

**The Relationship between Old Testament and New Testament Textual
Criticism and Its Impact on Biblical Scholarship**

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Abstract

This article explores from the historical perspective the relationship between Old Testament and New Testament Textual Criticism with its impact on Biblical Scholarship. The aim and objective of the article is to draw from the enormous wealth of Textual Criticism and its contribution to the preservation and presentation of the authentic word of God as it stemmed from the original autograph, eschewing corruption of the text by any means. The methods adopted for this research are historical critical approach and Textual methods. In our findings, we discovered the importance of Textual Criticism cannot be overemphasized, if our convictions and faith to believing what we read is God's original word, then the discipline of Textual Criticism is ultimately necessary. We recommend to all and sundry, especially, biblical studies' students, scholars and translators to engage in this important field of study to help in transmitting God's word from original autograph to all humanity.

Keywords: Old Testament, New Testament, Textual, Criticism and Manuscripts

Introduction

Textual Criticism is an important field in biblical studies. Its focus is to recover the original manuscript from the perspective of the author. Meanwhile, there are fewer manuscripts in Hebrew Old Testament than the numerous manuscripts in the New Testament when compared. Perhaps the former has long aged tradition. Supporting this position Don Stewart opines that we do not possess many older copies of the Hebrew Scriptures is because of the reverence with which the Jews protected the purity of God's Word. The Jews considered the text so sacred that they ceremoniously disposed of worn copies. The worn copies were first stored in a special room in the

Synagogue, called *Genizah*. After a number of copies accumulated, they were all buried together in the grave of some Jewish scholars. The Jews believed that this would protect readers from misreading God's word because of worn spots in older manuscripts of the Old Testament¹.

Stewart further maintains that "Accuracy was not lost by destroying the worn copies because of the meticulous care with which the Jews copied the manuscripts"² and these manuscripts can be traced or categorized effectively by making use of the tools of Textual Criticism. It is therefore imperative to examine how scholars have defined Textual Criticism. There are enormous manuscripts of the Bible and it is Textual Criticism that examines which of these manuscripts are either closer to the original or farther away from it. An erudite scholar of the Old Testament Textual Criticism Emmanuel Tov in his Book *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* defines Textual Criticism of the Bible as "a field of study that is learned both by means of introductory discussions and by practical involvement in the problems connected with it and It is impossible to attain a full understanding of Textual questions without practical experience"³ George Ladd like many scholars defines Textual Criticism as an attempt to know what exactly the author puts down in writing and to discover whether the text used is the original one produced by the author or not⁴. It is also a science known as lower criticism. The use of fundamental tenets and observed information makes Textual Criticism a science while the use of decisive action, suppositions and argument makes it a non-science.⁵ Martin and Davies define Textual Criticism as a profession whereby trained and skilled individuals critically investigate the differences that occur in numerous manuscripts with the sole aim of extracting and establishing the exact words embedded in the text.⁶ Martins and Davies further explains that as a result of the copying of the manuscripts with the hands from generation to generation the autograph of the manuscripts were changed and there is a need to regain them back.⁷ Scholars like Green and McKnight define Textual Criticism as a systematic study which attempts to know the autograph of a subject by examining side by side all the available manuscripts.⁸

Gordon Fee D, et al, the author of *The Textual Criticism of the New Testament in Biblical Criticism: Historical, Literary and Textual*, gave a familiar definition of Textual Criticism as the science which studies similar numerous manuscripts with the aim of obtaining the source and authentic manuscripts. Fee makes an important assertion when he says Textual Criticism makes possible the attainment of the idea of the author, makes it possible for various versions to be

¹Don Stewart, *Family Handbook of Christian Knowledge* (California: Here's Life Publishers, ny) 47-48.

² Stewart, *Family Handbook of Christian Knowledge*, 48.

³ Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1987) xxxix. We personally subscribe to this assertion, because of our engagement with some Hebrew Mss and especially Nggada, who specifically carried out a Postdoctoral research on the topic; Textual Examination of Sofer's Marks of the 16th Century scroll of the Hebrew Torah. Amazing discoveries on the different style of sofer marks by scribes over the centuries.

⁴George Eldon Ladd, *The New Testament Criticism* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 55

⁵ Ladd, *The New Testament Criticism* 55, 74. In other words, lower criticism could also be understood as the science and arts in biblical studies in recovering the author's intended meaning of the text. It is science because it deals with rules and regulations. It is also an art because it gives rooms for skills to be exercised.

⁶Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids, *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Development* (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1997), 1171

⁷ Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids, *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Development*. 1171

⁸Joel B, Green, Scot McKnight et al, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1992), 827.

produced with great satisfaction, and it gives good knowledge to the origin and dynamics of translations.⁹

Establishment of the Standard Hebrew Text of the Old Testament

It is interesting to note this important information that what we have today as the Massoretic Text, stemmed from a Jewish scholar Moses Ben Asher and his son Aaron Ben Moses Ben Asher.¹⁰ Mention must be made of the contribution of the Ben Napthali family, a contemporary of Moses ben Asher who also produced their own copy of the text. Stewart further explains that Moses Ben Asher's copy of the Hebrew Text gained more acceptance and approval. This was endorsed by a Jewish Philosopher Maimonides (1135-1204), who authentically posit that, the only difference is minor orthographic inappropriateness and spellings¹¹. Having commented on the fewer copies of the Hebrew Manuscripts, the major Hebrew manuscripts from the Hebrew Tradition mainly used by modern textual critics in reconstructing the original text of the Old Testament are listed below:

The Cairo Codex of the Prophets designated "C" contains the second division of the Hebrew Text written in AD 895.¹²

The Leningrad Ms Heb B3 designated "P" for Petrograd, former name of the Russian City of Leningrad contains only the later Prophets written in AD 916.¹³

The Aleppo Ms designated "A" from the 10th Century. It has a scribal note stating that the vowels were added by Aaron Ben Moses. It also contains the entire Old Testament when it was discovered but one forth 1/4th of it was later destroyed.¹⁴

The Leningrad Ms B 19 A designated "L" was copied in AD1008 as earlier one prepared by Aaron ben Moses Ben Asher. It contains the entire Old Testament Text¹⁵.

The above Manuscripts are the only ones accepted and commonly in used by Modern Textual Scholars in the field of the discipline of Textual Criticism. Other witnesses to the Text of the Old Testament are the Targums, Septuagint, Dead Sea Scrolls and the Samaritan Pentateuch¹⁶

The New Testament and Textual Criticism

The emergence of Textual Criticism has been made possible as a result of the great impact of some scholars in history. This discipline is further advanced in 20th Century by Bruce Metzger, who is an authority in this field in one of his books *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, gives a history of scholars and great men who

⁹ Harrison R.K, et al, *Biblical Criticism: Historical, Literacy and Textual* (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1978), 127. It should be noted that each scholar has a unique perspective of what Textual Criticism entails and the researchers felt that their views are cardinal to the understanding of Textual Criticism.

¹⁰ Stewart, Family Handbook of Christian Knowledge, 47

¹¹ Stewart, 47.

¹² Stewart, 47.

¹³ Stewart, 47.

¹⁴ Stewart, 47.

¹⁵ Stewart, 47

¹⁶ Stewart, 50.

massively contributed to the development of New Testament text and Textual Criticism. The followings are:

Johann Jacob Griesbach (1745-1812): In 1775 at the University of Jena in Germany was the institution Griesbach became Professor of New Testament. He is well known to be the father of modern period.¹⁷

Christian Friedrich Matthaei (1744-1811): He served as a professor of classical literature both in Wittenberg and at Moscow. He studied both the Greek text and the Latin Vulgate.¹⁸

Franz Karl Alter (1749-1804): He served as a Professor of Greek at Vienna. He made an important publication of a New Testament manuscript which is connected to Imperial Library in the city where he lived and lectured.¹⁹

Johann Leonhard Hug (1765-1846): A Professor from University of Freiburg Hug, his discoveries resulted to the Western Text which he believed to be derived from many devalued manuscripts. Other renowned scholars also reviewed his positions and publications.²⁰

Other notable scholars are **Johannes Martin Augustinus Scholz (1794-1852):** He is a Professor at the University of Bonn. His adventure in the search of New Testament manuscripts made him to discover about 616 more manuscripts. His procedure was to follow non internal mark of place and time of origin.²¹ **Berlin Karl Lachmann (1793-1851):** He had the focus of producing a better text which is different from the ones that were in existence including the Received Text which he succeeded in doing. He further used more of uncials and little or no minuscules in his work.²² **Lobegott Friedrich Constantin von Tischendorf (1815-1874):** Tischendorf is widely known for the great impact he contributed to Textual New Testament studies. His production of an outstanding eight editions of Greek Bible in history, the text of twenty-two volumes of biblical manuscript production and other amazing works made him to be distinct among other New Testament Textual scholars.²³ **Samuel Prideaux Tregelles (1813-1875):** Tregelles is a British scholar who discouraged his colleagues from following the Received Text. His publication of the Greek New Testament was unique and added greatly to the scholarship within and outside his fatherland.²⁴ **Brooke Foss Westcott (1825-1901) and Fenton John Antony Hort (1828-1892):** They proposed the manuscripts into four division Syrian (also known as Byzantine), Western, Alexandrian and Neutral. Many scholars today are using the principles (for Textual criticisms and variant readings) which were established by them.²⁵ **Berhard Weiss (1827- 1918):** Both in Kiel and Berlin, Weiss was a New Testament Professor. His publications revealed the errors that were

¹⁷ Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its transmission, Corruption and Restoration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 119.

¹⁸ Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, 121.

¹⁹ Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, 122.

²⁰ Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, 123.

²¹ Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, 123

²² Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, 124

²³ Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, 126

²⁴ Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, 127

²⁵ Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, 129.

in the manuscripts of the New Testament. Through his studies, he discovered and highlighted the errors present in the manuscripts.²⁶

Many scholars are of the opinion that the New Testament Text that was first produced is a papyrus manuscript called P⁵², dated between AD 110-125. In order for the original text to be produced, many other manuscripts were used to reproduce the authentic text.

There are some manuscripts that developed in the second century such as

(Matthew, Luke), P⁴, P⁶⁴, P⁶⁷
(Titus), P³²
(John), P⁶⁶
(Luke, John), P⁷⁵
(Matthew), P⁷⁷
(Philemon), P⁸⁷
(John), P⁹⁰
(Revelation), P⁹⁸

The Alexandrian manuscripts which are P¹, P²³, P³⁹, P⁶⁵, P⁷⁵, P⁹¹ and P⁹⁸ are probably the closest manuscripts to the original.²⁷ Metzger gives more comprehensive details of relevant and existing manuscripts such as the following listed below:

P⁴⁵= contains 220 leaves, 10 by 8 inches, four Gospel and Acts, (third century manuscripts).

P⁴⁶= 86 leaves, 11 by 6.5 inches, it contains 10 Pauline Epistles.

²⁶, Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament Criticism: Its Transmission, Corruption*, 55, 74. All New Testament scholars built on the established studies of the New Testament text earlier embarked by Griesbach. He studied elaborately earlier citations made by the Greek Patriarchs. He also did further studies on New Testament translations in Armenian, Gothic and Philoxenian Syriac. The past events on the text of the New Testament were verified by Griesbach. He also built on the discoveries of the classifying of manuscripts earlier made by Bengel's and Semler. He later concluded to classify the manuscripts into three mainly Alexandrian, Western and Byzantine. To a large extent, he also initiated and approved other manuscripts (small and capital letters) and Codices. He expatiated more on the principles of variant readings. His studious study of the New Testament texts and manuscripts made him to ignore the Received Text and ventured into a better one thereby contributing greatly to scholarship. He also made several publications of his findings. **Christian Friedrich Matthaei**: His published text and his setup are relevant to the New Testament scholarship. He brought together so many important manuscripts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and the letters of Apostle Paul. He also published books and articles. **Franz Karl Alter**: The source of his evidence was from Greek, Latin, Bohairic and Slavic manuscripts which made his work unique. **Westcott and Hort**: Westcott was a scholar and clergy man. As a scholar, he was a Professor of Divinity at Cambridge and as a clergy, he was a Canon of Peterborough and in 1890 a Bishop of Durham. Hort was a Hulsean Professor of Divinity at Cambridge. These two scholars made use of the existing manuscripts but readdressed and reconstructed the existing methods established by their predecessors.

²⁷Martin and Davids, *Dictionary of the Later New Testament*, 1172.

P⁴⁷= 10 leaves, 9.5 by 5.5 inches, it contains book of Revelation and it has a strong agreement with Codex Sinaiticus (third century manuscripts).

P⁵²= 2.5 by 3.5 inches, it contains few verses from John.

P⁶⁶= 104 pages, 6 by 5.5 inches, it contains few chapters from John (about A.D 200).

P⁷²= 6 by 5.75 inches, it contains Jude and two Epistle of Peter, (third century manuscripts).

P⁷⁴= 3 by 8 inches, 264 pages, it contains part of Acts, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 3 John and Jude (7th century).

P⁷⁵= 10.25 by 5.13 inches, about 144 pages, it contains Gospel of Luke and John (between A.D 175 and 225).

Metzger also gives other grouped minuscules' manuscripts of the New Testament that has been categorised as follows;

Family 1- 1, 118, 131, and 209 between the 12th and 14th centuries.

Family 13- 13, 69, 124 and 346 between the 11th and 15th centuries.

Manuscript 28- 11th century, contain Four Gospels.

Manuscript 33- 19th century, contains NT books except Revelation.

Manuscript 61- 15th -16th century, NT books.

Manuscript 69- 15th century, NT books.

Manuscript 81 – A.D 1044, Acts of the Apostles.

Manuscript 1739- 9th century, Acts and the Epistles.

Manuscript 2053- 13th century, Revelation.

Manuscript 2344-11th century, Acts, Catholic and Pauline Epistles and Revelation.

There are ancient versions that contain manuscripts and codices which bear witness to the text of the New Testament. Examples are Syriac version, Latin version, Coptic version, Armenian version, Ethiopic version, Old Slavonic version. ²⁸Family relationship among manuscripts can be

²⁸Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament and Criticism*, 38-68. There are other codices in existence from the ancient period, others are Codex Ephraemi (Greek Bible manuscripts of the 5th Century), Codex Bezae (majority of the Gospels and Acts), Codex Basilienensis (8th century, contains the Gospels on 318 leaves), Codex Laudianus (Acts in Greek and Latin), Codex Sangermanensis (Pauline Epistles in Greek and Latin), Codex Bezae Cantabrigiae (9th Century the Gospels), Codex Augiensis (9th Century, Pauline Epistles in Greek and Latin double column), Codex Wolfii A and B (10th Century Gospels with lacunae), Codex Boernerianus (9th Century, Pauline Epistles in Greek), Codex Washington (5th Century, Pauline Epistles), Codex Cyprius (9th Century, complete Gospels), Codex Mosquensis (9th Century, Acts, Catholic/Pauline Epistles), Codex Regius (9th Century, the Gospels), Codex Angelicus (9th Century, Acts, Catholic/Pauline Epistles), Codex Campianus (9th Century, Gospels), Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus (6th Century, Gospels), Codex Sinopensis (6th Century, Matthew), Codex Porphyrianus (9th Century, Acts, Catholic/Pauline Epistles and Revelation), Codex Nitriensis (6th Century, part of Luke), Codex Athous (8th Century, Acts, Catholic Epistles, Romans, part of 1 and 2 Corinthians and Ephesians), Codex Borgianus (5th century part of Luke and John), Codex Mosquensis (8th Century, the Gospels), Codex Monacensis (9th Century, the Gospels), Codex Dublinensis (5th Century, Matthew), Codex Sangallensis (9th Century, Gospels), Codex Koridethi (9th Century, Gospels), Codex Tischendorfianus III (19th Century, Luke and John), Codex Zacynthius (Luke 1-11), Codex Petropolitanus (9th Century, Gospels), Codex Rossanensis (6th Century, Matthew and Mark), Codex Bezae Cantabrigiae (6th Century, Matthew and Mark), Codex Athous Laurae (8th Century, Gospels from Mark, Catholic/ Pauline Epistles and Hebrews), Codex

decided by examining two similar manuscripts with the ones that are antecedently and recently discovered.²⁹ Ladd affirms that among variant readings, manuscript can be categorised based on the congeniality of the manuscripts. He explains that two reputable scholars Westcott and Hort of the early centuries have made a good attempt to categorise the various manuscripts into families.³⁰ Evans and Porter wrote for the purpose of classifying the manuscript, scholars had to locate the source of the manuscripts. The progressive nature of the line of the manuscript was also put into consideration. The source of manuscripts at times has to do with some specific places and people³¹.

The major classification of manuscripts into families is stated below. Fee enumerates the methods of Textual criticism:

External Evidence: This tends to answer the question how long has the text existed? What is the overall value of the manuscripts? What is the extent of the global recognition and accessibility of the manuscript?

Internal Evidence: Transcriptional evidence and intrinsic evidence are the two divisions of this textual evidence. The former centres on the addition and subtractions in a text made by the scribes while the latter has to do with the manner, thought and clarity of the writer.

Eclectic Method: This is the method whereby all the principles and techniques for the discovery of the original manuscripts are put in place and used.

Eclectic Western Method: This method supports the short reading of translations and the church fathers' quotation as evidence in other Western witnesses.

Rigorous Eclecticism: This method supports the full use of internal principles and evidence.³²

Textual variance arises because of the deliberate and non-deliberate changes made by the scribes and some other factors. Some of these differences are indicated below the text of the scriptures of the versions in our present days.³³ Some examples of the un-intentional changes are errors of the eyes, ears, thought and making of wrong decisions etc. Words that are not rightly spelt, words that not rightly interpreted, words that are missing or omitted are some examples of intentional errors.³⁴

Athous Dionysiou (Gospels), Codex Vaticanus 2066 (8th Century, Revelation). Other families of manuscript includes Manuscript 157- 12th century, NT books, Manuscript 383- 13th century, Acts and the Epistles., Manuscript 565- 9th-10th century, Manuscript 579- 13th century, Four Gospels., Manuscript 614- 13th century, Acts and the Epistles, Manuscript 700- 11th-12th century, Four Gospels, Manuscript 892- 9th-10th century, Four Gospels, Manuscript 1071- 12th century, Four Gospels, Manuscript 1241- 12th-13th century, NT books except Revelation, Family 1424- 9th-10th century, NT books.

²⁹Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament Criticism*, 179.

³⁰Ladd, *The New Testament Criticism*, 75.

³¹Evans and Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 673.

³²Harrison R.K et al. *Biblical Criticism: Historical, Literary and Textual*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publications, 1978), 148-151.

³³Craig L. Bloomberg, *Making Sense of the New Testament and Three Crucial Questions* (England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2003), 22.

³⁴Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament and Criticism*, 186.

Textual Criticism and Its Impact on Biblical Scholarship

Over the years, Textual Criticism has been so helpful to the biblical world both of the Old Testament and the New Testament in the following ways:

Copying of the Text: One of the great impacts of Textual Criticism to scholarship is the copying and recopying of the text. The process of transmission began when scribes began to recopy manuscripts with their hands in order to ensure continuity and sustainability of such document. The Old Testament scribes were very meticulous and copied with great accuracy while the New Testament manuscripts were also recopied massively by scribes in the scriptorium. Tremper Longman III and Peter Enns comments that the *Sopherims* were also referred to as scribes who were well known for their effectiveness and skills in passing out knowledge.³⁵

Identifying of Letters and Alphabets: Over the years, the forms of the letters and alphabets take changes from time to time. This is as a result of some factors such as the type of materials used for writing, the writing style of the scribes, the kind of ink used etc. There are some alphabets which are similar to each other on a manuscript and it takes full concentration and special skills to know what kind of alphabet that is written. This is applicable to both the Hebrew and Greek words. This skill is developed from Textual Criticism.

The Development of Codex and Books: The progressive nature of the writing materials that is used for writing shows the way Old Testament and New Testament Textual Criticism developed over the years. Papyrus and parchment were initially used. Codex or scrolls and books were later developed. From the early centuries till now, Textual Criticism has undergone a lot of development in writing materials and recopying of the text and others with the aim of recovery the original text.³⁶ Apostle Paul stated that *when you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments* (2 Tim 4:13 NIV).

Preservation of the Biblical Tradition: It is the major goal of Textual Criticism both in Old Testament and New Testament to obtain the real idea of the author in any given document. Through the careful and excellent copying of the manuscripts by the Old Testament scribes and the availability of traceable numerous New Testament manuscripts to the original, the traditions of the patriarch fathers from the Pentateuch to the church or apostolic fathers have been preserved and successfully passed on from generations to generations. Lee Strobel comment on Metzger interview was “The New Testament, then, has not only survived in more manuscripts than any other book from antiquity, but it has survived in a purer form than any other great book—a form that is 99.5 percent pure.”³⁷

³⁵ Tremper Longman III and Peter Enns, *Dictionary of the Old Testament Wisdom, Poetry and Writing* (England: Intervarsity Press, 2008), 795.

³⁶ Ladd, *The New Testament Criticism*, 56

³⁷ Lee Strobel, *The Case for Christ*. (USA: Oasis International Limited, 1998), 65.

Extraction and Recovery of Great Ideas of Primitive Scholars: In the process of making use of the tools (Masoretic Text, Versions, Ancient Text or fragments) of Textual Criticism (in the Old and New Testament) to discover the original manuscripts, many ideas, comments and positions of distinguished scholars in history have been discovered and unveiled. These ideas have been developed and built upon by other scholars which has led to the development of more ideas, formulation of textual principles and other constructive emendations and speculations. McCain and Keener indicate the positive effects of how Textual Criticism enables scholars to interact with each other.³⁸ This impact is one of the major reasons that encourage scholars to go on further academic research. *Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explain the word of truth (2 Tim 2: 15 ASB).* From the experiences we have gotten from the various workshops and seminars here at the Centre for the Studies of Ancient Religious Scrolls and Manuscripts at the University of Jos anchored by Prof. Danny McCain a professor of New Testament, founder of Global scholars and Prof. Scott Carroll, director of Manuscripts Research Group Grand Haven USA, we have been able to unveil and to discover the source of many manuscripts.³⁹

It Encourages the Reverence for the Spoken and Written Word of God: From our studies of Textual Criticism and the practical aspect of the studying and examining of ancient manuscripts related to both the Old and New Testament here at the Centre for the Study of Ancient Religious Manuscripts at the University of Jos, I have discovered that these studies does not devalue the spoken and written word of God in any way but it gives reasons why the scriptures should be reverend not only as a holy book of God but also as a spiritual book. Wenham posits that “The Scriptures is both a completely divine book and a human book. Neither aspect should be overlooked in studying the Scriptures.”⁴⁰

Conclusion

We have explored Textual Criticism from a historical perspective and have seen it as a very herculean task, which was constructive, creative and impactful field of study, which enables scholars to deeply investigate and analyse ancient, recent and critical manuscripts. We have also seen that the discipline of Textual Criticism has the ability of building the skills of scholars when using the tools provided effectively. Although, in our thorough discourse we have seen Textual Criticism undergo a lot of processes which helps one to have the right understanding, interpretation

³⁸Danny McCain and Craig Keener, *Understanding and Applying the Scriptures* (Bukuru: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2008), 55.

³⁹This has been made possible through God’s grace and the benevolence of Prof. Scott and Prof McCain lectures, seminars and workshops using the available tools and following the laid down rules and principles of Textual Criticism. Some of the procedures taught by the above scholars in discovering manuscripts includes: 1. Measuring of the length of the manuscript. 2. Measuring of the breath of the manuscript. 3. Numbering of the lines of the manuscript. 4. Counting the letters in each line of the manuscript. 5. Identifying the alphabets and letters of the manuscript. 6. Transcribing of all the alphabets. 7. Identifying of meaning transcribed words. 8. Studying and identifying of style of alphabets to know what century it is. 9. Searching for meaningful transcribed word in Bible software 10. Identifying similar transcribed words found in the Bible software etc.

⁴⁰Gordon J Wenham, “The Place of Biblical Criticism in Theological Study” *Themelios International Journal for Theological Students*. 14, no. 3 (1989) 84.

and application of God's word. We have also discovered that the discipline of Textual Criticism cannot be avoided by averagely informed minds but should be approached with all reverence in handling the word of truth. We have brought to the minds of developing textual scholars that Textual variations should not be treated heretical, rather to be appreciated by the great men that God used over the ages to copy, recopied, preserved and transmitted God's word to many thousands of generations. The contribution of this discipline has helped in one way or the other not to cause confusion, but has produced better and clearer versions of the Bible for proper understanding and interpretation.

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