

REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY CHARLOTTE

*ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ*: THE TEXT CRITICAL ISSUE OF LUKE 22:43-44

PRESENTED TO  
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## Introduction

The task of textual criticism can be truly agonizing. Thus, it is ironic that one of the most heavily disputed texts in the textual criticism of the New Testament has to do with the agony of Jesus during his prayer on the Mount of Olives recorded in Luke 22:43-44.<sup>1</sup> These two verses, which have received the authenticity rating of {C} from Metzger,<sup>2</sup> are double-bracketed in both of the two most recent of the major editions of the Greek New Testament: the NA<sup>28</sup> and the UBS<sup>5</sup>.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, the recently published Tyndale House Greek New Testament (THGNT) keeps the two verses in the main text with nothing more than a symbol<sup>4</sup> indicating that the verses are left out of some ancient manuscripts.<sup>5</sup> What is the evidence against the authenticity of the verses? Certain scholars have attempted to close the debate by claiming the verses are so clearly inauthentic that it is foolish to believe otherwise.<sup>6</sup> Is there any evidence to the contrary? That is, is there any evidence that would lead a competent scholar to believe the verses were original to Luke's manuscript? Without a doubt, the question must be answered affirmatively.

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<sup>1</sup>ὥφθη δὲ αὐτῷ ἄγγελος ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἐνισχύων αὐτόν. καὶ γενόμενος ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ ἐκτενέστερον προσηύχετο· καὶ ἐγένετο ὁ ἰδρῶς αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ θρόμβοι αἵματος καταβαίνοντες ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν. From NA<sup>28</sup> without text critical markings or versification.

<sup>2</sup>Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 3rd ed., (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971), 177. This scale goes from {A} to {D}, with {A} being most likely original.

<sup>3</sup>Double-brackets indicate what the editors of the editions understood to be early insertions into the textual tradition. This is a stronger rejection of the material than single-brackets, which simply indicate doubtful authenticity.

<sup>4</sup>Known as the “diamond of uncertainty.” Dirk Jongkind, “Luke 22:43-44. Is the Angel and the Sweat like Drops of Blood an Early Addition?,” *Tyndale House Cambridge*, <https://academic.tyndalehouse.com/angel>.

<sup>5</sup>The editors of the THGNT followed a different text-critical process than did the editors of the NA<sup>28</sup> and UBS<sup>5</sup>, which led them to affirm the authenticity of the two verses. This is intriguing because it indicates two things: first, that there are different methods of textual criticism employed by highly competent scholars and, second, that the debate of this particular text critical issue is far from settled. The process of producing the THGNT can be read about here: “Tyndale House Greek New Testament: Production Notes,” <https://academic.tyndalehouse.com/thgnt/production-notes>.

<sup>6</sup>“The external evidence leaves *no doubt* that these verses were added to the original text” (emphasis added). 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* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 310.

The current work will seek to concisely summarize the arguments both for and against the authenticity of the Luke 22:43-44. The first section of the paper will deal with the external evidence primarily by calling into question the strength of the most frequently cited manuscripts, but also by detailing why two manuscripts (8 and 0171) are significant witnesses to the Lucan origin of 22:43-44. This section will give less attention to the quantity of extant manuscripts, choosing rather to consider as primary the quality of the varying manuscripts.<sup>7</sup> Second, the internal evidence will be addressed. This section of the paper will seek to understand if the verses are theologically and literarily in unison with the rest of Luke's Gospel as well as whether it is more likely for the verses to have been interpolated or excised by scribes. Following, the information will be analyzed and a conclusion will be drawn as to whether or not Luke 22:43-44 was original. It will be seen that while coherent arguments can be made for both sides of the debate it is ultimately best to conclude in favor of the authenticity of the verses. Finally, the implications gained by the inclusion of the two verses will be discussed.

### **External Evidence**

The external evidence concerning Luke 22:43-44 is remarkably balanced.<sup>8</sup> Not only are the manuscripts themselves divided fairly evenly, but attestations of early church fathers are also divided nearly down the middle. This fact causes the task of textual criticism to be much more difficult than some other text critical issues with manuscript evidence decidedly in favor of a text's later interpolation or authenticity. Indeed, the external evidence to these verses is so balanced that the debate over their genuineness has been based primarily on theology rather than

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<sup>7</sup>There is some debate as to whether particular regions copied and preserved a more faithful rendering of the original manuscript. For a discussion of methods in the field of New Testament textual criticism, see particularly section IV (chs. 15-22) in Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes, eds., *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis, Studies and Documents* v. 46 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995). A much more concise explanation for the four main approaches to textual criticism today is found in pages 36-40 in David Alan Black, *New Testament Textual Criticism: A Concise Guide* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994).

<sup>8</sup>cf. Dirk Jongkind, "Luke 22:43-44. Is the Angel and the Sweat like Drops of Blood an Early Addition?," *Tyndale House Cambridge*, <https://academic.tyndalehouse.com/angel>. "There is good evidence on both sides," though Jongkind ultimately concludes the verses should be considered original. Contra. the Alands who claim the external evidence is decidedly in favor of the verses being a later interpolation. See Aland, 310.

on historical evidence in extant manuscripts.<sup>9</sup> Theology of text critics, though, is unable to declare a text original or interpolated; the textual evidence (both internal and external) must lead to this conclusion.<sup>10</sup> So, what manuscripts include Luke 22:43-44 and what manuscripts exclude the verses? Further, and more importantly, do the oft-thought of “best manuscripts” lacking these verses necessarily support that Luke 22:43-44 was a later interpolation?

Ehrman and Plunkett have noted that Luke 22:43-44 are primarily found in Western witnesses but absent from Alexandrian witnesses.<sup>11</sup> Both of these text traditions are dated to the second century AD,<sup>12</sup> though the Alexandrian Text is generally given priority.<sup>13</sup> One must question how helpful such classifications are, though. Clivaz has argued that classifying ancient manuscripts in these “traditions” is reductionistic and unhelpful because many manuscripts, such as P69,<sup>14</sup> “follow [their] own way.”<sup>15</sup> Thus, henceforth in this paper, terminology such as “Alexandrian Text” and “Western Text” will be avoided as much as possible, seeking rather to speak of particular manuscripts rather than traditions as a whole. The manuscripts excluding

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<sup>9</sup>Philip Comfort, *Encountering the Manuscripts: An Introduction to New Testament Paleography & Textual Criticism* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 288. “The debate about the genuineness [*sic*] of this passage has focused on what view one takes concerning whether or not Jesus needed to have been strengthened by angels during his trial in the Garden of Gethsemane.”

<sup>10</sup>It ought to be noted that while the theology of text critics cannot be imposed on texts and determine whether or not a text is original, the overall theology within any given text is a valuable type of internal evidence. That is to say, if Luke has a particular theology of Jesus in his entire gospel account but then one disputed section deviates from that particular theology, then that deviation is strong evidence for the section’s later interpolation. As will be seen, this is part of Bart Ehrman’s argument for Luke 22:43-44 being a later interpolation.

<sup>11</sup>Bart D. Ehrman and Mark A. Plunkett, “The Angel and the Agony: The Textual Problem of Luke 22:43-44,” *CBQ* 45 (1983): 401–16. Raymond E. Brown has expanded on this and stated that while the Alexandrian Text generally omits these verses, the Western, Byzantine, and Caesarean Texts each include the verses. Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, vol. 1 of The Anchor Bible Reference Library (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 181.

<sup>12</sup>Metzger, xviii.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., xvii.

<sup>14</sup>P69 will shortly be discussed.

<sup>15</sup>Claire Clivaz, “The Angel and the Sweat like ‘Drops of Blood’ (Lk 22:43-44): P<sup>69</sup> and f<sup>13</sup>,” *HTR* 98.4 (2005): 432.

these verses are the following: P<sup>69</sup> P<sup>75</sup>  $\aleph^{2a}$  A B N R T W 0211  $f^{13}$  158 579 713 1071\* 1844.<sup>16</sup> The manuscripts including Luke 22:43-44 are:  $\aleph^*$   $\aleph^{2b}$  D K L Q  $\Delta$   $\Theta$   $\Psi$  0171 0233 1071<sup>c</sup> 1424 Maj.<sup>17</sup> Most notably (and disputably) among those manuscripts excluding Luke 22:43-44 are P<sup>69</sup>, P<sup>75</sup> and  $\aleph^{2a}$ . These three manuscripts will now be addressed.

Until the discovery of P<sup>75</sup>, most scholars affirmed Luke 22:43-44 as original verses that were later excised by scribes who found the verses unorthodox.<sup>18</sup> This was due, in large part, to Adolf von Harnack, who “closed the door” on the debate by demonstrating that the verses were not omitted from any manuscripts until 300 AD.<sup>19</sup> Upon the discovery of P<sup>75</sup>, which, as has been shown, is generally dated to the late second century, the debate surrounding these verses resurfaced because P<sup>75</sup> reveals that the verses were excised no later than 200 AD if they were, in fact, original.<sup>20</sup> Recently, though, the early date of P<sup>75</sup> has been critically called into question. Based on codicology and paleography, Brent Nongbri argues that the dating of P<sup>75</sup> was improper, circular, and presupposed.<sup>21</sup> If Nongbri is correct, then the manuscript evidence against the

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<sup>16</sup>It must be noted that while  $f^{13}$  excludes Luke 22:43-44 from Luke 22,  $f^{13}$  transposes the verses after Matthew 26:39 (as does C). This is often cited as evidence against the verses having originated in Luke’s gospel, being regularly compared to the pericope of the adulteress found in English Bibles in John 8. The comparison is massively overstated and unfair because Luke 22:43-44 is only ever transposed to Matthew 26:39, whereas the pericope of the adulteress is transposed to a number of different places. Furthermore, it has been shown that  $f^{13}$  cannot be cited as evidence of non-Lucan origin because every miniscule in  $f^{13}$  shows the verses are at least connected to Luke 22. Noting that only five out of twelve manuscripts in  $f^{13}$  omit the two verses from Luke 22 Clivaz argues that the transfer of Luke 22:43-44 is fully aware of its Lucan origin and was done for liturgical purposes. See Clivaz, 432-436. “No miniscule of  $f^{13}$  ignored that the angel and the sweat like drops of blood were in Luke. The manuscripts that do omit the verses from Luke nevertheless indicate a link between the verses and Luke, either in the main text or after Luke 22:43, or in the margin of Luke 22:43, and/or in the margin of Matt 26:39.”

<sup>17</sup>These two lists are a compilation of both Blumell and Jongkind’s lists. See Lincoln H. Blumell, “An Anti-Docetic Interpolation or an Apologetic Omission?,” *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism* 19 (2014): 5; Dirk Jongkind, “Luke 22:43-44. Is the Angel and the Sweat like Drops of Blood an Early Addition?,” *Tyndale House Cambridge*, <https://academic.tyndalehouse.com/angel>.

<sup>18</sup>“Unorthodox” is used somewhat anachronistically.

<sup>19</sup>Clivaz, 420.

<sup>20</sup>cf. Ehrman and Plunkett, 403. “[An] omission [of Luke 22:43-44] must be dated before ca. AD 200-230 and an interpolation before AD 160.”

<sup>21</sup>Brent Nongbri, “Reconsidering the Place of Papyrus Bodmer XIV-XV (P<sup>75</sup>) in the Textual Criticism of the New Testament,” *JBL* 135.2 (2016): 405–37.

originality of Luke 22:43-44 is significantly reduced and Harnack's conclusion would, once again, be proven true.<sup>22</sup>

However, the testimony of P<sup>75</sup> is questionable even if Nongbri's objection falls flat. Blumell has argued that far too much weight is given to P<sup>75</sup> in the debate over Luke 22:43-44 due to preconceived notions about the superiority of particular manuscripts.<sup>23</sup> "[One] of the main challenges in current research on the textual history of Luke is to resist the prevalent fascination with P<sup>75</sup>. . . We should recall that *every manuscript* potentially reflects or has been affected by historical contingencies."<sup>24</sup> As Joseph A. Fitzmyer, a Roman Catholic priest who ultimately declares the verses a later interpolation,<sup>25</sup> notes,

It is surprising how frequently [P<sup>75</sup>] disagrees with P<sup>45</sup>, the *Chester Beatty Papyrus I*, which contains part of Luke and which is roughly a half century older than it. . . the fact that both P<sup>45</sup> and P<sup>75</sup> stem from Egypt in the period prior to the great parchment uncial mss. and yet do not agree in their readings gives evidence of a fluctuating state of the text in that country in the early period.<sup>26</sup>

Such facts do not mean that external manuscript evidence is irrelevant. However, if there were a variety of differing recordings of Luke 22 with some manuscripts containing verses 43-44 and others excluding them, then it shows that scribes were questioning whether or not the text was

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<sup>22</sup>Significantly reduced in terms of quality as opposed to quantity, that is, as P<sup>75</sup> is largely considered to be one of the most important manuscripts.

<sup>23</sup>Blumell, 424. This raises the further question of how textual criticism ought to be done. There are many different methods of textual criticism and scholarly consensus remains nonexistent. Some text critics favor manuscript evidence while others favor internal textual evidence; these often blend together. Again, I point to Black's extremely concise introduction to textual criticism to understand the very basics of the field. See full citation in note 7 or bibliography at the end of this paper.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid. Emphasis original.

<sup>25</sup>Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, vol. 2 of *The Anchor Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1981), 1444. Fitzmyer declared the debate an uneasy decision and even after drawing his conclusion stated that one must not be "apodictic about the matter." He rejected the verses for five main reasons: 1. shorter readings are preferred; 2. the Synoptics have no parallel; 3. "They militate against the thrust of the Lucan passage in that they add emotional details to what is otherwise a sober abridgment of the Marcan text."; 4 They are absent from the oldest manuscript of Luke (P<sup>75</sup>); 5. the verses "betray later parenetic or hortatory concerns." As has been seen, though, P<sup>75</sup> may not be as old as originally thought. Further, as will shortly be seen, the preference for shorter readings is debatable when the text in question regards such a large text, "later parenetic or hortatory concerns" is a presupposition based on uncertain facts, and a parallel is easily seen with the other Synoptics, even if the parallel uses rather different verbiage.

<sup>26</sup>Fitzmyer cited in Blumell, 424.

original. This leads to the question that will be addressed later: were the verses more likely to have been excised due to scribes fearing that Jesus was represented as “too human” or were the verses more likely to be interpolated in order to reinforce the true human nature of Jesus?<sup>27</sup>

For now, there is still much external evidence to address. P<sup>69</sup> is another manuscript that is often cited in support of the text’s later interpolation. Unlike P<sup>75</sup>, the witness of P<sup>69</sup> is not called into question on the grounds of the manuscript’s date. Instead, the manuscript’s witness is called into question on the basis of the text that it actually contains. P<sup>69</sup> famously omits not only Luke 22:43-44, but also Luke 22:42.<sup>28</sup> Being the only manuscript that also excises verse 42, one is forced to ask why such an excision would occur. Various arguments have been put forth. Clivaz has argued that P<sup>69</sup> lacks Luke 22:42-44 because it is a “fragment of Marcion’s redaction of the Gospel of Luke.”<sup>29</sup> She supports this claim by stating that omitting Jesus’s entire prayer would have been a standard Marcionite habit, for Marcion<sup>30</sup> “did exegesis ‘with a knife.’”<sup>31</sup> This is certainly possible, as even Kurt Aland (who dogmatically affirmed the later interpolation of these verses) declared that P<sup>69</sup> is “very free,”<sup>32</sup> “follow[ing] its own way” and being unable to be “assimilated to a specific textual tradition.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>cf. Ehrman and Plunkett, 407. After concluding that external evidence falls in favor of the verses having been interpolated at a later time, this duo states, “Thus there is only one pressing question to be answered: ‘Which reading is more readily explained as originating in the theological climate of the second century?’” See section “Internal Evidence” beginning on page 10.

<sup>28</sup>Jongkind, “Luke 22:43-44. Is the Angel and the Sweat like Drops of Blood an Early Addition?”.

<sup>29</sup>Clivaz, 429.

<sup>30</sup>It may be helpful to state here who Marcion was. Marcion was a second century heretic who sharply distinguished between the God of the Old Testament and the God of Jesus Christ, the former of which was a God of wrath and the latter a God of love. Important for the current topic, Marcion did not believe that Jesus lived a real human life. Instead, he appeared in the synagogue in AD 29 as a fully grown man and only appeared to be human. Even though Marcion believed Christ’s earthly life, death, and resurrection were necessary for salvation, Marcion believed that Jesus did not actually suffer in any way because he was not really human. It is not hard to imagine a person with these types of preconceived notions about Jesus removing verses that vividly portray Jesus’ humanity. Tim Dowley, ed., *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 50.

<sup>31</sup>Clivaz, 429.

<sup>32</sup>Aland, 100.

<sup>33</sup>Aland in Clivaz, 432.

Clivaz's claims are certainly not definitive, though. Juan Hernandez Jr. argues that such proposals are tremendously tenuous and unhelpful.<sup>34</sup> Instead, Hernandez argues that because P<sup>69</sup> excludes Luke 22:42-44 instead of just 22:43-44, the manuscript simply should not be used as evidence for or against the originality of Luke 22:43-44 since it is impossible to know whether or not its exemplar contained Luke 22:43-44 (which, at least in this case, is the more important question).<sup>35</sup> However, Clivaz's claims are questioned, not refuted. It takes little imagination for one to think of Marcion butchering a text to suit his own ends. A Marcionite background for the excision of Luke 22:43-44 therefore remains plausible, which in fact is what Clivaz set out to demonstrate.<sup>36</sup>

Two more possibilities for P<sup>69</sup>'s lack of Luke 22:42-44 remain. The simplest explanation as to why the verses may have been left out of P<sup>69</sup> comes from Philip Comfort, who declares that P<sup>69</sup>'s exemplar lacked Luke 22:43-44.<sup>37</sup> Comfort's statement is the most easy to affirm, but Dirk Jongkind proposes another alternative. Jongkind proposes that Luke 22:42-44 were left out of P<sup>69</sup> independently from other manuscripts.<sup>38</sup> He states that they may have been excised for similar reasons as other manuscripts even if the exemplar that P<sup>69</sup> used did contain Luke 22:43-44. Jongkind's explanation does not really provide any solution to the problem of P<sup>69</sup>, but if P<sup>69</sup>'s exemplar did, in fact, contain Luke 22:43-44 then that would corroborate with others' statements that a variety of text traditions regarding these verses circulated in the early centuries AD.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Juan Hernandez Jr., "The Early Text of Luke," in *The Early Text of the New Testament*, ed. Michael J. Kruger and Charles E. Hill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 124, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=462589&site=ehost-live>.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid. Similarly J. Keith Elliot states, "Unless we can be sure how many stages exist between any [manuscript] and the original, and unless one knows what changes were made at each copying, then age alone is no help in recovering the original words." J. Keith Elliot, "Thoroughgoing Eclecticism in New Testament Textual Criticism," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, ed. Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes, Studies and Documents 46 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 322. While thoroughgoing eclecticism (which Elliot is here defending) is not a universally affirmed text critical method, it certainly lends itself to easily refuting P<sup>69</sup>'s testimony in this particular instance.

<sup>36</sup>Clivaz, 429.

<sup>37</sup>Comfort, 71.

<sup>38</sup>Jongkind, "Luke 22:43-44. Is the Angel and the Sweat like Drops of Blood an Early Addition?"

<sup>39</sup>Clivaz cites Celsus who claimed there were "*many* changes in the textual traditions of the prayer at Gethsemane." Clivaz, 432. Emphasis original.



While scholarly consensus concerning the reason for P<sup>69</sup>'s lack of Luke 22:42-44 remains unreached, the more important fact remains self-evident: P<sup>69</sup> lacks Luke 22:42-44. The text critic is therefore required to answer the question, "Is P<sup>69</sup> truly able to be used as evidence that Luke 22:43-44 were not included in the original manuscripts?" The clear answer is "no." P<sup>69</sup>'s reading of Luke 22:42-44 is simply unreliable, even if the manuscript is reliable in other places. Thus, even though it may be bolstering for critics who reject the Lucan origin of Luke 22:43-44 to have P<sup>69</sup> in their favor, it is simply unreasonable to claim its support when it has an indisputably faulty reading.

ℵ<sup>2a</sup> is another fascinating manuscript cited against the Lucan origin of 22:43-44. ℵ<sup>2a</sup> is the first revision of Codex Sinaiticus (ℵ). Intriguingly, while ℵ<sup>2a</sup> excises Luke 22:43-44, the original manuscript and the second revision on the manuscript both include the verses. While not debatable as to whether or not the first revision of ℵ excluded Luke 22:43-44, it remains questionable whether or not ℵ<sup>2a</sup> can really be claimed in support of non-Lucan origins since ℵ<sup>2a</sup> came two hundred years after ℵ was originally written.<sup>40</sup> The strength of ℵ<sup>2a</sup> is put into an even less certain position when one realizes that the second reviser of ℵ re-included Luke 22:43-44. Clearly the original scribe and second reviser saw nothing wrong with the verses. Is it possible that the first reviser was one of the "orthodox theologians... [who] were perplexed at the apparent incompatibility of the strong human emotion" made evident in these verses?<sup>41</sup> It is reasonable to draw this conclusion.<sup>42</sup> Related to the revision of ℵ<sup>2a</sup> is the statement made by Epiphanius.

Fitzmyer cites Epiphanius who said Luke 22:43-44 were included in "uncorrected copies" of the text and seems to draw the conclusion that the verses are therefore non-original to

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<sup>40</sup>Blumell, 6.

<sup>41</sup>Fitzmyer, 1443.

<sup>42</sup>Indeed, it is related to the internal evidence that will be addressed later, but it is a common argument that scribes who were uncomfortable with the level of humanity shown in Luke 22:43-44 excised the verses. See Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, The NIV Application Commentary Series (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 566 n.1; Geldenhuys, 577; Green, 35; Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to St. Luke*, Tyndale New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 312.

Luke.<sup>43</sup> Fitzmyer’s conclusions are incorrect. “Uncorrected” can also be understood as “unrevised.” The question remains as to whether or not manuscript was revised properly.

Blumell succinctly refutes the claim:

Though some have cited Epiphanius as evidence against the authenticity of the passage, this is a fundamental misunderstanding of the passage. When Epiphanius talks about Luke 22:43-44 being present in the ‘unrevised’ or ‘uncorrected’ copies of Luke... he is not making a general statement about the nature of the manuscript evidence *per se*, or implying that in more reliable manuscripts the passage is not present. He is simply stating that in the copies not deliberately corrupted (i.e. ‘unrevised’) by the orthodox the passage is attested and is otherwise genuine.<sup>44</sup>

Simply put, just because a manuscript was later “corrected”, such as  $\kappa$ , does not mean that the later “correction” made the manuscript better than it was originally. It may be, in fact, that the scribe who made the correction did so incorrectly and therefore corrupted the text. It is significant that the second reviser of  $\kappa$  did not leave the excision in place, but re-included Luke 22:43-44 in the text.  $\kappa$ , then, is more in favor of including verses 43-44 than it is in favor of rejecting them.

Also in favor of the originality of Luke 22:43-44 is miniscule 0171.<sup>45</sup> Miniscule 0171 is an oft-neglected fragment<sup>46</sup> generally dated somewhere between or around 200-300 AD that contains the end of Luke 22:44.<sup>47</sup> It is worth noting, though, that 0171 has recently been dated much earlier than the classic date. Pasquale Orsini and Willy Clarysse have argued that 0171 easily dates to the late second or early third century, noting that many papyrologists disagree with biblical scholars.<sup>48</sup> Whether one dates 0171 a bit later or a bit earlier, though, the fact

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<sup>43</sup>Fitzmyer, 1443.

<sup>44</sup>Blumell, 18-19.

<sup>45</sup>View a digital copy here: “Manuscript GA 0171 - CSNTM,” [http://csntm.org/manuscript/View/GA\\_0171](http://csntm.org/manuscript/View/GA_0171).

<sup>46</sup>Clivaz, 422. Brown, Crowe, and Ehrman each ignore 0171. 0171 is not only ignored, though, it is also mis-cited, as in the case of Fitzmyer. Ironically, the editors of THGNT neglected to include 0171 as support for 22:43-44 even though they affirm the verse’s Lucan origin.

<sup>47</sup>Aland, 57. The Alands date 0171 to somewhere within the two hundred year period of the third and fourth centuries.

<sup>48</sup>Cited in Blumell, 6. Their article is titled, “Early New Testament Manuscripts and their Dates: A Critique of Theological Paleography.”

remains that 0171 is an early fragment that contains the end of Luke 22:44. 0171 potentially predates all of the opposing manuscripts that exclude Luke 22:43-44 and therefore offers support to the Lucan origin of the verses.

Thus far, the manuscripts that are put forth as support of Luke 22:43-44 being a later interpolation have been called into question. Once the student is able to push past the polemic of individuals like the Alands who claim Luke 22:43-44 is most certainly a later interpolation, the student sees that the manuscripts lacking the verses are not as strong as the polemic. P<sup>75</sup>'s date has been reasonably questioned and its trustworthiness as a text has also been questioned due to its regular disagreements with other important manuscripts (such as P<sup>45</sup>).<sup>49</sup> That P<sup>69</sup> is evidence against the Lucan origin of Luke 22:43-44 has also been rejected because of its larger excision.  $\aleph$  and its later revision have been addressed. It was stated that while  $\aleph$ 's first "corrector" excised verses 43-44 (an undisputed fact), the second "corrector" re-included the two verses. It was therefore concluded that  $\aleph$  lends more support to the originality of Luke 22:43-44 than it does to the later interpolation of the verses. Finally, a regularly neglected fragment (0171) was addressed. It was stated that while the fragment contains little, its significance is far greater due to its early date. While there is far more that could be said about the external evidence surrounding the verses in question, it will be much more profitable to turn to the evidence within Luke itself.<sup>50</sup>

### **Internal Evidence**

Internal evidence is key in this debate. It is not surprising, then, that the dividing line between scholars who affirm the Lucan origin of Luke 22:43-44 and those who reject the verses as a later

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<sup>49</sup>Recall Nongbri's argument and Fitzmyer's quote questioning the authority of P<sup>75</sup> due to its disagreements with P<sup>45</sup>, page 5 above.

<sup>50</sup>Scholars are nearly unanimous that a decision for or against Luke 22:43-44 cannot be done based on external evidence alone. While the Alands have drastically overstated the evidence against Luke 22:43-44 (as has been noted multiple times), most scholars agree that the debate in question is very difficult and requires a survey of internal evidence alongside the external evidence. Cf. Ehrman and Plunkett, 416. "The cumulative force of a group of arguments must be assessed, and even then the critic is left with a probability-judgment."

interpolation regularly comes down to one's theology of Christ and view of Christian history.<sup>51</sup> Due to other scholars' use of Christian history in drawing a conclusion on Luke 22:43-44, the role Christian history plays in the debate on these verses will be discussed. However, this section will be brief, as scholars regularly disagree on what is "more likely to have occurred" in transcribing the text. Indeed, these claims are inherently subjective and therefore lack much substance or weight in the debate.<sup>52</sup> It will be seen that arguments based on scribal habits are weaker than arguments based on Luke's own text. Following a discussion of the role of Christian history, Ehrman's claim that the pericope in which Luke 22:43-44 falls is a chiasmus will be addressed (Luke 22:39-46). After concluding that Ehrman's supposed chiasmus is irrelevant due to other chiasmus possibilities, the verses themselves will be considered in light of Luke's greater vocabulary and syntax. Three conclusions will ultimately be reached that will lead to affirming the originality of Luke 22:43-44. First, Ehrman's chiasmus is weak and if verses 43-44 were original to Luke's text then the point of the section is even more clear. Second, Luke's unique vocabulary in this verse is no grounds for rejecting their Lucan origin. Third, the phrase ἄγγελος ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ cannot be claimed to be as non-Lucan.

It has already been mentioned that a Marcionite background has been sketched for the exclusion of Luke 22:43-44.<sup>53</sup> It was concluded that a Marcionite background plausibly explains the excision of the verses in question. However, others have put forth that the verses were interpolated as a way to combat heresies that plagued the early church. To quote one such author, "It cannot be overlooked that the three earliest preserved citations of these verses are all put forth against heretically high Christologies."<sup>54</sup> To be fair, these authors are correct that these Church

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<sup>51</sup>I must note here that when I first began research on Luke 22:43-44 I was hesitant to affirm their originality. It was a study of the manuscripts, other individuals' historical arguments, and particularly a study of the Lucan text itself that led me to affirm Luke 22:43-44 as original to the manuscript from Luke's own hand. While this aligns me with most of the Reformed tradition of which I am a part, it is important to emphasize that I began my search more opposed to Luke 22:43-44 than I was for the verses.

<sup>52</sup>The subjectivity of these claims is at least in part due to the remarkable balance of ancient witnesses—not only in regards to manuscripts themselves but also regarding Church Fathers' own disagreements on the verses, as was mentioned earlier.

<sup>53</sup>Clivaz made this argument. See page 6.

<sup>54</sup>Ehrman and Plunkett, 406.

Fathers' citations cannot be ignored. However, one must question whether or not this claim lends any credence to the theory of interpolation. Ehrman and Plunkett explain that these verses were cited by Justin Martyr and Irenaeus against Docetists<sup>55</sup> and Hippolytus against a Patripassionist<sup>56,57</sup> For men like these to interpolate these two verses into Luke's Gospel as a proof text for Christ's humanity would have been pointless, though, for there were already in existence plenty of other verses that could have been cited as proof texts for Jesus's humanity (if that is what the men desired). Indeed, one would not even have to leave the Gospel of Luke to find "proof texts" of Jesus' humanity: Luke 24:39-43 would have served this use perfectly.<sup>58</sup> Thus, if there is little grounds for claiming that these verses were interpolated on these grounds, one must ask if it is more likely that these verses were excised by those who feared what the verses imply.

Luke 22:43-44 is clear: Jesus is in agony and needs divine intervention to continue on the path prepared for him. Jesus is in such agony that he is forced to pray "more earnestly" after an angel strengthens him. Further still, Jesus is in such agony that "his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground" (Luke 22:44).<sup>59</sup> This is a vivid scene of Jesus's suffering. Luke portrays Jesus's pre-betrayal prayer far more intimately than the other synoptics, though the accounts remain quite similar.<sup>60</sup> Jesus' humanity is on full display in that he needs strengthening by an angel in order to press on. Ehrman conjectures that these verses cannot be Lucan because they portray Jesus in an overly emotional way that has no credence in the rest of

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<sup>55</sup>Docetists were a Gnostic sect who believed Jesus only appeared to be human. "The Docetists regarded Christ as merely a temporary appearance of God disguised as a human." Dowley, 81.

<sup>56</sup>"Patripassionist" is another name for Monarchians or Sabellians. They believed that the Father suffered as the Son as a result of their modalistic view of the Godhead (i.e. that God exists as Father at times, Son at other times, and Spirit at still other times, but never as the Trinitarian God affirmed by Christian orthodoxy). Dowley, 81.

<sup>57</sup>Ehrman and Plunkett, 406.

<sup>58</sup>cf. Blumell, 34.

<sup>59</sup>All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the English Standard Version.

<sup>60</sup>cf. Joel B. Green, "Jesus on the Mount of Olives (Luke 22:39-46): Tradition and Theology," *JSNT* 26 (1986): 30. While Green affirms that the accounts are broadly similar theologically, he also draws close verbal connections between the accounts at verses 39, 42, and 46.

the Gospel.<sup>61</sup> However, Jesus' emotion is clearly portrayed in at least one other place in Luke: His approach to Jerusalem recorded in Luke 19. The text reads, "And when Jesus drew near and saw the city, he wept over it" (Luke 19:41).<sup>62</sup> Given that these verses are uncontested and weeping is a decidedly emotional, unrestrained action, Ehrman's claims are disproven. Thus, there is at least some credence within Luke's Gospel for Jesus' extreme emotion in Luke 22.

Therefore, if Jesus is shown to have extreme emotion in other portions of Luke, what is different about Luke 22:43-44? It is likely that scribes saw the Jesus of Luke 22:43-44 as too weak of a human to also be God. Luke 22:43-44 portrays Jesus as so human that he comes off as pathetic. Scribes undoubtedly questioned the orthodoxy of this portrayal of Jesus, leading many to excise the verses. As Leon Morris points out,

In a day when scribes were sure of the deity of their Lord, some would find difficulty in the thought of his being strengthened by an angel, and they would see the striking details of agony as pointing to a Jesus all too human. There would be every reason for omitting the words if they were original, but it is difficult indeed to imagine an early scribe inserting them in a text that lacked them.<sup>63</sup>

Geldenhuis makes a similar argument, stating that scribes who "had no clear idea of the Savior's real humanity" likely excised the verses because they "could therefore not understand why an angel had to strengthen" Jesus.<sup>64</sup>

So then, what is one to do with the claim that Luke 22:43-44 was an anti-Docetic interpolation? It has been shown that Luke portrayed Jesus in an unabashedly, human way elsewhere in his Gospel; namely, Luke 19. On that basis, Luke could easily have portrayed Jesus

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<sup>61</sup>Ehrman and Plunkett, 416. Summarizing their own article, this duo states, "Jesus is depicted as emotionally restrained, in control of himself and the situation, facing his death with equanimity." This, of course, is true only if verses 43-44 were not original (the conclusion they have drawn is assumed in the process of deduction). Elsewhere, Ehrman poses the question of whether or not Luke could have portrayed Jesus in such an emotional way. See Bart D. Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (New York: HarperOne, 2005), 140. Ehrman, of course, concludes that Luke could not have portrayed Jesus in the emotional way that He is portrayed in Luke 22:43-44.

<sup>62</sup>Καὶ ὡς ἤγγισεν, ἰδὼν τὴν πόλιν ἔκλαυσεν ἐπ' αὐτήν. κλαίω (to weep) is a fairly common verb in Luke. Other verses in which he uses this verb are: Luke 6:21, 25; 7:13, 31, 38; 8:52 (2x); 22:62, 23:28 (x2); Acts 9:39; 21:13. Each of these instances clearly indicates a swell of emotion that is likely undignified.

<sup>63</sup>Morris, 312.

<sup>64</sup>Norval Geldenhuis, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 577.

as being in agony and needing strengthening by an angel to face the trial that was ahead of him. Furthermore, if these two verses were an anti-Docetic interpolation, why were other verses not excised as well (Luke 24:39-43)? An anti-Docetic interpolation simply does not hold up. The most likely reason for the verses to have been excised is because the scribe copying the manuscript did not understand the true humanity of Jesus, whether that individual was “orthodox” or “unorthodox” is irrelevant.<sup>65</sup>

Now, Ehrman and Plunkett’s supposed chiasmus must be addressed. The chiasmus conjectured by Ehrman and Plunkett seems to be viewed by them as a sort of “mic-drop” situation in which the debate is ultimately solved by a mere literary-structuring device.<sup>66</sup> Simply put, that is not the case. The problem with chiasms like the one Ehrman and Plunkett propose is that they are “subjective and often tend to appear only in the eye of the beholder.”<sup>67</sup> Indeed, a brief survey of responses to Ehrman proves that his “nearly impossible to overlook”<sup>68</sup> chiasmus is heavily disputed.<sup>69</sup> Ehrman and Plunkett’s chiasmus focuses in on Jesus’ prayer as the center. They state that when verses 43-44 are inserted into the passage the “chiasmus that focuses the passage on Jesus’s prayer is absolutely destroyed” and causes the chiasmus to focus instead on agony.<sup>70</sup> However, that is only true if verses 43-44 are not original. If original, then the prayer focuses not on agony but on the strengthening of Jesus by the angel. Indeed, the angel’s strengthening of Jesus is preceded by Jesus praying and it is followed by Jesus praying “more earnestly” (Luke 22:42, 44). Thus, if anything, then including verses 43-44 does not “absolutely

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<sup>65</sup>cf. Epiphanius who claimed even orthodox were perplexed by how human Jesus was portrayed in these verses. Fitzmyer, 1443.

<sup>66</sup>A reproduction of their chiasmus can be found in Appendix I, along with what I propose to be a better chiasmus for the passage, if one seeks to find a chiasmus therein.

<sup>67</sup>Blumell, 33.

<sup>68</sup>Ehrman stated this during a lecture in 1997 regarding the chiasmus he had proposed with Plunkett in 1983. Clivaz, 421.

<sup>69</sup>Brown proposes that if one insists on finding a chiasmus in Luke 22:39-46, then the center of the chiasmus ought to be considered the Father’s response to Jesus’ prayer in 22:43 (the angel strengthening Jesus). Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, 182. Blumell also cites Ludger Feldkämper and Giuseppe G. Gamba who found chiasms in this section of Luke that were dependent on vv. 43-44. Blumell, 33.

<sup>70</sup>Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus*, 141.

destroy” the chiasmus as Ehrman purports. Rather, it emphasizes that the Father responds to Jesus’s prayer in a caring way: sending an angel to strengthen him for the task ahead.<sup>71</sup> Ehrman’s claims, then, are unfounded and cannot be used as a reason to claim Luke 22:43-44 are a later interpolation.

If the structure of this particular pericope cannot be used as evidence against the Lucan origin of verses 43-44, can Luke’s vocabulary in these two verses be cited as evidence of interpolation? It is undisputed that these two verses contain a relatively high percentage of *hapax legomena*.<sup>72</sup> By Ehrman and Plunkett’s calculation, the percentage of *hapax legomena* in Luke 22:43-44 is 11.5%. Contrarily, the rest of Luke’s Gospel calculates to only 1.1% *hapax legomena* per verse.<sup>73</sup> These calculations, however, cannot properly be used as evidence against the Lucan origin of 22:43-44, as Ehrman and Plunkett themselves point out.<sup>74</sup> Does the concentration of *hapax legomena* lend itself to supporting the Lucan origin of these verses? While not an argument regularly made, it seems possible that the rare vocabulary in these verses could indicate that Luke was, in fact, the author. Luke’s writings are known to be the most beautifully and masterfully written books in all of the New Testament.<sup>75</sup> Luke’s characteristic style is that of an educated Greek, well acquainted with excellence of even the best of Greek literature. This is evident from “the freedom of his constructions and from the exceptional wealth of his

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<sup>71</sup>Brown suggests that the Father’s answer to Jesus’ prayer is “a touch illustrative to the Lucan Jesus’ closeness to his Father.” Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, The Anchor Bible Reference Library (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 257.

<sup>72</sup>i.e. Words unique to this section. The words are ἀγωνία, ἰδρώς, and θρόμβος. See Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 181; Ehrman, 140; Ehrman and Plunkett, 409; Green, 35.

<sup>73</sup>Ehrman and Plunkett, 409.

<sup>74</sup>Ehrman and Plunkett cite Luke 4:8 which contains a 13.6% concentration of *hapax legomena*, as well as 6:38 (15%) and 10:34 (16.1%). Since these three verses are indisputably Lucan and contain a high percentage of *hapax legomena* even those advocating the later interpolation of these verses cannot contend that *hapax legomena* herein alone affirm interpolation. Ehrman and Plunkett, 409.

<sup>75</sup>I. Howard Marshall, “Luke, Gospel Of,” *NBD*, 705. “Luke wrote as a man of culture and education, and his work has much more of a claim to being a deliberate literary production than the other Gospels have. It is clear that the author was a man of letters, well acquainted with the OT in Greek. and also with the style of contemporary literature, who was able to produce a work that would commend the gospel by its literary quality.”



vocabulary.”<sup>76</sup> Further, Luke’s vocabulary in these verses can be seen as a microcosm of his overall narrative (including Acts), which contains a far greater vocabulary than any other New Testament author and nearly eight hundred words unique to Luke himself.<sup>77</sup> It seems, then, that the uniqueness of these verses is just another characteristically Lucan reality.<sup>78</sup> Related to the question of the three *hapax legomena* is Luke’s use of ἄγγελος ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ (angel from heaven).

According to some, Luke could not have said that an angel appeared from heaven because Luke’s regular use of ἄγγελος + genitive is ἄγγελος followed by κυρίου or ἄγγελος followed by τοῦ θεοῦ (angel of the Lord or angel of God).<sup>79</sup> While it is true that Luke’s regular construction is not ἄγγελος ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ, is this a substantial claim that Luke could not have used the phrase? Unlikely. ἄγγελος and the genitive form of οὐρανός (οὐρανοῦ) is only used three times in the New Testament (Matt 24:36; Luke 22:43; Gal 1:8).<sup>80</sup> This indicates that while the phrase may have been uncommon for biblical authors to use, it was not unprecedented.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, ἄγγελος ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ means precisely the same thing as either of the more regular uses of ἄγγελος

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<sup>76</sup>Geldenhuys, 38.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Michael Pope has discussed the uniqueness of Luke’s vocabulary in these verses from a different angle. In his article titled “The Downward Motion of Jesus’s Sweat and the Authenticity of Luke 22:43-44,” Pope hones in on the latter half of verse 44 (ἐγένετο δὲ ὁ ἰδρῶς αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ θρόμβοι αἵματος καταβαίνοντες ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν) and argues that the phrase has commonly been misunderstood. Pope shows that Luke’s verbiage in this phrase is characteristic of the day’s medical language and is also found in the Greek Old Testament. His article is a fascinating in-depth study of a particularly problematic phrase and is quite helpful. Pope’s article gives further support to the fact that the verbiage of Luke 22:43-44 is not only possibly Lucan, but most likely Lucan. Michael Pope, “The Downward Motion of Jesus’ Sweat and the Authenticity of Luke 22:43-44,” *CBQ* 79.2 (2017): 261-281.

<sup>79</sup>Ehrman and Plunkett cite Lyder Brun, who claims that Luke could not have used “angel from heaven” because Luke’s terms for angel + genitive are “angel of the Lord,” “angel of God,” and “holy angel”. In order, these terms are used by Luke seven times, two times, and (ironically only) once. One must question why Lyder Brun did not claim “holy angel” was also a later interpolation if, in fact, the number of uses indicate anything related to Luke’s potential verbiage. Ehrman and Plunkett, 409.

<sup>80</sup>Only Luke uses the preposition ἀπό, however. The instance of Matthew 24:36 lacks any preposition (οἱ ἄγγελοι τῶν οὐρανῶν) and Paul’s usage of this particular construction replaces ἀπό with the preposition ἐξ (ἢ ἄγγελος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ).

<sup>81</sup>It is also significant that neither the verse in Matthew nor that in Paul are disputed texts.

+ genitive, which is used remarkably often in Luke.<sup>82</sup> Supporting the Lucan origin of the phrase ἄγγελος ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ further is the fact that while Luke doesn't state explicitly that an angel is from heaven in another section, Luke does imply that an angel came down from heaven or connect the angel to heaven in some other way.

It is common knowledge that angels are connected to the nativity scenes recorded in Luke.<sup>83</sup> In Luke 2:1-7, Jesus's birth is recorded. Following this, in 2:8-20 is recorded the angelic appearance to the shepherds and the response of the shepherds to the angelic announcement. In 2:9 we read, "And an angel of the Lord appeared to them [the shepherds]."<sup>84</sup> Luke records that the glory of the Lord visibly showed itself all around them, causing the shepherds to fear deeply (2:9). Then, the angel that appeared to them gave the announcement of Jesus's birth in 2:10-12. Following this birth announcement Luke draws a connection between the angel and heaven. The text reads, "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God" (2:13)<sup>85</sup> The "heavenly host" undoubtedly refers to the angels in heaven.<sup>86</sup> Luke's announcing angel, assigned with the particular task of announcing Jesus's birth is directly connected to a multitude of heavenly beings, from whom this particular angel presumably came. Following the birth proclamation, though, the angel's connection to heaven is made even more

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<sup>82</sup>It is also worth mentioning that Luke's construction in 22:43 is precisely the same construction as the first angelic appearance in his narrative, which is found in 1:11. In Luke 1:11, an angel appears to Zechariah announcing the birth of John the Baptist. The text reads "Ὡφθη δὲ αὐτῷ ἄγγελος κυρίου ἐστῶς ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ θυμιάματος". It is a precise match with 22:43, reading ὥφθη δὲ αὐτῷ ἄγγελος ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἐνισχύων αὐτόν. Notice: both begin with an aorist verb (ὥφθη) followed by a conjunction (δὲ), then a dative pronoun (αὐτῷ), angel + genitive, and a participle. If 22:43 was a later interpolation then the interpolator did a fantastic job mimicking Luke's distinctive style.

<sup>83</sup>Jongkind, "Is the Angel and the Sweat Like Drops of Blood an Early Addition?". Also, Brun uses Luke's connection of angels to the nativity scenes to reject Lucan authorship of Luke 22:43-44. Cited in Ehrman and Plunkett, 408.

<sup>84</sup>While this phrase appears the same in English, the verb "appeared" in this verse is different than the one used in 1:11 and 22:43. This verse reads καὶ ἄγγελος κυρίου ἐπέστη αὐτοῖς. It is worth questioning whether or not Luke intentionally drew a connection between 1:11 and 22:43 by using an identical construction whereas elsewhere in his Gospel the phrase found in 2:9 is more common.

<sup>85</sup>καὶ ἐξαίφνης ἐγένετο σὺν τῷ ἀγγέλῳ πλῆθος στρατιᾶς οὐρανοῦ αἰνούντων τὸν θεόν.

<sup>86</sup>The heavenly host is a large topic that requires much study on its own. Suffice it here to say that angels and heavenly host are equated in the Old Testament (Ps 148:2) and that God is regularly called the Lord of Hosts (יהוה צבאות) in the Old Testament as well.

explicit. The text states that the angels “went away from them into heaven” (2:15).<sup>87</sup> One can assume, then, that any angel that is “of the Lord” (as this particular angel and the heavenly host it was accompanied by were) is also “from heaven.” Thus, the claim that Luke could not have used the phrase ἄγγελος ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ is remarkably misleading and unprecedented. It should be clear, then, based on the internal evidence thus far discussed, that Luke 22:43-44 is more than likely original to Luke’s own pen.

### **Does Any of This Matter?**

Text criticism is not for the faint of heart. Text criticism requires addressing difficult issues that are often misconstrued and overstated.<sup>88</sup> While arguing for the originality or later interpolation of any text may be tedious, the task is remarkably important. The Scripture itself testifies that all Scripture is “breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for correction, and for training in righteousness” in order that people “may be complete (and) equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16-17). This promise, though, goes only as far as the Scripture itself goes. If Luke 22:43-44 were not original verses to Luke’s Gospel, but were rather interpolated at some later time, then these verse must not be preached from the pulpit. Knowing the extent and limits of the Scriptures must be of primary importance to the Christian.<sup>89</sup>

Other than the obvious necessity of knowing whether or not Luke 22:43-44 is or is not Scripture, what do Christians today glean from these verses?<sup>90</sup> First, the Christian sees in vivid detail exactly what Jesus went through in order to atone for the sins of man.<sup>91</sup> This should serve as an encouragement: that God so loved the world He sent His Son to suffer in agony not only on

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<sup>87</sup>ἀπῆλθον ἀπ’ αὐτῶν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν οἱ ἄγγελοι.

<sup>88</sup>We have seen this in the case of those who mis-cite or ignore some manuscripts, such as 0171 and in the case of the Alands who drastically overemphasized the clarity and strength of the external evidence.

<sup>89</sup>This, of course, assumes Scriptural, not ecclesiastical, authority.

<sup>90</sup>If one is not convinced of the originality of Luke 22:43-44 I must note that the following gleanings from the verses can still be found elsewhere in Scripture.

<sup>91</sup>Though, the accounts in Matthew and Mark are quite vivid as well. Both of these have Jesus “falling” to the ground (or on his face) and being “greatly distressed” (Mt 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42).

the cross but leading up to the cross as well.<sup>92</sup> This ought to lead the Christian to do a few things. First, the Christian ought to mourn over his sin. Seeing the agony that Jesus went through in order to atone for the sins of man ought to cause a sense of agony in the Christian. Second, Luke's portrayal of Jesus's prayer ought to lead Christians to worship God all the more due to the great suffering that Christ went through on our behalf. Jesus's death was of the highest value. Third, we ought to approach the throne of God fearfully, yet boldly through Christ, knowing that He has already suffered on our behalf, and beseech the Lord for grace.

The second thing Christians see in this passage is an encouragement to long-suffering. We live in a world in which trials abound and temptations to sin are never-ceasing. When Christ was weak, He went to prayer and the Father answered Him with a ministering angel. We must not presume that the Lord will send an angel to strengthen us, but we can rest assured that when we face temptations we will be provided a means of overcoming the temptation.<sup>93</sup> One cannot help but recall Hebrews 12:4, "In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood." It is better to agonize in prayer than to give in to temptations to sin. The Father is faithful to answer those who come to Him in prayer and desperation over the difficulties this life has.

### **Conclusion**

Through a study of both external and internal evidence, then, it must be concluded that Luke 22:43-44 are original verses to Luke. While the debate is not settled and there are many aspects of the debate that were not addressed in this paper, the evidence that has been discussed herein provides a sufficient refutation to the arguments that were addressed. The external evidence found in the manuscripts, traditionally understood as being in favor of the later interpolation of these verses, has been shown to be decidedly inconclusive. Furthermore, if the studies that have been done in recent years concerning the debate of P<sup>75</sup> are true, then those arguing for the later interpolation of Luke 22:43-44 lose much ground in the debate. Secondly, P<sup>69</sup> has been shown to

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<sup>92</sup>cf. R. Kent Hughes, *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*, vol. 2 of *Preaching the Word* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1998), 333. "He knew that death would bring on him the wrath of God (cf. 1 John 2:2)—and that he would propitiate it to the full. That is why Jesus was filled with such unremitting dread. This is why he was so fearful. This is why he could well have died *before* the cross."

<sup>93</sup>cf. 1 Cor 10:13.

be an irrelevant manuscript in the debate because of the fact that it excises a greater portion of Luke 22 than any other manuscript and is therefore untrustworthy for that portion of the Gospel.  $\kappa$  has been shown to be in support of the Lucan origin of 22:43-44 even though its first corrector excised the verses. It must be remembered that the second corrector re-inserted the verses into the manuscript. 0171, an often ignored miniscule, has been shown to be significant because of its early date and contains the end of Luke 22:44. Internal evidence, as well, has been shown to be in favor of Lucan origin. Ehrman's supposedly unmistakable and unavoidable chiasmus has been disproven. An alternative chiasmus has been provided, if one insists on seeing a chiasmus in this pericope. The unique vocabulary in Luke 22:43-44 has been shown to be irrelevant to the debate because Luke regularly has a high volume of *hapax legomena* and because Luke was simply an expert with the Greek language. Lastly, I rejected the claim that ἄγγελος ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ could not have originated with Luke because the phrase is only found in 22:43. I demonstrated that while ἄγγελος ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ does only occur in 22:43, there is plenty of precedence for the phrase originating with Luke because he elsewhere connects angels to heaven and he uses the exact same construction for the first angelic appearance in 1:11. While the debate will undoubtedly continue on and likely never be resolved, there is more than enough reason to affirm 22:43-44 as original verses in Luke's Gospel that were later excised. Luke 22:43-44, then, must be considered inspired and authoritative words of God.

## Appendix

### Ehrman and Plunkett's Chiastic Structure<sup>94</sup>

Introduction: And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the mount of olives, and the disciples followed him. (22:39)

A. And when he came to the place, he said to them, “pray that you may not enter into temptation. (22:40)

B. And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw (22:41a)

C. And he knelt down (22:41b)

D. Prayed saying, “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done.” (22:41c-42)

C'. And when he rose from prayer (22:45a)

B'. He came to his disciples (22:45b)

A'. And found them sleeping for sorrow, and he said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation. (22:45c-46)

### Potential Chiastic Structure if 22:43-44 are Original<sup>95</sup>

Introduction: And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the mount of olives, and the disciples followed him. (22:39)

A. And when he came to the place, he said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.” (22:40)

B. And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed (22:41)

C. Saying, “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done.” (22:42)

D. And there appeared to him an angel from heaven strengthening him. (22:43)

C'. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling on the ground. (22:44)

B'. And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow (22:45)

A'. And he said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation.” (22:46)

The strength of the chiastic structure including 22:43-44 is that the pericope centers not on Jesus' prayer, but on the Father's response to Jesus's prayer. The Father's response is unique to Luke, illuminating an otherwise unknown aspect to Jesus's pre-betrayal prayer.

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<sup>94</sup>Ehrman and Plunkett, 413. English translation using the ESV. Original uses Greek.

<sup>95</sup>cf. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 182.

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