

SCRIPTURAL INSPIRATION AND THE AUTHORIAL
“ORIGINAL” AMID TEXTUAL COMPLEXITY:
THE SEQUENCES OF THE MURDER–ADULTERY–STEAL
COMMANDS AS A CASE STUDY

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Abstract: *This article examines the diversity found in the sequence of a portion the Decalogue (murder, adultery, steal) and uses it to articulate and reflect upon some challenging issues with which evangelical inerrantists should grapple. It is a fitting case study, given the Decalogue’s central importance and intrinsically memorizable form. The article begins by providing a fresh and comprehensive inventory of all relevant evidence for the OT forms, quotations/allusions in the NT, and additional early Jewish and Christian references. It then discusses the broader implications raised by this tangible example, specifically in terms of what it means to discuss the “autograph” or “original” of an OT writing, what form is received as “original” by NT authors, what variants contribute to our understanding of scriptural authority, and what possible improvements can be made in articulating a well-orded “high” doctrine of Scripture.*

Key words: *inerrancy, textual criticism, autographs, Decalogue, Ten Commandments, Septuagint, versions, textual transmission, Gospels, Paul*

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Liberty, the Pursuit of Happiness, and Life.”

Notice anything odd? For any American grade-school student with even a rudimentary knowledge of the Declaration of Independence, the sequencing within the final clause is quite obviously incorrect. “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness” is the “correct” order, as rendered not only in the autographical Declaration but in numerous reproductions found in books, commercials, movies, and so forth ever since. Indeed, it would be rather unusual for someone to get the sequence of this list wrong for something so well known, easily memorized, and important to our national history. One might expect something similar to prevail for the sequence of the Ten Commandments, the charter document of the people of God. But what do we actually find?

The variations seen in the *numbering* of the Ten Commandments are well known, particularly in terms of commandments 1–2 and 9–10.¹ Perhaps less well

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known is the underlying complexity of the *sequencing* of the Murder²–Adultery–Steal commands found in the so-called “second table” of the Decalogue. The uniformity found across all modern religious groups on the sequence of these commandments obscures a more complicated story in the ancient world. The aim of this article is twofold. The first is to provide the most comprehensive inventory available of the known data (approximately 85 relevant readings) in the Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic/Syriac, Latin, and other traditions of the Decalogue, including OT, NT, and early Jewish/Christian sources. This alone will contribute to scholars working on the history and reception of the Decalogue (on both OT and NT sides). The second is to reflect on the questions raised by the substantial variations found in the sequences of these commandments in extant witnesses. The importance of the Decalogue—its memorability, privileged status in both Jewish and Christian antiquity, central place in the Torah, and reception by multiple authors of the NT—makes it a good case study on the complexities of the textual traditions of both testaments in the early Jewish and Christian eras. Thus, having established the data, I will use this example as a launching point for articulating some questions it surfaces for how those (including myself) who hold to a “high” view of scriptural inspiration should think about “autographs,” textual transmission, and other important topics.

I. MODERN SEQUENCE

Though differing on the numbers assigned to this subset of commands due to their respective differences on the first two commandments—namely, Lutherans

¹ Space does not permit a detailed discussion here. For the most robust recent treatment, see Jason S. DeRouchie, “Counting the Ten: An Investigation into the Numbering of the Decalogue,” in *For Our Good Always: Studies on the Message and Influence of Deuteronomy in Honor of Daniel I. Block* (ed. Jason S. DeRouchie, Jason Gile, and Kenneth J. Turner; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 93–125; see also Mordechai Breuer, “Dividing the Decalogue into Verses and Commandments,” in *The Ten Commandments in History and Tradition* (ed. Ben Segal and Gershon Levi; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1990), 291–330. To be brief, the first three clauses of the Decalogue can be summarized as follows: [a] I am the Lord your God; [b] You shall have no other gods before me; [c] You shall not make carved images. The final two clauses of the Decalogue can be summarized as follows: [y] You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife; [z] You shall not covet your neighbor’s property. Among the major ecclesial traditions, these clauses are grouped differently in the 1st, 2nd, 9th, and 10th commandments:

Lutheran and Catholic:	1=abc	...	9=y	10=z
Other Protestant:	1=b	2=c	...	10=yz
Majority Jewish tradition:	1=a	2=bc	...	10=yz
Orthodox:	1=ab	2=c	...	10=yz

² While acknowledging that many English translations (and other renderings, such as the Aramaic) read “kill” rather than the more specific “murder,” I will use the latter for consistency. As Eibert Tigchelaar notes, “רצח ... is not a general verb for ‘to kill,’ but [it] also does not exactly correspond to our modern concept of ‘murder’”: “‘Thou shalt not kill’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Narrative and Halakah,” presented at the WMU Münster Conference—“‘Du sollst nicht töten’: Das Tötungsverbot als Norm in Religionen und Kulturen der Antike” (January 15, 2011).

and Roman Catholics assign 5–6–7, and everyone else assigns 6–7–8—all modern Jewish and Christian traditions agree on their relative sequence. For instance, we read in Luther’s shorter catechism, *Du solt nicht tödten ... Du solt nicht Ehebrechen ... Du solt nicht stehlen*.³ The catechism of the Roman Catholic Church (Articles 6–8) follows the Murder–Adultery–Steal sequence. For Reformed churches, *Westminster Larger Catechism* Q134/Q137/Q140 state the order as “Thou shalt not kill ... Thou shalt not commit adultery ... Thou shalt not steal.”⁴ Jewish tradition follows the same sequence,⁵ as does the Orthodox tradition, despite the tremendous diversity seen in the Greek OT witnesses.⁶

II. ANCIENT SEQUENCES: AN INVENTORY

The textual tradition, however, is far from uniform. What follows is a comprehensive survey of these three commandments across the relevant corpora—the first such compilation available.⁷ Such detail is important in its own right in order to make all the relevant data available, but it will also serve to illustrate the underlying complexity and crystallize important issues for discussion. After tabulating the data, I will summarize the key points before moving on to a discussion of the implications.

A brief note on methodology is needed. I will proceed from (1) OT evidence, including the versional evidence as well as manuscripts that purport to give a direct reading of the Decalogue, rather than a *relecture*; to (2) NT evidence where appeals are made to this section of the Decalogue; to (3) additional Jewish and Christian evidence where independent use of these commandments appear (that is, excluding a patristic quotation of Paul’s quotation of the Decalogue, and similar situations). The chief criterion for selecting relevant passages is the collocation of at least two of these three commandments (apart from a few cases of scribal error) in contexts where the divine commands are clearly being discussed. But within the resulting pool of data, I also distinguish between *direct* and *indirect* evidence: the former category is most important and refers to those passages that are indisputably appealing to these commandments *as Decalogue commandments*; the latter category is supple-

³ From the critical edition of “Der Kleine Katechismus,” in Irene Dingel, *Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche: Vollständige Neuauflage* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 864–66. The Latin counterpart reads *Non occides ... Non moechaberis ... Non furtum facies*.

⁴ 1788 American revised edition, provided by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

⁵ See, for instance, *Mek. d’R. Shimeon* to Exod 20:14 and *Pesik. Rab.* 24.

⁶ See below. *The Orthodox Study Bible* (St. Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008). Interestingly, the foreword notes that the OT translators “used the Alfred Rahlfs edition of the Greek text as the basis,” though the NKJV is used “in places where the English translation of the LXX would match that of the Masoretic” (p. xi). The latter caveat, I presume, explains why they conform to Murder–Adultery–Steal in both Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5, even though this departs from Rahlfs (see below). This is consistent with other Orthodox sources that talk generically of following “the Septuagint” as if it were some sort of monolithic entity.

⁷ Smaller-scale analyses are provided elsewhere by David Flusser, “Do Not Commit Adultery’, ‘Do Not Murder,’” *Textus* 4 (1964): 220–24; and DeRouchie, “Counting,” 95 n. 5.

mental and refers to passages that make reference to these commandments within a broader context that may include other non-Decalogue material (e.g. vice lists). In tabulating the various possible sequences, it is obvious mathematically that six permutations of Murder [M]—Adultery [A]—Steal [S] are possible, plus an additional six if you include pairs. Three—MAS, AMS, and ASM—are most common and receive their own column in the inventory in order to facilitate comparison; all other sequences are listed in the “Other” column. An excerpt of each relevant reading is provided so that comparisons in wording and sequence can be made more easily.⁸

1. *OT evidence.* We begin with the two canonical accounts of this section of Decalogue as found in Exod 20:13–15 and Deut 5:17–19, followed by two examples from Hosea and Jeremiah. We will present as full a listing of witnesses for each language/tradition as possible, given the present scope (further details can be found in the editions cited).

⁸ Note, the excerpted readings provided may in some cases be slightly oversimplified, particularly in terms of minor orthographic differences among manuscripts that otherwise clearly share the same reading.

a. *Exodus 20 account of the Decalogue (direct).*

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
Heb ⁹	Leningrad ¹⁰	: לא תרצח : ס לא תנאף ס לא תגנב :	●			
Sam ¹¹	Majority	לא תקטל לא תגור לא תגנב	●			
Gk ¹²	B 82 f 120 ⁷	οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις, οὐ φονεύσεις			●	
	A F M a-chklmpstv-b ₂ [Complutensian] ¹³	οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις	●			
	C ¹ -422 125 n ¹²⁷ 30 ¹ x	οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις		●		

⁹ 4Q158 f7–8 is occasionally mentioned as reading MAS, which would constitute the only known Hebrew manuscript of Exod 20:13–15 other than Leningrad (Aleppo does not contain Genesis 1–Deuteronomy 27). See the reconstruction of the text in García Florentino Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000). However, the fragment has a lacuna at this point, so any reconstruction as MAS is hypothetical; hence, it is excluded from this inventory. For more on this fragment, see Emanuel Tov, “4QReworked Pentateuch: A Synopsis of Its Contents,” *RevQ* 16 (1995): 647–53.

¹⁰ Also known as St. Petersburg Codex B19A, or *Leningradensis* (which is the basis of BHS).

¹¹ Critical text of the Samaritan Pentateuch provided by *The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon* (<http://cal1.cn.huc.edu/>) (CAL), which, in turn, is based upon A. F. Tal, *The Samaritan Targum of the Pentateuch: A Critical Edition* (Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University, 1981). Text rendered here in square script for ease of reading.

¹² The witnesses listed are compiled from John W. Wevers, *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum*, vol. 2:1: *Exodus* (ed. U. Quast; Societatis Litterarum Göttingensis; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991); Alan E. Brooke and Norman McLean, *The Old Testament in Greek*, vol. 1:2: *Exodus and Leviticus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909); Henry Barclay Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek according to the Septuagint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1896); and Frederick Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt: sive veterum interpretum graecorum in totum Vetus Testamentum fragmenta*, vol. 1: *Prolegomena. Genesis-Esther* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1875). Space does not permit providing dating and text-type information for the uncials and minuscules listed; consult John W. Wevers, *Text History of the Greek Exodus* (MSU 21; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992). Note: Sinaiticus has lacunae for both Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5.

¹³ From the 1521 edition. Given its provenance, this almost certainly reflects an assimilation to the Hebrew order.

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
	799	οὐ κλέψεις, οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ μοιχεύσεις				SMA
	84	οὐ κλέψεις, οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ φονεύσεις				MSA
Aram	Tg. Onqelos ¹⁴	הא לא תגנב לא תרצח [גנב]	●			
	Peshitta ¹⁵	ܠܐ ܝܘܨܗ ܕܐܘܪܚܝܢ ܠܐ ܝܘܨܗ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ	●			
Lat	Old Latin ¹⁶	<i>non occides, non moecha- beris, non furaberis</i>	●			
	Vulgate ¹⁷	<i>non occides, non moecha- beris, non furtum facies</i>	●			
Other	Armenian; Coptic (Bohairic); Ethiopic	—	●			
	Coptic (Sahidic)	—			●	

¹⁴ From *CAL. Tg. Neofiti* and *Tg. Jonathan*, though containing their typical expansions/glosses, read MAS.

¹⁵ *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshitta Version*, part 1:1: *Genesis–Exodus* (Leiden: Brill, 1977). See also M. D. Koster, “The Numbering of the Ten Commandments in Some Peshitta Manuscripts,” *VT* 30 (1980): 468–73.

¹⁶ Pierre Sabatier, *Bibliborum Sacrorum latinae versiones antiquae: Tomus primus* (Remis: Apud Reginaldum Florentain, 1743).

¹⁷ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata. Editio quinta* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007).

b. *Deuteronomy 5 account of the Decalogue (direct).*

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
Heb	Leningrad	לֹא תִרְצַח : ס לא תנאף : ס לא תגנב : ס	●			
	Nash Papyrus (Or. 233) ¹⁸	לֹא תִנְאָף לֹא תִרְצַח לו[א תג]נב		●		
	4Q41 (4QDeut ^N) ¹⁹	לֹא תִרְצַח לֹא תִנְאָף לֹא תגנב	●			
	Qumran phylac- teries (1Q13, 4Q129, 4Q134, XQ3) ²⁰	(Minor variations on the MT reading)	●			
Sam	Majority	לֹא תִקְטֹל לֹא תִגְוֹר לֹא תִגְנֹב	●			
Gk ²¹	B V 963 ^{vid} b d n ⁻¹²⁷ t 407'	οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις		●		

¹⁸ The famous Nash Papyrus is dated to the second century BC and is one of the oldest Hebrew copies of the Decalogue (see <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-OR-00233/1>). For a transcription and discussion, consult F. C. Burkitt, "The Hebrew Papyrus of the Ten Commandments," *JQR* 15 (1903): 392–408. It remains debated whether the papyrus represents an early edition of Exodus, an early edition of Deuteronomy, or a combination of the two (for, say, catechetical purposes). Given it also contains the Shema (Deut 6:4), I have included it here with the Deuteronomy witnesses. See discussion in Alfred Jepsen, "Beiträge zur Auslegung und Geschichte des Dekalogs," *ZAW* 79.3 (1967): 277–304; he argues it reflects the Hebrew *Vorlage* behind Codex Alexandrinus.

¹⁹ Dated to the first century BC, this fragment is one of the earliest of Hebrew Deuteronomy. See images at <http://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/explore-the-archive/image/B-314643>.

²⁰ For plates and transcriptions, see *DJD* 1 and *DJD* 6; on XQ3 (including comparisons with Nash and other witnesses), consult Maurice Baillet, "Nouveaux phylactères de Qumran (X Q Phyl 1–4) à propos d'une édition récente," *RerQ* 7.3 (1970): 403–15. Interestingly, 4Q129 (Phyl^B) is one of two Qumran findings that, like the Nash Papyrus (see note above), include both the Decalogue and Shema.

²¹ The witnesses listed are compiled primarily from John W. Wevers, *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum*, vol. 3.2: *Deuteronomium* (ed. U. Quast; 2nd ed.; Societatis Litterarum Gottingensis; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006); Alan E. Brooke and Norman McLean, *The Old Testament in Greek*, vol. 1:3: *Numbers, Deuteronomy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911); Swete, *Old Testament*; and Field, *Origenis*. Space does not permit providing dating and text-type information on the uncials and minuscules listed; consult John W. Wevers, *Text History of the Greek Deuteronomy* (MSU 13; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978).

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
	A F M acefh- moqrsvxyzb ₂ [Complutensian]	οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις	●			
	414	οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ φονεύσεις				AM
Aram	Tg. Onqelos	לא תקטול נפש לא תגור לא [תגנב] [נפש]	●			
	Peshitta ²²	ܠܐ ܝܘܒ ܕܐ ܠܐ ܝܘܒ ܕܐ ܠܐ ܕܐ ܝܘܒ ܕܐ	●			
Lat	Old Latin	<i>non occides, non adulterabis, furtumque non facies</i>	●			
	Vulgate	<i>non occides, neque moechaberis, furtumque non facies</i>	●			
Other	Coptic (Bohairic)	—	●			
	Armenian, Ethi- opic (most); Coptic (Sahidic)	—		●		
	Ethiopic (ms. M)	—				AM

c. *Other allusions to the Decalogue (indirect)*. Two other passages in Israel's Scriptures are generally understood to allude to the second table of Decalogue, as they are the only other places where these three verbs show up together along with other commandments such as lying. (i) In a sweeping indictment on Israel's sin, Hos 4:2 reads, "There is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery" (ESV). The Hebrew follows the MSA order (וּרְצַח וְגַנְבַּ וְנֹאֲפֵי), as does the main line of the Greek tradition (καὶ φόνος καὶ κλοπὴ καὶ μοιχεία), the Peshitta, *Tg. Jonathan*, and the Vulgate. (ii) Jeremiah 7:9 likewise accuses Israel with these words: "Will

²² *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version*, part 1:1: *Leviticus–Numbers–Deuteronomy–Joshua* (Leiden: Brill, 1991).

you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known?” (ESV). The Hebrew follows SMA (פְּנֵי הַצַּח וְנִגְנָה), as do the Peshitta, *Tg. Jonathan*, and Vulgate; however, the main Greek tradition follows MAS (καὶ φονεύετε καὶ μοιχᾶσθε καὶ κλέπτετε).

2. *NT evidence.* It is generally recognized that the second table of the Ten Commandments is directly quoted or, at least, echoed in eight places in the NT: the Synoptic account of Jesus and the young man; Jesus’s teaching on what defiles a person in Matthew and Mark; Rom 13:9; Jas 2:11; and the first two “antitheses” of the Sermon on the Mount. Each will be treated in turn.

a. *Jesus and the young man (Mark 10:19 // Matt 19:18 // Luke 18:20) (direct).* The best known and direct case of Jesus’s own use of the Decalogue comes in his summary on the law in conversation with the young man during his Judean ministry. To set the context, a brief synopsis of the account based on the eclectic text of NA²⁸/UBS⁵ is provided:²³

Mark 10:17–22	Matt 19:16–22	Luke 18:18–23
Καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ εἰς ὁδὸν προσδραμῶν εἰς καὶ γονυπετήσας αὐτὸν ἐπρώτα αὐτόν·	Καὶ ἰδοὺ εἷς προσελθὼν αὐτῷ εἶπεν·	Καὶ ἐπρώτησέν τις αὐτὸν ἄρχων λέγων·
διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, τί ποιήσω ἵνα ζῶν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω;	διδάσκαλε, τί ἀγαθὸν ποιήσω ἵνα σχῶ ζωὴν αἰώνιον;	διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, τί ποιήσας ζῶν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω;
ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός.	ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· τί με ἐρωτᾷς περὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ; εἷς ἐστὶν ὁ ἀγαθός·	εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός.
	εἰ δὲ θέλεις εἰς τὴν ζωὴν εἰσελθεῖν, τήρησον τὰς ἐντολάς.	
	λέγει αὐτῷ· ποίας;	
	ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν·	
τὰς ἐντολάς οἶδας·		τὰς ἐντολάς οἶδας·
<u>μὴ φονεύσης,</u>	<u>τὸ οὐ φονεύσεις,</u>	<u>μὴ μοιχεύσης,</u>
<u>μὴ μοιχεύσης,</u>	<u>οὐ μοιχεύσεις,</u>	<u>μὴ φονεύσης,</u>
<u>μὴ κλέψης,</u>	<u>οὐ κλέψεις,</u>	<u>μὴ κλέψης,</u>
<u>μὴ ψευδομαρτυρήσης,</u>	<u>οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις,</u>	<u>μὴ ψευδομαρτυρήσης,</u>
<u>μὴ ἀποστερήσης,</u>	—	—
τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα.	τίμα τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα,	τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα.

²³ For an alternative Synoptic layout, see Kurt Aland, *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1996).

Mark 10:17–22	Matt 19:16–22	Luke 18:18–23
	καὶ ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτὸν.	
ὁ δὲ ἔφη αὐτῷ· διδάσκαλε, ταῦτα πάντα ἐφυλάξαμην ἐκ νεότητός μου...	λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ νεανίσκος· πάντα ταῦτα ἐφύλαξα· τί ἔτι ὑστερῶ...	ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· ταῦτα πάντα ἐφύλαξα ἐκ νεότητος...

The basic flow of the account in each retelling is the same,²⁴ apart from (i) Matthew’s enhanced detail on the back and forth between the young man and Jesus; (ii) Matthew’s inclusion of the “love your neighbor” summary statement (cf. Matt 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27) as one of the ἐντολῶν; and (iii) Mark’s inclusion of “Do not defraud” (μὴ ἀποστερήσης), which is neither part of the Decalogue nor found elsewhere in the OT in similar contexts, which raises important text-critical and source-critical questions.²⁵

Of most relevance to the present discussion is, of course, the differing sequences of the Murder–Adultery–Steal commands. From the synopsis, it appears that Luke is the odd one out; however, a fuller inventory of the various readings reveals a much more complex picture.²⁶

²⁴ The complexities surrounding Jesus’s statement “what is good”/“why do you call me good” need not detain us.

²⁵ The manuscript attestation is more or less balanced; that it is the *lectio difficilior* likely impacts the editorial committee’s decision to retain it in the text without brackets. Witnesses with the reading include **NA** B² C D E F G H N^{vid} M U **Γ** **Θ** 0274. 2. 13. 124. 157. 180. 691. 565. 597. 828. 892. 1006. 1071. 1241. 1243. 1292. 1342. 1424. 1505. *Byz* it^a, *aur*, b, c, d, f, ff2, k, l, q *Vulg* Syr^p, *H* Cop^{Sa}, Bo Eth Slav. Witnesses that omit the reading include B* K W **Δ** **Σ** **Π** **Ψ** *J*³ 28. 69*. 205. 579. 700. 788. 1010. 2542. Syr^s Arm Geo (see UBS⁵ and Reuben J. Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, vol. 2: *Mark: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines against Codex Vaticanus* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995], 161). The plus is interesting in that this command “does not come from the Bible” (Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21–28* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005], 51 n. 232 [commenting on Matthew’s omission of it]). It is not included in the Decalogue, of course, and the only time the verb appears in the Greek OT tradition is at Exod 21:10 (ἐὰν δὲ ἄλλην λάβῃ ἑαυτῷ, τὰ δέοντα καὶ τὸν ἱματισμὸν καὶ τὴν ὀμίλιαν αὐτῆς οὐκ ἀποστερήσει), where it is referring to a woman’s marital rights—clearly not the same context as in this pericope in Mark. It does, however, appear in a list of ethical exhortations in Sir 4:1 (τένον, τὴν ζωὴν τοῦ πτωχοῦ μὴ ἀποστερήσης). The reading, then, raises several questions: did Mark get this plus from an authentic Jesus tradition but Matthew and Luke chose not to include it here? If authentic, is Mark (or his source) familiar with Sirach or another similar tradition? Or was it added later by a scribe, and if so, why? What are the implications of its obvious inclusion in a summation of the Decalogue? How might this phenomenon relate to Matthew’s inclusion of another non-Decalogue clause (“love your neighbor”)?

²⁶ It is also striking that “honor your father and mother” is placed after these commandments, not before.

Mark 10:19

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
Gk ²⁷	Ⲁ ¹ B C Δ Ψ 0274. 579. 892	μη φονεύσης, μη μοιχεύσης, μη κλέψης	●			
	A K M N U W Θ Π J ¹³ 2. 28. 157. 565. 700. 1071. 1241. 1424. 2542. Bγζ	μη μοιχεύσης, μη φονεύσης, μη κλέψης		●		
	Ⲁ*	μη φονεύσης, μη κλέψης				MS
	J ¹	μη μοιχεύσης, μη κλέψης				AS
	D Γ	μη μοιχεύσης, μη πορνεύσης, μη κλέψης				AS
Lat ²⁸	Old Latin (some mss.)	<i>non occides, non adulterabis</i>				MA
	Old Latin (some mss.)	<i>non occides, non adulterabis, non furaberis</i>	●			
	Old Latin (some mss.)	<i>non adulterabis, non occides, non furaberis</i>		●		
	Vulgate	<i>ne adulteres, ne occidas, ne fureris</i>		●		

²⁷ The witnesses listed are compiled from Swanson, *Mark*; NA²⁸/UBS⁵ and NA²⁷/UBS⁴.

²⁸ See Pierre Sabatier, *Bibliorum Sacrorum latinae versiones antiquae: Tomus tertius* (Remis: Apud Reginaldum Florentain, 1751); Walter Matzkow, Adolf Jülicher, and Kurt Aland, *Itala: Das Neue Testament in altlateinischer Überlieferung: Markus-Evangelium* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1970) (not all variant readings shown).

Matthew 19:18

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
Gk ³⁰	Essentially all ³¹	οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις	●			
	ⲛ*	οὐ φονεύσεις ³²				M
	579	οὐ φονεύσης, οὐ μοιχεύσης, οὐ μοιχεύσης				MAA
Lat	Old Latin	<i>non occides, non adulterium com- mittes,</i> ³³ <i>non furtum facies</i>	●			
	Vulgate	<i>non homicidium facies, non adul- terabis, non facies furtum</i>	●			
Syr	(Old) Syr ^s	ⲓⲁⲗ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲗⲟ ⲓⲁⲫⲟⲃⲓ ⲛⲗⲓ				MA
	(Old) Syr ^c ; Peshitta	ⲛⲗⲟ ⲓⲁⲗ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲗⲟ ⲓⲁⲫⲟⲃⲓ ⲛⲗⲓ ⲙⲁⲗ ⲛⲓ	●			
Other	Sahidic Cop- tic	nnekhôtb nnekrnoeik nnekçioue	●			

³⁰ The witnesses listed are compiled from Reuben J. Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, vol. 1: *Matthew: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines against Codex Vaticanus* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995); NA²⁸/UBS⁵ and NA²⁷/UBS⁴.

³¹ There are numerous minor variations in terms of other words in this verse, but our focus here is on the sequence.

³² The other two commandments (AS) are added by the first corrector.

³³ Several manuscripts read *non moechaberis* in the second position.

Luke 18:20

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
Gk ³⁴	Ⲙ Ⲁ Ⲕ Ⲛ Ⲁ 33. Bγζ	μη μοιχεύσης, μη φονεύσης, μη κλέψης		●		
	D various miniscules ³⁵	οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις		●		
	Ψ 0211. 1216. 1675	μη μοιχεύσης, μη κλέψης				AS
	579	μη μοιχεύσεις, μη πορνεύσεις, μη κλέ[ψεις]				A-S
	827. 1012. 2096. 2766	μη φονεύσης, μη μοιχεύσης, μη κλέψης	●			
	343. 1215. 1229. 2487	μη μοιχεύσης, μη κλέψης, [μη ψευδομαρτυρήσης.] μη φονεύσης			●	
	Some lectionaries	μη κλέψης, μη μοιχεύσης, μη φονεύσης				SAM
Lat	Old Latin (majority)	<i>non occides, non adulterium com- mittes, non furtum facies</i> ³⁶	●			

³⁴ The witnesses listed are compiled from *The New Testament in Greek: The Gospel According to St. Luke*, vol. 2: *Chapters 13–24* (International Greek NT Project; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); Reuben J. Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, vol. 3: *Luke: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines against Codex Vaticanus* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995); NA²⁸/UBS⁵ and NA²⁷/UBS⁴.

³⁵ IGNTP appears inconsistent in how witnesses for the future vs. subjunctive are listed, but among those that the editors mark as reading future for at least one of the three commands are 0211. 2. 21. 544. 579. 903. 1009. 1347. 1352. 1424. 1630.

³⁶ Some manuscripts read *non homicidium facies, non adulterabis* for the first and second positions.

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
	Old Latin (some mss.)	<i>non moechabis, non occides, non furtum facies</i>		●		
	Vulgate	<i>non occides, non moechaberis, non furtum facies</i>	●			
Syr	(Old) Syr ^{S,C} ; Peshitta	ܠܘ ܝܢܩ ܕܝ ܠܘ ܕܠܡܕܝ ܠܠ ܥܘܠ ܕܝ	●			
Other	Sahidic Coptic	mprrhoik mprhōtb mprhōft		●		
	Bohairic Coptic (vary)	—	●			MS

b. *Jesus’s teaching on what defiles a person (Mark 7:21–22 // Matt 15:18–19) (indirect).* Another Synoptic episode deals with Jesus’s debate with the Pharisees and scribes about their adherence to “tradition of the elders” (παράδοσις τῶν πρεσβυτέρων)/“precepts of men” (ἐντάλμα ἀνθρώπων) and departure from the “commandment of God” (ἐντολή τοῦ θεοῦ)/“word of God” (λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ). After his critique, Jesus explains to his disciples that the things coming out of the heart are what defiles a person. In the list of sins he provides, it is clear Jesus “has been influenced by the second table of the Decalogue,”³⁷ since all six of those commands are represented across the two lists, and Jesus has already prefaced this teaching with ἐντολή/λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ. However, the particulars vary between Mark’s and Matthew’s accounts (Luke omits this portion of the episode), particularly in terms of number of sins (twelve versus seven) and sequencing of the respective lists. Per NA²⁸/UBS⁵, the accounts read as follows, with Decalogue-related vocabulary underlined and numerical annotations added to help the reader compare the sequencing:

³⁷ W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 2: *Matthew VIII–XVIII* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 536–37.

Mark 7:21–22	Matt 15:18–19
<p>ἔσωθεν γὰρ ἐκ τῆς καρδίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων [0] οἱ διαλογισμοὶ οἱ κακοὶ ἐκπορεύονται,</p> <p>[1] πορνεΐαι, [2] κλοπαί, [3] φόνοι, [4] μοιχεΐαι, [5] πλεονεξίαι, [6] πονηρίαι, [7] δόλος, [8] ἀσέλγεια, [9] ὀφθαλμὸς πονηρός, [10] βλασφημία, [11] ὑπερηφανία, [12] ἀφροσύνη</p>	<p>τὰ δὲ ἐκπορευόμενα ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ἐκ τῆς καρδίας ἐξέρχεται, κάκεῖνα κοινοὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον. ἐκ γὰρ τῆς καρδίας ἐξέρχονται</p> <p>[0] διαλογισμοὶ πονηροί, [3] φόνοι, [4] μοιχεΐαι, [6] πορνεΐαι, [2] κλοπαί, [13] ψευδομαρτυρίαι, [10] βλασφημίαι</p>

These lists differ from the young man pericope covered above in that they do not purport to be direct quotations of the Decalogue; however, the fact that both lists include murder, adultery, and theft—as well as, individually, coveting and bearing false witness—indicates that they are helpful *indirect* witnesses to how the Decalogue was received by the Gospel tradition. As such, the diversity in sequence among the manuscripts for the three commandments in question offer helpful, though not decisive, evidence for the present study. In the extant witnesses, one will observe that “fornication” moves around quite a bit in the sequencing, but our focus will remain on the three in question.

Mark 7:21–22

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
Gk ³⁸	Ⲱ B L Δ Θ 0274. 579. 892	πορνείαι, κλοπαί, φόνοι, μοιχεΐαι				SMA
	D	πορνείαι, κλέμματα, μοιχεΐαι, φόνος				SAM
	W ^f 28*. 33. 124. 565. 700. 2542	μοιχεΐαι, πορνείαι, κλοπαί, φόνος			●	
	Α Κ Μ Ν U Γ Π ^{f3} 2. 157. 1071. 1241. 1424. Byζ	μοιχεΐαι, πορνείαι, φόνοι, κλοπαί		●		
	28 ¹	μοιχεΐαι, πορνείαι, κλοπαί				AS
Lat	Old Latin	<i>adulteria, furta, fornicationes, homicidia</i>			●	
	Vulgate	<i>adulteria, fornicationes, homicidia, furta</i>		●		
Syr	(Old) Syr ^{H,S}	ܩܘܪܒܝܢ ܩܠܒܘ ܩܘܪܒܝ ܩܘܪܒܝܢ		●		
	Peshitta	ܩܠܒܘ ܩܘܪܒܝܢ ܩܘܪܒܝ ܩܘܪܒܝܢ			●	
Cop	Sahidic	hençioue henhôtb henmnt- noeik				SMA

³⁸ Compiled from Swanson, *Mark*; NA²⁸/UBS⁵ and NA²⁷/UBS⁴.

Matt 15:18–19

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
Gk ³⁹	Ⲙ B D E 33 ^{vid.} 579. Byz	φόνοι, μοιχεΐαι, πορνείαι, κλοπαί	●			
	L W 1424	πορνείαι, μοιχεΐαι, φόνοι, κλοπαί		●		
Lat	Old Latin	<i>homicidia, adulteria, fornicationes, furta</i>	●			
	Vulgate	<i>homicidia, adulteria, fornicationes, furta</i>	●			
Syr	(Old) Syr ^S	ⲕⲃⲁⲓⲟⲓ ⲓⲁⲗ ⲓⲟ ⲕⲗⲃⲟⲓ ⲕⲃⲁⲓⲟⲓ ⲟ	●			
	Peshitta (vary)	ⲕⲃⲁⲓ ⲕⲗⲃⲟ ⲕⲓⲁⲗ [ⲕⲃⲁⲓⲟⲓ]		●		AM-
Cop	Sahidic	henhôtḅ henmntnoeik hen- porna henčioue	●			

c. *Romans 13:9 and the summation of the law (direct)*. Paul famously appeals to the Decalogue to summarize the essence of the moral law in the love commandment of Lev 19:18. Nearly all manuscripts agree on the sequence of Adultery–Murder–Steal (followed by Covet).⁴⁰

³⁹ Compiled from Swanson, *Matthew*; NA²⁸/UBS⁵ and NA²⁷/UBS⁴.

⁴⁰ Numerous witnesses (including Byz) insert οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις before the coveting command.

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
Gk ⁴¹	Essentially all ⁴²	οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις		●		
	1739. 1881	οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις				AS
	2125	οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις, οὐ φονεύσεις			●	
Lat	Old Latin	<i>non adulterabis, non occides, non furaberis</i>		●		
	Vulgate	<i>non adulterabis, non occides, non furaberis</i>		●		
Syr	Peshitta	ܠܐ ܕܘܠܡܐ ܠܐ ܝܘܘܕܝ ܠܐ ܘܘܘܘܕܝ		●		
Cop	Sahidic	nnekrnoeik nnekhôtb nnekçioue		●		

e. *James 2:11 and the keeping of the whole law (direct)*. Similar to what we see in Romans, the epistle of James appeals to a portion of the second table of the Decalogue—Adultery and Murder—in order to draw conclusions about keeping the *whole* law. The sequencing in itself is not the main focus of the author’s teaching, but the flow of the argument and the double repetition of the two commands in the same sequence at a minimum presupposes his reader’s familiarity with *some* known ordering of the Decalogue; otherwise the participle (εἰπών) + indicative (εἶπεν) + καί would lose some of its rhetorical force. Interestingly, we see two primary sequences even for this short example:

⁴¹ Compiled from Reuben J. Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, vol. 6: *Romans: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines against Codex Vaticanus* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001); NA²⁸/UBS⁵ and NA²⁷/UBS⁴.

⁴² There are numerous minor variants for other words in this verse.

	Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
Gk ⁴³	Ⲙ B P Ψ 020. 025. 049. 1 ^c . 5. 33. 81. <i>Byz</i> numerous others	μη μοιχεύσης...μη φονεύσης (or) οὐ μοιχεύσεις...οὐ φονεύσεις				AM
	C 61. 206. 252. 614. 630. 945. 1241. 1292. 1505. 1739. 1852. 2495.	μη φονεύσης...μη μοιχεύσης (or) οὐ φονεύσεις...οὐ μοιχεύσεις				MA
Lat	Old Latin	<i>non moechaberis...non occides</i>				AM
	Vulgate	<i>non moechaberis...non occides</i>				AM
Syr	Peshitta	ⲃⲁⲃⲃⲁ ⲗⲗⲓ ... ⲓⲁⲗ ⲃⲓ ⲗⲗⲓ				AM
	(Old) Syr ^H	ⲓⲁⲗ ⲃⲓ ⲗⲗⲓ ... ⲃⲁⲃⲃⲁ ⲗⲗⲓ				MA
Cop	Sahidic	mprnoeik...mprhôtb				AM
Other	Ethiopic	—				AM
	Armenian	—				MA

f. *Matthew 5:21–30 and the Sermon on the Mount (indirect)*. Our final example is an indirect one from Jesus’s famous “antitheses” in the Sermon on the Mount. As is well known, Jesus follows his statement on the fulfillment of the law and the prophets (Matt 5:17) with six teachings that draw from both the Torah and what his audience “has heard it said” (apparently referring to some sort of oral tradition). The first two are derived from the Decalogue and follow the order MA: οὐ φονεύσεις ... οὐ μοιχεύσεις. This sequence is stable in the textual tradition.

⁴³ Compiled from Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland, Gerd Mink, Holger Strutwolf, and Klaus Wachtel, eds., *Novum Testamentum Graecum, Editio Critica Maior*, vol. 4:1: *Die Katholischen Briefe* (2nd rev. ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2013). Due to the amount of information collated in this volume, only a representative sample of witnesses can be displayed here. The second half of the verse constitutes one of the ECM’s “diamond” (◆) readings, but it need not be discussed here.

3. *Additional evidence.* We turn finally to a variety of Jewish and Christian writings that appeal to the Decalogue independently (versus, say, quoting Rom 13:9).⁴⁴ The number of possible witnesses here is large, so we will focus on those that are earliest and most relevant to the discussion, proceeding roughly in chronological order. With the exception of a few vice lists, the majority of these examples would be classified as *direct*, as they are focusing specifically and explicitly on expounding the Decalogue.

Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
Josephus, <i>Ant.</i> 3.91–92 ⁴⁵	ὁ δὲ ἕκτος ἀπέχεσθαι <u>φόνου</u> · ὁ δὲ ἕβδομος μὴ <u>μοιχεύειν</u> · ὁ δὲ ὄγδοος μὴ <u>κλοπὴν</u> δρᾶν	●			
Philo, <i>Decal.</i> 121–135 ⁴⁶	ἀπὸ <u>μοιχείας</u> ἄρχεται ... Δεύτερον δὲ <u>πρόσταγμα μὴ ἀνδροφονεῖν</u> ...Τρίτον δ' ἐστὶ δευτέρας πεντάδος παράγγελμα <u>μὴ κλέπτειν</u>		●		
Philo, <i>Spec.</i> 3.8, 83; 4.1 ⁴⁷	ἐν δὲ τῇ δευτέρᾳ δέλτῳ πρώτων γράμμα τοῦτ' ἐστίν· <u>οὐ μοιχεύσεις</u> ...Ὄνομα μὲν <u>ἀνδροφονία</u> ...τρίτον μὲν ἐστὶ τῶν ἐπὶ τῇ δευτέρᾳ στήλῃ, τῶν δ' ἐν ἀμφοτέραις ὄγδοον, περὶ τοῦ <u>μὴ κλέπτειν</u>		●		
Philo, <i>Her.</i> 173 ⁴⁸	ἡ δ' ἑτέρα πεντάς ἐστὶν ἀπαγόρευσις <u>μοιχείας, ἀνδροφονίας, κλοπῆς, ψευδομαρτυρίας, ἐπιθυμίας</u>		●		

⁴⁴ For instance, the Göttingen LXX apparatus mentions Ambrosiaster as following AMS (*non adulterabis, non occides, non furaberis*), but he is simply citing Rom 13:9 there and is, thus, excluded from this inventory.

⁴⁵ LCL 242. In the context, Josephus is summarizing each of the ten “words” (λόγοι) of God to Moses.

⁴⁶ LCL 320. In context, Philo is expounding on the “second set” of commandments in the Decalogue. For a fuller discussion of Philo’s interaction with the Decalogue, see Yehoshua Amir, “The Decalogue According to Philo,” in *The Ten Commandments in History and Tradition* (ed. Ben Segal and Gershon Levi; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1990), 121–60.

⁴⁷ LCL 341. As with *Decal.*, Philo is expounding on the second table of the Decalogue at length here.

⁴⁸ LCL 261.

Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
“Two Ways” or <i>Doctrina Apostolorum</i> ⁴⁹	<i>non moechaberis, non homicidium facies, non falsum testimonium dices, non puerum uiolabis</i>				AM
<i>Did.</i> 2.2 ⁵⁰	<u>οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ παιδοφθορήσεις, οὐ πορνεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις</u>	●			
<i>Did.</i> 3.2–9	<u>φόνου</u> γεννῶνται... <u>μοιχεῖται</u> γεννῶνται... <u>κλοπαί</u> γεννῶνται	●			
<i>Did.</i> 5.1	πρῶτονπάντων πονηρά ἐστι καὶ κατάρως μεστή· <u>φόνου, μοιχεῖται, ἐπιθυμίαι, προνεῖαι, κλοπαί,</u> εἰδωλολατρίαι	●			
<i>Barn.</i> 20.1 ⁵¹	εἰδωλολατρεία, θρασύτης, ὕψος δυνάμεως, ὑπόκρισις, διπλοκαρδία, <u>μοιχεία, φόνος, ἀρπαγή,</u> ὑπερηφάνια, μαγεία, πλεονεξία, ἀφοβία θεοῦ		●		
<i>LAB</i> 11.9–12 ⁵²	<i>non mechaberis...non occides</i>				AM
Clem. of Alex., <i>Strom.</i> 7.37 ⁵³	<u>μὴ μοιχεύσης, μὴ φονεύσης</u>				AM

⁴⁹ The existence and text form of this early Christian document (possibly edited from a Jewish source) remains debated; the reading shown is a reconstruction provided by Huub van de Sandt and David Flusser, *The Didache: Its Jewish Sources and Its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 115. Flusser argues that the original of the document (possibly Semitic, though the only traces we have are Latin) is related to 1QS; see David Flusser, “The Ten Commandments and the New Testament,” in Segal and Levi, *Ten Commandments*, 235.

⁵⁰ Michael W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations* (3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007).

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Howard Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum: With Latin Text and English Translation*, vol. 1 (AGJU 31; Leiden: Brill, 1996). The author is commenting on the latter portion of the Decalogue, beginning with honoring parents, then adultery, then murder, then bearing false witness, then coveting; stealing is left out.

Witness	Reading (excerpt)	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
Tertullian, <i>Adv. Marc.</i> 4.16.17 ⁵⁴	<i>non occides, non adulterabis, non furaberis</i>	●			
Cyprian, <i>Test.</i> 3.1 ⁵⁵	<i>non occides, non moechaberis, non falsum testimonium</i>				MA
Hippolytus, <i>Elen.</i> 5.19.18–20 ⁵⁶	διατιμητικός δὲ νόμος ἐστὶν ὁ λέγων. <u>οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις</u>		●		
Chrysostom ⁵⁷	οἶον τὸ <u>φονεύειν</u> , τὸ <u>μοιχεύειν</u> , τὸ <u>κλέπτειν</u> ...ἀλλὰ μόνον ἀπηγόρευσεν, οὐ <u>μοιχεύσεις</u> , οὐ <u>φονεύσεις</u>	●			AM

4. *Summary.* Synthesizing this vast set of data is challenging. A statistical tabulation based on absolute manuscript counts is not only impossible (none of the examples have full collations of all known witnesses; the ECM for James comes close but is still selective) but also mostly unhelpful, since it fails to take into consideration manuscript quality, importance, and date (both of the artifact and the text contained). A *relative* tabulation would reveal that MAS is by far the most commonly attested across Semitic sources, and AMS among Greek sources—but on the whole the various witnesses are more or less all over the map. We can, however, venture a few summary statements to help put the data into perspective:

- *OT evidence.* Most extant Hebrew witnesses as well as versional evidence support MAS for both Exodus and Deuteronomy. However, a few very important witnesses indicate variations in sequence from an early date, chiefly, the Nash Papyrus and Codex Vaticanus (as well as a sampling of other uncials and minuscules). As Wevers observes, “Why the order

⁵³ PGL 9.485C. Clement also agrees with the AMS tradition for Mark 10:19 in *Quis.* 4.5 (see P. M. Barnard, *Clement of Alexandria: Quis dives salvetur* [Texts and Studies 5; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1897]).

⁵⁴ Ernest Evans, *Tertullian: Adversus Marcionem* (Early Christian Texts; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972).

⁵⁵ PGL 4.730C. A textual variant in Cott. reads MAS.

⁵⁶ Paul Wendland, *Hippolytus Werke, Dritter Band: Refutatio Omnium Haeresium* (GCS 26; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1916).

⁵⁷ Chrysostom refers to the Decalogue in several homilies. The most interesting one is in his *Homily on Fate and Providence* #3 (PGL 50.757), where he follows one order in one place but partially reverses it a few lines later (as shown above).

should vary [in Vaticanus] is not clear,⁵⁸ though he concludes (rightly, I believe, along with others) that B contains the earliest Greek reading for both of these passages and that modifications back to MAS (e.g. in Alexandrinus) reflect hexaplaric influence.⁵⁹ Septuagint scholars widely agree that the first translator(s) for Greek Exodus and Greek Deuteronomy are on the whole very faithful to their *Vorlage(n)*, so there is little reason here to suspect intentional modification away from the order they found in their Hebrew exemplar(s).⁶⁰ There is also little reason to suspect a mere slip of the pen by B's initial scribe, which likely would have prompted one of B's later correctors to take notice. Rather, assuming the scribe of B is faithful to his Greek exemplar (generally a good assumption), which in turn was faithful to the Hebrew *Vorlage(n)*, it appears that Greek Exodus and Greek Deuteronomy were operating from a Hebrew form of the Decalogue that, at least for these three commandments, differed from that used for the other versions and the MT—and from each other, since the two readings in B do not agree between themselves. The fact that Nash agrees with B–Deut confirms this hypothesis in part. At a minimum, the variations in sequence “zeigen sofort, daß der Text des Dekalogs eine Geschichte gehabt hat.”⁶¹

- *NT evidence:* The two different conjugations found in the NT witnesses for the verbal commandments is notable: οὐ + future (on which the Greek OT witnesses all agree) and μή + subjunctive (Mark, Luke [minus D], Paul, and about half of witnesses for James). From this phenomenon and the variations seen in sequence we find that (apart from Matthew's internal agreements) none of the witnesses fully agree with each other, at least in terms of those readings prioritized by NA/UBS.⁶² This is not necessarily outside the ordinary pattern seen among multiple NT authors drawing on the same OT passage. It is further notable that, apart from Matt 19:18, the versional witnesses evince a substantial degree of variation among themselves, thus mirroring the textual complexity of the Greek stratum.
- *Additional evidence:* There is a fair amount of diversity among the various Jewish and Christian quotations/allusions to these commandments, both in terms of wording and sequence. One notes, for instance, Philo's use of ἀνδροφονέω (0x NT; 1x LXX, in 4 Macc 9:15) rather than φονεύω, as well

⁵⁸ John W. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus* (SBLSCS 46; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 314.

⁵⁹ John W. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Deuteronomy* (SBLSCS 39; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 104.

⁶⁰ See the summaries on translation and composition in the respective chapters of James K. Aitken, *T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015).

⁶¹ “Directly demonstrate that the text of the Decalogue has had a history” (my trans.); Jepsen, “Beiträge,” 281. His conclusion is not solely based on the MAS/AMS difference but also on numerous other textual variations observed among Nash, DSS, LXX, and the MT.

⁶² The main alternative tradition for Mark 10:19 (including the Textus Receptus) has a strong claim to originality—or it could have arisen via assimilation to Luke 18:20.

as the variations seen among the Latin writers (*homicidia/occidio; adulterabis/moechor*—though these are consistent with OL/Vulgate variations). Moreover, the writers are nearly 50/50 split MA[S] and AM[S], with none giving independent attestation of ASM or any sequence beginning with S, despite their appearance in the OT/NT textual tradition. There appears to be no strong correlation between order and language. It is notable, however, that *Doctrina Apostolorum*, *Didache*, and *Barnabas* differ, given their apparent mutual relations.

III. DISCUSSION OF IMPLICATIONS

This study involves but a small example of three commandments from the Decalogue. The variations in sequence (and wording) observed are, from one perspective, consistent with what we might find for any phrase in the OT tradition, especially for lists. However, the importance of this passage far exceeds its length, given the central importance of the Ten Commandments to both Jewish and Christian tradition. While the grouping/numbering of the other seven commandments does vary, the actual sequencing does not. These three appear to be the exception.⁶³ In a central teaching that was memorized, catechized, and preached for generations, one wonders: How do we account for so many different sequences for this subset of commands? Why was there a tendency toward variation rather than toward standardization, as we might expect (and as we see today across modern traditions)? Further, there is little evidence that the various tradents were even consciously aware of the various extant sequences.⁶⁴

This turbulence seen in the numerous traditions raises at least four questions that deserve more scrutiny, particularly in terms of the doctrine-of-Scripture implications for those operating from a “high” view of Scripture of a broadly Chicago Statement, Westminster Assembly, and/or Warfieldian variety.⁶⁵

1. *What does it mean to speak of the “inspired” or “original” sequence of these commandments given to Moses?* Of fundamental importance to the traditional evangelical or Reformed approach to Scripture is the notion that the locus of divine inspiration (and thus inerrancy/infallibility) is the autographs, which, of course, we no longer possess. For this specific example, one might frame the question thus: in the divine

⁶³ Such a phenomenon may be purely accidental. However, it is possible that these three functioned almost as a discrete unit (which may, in turn, explain some of the variability). John Walton, following the earlier work of Stephen Kaufman, argues that the Decalogue (Deuteronomy 5) provides the overarching structure for the rest of Deuteronomy. In this scheme, Murder-Adultery-Steal are considered jointly as corresponding to the second commandment and receive their elaboration in Deut 19:1–24:7. While Walton argues that there is a flow in these chapters that loosely follows MAS, he admits that some key “anomalies” (e.g. 21:20–22:12 and 23:1–18) do not fit this scheme neatly. See his “The Decalogue Structure of the Deuteronomic Law,” in *Interpreting Deuteronomy: Issues and Approaches* (ed. David G. Firth and Philip S. Johnston; Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 93–117, esp. 115.

⁶⁴ Though we surmise that some scribes’ modifications in one direction or another arose from a desire to conform their exemplar to a different sequence with which they were more familiar.

⁶⁵ As does the present author.

speech act,⁶⁶ *text* (which can exist apart from any written artifact), or *wording*⁶⁷ communicated to Moses at Sinai, inscribed on the stone tablets (twice), and inscripturated in Exodus and Deuteronomy, what was the sequence of these commandments? This kind of question regarding wording applies to all of Israel's Scriptures, for which the Decalogue is a very helpful test case given its status as the summation of the Torah. What this study surfaces is the underlying complexity that has not always received sufficient attention in evangelical circles.

We can articulate this more concretely by using this single example to produce a high-level schematic—focusing on the main examples in the inventory above (incorporating all variant traditions would be overly cumbersome)—of the historical flow of the text.⁶⁸ An attempt will be made to distinguish between a known textual reading and concrete artifactual witnesses (underlined), where important. The NT and Josephus/Philo are included here as the only clear first-century CE data points, but one should keep in mind that they largely provide insight into what later writers *thought* was the 'correct' sequence—which is a separate question (on which more below).

⁶⁶ See Timothy Ward's construal of speech-act theory in relation to inspiration in *Words of Life: Scripture as the Living and Active Word of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014) (a simpler version of his 2002 thesis).

⁶⁷ On the complexity of choosing the right wording by which even to ask the question, see Peter J. Williams, "Ehrman's Equivocation and the Inerrancy of the Original Text," in *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures* (ed. D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 389–406.

⁶⁸ Constructing such a schematic is made difficult by the fact that age of artifact ≠ age of textual reading (e.g. a 4th-century-AD uncial codex may contain a reading from the 2nd century BC). I will attempt to reflect this in the diagram without making things overly confusing—acknowledging that this requires some oversimplification in terms of dates, etc. This simply reiterates my point about complexity.

Approx. time	MAS	AMS	ASM	Other
~1500s–1300s BC	<i>“Inspired” / “original” sequence given to Moses?</i>			
700s–600s BC				Hosea / Jeremiah
200s BC		<u>Nash Papyrus</u> “Old Greek” Deut	“Old Greek” Exod	
100s BC	<u>Qumran Deut</u> Samaritan Pent			
AD 0–100	Josephus Jesus (Matthew) Jesus (Mark?)	Philo Paul Jesus (Luke) Jesus (Mark?)	Jesus (Mark?)	
AD 200s	Old Latin Tg Onqelos Peshitta OT			
300s–400s AD	Vulgate <u>Alexandrinus</u>	<u>Vaticanus</u> (Deut)	<u>Vaticanus</u> (Exod)	
1000s AD and later	<u>Leningrad</u> <u>Gk Exod minuscules</u> <u>Gk Deut minuscules</u>	<u>Gk Exod minuscules</u> <u>Gk Deut minuscules</u>		<u>Misc. Gk minuscules</u>
Today	<u>Modern Bibles</u>			

Most evangelicals today treat Leningrad (MT/*BHS*) as, functionally, the text that best approximates the “inspired” or “original” wording.⁶⁹ In the case of these commandments, the Masoretic form has strong pedigree attested by other preceding Semitic traditions, but at an earlier point—namely the 100–200s BC—the extant data points in other directions.⁷⁰ So how does one think about “original”? How do we weight the long-standing MAS tradition that coalesces in the Masoretic

⁶⁹ It is, indeed, generally the starting point for most Hebrew scholars, though in recent years its primacy has been questioned by Emanuel Tov and others.

⁷⁰ As W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann summarize, “By NT times there were several divergent recensions of the Decalogue” (*Matthew* [AB 26; New York: Doubleday, 1971], 231–32).

form against two different traditions that are, from an artifactual perspective, centuries older? On what methodological grounds can we make the *a fortiori* move from the three main candidates to the singular sequence given to Moses?

One might interject, “Does it really matter? It does not affect meaning.” This may be true, though note that Philo—apparently familiar with the Old Greek Deuteronomy tradition—*does* draw implications from the sequence. In *De decalogo* he argues that Adultery comes first in sequence because it is the greatest of all transgressions (μέγιστον ἀδικημάτων). While it is possible that he is intentionally modifying the MAS order—witnessed by his near-contemporary Josephus—to AMS in order to fit his own beliefs on Adultery, he would scarcely be able to call it the “first” of the second table if he did not assume his readers agreed; otherwise, his argument on the importance of this commandment would be completely undermined. Some church fathers also build arguments from the order they receive as authoritative. But the point remains valid that, on the whole, the sequence may not be in itself of utmost importance to interpretation.

However, this example does serve as an illustrative microcosm for a much broader and more nebulously-defined issue that deserves more attention: namely, the shape of the *thing* which we are, ultimately, interpreting and treating as determinative for meaning. It is one thing to speak of an “authorial” text form/wording (say, by Moses or Isaiah) and accommodate the possibility that “editorial revisions, although on a relatively small scale,” have taken place, such as updates to place names.⁷¹ The more challenging problem arises, however, when one takes into consideration the data that may indicate something beyond minor revisions to a stable core, particularly in terms of the privileged place the MT has long held. One can take several books of the OT (or pericopes, such as David and Goliath) and produce similar schematics of textual flow as that shown above, once the complex interactions of Hebrew (pre-MT and MT), Aramaic/Syriac (including Targums), Greek, Latin, and other textual traditions are factored in. Take Daniel, for instance. Apart from the recurring question of the dating of its composition, a brief perusal of recent scholarship reveals substantial complexity for its textual history: the proto-Masoretic Hebrew/Aramaic form (no longer extant), the Old Greek (which, it appears, relies on proto-MT but is relatively “free”), proto-Theodotion (a retranslation; occasionally cited by NT authors), Theodotion (200s CE; drawing on proto-Theodotion and correcting towards the proto-MT; eventually supplanting the OG), the Syro-Hexaplar form, the additional material added to the beginning/middle/ending of the Greek versions,⁷² and the Masoretic form (which shares similarities and differences with both lines of Greek tradition, though lacking the

⁷¹ Michael A. Grisanti, “Inspiration, Inerrancy, and the OT Canon: The Place of Textual Updating in an Inerrant View of Scripture,” *JETS* 44 (2001): 579.

⁷² *Susanna*, the *Song of the Three Children*, and *Bel and the Dragon*—all considered “Apocrypha” in the Protestant tradition but found in many Greek manuscripts at various points of insertion.

additions).⁷³ Similar situations are seen for, most notably, Jeremiah (its longer and shorter forms),⁷⁴ Job (ditto), Judges and Esther (multiple Greek recensions), and 1–2 Samuel (proto-MT, Old Greek, *kaige*, Hexaplaric recension, Lucianic recension, MT).

To frame it differently: on the one hand, *micro/clause-level variations* are not, in themselves, a challenge in terms of doctrine of Scripture, nor are they necessarily new, as some Church Fathers show awareness of such phenomena on the OT and NT side. On the other hand, the broader evidence offered by the relevant versions/recensions/translations/etc.—especially in light of findings at Qumran, the Cairo Genizah, Nahal Hever (among others)—for possibly earlier and at times quite distinct *forms of the Hebrew* than that found in the MT (Leningrad/BHS) *does* raise important questions regarding what exactly we can point to and say *this* is the “original,” “authorial,” “autographical,” or “inspired final form.”

Such questions are, in fact, the driving force behind the *Hebrew Bible: Critical Edition* project (under the auspices of the Society of Biblical Literature).⁷⁵ The first fascicle on Proverbs, released in 2015, frames precisely these issues and, in turn, describes how the editors will go about resolving them:

The HBCE editions aim to restore, to the extent possible, the manuscript that was the latest common ancestor of all the extant witnesses. This earliest inferable text is called the archetype. The archetype is not identical to the original text (however one defines this elusive term) but is the earliest recoverable text of a particular book. . . . Many books of the Hebrew Bible circulated in multiple editions in antiquity, and sometimes these editions can be wholly or partially recovered. In such cases, the HBCE text will be plural, approximating the archetypes of each ancient edition. The critical text will consist of two or more parallel columns.⁷⁶

⁷³ For helpful summaries, see Timothy McLay, “Daniel,” in Aitken, *Companion*, 484–93; Lawrence Lahey, “Additions to Daniel,” in Aitken, *Companion*, 494–504. The content of these additions differs between the OG and (proto-)Theodotion forms.

⁷⁴ See Emanuel Tov, “The Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah in Light of Its Textual History,” in *The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint* (VTSup 72; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 363–84. Andrew Shead provides a helpful (conservative) reconstruction of the complex history of the version(s) of Jeremiah in *A Mouth Full of Fire: The Word of God in the Words of Jeremia* (NSBT 29; Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 47–51. He concludes by asking the probing question, “Which words of Jeremiah should we treat as the word of God? Which Church has the true Jeremiah, the East [=LXX] or the West [=MT]?” (he answers, cautiously, “both”; p. 51). He also rightly observes (as I do), “More work needs to be done in pursuing the implications of the two recensions of Jeremiah for a doctrine of Scripture” (p. 51 n. 32).

⁷⁵ Formerly known as the Oxford Hebrew Bible. It is one of several ongoing efforts to produce new critical editions of the Hebrew Bible; for a helpful summary of each effort, see David L. Baker, “Which Hebrew Bible? Review of *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*, *Hebrew University Bible*, *Oxford Hebrew Bible*, and *Other Modern Editions*,” *TynBul* 61 (2010): 209–36.

⁷⁶ Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition with Introduction and Textual Commentary* (The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition; Atlanta: SBL, 2015), ix (written by the series editor, Ronald Hendel).

This substantially reorients what *thing* we are seeking (“earliest inferable archetype” versus “original”) and what that *thing* may look like (“plural”/“parallel” vs. singular). While the project has received criticism for several of its paradigm-shifting features, many of its same ideas—including the goal of recovering “the earliest attainable form of the text”—underlie the (competing) *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (BHQ) project.⁷⁷ The issues to which both sets of editors are responding are not imaginary. Evangelical scholars need to continue reflecting critically on the epistemological and doctrine-of-Scripture implications raised by this playing field of data that is vastly different than that experienced by prior generations.⁷⁸ In short, what does it mean to speak of a “final stage of composition”⁷⁹—if that is how we should think of the point of inspiration—in light of the complexity of extant data? While the focus here has been on the OT side, similar compositional complexities, though on a smaller scale, may be found on the NT side (e.g. Mark 16; John 20/21; Romans 15–16; 2 Corinthians 10–13; relationship between Colossians and Ephesians).

2. *What do the NT writers receive as the “original” Decalogue?* We turn now to two issues raised by the NT passages included above, namely, the differences among the pericopes on the sequencing, and the differences within the manuscript tradition for each individual pericope.

The latter issue is often deemed of primary importance due to the longstanding focus within NT textual criticism on restoring the “original” reading of any given pericope, so we will address it first. As shown in the inventory, apart from Matthew there is non-trivial diversity in extant readings found among the manuscripts for each pericope, which naturally raises the question: what did the inspired authors originally write? Fortunately, in this case, with the exception of Mark 10:19, it is not too difficult to apply the canons of textual criticism to arrive at a defensible local stemma for each reading. Nevertheless, this study helpfully crystallizes a debate that has generated much attention in NT text-critical circles in recent years surrounding the very notion of what it means to refer to “original” or “authorial”—mirroring in profound ways what is going on with the OT (HBCE, BHQ) outlined above, though this convergence has not received much attention due to the wide chasm between the two text-critical disciplines. On the NT side, our earliest artifacts—particularly non-fragmentary ones—are at least a century removed from the time of authorial composition, and there is often (as with these short pericopes) an early proliferation of variants. There have been, thus, ongoing discussions in text-critical circles about whether there should be a shift in focus from

⁷⁷ As described by one of its editors in Richard D. Weis, “*Biblia Hebraica Quinta* and the Making of Critical Editions of the Hebrew Bible,” *TC* 7 (2002).

⁷⁸ A helpful and probing example is Grisanti’s “Inspiration.” His proposal that everything up to c. 400 BC is inspired (including editorial revisions)—and everything after that ‘wall’ is merely text-critical/transmissional variation—is a helpful framework (p. 581). However, one is still faced with a mountain of data on non-trivial differences among early witnesses that raise the question: which is “inspired” and which is “transmissional”? How does one reconstruct the *textual thing* on the other (earlier) side of that wall?

⁷⁹ Grisanti, “Inspiration,” 578.

“original”/“authorial” (which some hold to be unobtainable) to “initial”/ *Ausgangstext*⁸⁰ (the fountainhead of the received textual tradition[s], emphasis on the plural). This paradigm shift underlies the primary stream of work on the Greek text via the *Editio Critica Maior* (which feeds the Nestle-Aland and UBS editions),⁸¹ but an even more radical form motivates the lesser-known *Marc multilingue* project as well.⁸² While scholarly agnosticism about our ability to penetrate with certainty the gap between a singular product of the NT authors and the extant 3rd and 4th century plurality of textual traditions contained in the artifactual manuscripts is often overstated, the long-term implications of these discussions on doctrine of Scripture from an evangelical perspective remain to be digested fully.⁸³

Perhaps the more interesting issue surfaced by this particular case study—regardless of which reading one ultimately deems “original” (or “initial”) for each pericope—is *that* the various NT authors (and Jesus) differ among one another on the sequencing at all. Such variations in OT quotations are well known and fairly common. But the nearly unsurpassed importance and catechetical quality of the Decalogue⁸⁴ makes this situation different from alternative quotation forms among NT authors in terms of moving a ὅτι, changing from present to aorist, dropping or adding an αὐτός, shifting from καί to δέ, eliding phrases, and so on. As with, say, the Declaration of Independence mentioned earlier, the familiarity of the Ten Commandments makes it *a priori* unusual that variability in sequencing would be so pronounced. It presents few challenges to a Chicago Statement-style doctrine of inspiration to argue that, say, Matthew is following one tradition known to him while Luke (though rendering the same dominical episode as Matthew) and Paul are following an alternative. But the question remains, what did these NT authors *receive* as the original sequence of these commandments? Particularly for the direct examples (Jesus with the young man; Rom 13:9; Jas 2:11) it appears the authors were at least attempting to cite that portion of the Decalogue in the sequence they received it. Without going too far into the *ipsisima* issues, at a minimum we have the question of which sequence Jesus “originally” used in his teaching—and what influenced the Synoptists to deviate. Taking one Synoptic problem hypothesis as an

⁸⁰ The most thorough introduction to the issues is provided by Michael Holmes, “From ‘Original Text’ to ‘Initial Text’: The Traditional Goal of New Testament Textual Criticism in Contemporary Discussion,” in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis* (ed. Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes; 2nd ed.; NTS 42; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 637–88.

⁸¹ On such recent changes, see Peter J. Gurry, “How Your Greek New Testament Is Changing: A Simple Introduction to the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method (CBGM),” *JETS* 59 (2016): 675–89. Some confusion still remains regarding what the Münster folks truly mean by *Ausgangstext*.

⁸² This project (which appears to have stalled out) aims to move away entirely from a single critically-restored eclectic text (or a diplomatic text, for that matter) and instead present “plusieurs types de texte”—namely, seven that represent three chronological stages of transmission—as *the earliest recoverable traditions* (for more see <http://www.safran.be/marcmultilingue/projet.html>).

⁸³ An attempt at starting the conversation may be found in Gregory R. Lanier, “Sharpening Your Greek: A Primer for Bible Teachers and Pastors on Recent Developments, with Reference to Two New Intermediate Grammars,” *Reformed Faith and Practice* 3.1 (2016): 88–155 (esp. §6).

⁸⁴ One is reminded also of the variations seen in the NT renderings of Deut 6:5.

example (Mark, then Matthew, then Luke),⁸⁵ we could have something like the following scenario: Jesus's original use of MAS (which is most plausible, based on the Sermon on the Mount); Mark's rendering as AMS (according to substantial Greek evidence, both Latin traditions, and the Peshitta); Matthew's reversion back to MAS; Luke's reversion once again back to AMS. Perhaps Mark is familiar with an alternative Hebrew sequence (e.g. represented by Nash), or with the Old Greek of Deuteronomy; perhaps Matthew, then, is conforming Mark's rendering to what he knows Jesus actually said (based on oral tradition?) or a more traditional Hebrew ordering; perhaps, then, Luke is using Mark here, or conforming Matthew's rendering back to what *he* knows of the Old Greek of Deuteronomy; all of them, it seems, are ignoring or unaware of the Old Greek of Exodus (ASM).

This is simply one option for one small portion of text, but it presents in concise form a host of related issues and, ultimately, forces us to be more clear on how we understand the "original" version of an "inspired" writing, and how later "inspired" writers were interacting with it. If we model our reception of the OT on that of the apostles, how should we think through the implications of the fact that, in this case, they *seem to be* receiving as "original" (what is actually going on in their minds is, of course, beyond what textual witnesses can provide) different sequences of the second table of the Decalogue. Again, little significance hangs on this from a meaning/interpretation standpoint, but the second-order complexities raised in terms of doctrine of Scripture recur regularly in the NT.⁸⁶

3. *What do the variants themselves tell us?* In recent years, more attention has been given within text-critical circles to studying textual variants not only to restore the "original" text (or, if one prefers, *Ausgangstext*) but to understand what they tell us about (Jewish and) Christian history of reception (*Wirkungsgeschichte*).⁸⁷ Every manuscript (in whatever language) is, more or less, authoritative for those who are using it. Yes, a manuscript may contain non-"original" readings (and, thus, may be put in the apparatus rather than the main text of an edited edition), but *for its local readers* it

⁸⁵ That is, the Goulder/Farrer/Goodacre hypothesis; recently endorsed by Watson and Hays as well, among others.

⁸⁶ Similar issues elsewhere include the following: agreements with one text-form (e.g. Greek OT) against another (e.g. the MT), or vice versa; Mark's apparent inclusion of *μὴ ἀποστερήσης* as one of *τὰς ἐντολάς* (10:19), as mentioned above; quotation of OT passages that are not found in the MT but do appear in some Greek OT witnesses (Rom 15:10; portions of Luke 4:18); verifiable quotations of or allusions to non-canonical Jewish and secular sources (Acts 17:28–29; 1 Cor 15:33; Titus 1:2; 2 Tim 3:8; Jude 6–12; 2 Pet 4:4, 9); and the agrapha of Jesus (Acts 20:35; numerous textual variants with strong attestation, such as Luke 23:34a). On this, see Gregory R. Lanier, "Off the Beaten Path: Orality, Textuality, and the Inspired Use of Diverse Sources in the Formation of the NT," presented at the New Testament Canon, Textual Criticism, and Apocryphal Literature Section, annual meeting of the ETS, Providence, RI, 15 November 2017.

⁸⁷ See, e.g., Eldon Jay Epp, "It's All About Variants: A Variant-Conscious Approach to New Testament Textual Criticism," *HTR* 100 (2007): 275–308. One cannot help but notice that this drift fits with the current *en vogue* status of reception history in the NT guild as a whole.

contains the wording they deemed authoritative.⁸⁸ This fact alone illustrates one of the challenges faced by scribes who were confronted by readings in an exemplar that differed from what they knew from elsewhere (memory, other manuscripts, liturgy). Put more tangibly, whole groups of Greek-speaking churches held to one (or more) sequence(s) of the Decalogue found in Exodus/Deuteronomy that differed from their Hebrew- and Aramaic-speaking counterparts. Likewise, if one were to compare the NTs used within the “Alexandrian” (Greek-speaking), Latin-speaking, and Syriac communities, one would be struck by how they disagree on nearly all the NT examples in our inventory! It is, then, not surprising that we see such variability among the Fathers of the East and West.

The interesting question raised by this data, then, is how we should construe the nature of scriptural *inspiration* and *authorship* (that is, restoring the “original” that best approximates the inspired/autographical wording of a given passage) in relation to Scriptural *authority* (that is, how different readings were deemed authoritative by various churches). Modern-day debates about the *pericope adulterae*, endings of Mark, Majority Text tradition, and so forth are, ultimately, simply bigger and more contentious examples of a more comprehensive issue.

4. *What changes should (evangelical) scholars make to engage with these issues more adequately?* This Murder–Adultery–Steal study surfaces a few course corrections that would benefit us all—particularly NT scholars—in how we go about our work. The first is the need for more precision. This study (and its many footnotes) demonstrates just how hard it is to track down information on variant readings, whether for these passages or any others. Hebrew Bible and Septuagint textual criticism in particular are vast fields with their own rules and complexities. For this reason it is not uncommon even for the most seasoned scholars to make errors in assessing the data. For instance, Albright/Mann describe how Matthew follows the order of the MT (which is mildly anachronistic) and comment that “one of the LXX manuscripts of Deuteronomy” agrees with Luke (ignoring, apparently, the other ~7 Greek OT witnesses and the significant variability seen for Luke).⁸⁹ Hagner comments that “Matthew reorders [these three commandments] to agree with the OT order, both in the MT and in the LXX” (the latter part of which is false, depending on what he means by “the LXX”).⁹⁰ Luz concludes that the second table “appears in Matthew in the correct order which corresponds to the Hebrew text” (ignoring Nash, and failing to define “the” Hebrew text and why it is “correct”).⁹¹ This example, then, reminds us of the need for more thorough and careful assessment of the data when dealing with such matters.

A second and related point is simply a reiteration of the need for *Newtestament-ers* to change the way we think about “*the* LXX,” that is, to realize there really is no

⁸⁸ Much like today, “each manuscript was Scripture in an early Christian community” (Swanson, *Romans*, xxv; italics removed).

⁸⁹ Albright and Mann, *Matthew*, 231–32.

⁹⁰ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14–28* (WBC 33B; Dallas: Word, 1995), 437.

⁹¹ Luz, *Matthew*, 334.

such thing. Though it is possible to apply the label “Septuagint” to the earliest translation efforts for the Pentateuch, using “the” in scholarly contexts to referring to Greek translations (and recensions) of Israel’s Scriptures is so overly simplistic and problematic at this point that it should likely be scrapped.⁹² Rahlfs-Hanhart has, unfortunately, become *identified* in most people’s minds with a monolithic Greek tradition for the entire OT (and Apocrypha) that simply does not exist—even among the two/three witnesses (⌘ B A) used by Rahlfs. As this small example demonstrates, there is much more complexity to the Greek OT tradition than many realize, both in terms of textual variability and recensional history. Rahlfs is still a great starting point, but using the Göttingen (and Cambridge) editions is a necessary step in a better direction. The broader misconception about the nature of “the” Septuagint, though, is a much deeper issue—much like for “the” Hebrew.

The third and final point—and the reason I include “(evangelical)” in the question posed above—is that the broader evangelical community needs to continue developing sharp, rigorous, insightful, scholarly engagement with some of the questions surfaced by this simple Decalogue example. On the OT side, the textual picture is extraordinarily complex, but looking the other way is hardly an option. We need more scholarship from a conservative vantage point that can deal intelligibly with the challenges that non-MT Hebrew and versional witnesses (translations, recensions/editions, alternative text forms, etc.) raise in terms of how we understand inspiration and transmission. Once again, the HBCE editors help articulate the issues in a way that should pique the interest of any evangelical reader of the OT:

The HBCE raises afresh many fundamental issues. ... What is a biblical book? Which stage of the biblical text is more authentic? Is the biblical text a unitary object, or is it irreducibly plural, dispersed in time and space? What do we mean by the original text? ... How do we read a plural text of the Hebrew Bible?⁹³

It is, consequently, more than surprising that in the most recent, 1,200+ page symposium representing the best thinking on the inspiration and authority of Scripture by a “veritable who’s who of evangelical scholars,” such challenges (e.g. the textual relations among the MT, Qumran, “Septuagint,” and so forth) were mentioned—so far as I can tell—on only two pages of one essay.⁹⁴ On the NT side, the task is a bit more straightforward,⁹⁵ and much solid work has been and is being done. But strong evangelical responses to the challenges raised by the “initial”/*Ausgangstext*

⁹² Cf. Peter J. Williams, “On the Invention and Problem of the Term ‘Septuagint,’” presented at the Septuagint Studies Panel of the annual meeting of the ETS, San Antonio, TX, 17 November 2016.

⁹³ Fox, *Proverbs*, x.

⁹⁴ Stephen G. Dempster, “The Old Testament Canon, Josephus, and Cognitive Environment,” in Carson, *Enduring*, 352–53. He comments, “The picture does not seem to be as neat and tidy as it once was.” (Note: the “who’s who” quotation above is taken from the dust jacket of the book.)

⁹⁵ As a friend admitted in private correspondence, for someone doing this kind of hard work on the OT side “the number of hot-button issues you’d bump into along the way is terrifying!”

shift, textual flow, complexities in terms of NT reception of the OT, and so forth are an ongoing need.

In sum, this study attempts to use a concrete example to illumine how the complexity of the data on the OT and NT sides touch each of the three aspects of the traditional doctrine of inspiration: “verbal,” “plenary,” and “organic.” A well-argued doctrine of Scripture needs to be able to articulate how we should understand the wording deemed “inspired” in light of the contemporary challenges posed to the very idea of an “original”/“autographical” form (verbal); the relationship between the authorial form and extant diverse textual forms (and recensions/editions?), especially on the OT side (plenary); and the role of editing/compiling as well as the downstream use of upstream sources both within and between the Testaments (organic).