



Chap. vi.

The Endings of Mark and Revelation

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Because the King James Version of the Bible ultimately has its textual base in the New Testament text of Erasmus's Greek edition (the *Textus Receptus*), it is wise to look back to that edition for matters of textual integrity and questions concerning sources. The English translation of the KJV is itself a fairly complex matter and has been thoroughly and carefully studied by respected scholars.¹ Therefore, this chapter will not attempt to unravel any of the nuances of the English translation carried out and published in 1611 nor any of the subsequent changes made to the English of that edition. Rather, this chapter will look at the peculiarities of two passages contained in the current edition of the KJV: the so-called longer ending of Mark (Mark 16:9–20) and the final verses of the book of Revelation (Revelation 22:16–21). These examinations will serve as examples of challenges that scholars face as they examine the text of the New Testament and of approaches to deal with those challenges.

Both of these passages presented unique difficulties to Erasmus in his five editions of the New Testament in Greek and are recognized today as significant textual problems for different reasons. The first issue is the rather convoluted and confusing textual history of the final twelve verses of the ending of the Gospel of Mark. Mark 16 appears in no less than five different forms in Greek New Testament manuscripts, and none of the five are absolutely convincing candidates for being the original ending as

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the author Mark intended. The second issue is the final six verses of the book of Revelation, which were not present in any of Erasmus's Greek manuscripts. The omission of those verses forced Erasmus to translate them from Latin into Greek, and even though he was quite capable in both Greek and Latin, his translation produced a number of unique words and phrases not attested anywhere else in Greek literature. Both of these issues are subsequently reflected in the English translations of the New Testament, including the King James Version.

THE ENDING OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK

For most KJV readers of the Gospel of Mark, the story ends with a summation of the Apostles' ministry: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen" (Mark 16:20). But for some early readers of the Gospel, it ended abruptly: "And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid" (Mark 16:8). Because of a series of textual corruptions, the original ending of the Gospel of Mark has almost certainly been lost. The following list summarizes the five different endings that have survived and have been passed on to us.

1. Mark 16:9–20 are missing completely in two important codices, Codex Sinaiticus² (fourth century AD, containing the entire New Testament) and Codex Vaticanus (fourth century AD, containing almost the entire New Testament, with the exception of the Pastorals and Revelation).³ Furthermore, many early versions (Latin, Armenian, Georgian, and Ethiopic) do not contain the final twelve verses and instead end with Mark 16:8.⁴ Metzger and Ehrman claim that "Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Ammonius show no knowledge of the existence of these verses."⁵ While they are justified in this claim, there is no compelling reason to be alarmed at their silence on the matter and to interpret their silence as evidence of absence. Jerome acknowledged that the verses were missing in some copies of the Gospel when he stated, "In the majority of Gospel manuscripts these verses are not present" (*in raris fertur Evangeliiis, omnibus Graeciae libris paene hoc capitulum fine non habentibus*).⁶ Eusebius was also aware of the difficulties associated with the ending of the Gospel of Mark when he said, "Nearly all the copies of the Gospel of Mark end in

this way [i.e., at 16:8], and the things that follow [probably 16:9–20] are in some but not all copies and may be spurious.”⁷

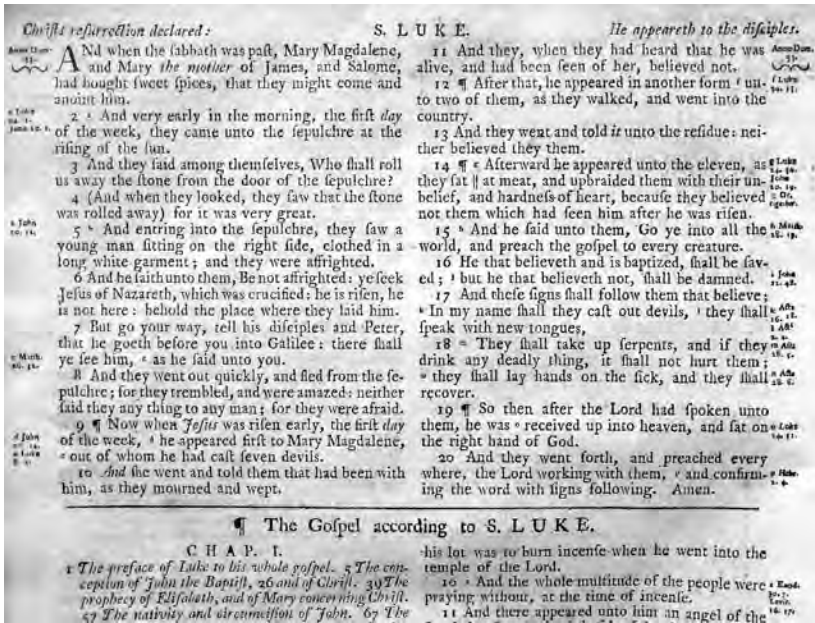
2. Some manuscripts⁸ contain what is referred to as the intermediate or shorter ending, which after Mark 16:8 adds, “But they reported briefly to Peter and those with him all that they had been told. And after this Jesus himself sent out by means of them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.”⁹ The shorter ending includes nine words that are not found elsewhere in the Gospel of Mark.¹⁰ Phrases such as “imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation” do not commend themselves as being original to the author of the Gospel of Mark and indeed appear secondary and theologically motivated.¹¹

3. The longer ending is attested in the majority of ancient manuscripts and is the text that appears in the KJV.¹² It has excellent support from Greek witnesses, although not from all the earliest Greek manuscripts.¹³ Both Irenaeus and Tatian knew of the longer ending, and therefore a date prior to the middle of the second century AD can be posited for its origin.¹⁴ Importantly, the longer ending is the first to be mentioned by an external source. Irenaeus quoted directly from Mark 16:19, a verse that is unique to the longer ending: “At the end of his gospel, Mark says, ‘And then after the Lord Jesus spoke to them, he was received up in heaven and sits on the right of God.’” (*In fine autem euangelii ait Marcus: Et quidem Dominus Jesus, posteaquam locutus est eis, receptus est in caelos, et sedit ad dexteram Dei.*¹⁵)

4. One manuscript contains what might be referred to as an expansion of the longer ending.¹⁶ The Freer Codex contains a rather remarkable passage directly after Mark 16:14:

And they excused themselves, saying, “This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who does not allow the truth and power of God to prevail over the unclean things of the spirits. Therefore reveal your righteousness now”—thus they spoke to Christ. And Christ replied to them, “The term of years of Satan’s power has been fulfilled, but other terrible things draw near. And for those who have sinned I was delivered over to death, that they may return to the truth and sin no more, that they may inherit the spiritual and imperishable glory of righteousness that is in heaven.”¹⁷

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*Mark 16 in a 1756 King James Bible, printed by Adrian Watkins,
His Majesty's Printer, Edinburgh.*

5. Some manuscripts contain the short ending and the long ending. Although none of these manuscripts is particularly early, they do show that the longer and shorter endings could survive side by side. The two most notable examples of this tradition are Codex L or Regius of the eighth century AD and Codex Ψ or Athous Lavrensis of the eighth and ninth centuries AD.

While there are manuscripts that contain both the shorter and longer endings, no surviving manuscripts contain the long ending followed by the short ending.¹⁸

Faced with a seriously complex New Testament textual issue, Erasmus, who found the longer ending of Mark both in his Vulgate translation and his Greek manuscripts of the Gospels, was likely not aware of the variety and complexity of this problem because his manuscripts were unified in preserving only one of the options.¹⁹ For Erasmus, the problem was particularly acute because he trusted the Greek text so implicitly.²⁰ His trust in the Greek text can be seen in his almost blind acceptance of the belief that the Latin text could be only fully understood through learning

Greek: “I can see what utter madness it is even to put a finger on that part of theology which is specially concerned with the mysteries of the faith unless one is furnished with the equipment of Greek as well, since the translators of Scripture, in their scrupulous manner of constructing the text, offer such literal versions of Greek idioms that no one ignorant of that language could grasp even the primary, or, as our own theologians call it, literal meaning” (Ep. 149).²¹ One could hardly expect Erasmus, who was pioneering into new territories, to be as critical with his Greek New Testament as he was with his Latin Vulgate.

Nonetheless, the significant question arises concerning whether, in his exuberance for promoting the Greek text, Erasmus overlooked an issue that should have been treated more carefully. The answer to that question is that Erasmus likely should have noted that the evidence for the longer ending, the one reproduced in the KJV, has excellent support but that there were genuine and legitimate questions about its authenticity.²²

Looking at the text of Mark 16 in light of the surviving evidence and with knowledge that there are some questions about its authenticity, a number of important questions must be addressed before Erasmus’s text can be discredited as inaccurate, as some scholars have proposed. First, the transition between Mark 16:8 and Mark 16:9 is quite abrupt, as the subject shifts between the women in verse 8 and Jesus in verse 9: “And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid. Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.” The fear of verse 8 seems to disappear in verse 9. This disappearance is, of course, not fatal to the text, but it does seem to indicate the presence of a textual seam, perhaps where the text was at one time lost or altered.²³

While the presence of a textual seam is not indicative of any specific ending, the final two words of Mark 16:8, ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ (“for they were afraid”), are.²⁴ This otherwise unprecedented ending does little to restore confidence in the reader that the author had finalized his work. Instead, it suggests an unfinished thought, something that would be explained in the following verses. Whether Mark was the one to add those final verses explaining how the fear of verse 8 was resolved or whether a later Christian scribe supplied them is now unknown. The non-Markan vocabulary

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suggests perhaps that a later follower added them in the spirit of the Gospel author. That is about as far as the textual evidence can take us.

In addition to the manuscripts that survive, a number of quotations that appear to have portions of Mark 16:9–20 in mind are an important witness to the longer ending. For example, Eusebius, quoting the early historian Papias, relates “a miracle that happened to Justus, surnamed Barsabas, who swallowed a dangerous poison and by the grace of the Lord was none the worse.”²⁵ The parallel to Mark 16:18 is striking: “And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.” Justin Martyr may also refer to the longer ending in his First Apology 1.45.²⁶ Latter-day Saints may also see a parallel in Mormon 8:24, although its sweeping language is hardly conclusive evidence that the wording is directly derived from Mark 16:18.²⁷

This issue certainly cannot be decided in an essay-length study, and indeed entire books have been dedicated to the subject.²⁸ Nor has it been the purpose of this essay to decide the matter. Rather, the text produced by Erasmus, the text that would eventually become influential for the KJV, has been the subject of criticism because it shows little awareness of this significant issue. In criticism of Erasmus, it should be observed that he should have noted and explained the issue in his *Adnotationes* or perhaps omitted it as he did another sticky textual issue in 1 John 5:7.²⁹ Despite this criticism, the evidence is hardly definitive on which ending is to be preferred, and Erasmus’s choice, or more accurately the text that he used, is a viable and defensible option. Erasmus was not a modern text critic. His purpose in printing a Greek text is something that will be examined shortly, but it is quite clear that he intended to undermine the longstanding authoritative position of the Vulgate, and debating the ending of Mark inconclusively would have done little to further Erasmus’s aims.

ERASMUS’S TRANSLATION OF REVELATION 22:16–21

At the heart of Erasmus’s edition of the New Testament in Greek and Latin is the issue of manuscripts that were either incomplete or corrupted due to wear, rot, and neglect. Erasmus was certainly aware of the simple fact that the manuscripts he used to create a new edition of the New Testament were themselves artifacts that were subject to physical shortcomings and scribal mistakes. But one problem in particular, the ending of the book of Revelation, must have given him pause. In an odd twist of fate, Erasmus did

not have a single manuscript with the complete book of Revelation, and being pressed for time he was forced to produce a Greek text of the last six verses based on the Latin Vulgate. Erasmus carried out the translation himself and, from the surviving evidence, did not seek input from colleagues or peers.

Before looking at those final verses with a critical eye, it is important to first review the time constraints that Erasmus was under to prepare the text for printing, as well as his purpose in printing a Greek text in the first place. The widely established timeline of events leading up to the printing of Erasmus's first edition, which later advertisements referred to as the *Textus Receptus* or the "received text," is as follows: Erasmus arrived in Basel in July 1515 and began printing in August of that same year. On February 1, 1516, Erasmus dedicated the work to Leo X; this date serves as a likely estimate for when his job of preparing the manuscript was either complete or nearly so. By March 7, 1516 the work was completed, printed, and available for purchase. It is believed that two presses worked on the text simultaneously to hurry the process along. By June 1, 1516, Erasmus wrote a letter to Remacus, the secretary of Prince Charles, in which he stated that he had just completed six years of work in eight months.³⁰ In what can only be described as a stunning achievement, Erasmus compiled, edited, critiqued, and oversaw the printing of the first Greek New Testament in the modern era.³¹

Erasmus's rush to meet Johannes Froben's printing deadlines permitted him no significant time to digress about the notes on the Latin New Testament text by Lorenzo Valla, the fifteenth-century humanist and scholar, nor to enhance and augment his own collection of notes on the biblical text (*Adnotationes*), which were certainly prepared prior to his arrival in Basel.³² Under such strict deadlines, it is unimaginable that any one problem in the text of the New Testament could have delayed Erasmus for more than a few moments.³³ Issues had to be decided quickly, which is why Erasmus handed over the marked-up Greek manuscripts directly to the printer rather than making a copy and working through textual discrepancies.³⁴ Because all signs point to a rushed production, some scholars tend to draw the conclusion that Erasmus's Greek text was not as important as his Latin text because of the implications that the latter had for the Vulgate text then widely in use.³⁵

This point will be important for understanding Erasmus's translation of the final verses of the book of Revelation because, rather than attempting

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to put together a critical edition of the Greek text, Erasmus was establishing the controversial point that the Vulgate text was not as secure as some had supposed. Other indications that his Latin text was more important than his Greek text are that the Latin text he created was eventually published apart from the Greek text, alongside Tyndale's English translation and in four diglot New Testaments issued between 1538 and 1550.³⁶ In addition to his emphasis on the Vulgate, it appears that only later did Erasmus begin to significantly correct the Greek text that he had publicly offered in his first edition.³⁷ In the 1519 edition, Erasmus changed the name from the *Novum Instrumentum* to the *Novum Testamentum* (New Testament), probably in recognition of the attention being paid to the Greek text. In addition to changing the name, Erasmus also used Codex Corsendoucensis to correct the Greek text.³⁸ The fifth edition, published in 1535, was the first edition to publish the Greek text without the Latin.

All of these facts point to someone who was rushed to put together a Greek text that was in some instances imperfect but served the main purpose of challenging the standing tradition of the Vulgate as well as putting Erasmus's notes in print and making them available to the public. This first edition achieved those ends and therefore should not be considered a failure in all senses. When Erasmus did what he thought necessary, in this case keeping the printing moving forward by translating the final verses of the book of Revelation, it was in conformance with his overall purpose and mindset. Additionally, for the reader who wished to see the translation process, Erasmus plainly indicated what he had done in the final verses in his notes.

THE TEXT OF REVELATION 22:16–21

The final verses of Revelation (22:16–21) read in English (KJV):

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

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For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

For his Greek text of the book of Revelation, Erasmus relied upon minuscule 2814, formerly identified as 1 or 1r.³⁹ This manuscript was thought to be lost for several centuries but was subsequently rediscovered in the mid-nineteenth century by Franz Delitzsch.⁴⁰ This manuscript is ascribed to the Byzantine text type or family, which is typically viewed as later than, or secondary to, the Alexandrian text family.⁴¹ Erasmus was aware of problems in the Greek text of Revelation, but the concept that certain biblical manuscripts were of higher quality and reliability than others had simply not yet entered into the mainstream of the academic mindset.⁴² Having rushed to complete his translation of Revelation 22, he warned the reader of potential problems in both the Vulgate and Greek versions of the text:⁴³ “However, at the end of this book, I found some words in our versions which were lacking in the Greek copies, but we added them from the Latin” (*Quamquam in calce huius libri nonnulla verba reperi apud nostros quae aberrant in Graecis exemplaribus; ea amen ex latinis adiecimus*).⁴⁴ The final verb *adiecimus* conveys the sense of supplying or putting in rather than translating. Erasmus actually did the latter.

At times, Erasmus has been harshly criticized for his use of inferior manuscripts when creating his Greek text, particularly when it comes to the book of Revelation. By modern standards this criticism is certainly justified, but a quick look at the most modern Greek text of the New Testament reveals that for the section in question (Revelation 22:16–21), there are actually relatively few variants in the text that affect the meaning. Here is a brief outline of the issues involved in this passage:

1. Verse 16 reads in some manuscripts, “I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things upon the churches,” whereas the KJV text

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Ending of book of Revelation in Erasmus's 1522 New Testament.

uses the phrase “in the churches.”⁴⁵ The issue is whether the testifying angel bears witness to the churches to prepare them, which fits the overall picture of the book, or whether the witness was literally a warning “upon” the churches for their sins, which would fit the opening chapters, which detail their sins.

2. Verse 18 contains a specific mention to the “seven plagues” rather than simply the “plagues.” Most translations omit the adjective *seven* because it is only attested in late manuscripts.⁴⁶

3. The phrase “And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy” (v. 19) contains an important textual variant that

does alter the meaning slightly.⁴⁷ A very literal rendering of the passage would be, “And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy.” Some manuscripts add “these” modifying “words” so that the passage would read, “And if any man shall take away from these words of the book of this prophecy.”⁴⁸

4. Some manuscripts omit “Amen” in the phrase “Surely I come quickly. Amen” (v. 20).⁴⁹

5. Perhaps the most significant variant occurs in verse 20 in the phrase “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Some manuscripts read, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus Christ”⁵⁰; others read, “Come, Lord Jesus”⁵¹; and still others read, “Come Lord Jesus Christ with your saints.”⁵² It is probable in this instance that “Even so” is a later addition reflected in the KJV.

6. Verse 21, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen,” preserves a number of different readings that are largely secondary to the text. The changes can be categorized as changes to the title of the Lord (“Lord Jesus” or “Lord Jesus Christ” or “our Lord Jesus Christ”) and changes to the end “with you all” (“with all the saints” or “with all his saints” or “with us”). “Amen” at the end of the verse is judged by some scholars to be secondary, but it does have solid textual support.⁵³

The purpose in looking at the several variants for the final six verses is to emphasize that there is genuinely no significant dispute concerning the meaning of these verses. And even though the text is fairly static, Erasmus’s work in Revelation 22 has resulted in fairly harsh criticism.⁵⁴ What occurred in these verses is indeed noteworthy, but the text as we have it today has remained fairly safe from Erasmus’s mistakes. One example of the type of error that Erasmus introduced through the process of translating from Latin to Greek is the creation of words. In verse 19, the phrase “God shall take away his part out of the book of life” is built on the Greek verb ἀφαιρέω, a third-person future. Erasmus apparently misread the verb to be ἀφαιρήσει, also a third-person future. The difference is that the first form is a second future whereas the second form is a first future, the difference being that the form introduced by Erasmus is otherwise unattested in biblical manuscripts of Revelation.⁵⁵

A second error in this verse occurred when Erasmus changed the word “tree” to “book” in the phrase “take away his part out of the book of life.” The Greek text overwhelmingly reads the “take away his part of the tree of

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life.”⁵⁶ In this instance, the error is still reflected in the KJV text. Erasmus, however, openly warned the reader that errors existed in his translation. In his notes he stated:

There was no doubt that some things were missing, and it was not much. Therefore we completed the Greek from our Latin texts, so that there might be no gap. We did not want to hide this from the reader, however, and acknowledged in the *Annotations* what we had done, in order that, if our words differed in some respect from those that the author of this work had provided, the reader who obtained a manuscript could restore them. . . . And even this that we did here we would not have dared to do in the case of the Gospels nor indeed in the apostolic Epistles.⁵⁷

Two factors are at play here. First, his low view of the book of Revelation probably led Erasmus to pass on a faulty text, and second, he intended that the errors should be corrected by the reader.

With the issuance of the second edition, Erasmus had already begun to address the errors that had been passed over in the first edition.⁵⁸ The second edition is perhaps the most important for the KJV because it became the base text for Tyndale’s translation as well as for Luther’s German translation. The KJV translators would also have had access to the fifth edition (1535), but their reliance on Tyndale makes the second more textually important. Erasmus added in a note, “When I sent the corrected text back to Basel, I wrote to my friends there that they should restore this from the Aldine text. I have not purchased this work, but as I asked, it (the changes) has been done.” (*Cum igitur Basileum mitterem recognitum exemplar, scripsi amicis ut ex aeditione Aldina restituerent eum locum. Nam mihi nondum emptum erat hoc opus. Id ita, ut iussi, factum est.*)⁵⁹ Unfortunately, in the second edition of his work, Erasmus did not realize that the edition created by Aldine and mentioned as the text to be used to correct his own version was simply an edition of his own text by another printer.⁶⁰

CONCLUSION

The impact of Erasmus’s Greek text for the English translation of the King James Bible is enormous, and the issues associated with that text have in some instances been telescoped into the KJV text. No single

chapter-length treatment of the issue can discuss and reconcile all of the peculiarities of the Erasmian text. This study has looked at two distinct issues: first, a convoluted textual question where a variety of conclusions are possible and probable but none overwhelmingly satisfactory, and second, a case where Erasmus himself entered errors into the biblical text. In the latter case, it seems to have been Erasmus's desire and hope that his readers would take the initiative to correct the Greek text and move on accordingly. Because his Greek text was in itself a statement on the quality of the Vulgate text, it was important to him at some stage of his work to certify the accuracy of the Greek text. It should also be noted, however, that Erasmus was by no means a modern text critic, and the tools and theories available to us today were in large part unavailable to him.

The issue of thorny textual problems where multiple solutions commend themselves appears in several instances in Erasmus's text, and much of the criticism leveled at him in the modern era seems to reveal a desire that Erasmus should have acted in the same way that we do today in matters of textual criticism. In Erasmus's defense, the task of developing and editing a true critical edition of the Greek text was simply beyond his abilities and desires. Had he not started us on the road toward considering the Greek text superior to the Latin, we would perhaps still be laboring under the Latin text's shadow. Therefore, matters such as the ending of Mark should be discussed and resolved to the best of our abilities but at the same time in recognition of the fact that Erasmus is not a hindrance but rather part of the process of recognizing these ancient textual questions.

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NOTES

1. Some of the more noted recent studies on the KJV are David Norton, *A Textual History of the King James Bible* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Alister McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2001); Bruce M. Metzger, *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker,

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2001), 70–80; F. H. A. Scrivener, *The Authorized Edition of the English Bible (1611), Its Subsequent Reprints and Modern Representatives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1884). For a popular treatment of the subject, see Adam Nicolson, *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003); Benson Bobrick, *Wide as the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000); Edgar J. Goodspeed, ed., *Translators to the Reader; Preface to the King James Version, 1611* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935); G. S. Paine, *The Learned Men* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1959), repr. *The Men Who Produced the King James Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988); E. E. Willoughby, *The Making of the King James Bible* (Los Angeles: Plantin, 1956). I have limited the above references to recent and enduringly influential studies on the KJV. If the list were expanded to include articles and specialized studies, the number of entries would surpass several hundred.

2. The evidence of Codex Sinaiticus is somewhat ambiguous because the ending of Mark is written on an inserted bifolium of four pages. The bifolium is almost certainly present to correct a scribal error in which the scribe either omitted the beginning of the Gospel of Luke or the ending of Mark. Scholars have suggested that, judging from the space available on the bifolium, there is insufficient room for the longer ending.
3. Nineteenth-century apologists for the longer ending of Mark frequently argued that the scribe of Codex Vaticanus left a blank column after Mark 16:8, indicating knowledge of the longer ending. The blank column is certainly present, but such a blank space is not clearly indicative that the scribe knew of the longer ending but omitted it because he felt it was spurious. See F. H. A. Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, 4th ed. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1894), 2:337–44.
4. Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 322. The fourth edition, which was heavily revised by Ehrman, greatly enriches the discussion of the previous three editions. It should be noted that recourse to these early versions does little to confirm the absence of the longer ending (Mark 16:9–20) because they are so far removed from the time of writing of the Gospel. The longer ending also preserves seventeen words that are found nowhere else in the Gospel of Mark.
5. Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 322.
6. Jerome, Epistle to Hebidia 120.3. An online Latin text is available at <http://remacle.org/bloodwolf/eglise/jerome/hedibia.htm>, but the text mistakenly reads “pene” instead of “paene.” The Latin is accompanied by an excellent French translation of the passages I examined.
7. *Quaest. ad Marinus*. Strangely, Metzger and Ehrman do not note the Eusebius reference even though it is important to their thesis. *Text of the New Testament*, 322. The longer text reads, “Nearly all the copies of the Gospel of Mark end in this way [i.e., at 16:8], and the things that follow [probably 16:9–20] are in some but not all copies and may be spurious; this is particularly so because it is a contradiction to the

witness of the other gospels. These things one might say to avoid and do away with a useless question.” (ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ σχεδὸν ἐν ᾗπασιν τοῖς ἀνωτιγράφοις τοῦ κατὰ Μάρκον Εὐαγγελίου περιγέγραπται τὸ τέλος. τὰ δὲ ἐξῆς σπανίως ἐν πῶσιν ἄλλ’ οὐκ ἐν πᾶσι φερόμενα περιττὰ ἂν εἴη, καὶ μάλιστα εἴπερ ἔχοιεν ἀντιλογίαν τῇ τῶν λοιπῶν εὐανγγελιστῶν μαρτυρίᾳ ταῦτα μὲν οὖν εἴποι ἂν τις παραιτούμενος καὶ πάντῃ ἀναιρῶν περιττὸν ἐρώτημα.) Some early commentators attributed Eusebius’s concern about the longer ending of Mark to Origen, an earlier source; this assertion, if true, would push the evidence of the awareness of missing verses into the third century AD. Such a speculation is perhaps unwarranted.

8. The most important manuscripts to contain this reading are Ψ and k. Ψ, Codex Athous Lavrensis of the eighth and ninth centuries, is considered a manuscript of considerable significance, and k, Codex Bobiensis of the fourth and fifth centuries, is quite fragmentary but also of considerable importance.
9. Translation taken from Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 323. The Greek of the shorter ending differs slightly from the translation provided. (φέρετε ποῦ καὶ ταῦτα πάντα δὲ παρηγγελμένα τοῖς περὶ τὸν Πέτρον συντόμως ἐξηγγειλαν. Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐφάνη ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς καὶ ἄχρι δύσεως ἐξαπέστειλεν δι’ αὐτῶν τὸ ἱερὸν καὶ ἄφθαρτον κήρυγμα τῆς αἰωνίου σωτηρίας ἀμήν.) The Greek text contains two textual variants following “Jesus.” Some Coptic manuscripts contain the reading “Jesus appeared to them,” while the earliest Greek and Latin manuscripts to have this reading (Ψ and k) preserve the text as “Jesus appeared.” Metzger and Ehrman favor the text of Codex Regius (eighth century AD).
10. The nine words are συντόμως “briefly,” ἐξαγγέλλω “proclaim,” ἀνατολή “east,” δύσις “west,” ἐξαποστέλλω “send out,” ἱερός “divine,” ἄφθαρτος “immortal,” κήρυγμα “message,” and σωτηρία “salvation.”
11. Only one manuscript (k or Codex Boiensis) contains the short ending without anything following it. This seems to suggest that the truncated ending was either unsatisfactory as a replacement or that it quickly fell into disuse.
12. An Armenian manuscript containing the longer ending also contains an interlinear notation that may attribute the longer ending to “Aristion.” A photograph of the manuscript is available in Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 118, fig. 21. The attribution may simply represent a later church tradition connecting the reading to Aristion. It is too far removed from the second century when the reading is first documented to be a credible witness to its authorship.
13. The following Greek manuscripts contain the longer ending of the Gospel of Mark: A, C, D, G, L, W, X, Δ, Θ, Σ, Ψ, 083, 099, 0211, f13, 33, 579, 700, 1342. Perhaps the most impressive and credible witness to the longer ending is Codex Alexandrinus (fifth century AD). Obviously the longer ending’s simple presence in the majority of manuscripts does not necessarily indicate that the original copy of Mark had the longer ending, but it does indicate that by the fifth century the longer ending was the dominant ending.
14. The claim that Tatian knew of the longer ending in his Gospel harmony, referred to as the *Diatessaron*, is accepted by many but difficult to prove because no complete

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copy of the *Diatessaron* has survived. An Arabic translation has survived and can be accessed in P. Agostino Ciasca, *Tatiani Evangeliorum Harmonicae, Arabice* (Rome, 1888). I am unable to access the Arabic text, but it purportedly contains certain evidence of the longer ending of Mark.

15. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.10.5–6.
16. Prior to the discovery of Codex W, the Freer Codex, this additional text was only known through Jerome's quotation of it in his work *Against Pelagius* 2.15.
17. Translation taken from Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 81. For a recent treatment of the text, see J. Frey, "Zu Text und Sinn des Freer-Logion," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 93 (2002): 13–34.
18. Both L and Ψ contain the marginal note that states some manuscripts end with "they were afraid."
19. The manuscript Erasmus used for the Gospels is frequently referred to as Codex 2e (A.N. IV.1), a minuscule of the twelfth century. Red chalk marks on the manuscript indicate that this was largely used as the printer's text for the Gospels. There is little evidence to suggest that Erasmus was critical in any way of the quality of his Greek manuscripts. The text used for the Gospels may also be referred to as Basel minuscule 2 in some publications. Codex 1^{esp} (A.N. IV.2) was also available to Erasmus for consultation. Tarelli argues that Erasmus had recourse to an older manuscript (uncial E, Codex Basilensis of the eighth century) but that the text was overlooked in favor of the minuscules. See Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 110 for a description of E. For a discussion of the Gospel manuscripts used by Erasmus, see C. C. Tarelli, "Erasmus' Manuscripts of the Gospels," *Journal of Theological Studies* 44 (1943): 155–62; F. D. Kenyon, *The Text of the Greek Bible*, 3rd rev., ed. A. W. Adams (London: Duckworth, 1975), 105; E. Yamauchi, "Erasmus' Contributions to New Testament Scholarship," *Fides et historia* 19 (1987): 10–11.
20. Yamauchi, "Erasmus' Contributions to New Testament Scholarship," 11, sees the problem somewhat differently. According to his findings, Erasmus sent to the printers two codices and a transcript of a third and collated readings from the other four codices. K. W. Clark, "Observations on the Erasmian Notes in Codex 2," *Texte und Untersuchungen* 73 (1959): 752, notes that Erasmus made very few changes to the codices he used and primarily changed itacisms (a type of spelling error in which *ē*, *ēta*, is shortened to *e*, *epsilon*, causing a change in spelling). Yamauchi seems to see a more careful process in preparing the manuscripts for publication than is typical.
21. Yamauchi, "Erasmus' Contributions to New Testament Scholarship," 8.
22. A. Bludau, *Die beiden ersten Erasmus-Ausgaben des Neuen Testaments und ihre Gegner*, *Biblische Studien* VII, 5 (Freiburg: Herder, 1902), 49–50, appears to be the first to challenge Erasmus's Greek text based on his knowledge of patristic sources. Yamauchi, "Erasmus' Contributions to New Testament Scholarship," 13, contends that he knew the longer ending of Mark was challenged in patristic sources. Yamauchi fails to note, however, that he would also have been confronted with the issue of

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- the longer ending's authenticity in patristic sources; see also J. H. Bentley, *Humanists and Holy Writ* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 160.
23. M. Clayton Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), 137–63, contends that the abbreviation of the Gospel of Mark may have occurred because the last page of the codex containing it was lost.
 24. Two studies have been carried out that look specifically at whether a book can end in such a dramatic and inexplicable manner. See P. W. van der Horst, "Can a Book End with a Gar? A Note on Mark XVI:8," *Journal of Theological Studies* 23 (1972): 121–24; K. R. Iverson, "A Further Word on Final Gar (Mark 16:8)," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68 (2005): 79–94.
 25. *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.9. Translation taken from G. A. Williamson, trans., *Eusebius* (New York: Penguin, 1989), 103.
 26. The phrase ἐξελθόντες ἐκήρυξαν πανταχοῦ in Mark 16:20 is repeated almost verbatim in Justin (ἐξελθόντες πανταχοῦ ἐκήρυξαν) although in slightly different word order, suggesting that the passage may have been recalled through memory.
 27. "And he knoweth their prayers, that they were in behalf of their brethren. And he knoweth their faith, for in his name could they remove mountains; and in his name could they cause the earth to shake; and by the power of his word did they cause prisons to tumble to the earth; yea, even the fiery furnace *could not harm them*, neither wild beasts nor *poisonous serpents*, because of the power of his word" (emphasis added to show possible verbal connections).
 28. See the excellent and balanced treatment in D. A. Black, ed., *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark: 4 Views* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2008).
 29. Erasmus's 1522 edition was the first edition to include 1 John 5:7–8, the Johanne Comma. Erasmus originally omitted this passage because it did not appear in Vulgate manuscripts that date to the period before AD 800. It is found in Codex Montfortianus, but this is probably a Greek translation of the Latin and not technically a witness to 1 John 5:7 in the Greek manuscript tradition.
 30. Epistle 411. R. A. B. Mynors and D. F. S. Thomson, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 298–445 (1514–1516)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 290.
 31. Erasmus cannot properly be credited with printing the first Greek New Testament. That distinction goes to Cardinal Cisneros, who oversaw the publication of the *Complutensian Polyglot*, a multi-language translation of the Bible. Unfortunately for Cisneros, his translation was held up in publication while it waited for papal sanction. Erasmus, who dedicated his work to Leo X, was able to gain papal approval sooner and was able to precede Cisneros in publication.
 32. On Erasmus's educational debt to the humanist Valla, see E. Rummel, "The Renaissance Humanists," in *A History of Biblical Interpretation*, vol. 2, *The Medieval through the Reformation Periods*, ed. A. J. Hauser and D. F. Watson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 287–93; J. Bentley, "Biblical Philology and Christian Humanism: Lorenzo Valla and Erasmus as Scholars of the Gospels," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 2 (1977): 8–28.
 33. A later critic of Erasmus (Samuel Tregelles) thought that the working conditions in Froben's printing shop were to blame for some of the mistakes. See Jan Krans, *Beyond*

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- What is Written: Erasmus and Beza as Conjectural Critics of the New Testament*, New Testament Tools and Studies 35 (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 2006), 55.
34. Compare Yamauchi, "Erasmus' Contributions to New Testament Scholarship," 11.
 35. H. J. de Jonge, "Novum Testamentum a nobis versum: The Essence of Erasmus' Edition of the New Testament," *Journal of Theological Studies* 35 (1984): 395, thinks that the *Novum Instrumentum* (the original title of Erasmus's text) was primarily a correction of the Latin text with Greek support to substantiate Erasmus's changes to the Vulgate.
 36. Yamauchi, "Erasmus' Contributions to New Testament Scholarship," 9–18; H. F. Moule, "The Greek Testament of Erasmus," *Expositor* 11 (1916): 435.
 37. Tyndale and Luther availed themselves of Erasmus's second edition. An estimated 80 percent of the KJV derives from the language of Tyndale, who based his translation on Erasmus's Greek and corrected Latin.
 38. Scrivener, *The Authorized Edition of the English Bible*, 434.
 39. Erasmus obtained an incomplete manuscript from Johann Reuchlin, who had himself borrowed it from the Dominican monastery in Basel. The manuscript dates from the twelfth century. Erasmus's manuscript of the Apocalypse, a commentary of Andreas of Caesarea, is held by Augsburg University Library (Cod. 1.1.4.1).
 40. Krans, *Beyond What is Written*, 54.
 41. Aland and Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, 50–52.
 42. I. Backus, "The Church Fathers and the Canonicity of the Apocalypse in the Sixteenth Century: Erasmus, Frans Titelmans, and Theodore Beza," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 29 (1998): 651–55, thinks that Erasmus's low opinion of the canonicity of the book of Revelation may have anticipated his willingness to treat it so freely.
 43. I think that Erasmus's warning here has implications for both texts because, in Erasmus's way of thinking, the Vulgate cannot be confirmed and the Greek text is inferior because it relies upon the Vulgate.
 44. Translation taken from Krans, *Beyond What Is Written*, 56.
 45. The most important uncial to witness the reading "in" is Codex Alexandrinus, and in this instance the reading is probably judged as secondary because it appears in very few manuscripts and because the majority of manuscripts read "upon."
 46. Both 046 and 051 from the tenth century AD contain the reading "seven." It is not attested in the earliest and best witnesses.
 47. Many modern translations favor translating *book* as "scroll" because of first-century preference for using scrolls. Indeed it may be the case that John intended a scroll here, but βιβλίον later came to mean "book" as well.
 48. Codex Sinaiticus (fourth century AD) contains this reading. The added "these" is likely dismissed as secondary because "this" is repeated near the end of the clause.
 49. Codex Sinaiticus is the most important witness to the omission of "Amen."
 50. Codex Sinaiticus.
 51. This is the reading of the majority of manuscripts and the one favored today in most translations.
 52. This is a unique reading of the uncial 2329 of the tenth century AD.

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53. Codex Sinaiticus contains the reading, as does the Majority Text. R. L. Omanson, *A Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006), 551–52, contains a discussion of the relative value of the variants to Revelation 22:21.
54. H. Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament: History and Literature of Early Christianity* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1987), 36. Koester states, “For the Revelation of John he had only one single manuscript with a text that was unreadable in many passages and which lacked its last page. Erasmus repaired these defects by translating the respective passages into Greek from the Latin Vulgate, creating in this process a number of Greek words which had never before existed.” While Koester is certainly correct in Erasmus’s coining new words, the manuscript he used was not actually missing the last page but only the page containing Revelation 22:16–21. The text was actually followed by an intact commentary. See also the critique offered by R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From 1300 to 1850* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), 77, who dramatically claims that there is no Greek support for the last verses of Revelation 22 (16–21).
55. The verb form ἀφαιρήσει occurs thirty-six times in Greek literature. Cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Phil.* 4.11.1; Aristophanes, *Archarnenses* 464.
56. The confusion may have been visual between βιβλίου (book) and ξύλου (tree). The word *book* appeared in the line above, and it is probable that Erasmus’s eyes simply returned to that point in the text rather than to the place they should have. Compare Bruce M. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006), 690.
57. Krans, *Beyond What Is Written*, 55–56.
58. Erasmus’s error in Revelation 22:11 is exemplary of his method of correcting a text that was discovered to be erroneous. In the first edition, Erasmus made mistakes when he recorded the verse, changing some words and adding others. Later, he used the Vulgate to correct the text. The original version introduced by Erasmus reads, “and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still.” The corrected phrase should read, after removing Erasmus’s mistakes, “let the filthy be filthy still, let the righteous continue to do right.” Erasmus apparently missed the subtle nuance of “doing right” rather than “being right.”
59. Kranz, *Beyond What Is Written*, 57n16.
60. Kranz, *Beyond What Is Written*, 57n16.