



Robert T. Barrett, *Joseph Translating the Bible*. Courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

Joseph understood scripture to be somewhat fluid in that additional revelation could revise, update, or correct previous understanding and that any version of the written word was not necessarily the final word.

## *An Analysis of the Joseph Smith Translation of 1 Corinthians 15:40*

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The Joseph Smith Translation (JST) of 1 Corinthians 15:40 is significant for the Latter-day Saint (LDS) community because the King James Version (KJV) is closely associated with the LDS doctrine of three degrees of glory in the Resurrection. Of particular interest is that JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 adds two phrases to the KJV,<sup>1</sup> in bold below:

### **KJV 1 Corinthians 15:40**

*There are* also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial *is* one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial *is* another.

### **JST 1 Corinthians 15:40**

Also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial, **and bodies telestial**; but the glory of the celestial, one; and the terrestrial, another; **and the telestial, another.**

The following question naturally arises: What is the relationship of the JST additions to the biblical text? It has been generally recognized that the

JST may represent various kinds of changes, categorized as (1) “Restoration of original text,” (2) “Restoration of what was once said or done but which was never in the Bible,” (3) “Editing to make the Bible more understandable for modern readers,” (4) “Editing to bring biblical wording into harmony with truth found in other revelations or elsewhere in the Bible,” and (5) “Changes to provide modern readers teachings that were not written by original authors.”<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, a comprehensive analysis of JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 to determine which of these categories it falls into is lacking. In addition, a standard methodology to conduct analyses for individual JST passages has not been established. Therefore, our purpose is twofold: (1) utilize a balanced approach to analyze the relationship of JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 to the biblical text and (2) discuss potential benefits of this approach, including how it could be applied to other JST texts. To accomplish this, we will first introduce our methodology, then apply it to conduct an in-depth analysis of JST 1 Corinthians 15:40, and finally return to discuss potential benefits of our approach.

### A Balanced Approach

Over a number of years, we have observed LDS leaders and teachers take different approaches to Joseph Smith’s translation of the Bible.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes we have seen a focus on the biblical text, with less reference to the JST, and at other times we have seen an emphasis on the JST, with less attention to the biblical text. In contrast, we suggest that a balanced approach, which includes an in-depth understanding of both the biblical and JST texts, is a better option. This is because ignorance of either perspective may lead to incorrect conclusions<sup>4</sup> and because a superficial knowledge of the biblical or JST texts might limit our appreciation of what the JST offers to modern readers.

What does a balanced approach to JST texts look like? By this we mean separating the analysis into two parts—first examining the biblical text without modern revelation and then investigating the JST text with modern revelation. The reason for this methodology is that a thorough evaluation of the biblical text provides the best foundation for fully understanding the JST. We see JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 as a useful case study for this kind of approach because it raises important issues of biblical language, textual variants, and literary structure that can be compared to modern revelations and Joseph Smith’s teachings.

To analyze the relationship of JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 to the biblical text, we will focus on whether the JST represents a restoration of original text or a modern revelatory change by Joseph Smith. By restoration of original text we mean that the JST is an English version of the author’s original text, and by modern revelatory change we mean creating a different text than what was original, including if the information represents what happened or was known anciently but did not exist as part of the author’s original text. Focusing our analysis in this way will provide the basis for our conclusions about the nature of the relationship of the JST to the biblical text and for discussing the potential benefits of our approach.

### Biblical Text without Modern Revelation

First Corinthians contains Paul’s written responses to several issues raised by the church at Corinth (see 1 Corinthians 5:1; 7:1). More specifically, chapter 15 addresses a major problem that had developed among some in the Corinthian congregation—denial of the Resurrection. Paul begins his response by reminding the Corinthian Saints of the gospel he preached and they believed: that Christ died for our sins, was buried, rose again the third day, and was seen by many witnesses (vv. 1–11). Then he asks, “Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?” (v. 12). Paul counters this false idea by declaring the reality of the Resurrection of Christ and all mankind (vv. 13–34) and then turns to an actual or anticipated objection of his audience. “But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” (v. 35). The rest of the chapter is Paul’s answer to these questions, wherein he explains the nature of the resurrected body (vv. 36–57), including our specific passage of interest (v. 40).

Numerous commentators have examined 1 Corinthians 15,<sup>5</sup> and several topics elucidated by these efforts are important here: Greek wording, textual analysis, use of rhetorical contrasts, chiasmic literary structure, and creation context.

### Greek Wording

As we will explore the idea of celestial, terrestrial, and (JST) telestial “bodies,” the use of the Greek word *sōma*, meaning “body,” is noteworthy.<sup>6</sup> While the word *sōma* is used primarily to indicate human or animal bodies, Paul also employs it in comparing plant bodies to seeds and in reference to astronomical

bodies.<sup>7</sup> Paul uses this word to make analogies to the resurrected human *sōma* to answer the question of what type of body rises in the Resurrection.

Other important Greek words are those translated “celestial” and “terrestrial” in the KJV. In Greek these are *epouranios* and *epigeios*, meaning “heavenly” and “earthly,”<sup>8</sup> which are the words typically used in modern translations. In fact, the KJV renders *epouranios* and *epigeios* as “heavenly” and “earthly” (or similar) in all other New Testament occurrences,<sup>9</sup> but the one place they are translated as “celestial” and “terrestrial” is in 1 Corinthians 15:40. The English “celestial” comes from the Latin *caelesti(s)*, which means “heavenly” (as a derivative of *caelum*, meaning “heaven, sky”),<sup>10</sup> and the English “terrestrial” comes from the Latin *terrestri(s)* which means “pertaining to earth” (as a derivative of *terra*, meaning “earth”).<sup>11</sup> When these meanings are properly understood, “celestial” and “terrestrial” provide an accurate translation of the Greek *epouranios* and *epigeios*.

### Textual Analysis

There are no known textual issues with the Greek of 1 Corinthians 15:40. In one Greek textual commentary, there are ninety-four entries for textual variants in 1 Corinthians, and of these, ten are in 1 Corinthians 15, but none of them involves or calls into question verse 40.<sup>12</sup> However, nearby there is evidence of intentional changes. In 1 Corinthians 15:47 the KJV reads, “The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.” The two words “the Lord” are found in some manuscripts but absent in others. As Collins notes, “According to the general principles of textual criticism the reading is to be preferred that best explains the origin of all others.”<sup>13</sup> Hence Metzger identifies “the Lord” as a “gloss added to explain the nature of ‘the man from heaven’”<sup>14</sup> and that the preferred reading is without it. Another nearby textual variant is 1 Corinthians 15:51, where the KJV reads, “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.” Per Fee, “This text has suffered considerable corruption in transmission. There are five basic text forms.”<sup>15</sup> The five texts vary by the existence or absence of “not” before “all sleep” and “all be changed,” ascribing quite different meanings to the text. Metzger has suggested that because “Paul and his correspondents had died, the statement . . . seemed to call for correction. The simplest alteration was to transfer the negative to the following clause.”<sup>16</sup> These examples of textual variants in the Greek provide evidence of intentional changes to Paul’s original text, both addition and correction. However, there is no evidence of tampering with

1 Corinthians 15:40. If alterations were made to verse 40, they would have been very early, such that no extant manuscripts hint of them.

### Rhetorical Contrasts

Paul’s explanation of the resurrected body is an extended argument using rhetorical contrasts.<sup>17</sup> The multiple contrasts he uses in 1 Corinthians 15:36–54 illustrate both the resurrected body’s continuity with, and dissimilarity from, the mortal body. Paul’s logic develops and maintains this distinction, which can be seen by grouping the contrasts as follows:

- Seed versus Plant (vv. 36–38): One does not sow a plant to get a plant, but a seed that must die to come forth as a plant. Each kind of seed gives a certain kind of plant “body,” and while the two are inseparably linked, they are clearly different from each other.<sup>18</sup>
- Earthly versus Heavenly (vv. 39–41): Earthly bodies and heavenly bodies have different kinds of glory or splendor. In addition, earthly bodies consist of different kinds of flesh (humans, animals, birds, fish), while heavenly bodies exhibit different kinds of luminosity (sun, moon, stars).
- Natural versus Spiritual (vv. 42–44): A natural, perishable body is laid in the ground while a spiritual, imperishable body is raised by resurrection. The natural body is sown in dishonor and weakness, while the spiritual body comes forth in glory and power.
- First Adam versus Last Adam (vv. 45–49): The first Adam was of the earth, while the last Adam is of heaven. Those who are of Adam bear his likeness, and those who are of Christ will bear his likeness.
- Current versus Changed (vv. 50–54). Humankind’s current body of flesh and blood is not suitable to inherit the kingdom of God at Christ’s coming. Humans must be changed from perishable and mortal to imperishable and immortal. Then death will be swallowed up in victory.

The biblical text, laid out according to the above groups of contrasts, is shown in table 1. While there are other aspects of the text, including various subunits with different emphases,<sup>19</sup> this arrangement highlights the pervasive number of contrasts in verses 36–54.



**Table 1: Contrasts in 1 Corinthians 15:36–54 (New International Version)<sup>a</sup>**

Seed versus Plant	Seed	Plant
“How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies” (v. 36) <sup>b</sup>	“When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just the seed, perhaps of wheat or something else” (v. 37)	“But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body” (v. 38)
Earthly versus Heavenly	Earthly	Heavenly
“There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another” (v. 40)	“Not all flesh is the same: People have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another” (v. 39)	“The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor” (v. 41)
Natural versus Spiritual	Natural	Spiritual
“So will it be with the resurrection of the dead” (v. 42a)	“The body that is sown is perishable” (v. 42b) “it is sown in dishonor” (v. 43a)	“it is raised imperishable” (v. 42c) “it is raised in glory” (v. 43b)
“If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body” (v. 44c, d)	“it is sown in weakness” (v. 43c) “it is sown a natural body” (v. 44a)	“it is raised in power” (v. 43d) “it is raised a spiritual body” (v. 44b)
First Adam versus Last Adam	First Adam	Last Adam
“So it is written: ‘The first man Adam became a living being’; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual” (vv. 45–46)	“The first man was of the dust of the earth” (v. 47a) “As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth” (v. 48a) “And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man” (v. 49a)	“the second man is of heaven” (v. 47b) <sup>20</sup> “and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven” (v. 48b) “so shall we bear the image of the man from heaven” (v. 49b)

Current versus Changed	Current	Changed
“I declare to you, brothers and sisters” (v. 50a)	“that flesh and blood cannot” (v. 50b) “nor does the perishable” (v. 50c)	“inherit the kingdom of God” (v. 50b) “inherit the imperishable” (v. 50c)
“We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed. . . . For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed” (vv. 51b, 52b)	“For the perishable must” (v. 53a) “and the mortal” (v. 53b) “When the perishable has” (v. 54a) “and the mortal” (v. 54b)	“clothe itself with the imperishable” (v. 53a) “with immortality” (v. 53b) “been clothed with the imperishable” (v. 54a) “with immortality” (v. 54b)
“then the saying that is written will come true” (v. 54c)	“Death” (v. 54d)	“has been swallowed up in victory” (v. 54d)

<sup>a</sup>The New International Version (NIV) is used here because it helps highlight the contrasts.

<sup>b</sup>Compare to Jesus’s prediction of his death and resurrection: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John 12:24).

*Chiastic Structure*

If we look closely at “Earthly versus Heavenly” in table 1 (vv. 39–41), the contrast seems out of order in the text. As Fee has pointed out, “The series seem to begin with ‘earthly bodies’ (v. 39), followed by ‘heavenly bodies’ (v. 41), with a twofold affirmation (v. 40) standing as the middle term that expressly ties the two together. All together they form a nearly perfect chiasm.”<sup>21</sup> This chiasmic structure, or inverted parallelism, can be seen by organizing the English text as follows:<sup>22</sup>

Verse 39	A	Not all flesh is the same; B People have one kind; Animals another; Birds another; Fish another.	[earthly bodies]
Verse 40		C There are heavenly bodies There are earthly bodies C’ The splendor of the heavenly bodies is of one kind; The splendor of the earthly bodies is of another.	[B’] [B]
Verse 41		B’ The sun has one kind of splendor; The moon another kind of splendor; The stars another kind of splendor; A’ And star differs from star in splendor.	[heavenly bodies]

Notice how well verse 40 fits within the chiasm and is the focal point of the contrast. If Paul intended this passage to be chiastic, it represents a sophisticated literary technique that contrasts earthly and heavenly bodies, and the differences within each category. “Thus the first and final sentences (A–A’) emphasize differences within kinds; the two B sentences emphasize the differences within ‘genus’ (the earthly expressed in terms of ‘flesh’; the heavenly in terms of ‘splendor’); while the two middle sentences (C–C’) simply state the realities of earthly and heavenly ‘bodies.’”<sup>23</sup> Seeing verses 39–41 as chiastic adds strength to the logic of Paul’s argument and obviates what might otherwise be difficulty with the order and progression of the biblical text.

### *Creation Context*

Another aspect of 1 Corinthians 15:36–49 appears to be Paul’s allusions to the biblical account of Creation. This seems to provide for an analogy of a new creation through Christ and the Resurrection. Importantly, the wording of verse 40 is aligned with the two major groupings found in the Creation narrative—the heavens and the earth. Per Wright:

A glance through Genesis 1–2 reveals how many of its major themes are alluded to in Paul’s present argument. The creator God made the heavens and the earth, and filled both with his creatures; Paul mentions these two categories in verse 40, and uses a discussion of them to distinguish the first Adam from the final one. . . . The creator made the lights in the heaven, which Paul mentions in verse 41. He created plants bearing fruit containing seed, so that more plants could be produced; Paul makes this a major theme in verses 36–8, and then draws on the language of sowing in verses 42–4. The creator made every kind of bird, animal and fish; Paul brings them, too, into his argument (verses 39–40). . . . This is indeed a deliberate and careful theology of new Genesis, of creation renewed.<sup>24</sup>

In addition, it has been recognized that the types of flesh Paul mentions in verse 39 are the four kinds of flesh in the Creation account. According to Fee, “The four ‘kinds’ are standard expression of ‘animal’ life (human beings, beasts, birds, fish),” which “are the four specifically mentioned, in reverse order, as being created on the fifth and sixth days of creation (Gen. 1:20, 24, 26).”<sup>25</sup> This observation is helpful because we can see how humans, beasts, birds, and fish mirror the Creation account for describing bodies on the earth (earthly bodies),<sup>26</sup> just as the sun, moon, and stars mirror the Creation account for describing bodies in the heavens (heavenly bodies). Furthermore, the earthly bodies have one kind of glory, while the heavenly bodies have a different kind of glory. Recognizing that earthly bodies do not shine like heavenly bodies,

Wright identifies the “glory” referred to here “to mean ‘honour,’ ‘reputation,’ ‘proper dignity,’”<sup>27</sup> and Fee notes this means “each is adapted to its own peculiar existence.”<sup>28</sup> Thus the comparison of earthly and heavenly bodies is aligned with the specific terms Paul is using, which echo the Creation story of Genesis.

We have completed the first part of our approach by examining the biblical text of 1 Corinthians 15:40 without referencing modern revelation. In summary, we can see that understanding the Greek wording, the use of rhetorical contrasts, the chiastic literary structure, and the Creation context helps us better appreciate Paul’s exposition of the resurrected body. Also, we recognize that textual variants in the Greek do not compromise the exegesis of 1 Corinthians 15:40. In the biblical text, it appears that Paul answers the question of what type of body rises in the Resurrection by contrasting the glory of terrestrial bodies on the earth (people, animals, birds, and fish) with the glory of celestial bodies in the sky (sun, moon, and stars). And just as there are different kinds of glorious heavenly bodies in the sky, there are different kinds of glorious human bodies in the Resurrection. The biblical text is internally consistent, and Paul’s logic is compelling and persuasive.

### **JST Text with Modern Revelation**

Having explored key aspects of the biblical text, we are in a position to analyze the Joseph Smith Translation text with modern revelation. To focus our analysis, we will consider the question previously mentioned: Does the JST represent a restoration of original text or a modern revelatory change by Joseph Smith? In other words, did Paul originally write about “bodies celestial” (JST 1 Corinthians 15:40) and glory or is this a revelatory reading by Joseph Smith? To answer this question, there are a number of topics that need to be addressed, and points may be made in favor of either possibility.

### *Joseph Smith’s Views of the Biblical Text*

On 15 October 1843, Joseph Smith is reported to have said, “I believe the bible, as it ought to be, as it came from the pen of the original writers.”<sup>29</sup> In a few cases, Joseph specifically identified what he believed a biblical author originally wrote,<sup>30</sup> but more often he did not, leaving us with questions about which Bible version(s) he thought reflected the original text (e.g., Hebrew, Greek, English, or other) and which passages he thought were unchanged since originally written. This uncertainty is amplified by instances when

Joseph used the KJV to establish doctrinal points in contrast to his own previous JST revisions. For example, KJV Hebrews 11:40 reads, “God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect,” while the JST reads, “God having provided some better things for them through their sufferings, for without sufferings they could not be made perfect.” The JST removes the idea that those who are dead need those who are alive to be made perfect. Nevertheless, on 6 September 1842, Joseph specifically quoted the KJV to make this point and attributed it to Paul: “Let me assure you that these are principles in relation to the dead and the living that cannot be lightly passed over, as pertaining to our salvation. For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, as Paul says concerning the fathers—that they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect” (D&C 128:15). This illustrates that JST changes do not automatically mean the KJV is incorrect or that the original text has been modified.<sup>31</sup>

Another consideration is that Joseph Smith accepted variant readings of the same passage, even when the KJV appears to represent the original text. For example, Joseph understood different versions of Malachi 4:5–6 to be acceptable, including both the KJV and Moroni’s version. When Moroni first appeared to seventeen-year-old Joseph on 21 September 1823, he quoted and altered Malachi 4:5–6 significantly compared to the KJV (see JS—H 1:38–39). However, a few years later, Joseph translated the Book of Mormon, which described how the resurrected Jesus commanded the Nephites to write “the words which the Father had given unto Malachi” (3 Nephi 24:1) and then quoted Malachi chapters 3 and 4, including chapter 4 verses 5–6 as they are in the KJV (see 3 Nephi 25:5–6). Moreover, in Joseph’s subsequent revelations, we find parts of these verses with variant readings (see D&C 27:9; 98:16–17), and yet when Elijah appeared to fulfill Malachi’s prophecy, he quoted the KJV (see D&C 110:14–15). With several acceptable variant readings in Joseph’s revelations, we can better appreciate why he quoted Malachi’s prophecy from the KJV but then wrote, “I might have rendered a plainer translation to this, but it is sufficiently plain to suit my purpose as it stands” (D&C 128:18). Thus, Joseph understood variant readings of Malachi 4:5–6 to be acceptable, even when the KJV appears to represent Malachi’s original text.

### *Joseph Smith’s Revelations Related to 1 Corinthians 15:40–41*

On 16 February 1832, while Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were working on the JST, they came to John 5:29, which catalyzed what became known as “the Vision.” In introducing the written account of this vision, which later became D&C 76, Joseph Smith’s history states: “From sundry revelations which had been received, it was apparent that many important points touching the Salvation of man had been taken from the Bible, or lost before it was compiled.”<sup>32</sup> It appears that Joseph saw the Vision as helping restore knowledge that was either taken or lost from the Bible, and multiple aspects of his revelatory experience connect to 1 Corinthians 15:40–41. Corresponding passages in the original inscription of the Vision and the edited version of D&C 76 are detailed in table 2.

**Table 2. Passages from the Written Account of the Vision Relating to 1 Corinthians 15:40–41**

Original Inscription (John Whitmer) <sup>a</sup>	D&C 76 (2013 Edition)
“these are th[e]y whose bodies are celestial whose glory is that of the Son even of God the highest of all which glory the Sun of the firmament is written of as being typical— And again we saw the Terrestrial world & behold & lo these are they who are of the Terrestrial whose glory differeth from that of the Church of the first born who have received of the fulness of the father even as that of the Moon differeth from the Sun of the firmament”	“These are they whose bodies are celestial, whose glory is that of the sun, even the glory of God, the highest of all, whose glory the sun of the firmament is written of as being typical. And again, we saw the terrestrial world, and behold and lo, these are they who are of the terrestrial, whose glory differs from that of the church of the Firstborn who have received the fulness of the Father, even as that of the moon differs from the sun in the firmament.” (vv. 70–71)
“wherefore they are bodies Terrestrial & not bodies Ceelestial & differeth in glory as the Moon differeth from the Sun . . .”	“Wherefore, they are bodies terrestrial, and not bodies celestial, and differ in glory as the moon differs from the sun.” (v. 78)
“& now this is the end of the vision which we saw of the Terrestrial that the Lord commanded us to write while we were yet in the Spirit” “And again we saw the glory of the Telestial whose glory is of that of the lesser even of «as» the glory of the Stars differeth from that of the Moon glory of the Moon in the firmament”	“And now this is the end of the vision which we saw of the terrestrial, that the Lord commanded us to write while we were yet in the Spirit. And again, we saw the glory of the telestial, which glory is that of the lesser, even as the glory of the stars differs from that of the glory of the moon in the firmament.” (vv. 80–81)

“these are they who receive not of his fulness in the eternal world but of the Holy Ghost through the administration of the Terrestrial & the Terrestrial through the administration of the Celestial & also the Telestial receive it of the administering of angels who are appointed to minister for them or who are appointed to be ministering Spirits for them for they Shall be heirs of salvation & thus we saw in the Heavenly vision the glory of the Telestial which surpasseth all understanding & no man knoweth it except him to whom God hath revealed it and this thus we saw the glory of the Telestial «Terrestrial» which excelleth in all things the glory of the Telestial”

“These are they who receive not of his fulness in the eternal world, but of the Holy Spirit through the ministration of the terrestrial; and the terrestrial through the ministration of the celestial. And also the telestial receive it of the administering of angels who are appointed to minister for them, or who are appointed to be ministering spirits for them; for they shall be heirs of salvation. And thus we saw, in the heavenly vision, the glory of the telestial, which surpasses all understanding; and no man knows it except him to whom God has revealed it. And thus we saw the glory of the terrestrial which excels in all things the glory of the telestial.” (vv. 86–91)

“& the glory of the Celestial is one even as the Son is one & the glory of the Terrestrial is one even as the glory of th[e] Moon is one & the glory of the Telestial is one even as the glory of the Stars is one for as one Star differeth from another star in glory even so differeth one from another from glory in the Telestial world”

“And the glory of the celestial is one, even as the glory of the sun is one. And the glory of the terrestrial is one, even as the glory of the moon is one. And the glory of the telestial is one, even as the glory of the stars is one; for as one star differs from another star in glory, even so differs one from another in glory in the telestial world.” (vv. 96–98)

“but behold & lo we Saw the glory of the Telestial world that they were in number as innumerable as the stars in the firmament of Heaven or as the sand upon the sea shore”

“But behold, and lo, we saw the glory and the inhabitants of the telestial world, that they were as innumerable as the stars in the firmament of heaven, or as the sand upon the seashore.” (v. 109)

<sup>a</sup>Vision, 16 February 1832 [D&C 76], Revelation Book 1, pp. 136–39, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revelation-book-1/124>. To see the redactions made after the original inscription by John Whitmer, consult Robin Scott Jensen, Robert J. Woodford, and Steven C. Harper, eds., *Manuscript Revelation Books*, facsimile edition, vol. 1 of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2009), 242–55.

D&C 76, which shows only minor variation from the text of the original inscription of the Vision, frequently draws upon the KJV wording of 1 Corinthians 15:40–41. However, the three types of glorious resurrected bodies—represented typologically by the sun, moon, and stars—are identified in D&C 76 as celestial, terrestrial, and telestial bodies. In addition, the worlds inherited by persons with each type of glorious resurrected body are identified as celestial, terrestrial, and telestial (see D&C 76:71, 98, 109;

also compare D&C 78:7, 14). Significantly, D&C 76 seems to be quoting 1 Corinthians 15:40–41 in verses 96–98 but alters the biblical text, including the addition of information about the telestial glory.

Outside of D&C 76, the only other place in LDS scripture where the term “telestial” occurs is D&C 88. This revelation was given less than a year after the Vision and provides insight into how the universe is organized into kingdoms. After explaining that the earth will be crowned with celestial glory so that “bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever” (v. 20), the revelation indicates that they who are not sanctified through the law of Christ “must inherit another kingdom, even that of a terrestrial kingdom, or that of a telestial kingdom” (v. 21). Those who cannot abide the laws of these kingdoms cannot abide the glory associated with them (vv. 22–23, 29–32), and it is explained that all space in the universe is divided up into kingdoms: “There are many kingdoms; for there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or a lesser kingdom” (v. 37). The implication is that D&C 76 and 88, and by extension JST 1 Corinthians 15:40, accurately describe the organization of kingdoms in the universe. We see that D&C 88 reinforces concepts found in the Vision and employs the celestial, terrestrial, and telestial terminology as found in D&C 76 and JST 1 Corinthians 15:40.

If we apply the perspective of D&C 76 to JST 1 Corinthians 15:40–41, we see a subtle but important difference in the use of “celestial” and “terrestrial” when compared to the KJV, delineated in table 3.

**Table 3: Differences between KJV and JST Use of Terms in 1 Corinthians 15:40–41**

KJV Text	JST Text
As there are different kinds of flesh among terrestrial (earthly) bodies, there are different kinds of glory among celestial (heavenly) bodies.	As there are different kinds of flesh, there are different kinds of resurrected bodies.
In the Resurrection there will be three kinds of glory of celestial (heavenly) bodies, typified by the glories of the sun, moon, and stars.	In the Resurrection there will be three kinds of glorious bodies—celestial, terrestrial, and telestial—typified by the glories of the sun, moon, and stars.
There are various gradations of glory among the stars.	There are various gradations of telestial glory as stars differ in glory from each other.



The JST of 1 Corinthians 15:40 was created after the Vision occurred<sup>33</sup> and reflects the understanding and terminology of D&C 76, but Joseph’s translation seems to use “celestial” and “terrestrial” differently than the biblical text. Was the Vision given such that Joseph Smith understood and used these terms differently than Paul? This is difficult to determine. Our answer will depend on our assumptions. On the one hand, if D&C 76 represents the way Paul used the terms, then the JST may be a restoration of Paul’s original text. On the other hand, if the biblical text is what Paul originally wrote, D&C 76 seems to be using the terms differently than Paul did and the JST may be a modern revelatory change by Joseph Smith.

*Joseph Smith’s Teachings Related to 1 Corinthians 15:40–41*

A survey of Joseph Smith’s teachings indicates that he often quoted from Paul’s letters, especially Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians.<sup>34</sup> An examination of extant accounts shows that several of his teachings relate specifically to 1 Corinthians 15:40–41.<sup>35</sup> Primary sources and edited versions of statements attributed to Joseph are provided in chronological order in table 4.

**Table 4: Statements Attributed to Joseph Smith Relating to 1 Corinthians 15:40–41**

Date	Primary Source	Edited Version
Before 8 August 1839	“When any person receives a vision of Heaven, he sees things that he never thought of before. if we should tell of glories as Paul did, in my fathers house there are Many Mansions.” <sup>a</sup>	Not applicable
1 February 1843	Not applicable	“These are they that are perfect through Jesus’ own blood, whose bodies celestial are mention’d by Paul, where the sun is the typical glory thereof. . . . But the great things of God, which he show’d unto me, unlawful to utter, I dare not declare; they surpass all the wisdom and greatness of men, and are only seen, as has Paul, where they are.” <sup>b</sup>

21 May 1843	“there is one glory of the sun another of the moon & another of the stars as one Star differeth &c. so also is the reserection of the dead. . . . There are some things in my own bosom that must remain there. If Paul could say, ‘I knew a man who ascended to the third heaven and saw things unlawful for man to utter,’ I more.” <sup>c</sup>	“Paul ascended into the third heavens, and he could understand the three principal rounds of Jacob’s ladder—the telestial, the terrestrial, and the celestial glories or kingdoms, where Paul saw and heard things which were not lawful for him to utter. I could explain a hundred fold more than I ever have of the glories of the kingdoms manifested to me in the vision, were I permitted, and were the people prepared to receive them.” <sup>d</sup>
11 June 1843	“but St Paul informs us of three glories & three heavens he knew a man caught up to the third heavens.” <sup>e</sup> “Paul says caught up to 3d heaven, & what tell that Lie for Paul.—Sun Moon & Stars.” <sup>f</sup>	“But St. Paul informs us of three glories and three heavens. He knew a man that was caught up to the third heavens. Now, if the doctrine of the sectarian world, that there is but one heaven, is true, Paul, what do you tell that lie for, and say there are three?” <sup>g</sup>
7 April 1844	“There is one glory of the moon sun & star &c.” <sup>h</sup>	“Paul says, ‘There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead’ (1 Cor. 15:41).” <sup>i</sup>
16 June 1844	“go & read the vision—there is glory & glory—Sun, moon, & Stars—& so do they differ in glory & every man who reigns is a God . . . Paul—says there is one Glory of the Sun the moon & the Stars—& as the Stars differs &c.” <sup>j</sup>	“Go and read the vision in the Book of Covenants. There is clearly illustrated glory upon glory—one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and a glory of the stars; and as one star differeth from another star in glory, even so do they of the telestial world differ in glory, and every man who reigns in celestial glory is a God to his dominions. . . . Paul says, ‘There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.’” <sup>k</sup>



<sup>a</sup>Willard Richards Pocket Companion, in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 14.

<sup>b</sup>Joseph Smith, “The Vision,” *Times and Seasons* 4, no. 6 (1 February 1843): 84. These statements come from a poetic version of D&C 76, which was written nearly eleven years after Joseph and Sidney experienced the Vision. In an analysis of authorship, Hicks has suggested that this poetic version was ghostwritten by W. W. Phelps. See Michael Hicks, “Joseph Smith, W.W. Phelps, and the Poetic Paraphrase of ‘The Vision,’” *Journal of Mormon History* 20, no. 2 (Fall 1994): 63–84. Regarding primary sources for the poetic version, Hicks notes that “no manuscript version of the poem in Smith’s or Phelps’s hand has been found. Smith’s papers include a holograph of the two poems, but the two run continuously one to the other, suggesting that this version is a copy from other sources.” Hicks, “Joseph Smith, W.W. Phelps, and the Poetic Paraphrase of ‘The Vision,’” 78.

<sup>c</sup>Howard and Martha Coray notebook, in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 206, 207; underlining in original removed.

<sup>d</sup>Smith, *Teachings*, 304–5.

<sup>e</sup>Wilford Woodruff journal, in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 214.

<sup>f</sup>Joseph Smith, Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 211.

<sup>g</sup>Smith, *Teachings*, 311.

<sup>h</sup>Thomas Bullock report, in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 354.

<sup>i</sup>Smith, *Teachings*, 359.

<sup>j</sup>Thomas Bullock report, in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 374.

<sup>k</sup>Smith, *Teachings*, 384.

A careful review of table 4 highlights the difficulty of using primary sources or edited versions to identify Joseph Smith’s exact views on 1 Corinthians 15:40. The reliability of extant statements depends on the accuracy of the primary sources or on the editors’ efforts to reconstruct Joseph’s teachings.<sup>36</sup> In spite of these difficulties, it does seem clear that Joseph believed Paul knew of the three degrees of glory in the Resurrection. In the primary sources, Joseph quoted KJV 1 Corinthians 15:41 on multiple occasions in reference to the Resurrection and the glories of the sun, moon, and stars. Nevertheless, it is unclear if Joseph believed that 1 Corinthians 15:40 had been modified from Paul’s original letter. In the primary sources, Joseph did not quote 1 Corinthians 15:40 or the associated JST, and the 1 February and 21 May 1843 statements, which include more specific details about what Paul saw, are edited versions.<sup>37</sup> Even if we assume the extant primary sources and edited versions accurately represent Joseph’s views, the accounts we have do not allow us to identify with enough certainty what Joseph believed Paul originally wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:40. On the one hand, if Paul knew of the “testial” glory as Joseph did, it seems likely he would have included it in his letter to the Corinthians. On the other hand, there is no way to know if Paul understood the three degrees of glory in the same way Joseph did.

### *Changes to the Biblical Text*

In his prophetic vision, Nephi learned that the great and abominable church would remove many plain and precious parts of the gospel from the Bible before it would go to the nations of the Gentiles (see 1 Nephi 13:23–29). Moreover, he learned that “other books” would come forth and make known the plain and precious things that were taken away from the Bible (1 Nephi 13:39–41). The Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Book of Abraham, and JST, as well as others yet to come forth, all seem to be included in these “other books” Nephi mentioned.<sup>38</sup> If we apply this perspective to 1 Corinthians 15:40, the knowledge of testial bodies and glory in the Resurrection could be a plain and precious truth that was taken from the Bible and restored by Joseph Smith. Could it be that Paul wrote about “testial” bodies and glory, but others ignorantly or intentionally removed this from his original letter?

We have seen that there is no Greek manuscript evidence of tampering with 1 Corinthians 15:40, even though there are nearby examples of textual addition and correction. This indicates there was no alteration to verse 40 or that changes were made very early. As we consider the possibility of changes to Paul’s original letter, we suggest caution in assuming Nephi’s statements about the removal of plain and precious things from the Bible apply to each JST change. The JST itself provides evidence for different kinds of passages, including restored original or otherwise ancient texts, texts that could be ancient or modern, and a few that are clearly modern.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps the best examples of where the JST may be restoring original text are those where significant passages have been added, such as parts of Moses chapters 1–7. Even here, certain parts are not restored original text, such as those where the Lord gives specific instructions to Joseph Smith (see Moses 1:42; 4:32).<sup>40</sup> In a few other cases, it is evident that the JST is not restoration of original text. For example, Isaiah 34:7a reads, “And the unicorns shall come down with them.” The JST changes “unicorns” to “reem,” which is a transliteration of the existing Hebrew text and means “wild ox.”<sup>41</sup> As noted previously, the relationship of the JST to the biblical text may be one of several possibilities, and we should be aware that modifications may or may not be a restoration of original or otherwise ancient text.<sup>42</sup> Thus, while it is possible that 1 Corinthians 15:40 was altered early so as to avoid modern detection, the available textual information more strongly aligns with the view that the version we have today represents what Paul originally wrote.

### *Chiastic versus Parallel Structure*

The JST alters the apparently chiastic structure of KJV 1 Corinthians 15:39–41 to a parallel structure. One view is to see the biblical text as incomplete because it does not follow a parallel structure. Draper has noted this and suggested the JST addresses this discrepancy: “In 1 Corinthians 15:40 . . . the Apostle Paul speaks of physical bodies of a celestial and a terrestrial nature. He goes on to say in verse 41 that ‘there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars.’ It does not take much to realize the two verses are not parallel. The JST makes them parallel by adding a third element—those bodies that are ‘*telestial*’, or starlike—to those bodies celestial (sunlike) and terrestrial (moonlike) to complete the comparison.”<sup>43</sup>

Draper and Rhodes do not address the issue of a possible chiastic structure for 1 Corinthians 15:39–41 but have suggested that the JST is an addition to Paul’s original letter that makes verse 40 parallel with verse 41, links the passage to the Vision, and represents more than what Paul was willing to share with his ancient audience:

In adding the idea of a third kingdom to Paul’s writings, what Joseph Smith did was make the verse parallel with sun, moon, and stars and thereby link this scripture to a profound vision that he and Sidney Rigdon had experienced . . . When viewing Paul’s writings in light of this vision, they seemed incomplete and so Joseph Smith was inspired to add what was needed. That being said, the Greek text suggests that what Paul was willing to share was much more limited than what the Prophet [Joseph Smith] did. . . . Given the bitter doctrinal disputes the Corinthian letters reveal, these people were not ready for such meat ([1 Cor.] 3:2) and therefore Paul could only hint at some ideas. To those living in the last days, however, the Lord has promised that he would reveal truths that have been “hid from the foundation of the world.” [Smith, *History of the Church*, 5:424] One of those gems is, likely, found in Joseph Smith’s vision of the three degrees of glory (see D&C 76). Paul could have known these things based on a vision in which he learned by experience that there were three heavens (2 Cor. 12:2). What Paul stresses in these verses, however, is that there are different types of physical bodies. One is earthly and mortal (terrestrial) while the other is heavenly and spiritual (celestial).<sup>44</sup>

This highlights the issue of whether “celestial” and “terrestrial” are arranged in a chiasm to represent categories of resurrected and mortal bodies or if these terms only refer to resurrected bodies. Anderson has suggested the current biblical text is problematic by challenging the idea that Paul uses “glory” to describe both mortal and resurrected bodies:

The mortal planting stage is singular in [Paul’s] language (“body”), but the Resurrection yields “celestial bodies” and “bodies terrestrial.” Since these adjectives

usually mean “heavenly” and “earthly,” some translations write that alone, suggesting that Paul is simply contrasting the sowed earthly bodies and with the resurrected, heavenly bodies. But that causes a severe problem of definition. Generally in Paul, and in this chapter, “glory” is the stage of the resurrection: “It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory” (1 Cor. 15:43). Thus “celestial” and “terrestrial,” would be states of resurrected “glory” (1 Cor. 15:40), followed by comparison of eternal brilliance: “There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory” (1 Cor. 15:41, NKJB [New King James Bible]). And the concluding sentence summarizes all these as future: “So also is the resurrection of the dead” (1 Cor. 15:42). Sun, moon, or stars are not images of “corruption” but of “glory.”<sup>45</sup>

If the text is intended to be a parallel structure with “celestial” and “terrestrial” referring to resurrected bodies, then the absence of a third element is conspicuous. However, if the text is intended to be chiastic and Paul’s comment about terrestrial glory is not a reference to the Resurrection, the presence of “telestial” is problematic.

Did Paul intend 1 Corinthians 15:39–41 to be chiastic? With his background and training as a Pharisee (see Acts 23:6), Paul was an expert in the Old Testament, which exhibits many examples of chiasmus.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, it has been shown that various New Testament writers utilized chiasmus.<sup>47</sup> While there is debate on the extent of chiasmus in Paul’s writings, there is good evidence that he employed chiasmus at least to some degree.<sup>48</sup> However, even given that Paul very likely knew of and utilized chiasmus, we cannot with certainty determine if he intended 1 Corinthians 15:39–41 to be chiastic. In addition, it is unclear if Paul’s intended audience would have appreciated chiasmus or understood his use of it. Consequently, if Paul intended the text to be chiastic, the JST appears to be a modern revelatory change. If Paul intended the text to be parallel, the JST may represent a restoration of original text.

### *Language Considerations*

There are several linguistic difficulties with the way key terms are used in latter-day revelation when compared to the biblical text of 1 Corinthians 15:40.<sup>49</sup> These include at least the following: (1) “telestial” was a neologism, or new word, that first occurred in D&C 76, and there is no known corresponding Greek word or Latin intermediate, (2) in Greek “celestial” does not correspond to the sun and “terrestrial” does not correspond to the moon, and (3) “terrestrial” means “of the earth,” whereas “telestial” is associated in modern revelation with the fallen, mortal earth.

If “telestial” was a new word introduced by Joseph Smith, how could the JST represent a restoration of original text? Anderson has argued for the verbal accurateness of the terms used in D&C 76 and suggests a connection between the Greek *telos* in 1 Corinthians 15:24 and the English “telestial.”

Verbal accurateness appears in the names revealed to Joseph Smith for the three glories. The highest is the “celestial,” which means “heavenly” in Greek and is the heaven proper where God dwells (D&C 76:92–94). The next is “terrestrial,” which means “earthly” in Greek, and is the place for the “honorable men of the earth,” who were indifferent to spiritual growth through faith in Christ (D&C 76:74–76). And the “telestial” or last degree of glory meshes with Paul’s description of those in the second resurrection: “but each one in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward those who are Christ’s at his coming; then comes the *end*” (1 Cor. 15:23–24, NKJB [New King James Bible]). The italicized term is *télos*, meaning in this case the final resurrection. So those in the “telestial” glory have come up at the “end,” for which they were delayed by lengthy preparation in overcoming their wickedness (D&C 76:103–6).<sup>50</sup>

Acknowledging that “telestial” was a neologism provided by Joseph Smith, Robinson and Garrett have offered a possible etymology based on the Greek prefix *tele*.

The term *telestial* occurs in scripture only in Doctrine and Covenants 76 and 88. It is not found in the Bible or anywhere else before 1831. Joseph Smith here added a new word to the English language. It is possible that the term was derived from the Greek prefix *tele*, which means “at a distance” or “far away,” as the word *telephone* means a “faraway voice,” or *television* means “distant viewing.” That would make the *telestial* kingdom mean something like “the farthest or most distant” kingdom of glory. This etymology is only speculative, however.<sup>51</sup>

Draper and Rhodes have suggested another possibility, that of “telestial” being a combination of Greek and Latin: “It appears to be a neologism, perhaps combining the root ‘teles-’ from the Greek noun *τέλος* (*telos*), ‘end,’ with the Latin adjectival ending ‘-(t)ialis,’ which is found in the words ‘celestial’ and ‘terrestrial.’”<sup>52</sup>

While the Greek *telos* or *tele* appear to have some relation to “telestial,” there is no known Greek word or Latin intermediate that corresponds linguistically with the English “telestial.” This being the case, is it possible that Paul created a new Greek word that was later removed because it was thought to be an error? Interestingly, it seems Paul did coin a new Greek word nearby that has been retained in the biblical text. Collins has noted, “To establish a sharp contrast between earthly and heavenly existence Paul apparently coined an adjective ‘of dust,’ ‘dusty’ (*choikos*). His neologism recalls Gen. 2:7. Used as

a substantivized adjective it contrasts ‘those of dust’ (*hoi choikoi*) with ‘those of heaven’ (*hoi epouranioi*).”<sup>53</sup> Paul’s neologism is “not found in Hellenistic literature prior to 1 Corinthians” but “occurs four times in 1 Cor 15:47–49.”<sup>54</sup> If Paul coined the Greek work *choikos* in 1 Corinthians 15:47–49, it is also possible he created a new Greek word corresponding to “telestial” in 1 Corinthians 15:40 that was later removed. If so, this would explain why “telestial” appears to be a nineteenth-century English neologism rather than a first-century Greek neologism. The only suggestion that something like this might have happened is the occurrence of “telestial” in modern revelation.

Instead of creating a Greek neologism, could Paul have used an existing Greek word to identify a third category of glory? Sometime after writing to the Corinthians,<sup>55</sup> Paul wrote to the Philippians that “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth” (2:10). This verse includes a third category, “under the earth,” in addition to the two categories “in heaven” and “in earth.” The Greek of Philippians 2:10 for “in heaven” and “in earth” is the same as 1 Corinthians 15:40, *epouranios* and *epigeios*, while “under the earth” is *katachthonios*. The word *katachthonios* is a hapax legomenon in the New Testament, meaning Philippians 2:10 is the only place it occurs, but based on Greek literature Paul’s use of it seems to refer to “*beings or powers under the earth*.”<sup>56</sup> Conceptually, there is a connection between *katachthonios* and “telestial,” as “under the earth” is associated with the underworld (*hadēs* in Greek or “hell” in English), and telestial people will suffer in hell until their resurrection (see D&C 76:84–85, 106–10).<sup>57</sup> In the scriptures, “under the earth” is part of a series that conveys everyone or everything (see Exodus 20:4; Revelation 5:3, 13; Moses 6:63; D&C 88:79, 104).<sup>58</sup> If Paul originally wrote of the glory of those who are *katachthonios*, this would cover the three categories of glory and include everyone who will receive a resurrection of glory. In this scenario, the JST could represent an English translation of Paul’s original text in which “telestial” translates *katachthonios* and means “underworldly” or “underearthly.” The difficulty is that *katachthonios* means “under the earth,” which does not logically correspond to the glory of the stars that are above the earth in the sky, and there is no apparent linguistic connection between *katachthonios* and “telestial.” On the one hand, it is difficult to rationalize why Paul would have used such a term in his letter. On the other hand, it is possible that Paul originally used this term and that the logical disconnect it created led to its removal.



If “testial” is a modern neologism, then searching for its ancient etymology and meaning is irrelevant. Rather, the question becomes why Joseph and Sidney used this word in D&C 76, apparently without any awareness of it before the Vision and absent any commentary of its origin. Where did this neologism come from? Joseph and Sidney wrote that they “saw” and “conversed” with Jesus Christ “in the heavenly vision” (D&C 76:14). If Joseph and Sidney heard Jesus Christ or other heavenly beings use the word “testial,” this would explain its origin. Perhaps this is the most likely explanation: they saw the Vision and then used the term in writing D&C 76, without any apparent issues concerning the written language of their experience. Even so, why would the Lord give the Vision such that D&C 76 references 1 Corinthians 15:40 but adds a word that did not exist originally? One possibility is that the Lord was less concerned with the exact specifics of what Paul originally wrote to the ancient Corinthians and decided to use terminology from the KJV in a slightly different way to teach modern Latter-day Saints about the three degrees of glory. Just as prophets and apostles are free to “liken” the scriptures to their people (see 1 Nephi 19:23), including applying passages in a different way than intended by the original authors,<sup>59</sup> the Lord could be taking such an approach with D&C 76 and 1 Corinthians 15:40. There are many examples in Joseph Smith’s revelations of both interpretation and application of biblical texts,<sup>60</sup> which should alert us to the possibility that JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 may be an application of a biblical text in a new revelation rather than a restoration of Paul’s original letter.

A somewhat related language issue is that in Greek “celestial” does not correspond to the sun (*epouranios* versus *hēlios*) and “terrestrial” does not correspond to the moon (*epigeios* versus *selēnē*). Someone reading the biblical text in Greek would not naturally understand the terminology the way it is used in D&C 76 and JST 1 Corinthians 15:40. Again this raises the issue of the Vision being given such that Latter-day Saints understand and use biblical terms inconsistently with the way they were used anciently. It may be that D&C 76 reflects a likening or application of 1 Corinthians 15:40 for a modern audience rather than restoration of original text for an ancient audience. If we insist on direct linguistic and logical connections between the names of the three degrees of glory and the sun, moon, and stars, JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 does not readily conform to these assumptions, suggesting it more likely represents a modern revelatory change.

One additional concern is that “terrestrial” means “of the earth,” but “testial” is associated with the fallen, mortal earth in modern revelation. Robinson and Garrett have addressed this as follows:

Outside sections 76 and 88, the word *terrestrial* occurs in scripture only in 1 Corinthians 15:40, where it is used to mean “of the earth” in contrast to *celestial*, which means “of the heavens.” The root of *terrestrial* is the Latin *terra*, which means “earth.” This derivation has troubled some students who associate the earth with Babylon, or the fallen, testial world. But Paul made it clear he was speaking of the earth from which Adam was originally made (see 1 Corinthians 15:45, 47), that is, the earth as Eden, or paradise. And the Eden state, or paradisiacal glory, is what this earth will receive again during the Millennium, when it will be returned to the terrestrial glory in which it was first created (see Articles of Faith 1:10).<sup>61</sup>

This approach does not resolve the language difficulty, as Paul’s argument is a series of contrasts of the mortal with the immortal, but Adam’s body in Eden was not mortal. While Paul does refer to Adam’s creation, which resulted in a nonmortal body, the focus of his argument is on the mortal body subject to death. If Paul had Adam’s nonmortal body in mind, this would significantly confuse his argument contrasting the mortal body and the resurrected body.

### Restoration of Original Text or Modern Revelatory Change?

Taking into consideration all the information currently available, we do not believe it possible to definitively conclude whether JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 represents a restoration of original text or a modern revelatory change. Nevertheless, the JST reflects what Paul originally wrote or it does not—it cannot be both. While acknowledging that either option is a viable conclusion, in our judgment the evidence more strongly suggests that JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 is a modern revelatory change by Joseph Smith rather than a restoration of Paul’s original text. To summarize, we note the points in favor of each conclusion and the associated implications below.

#### *Restoration of Original Text*

Foremost in the argument that JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 represents a restoration of original text is D&C 76. The Vision was given such that Joseph and Sidney saw the three degrees of glory and quoted KJV 1 Corinthians 15:40–41 but altered the text to add statements about the testial glory. Primary sources report that Joseph Smith believed Paul knew of the three degrees of

glory, and edited versions of Joseph's teachings suggest he ascribed to Paul a similar use of the terminology in D&C 76 and 88. Assuming modern revelation uses "celestial" and "terrestrial" as they were used by Paul, it is plausible that information about the telestial glory was removed from Paul's original letter. In the Greek text of 1 Corinthians 15, there are multiple variant readings, including correction and addition, providing examples of how a Greek word corresponding to "telestial" could have been removed. Moreover, the JST provides a parallel structure for 1 Corinthians 15:40–41, consistent with D&C 76, that connects the three types of glorious resurrected bodies to the sun, moon, and stars, which otherwise would seem to be lacking a third element.

If we conclude that JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 represents a restoration of original text, we need to acknowledge the difficulties this creates with the Greek text. Hypothetical reconstruction of how "telestial" was removed challenges conventional logic, as it implies Paul created a Greek neologism or used a linguistically unrelated Greek word like *katachthanos* and that the anomalous wording was removed, perhaps due to logical disconnects with the rest of the text. In taking this view, we admit that an original Greek text corresponding to JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 would have been difficult for Greek readers to understand, as celestial, terrestrial, and telestial do not naturally or linguistically correspond to the sun, moon, and stars. We also concede that Paul's argument for a bodily resurrection is a logical and compelling use of contrasts but that JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 is the one passage that does not follow this pattern.

### Modern Revelatory Change

Foremost in the argument that JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 represents a modern revelatory change is that the current biblical text is internally consistent, with compelling logic and a sophisticated chiasmic structure that emphasizes the difference between terrestrial (earthly) bodies and celestial (heavenly) bodies. In the biblical text, the language and terms are harmonious (terrestrial bodies correspond to man, animals, birds, and fish, while celestial bodies correspond to sun, moon, and stars), whereas in the JST the linguistics are significantly strained ("telestial" is a nineteenth-century English neologism without a known Greek counterpart, and there is no apparent correlation of the terminology for the three degrees of glory). In addition, Joseph Smith readily accepted variant readings of scriptural passages, sometimes quoting

the KJV to prove points removed in his earlier JST changes, and apparently did not quote JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 or indicate the biblical text had been altered. Moreover, there is no evidence of textual manipulation of the Greek of 1 Corinthians 15:40, even though verses nearby have been modified, and the attested retention of Paul's neologism *choikos* suggests that if he had created another Greek neologism corresponding to "telestial," it would have been just as likely to have been retained in the text.

If we conclude that JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 represents a modern revelatory change, we need to acknowledge the disconnect this creates between modern revelation and the biblical text. D&C 76 specifically references 1 Corinthians 15:40–41 and adds a third term to identify the three degrees of glory as celestial, terrestrial, and telestial, and these terms are similarly used in D&C 88. We admit that the Vision was given such that "celestial" and "terrestrial," biblical terms that only occur in KJV 1 Corinthians 15:40, are used differently in modern revelation than how Paul used them originally. We also recognize that both the primary accounts and edited versions of Joseph Smith's teachings suggest he understood Paul used the terms "celestial" and "terrestrial" as they are used in modern revelation. In taking this view, we recognize that ancient understanding was restored by the Vision but that the removal of plain and precious things from the Bible does not apply to 1 Corinthians 15:40. We also concede that Paul used chiasmus to make his argument compelling for an audience that may not have been equipped to recognize and appreciate such a sophisticated literary technique.

Of the potential types of modern revelatory changes, it seems most likely to us that JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 falls into the categories of editing biblical wording to bring it into harmony with other revelations (specifically D&C 76 and 88) and providing modern readers teachings that were not originally written by Paul (particularly telestial bodies and glory in the resurrection). The other two possibilities—restoration of what was once said or done but which was never in the Bible, and editing the Bible to make it more understandable for modern readers—seem less likely to apply to JST 1 Corinthians 15:40.

### Potential Benefits of a Balanced Approach

Having summarized our findings from analyzing JST 1 Corinthians 15:40, we turn to discussing some potential benefits that can be derived from our approach. We offer several things for Latter-day Saints to consider.

### *Application to Other JST Texts*

Other JST texts could benefit from an in-depth analysis using a balanced approach. For instance, in the Old Testament the KJV indicates multiple times that God “repented,” and the JST consistently changes these references to someone else besides God, but an alternate translation of the Hebrew could also address this issue (compare Genesis 6:6, footnote *a*, to Moses 8:25). In the New Testament the KJV indicates that one should leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ to go on to perfection, while the JST changes this to read that one should “not” leave the principles, which is a different way to address the issue than an alternate translation of the Greek (see Hebrews 6:1, footnote *a*). We suggest that a balanced approach to analyzing these kinds of JST texts could be beneficial.

Another way our approach may be useful is in exploring language issues raised by the JST, such as we have seen with “telestial.” An example of this is the occurrence of “baptism” in the JST of the Old Testament (see Moses 6:52). Baptism is derived from Greek,<sup>62</sup> and there is no known corresponding word in Biblical Hebrew. What can be learned from the use of words in the JST that do not have ancient counterparts? We posit that taking a balanced approach to address such JST language issues could be beneficial.

### *A Modern Perspective of Scripture*

A second benefit of our analysis of JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 is that it has highlighted Joseph Smith’s perspective of scripture. Joseph’s views on scripture began developing early, at least by 21 September 1823, when Moroni visited him and quoted biblical passages in meaningfully different ways than the KJV.<sup>63</sup> As Joseph continued to receive revelations, including while translating the Book of Mormon and during the JST, many of the texts he produced added to or clarified biblical passages. In addition, sometimes the JST revised wording of corresponding passages in the Book of Mormon, such as quotations from Isaiah and the Sermon on the Mount.<sup>64</sup> Even though the JST was completed on 2 July 1833, Joseph continued to revise the wording of the manuscript until his death.<sup>65</sup> Likewise, Joseph revised the wording of the manuscripts of the Book of Mormon and his own revelations over time, providing different textual versions, some of which were published and some of which were not.<sup>66</sup> In all of this, it is clear that Joseph understood scripture to be somewhat fluid in that additional revelation could revise, update, or

correct previous understanding and that any version of the written word was not necessarily the final word.

In contrast to Joseph Smith’s view of scripture, some may insist on the primacy and accuracy of the biblical text. We suggest that expecting scriptural texts, including the JST, to be both complete and static is inappropriate and follows a view that was generally developed and imposed on the Bible following the Apostasy.<sup>67</sup> We think that one advantage of our analysis of JST 1 Corinthians 15:40 is that it is consistent with Joseph Smith’s view of scripture, which allows for more than one possible relationship of the JST to the biblical text. We would encourage Latter-day Saints to take an informed and modern perspective of scripture when analyzing biblical and JST texts, one that values all scriptural texts as worthy of study without relegating the Bible or the JST to be of secondary importance.

### *The Revelatory Nature of the JST*

A third benefit of our approach is that it can help address reservations some may have about the value of the JST. Since manuscript discoveries and modern biblical scholarship have not generally confirmed the JST to be a restoration of original texts, some may feel that Joseph Smith’s translation is of secondary importance compared to the voluminous library of ancient texts related to the Bible. This kind of view is limited by incorrect assumptions about the nature of the JST, and Latter-day Saints should understand that the JST is not diminished nor magnified by being a restoration of original text or a modern revelation. The JST was a revelatory experience for Joseph Smith and can be a revelatory experience for us. It was not limited by original or other ancient texts, just as new revelation is not limited by previous revelation. We believe that all Latter-day Saints can embrace the JST for what it is without thinking less of it for what it is not. In other words, we need not disparage the JST if it does not restore original text, and we need not automatically disparage the biblical text when the JST makes changes. If there are doctrinal conflicts, certainly modern revelation takes precedence, but Latter-day Saints can benefit from a thorough understanding of what modern revelation adds to or corrects in the Bible.

The Lord’s early description of the JST emphasizes its purpose and place in the Restoration of the gospel. On 7 December 1830, the Lord commanded Sidney Rigdon to write for the JST: “And a commandment I give unto thee—that thou [Sidney] shalt write for him [Joseph]; and the scriptures shall be



given, even as they are in mine own bosom, to the salvation of mine own elect; for they will hear my voice, and shall see me, and shall not be asleep, and shall abide the day of my coming; for they shall be purified, even as I am pure” (D&C 35:20–21). Notably, the Lord did not specify the relationship of the JST to biblical texts. Rather, he indicated that the scriptures would be given as they are in his bosom—suggesting that they would read how he wants them to read. Moreover, the primary purpose of the JST is to save the elect in our dispensation by preparing them for the Second Coming, not necessarily to ensure they know which ancient or modern text is more “correct” than another. The JST was revealed for a modern audience and, as illustrated by our analysis of JST 1 Corinthians 15:40, may provide more information than what Paul originally wrote for an ancient audience. As we study and consider the JST, we should seek to understand what the Lord wants us to know in our day, and Latter-day Saints may benefit most by accepting the revelatory nature of the JST as a key part of the Restoration of the gospel.

## Summary

We have taken a balanced approach to analyze the Joseph Smith Translation of 1 Corinthians 15:40 in an effort to determine if the JST additions describing celestial bodies and glory were original to Paul’s letter. Our methodology has been to examine the biblical text without modern revelation and the JST text with modern revelation. We have compiled information relevant to each possibility and suggested that while the JST could represent restoration of original text, the evidence more strongly suggests it is a modern revelatory change by Joseph Smith. Based on the points raised in our assessment of JST 1 Corinthians 15:40, we have advocated that Latter-day Saints can benefit by applying a balanced approach to other JST texts, taking a modern view of scripture consistent with Joseph Smith’s, and increasing their appreciation for the revelatory nature of Joseph Smith’s translation of the Bible. **RE**

## Notes

1. Also, the JST removes the KJV italics, which are not part of the Greek text but were added by the KJV translators. The removal of KJV italics suggests greater alignment of the JST with the Greek text, at least as related to the italicized words.

2. Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, 2004), 8–11; italics removed.

3. For a summary of views of the JST over time, see Thomas E. Sherry, “Changing Attitudes toward Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible,” in *Plain and Precious Truths Restored: The Doctrinal and Historical Significance of the Joseph Smith Translation*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Robert J. Matthews (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995), 187–226.

4. For example, if we rely on the biblical text alone, we may incorrectly conclude that man cannot see God (see John 1:18 compared to JST John 1:18). Using a different example, if we rely on the JST text alone, we may incorrectly conclude that matching Book of Mormon and biblical passages are in error (see 3 Nephi 14:1 and Matthew 7:1 compared to JST Matthew 7:1).

5. For example, see relevant sections in Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, Sacra Pagina series (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999); Nicholas Thomas Wright, *Christian Origins and the Question of God*, vol. 3, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003); and Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2014), with associated references. For a brief history of interpretations, see James Ware, “Paul’s Understanding of the Resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:36–54,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 133, no. 4 (2014): 809–35. We appreciate Nicholas Frederick for pointing us to these references and for his helpful comments on this paper.

6. Paul shifts his language in 1 Corinthians 15:35 to focus on the nature of the resurrected *sōma*. “The word *nekros* (‘dead’) appeared eleven times in vv. 1–34, . . . [but] occurs only three times in the present section (vv. 35, 44, 52)—at key points where the two sections are tied together. The word that now dominates is *sōma* (‘body’), which occurs ten times here but not once in vv. 1–34.” Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 858.

7. See Frederick William Danker, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 983–84.

8. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 388, 368.

9. See John 3:12; 1 Corinthians 15:48–49; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Ephesians 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12; Philippians 2:10; 3:19; 2 Timothy 4:18; Hebrews 3:1; 6:4; 8:5; 9:23; 11:16; 12:22; and James 3:15.

10. *Random House Webster’s College Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (1998), s.v. “celestial.”

11. *Random House*, s.v. “terrestrial.”

12. See Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (London: United Bible Societies, 1971), 543–71.

13. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 571.

14. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 568.

15. Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 881.

16. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 569.

17. Note the contrast between Adam and Christ introduced earlier in 1 Corinthians 15:21–22: “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

18. As Wright has explained: “The basic image speaks of continuity (the corn growing from the seed), but Paul here stresses the discontinuity: seed and plant are not identical. You do not sow a cauliflower nor do you serve cauliflower-seed with roast beef.” Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 344.

19. For example, vv. 50–58 shift to include what happens to those who are alive when Christ comes. “The central emphasis of the paragraph [vv. 50–58] is on transformation that will be required for those presently alive if they are to be part of the kingdom.” Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 357.

20. Per Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 876. The NIV reads, “The second man is from heaven.”

21. Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 866. For more on chiasmus, see notes 46–48.

22. Per Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 783. Using the transliteration of the Mounce Reverse-Interlinear New Testament (<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+corinthians+1:5&version=MOUNCE>, accessed 25 September 2017), the corresponding Greek text arrangement would be as follows:

Verse 39	A	<i>ou pas sarx ho autos</i> [earthly bodies]	
		B	<i>anthrōpos allos</i> <i>ktēnos allos</i> <i>de ptēnos allos</i> <i>de ichthys allos</i>
Verse 40		C	<i>de kai epouranios sōma</i> [B'] <i>kai epigeios sōma</i> [B]
		C'	<i>alla ho doxa ho epouranios heteros</i> <i>de ho ho epigeios heteros</i>
Verse 41		B'	<i>hēlios allos doxa</i> <i>kai selēnē allos doxa</i> <i>kai astēr allos doxa</i>
		A'	<i>gar astēr diapherō astēr en doxa</i> [heavenly bodies]

23. Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 783. In addition, according to Collins, the distinction between earthly and heavenly bodies and within these categories is also supported by the Greek construction for v. 40b, which is different than vv. 39 and 41. “To distinguish between the glory of heavenly and of earthly bodies, [Paul] uses a ‘one thing . . . another thing’ (*hetera . . . hetera*) construction; to distinguish among the glories of the three sorts of heavenly bodies he uses a serial *allē* construction as he does in v. 39.” Collins, *First Corinthians*, 567. For some reason, Collins seems to be applying Classical Greek usage to make this point, whereas the Koine Greek of the New Testament does not distinguish between *allos* and *heteros*. See Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 47, 399. Per Mounce: “Koine was a simplified form of Classical Greek and unfortunately many of the subtleties of Classical Greek were lost. For example, in Classical Greek [*allos*] meant ‘other’ of the same kind while [*heteros*] meant ‘other’ of a different kind. If you had an apple and you asked for [*allos*], you would receive another apple. But if you asked for [*heteros*], you would be given perhaps an orange.” William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 1.

24. Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 341.

25. Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 783.

26. Again we note that the word Paul uses for “earthly” is *epigeios*, which is literally “upon-the-earth-ly,” a word principally of location.” Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 345.

27. Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 345. “Just because it is part of the ‘glory’ of a star that it shines, that does not mean that everything else must have ‘glory’ of that sort. It is no shame to a dog that it does not shine, or to a star that it does not bark.” Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 345–46.

28. Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 782.

29. Joseph Smith, in Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Orem, UT: Grandin Book, 1991), 256. The edited version of this discourse includes an additional statement not in the primary source: “I believe the Bible as it read when it came from the pen of the original writers. Ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or designing and corrupt priests have committed many errors.” Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 327.

30. For example, on 7 April 1844, Joseph indicated that the first letter of the Hebrew Bible was an unauthorized addition to the original text. See Wilford Woodruff journal, in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 345; Thomas Bullock report, in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 350–51; and William Clayton report, in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 358.

31. Another important example is Revelation 1:6, where the KJV reads, “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father,” while the JST removes the second conjunction, “And hath made us kings and priests unto God, his Father.” On 16 June 1844, Joseph quoted Revelation 1:6 as part of his argument for the plurality of Gods and said, “It is altogr. [altogether] correct in the transltn [translation].” Thomas Bullock report, in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 378. Confirmation that Joseph quoted the KJV rather than the JST is found in his later statement during the same sermon: “If J.C. [Jesus Christ] was the Son of God & John discd. [discovered] that god the Far. [Father] of J.C. [Jesus Christ] had a far. [father] you may suppose that he had a Far. [Father] also.” Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 380. This suggests that in this instance Joseph saw KJV Revelation 1:6 as representing John’s original text rather than the JST.

32. History, 1838–1856, volume A-1, [23 December 1805–30 August 1834], p. 183, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed 25 September 2017, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-a-1-23-december-1805-30-august-1834/189>.

33. At the time the Vision was given, Joseph and Sidney were working in the Gospels and had not yet reached the Pauline Epistles. See Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith’s New Translation: Original Manuscripts*, 58.

34. See Thomas A. Wayment, “Paul Quotations in the Doctrine and Covenants,” in *Doctrine and Covenants Reference Companion*, ed. Dennis L. Largey and Larry E. Dahl (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 2012), 488–90.

35. In addition to searching josephsmithpapers.org as of September 2017, we consulted three main resources for this survey: Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*; Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*; and Kent P. Jackson, comp. and ed., *Joseph Smith’s Commentary on the Bible* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1994).

36. Regarding the efforts to reconstruct Joseph’s teachings using imperfect primary sources, see the letter from George A. Smith to Wilford Woodruff, 21 April 1856, Salt Lake City (conveniently cited in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2007], 562).

37. The poetic version of D&C 76 seems to have been written by W. W. Phelps (see table 4, note b), and the amplified statement referencing Jacob’s ladder appears to have been provided by Church historians.

38. See Robert J. Matthews, “Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible (JST),” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan Publishing

Company, 1992), 2:764; and Joseph Fielding McConkie, “Restoring Plain and Precious Truths,” in Miller and Matthews, *Plain and Precious Truths*, 19.

39. “The question at hand is whether the JST restores original text, restores intended meaning, provides prophetic commentary and application that teach new doctrine through the Bible, or adds truth to the Bible where it was not originally recorded but understood by the authors. The JST may represent a combination of these categories, including restoration of original text.” Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, Eric D. Huntsman, Thomas A. Wayment, *Jesus Christ and the World of the New Testament: An Illustrated Reference for Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006), 14. Regarding restoration of original text, JST Matthew 2:2, 5:22, and John 1:13 have been identified as examples where there is “a remarkable degree of textual support for the JST from a variety of early New Testament Greek manuscripts, suggesting that in some instances the JST was restoring a better text than that which the King James translators had in the Textus Receptus, a Greek text created by Erasmus of Rotterdam in the sixteenth century based on eight or nine medieval manuscripts. . . . The results are quite striking but should not be interpreted to mean that all JST changes to the text of the Bible will find support from new manuscript discoveries.” Holzapfel, Huntsman, and Wayment, *World of the New Testament*, 15.

40. To complicate things further, on 7 April 1844, Joseph indicated that the first letter of the Hebrew Bible, which is the letter *beyt* and translated as “In,” was not original to the text (see note 30). He said that “a Jew witht. any authy. thot. [without any authority thought] it too bad to begin to talk about the head of any man.” Thomas Bullock report, in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 350–51. Nevertheless, in the JST created June 1830, we read, “In the beginning I created the heaven, and the earth upon which thou standest” (Moses 2:1). Even though the JST significantly modifies Genesis 1:1, it still contains the “In” that Joseph later said was not part of the original text.

41. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon: With an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000), 910. See also the footnote in the LDS edition of the scriptures. In this case, it is as if the JST is a marginal note calling attention to the Hebrew (note that the Hebrew is the plural *re'emim*, while the JST is singular). It may be that Joseph transliterated the Hebrew to avoid suggesting the existence of a mythical creature.

42. See the discussion in Robert J. Matthews, *“A Plainer Translation”: Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible, A History and Commentary* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1975), 233–53. In this context we note that there are even examples in the Book of Mormon where Joseph Smith made changes such that the current edition does not appear to represent the original text. When the angel asked Nephi if he knew the “condescension of God” (1 Nephi 11:16), the current edition reads that the virgin whom Nephi saw was “the mother of the Son of God” (1 Nephi 11:18). However, the original manuscript, unedited printer’s manuscript, and 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon all read that the angel called Mary “the mother of God” (instead of “the mother of the Son of God” [v. 18]), that later the angel called Jesus “the Eternal Father” (instead of “the Son of the Eternal Father” [v. 21]), and that Nephi saw Jesus as “the Everlasting God” (instead of “the Son of the everlasting God” [v. 32]) being judged by the world. Joseph Smith made these changes when he revised the printer’s manuscript for the second edition (1837) of the Book of Mormon. The most probable explanation is that the earliest readings represent Nephi’s original text and that Joseph made the changes to avoid a misinterpretation, such that the additions of “the Son of” can be thought of as clarifications rather than the primary readings. See Royal Skousen, *Analysis*

*of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon, Part 1: 1 Nephi–2 Nephi 10* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2004), 230–33.

43. Richard D. Draper, “New Light on Paul’s Teachings,” *Ensign*, September 1999, 22; italics in original. Draper’s identification of celestial as “sunlike,” terrestrial as “moonlike,” and celestial as “starlike” creates difficulty with the Greek wording of the biblical text, as discussed in the next section.

44. Richard D. Draper and Michael D. Rhodes, *Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 2017), 808–9. Interestingly, Draper and Rhodes discuss Paul’s apparent use of chiasmus elsewhere in 1 Corinthians, but not in relation to 15:39–41. See Draper and Rhodes, *Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 7, 175, 201, 511, 626, 721.

45. Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Understanding Paul* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 128.

46. For example, see Yehuda T. Radday, “Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative,” in *Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis*, ed. John Welch (Provo, UT: Research Press, 1981), 50–117; and Wilfred G. E. Watson, “Chiastic Patterns in Biblical Hebrew Poetry,” in Welch, *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, 118–68.

47. “Chiasmus is indeed a prevalent literary form appearing significantly in many parts of the New Testament. The necessary consequence of this is that interpreters and critics of the New Testament can no longer confidently proceed without some awareness of chiasmus as a basic aspect of the literary structure of the texts of the New Testament.” John Welch, “Chiasmus in the New Testament,” in Welch, *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, 211.

48. See Ian H. Thomson, *Chiasmus in the Pauline Letters*, JSNTSupp 111 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1995); and Jeffrey A. D. Weima, review of *Chiasmus in the Pauline Letters*, by Ian H. Thomson, *Review of Biblical Literature* (2000), <http://www.bookreviews.org>.

49. As seen by the citations herein, only a few Latter-day Saints have discussed the language issues associated with “telestial.” In addition, various views can be found on the internet, some of which are more informed and some of which are less so. For example, see a summary by Kevin Barney, “The Etymology of ‘Telestial,’” *By Common Consent* (blog), 27 January 2010, with subsequent comments, <http://bycommonconsent.com/2010/01/27/the-etymology-of-telestial/>. We acknowledge this blog for first drawing our attention to the Greek wording of Philippians 2:10, which is discussed later.

50. Anderson, *Understanding Paul*, 147; italics in original. Draper also notes that the “Greek word *telos* means ‘end,’ carrying the nuance of cessation or termination. Thus, the telestial kingdom would be the last, or final, kingdom of glory.” Draper, “New Light on Paul’s Teachings,” 28. Biblical commentators have debated whether or not “the end” in 1 Corinthians 15:24 represents a third group in the resurrection order. Collins has argued against this view: “Grammatical and theological considerations preclude an interpretation of the verse that suggests an interregnum between the parousia [Christ’s coming in glory] and the end. . . . No known Greek usage allows ‘the end’ (*to telos*) to be construed as the rest (of those to be raised).” Collins, *First Corinthians*, 552.

51. Stephen E. Robinson and H. Dean Garrett, *A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2001), 2:318; italics in original.

52. Draper and Rhodes, *Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 798.

53. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 570.

54. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 571.

55. See LDS Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Pauline Epistles.”

56. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 530; italics in original.



57. Although not found in the New Testament, the Greek word *chthonios* means “in, under, or beneath the earth,” and one way it is used in Greek literature is in reference to “gods of the nether world.” The Online Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon, <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/>; italics in original. The Greek word from which *chthonios* is derived is *chthōn*, meaning “earth, esp. the surface of it,” and is used for “to go beneath the earth, i.e. to die” in reference to “the nether world” and speaking of “those in the shades below.” The Online Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon, <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/>; italics in original.

58. In Revelation 5:3, 13, the Greek reads *hypokatō tēs gēs*, which is different than the single word, *katachthonios*, used in Philippians 2:10. While the Greek wording is different, the intended meaning seems to be the same, or at least similar.

59. For example, JST Isaiah 29 mostly follows Nephi’s quotations of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon, but the JST makes a number of significant additions throughout the text (compare 2 Nephi 27 and JST Isaiah 29). While Isaiah’s writings exhibit strong poetic parallelism, Nephi’s additions do not. See the layout of the text in Donald W. Parry, Jay A. Parry, and Tina M. Peterson, *Understanding Isaiah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1998), 260–71. It appears that many of Nephi’s changes represent his application of Isaiah to his people rather than restoration of missing original text. See Robert A. Cloward, “Isaiah 29 and the Book of Mormon,” in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1988), 191–247.

60. For examples of interpretation, compare John 21:20–23 with D&C 7, and 1 Corinthians 7:14 with D&C 74. An example of application seems to be D&C 27:15–18, where the Lord quotes Paul’s description of the armor of God but expands the text with some explanatory comments that do not appear to be restoration of lost original text (compare to Ephesians 6:13–18). See also the discussion of the interpretation versus application of parables in the LDS Bible Dictionary (s.v. “Parables”).

61. Robinson and Garrett, *A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants*, 2:313–4; italics in original.

62. See LDS Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Baptism.”

63. Joseph’s First Vision three years earlier included at least one quotation of scripture by Jesus Christ, that of Isaiah 29:13, but Joseph also reported that the Savior said “many other things . . . which I cannot write at this time” (JS—H 1:20). It is unclear if the Savior quoted other biblical passages or made changes to them. See the various accounts of the First Vision in Dean C. Jessee, “The Earliest Documented Accounts of Joseph Smith’s First Vision,” in *Opening the Heavens: Accounts of Divine Manifestations, 1820–1844*, ed. John W. Welch (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 1–33.

64. For example, Jesus’s quotation of Isaiah 52:15 to the Nephites matches the KJV, but the JST changes “sprinkle” to “gather” (compare 3 Nephi 20:45 and JST Isaiah 52:15). Similarly, several passages in the Book of Mormon match the KJV of the Sermon on the Mount but are revised in the JST (see 3 Nephi 12–14 compared to JST Matthew 5–7). For a comparison of two ancient Hebrew texts (the traditional Masoretic Text and Isaiah Scroll from the Dead Sea), the Book of Mormon, and the JST of Isaiah, see Donald W. Parry, *Harmonizing Isaiah: Combining Ancient Sources* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2001). For a discussion of JST revisions in the Sermon on the Mount that are not found in the Book of Mormon, see Robert L. Millet, “Hard Questions About the Joseph Smith Translation,” in Millet and Matthews, *Plain and Precious Truths Restored*, 147–62.

65. See Matthews, *A Plainer Translation*, 207–32; and Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts*.

66. For the textual history of the Book of Mormon, see Royal Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon*, 6 pts. (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2004–2009); and the summary of significant textual changes in Royal Skousen, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 739–89. For the textual history of Joseph’s revelations, see Robin Scott Jensen, Robert J. Woodford, and Steven C. Harper, eds., *Revelations and Translations, Volume 1: Manuscript Revelation Books*, vol. 1 of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2011), available at [josephsmithpapers.org](http://josephsmithpapers.org); and Robin Scott Jensen, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Riley M. Lorimer, eds., *Revelations and Translations, Volume 2: Published Revelations*, vol. 2 of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2011), available at [josephsmithpapers.org](http://josephsmithpapers.org).

67. “Latter-day Saints understand inspiration to lie primarily in the Prophet Joseph rather than in the text. That is, the divine revelation was given *through* the Prophet and was often shaped by his vocabulary, thinking, and ability to express himself (see D&C 1:24). As the Prophet’s skills or understanding increased, he could edit and revise what had been written earlier as he saw ways of expressing the intent of the revelation more clearly or more exactly, and this has the effect of making such revisions even *more* inspired than the original—as, for example, in the Joseph Smith Translation. Uneasiness over these types of changes is a typically Protestant reaction, because Protestant thinking generally attributes inspiration primarily to the text. Thus, Protestants want to find the ‘earliest’ text or the ‘most faithful’ copies, while Latter-day Saints want to know the Prophet’s latest and most mature judgment on how a revelation should be understood or expressed.” Robinson and Garrett, *A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants*, 2:10–11; italics in original.