 24:51 say that Jesus was carried up into heaven?

> א: **no**
> Byz: **yes**

Remember, reader, that my purpose here in this little book is not to show which text is *better.* It is to show that they are *different*.

The doctrine of inerrancy is difficult to maintain when using a text says that Nazareth is in Judea. And if one uses a text that does not contain Mark 16:19 and Luke 24:51*b*, one must concede that Jesus' bodily ascension is not reported anywhere in the Gospels.

Codex Sinaiticus' text disagrees with the Byzantine text AND with the Byzantine Text in 41 of the passages I have listed from Saint Luke's Gospel.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT JOHN

Having looked at 180 translation-impacting differences between the Byzantine Text and the text in Codex Sinaiticus in the Synoptic Gospels (60 in Matthew, 60 in Mark, 60 in Luke), I now list 100 translation-impacting differences between the Byzantine Text and the text that was written by the copyist of Codex Sinaiticus in the Gospel of John.

● 1. In John 1:15, does John the Baptist say that Jesus is the One he was speaking of before?
   א: **no**
  Byz: **yes**

● 2. Does John 1:17 affirm that grace and truth come from Jesus **Christ**?
   א: **no**
  Byz: **yes**

● 3. Does John 1:18 refer to "**the** only begotten **Son who is** in the bosom of the Father" or to "only begotten God in the bosom of the Father"?
  א: only begotten God in the bosom of the Father
  Byz: the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father

● 4. Does John 1:20 emphasize John the Baptist's confession by mentioning twice that he confessed?

    :א **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 5. In John 1:34, does John the Baptist affirm that Jesus is the Son of God, or that Jesus is the chosen one of God?

    :א chosen one of God

    Byz: Son of God

● 6. Does John 2:3 contain a phrase which says that they did not have wine, because the wine for the marriage-feast was finished?

    :א **yes**

    Byz: **no**

● 7. Does John 2:6 say that the waterpots were standing there?

    :א **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 8. Does John 2:10 specifically say that Jesus manifested **His** glory?

    :א **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 9. Does John 2:12 mention Jesus' disciples?

ℵ: **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 10. Does John 2:21 specify that Jesus spoke of the temple of **His** body?
ℵ: **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 11. In John 3:8, does Jesus describe "everyone who has been born **of water and** of the Spirit"?
ℵ: **yes**
Byz: **no**
(In the Byzantine text, Jesus describes "everyone who has been born of the Spirit")

● 12. Does John 3:13 mention "the Son of Man **who is in heaven**"?
ℵ: **no**
Byz: **yes**
See Appendix D for details.

● 13. Does John 3:16 affirm that God **gave His** only begotten Son?
ℵ: **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 14. Does John 3:20 affirm that everyone who hates the light does not come to the light?
ℵ: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 15. Does John 3:21 affirm that the one who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest?
　　　 :א **no**
　　　 Byz: **yes**

● 16. Does John 3:31 affirm that He who comes from heaven is above all?
　　　 :א **no**
　　　 Byz: **yes**

● 17. Does John 4:1 refer to Jesus as "the Lord"?
　　　 :א **no**
　　　 Byz: **yes**

● 18. Does John 4:9 say that Jews have no dealings with Samaritans?
　　　 :א **no**
　　　 Byz: **yes**

● 19. In John 4:19, does the Samaritan woman refer to Jesus as "Lord"?
　　　 :א **no**
　　　 Byz: **yes**

● 20. Does John 4:39 specify that many of the Samaritans believed **on Him**?

:א **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 21. Does John 4:45 say that the Galileans received Him?
:א **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 22. Does John 5:3 mention that the sick people were waiting for the moving of the waters?
:א **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 23. Does John 5:4 say that an angel stirred up the waters, and that the one who first entered the pool after the waters were stirred up would be healed?
:א **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 24. Does John 5:9 say that the man **immediately** became whole?
:א **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 25. Does John 5:14 mention that the healed man found Jesus **healing** in the temple?
:א **yes**
Byz: **no**

● 26. Does John 5:16 say that the Jews sought to kill Jesus?

       :א **no**

       Byz: **yes**

● 27. In John 5:25, does Jesus refer to an hour that is coming **and now is**?

       :א **no**

       Byz: **yes**

● 28. Does John 5:26 say that the Father has given to the Son to have life in Himself?

       :א **no**

       Byz: **yes**

● 29. In John 6:10, how does John describe the place where Jesus fed the five thousand?

       :א there was much place in that place

       Byz: there was much grass

● 30. In John 6:10, about how many men were present?

       :א three thousand

       Byz: five thousand

● 31. Does John 6:11 say that Jesus gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to those who were sitting down?

:א **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 32. Does John 6:15 say that Jesus **withdrew** from the crowd, or that He **escaped** the crowd?
　　:א He escaped
　　Byz: He withdrew

● 33. In John 6:26, does Jesus' statement begin, "You seek me"?
　　:א **no**
　　Byz: **yes**

● 34. Does John 6:27 say that God the Father has sealed the Son of Man?
　　:א **no**
　　Byz: **yes**

● 35. In John 6:39, does Jesus say something specifically about the will of the One who sent Him?
　　:א **no**
　　Byz: **yes**

● 36. In John 6:42, do the Jews affirm that they know Jesus' mother?
　　:א **no**
　　Byz: **yes**

● 37. In John 6:46, does Jesus say that He who is from God has seen the Father?

      :א **no**. (In א, Jesus says that He who is from the Father has seen God.)

      Byz: **yes**

● 38. In John 6:47, does Jesus say that the one who believes **in Him** has eternal life?

      :א **no**

      Byz: **yes**

● 39. In John 6:55, does Jesus say that His blood is truly drink?

      :א **no**

      Byz: **yes**

● 40. Does John 6:64 refer to Jesus as "the Savior"?

      :א **yes**

      Byz: **no**

● 41. In John 6:69, does Simon Peter describe Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God," or as "the Holy One of God"?

      :א the Holy One of God

      Byz: the Christ, the Son of the living God

● 42. In John 7:6, does Jesus say "My time is not yet come," or "My time is not come"?

:א My time is not (ου) come
Byz: My time is not yet (ουπω) come

● 43. In John 7:7, does Jesus say specifically that He testifies concerning the world?
      :א **no**
      Byz: **yes**

● 44. In John 7:8, does Jesus say, "I am **not** going up to this feast," or "I am **not yet** going up to this feast"?
      :א I am not (ουκ) going up to this feast
      Byz: I am not yet (ουπω) going up to this feast
      Papyrus 66, Papyrus 75, and Codex Vaticanus agree with Byz here.

● 45. Does John 7:22 begin with "Therefore"?
      :א **no**
      Byz: **yes**

● 46. In John 7:26, do the people ask a question about the high priest?
      :א **yes**
      Byz: **no**

● 47. In John 7:27, do the people raise a question about the signs the Messiah will do?
      :א **yes**

Byz: **no**

● 48. Does John 7:35 say that the Jews said something **among themselves**?

:א **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 49. In John 7:37, does Jesus say, If anyone thirsts, "let him come **to Me** and drink"?

:א **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 50. Does John 7:50 say anything about Nicodemus' previous encounter with Jesus?

:א **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 51. Does the Gospel of John contain an episode about Jesus and a woman caught in adultery, in which Jesus says "Go and sin no more"?

:א **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 52. Does John 8:20 say that Jesus was teaching in the temple?

:א **no**
Byz: **yes**

● 53. In John 8:26, does Jesus specifically say that the Father has sent Him?

      :א **yes**
      Byz: **no**

● 54. Does John 8:27 specifically say that Jesus was speaking of God as the Father?

      :א **yes**
      Byz: **no**

● 55. In John 8:35, does Jesus affirm that the Son abides forever?

      :א **no**
      Byz: **yes**

● 56. In John 8:52, does Jesus say something about death?

      :א **no**
      Byz: **yes**

● 57. In John 8:57, did the Jews ask Jesus, "Have you seen Abraham," or "Has Abraham seen You"?

      :א has Abraham seen You?
      Byz: have you seen Abraham?

● 58. Does John 8:59 report that Jesus went through their midst, and so passed by" as He left the temple?

      :א **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 59. Does John 9:10 specifically mention the Jews?

      א: **yes**
      Byz: **no**

● 60. In John 9:38, does the formerly blind man say to Jesus, "Lord, I believe"?

      א: **no**
      Byz: **yes**

● 61. In John 9:39, does the formerly blind man worship Jesus?

      א: **no**
      Byz: **yes**

● 62. Does John 10:10 specifically refer to **eternal** life?

      א: **yes**
      Byz: **no**

● 63. In John 11:31, were the Jews thinking that Jesus was going to the tomb to weep there, or were they Jews saying that Mary was going to the tomb to weep there?

      א: they were thinking that Jesus was going to the tomb

Byz: they were saying that Mary was going to the tomb

● 64. In John 11:50, does Caiaphas say "It is profitable **for us** that one man should die," or does he say, "It is profitable that one man should die"?
        ℵ: it is profitable
        Byz: it is profitable for us

● 65. Does John 12:1 specify that the individual named Lazarus is "the one who had died"?
        ℵ: **no**
        Byz: **yes**

● 66. In John 12:25, did Jesus say that he who hates his life in this world **shall keep it**?
        ℵ: **no**
        Byz: **yes**

● 67. In John 12:31, does Jesus say something about the prince of this world?
        ℵ: **no**
        Byz: **yes**

● 68. Does John 13:1 say that Jesus loved "His own" who were in the world, or "the Jews" who were in the world?
        ℵ: the Jews

Byz: His own

● 69. In John 13:6, does Simon Peter address Jesus as "Lord"?
   :א **no**
   Byz: **yes**

● 70. In John 13:9, does Simon Peter address Jesus as "Lord"?
   :א **no**
   Byz: **yes**

● 71. In John 13:10, does Jesus say something about washing feet?
   :א **no**
   Byz: **yes**

● 72. In John 13:12, did Jesus take **their** garments, or **His** garments?
   :א their garments
   Byz: His garments

● 73. Does John 13:22 say that the Jews looked, one another, upon the disciples?
   :א **yes**
   Byz: **no**

● 74. In John 13:24, does Simon Peter *(a)* motion to the disciple whom Jesus loved to ask Jesus to

whom He referred, and *(b)* tell the disciple to ask Him of whom He spoke?

     :א **yes**
     Byz: **no**
     Only the first action is mentioned in the Byzantine text.

● 75. How does John 13:32 begin?
     :א "Also God shall glorify Him in Himself"
     Byz: "If God has been glorified in Him"

● 76. In John 13:37, Does Simon Peter address Jesus as "Lord"?
     :א **no**
     Byz: **yes**

● 77. In John 14:16, does Jesus say that He will **keep** the Father, or that He will **ask** the Father?
     :א keep
     Byz: ask

● 78. In John 15:10, does Jesus say, "If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love"?
     :א **no**
     Byz: **yes**

● 79. Does John 15:21 say that people will do these things "to you"?
     :א **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 80. In John 16:9, does Jesus say that the Comforter will convict the world concerning sin because "they believe on Me" or "because they do not believe on Me"?

    א׃ because they believe on Me

    Byz: because they do not believe on Me

● 81. In John 16:15, does Jesus say, "All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He will take of Mine, and shall show it to you"?

    א׃ **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 82. Does John 16:16 end with the phrase "because I go to the Father"?

    א׃ **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 83. In John 16:17, does Jesus mention the phrase, "A little while, and you shall not see Me"?

    א׃ **no**

    Byz: **yes**

● 84. In John 17:8, does Jesus affirm that the people who were given to Him have known truly that He came from the Father?

    א׃ **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 85. Does John 17:10 begin with the phrase, "And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine"?
> :א **no**
> Byz: **yes**

● 86. Does John 17:17 include the phrase, "Your word is truth"?
> :א **no**
> Byz: **yes**

● 87. In John 17:26, does Jesus refer to "the love in which You loved Me" or to "the love in which You loved them"?
> :א the love in which You loved them
> Byz: the love in which You loved Me

● 88. In John 19:13, is the judgment seat in a place that is called Gabbatha, or Golgotha?
> :א Golgotha
> Byz: Gabbatha

● 89. Does John 19:20 say that the title was read by many of the Jews, and that it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin?
> :א **no** (the whole verse is absent)
> Byz: **yes**

● 90. Does John 19:21 say that the chief priests told Pilate not to write "King of the Jews"?

      א: **no**
      Byz: **yes**

● 91. Does John 19:23 mention that the soldiers also took Jesus' tunic?

      א: **no**
      Byz: **yes**

● 92. In John 19:26, does John say that Jesus saw His mother?

      א: **no**
      Byz: **yes**

● 93. Does John 19:38 say that Joseph of Arimathea "took the body of Jesus," or that Joseph of Arimathea "took Him"?

      א: took Him
      Byz: took the body of Jesus

● 94. Does John 20:3 say that Peter and the other disciple came to the tomb?

      א: **no**
      Byz: **yes**

● 95. Does John 20:5 mention that the other disciple did not enter the tomb?

      א: **no**

Byz: **yes**

● 96. Does John 20:6 say that Simon Peter came and entered the tomb?

　　:א **no**
　　Byz: **yes**

● 97. In John 21:15, does Jesus call Simon "son of Jonah"?

　　:א **no**
　　Byz: **yes**
　　The Alexandrian Text has "son of John" – but א has neither.

● 98. In John 21:20, did Peter see the disciple whom Jesus loved, **following**?

　　:א **no**
　　Byz: **yes**

● 99. In John 21:21, did Peter address Jesus as "Lord"?

　　:א **no**
　　Byz: **yes**

● 100. Does John 21:23 end with the phrase, "What is that to you"?

　　:אno
　　Byz: **yes**

APPENDIX A: Matthew 1:7-10

"All Scripture is breathed out by God." That statement is not only the introductory phrase of Second Timothy 3:16 in the English Standard Version; it is also an affirmation in the introduction of the *ESV Reader's Gospels* (in more traditional wording): "All Scripture is inspired by God." At the ESV Bible website, a brief essay teaches that "As the Bible is the inspired word of God, presenting us with God's words as mediated through human language, it is likewise *inerrant* and *infallible*."

Evangelical theologians may therefore have good reason to wonder why the ESV New Testament promotes two errors on its first page. I

refer to the ESV's erroneous claims that Asaph and Amos were among the kings of Judah in the ancestry of Christ. The answer to this question involves textual variants.

The ESV's preface was intended to give readers the impression that the ESV is a direct descendant of the KJV: the ESV, the writer claims, "stands in the classic mainstream of English Bible translations," and continues "the Tyndale-King James legacy," and so forth. However, those who read the section of the preface sub-titled *Textual Basis and Resources* will find a statement that the ESV New Testament is based on the fourth edition of the United Bible Societies' *Greek New Testament* and on the 27th edition of the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* – which is another way of saying that the ESV New Testament was translated from a base-text that is very similar to the compilation produced by Westcott and Hort in 1881 – a compilation which thoroughly replaced the primarily Byzantine base-text of the KJV New Testament with primarily Alexandrian readings, resulting in over 5,000 changes.

In Matthew 1:7-10, there is a contest between Ασα (Asa) and Ασαφ (Asaph), and between Αμων (Amon) and Αμως (Amos). The compilers of the UBS and NA-texts, like Hort, rejected the readings that are found in the vast

majority of MSS (and in diverse early witnesses including Codex Washingtoniensis, Old Latin Codex Vercellensis, the Vulgate, the Sinaitic Syriac, and the Peshitta), and adopted the Alexandrian readings Ασαφ and Αμως, thus conveying errors, inasmuch as Asaph was a songwriter (the author of several psalms) and Amos was a prophet who prophesied in the time of Uzziah. (Uzziah is mentioned in the genealogy in Matthew 1:8-9). Neither Asaph nor Amos was an ancestor of Jesus.

It is for that very reason that Ασαφ and Αμως were preferred by the editors of the ESV's base-text, on the premise that copyists would tend to replace difficult readings with non-problematic ones, instead of the other way around. The preference for the more difficult reading – a text-critical canon sometimes expressed in Latin as *lectio difficilior potior* – initially seems to compel the adoption of Ασαφ and Αμως. However, that impression may be reversed when additional factors are considered.

The late Bruce Metzger, in his argument for Ασαφ, mentioned a statement from Lagrange (an earlier scholar) to the effect that inasmuch as anyone making this genealogy-list would have to consult the Old Testament, and anyone reading the Old Testament would see the kings' correct names, "It is necessary, therefore, to suppose that

Ασαφ is a very ancient [scribal] error." Metzger dismissed that line of reasoning via the supposition that "the evangelist may have derived material for the genealogy, not from the Old Testament directly, but from subsequent genealogical lists, in which the erroneous spelling occurred."

However, there is no evidence for the use of such a hypothetical genealogical list in the hands of the evangelist. Meanwhile the evidence for Matthew's familiarity with the Old Testament permeates his Gospel-account. In addition, considering that Matthew knew the Old Testament and treated it as authoritative, which source is he more likely to have favored when they disagreed: the Old Testament text, or some "subsequent genealogical list" (assuming that he ever had one)?

Metzger attempted to present Ασαφ and Αμως as if the evangelist merely had a strange way of spelling Ασα and Αμων. Footnotes in the ESV make the same attempt. However, on balance, the evidence that Metzger cited weakens his position. In the Septuagint, out of the many occurrences of Asa's name, he is almost always called Asa. The few intrusions of Ασαφατ and Ασαφ and Ασαβ are simply scribal mistakes.

As Jonathan Borland has pointed out: "That only these few comparable examples exist out of

90 or so instances of the two names in the LXX demonstrates just what one should expect: while the vast consensus of MSS always distinguished the names, less than 10 percent of the time a single scribe (with the exception of 2 Chr 29:13 where 3 MSS vary) wrote one name for the other."

Before I offer an explanation of the origin of the Alexandrian reading, it may be appropriate to point out the diverse name-spellings found in the flagship MSS of the Alexandrian Text in Matthew 1:1-13:

1:2 – σI sdaer (sucitianiS) אακ instead of Ισαακ.
1:3 – B (Vaticanus) reads Ζαρε instead of Ζαρα.
1:4 – eht emit tsrif eht yltcerroc βαδανιμΑ sdaer א name is written, but Αμιναδαμ the second time.
1:5 – B, א, and P1 read Βοες against diverse opposition favoring Βοοζ. (The UBS-compilers adopted Βοες).
1:5 – B and א and some Alexandrian allies read Ιωβηδ instead of Ωβηδ. (GA 33: Ιωβηλ.)
1:6 – Σ sdaer *אαλομων instead of Σολομωνα.
1:6 – B reads Ουρειου instead of Ουριου.
1:7 – αιβΑ ,αιβΑ sdaer אς instead of Αβια, Αβια.
1:8 – B and א read Οζειαν instead of Οζιαν.
1:9 – αχΑ sdaer אς, Αχας instead of Αχαζ, Αχαζ.
1:10-11 – B and א read Ιωσειαν, Ιωσειας instead of Ιωσιαν, Ιωσιας.

1:12-13 – B reads Σελαθιηλ instead of Σαλαθιηλ, in addition to reading γεννα instead of εγεννησεν three times.
1:13 – υοιβΑ sdaer *ℵτ instead of Αβιουδ.

Except for the readings in 1:5, these readings disagree with both the UBS/NA compilation and with the RP2005 Byzantine Text. This shows a high level of variation in the spelling of proper names in the Alexandrian text-stream.

Several Old Latin MSS agree with the Alexandrian text's readings for Asaph and Amos. On one hand, this gives the reading some diversity, but on the other hand it indicates that at these points the primary Alexandrian witnesses ℵ, B, and P1 reflect an early Western intrusion.
In 1885, J. Rendel Harris proposed that the reading Ασαφ, Ασαφ originated as the result of a "ghastly line-errors," that is, Ασαφ was accidentally written when a copyist's line of sight drifted to the letters σαφ in the nearby word Ιωσαφατ. He suggested that the same phenomenon can account for the origin of the reading Αμως, Αμως – the copyist's line of sight straying, in this case, to the letters ωσ in the nearby word Ιωσειαν. Harris concluded, "It can hardly be accidental that this coincidence of letters is found in the proper names. And this

simple paleographic explanation being given, is not to be shaken by an array of excellent MSS in which the archaic error may be preserved." (The same sort of syllable-interchange may account for gnidaer s'ℵ **Σαλ**ομων in verse 6, echoing the **Σαλ** from Σαλμων's name in verse 5.)

I am not persuaded by Harris' theory. The occurrence of two such mistakes so close together seems unlikely. However, I am also not persuaded by proponents of the idea that Matthew would risk confusing his readers by listing Asaph and Amos as kings of Judah when he knew very well that his readers would recognize Asaph as a well-known psalm-writer, and Amos as a well-known prophet.

What has happened is that an early Western scribe who was unfamiliar with Old Testament chronology introduced the names of Asaph and Amos as a primitive attempt to pad Jesus' Messianic résumé by adding prophets among his ancestry. The tampering of this scribe influenced the Western transmission-line represented by some Old Latin copies. When these Western readings intersected with the Alexandrian transmission-line, they blended into a crowd of orthographic variations – that is, in some Western Old Latin copies (in Egypt) the names of Asaph and Amos were assumed to be variant-spellings referring to Asa and Amon, and for that reason,

they were not corrected. Elsewhere, though, these readings were either never encountered, or were almost always rejected as variants which Matthew had not written and which he had been highly motivated not to write.

Among the passages in the ESV New Testament which its editors should change when preparing the next edition, Matthew 1:7-10 is near the top of the list. Ask yourselves, ESV editors: where is the evidence for Bruce Manning Metzger's theory that Matthew used a "subsequent genealogical list" instead of simply consulting the Old Testament text? And how realistic is the theory that Matthew would take for granted that his readers would identify Asaph and Amos as kings of Judah? Why wouldn't Matthew – especially if one affirms that Matthew was writing under the inspiration of God –write the usual names? The rationales which some commentators (advocating the Alexandrian readings) have attributed to Matthew may more readily be assigned to scribes.

Lectio difficilior potior has its limits. However difficult it may be to picture a scribe introducing the names of Asaph and Amos into the text of Matthew 1:7-10, whether accidentally or deliberately, it is much more difficult to picture Matthew (or *any* first-century author familiar with the contents of the Old Testament) doing so.

Another textual contest (in Matthew 1:8-10) concerns the name of the man who was Abijah's son and Jehosaphat's father: the Alexandrian Text (allied with family-1, 700, the early Sahidic version, and some Old Latin copies) supports "Asaph," but the Byzantine Text (allied with L, W, the Vulgate, the Sinaitic Syriac, the Curetonian Syriac, and the Peshitta) supports "Asa." According to the Old Testament, the king's name was Asa; Asaph was a psalm-writer contemporary with David. It seems unlikely that Matthew would confuse these two individuals.

The reading "Asaph" may be an early copyist's quirky attempt to enhance Jesus' genealogy by removing the name of Asa with the name of the more spiritually accomplished Asaph. (The same quirk is at work in verses 10-11, where, in the Alexandrian Text, the name of king Amon is replaced by the similar name of the prophet Amos.)

A scribal error may also account for the Alexandrian reading: if an inattentive early copyist's line of sight momentarily wandered to the occurrence of "-sapha-" in the name "Jehosaphat" in the following line, he may have added the "ph," repeated the name the same way without consulting his exemplar, and then resumed writing at the correct place, never

noticing his mistake.

Subsequent copyists, rather than viewing "Asaph" as a mistake, may have considered it a spelling-variation. Several of the names in the genealogy are the subjects of orthographic variation: in verse 2, Aleph has "Isak" instead of "Isaak, and in verse 3, B has "Zare" instead of "Zara." Aleph and B both have "Boez" and "Iobed" instead of "Booz" and "Obed" in verse 5. Aleph spells Solomon's name as "Salomon" in verse 6. In verse 9, Aleph has "Achas" twice, instead of "Achaz." In verse 10, B names "Amnon" as the son of Manasseh, but then immediately calls him Amos. In verse 12, B twice spells Salathiel as "Selathiel." In verse 13, Aleph names "Abiout" instead of "Abioud," and in verses 14 and 15, Aleph names "Eliout" instead of "Elioud." All this goes to show that in the Alexandrian channel of transmission, there was wide latitude in the spelling of proper names -- in which case, the name "Asaph" may have originated as a localized spelling-variation, rather than as an erroneous reference to the psalm-writer.

APPENDIX B: Mark 1:2

Did Mark 1:2 originally say *"in the prophets"* (ἐν τοῖς προφήταις) or *"in Isaiah the prophet"* (ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐᾳ τῷ προφήτῃ)? As we embark on a multi-part exploration of this question, let's thoroughly describe the external evidence, beginning with the manuscript-evidence for each rival variant:

● ἐν τοῖς προφήταις, according to the UBS apparatus, is supported by Codex Alexandrinus (A, 02), Codex Washingtoniensis (W, 032), f^{13}, 28, 180, 579, 597, 1006, 1010, 1292, 1342, 1424, 1505, and Byz.

"Byz" represents not only hundreds of Greek Gospels-MSS that are less than 900 years old, but also the following MSS:

Codex Basiliensis (E, 07), Codex Boreelianus (F, 09), Codex Seidelianus II (H, 013), Codex Cyprius (K, 017), Codex Campianus (M, 021, which has *"Isaiah"* in the margin), Codex Guelferbytanus A (P^e, 024), Codex Vaticanus 354 (S, 028), Codex Nanianus (U, 030), Codex Mosquensis II (V, 031), Codex Monacensis (X, 033), Codex Macedonianus (Y, 034), Codex Petropolitanus (Π, 041), Codex Rossanensis (Σ, 042, from the 500's), Codex Beratinus (Φ, 043), Codex Athous Dionysiou (Ω, 045), 047, 0133, and minuscules 24, 27, 29, 34, 67, 100, 106, 123, 134, 135, 144, 150, 161, 175, 259, 262, 274, 299, 300, 338, 344, 348, 364, 371, 376, 399, 405, 411, 420, 422, 478, 481, 564, 566 (paired with Λ, 039), 568, 652, 669, 771, 773, 785, 875, 942, 1055, 1073, 1076, 1077, 1078, 1079, 1080, 1110, 1120, 1172, 1187, 1203, 1223, 1225, 1266, 1281, 1346, 1347, 1357, 1379, 1392, 1422, 1426, 1444, 1458, 1507, 1662, 1663, 1701, 1816, 2142, 2172, 2193, 2290, 2324, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2373, 2414, 2474, 2509, 2545, 2722, 2790, 2800, 2811, 2812, 2854, 2907, and 2929.

● ἐν τῷ Ἠσαΐᾳ τῷ προφήτῃ is supported by Oxyrhynchus Papyri LXXVI 5073, Codex Sinaiticus (01, Aleph (א), Codex Vaticanus (B, 03), Codex Regius (L, 019, "Isaiah" is spelled Ϊσαϊα), Codex Sangellensis (Δ, 037, Greek-Latin),

33, 151, 892, 1241, about 10 other minuscules, and the D'Hendecourt Scroll (from the 1300s). (Minuscule 151's retention of this reading may have something to do with the inclusion of Eusebius' apologetical composition *Ad Marinum* in the same volume.)

● ἐν Ἡσαΐᾳ τῷ προφήτῃ is supported by Codex Bezae (D, 05, Greek-Latin), Codex Koridethi (Θ, 038), the core members of f^1, 565, and 205 (from the mid-1400's), plus 700, 1243, and 1071. (Only these last three lack close affiliation with either the Western or Caesarean Text.) A few other minuscules support ἐν Ἡσαΐᾳ τῷ προφήτῃ but were not listed in the UBS apparatus; these include 22. Minuscule 22 shares some readings with f^1 and 205, and also shares a note about the ending of Mark; in 22 the note is shorter (failing to claim that the Eusebian Canons omit Mk. 16:9-20, very probably because where and where 22 was made, the Canons had been adjusted to include those verses) but it is recognizably the same note. (Minuscules 15, 22, 1110, 1192, and 1210 all have the note about Mark 16:9-20.) Also included: 61 (Codex Montfortianus, on 55r. This manuscript is famous for its inclusion of the *Comma Johanneum*), 372 (assigned to the 1500s, with some Latin notes in the margins), and 391 (produced in 1055).

● ἐν βίβλω λόγων Ἠσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου is read by 1273 (the George Grey Gospels) and 544 and a similar text is in the book in a full-page picture of Mark in Lectionary 1635.

For a convenient summary of versional and patristic evidence, see the STEPBible Textual Apparatus and Wieland Willker's *Textual Commentary on the Greek Gospels – Volume 2, Mark, 2015 Edition*. Readers should be aware that 2427 (cited throughout Mark in the 27th edition of the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece*) has been proven to be a forgery, based on a printed text from the 1800's, and that although f^1 is cited for *"in Isaiah the prophet,"* this represents only a consensus of its core members.)

The Armenian version was listed in UBS2 as support for ἐν τοῖς προφήταις, but in UBS4 the Armenian version was listed as support for ἐν Ἠσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ. The older Armenian MSS tend to not have *"Son of God"* in Mark 1:1, and to read *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in 1:2 – following the Caesarean form. However, a competition of influences upon the Armenian tradition began very early in its history, in addition to later influence from the Vulgate.

Most of the Greek lectionaries, such as Lect 123 (an illustrated lectionary from the 900s), Lect 379 (from the 800s), Lect 1599 (from the 900s), Lect 71 (from 1066), Lect 183 (from the 800s or 900s), and the illustrated Lect 120 (from the 1100s) support ἐν τοῖς προφήταις, but there are some exceptions, such as Lect 562 (from A.D. 991), which supports ἐν Ἠσαΐᾳ τῷ προφήτῃ.

● One more variant seems to be attested by the Old Latin Codex Usserianus Primus (VL 14); the Byzantine and Alexandrian readings are combined, so as to read, *"in Isaiah and in the prophets."* However the text is difficult to read due to damage to the parchment (See fol. 150r at the page-views at the Trinity College Dublin website .)

In this appendix, the reading *"in the prophets"* will be defended as original. Its Alexandrian and Western rivals originated in the following way:

In the 100s, some copyists were mildly averse to non-specific references to Old Testament books, and added specific names in place of the original non-specific references. Mark 1:2 is one of the passages affected by this tendency toward specificity. Some copyists, understanding the paraphrastic opening phrase – which could be understood as a reference to

Exodus 23:20 (in the Law, rather than the Prophets) – as merely an introduction to Isaiah's words, adjusted the text so as to identify the prophet being cited.

This happened independently in Alexandrian and Western transmission-streams, which is why the Alexandrian witnesses consistently have τῷ before Ἡσαΐα, while the major Western and Caesarean witnesses do not. When (and where) copyists and commentators were confident that Mark was using Malachi rather than Exodus, Christian scholars whose MSS read *"in Isaiah the prophet"* developed inventive explanations about how Mark could appear to identify Malachi's words as if they had been written by Isaiah. These explanations were sufficiently convincing to allow the reading to remain in the Alexandrian and Western transmission-lines.

The insertion of specific names, where the original text has no specific name, is a recurring scribal practice, and one which is observable in some of our very earliest New Testament MSS. For example, in the early Alexandrian transmission-stream, in Luke 16:19, in the story about the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man was given a name: he was named *Nineveh*. This reading is found in Luke 16:19 in Sahidic copies, and in the manuscript known as Codex Sinaiticus

Arabicus, or CSA, one of the documents discovered at St. Catherine's Monastery in 1975. (A collation of CSA by Hikmat Kachouh was released in 2008 in the journal *Novum Testamentum*.)

There is much earlier evidence for that reading. Papyrus 75 reads *named Neuhs* in the same passage (ονοματι νευης), and this is the same name, Nineveh, disfigured by a parableptic error in which the copyist skipped the first syllable. (Two Greek MSS, GA 36 and 37, have margin-notes which also identify the rich man as Nineveh.)

When a character in the Gospels plays a prominent role, but has no name, frequently a name is provided. Bruce Metzger documented this phenomenon in his essay, *Names for the Nameless in the New Testament*, which serves as chapter 2 of *New Testament Studies: Philological, Versional, and Patristic*.

The scribal tendency to provide names for unnamed individuals comes into play repeatedly in passages where the text refers to the fulfillment of prophecies. The non-specific attribution *"through the prophet"* is often turned into a specific attribution. Usually the attribution is correct but sometimes it is incorrect.

The Old Latin Codex Colbertinus (VL 6) displays this tendency. Its text of Mark 15:27

provides names for the two robbers who were crucified with Jesus – Zoathan and Chammatha. VL 6, like practically all Latin MSS of Mark, also reads *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in Mark 1:2. In Matthew 1:22 – where Matthew quoted Isaiah without naming him (simply saying that "what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet" was fulfilled) – Codex Colbertinus states specifically that the prophecy was given by Isaiah.

This phenomenon is not limited to one medieval Old Latin copy. Codex Bezae (which D. C. Parker has assigned to c. 400) also includes Isaiah's name in the text of Matthew 1:22, both in its Latin text and in its corresponding Greek text. Old Latin Codex Veronensis (VL 4, from the 400s) also has Isaiah's name in Matthew 1:22. So do the Old Latin codices Brixianus (VL 10, from the 500s) and Sangermanensis (VL 7, c. 810) and Vercellensis (VL 3, probably from the 370's). (Metzger expressed some uncertainty about Codex Vercellensis' reading in his *Textual Commentary*, but "ESEIAM PROPHETAM" is shown clearly in Irici's 1748 presentation of Codex Vercellensis.) "Isaiah" is practically the normal Old Latin reading in Matthew 1:22.

The earliest evidence for the reading *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in Matthew 1:22, however, may be even earlier than the earliest Old Latin manuscript: in the Latin text of Irenaeus' *Against*

Heresies 3:21:4 (composed in Greek c. 184), Irenaeus quotes Matthew 1:22: *"et quoniam Angelus in somnis dixit ad Joseph: Hoc autem factum est, ut adimpleretur quod dictum est **ab Esaia Propheta**: Ecce virgo it utero concipiet."* It is possible that the form of this quotation was altered by the Latin translator of Irenaeus' work, but that too would be early testimony.

In the Syriac tradition, the same scribal tendency is on display. In Matthew 1:22, the inclusion of the name *"Isaiah"* is attested by the Sinaitic Syriac, the Curetonian Syriac, the Harklean Syriac, and the Palestinian Aramaic.

Another Western witness that displays the tendency to fill the vacuum when a prophet's statements are cited without specifying his name is the Middle Egyptian Glazier Codex of Acts (G67, from the 400's). Instead of *"in the prophets"* in Acts 13:30, G67 reads, *"in Habakkuk the prophet."*

The scribal tendency toward specificity is also displayed by the core members of family-1. Although these MSS are medieval, they are generally thought to represent a text of the Gospels similar to a text used by Origen at Caesarea in the 200s; this is indicated by their support for the reading *"Jesus Barabbas"* in Matthew 27:17; according to a Latin translation of Origen's *Commentary on Matthew*, Origen stated that some of his copies had this reading.

The text of f^1 indicates that copyists of the MSS used by Origen were not exempt from the tendency toward specificity, and that occasionally the scribal attempt to make the text more specific was poorly executed. In Matthew 13:35, where most MSS simply read *"by the prophet,"* without naming the prophet being quoted, the text in f^1 includes a specific name: *Isaiah.*

That is not a correct reference. Matthew's quotation comes from Psalm 78:2, which was composed by Asaph, not by Isaiah. Yet an early copyist's need for specificity was greater than his grasp of the contents of the Old Testament, and the name "Isaiah" was perpetuated in various MSS, including minuscules 1, 543, 788, 230, 983, and 1582 (*et al*), and Codex Θ.

Eusebius of Caesarea, in his *Commentary on the Psalms*, mentioned that some copies read *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in Matthew 13:35, but not the accurate copies.

Jerome, in his *Homily 11 on Psalm 77* (our Psalm 78), cited Matthew 13:35 and claimed that the reading *"through the prophet Asaph"* is supported by "all the ancient copies" – *"in omnibus ueteribus codicibus"* – but it was changed by ignorant individuals (see Amy Donaldson's *Explicit References to New Testament Variant Readings Among Greek and Latin Church Fathers*, Vol. 2, pages 369-370). In addition, Jerome wrote

that Porphyry (an anti-Christian author who wrote c. 270) made an accusation against Matthew that can only be accounted for by Porphyry's use of a copy of Matthew with the reading *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in Matthew 13:35:

"Porphyry, that unbeliever . . . says, 'Your evangelist, Matthew, was so ignorant that he said, "What is written in Isaiah the prophet: I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter mysteries from of old."' . . . Now, just as this was the scribes' error, it was, likewise, their error to write 'Isaiah' instead of 'Asaph.'"

Jerome proceeded to offer a theory that some early copyist, reading *"Asaph the prophet"* in his exemplar, did not recognize the name *"Asaph,"* and replaced it with *"Isaiah."* He offered the same line of reasoning in his *Commentary on Matthew*. On the premise that Jerome was not being altogether deceptive, it would appear that the text of Matthew 13:35 in copies that he considered ancient had been expanded to include Asaph's name. (We shall take a closer look at Jerome's testimony soon.)

The tendency to make non-specific quotations of Old Testament prophets more specific – via the insertion of a prophet's proper name rather than *"through the prophet"* or *"by the prophet"* – was so strong that copyists in the Western and Caesarean transmission-streams

inserted prophets' names in various passages –
and, in the case of Matthew 13:35 in the
Caesarean transmission-stream, perpetuated a
specific name **even when it was the wrong name**.

  The scribal tendency toward specificity was
so strong in the Old Latin transmission-line that in
Old Latin Codex Vercellensis (VL 3) a copyist felt
that it was necessary to identify the prophet being
quoted in Matthew 2:5. Four copies of the
Harklean Syriac display the same tendency, but
their copyists exercised restraint by only putting
Micah's name in the margin of this passage. In VL
3 (probably produced in the 370's), the copyist (or
his exemplar's copyist) embedded the prophet's
name directly into the text – and, making matters
worse – the identification is incorrect: VL3 reads
there, *"per Eseiam propheta,"* that is, "through
Isaiah the prophet."

  What about Alexandrian witnesses? Yes;
the tendency toward specificity impacted
Alexandrian MSS too: *"Isaiah the prophet"* is the
reading of Codex ℵ at Matthew 13:35.

  In the margin of Matthew 2:15 in Codex
Sinaiticus, we see how precarious it would be to
assume that copyists knew the Old Testament too
well to attribute to Isaiah a passage from a
different Old Testament book.

  Matthew 2:15 contains a quotation of
Hosea 11:1 – *"that it might be fulfilled which was*

spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, 'Out of Egypt I called My Son.'" Someone did not recognize that the passage being quoted was Hosea 11:1 (because in the Septuagint, Hosea 11:1 reads differently, as *"When Israel was a child then I loved him, and called his sons out of Egypt"*) and thought instead that Matthew was referring to a passage in Numbers (15:41 or 20:16) and for that reason, he wrote in the margin of Codex Sinaiticus, in small vertically stacked lettering, *"In Numbers."*

However reasonable it might seem to assume that copyists knew the Old Testament so well that they would not have risked giving the impression that they attributed a passage to Isaiah that did not originate with Isaiah, there is evidence against such an assumption. Not only does the text of VL3 attribute Micah 5:2 to Isaiah in Matthew 2:5, but in Matthew 21:4 (according to Metzger in *Textual Commentary*, page 54), a few Vulgate copies, Bohairic copies, and Ethiopic copies add Isaiah's name, although the quotation is from Zechariah.

Not all copyists were familiar with the Old Testament text, and for most of those who *did* know the Old Testament well, the text they knew was the Septuagint. Consequently there was a risk that copyists would imagine that their exemplars contained an error when a Gospels-manuscript

contained a form of an Old Testament passage that did not match up with the form in which it was found in the Septuagint.

Mark's use of Malachi 3:1 is one such case. His utilization of Malachi 3:1 closes with the phrase, *"who shall prepare your way"* (ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδόν σου) in the Alexandrian text, or, in the Byzantine Text, *"who shall prepare your way before you"* (ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδόν σου ἔμπροσθέν σου). Neither is an exact match with the text of Malachi 3:1 in the Septuagint, which ends with the phrase "καὶ ἐπιβλέψεται ὁδόν πρὸ προσώπου μου" – *"and he shall carefully look for a way before me."* (See Maurice Robinson's article *Two Passages in Mark* in *Faith & Mission*, 13/2 (Spring 1996), pp. 66-111.) An additional factor to consider is that the Septuagint's text of Exodus 23:20*a* reads Καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου – *"And behold, I send my messenger before your face"* – which might have caused some copyists to wonder if the readers of their copies would suppose that Mark was using a passage in the Law, rather than in the Prophets.

So if anyone wonders, "If the reading *'in Isaiah the prophet'* in Mark 1:2 is not original, where did it originate?", let the copyists of ℵ, D, Θ, the Old Latin copies, and the main MSS of f^1 reply: from the same place that their

readings *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in Matthew 1:22, Matthew 2:5, and Matthew 13:35 originated: **from the propensity of some early scribes to make non-specific references more specific.**

A faint echo of the kind of scribal confusion that led to the insertion of Isaiah's name in Mark 1:2 (or an independent repetition of it) may be seen in two medieval Bohairic MSS. Boh-E$_1$ (a Coptic-Arabic manuscript produced in 1208), has the Bohairic words for "Exodus" and for "Malachi" in the margin near Mark 1:2. An Arabic note says, "A copy has, 'the prophets.'" Boh-O$_1$ (a Coptic manuscript produced in the 1300's) has an Arabic note that says, "Isaiah prophesied with the voice of one crying, and Moses and Malachi prophesied with the sending of the messenger." The notes in both copies show that to some copyists, Mark 1:2 was understood to refer not just to the Prophets, but to a passage in Exodus.

Once the reading *"in Isaiah the prophet"* was introduced in Mark 1:2, the puzzlement that it induced invited the erudition of scholars. The first known commentator to address the problem was Origen, who seems to have regarded his MSS at Caesarea with a measure of suspicion where proper names were concerned. In a comment on John 1:28 in Book 6, Part 24 of his *Commentary on John*, Origen wrote, *"In the matter of proper names the Greek copies are often incorrect, and in*

the Gospels one might be misled by their authority."

Earlier in his *Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Book 6, Part 14), Origen offered a theory about what Mark has done in 1:2:

"He has combined two prophecies spoken in different places by two prophets into one, 'just as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold I am sending my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way; a voice crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' For the 'voice crying in the wilderness' is recorded after the narrative about Hezekiah. But 'Behold I am sending my messenger before your face' is by Malachi. And so, because he is abridging, the evangelist placed two oracles side by side, attributing them both to Isaiah."

This statement from Origen formed part of the *Catena in Marcum*, a running commentary in the margin of some MSS, consisting mainly of extracts from patristic writings. (See William R. S. Lamb's *The Catena in Marcum: A Byzantine Anthology of Early Commentary on Mark*, page 222, © 2012 Koninklijke Brill NV.)

Immediately prior to the extract from Origen, the *Catena in Marcum* (quite legible in GA 773) offers an entirely different approach, with a different solution:

Τοῦτο προφητικὸν Μαλαχίου ἐστὶν, οὐχ Ἠσαΐου. Γραφέως τοινύν ἐστι σφάλμα, ὥς φησιν Εὐσβιος ὁ Καισαρείας ἐν τῷ πρὸς Μαρίνον περὶ τῆς δοκούσης ἐν τοῖς Εὐαγγελίοις περὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως διαφωνίας. – that is, *"This prophetic saying is from Malachi, not Isaiah. It appears to be an error by copyists, of the sort which Eusebius of Caesarea spoken in his composition to Marinus in which he clarified the discrepancies in the Gospels' accounts about the resurrection."*

The commenter refers to part 8 of Eusebius' response to the second question in *Ad Marinum*, which is about how to harmonize Matthew 28 and Mark 16 regarding the timing of the resurrection. In this part of his explanation, Eusebius presents (but does not embrace) the idea that the perceived harmonization-difficulty can be resolved if one assumes that the name "Magdalene" was mistakenly added by a copyist to the name of one of the women named Mary who visited Jesus' tomb, and that subsequent copyists perpetuated the error (σφάλμα). Eusebius mentions in his comment to Marinus that when a name in the text causes confusion, it "often turns out to be actually due to a scribal error." (See *Eusebius of Caesarea – Gospel Problems & Solutions*, pages 110-111.)

Jerome, having adopted the reading *"in Isaiah the prophet"* into the Vulgate, was somewhat obligated to comment on it, and he did so repeatedly. Very probably the work known as *Homily 75, On the Beginning of the Gospel of Saint Mark*, was written by Jerome, although it was preserved in a collection of the works of Chrysostom. The researcher Dom G. Morin regarded it as the work of Jerome.

Working from the premise that Jerome wrote this homily, let's take a look at its contents, relying on pages 121ff. of *The Homilies of St. Jerome – Volume 2* (60-96) translated by Sister Marie Liguori Eward, I. H. M., in the *Fathers of the Church* series. (I adjusted the following text slightly.) The Latin text of Mark, drawn from Jerome's own Vulgate, is digested a little at a time:

"The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" –

And therefore, not the son of Joseph. The beginning of the Gospel is the end of the Law; the Law is ended and the Gospel begins.
"As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, 'Behold, I send my messenger before you, who shall prepare your way." –
"As it is written in Isaiah."

Now as far as I recall by going back in my mind and sifting carefully the Septuagint, as well as the Hebrew scrolls [how many people besides Jerome could say this?], I have never been able to locate in Isaiah the prophet the words, 'Behold, I send My messenger before you.' But I do find them written near the end of the prophecy of Malachi. Inasmuch as this statement is written at the end of Malachi's prophecy, on what basis does Mark the evangelist assert here, 'As it is written in Isaiah the prophet'?

This author Mark is not to be lightly esteemed. In fact, the apostle Peter says in his letter, 'The church chosen together with you, greets you, and so does my son Mark.' O apostle Peter, Mark, your son – son not by the flesh but by the Spirit – though informed in spiritual matters, is uninformed here, and credits to one prophet of Holy Scripture what is written by another: 'As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send My messenger before you."'

This is the very passage that the impious Porphyry, who has barfed out poison in his many writings against us, attacks in his fourteenth book. 'The Gospel-writers," he claims, "were men so ignorant, not only in secular matters but even regarding divine writings, that they cited the testimony of one prophet and attributed it to

another." That is what he hurls at us. Now, what shall we say in answer to him?

I think, inspired by your prayers, that this is the answer:

"As it is written in Isaiah" –

What is written in Isaiah the prophet? "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make ready the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.'" That is written in Isaiah, but there is a clearer explanation of this text in another prophet, and the Evangelist is really saying that this is John the Baptist, of whom Malachi has also said, 'Behold, I send my messenger before you, who shall prepare your way.' The phrase, 'It is written' refers only to the following verse, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight."' To prove, furthermore, that John the Baptist was the messenger who was sent, Mark did not choose to recommend his own word, but to offer proof from the word of a prophet."

Thus Jerome proposed that while Mark's treatment of the text of Isaiah and Malachi had been so puzzling to Porphyry that he had concluded that Mark had a poor grasp of which prophet said what, what really happened is that Mark used an extract from Malachi as a sort of introductory cross-reference to the prophecy of Isaiah.

Jerome also commented about Mark 1:2 in his *Epistle 57 (To Pammachius)*, a fascinating letter in which Jerome put his cleverness and erudition on display in the course of defending his translation-work. Jerome frankly asserted in this letter that as far as he could tell, Matthew misquoted Zechariah 13:7 in Matthew 26:31: *"In this instance,"* he writes, *"according to my judgment – and I have some careful critics with me – the evangelist is guilty of a fault in presuming to ascribe to God what are the words of the prophet."*

Yet in the very next paragraph, he insists that when he says that he cannot see how the author has not made a mistake, this only shows the limits of Jerome's own intellect; he declines to charge the inspired authors with error. It is in the beginning of that same paragraph – the ninth – that he brings up the text of Mark 1:2:

"I refer to these passages, not to convict the evangelists of falsification – a charge worthy only of impious men like Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian – but to bring home to my critics their own want of knowledge, and to gain from them such consideration that they may concede to me, in the case of a simple letter, what, whether they like it or not, they will have to concede to the apostles in the Holy Scriptures. [The idea here is that Jerome cannot be charged with impropriety for using a

loose translation-method in his rendering of a letter for a fellow-worker (Eusebius of Cremona), because the apostles also were content to convey merely the gist of things on occasion.] *Mark, the disciple of Peter, begins his gospel thus: 'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in the prophet Isaiah: Behold, I send my messenger before your face, which shall prepare your way before you. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight."'*

"The quotation is made up from two prophets, that is to say, Malachi and Isaiah. For the most part, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, which shall prepare your way before you,' occurs at the close of Malachi. But the second part – 'The voice of one crying,' and so forth – we read in Isaiah. On what grounds, then, has Mark in the very beginning of his book set the words, 'As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "Behold, I send my messenger,' when, as we have said, it is not written in Isaiah at all, but in Malachi, the last of the twelve prophets? Let ignorant presumption solve this nice question if it can, and I will ask pardon for being in the wrong."

In this composition, Jerome was not interested in solving the problem presented by Mark's presentation of Malachi's words as if they were Isaiah's; he wanted instead to make his

critics aware of the problem, probably foreseeing that if they accepted the idea that Mark had made an inexact quotation, then they could not throw rocks at Jerome for inexact translation-work without hitting Mark. It ought to be noted that throughout his comments on Mark 1:2, Jerome seemed unaware of the existence of the reading *"in the prophets,"* even though he wrote within a generation of the time when Codices A and W were made.

In his *Commentary on Matthew* (written in 398 in Bethlehem), Jerome was more forthcoming in the course of a comment on Matthew 3:3:

"Porphyry compares this passage to the beginning of the Gospel of Mark, in which is written, 'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, just as it is written in the prophet Isaiah: Behold, I am sending my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, a voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' For since the testimony has been intertwined from Malachi and Isaiah, he asks how we can imagine that the citation has been taken from Isaiah only.

Men of the church have responded to him in great detail. My opinion is either that the name of Isaiah was added by a mistake of the copyists, which we can prove has also happened in other

passages, or, as an alternative, one piece has been made out of diverse Scriptural testimonies. Read the thirteenth Psalm and you shall discover this very thing." (See page 68 of Thomas P. Scheck's 2008 English translation, *Saint Jerome – Commentary on Matthew*, #177 in the *Fathers of the Church* series.)

The detailed responses by "men of the church" probably included the lost 30-volume work *Against Porphyry* by Apollinaris of Laodicea, and another refutation by Methodius of Olympus, and another one by Eusebius of Caesarea. But rather than leave it at that, Jerome summarized two possibilities that could resolve the difficulty. Jerome did not go into detail about what he hoped would be realized when one reads the thirteenth Psalm (which in our modern Bibles is Psalm 14). Perhaps he hoped that readers would see that Psalm 14 and Psalm 53 convey the same message with some variation in the wording, or that Paul, when quoting from Psalm 14 in Romans 3:10-18, felt free to also quote from some thematically related passages without separate introductions.

The second option that Jerome gives in his *Commentary on Matthew* is essentially the same solution offered in *Homily 75, On the Beginning of the Gospel of Saint Mark* – that Mark expected his readers to treat the quotation from

Malachi as a sort of cross-reference for the quotation from Isaiah. Those who accepted this approach would no longer feel that there was a need to augment or adjust the text, and this may be why the reading *"in Isaiah the prophet"* is so prevalent in the Latin text of Mark 1:2: to scribes armed with the explanations provided by Jerome and other "men of the church," it was not a difficult reading. To copyists familiar with the writings of Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome, the reading *"in Isaiah the prophet"* was capable of being resolved in two ways: by assuming that the name *"Isaiah"* was a scribal intrusion, or that Mark had intertwined his references, with Malachi's words preceding Isaiah's words.

One more patristic work should be mentioned here: the Eusebian Canon-tables, made by the author of the previously mentioned *Ad Marinum*. Inspired by a Matthew-centered cross-reference system devised by Ammonius of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea (d. 339) had divided the text of each Gospel into sections, assigning a number to each section, and at the beginning of the Gospels he drew up ten lists of section-numbers, showing where one could find parallel-passages shared by all four Gospels, and where one could find parallel-passages shared by different combinations of Gospels, and in the tenth (and last) list, where one could find

passages distinct to a single Gospel. The brief instruction-manual for these lists, presented as a letter from Eusebius to his friend Carpian, precedes the Canon-tables in many MSS. The Eusebian Canons became very popular in the 300's – and the section-numbers even appear in Codex Sinaiticus (in an incomplete and imprecise form) – and they are practically a normal feature of later MSS.

As the Eusebian Canons gained popularity, there was an elevated risk of harmonizing Mark 1:2 (Section 2) with the parallels in Matthew 3:3 (Section 8), Luke 3:3-6 (Section 7), and John 1:23 (Section 10), for these four sections were aligned in the first column of Canon One of the Eusebian Canons; all four feature quotations of Isaiah 40:3, and Matthew, Luke, and John specifically mention Isaiah. This factor did not *originate* the reading *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in Mark 1:2, but it would not be surprising if it encouraged some copyists to prefer that reading, as the more harmonious reading.

Now let's turn to Irenaeus, the bishop whose writings constitute the earliest evidence for Mark 1:2. Irenaeus had grown up in Asia Minor (he states in *Against Heresies* 3:3:4 that he saw Polycarp at Smyrna), and served as bishop in the city of Lugdunum (now Lyons), in Gaul (now France). He also visited Rome in 177, when

Roman persecution targeted Lugdunum. He wrote the third book of his most famous work, *Against Heresies*, in about 184, which means that his quotations of Mark are from a manuscript earlier than any known to exist.

Considerable sections of *Against Heresies* are extant only in Latin or Syriac, rather than in the Greek language in which Irenaeus wrote. For this reason, some scholars have suspected that when we encounter quotations of Mark 1:2 with *"in the prophets"* in *Against Heresies*, we are seeing the hand of a Latin translator who replaced Irenaeus' quotations with a text more familiar to the translator. However, the Old Latin and Vulgate firmly support *"in Isaiah the prophet"* – so whoever suggests that the Latin translator made Irenaeus' Greek quotation agree with some Latin text that read *"in the prophets"* in Mark 1:2 should identify what Latin text he has in mind.

In *Against Heresies* 3:10:5, Irenaeus wrote, *"Wherefore also Mark, the interpreter and follower of Peter, does thus commence his Gospel narrative: 'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who shall prepare your way. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord; make the paths straight before our*

God.' Plainly does the commencement of the Gospel quote the words of the holy prophets, and point out Him at once, whom they confessed as God and Lord, Him, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who had also made promise to Him, that He would send His messenger before His face, who was John, crying in the wilderness, in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight paths before our God.'"

(The combination of variants in this citation is interesting, and merits closer study: *"Son of God"* is included in verse 1, and *"in the prophets"* is read in verse 2; yet *"before you"* is not read at the end of verse 2, and the close of the quotation seems to be conformed to the text of Isaiah 40:3.)

Against the idea that Irenaeus' text has been altered here by a copyist of his works, it should be noticed that Irenaeus, commenting on the passage, did not proceed to say that *one* prophet (i.e., Isaiah) thus testified, but that *they* (i.e., the prophets) confessed him as God and Lord, and he made this affirmation as he saw no need for further comment.

However, in *Against Heresies* 3:11:8, which is preserved in Greek and Latin, Irenaeus quotes Mark 1:1-2 with *"in Isaiah the prophet."* In addition, his brief quotation does not include the phrase *"the Son of God"* – Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὡς γέγραπται ἐν Ἠσαΐα τῷ

προφήτη. This form of Mark 1:1-2*a*, excluding *"Son of God"* and including *"in Isaiah the prophet"* without τῷ before Ἠσαΐα, is rare; it is attested only in Codex Θ and in the Armenian and Georgian versions, and a few respectably early patristic compositions, as far as I can tell. While nothing precludes the idea that Irenaeus possessed the kind of text displayed in Codex Θ (and in Oxyrhynchus Papyri LXXVI 5073, a talisman probably made in the late 200s), there is another possibility: that at this point Irenaeus was incorporating the contents of an earlier source into his own composition.

Let's take a look at the context of the quotation in *Against Heresies* 3:11:8: it arrives as Irenaeus is defending the idea that there are four, and only four, Gospels – just as there are four cherubim around God's heavenly throne. Each angelic likeness is associated with one of the four Gospels. Using Revelation 4:7, Irenaeus explains that the Gospel of John corresponds to the confident lion; the Gospel of Luke corresponds to the ox; the Gospel of Matthew corresponds to the man, and the Gospel of Mark corresponds to the eagle – this last association being based on the swiftness of an eagle's flight and the swiftness with which Mark summarizes Jesus' activities, providing a quick overview: *"Mark, on the other hand, commences with the prophetical spirit*

coming down from on high to men, saying, 'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet,' – pointing to the winged aspect of the gospel; and on this account he made a compendious and cursory narrative, for such is the prophetical character."

Further along in *Against Heresies* (3:16:3), Irenaeus again refers to Mark 1:2. He specifically quotes from Mark: *"Wherefore Mark also says, 'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in the prophets.' Knowing one and the same Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was announced by the prophets . . . ."*

In the two instances where Irenaeus quotes Mark 1:1-2a with *"Son of God"* and *"in the prophets,"* the adjacent comments from Irenaeus do not give any hint that his own text has been replaced with something else; his comments interlock with a text of Mark in which those two readings are in the text. But at the same time, there is no sign of tampering in the quotation in which Irenaeus fails to use *"Son of God"* and in which he names Isaiah the prophet.

None of these passages in *Against Heresies* shows any sign of tampering by the Latin translator of *Against Heresies*. It looks like Irenaeus used two different forms of the text of Mark 1:2 – one which read, *"in the prophets,"* and one which read *"in Isaiah the prophet,"* in the

Western form of the Greek text (ἐν Ἠσαΐᾳ τῷ προφήτῃ). The only conclusion this evidence points to is that two forms of Mark 1:2 – one reading *"in Isaiah the prophet"* and another reading *"in the prophets"* – were in circulation in the 180's.

Now let's turn to a comment made by a Syriac writer named Isho'dad of Merv, around A.D. 850. Though later than Charlemagne, Isho'dad's writings are valuable, inasmuch as he frequently relied upon older compositions. Isho'dad acknowledged a difficulty in the Syriac text of Mark 1:2 (where the Peshitta reads *"in Isaiah the prophet"*) and he mentioned five proposals about how to resolve it, without expressing a preference for any of them:
    "It is asked, 'Why did Mark say, "As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, 'Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face,'" etc., when it is written in Malachi?
    "Some say that it was in Isaiah and was lost. Other say that he put to the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way,' etc., this sign as an answer. Others say that because it was translated from Roman [i.e., Latin; this reflects a tradition that Mark originally wrote in Latin] *to Greek, and from that to Syriac, the*

interpreters made a mistake, and put 'Isaiah' instead of 'Malachi.'

"Others say that he [i.e., Mark] *is not concerned to be meticulously precise about the reference, as is the custom of the Scriptures.*

"Others say that the Diatessaron-book, which was composed in Alexandria, instead of this 'as it is written by Isaiah the prophet,' says, 'by the prophets.'" (See Margaret Gibson's *The Commentaries of Isho'dad of Merv*, 1911, Vol. 1, page 126).

Let's zoom in on that last proposal. Isho'dad, in his description of the Diatessaron as a text composed in Alexandria, has probably confused the Diatessaron of Ammonius of Alexandria – a Matthew-centered cross-reference system mentioned in the much-circulated *Ad Carpian*, but not known to be extant – with the Diatessaron produced by Tatian (in the early 170's), in which the contents of the four Gospels were blended together into a single non-repeating narrative.

The text that Tatian produced – whether Greek or Syriac – is not extant, and its fullest echo, the Arabic Diatessaron, has been extensively (but not entirely) conformed to the Peshitta. (That is, the arrangement of the text was substantially retained, but because Tatian was suspected of heresy due to his asceticism, the text itself was

adjusted to agree (mostly) with the Peshitta, and this Syriac text was subsequently translated into Arabic.) Isho'dad's statement here, then, may be the only extant indication that Tatian's Diatessaron originally contained the reading *"in the prophets"* extracted from Mark 1:2.

J. Rendel Harris, in the preface to Gibson's translation of Isho'dad's Commentary (p. xxviii), mentioned that a later Syriac writer, Jacob Bar-Salibi (d. 1171), expanded Isho'dad's remark: "Others [say] that in the book Diatessaron which is preserved [or was composed] in Alexandria and was written by Tatianus the bishop, as also in the Greek Gospel and in the Harkalian, it is written 'in the prophet,' without explaining what prophet."

If indeed Tatian's Diatessaron read *"in the prophets,"* then this would constitute another second-century witness for that reading.

How diverse is the evidence for "in the prophets"?

The agreement of Codex Washingtoniensis with Codex Alexandrinus and the Byzantine Text is sometimes treated casually, but it actually is rather significant, because although the text of Codex W is primarily Byzantine in Matthew and in Luke from 8:13 onward, its text of Mark is very different. Larry Hurtado describes it in his

introduction to the volume *The Freer Biblical MSS*: "In Mark 1-4 Codex W agrees more closely with Codex Bezae and other "Western" witnesses. But at some point in Mark 5, the textual affiliation shifts markedly, and throughout the rest of Mark Codex W cannot be tied to any of the major text-types. In this main part of Mark, however, W was later shown to exhibit a very interesting alignment with the Chester Beatty Gospels codex (P45)."

The agreement of Codex A and Codex W demonstrates a more widespread range of attestation than the agreement of ℵ and B, which were very likely produced in the same scriptorium, or by copyists trained in the same place. Augmenting the case that Codex A's transmission-line is separate from that of Codex W is the observation that they read differently at the end of Mark 1:2 (A has εμπροσθεν σου; W does not) – not to mention the insertion in Codex W of several lines of Greek text from Isaiah 40:4-8 between Mark 1:3 and 1:4.

In addition, sub-groups of MSS within the Byzantine transmission-line consistently support *"in the prophets"* in Mark 1:2. Besides those mentioned already, 72 (a copy with some Arabic notes), 117, 128, 304 (a manuscript of Matthew and Mark, in which the text is divided into segments interspersed with

commentary), 444, 492, 780, 783, 809 (a deluxe manuscript from the 1000s, with some marginal commentary), 817 (a manuscript used by Erasmus; like other MSS in which the text of John is accompanied by Theophylact's commentary, it does not contain John 7:53-8:11), 826 (considered a strong representative of the f^{13} cluster), 389 (a manuscript with unusual decorations in its Canon-tables), 1216, 1342, 2483, some Armenian copies, Ethiopic copies, and the Old Slav/Glagolitic version demonstrate that the reading *"in the prophets"* was read in multiple locales.

Why don't we see a scribal tendency toward specificity in Matthew 27:35b?

The scribal tendency toward specificity manifested in versional evidence at Matthew 1:22, 2:5, 2:15, 21:4, but not in Matthew 27:35*b*. The reason for this is that Matthew 27:35*b* did not circulate as widely as the rest of the text of Matthew; it is in the *Textus Receptus* but it is not included in the Robinson-Pierpont Byzantine Textform, or in the archetype of f^{35} compiled by Wilbur Pickering.

The question about whether Matthew 27:35*b* is original or not may be set aside for the time being (though perhaps it should be mentioned that this verse-segment is strongly

supported by Old Latin evidence, and that it ends with the same word (κλῆρον) as the verse-segment that precedes it, which would make it vulnerable to accidental loss). The thing to see is that Matthew 27:35*b* escaped being the subject of the scribal tendency toward specificity by being absent from multiple transmission-lines.

What was the text of Mark 1:2 quoted by Victorinus of Pettau?

Victorinus of Pettau, in the late 200s, cited Mark 1:2 with *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in his Latin commentary on Revelation. His text may reveal the kind of liberties that were taken by Western copyists. Either Victorinus cited Mark 1:1-2 very loosely, or else his Latin text was radically altered; Victorinus quoted Mark 1:1-2 as follows: *"Mark, therefore, as an Evangelist, who begins, 'The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness,' has the likeness of a lion."* (Notice that Victorinus' text not only omits the material from Malachi, but also lacks the phrase *"the Son of God."*)

How do patristic writers of the mid-late 300s – Serapion of Thmuis, Basil of Caesarea, and Epiphanius of Salamis – quote Mark 1:1-2?

I do not have on hand critically edited editions of the works of Serapion of Thmuis, or of Titus of Bostra, or of Basil of Caesarea, or of Epiphanius (who have all been cited as support for *"in Isaiah the prophet"*) – and so I have resorted to the comments of John Burgon, in the form in which they were collected by Edward Miller for the book called *The Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*, published in 1896. I rephrased some wording and changed the syntax slightly in the following quasi-quotation from page 113:

"Serapion, Titus, and Basil merely borrow from Origen; and, with his argument, reproduce his corrupt text of St. Mark 1:2. Basil, however, saves his reputation by leaving out the quotation from Malachi, passing directly from the mention of Isaiah to the actual words of that prophet. Epiphanius (and Jerome, too, on one occasion) does the same thing."

Those who wish to test Burgon's claims, if they have the resources, may wish to consult Serapion of Thmuis' *Against the Manichees*, 25, 37, and Basil of Caesarea's *Against Eunomius*, 2:15, and Epiphanius' *Panarion* 51:6:4, and see if their compositions run parallel to the contents of Origen's comments in Book 2 of *Contra Celsus*, which run as follows:

"Even one of the Evangelists, Mark, says, 'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in the prophet Isaiah, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who shall prepare your way before you.' This shows that the beginning of the gospel is connected with the Jewish writings. What, then, is the force in Celsus' Jew's objection [Celsus had pictured a Jew objecting that Christians were merely a sect of Judaism] seeing that if anyone was to predict to us that the Son of God would visit mankind, it would be one of our prophets, and the prophet of our God? Or how is it a charge against Christianity to point out that John, who baptized Jesus, was a Jew?"

Similarly in Chromatius' use of Mark 1:2 with *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in *Prologues to Sermons on Matthew,* Chromatius seems to have recycled the material that one sees in Irenaeus' *Against Heresies* 3:11:9.

Do Byzantine copyists elsewhere display willingness to remove a prophet's name from the text if it appears problematic?

Such willingness is assumed by many commentators, as exemplified by Bruce Terry in his online *A Student's Guide to Textual Variants*: "The quotation in verses 2 and 3 is from two

scriptures: the first part is from Malachi 3:1 and the second part is from Isaiah 40:3. Thus it is likely that copyists changed the reference to make it more general."

Robert Waltz provides another example: "The quotation is not from Isaiah alone, but from Malachi and Isaiah. The attribution to Isaiah is an error, and scribes would obviously have been tempted to correct it."

The same assumption is expressed by Metzger in *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*: "The quotation in verses 2 and 3 is composite, the first part being from Mal 3.1 and the second part from Is 40.3. It is easy to see, therefore, why copyists would have altered the words "in Isaiah the prophet" . . . . to the more comprehensive introductory formula, "in the prophets.""

However reasonable that may sound, when we turn to Matthew 27:9 – where readers could understandably imagine that Matthew attributed to Jeremiah a paraphrase of Zechariah 11:12-13 – the Byzantine text adamantly reads "Jeremiah" nevertheless.

Meanwhile, when we look at representatives of the transmission-lines where *"in Isaiah the prophet"* was read in Mark 1:2, it is precisely there that we see a willingness to mess with the text of Matthew 27:9. A consultation of

the first volume of Willker's *Textual Commentary on the Greek Gospels* will show that Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome all expressed a suspicion that there was a scribal error in the MSS that read "Jeremiah" in Matthew 27:9. Augustine (in *The Harmony of the Gospels*, Book 3, chapter 7, written in A.D. 400), shows that by his time, some Latin copyists had removed the name "Jeremiah" to relieve readers of the burden of investigating the text:

"If anyone finds a difficulty in the circumstance that this passage is not found in the writings of the prophet Jeremiah, and thinks that this damages the credibility of the Evangelist, let him first take notice of the fact that the ascription of the passage to Jeremiah is not contained in all the codices of the Gospels, and that some of them state simply that it was spoken "by the prophet."

Augustine, for his part, proceeded to reject the non-inclusion of Jeremiah's name – because, he explained, most of the codices contain Jeremiah's name, and because "those critics who have studied the Gospel with more than usual care in the Greek copies report that they have found that the more ancient Greek exemplars include it," and so forth. But not all copyists shared his insight – which is why, in minuscules 33 and 157 (33 being one of the few minuscules that read *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in Mark 1:2) – there is

no proper name in Matthew 27:9, and, turning to versional evidence, there is likewise no proper name there in the Peshitta, nor in VL 3 (both of which support *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in Mark 1:2). In minuscule 22 and in the margin of the Harklean Syriac version, Zechariah's name is placed there, and in the Old Latin Codex Rehdigeranus (VL 11, from the first half of the 700s) not only is Jeremiah's name absent, but *Isaiah's* name has been put into the text.

Codex D's text also displays scribal willingness to simply delete a proper name that seemed problematic in Matthew 14:3; Philip's name is missing. And in Mark 6:3, Codex D does not include Jairus' name, apparently merely to bring the Marcan text into closer conformity to the Matthean parallel.

Codex ℵ's text similarly resolves a perceived difficulty in Matthew 23:35 via the removal of the words υἱοῦ Βαραχίου.

Meanwhile, the Byzantine Text in these passages retains the proper names which were considered problematic – so problematic that they were removed or replaced – in various Western, Caesarean, and Alexandrian MSS. This evidence ought to lead one to suspect that the witnesses which contain a text in which names were inserted or removed – Codex Bezae (D), Codex Sinaiticus (ℵ), Codex Koridethi (Θ), the Old

Latin witnesses (especially VL 3), the Peshita, 33, and f^1 – should not be trusted very much where a variant involves the presence or absence of a name, such as in Mark 1:2. To remove those witnesses from the picture would be to remove over half of the Greek manuscript-support cited in the UBS apparatus for *"in Isaiah the prophet"* in Mark 1:2.

Was Mark more likely to write "in Isaiah the prophet," or "in the prophets"?

Two other New Testament authors – Matthew and Paul – occasionally blend together two citations from the Old Testament, using one as a sort of thematic cross-reference for the other. Matthew appears to do this in 21:4-5, focusing on Zechariah 9:9 with a dash of Isaiah 62:11. And in 27:9, Matthew appears to use verbiage from Zechariah to frame the scene in Jeremiah 32:6-9 – unless, as some suspect (as Origen and Jerome did), Matthew refers here to an entirely different and non-canonical composition by Jeremiah, consisting of Hebrew source-material used in *"The Prophecy of Jeremiah to Passhur."* (See Willker, Vol. 1, TVU #377, for details.) Likewise Paul, in Romans 3, does not meticulously separate his quotations which are united by a common theme.

Mark, however, was not like Matthew and Paul. Matthew repeatedly quotes from the Old Testament, expecting his readers to know their Scriptures. Paul, trained as a Pharisee, quoted from the Old Testament frequently. Mark, in contrast, seems to have felt a stronger obligation to explain coinage-values (cf. 12:42) than to specify which Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus.

Turning, then, to the other passages in Mark where material from Isaiah is used – 4:12 (Isaiah 6:9), 7:6-7 (Isaiah 29:13), 9:44, 9:46, 9:48 (Isaiah 66:24 – 9:44 and 9:46 are absent from the Nestle-Aland compilation), 11:17 (Isaiah 56:7), and, in the Byzantine text, 15:28 (Isaiah 53:12) – what stylistic pattern do we see? Except for 7:6, it is one of non-specificity.

The cumulative weight of these points favors *"in the prophets"* as the original reading of Mark 1:2. The reading *"in Isaiah the prophet"* is likely to have arisen in both the early Alexandrian and Western transmission streams independently, due to a widespread scribal tendency to add specificity to the text.

The Alexandrian Text of the Gospels (particularly the text of Codex Vaticanus) is well-aligned with the earliest stratum of the Sahidic version, and the Western Text of the Gospels is

likewise well-aligned with the Old Latin version. Could translators have introduced proper names into their local translations? And, subsequently, could the Greek texts in the locales where these translations were in use have been adjusted to conform to the translation?

YES.

We see a tendency toward specificity in some modern English paraphrases. In Matthew 1:22, The Amplified Bible includes Isaiah's name, bracketed, in the text; The Voice includes it in italics. In Matthew 2:5, the Living Bible, the Voice, and Eugene Peterson's *"The Message"* all include Micah's name. *The Voice* includes Zechariah's name in Matthew 21:4. *The Message* also inserts Amos' name in Acts 7:42, and Isaiah's name in Acts 7:48.

The people who made these paraphrases did not consider what they did to be reckless and unnecessary tampering when they inserted proper names into these passages. They regarded this step as a helpful amplification of the specific meaning of the text. Some translators of early versions (particularly the Sahidic, Old Latin, and Syriac) – and some early copyists who prepared Greek MSS to be read to congregations – had the same intention.

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APPENDIX C: Mark 6:22

The first phrase in Mark 6:22 says different things depending on which version is read:

Mark 6:22 (NET): "When his daughter Herodias[34] came in and danced . . ."
Mark 6:22 (NRSV): "When his daughter Herodias[q] came in and danced . . ."
Mark 6:22 (NIV): "When the daughter of[a] Herodias came in and danced . . ."
Mark 6:22 (CSB®): "When Herodias' own daughter[p] came in and danced . . ."
Mark 6:22 (ESV): "For when Herodias' daughter came in and danced . . ."
Mark 6:22 (KJV): "And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced . . ."

Whose daughter danced for Herod? Was it his own daughter, or the daughter of Herodias? The first-century historian Josephus reports (in *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 18)) that Herodias' daughter was named Salome and that she was Herod's grand-niece, not his daughter. Matthew 14:6 affirms that she was Herodias' daughter.

Not only was the dancer not Herod's physical daughter; she was not Herod's daughter under Mosaic Law, either: her mother Herodias,

after marrying Herod II (the son of Herod the Great and Mariamne II), had divorced him, and – against Jewish Law – married his brother, Herod Antipas. As Josephus stated: "Herodias took it upon herself to confound the laws of our country, and divorced herself from her husband while he was alive, and was married to Herod Antipas." It was because of this violation of Jewish law that John the Baptist, according to Matthew 14:3-4 and Mark 6:17-18, had spoken out against the unlawful marriage – with the result that Herod Antipas had John the Baptist imprisoned.

With that background in mind we come to the textual problem. As the superscripted numbers and letters in the NET, NRSV, NIV, and CSB suggest, the difference in these translations' rendering of Mark 6:22 is due to a difference in MSS. The footnotes in the NRSV, the NIV, and CSB are (as usual) too vague to do much more than confuse their readers.

Quite a bit more data is found in the NET's textual note, in which the annotator explains that the NET's editors chose to have their translation say that the dancer was Herod's daughter despite the "historical difficulties" that it involves. Or to put it another way: even though Matthew says that Herodias was the dancer's mother, the NET's editors chose to adopt the reading in which Mark

says otherwise, because it is the most difficult reading – difficult, because it is erroneous – and thus the reading which copyists were most likely to alter.

(By the way: what are the odds that the similarity between Metzger's references to "historical and contextual difficulties" and "external attestation" in his comment on this variant-unit, and the NET annotator's references to "historical difficulties" and "external attestation," rather than being sheer coincidence, is the result of the NET's annotator attempting to summarize Metzger's comments? Rather high I think. Someone in Dallas needs to be more careful not to plagiarize so blatantly.)

Let's take a look at the rival variants that are found in Mark 6:22:

● τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτου Ἡρῳδιάδος – "his daughter Herodias" – is supported by ⅔ B D L Δ 238 and 565.

● τῆς θυγατρὸς τῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος – "the daughter of Herodias" – is supported by family 1, 15 minuscules, and by four Old Latin MSS (*aur*, *b*, *c*, and *f* – that is, VL 15 (Codex Aureus Holmiensis, copied c. 775), VL 4 (Codex Veronensis, copied at the end of the 400s), VL 6 (Codex Colbertinus,

copied in the 1100s), and VL 10 (Codex Brixianus, copied in the 500s)). Allied with them, according to the textual apparatus in the fourth edition of the UBS *Greek New Testament*, are the Sinaitic Syriac manuscript, the Peshitta, the Palestinian Aramaic version, the Sahidic version, the Bohairic version, the Gothic version, the Armenian version, the Old Georgian version, and the Ethiopic version.

● τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς τῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος – "the daughter of Herodias herself" or "the daughter of this same Herodias" – is supported by about 99% of the Greek MSS of Mark, including Codices A C K M N U Γ Θ Π fam-13, 33, 157, 579, 700, 892, 1010, 1195, 1241, 1424, and 2474. Allied with this mainly (but by no means exclusively) Byzantine army of witnesses are the Harklean Syriac (produced in 616), the Vulgate (produced in 383), and Old Latin MSS *a*, *d*, *ff*^{2}, *i*, *l*, *q*, and *r*^{1} – that is, VL 3 (Codex Vercellensis, copied in the late 300s), VL 5 (the Latin section of Codex Bezae, copied in the 400s or 500s), VL 8 (Codex Corbeiensis Secundus, copied in the 400s), VL 17 (Codex Vindobonensis, copied in the late 400s), VL 11 (Codex Rehdigeranus, copied in the early 700s), Codex Monacensis, copied in the 500s or 600s), and VL 14 (Codex Usserianus Primus, copied c. 600).

● τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος – "her daughter Herodias" – is supported by Codex W and a smattering of minuscules.

It should be noted that the second reading ("the daughter of Herodias") and the third reading ("the daughter of Herodias herself") mean basically the same thing. Both refer to the dancer as the daughter of Herodias. Only the first reading says that the dancer was the daughter of Herod – a claim that appears to contradict both Matthew 14:6 and Josephus' statements. In other words, by adopting this reading, the Nestle-Aland/UBS editors appear to have placed an erroneous statement into the text.

Why, then, did the editors of the current edition of the Nestle-Aland compilation adopt a reading which makes Mark appear to contradict his fellow-evangelist Matthew and the historical data from Josephus? Because textual critics tend to accept the principle that the more difficult a reading is, the more likely it is to be original – which means in this case that the first reading is more likely to be original because it is the variant that copyists would be most likely to attempt to adjust.   That, at least, was the reasoning at the conclusion of the NET's defense of the reading: "It most likely gave rise to the other readings as scribes sought to correct it."   (So much for the annotator's "embarrassment of riches," when he

declares that at this point in the text, 99.9% of the coins in the treasury are most likely counterfeit!)

Neverthless Bruce Manning Metzger, instead of promoting the reading with αὑτου on internal grounds, stated that the UBS Committee narrowly decided in its favor due to the *external* evidence, stating in his *Textual Commentary,* "A majority of the Committee decided, somewhat reluctantly, that the reading with αὑτου [i.e., the first reading], despite the historical and contextual difficulties, must be adopted on the strength of its external attestation." This shows that the so-called "reasoned eclectic" approach of the UBS editors was, to a very large extent, eclectic in name only, favoring the joint testimony of a very small team of MSS over virtually everything else.

The Tyndale House edition of the Greek New Testament reads τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς τῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος ("the daughter of Herodias herself"), and its apparatus does not even include an entry to alert readers of the existence that a textual contest exists at this point. Many other compilations of the Greek New Testament agree with the reading in the Tyndale House edition at this point, including not only the Robinson-Pierpont Byzantine Textform, but also the Greek New Testament compilations prepared by J. M. A.

Scholz (1829), by Karl Lachmann (1831), by J. M. S. Baljon (1898), by Eberhard Nestle (1904), by Alexander Souter (1910), and the 1969 edition of the Nestle-Aland compilation.

In addition, when we compare the four rival readings side-by-side –

- τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτου Ἡρῳδιάδος
- τῆς θυγατρὸς τῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος
- τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς τῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος
- τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος

– it becomes clear that the second and fourth readings can be explained as the effects of momentary carelessness on the part of copyists whose exemplars contained the third reading: the second reading was produced by a copyist who accidentally omitted αὐτῆς when his line of sight drifted from the ς at the end of θυγατρὸς, and the fourth reading was produced by a copyist who accidentally omitted τῆς when his line of sight drifted from the ς at the end of αὐτῆς to the ς at the end of τῆς. Thus all of the witnesses for the second, third, and fourth reading may be considered allies which favor τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς τῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος, directly or indirectly.

The NET's annotator claims that this is not adequate external support. Whatever approach is reflected by such claims, it is not really eclectic.

Some clarity about the reliability of the main witnesses for the reading with αὐτου ("his") in 6:22 may be gained by considering some of their readings in nearby passages.

■ In 6:17, the copyist of Codex Vaticanus did not include the words τὴν γυναῖκα (the words are added in the margin by a corrector).

■ In 6:22*b*, ℵ B C* L Δ and 33 and a smattering of minuscules read ἤρεσεν instead of καὶ ἀρεσάσης which is supported by all other Greek MSS. The editors of the Nestle-Aland/UBS compilation preferred the Alexandrian reading here – and in doing so, they rejected the testimony of Papyrus 45, the earliest manuscript of this part of the Gospel of Mark. Although P45 is extensively damaged in chapter 6, this reading is preserved. This constitutes an agreement between the Byzantine Text and the earliest manuscript of this part of Mark.

■ In 6:22*c*, the words in the opening phrase are transposed and slightly different in Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, C* L and Δ – ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς εἶπεν – instead of the usual εἶπεν ὁ βασιλεὺς. These MSS disagree with the word-order in the earliest manuscript, Papyrus 45, in which ν [the final surviving letter of εἶπεν] ὁ Ἡρώδης was written before Ἡρώδης was corrected (above the line) to βασιλεὺς.

In all three of these variant-units, the SBL-GNT, compiled by Michael Holmes, supports the Byzantine reading. So does the Tyndale House GNT. The SBLGNT also reads τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς τῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος (the daughter of Herodias herself).   Clearly not everyone is convinced that the Alexandrian witnesses are especially reliable in this particular passage.

Having established that the support for τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτου Ἡρῳδιάδος is extremely limited, and that the supportive MSS seem to be less reliable than usual elsewhere in the verse, let's turn to a couple of issues concerning the internal evidence.

First, how would copyists start with τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς τῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος and end up with τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτου Ἡρῳδιάδος? Such a transition is not difficult if an early copyist had an exemplar with the reading found in Codex W (τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος), and, with Herod prominent in his mind as the focus of the previous verse, inattentively wrote αὐτου instead of αὐτῆς. The few subsequent copyists who preserved the resultant reading τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτου Ἡρῳδιάδος rationalized that Mark must have used the term "daughter" to refer to a step-daughter, and that the dancer, like several members of Herod's extended family, shared a name with another family-member.

Second, is it plausible that Mark wrote τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτου Ἡρῳδιάδος? The answer is firmly *no*. Introducing the dancer as Herod's daughter, fully aware that she was Herodias' daughter (as Mark affirms in 6:24), immediately after explaining that Herod's marriage to Herodias was not valid, would be like saying that a man and a woman were committing adultery, and then saying that the woman's daughter was nevertheless the daughter of the adulterer – and that she happened to have the same name as the adulteress. It is extremely unlikely that Mark would ever drop such a statement upon his readers without explanation. An early copyist made a simple mistake which a small number of disciplined copyists perpetuated.

Third, how would copyists be likely to adjust the text if they found τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτου Ἡρῳδιάδος in their exemplars and considered such a statement (that the dancer was Herod's daughter, and that she was named Herodias) historically erroneous? Their first resort would be to conform the Markan text to the parallel-passage in Matthew 14:6 – but such a conformation to ἡ θυγάτηρ τῆς Ἡρῳδιάδος does not seem to have been attempted by any copyists. The only obvious scribal recklessness in Matthew 14:6 is displayed in Codex Bezae, where

the text reads αὐτου ("his") instead of τῆς, and Ἡρῳδιὰς instead of Ἡρῳδιάδος.

These three considerations in unison attest that the Byzantine reading at this point in Mark 6:22 is original, and that the Alexandrian reading is a mistake, albeit not quite so nonsensical that every copyist would recognize it as such. (It might be worth mentioning the possibility that in an ancient exemplar, αὐτου was omitted from verse 21 after μεγιστᾶσιν (an omission attested by Codex Bezae and by MSS 1 and 1582), and after the missing word was supplied in the margin nearby, it was misinterpreted as if it was intended to replace the similar word in verse 22 rather than supplement verse 21.)

Presently readers of the CSB and NIV only encounter the English echo of a scribal mistake in Mark 6:22 in their Bible's footnotes, and ESV-readers do not encounter it at all. But as long as these versions are subject to constant revision there is a very real possibility that a future edition of the ESV or CSB or NIV, the text of Mark 6:22 will be changed to resemble the errant text found in the NET and NRSV, corresponding to the errant text in the Nestle-Aland compilation.

The preventive solution which is less than ideal, but very simple to implement, is to adopt the Byzantine text as the primary base-text of

future editions of the ESV and CSB and NIV and NRSV and NLT.

APPENDIX D: John 3:13

In this appendix I ask and answer the question, "Did John write the phras *"who is in heaven"* in the text of John 3:13?"

In two recently published translations of the New Testament – the Evangelical Heritage Version and the Modern English Version – John 3:13 ends with the phrase, "who is in heaven." This is also the reading of the King James Version. It is supported by the vast majority (over 95%) of Greek MSS, as well as the Old Latin, the Vulgate, the Peshitta, the Ethiopic version, and a wide variety of early patristic writers.

The NIV and ESV, however, do not include this phrase, following instead the shorter Alexandrian text that is displayed in Papyrus 66, Papyrus 75, Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, some Egyptian versions, and some patristic writers.

The late Bruce Metzger, in his *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, defended the decision of the compilers of the United Bible Societies' printed Greek New Testament to reject this phrase: "The majority of the Committee, impressed by the quality of the external attestation supporting the shorter reading, regarded the words ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ as an interpretive gloss, reflecting later Christological development."

Against this theory of "later" – but earlier than Hippolytus, who cited John 3:13 with the phrase "who is in heaven" in *Against Noetus* – expansion, Wieland Willker responded effectively: "Internally the longer reading is clearly the harder reading and there is no reason why the words should have been added. Metzger says it could be an "interpretive gloss, reflecting later Christological development", but is this probable? It seems more

probable that scribes omitted the difficult words or changed them as 0141, Sy-S [the Sinaitic Syriac] and e [Old Latin codex Palatinus, from the mid-400s], Sy-C [the Curetonian Syriac] did."

Willker was referring to alterations in the text of Old Latin codex Palatinus (from the mid-400s) and the Curetonian Syriac that yield the meaning of "**was** in heaven" and in the Sinaitic Syriac manuscript that yields the meaning of "is **from** heaven."

This textual variant overlaps with an interpretive question: writing in ancient Greek with no (or only minimal) punctuation, did John intend to report that Jesus told Nicodemus, at the time of their conversation, that the Son of Man was in heaven? Or, if the phrase is assumed to be original, was it intended to be understood, not as part of Jesus' words, but as a parenthetical phrase made by John?

As Willker noticed, it is not hard to see why early copyists would consider the phrase puzzling: if the phrase is not understood as a parenthetical comment by John, then Jesus seems to say that the Son of Man is in heaven, while He is right there on the scene talking to Nicodemus. Internal considerations thus weigh in heavily against the shorter reading: to remove this phrase would be to reduce the risk of misinterpretation, whereas a copyist who added this phrase would be adding an interpretive difficulty where there previously was none.

The phrase "ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ" was part of the original text and was excised in the Alexandrian text-stream by a copyist prone to relieve perceived difficulties. The absence of this phrase in the fifth edition of the UBS/Biblica *Greek New Testament*, and in the 28th edition of the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testatementum Graece*, is an echo of previous compilers' reliance upon poorly

represented data combined with a preference for MSS blessed with dry weather. In the Sinaitic Syriac and the Curetonian Syriac and the Old Latin Codex Palatinus (and in the uncial 0141, in which the closing phrase states that the Son of Man is *from* heaven) we see copyists surrendering to the temptation to alter the text in order to resolve a perceived difficulty; the MSS that lack the phrase echo the work of an early scribe who took things a little further.

(Those who would object, "But we should follow the oldest MSS" are advised to notice that Papyrus 75 reads πιστεύετε (not πιστευύετε) at the end of 3:12, and in nearby 3:31, the scribe of papyrus 66 initially omitted the word ἐρχόμενος, and also in 3:31, Papyrus 75 and the scribe of Sinaiticus both did not include the final phrase ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστίν; the compilers of the UBS/NA texts obviously felt no obligation to follow the oldest MSS unthinkingly. Nor should we.)

The editors of the recently published Tyndale House edition of the Greek New Testament likewise omitted the phrase. The pitiful brevity of the THGNT's apparatus prevents readers from seeing the early patristic evidence. Had the editors accepted the judgment of Samuel Tregelles, the scholar from the 1800s whose work laid the foundation for the THEGNT, this phrase would have been retained.

P.S. A comparison of the treatment of John 3:13 in different editions of the UBS *Greek New Testament* does not build confidence in the reliability of the resources upon which the Committee-members depended. In the first edition (1966), the Ethiopic version was listed as a witness for the non-inclusion of *"who is in heaven."* The Arabic Diatessaron was listed as a witness for the inclusion

of the phrase. The Georgian version was listed in support of the longer reading. Didymus was listed as a witness for both readings. In the fourth edition (1993), part of the Georgian evidence was listed as support for the shorter reading, the Diatessaron was only listed for the shorter reading, Didymus was listed only as support for the shorter reading, and the Ethiopic version switched sides, favoring the inclusion of the phrase. And the certainty-rate varied from A ("the text is certain") to C ("the Committee had difficulty") to B ("the text is almost certain").

My fellow Christians, we can do better.   So let's do better.

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