Part 6

The Text of the New Testament

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Textual Criticism and the New Testament

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Simply stated, New Testament textual criticism is the practice of attempting to recover the earliest attainable text and is sometimes associated with the idea of recovering the "original" text of the New Testament. This effort is necessary given the fact that the surviving ancient copies of the Greek New Testament contain numerous differences called textual variants.[1] What is intended by the term *original* is a matter of dispute, and for the sake of this discussion, it will refer to the most original version of the Greek text of the New Testament that is recoverable by modern methods of study. That is not the same as recovering the original text exactly as it was written by Matthew, Mark, or Luke, for example. The modern reader who is not deeply interested in such detailed academic matters will be confronted with a sense of unease that such discussions are at times arcane and seemingly irrelevant. But the larger questions such as *Is the New Testament accurately translated?* or *How does such an effort alter faith in any significant way?* are simply too complex to answer thoroughly in a single study. Answers to such questions, however, can be based on the study of textual criticism, and the simple answers are that the KJV Bible now in common use has errors and textual limitations, while the answer to the second question is that textual criticism has the potential to raise questions about biblical accuracy that can affect faith.

In brief terms, textual criticism is the study of the existing manuscripts of the Bible, for which there are nearly six thousand New Testament manuscripts in Greek. Those manuscripts, which are handwritten copies dating from the second century to the Middle Ages, contain thousands of differences in wording, spelling, and the actual text they contain. Thus, it falls to the text critic to sift through the differences, determine which changes are errors, spurious additions, and unintentional mistakes, and then offer an informed opinion regarding what is the earliest recoverable text of the New Testament.[2] Over the course of the last several centuries, scholars have developed a set of tools to aid them in sifting through the variants in these texts. One particularly important way that scholars assess these differences is through a genealogical approach that assigns the various manuscripts each to a family of texts, and then subsequent decisions are made on the basis of whether a particular family of manuscripts is judged to be more reliable than another family of texts.

In 2006 Carl Griffin and Frank Judd Jr. surveyed the principles and practices of New Testament textual criticism for a Latter-day Saint audience, offering the suggestion that Latter-day Saint scholars could productively approach the topic of study through the principles of "reasoned eclecticism" (defined below).[3] That essay was published in tandem with a study that described the variety and difficulties associated with the nearly six thousand New Testament manuscripts, the four major textual families, and the hundreds of thousands of textual variants, thus giving Latter-day Saint audiences access to quality descriptions of the problems and challenges facing translators, New Testament scholars, and those working on textual issues.[4] Both of these studies are descriptive in their approach and offer general surveys of the importance of these issues for Latter-day Saints. Those studies, when combined with the wealth of high-quality general studies on the topic, provide an opportunity to move the conversation forward in at least one important way, by discussing the implications of the practice for Latter-day Saint sacred scripture. Therefore, this study will first briefly describe the relevant issues that shape the conversation and then offer a focused discussion regarding why New Testament textual criticism should be an essential consideration for Latter-day Saints.

Textual Criticism, Text Families, Unique Readings

The assumption that a translation of the New Testament exists as an authoritative and accurate rendering of what Jesus and his disciples taught and did is problematic largely because our knowledge of that time period is characterized by gaps in the historical record. It is well known that the books of the New Testament were not written while Jesus was alive and that some of them were written decades after his death.[5] To further complicate matters, copies of copies of those writings exist in fragmentary form beginning first in the mid to late second century, and then in complete form for most books only in the fourth century. That is not to say that an accurate text of the New Testament is hopelessly lost, or even that the text is so questionable as to be unreliable, but rather that there are significant gaps in our knowledge of how the text was copied and transmitted.

The text of the New Testament is witnessed by approximately 135 papyrus fragments of mostly individual New Testament books ranging in size from a small postage stamp–sized fragment to larger fragments that span over seventy-five pages.[6] These copies are described by their writing material, papyrus, and they are generally the earliest copies that survive. Beginning in the late fourth and early fifth century, a number of complete or nearly complete manuscripts, known today as codices, survived that contain the New Testament. The most important are Codices Sinaiticus (fourth century), Alexandrinus (fifth century), Vaticanus (fourth century), and Ephraemi Rescriptus (fourth century). These texts—the papyri and the four great codices—form the basis of nearly all text-critical discussions. When these manuscripts align in the way they preserve the text, it is exceptionally difficult to argue that they do not contain the most reliable text of the New Testament that can be recovered through modern tools of study.

A major challenge in the process of determining the most accurate version of the text is the realization that even within this framework of reliable manuscripts, there is evidence that each individual case has to be weighed on its own merits. A simple example illustrates this issue. In Matthew 27, Pilate presented two men to the crowd with the intent that the crowd could choose to release one prisoner and at the same time condemn the other. The name of the second individual is Jesus Barabbas according to some manuscripts, whereas others report his name simply as Barabbas. The textual critic must weigh the quality of the different manuscripts, assess whether one version is perhaps more original, and then offer a suggestion as to which version of the name should be included in translations. In other words, a modern translation of the Bible cannot simply translate Codex Sinaiticus, for example, as though it preserved the most original text of the New Testament. The reason for this is that even Codex Sinaiticus has its limitations and textual ambiguities, and it also contains a number of books that never made it into the official canon of the Church. The weighing of differences in the sources introduces the opportunity for human judgment and reasoning to make the final determination. Most scholars today advocate for this type of approach, and it is what Griffin and Judd argued for in promoting "reasoned eclecticism," the term used by scholars to designate the method of determining the most reliable text that relies on each individual situation to consider the quality of the texts that preserve it, the history of the passage, and other historical factors.

In a general sense, this is a reasonable way forward for arriving at a point where the reader can be relatively confident that the most reliable text has been recovered to the extent possible. There will always be limitations in this methodology, but often they do not radically change the way the message of the New Testament authors is understood in the cases where ambiguity remains. For example, in Matthew 8:28 it will probably always remain unclear whether Jesus went to the Gadarenes or the Gergesenes because there are so many different spellings of the village and so much confusion in the Greek manuscripts regarding the village in question, but apart from historical and archaeological interest, the difference has almost no significance for the meaning of this passage.[7] However, as will be discussed later, the pursuit of the most reliable text of the New Testament presents the Latter-day Saint reader with unique challenges and hurdles.

Some of the Most Significant Textual Problems

Perhaps the most important examples of textual dispute in the New Testament, where the text is in serious question because the Greek manuscripts preserve differences of wording between them and the interpretation is markedly affected, are worthy of brief consideration. Several of these passages are either removed from the text entirely in modern translations, like the New International Version (NIV) or New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), or are placed in double brackets "[[…]]" to indicate that they are included in the translation only with hesitation. On the basis of the surviving textual tradition, some of these are no longer considered serious points of debate because the tools of textual criticism can offer compelling solutions. Others remain more difficult to decide because the manuscript evidence is more ambiguous.

In no particular order, the following are some of the most significant textual variation units or passages. At the end of Matthew 27:49, a number of early and important manuscripts add the sentence "And another [soldier] took a spear and pierced him in the side, and water and blood flowed out." Typically, a textual critic would look at the various manuscripts that contain this extra passage, consider their dates, determine if the reading is also present in the papyri, and then offer a judgment concerning its authenticity. But considering only the quality of the manuscripts that preserve this reading—several of the most reliable manuscripts preserve it (Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, and others)—would warrant its inclusion into the text, and the manuscripts that omit it are certainly inferior (Alexandrinus, Bezae, Freer, and others). This example demonstrates how the quality of texts alone cannot be the sole consideration in some situations. In this example, the fact that the additional verse is nearly a verbatim quotation from John 19:34 likely indicates that scribes attempted to harmonize Matthew's account to John's, and therefore the additional verse is considered secondary.

John 5:3–4 contains what is almost certainly a scribal addition to the story of the man who was healed at the pool of Bethesda. According to the King James translation, the familiar text reads, "In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had." There is almost no doubt today that the words included in parentheses are spurious, and they are preserved only in very late and less reliable Greek manuscripts. Their weak textual support is a strong indicator that they are not original to John 5.[8] This is particularly obvious when the better manuscripts that omit this passage are compared to the weaker ones that include it. The addition to the text was probably introduced by a well-meaning scribe who wanted to supply a reason why the sick and ill would lie around the pool of Bethesda waiting to be healed.

One of the more complicated instances of textual variation is the story of the woman taken in adultery, or the *Pericope adulterae*. In its current form and position, the story is preserved in the majority of modern translations in John 7:53–8:11, but it is either placed in brackets or in notes. This text is familiar to Latter-day Saint readers because it is preserved in the King James translation. Most Greek manuscripts of the New Testament do not preserve this passage, and the quality of manuscripts that do not contain it is almost overwhelming. The passage has only moderately good textual support in a single manuscript of the Western tradition in Codex Bezae. All other important witnesses omit the story entirely or place the passage in another position such as after Luke 21:38, before John 7:37, or after John 21:25.[9] With this story, however, a number of scholars have argued that it may potentially preserve an account from the life of Jesus, although not recorded originally in John 7:53.[10] In this example, the textual evidence is insufficient to make a decision based solely on texts, primarily because some early Christian authors appear to have known a version of this story that may have been slightly different from the one recorded in John. Thus, the suggestion is that while it was not recorded in the Gospels, other Christians knew it was a story that could be traced back to the life of Jesus.

According to a significant number of manuscripts, the Gospel of Mark ended without reporting the different visits to the tomb or the appearance of the resurrected Lord, thus ending in what appears to be mid-story. The ending of Mark may be one of the most difficult textual problems because so much is at stake with the ending. Specifically, Mark may have ended his account without telling any of the resurrection experiences told in the other Gospels. At least two potentially original endings have emerged, known simply as the shorter and longer endings of Mark. To confuse matters, the shorter ending is often included with the longer ending.[11] The shorter ending states tersely, "They reported to those around Peter what they had been commanded to report. After these things, Jesus himself sent from the east to the west through them the holy and imperishable preaching of eternal salvation. Amen."[12] Although the two most respected manuscripts end following Mark 16:8 (Codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus), the longer ending—the version translated in the King James Version—has moderately good support. The arguments for and against the longer or shorter endings can become quite technical, and the modern arguments seem to have evolved along the lines of whether a book could end mid-sentence or whether the story of Jesus's resurrection was first reported with such an abbreviated ending.[13] Ultimately, the solution will not be reached without further evidence, but the text-critical discussion shows a willingness to be flexible when the manuscript evidence indicates one solution and scholars have pushed back against it with the hope of recovering the validity of the longer ending of Mark.[14]

A rather simple text-critical question arises with the potential forgery of a verse that was inserted into the text of the New Testament with a specific interest in promoting a distinct doctrinal position. In 1 John 5:7–8, only a few extremely late Greek manuscripts contain the words, "[7] in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. [8] And there are three that bear witness in earth." The textual evidence against these words is almost overwhelming, with only a late fourteenth-century Greek manuscript as the primary piece of evidence to support it.[15] Interestingly, these forged words found their way into the King James translation and have thereby become well known despite the fact that they were clearly forged.

One text-critical issue that has developed into a rather heated discussion at times is the story of Gethsemane as told in Luke 22:43–44. According to the King James translation, the verses in question report, "[43] And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. [44] And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Many scholars have seen these two verses as questionable, both because there is good manuscript evidence against them and because they appear to have a clear doctrinal interest, and therefore they may have been added to the New Testament by someone who wished to shape the meaning of the story.[16] The major manuscript evidence in support of these verses is generally later, although the verses are contained in one early uncial manuscript (0171), and most notably they were included in Codex Sinaiticus and then removed by a later scribe.[17] From a text-critical standpoint, this would amount to only marginally good textual support.

There are literally hundreds of text-critical issues in the New Testament, and this brief discussion of them has admittedly been subjective. Some less noteworthy examples are the question of whether Jesus was moved with compassion or anger in Mark 1:41. The manuscript evidence supports the idea that he felt compassion, but scholars have questioned whether believers would have been embarrassed by the possibility that Jesus felt anger. Luke 23:34 reports the saying "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," a reading that has some questionable support, and in fact the texts that omit these words are typically much more reliable than the ones that preserve it. Finally, John 1:18 refers to Jesus as the "only begotten Son" or, according to other manuscripts, the "only begotten God" or "the only begotten. God." The textual traditions for the two readings are nearly equal in reliability, and therefore it is difficult to resolve.[18] Many more examples could be cited and discussed, but the purpose of this discussion has been to demonstrate that the tools of textual criticism can in certain instances make a reasonable argument for the most reliable text of the New Testament while at other times, they can only arrive at general propositions for the restoration or recovery of the original text.

The Lord's Prayer—A Test Case

For Latter-day Saints, a second and third form of the New Testament text exist in some instances—the Book of Mormon and the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible.[19] Although these sources are limited in what they quote from the New Testament, the quotations that are contained in them nevertheless present some challenges for the Latter-day Saint textual critic.[20] Looking at any point of intersection between these texts raises important questions about the ways that Latter-day Saints view the reliability of the New Testament text and the authenticity of the Book of Mormon text. This vantage point in turn raises important questions about the Joseph Smith Translation and how it is used in interpreting the Bible and recovering the most original text of the New Testament.

Perhaps the most difficult text-critical challenge with respect to these three texts is found in the Lord's Prayer as recorded in Matthew 6:9–13, 3 Nephi 12:9–13, and the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 6:9–13. In particular, there is a significant textual variant in Matthew 6:13 that is easily resolved on text-critical grounds alone, but not as easily when Restoration scriptural texts are considered. The passage in question, using the language of the King James translation, reads, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen" (Matthew 6:13). For the text critic working independently of the Book of Mormon, the texts that omit this portion of Matthew 6:13 are impressive both in their reliability and range, and apart from the Greek manuscripts, the phrase is also omitted in Latin manuscripts and some of the Coptic versions.[21] This evidence would be considered overwhelming by most text critics of the New Testament. The phrase is included in a number of later manuscripts that are typically viewed as less reliable because of their later dating.[22] Most modern translations do not print the phrase in the text because the issue seems easily resolved, and scholars typically assume that the phrase was added to the Lord's Prayer when the passage began to be read in worship services.[23] It was added as a formal ending to the prayer where the Lord is praised emphatically, and the congregants and cantor could share in praising God.

The Book of Mormon, however, preserves the phrase exactly as it is used in the King James translation. The phrase is altered slightly in the Joseph Smith Translation, where the Prophet added an additional "and ever" to the end: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen." In light of these findings, the question then becomes whether the Book of Mormon should be used to establish the original text of the New Testament, or whether it should be viewed as secondary or independent to the New Testament. In another way of looking at the question, the issue is whether the Joseph Smith Translation and the Book of Mormon should be used in a New Testament text-critical discussion at all. One of the challenges in connecting these discussions is that the authenticity of the Book of Mormon text and the Joseph Smith Translation becomes connected to the transmission of the Greek New Testament. In the example under consideration, the passage from Matthew 6:13 is not defensible on historical grounds as belonging to the most original text of the New Testament, and Latter-day Saint textual critics would then be forced to argue for an indefensible position in order to preserve the concept of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon passage.

Initially, it may seem simple enough to propose that the Book of Mormon preserves a second historical event where the prayer was repeated in a new setting with different wording and potentially new meaning. That would be possible, theoretically, although such a solution would create difficulties in explaining how a late Byzantine (fourth to fifteenth centuries AD) passage from a Greek text made its way into the Book of Mormon historical setting. Strangely, in this situation the Book of Mormon would be the first text to record the reading, and then one would have to suppose that Byzantine copyists came up with the exact same reading several hundred years later. Looking closer at the issue, the Book of Mormon also offers several other variations from the King James Version, with the omission of "Thy kingdom come" in Matthew 6:10 and "Give us this day our daily bread" in 6:11. The Joseph Smith Translation further complicates the matter by introducing nineteen changes to the King James translation.

A couple of important features emerge from the comparison, ones that can perhaps guide the Latter-day Saint conversation on the matter. First, when compared side by side, the Joseph Smith Translation, in this example, appears to be a commentary rather than a textual revision.

Matthew 6 (KJV)	Matthew 6 (JST)
9 Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.	9 Our Father **who** art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.	10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done **on** earth, as it is **done** in heaven.
11 Give us this day our daily bread.	11 Give us this day our daily bread.
12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.	12 And forgive us our **trespasses**, as we forgive **them who trespass against us**.
13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.	13 And **suffer** us not **to be led** into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever **and ever**. Amen.

In the above example, the bolded text isolates the meaningful differences between the two texts. The most substantial changes are the shift from "debts" to "trespasses" and the change in verb form from "lead us not into temptation" to "suffer us not to be led into temptation." Matthew's wording regarding "debts" is universally agreed upon by all Greek manuscripts, and seems to convey the idea that believers should acknowledge their indebtedness to others and through that recognition forgive others with the hope that they too will be forgiven. The Joseph Smith Translation text is closer to the wording of Luke 11:2, which speaks of sin instead of debts, but the shift from debts to trespasses in Matthew is an obvious interpretation of the meaning based on a text-critical approach to the passage. The other major difference centers on the issue of whether God would lead a person into temptation, which the Joseph Smith Translation changes so that God holds the power to permit a person to be led into temptation by someone else, but God is not directly responsible for leading a person into temptation.[24] Such a change again appears to represent an interpretive interest.

A different picture emerges when the same comparison is made between the Book of Mormon and the King James text.

3 Nephi 13	Matthew 6 (KJV)
9 Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.	9 Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
10 Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.	10 **Thy kingdom come.** Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
	11 **Give us this day our daily bread.**
11 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.	12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
12 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.	13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.
13 For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.	

A different set of questions arises from this comparison, particularly the issue of why the Book of Mormon text omits "Give us this day our daily bread" and the invocation "thy kingdom come." Given the differences between the two texts, one would have to imagine a historical setting where the Book of Mormon audience would not need to pray for daily food and also would not be encouraged to pray for the coming of the kingdom of God. Such a pursuit could imagine two distinctly different settings and historical situations, but the overarching question of recovering the most reliable text of the Greek New Testament, the question that this study has engaged, would still remain unanswered.

Moving Forward

As has hopefully been demonstrated, Latter-day Saints face unique challenges when confronting text-critical problems when Restoration scripture also provides a comparative passage of scripture. Joseph Smith and subsequent leaders have not provided guidance on this issue that would clarify how such questions are to be answered, and yet those very questions have become the focus of critics of the Book of Mormon.[25] Also, it has hopefully been demonstrated that the tools of textual criticism are often sufficient to handle the challenge of dealing with the recovery of the most reliable text of the Greek New Testament. But those same tools are not sufficient to handle the question of when there are Greek manuscripts and modern scriptural texts that exist only in translation. In other words, text-critical tools were not designed to handle questions about similarities between the Greek New Testament, the Book of Mormon, and the Joseph Smith Translation. If textual criticism is the only tool that can be brought to this discussion, then the Book of Mormon text will continually appear anachronistic as a historical document because its original text cannot be compared against the Greek New Testament productively. One simple reason for this is that the original text of the Book of Mormon could potentially be translated in dramatically different ways using modern scholarly tools and approaches. Additionally, prophetic inspiration exists between the original Book of Mormon text and its English translation, and the fact will always remain that the language of inspiration had significant overlaps with the language of the King James translation because that was the religious language of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Instead of looking at these questions text critically, it will be helpful for Latter-day Saint scholars to maintain a continued interest in the issue of the recovery of the most reliable text of the New Testament using the traditional tools of text criticism, while also developing a nuanced approach to the way the Book of Mormon engages ancient texts, both the Old and New Testament. There is little doubt that the Book of Mormon frequently draws on the language of the New Testament, sometimes quoting its language verbatim (compare Mosiah 16:10 to 1 Corinthians 15:53), but to see this as an issue that raises questions either about the authenticity of the Book of Mormon or about the most reliable text of the Greek New Testament is to overlook what it means to translate a text through inspiration. Without sidetracking this discussion into the question of whether the Book of Mormon translation was done word for word or whether concepts and phrases were given to Joseph Smith, who then rendered them using his own language, this study will engage the question of how Book of Mormon quotations of the New Testament should not force Latter-day Saint scholars to argue for a revision of biblical texts when the Book of Mormon contains alternative readings.[26]

In his dissertation, Latter-day Saint scholar Nicholas Frederick tackled this question, arguing that Joseph Smith cited the opening verses of the Gospel of John throughout the translation of the Book of Mormon in new and creative ways.[27] Joseph's engagement with the Bible was both interpretive and thoughtful, suggesting that the Book of Mormon, in part, expresses the intellectual collision of biblical texts that already existed in Joseph Smith's mind through his cultural upbringing, and that those texts were revised through a process that can be described as inspiration. Joseph saw new ideas emerging from old texts, and it seems he did not limit his interests to texts that had been written by the time Lehi and his family departed to the New World. Instead, scripture was part of Joseph Smith's vocabulary, and it became part of the Nephite vocabulary through his translation of their ancient texts.

Although the suggestion that Joseph Smith creatively adapted texts may cause some consternation among Latter-day Saint exegetes, the reality of the matter is that without advocating for the creative and inspirational use of biblical texts, the Book of Mormon will appear anachronistic in several instances. One could also argue that the language of the King James translation is the language that God revealed to Joseph. The solution to that problem is beyond recovery because the original text of the Book of Mormon is not present for examination. Two important solutions arise from the approach advocated in this study. First, Latter-day Saint scholars are free to engage questions of the most reliable text of the Bible, and to suggest that the most reliable text of the Bible may depart from what is quoted in the Book of Mormon. This is the situation that exists with the Lord's Prayer. The most original form of the prayer in Matthew is easily recoverable on the basis of text-critical considerations, and the Book of Mormon is different from that text. Second, the Book of Mormon can be interpreted to be in conversation with the Bible, where the language of a modern translation conveys the extent of that conversation.

Returning to the Lord's Prayer in the Book of Mormon and the Joseph Smith Translation, the Book of Mormon version lacks the request for the coming of the kingdom of God. It also lacks the request for daily bread. Unlike the New Testament version of the prayer, the Book of Mormon experience follows a period of extreme wickedness (see 3 Nephi 8–9), so much so that many people were destroyed before the visit of Jesus Christ. In direct contrast to the setting in Matthew, where disciples had shown interest in Jesus and his teachings, the Book of Mormon setting is one of rebuke, followed by the preservation of a righteous remnant. In that light, the reading of the Lord's Prayer may indicate that the Book of Mormon people were either too wicked to ask for such things, and instead their most important request was for forgiveness, or that the kingdom had already come to them, in which case they no longer needed to ask for it. Perhaps in anticipation of feeding the Nephites until they were full (3 Nephi 18:4), Jesus did not teach them to pray for food, since he would later that day visually demonstrate a miraculous feeding.

Conclusion

It is hoped that this study has demonstrated two important ideas regarding the text of the New Testament. First, the most recoverable text of the Greek New Testament is an attainable goal, one that can be used productively in many instances to produce a sound and reliable text that can inform modern translations of the Bible. A corollary of this discussion is that the translation of the New Testament as presented in the King James Bible is not without its limitations. This study presented some of the most challenging instances of textual variation, but there are hundreds of additional examples. That is not to say that the King James Version is too flawed to convey the word of God, only that in certain cases where there are known text-critical issues it should be used with caution. Second, this study has attempted to engage the thorny question of how Latter-day Saint scholars of the Bible can engage the challenge of recovering the most reliable text of the New Testament when the Book of Mormon or other Restoration scripture also quotes those same biblical passages.

The use of the Bible in the Book of Mormon is a topic that has only recently been engaged openly, and this study has suggested that the Book of Mormon uses the Bible creatively and through inspiration. Those approaches do not provide sufficient grounds for Latter-day Saint exegetes to revise their quest to establish the most reliable text of the New Testament. Instead, recovering the most reliable text of the New Testament can in turn help determine the source texts that were used in the creation of Book of Mormon narratives, and subsequently help identify places where inspiration shaped and expanded passages adopted from the Bible.

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Further Reading

Frederick, Nick. "What Has Moroni to Do with John?" *Religious Educator* 14, no. 3 (2013): 93–109.

Griffin, Carl W., and Frank F. Judd Jr. "Principles of New Testament Textual Criticism." In *How the New Testament Came to Be*, edited by Kent P. Jackson and Frank F. Judd Jr., 78–92. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006.

Holmes, Michael W. "Reasoned Eclecticism in New Testament Textual Criticism." In *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, edited by Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes, 336–60. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.

Metzger, Bruce, and Bart Ehrman. *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Vaganay, Léon, and Christian-Bernard Amphoux. *An Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*. Translated by Jenny Heimerdinger. 2nd ed. London: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Notes

1. Compare Eldon J. Epp, "It's All about the Variants: A Variant-Conscious Approach to New Testament Textual Criticism," *Harvard Theological Review* 100 (2007): 275–308.

2. The process for the Old Testament is inherently different and will not be discussed in this study.
3. Carl W. Griffin and Frank F. Judd Jr., "Principles of New Testament Textual Criticism" in *How the New Testament Came to Be*, ed. Kent P. Jackson and Frank F. Judd Jr. (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006), 78–92.
4. Carol F. Ellertson, "New Testament Manuscripts, Textual Families, and Variants" in Jackson and Judd, *How the New Testament Came to Be*, 93–108.
5. President Hinckley noted the same phenomenon in general conference. See Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Great Things Which God Has Revealed," *Ensign*, April 2005, 82.
6. The longest New Testament papyrus is the Bodmer papyrus (P^{46}), and it contains portions of Romans, 1–2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, and Hebrews. It dates to the beginning of the second century AD.
7. Mark 5:1 calls them Gerasenes, although some texts for Mark call them Gadarenes (Alexandrinus), Gergystenes (Freer), and Gergesenes (Sinaiticus); Luke 8:26 calls them Gerasenes, although other texts of Luke call them Gergsenes (Sinaiticus) and Gadarenes (Alexandrinus and Freer).
8. Blumell carefully describes how such spurious verses came to be included in the King James translation. See Lincoln H. Blumell, "The Text of the New Testament," in *The King James Bible and the Restoration*, ed. Kent P. Jackson (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2011), 61–74.
9. Two papyri, 66 and 75, plus Sinaiticus and Vaticanus.
10. See Daniel B. Wallace, "Reconsidering 'The Story of the Woman Taken in Adultery Reconsidered,'" *New Testament Studies* 39 (1993): 290–96; Bart D. Ehrman, "Jesus and the Adulteress," *New Testament Studies* 34 (1988): 24–44; and Thomas A. Wayment, "The Woman Taken in Adultery and the History of the New Testament Canon," in *The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ: From the Transfiguration through the Triumphal Entry* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006), 372–97.
11. Although both endings are included in some manuscripts, the ones that do so are very late and are considered to be too late to potentially convey the most original recoverable text.
12. Translation from the New English Translation.
13. Thomas A. Wayment, "The Endings of Mark and Revelation," in Jackson, *The King James Bible and the Restoration*, 75–94. M. Clayton Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), 137–63, contends that the abbreviation of the Gospel of Mark may have occurred because the last page of the codex containing it was lost. See P. W. van der Horst, "Can a Book End with a Gar? A Note on Mark XVI:8," *Journal of Theological Studies* 23 (1972): 121–24; and K. R. Iverson, "A Further Word on Final Gar (Mark 16:8)," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68 (2005): 79–94.
14. Some scholars have connected the discussion of the endings of the Gospel of Mark with the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. Connecting the two discussions is problematic for many reasons, first because the issue of the ending cannot be solved convincingly for a broad audience, and second because the authenticity of the Book of Mormon exists independently of the Greek text. Parallels in language between the two more than likely represent the Prophet's religious vocabulary that came through in the translation process.
15. Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 2000), 647–49.
16. The classic study on this passage is in B. D. Ehrman and M. A. Plunkett, "The Angel and the Agony: The Textual Problem of Luke 22:43–44," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 45 (1983): 401–16.
17. Interestingly, Lincoln H. Blumell has argued that believing Christians removed the verses out of embarrassment for what the verses said about Jesus's humanity; see "Luke 22:43–44: An Anti-Docetic Interpolation or an Apologetic Omission?," *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism* 19 (2014): 1–35. See also Thomas A. Wayment, "A New Transcription of POxy 2383 (P69)," *Novum Testamentum* 50 (2008): 351–57. See also Pasquale Orsini and Willy Clarysse, "Early New Testament Manuscripts and Their Dates: A Critique of Theological Palaeography," *Ephemerides Theolgoicae Lovanianses* 88 (2012): 466.

18. Paul R. McReynolds, "John 1:18 in Textual Variation and Translation," in *New Testament Textual Criticism: Its Significance for Exegesis: Essays in Honor of Bruce M. Metzger*, ed. Eldon Epp and Gordon Fee (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), 105–7.
19. The Doctrine and Covenants should not be overlooked as a source for quotation of the New Testament and what that might mean for the recovery of the original text of the New Testament.
20. The question of whether the Book of Mormon quotes from the New Testament can be a challenging issue for the historicity of the Book of Mormon. However, the Book of Mormon clearly uses a form of the Sermon on the Mount (see Matthew 5–7 and 3 Nephi 12–14) that is almost identical to the King James translation of those chapters in Matthew.
21. The most important manuscripts to support this reading are Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus.
22. The most impressive of the manuscripts to include the passage is Codex Washingtonianus (fifth century AD).
23. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 13–14.
24. Greek scribes were not bothered by the insinuation of God leading a person into temptation, because the Greek word used here means both *temptation* and *trial*. Thus, for the Greek reader, God was leading a person into trial and not temptation by the devil.
25. For example, see Wesley P. Walters, *The Use of the Old Testament in the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1990).
26. For a discussion of the various translation methods used by Joseph Smith, see Richard S. Van Wagoner and Steven C. Walker, "Joseph Smith: The Gift of Seeing," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15 (1982): 46–68; and more recently Gerrit J. Dirkmaat and Michael Hubbard MacKay, *From Darkness unto Light: Joseph Smith's Translation and Publication of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2015). Brant Gardner offers a historical overview of the question of literal and equivalent translation practice in Brant A. Gardner, *The Gift and Power: Translating the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2011).
27. Nicholas Frederick, *The Bible, Mormon Scripture, and the Rhetoric of Allusivity* (New Jersey: Farleigh Dickenson University Press, 2016).