

JESUS MADE A MISTAKE - ACCORDING TO THE CRITICAL TEXT: Another Example of the Toxicity of Mainstream Textual Criticism

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THE PROBLEM

In 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, Paul writes the following: “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures**,⁴ and that **He was buried**, and that **He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures**.”

Christ’s death for our sins and His burial are clearly foretold in Isaiah 53, and His resurrection is foretold in Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22. However, nowhere does the Old Testament specify that the Christ would *rise on the third day*, so how is that “according to the Scriptures”? Apologists have long tried in vain to come up with an answer. As we pointed out elsewhere, they are unable to find such a place because, slavishly following the liberal paradigm assumption of the late dating of the Gospel books, they fail to see that Paul must be referring to *New Testament Scriptures*, likely the Gospel According to Luke that he quoted to Timothy.[\[1\]](#)

However, some have noted that Jesus Himself said that it was written in the Scriptures that He would rise on the third day:

⁴⁵ *Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.* ⁴⁶ **He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,** ⁴⁷ *and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24:45-47 NIV)*

⁴⁵ Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and **He said to them, “So it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,** ⁴⁷ and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. (Luke 24:45-47 NASB)

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and **said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,** ⁴⁷ and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. (Luke 24:45-47 ESV)

Now, one can trawl again through the Old Testament with a fine-tooth comb in search of a prophecy that the Messiah (Christ) would rise on the third day, but he will not find one; *nowhere* is it written in the Old Testament that the Christ would rise *on the third day*.

And that’s not the only problem; there is no reason to decouple “and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem,” so we need also to find a prophecy in the Old Testament to foretell this - and there is none.

So, did Jesus make a mistake - or two mistakes - here?

THE SOLUTION

Consider the passage as it is translated in the NKJV:

⁴⁵ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, **and thus it was necessary** for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

The clause in red makes a crucial difference. The statement about Christ suffering and rising the third day and the subsequent preaching is separated from the clause “Thus it is written.” “Thus it is written,” then, sums up what Jesus showed them “in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms” concerning Him.

Yet the skeptic may still ask why “it was *necessary*” for the Christ to rise on the third day and for the subsequent preaching to happen if it they were not foretold. What would make these things “*necessary*”? Let us look more carefully at the entire passage.

Here is the passage in the original Greek:

24:45 τότε διήνοιξεν αὐτῶν τὸν νοῦν τοῦ συνιέναι τὰς γραφάς·

24:46 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὅτι Οὕτως γέγραπται **καὶ οὕτως ἔδει** παθεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ ἀναστῆναι ἐκ νεκρῶν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ

24:47 καὶ κηρυχθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ μετάνοιαν καὶ ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἀρξάμενον ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλήμ

Now, the three words in red are the ones missing from the Greek text from which

the NIV, NASB, and ESV (and almost modern translations) were translated, and they are crucial. What is the meaning of the third word there, the imperfect active indicative form of δεῖ (*dei*)? According to the industry-standard lexicon, BDAG[2], δεῖ has two possible meanings:

(Hom.+) Strict classification of usage is not possible because of the multifunctional adaptability of this verb, esp. in colloquial discourse.

❶ **to be under necessity of happening, it is necessary, one must, one has to**, denoting compulsion of any kind.—Ⓞ of that which takes place because of circumstances or inner necessity, with the context determining the cause (Hdt. [8, 53 ἔδειε κατὰ τὸ θεοπρόπιον]; Appian, Liby. 122 §578 ἀλῶναι ἔδει Καρχηδόνα—it was necessary that Carthage be captured, i.e. it could not escape being captured [Appian's theological perspective surfaces, s. e.g. 7, 53; 8, 51; 57; 61; 62; 92]; Da 2:28f, 45 Theod; Wsd 16:4; Just., D. 6, 2; 32, 4) **Mt 17:10; 24:6** (δεῖ γενέσθαι as Jos., Ant. 10, 142); **26:54; Mk 9:11; 13:7, 10; Lk 4:43; 21:9; 24:46 v.l.; J 3:14, 30; 9:4; 10:16; 20:9; Ac 1:16; 3:21; 4:12; Ro 1:27; 1 Cor 15:53; 2 Cor 5:10; Rv 1:1; 4:1; 22:6; 2 Cl 2:5.**

Ⓜ of the compulsion of law or custom ἢ ἔδει θύεσθαι τὸ πάσχα *when the paschal lamb had to be sacrificed* **Lk 22:7.**—**Mt 23:23; Lk 11:42; 13:14; J 4:20, 24; Ac 15:5; 18:21 v.l.** Of the compulsion of Roman law **25:10.**

Ⓞ of an inner necessity growing out of a given situation, **Mt 26:35** (Jos., Ant. 6, 108 κὰν ἀποθανεῖν δέη; PFay 109, 5 ἐάν σε δῆ [=δέη] τὸ εἰμάτιόν σου θεῖναι ἐνέχυρον; Ath. 24, 1 τί δὲ δεῖ πρὸς ὑμᾶς . . . μνημονεύειν;), **Mk 14:31; J 4:4; Ac 14:22; 21:22 v.l.; 27:21; 2 Cor 11:30.**—ὥστε . . . [τὴν Ἀρτεμύλλαν] μικροῦ δεῖν ἀπόπληκτον γενέσθαι *so that Artemilla was on the point of fainting* AcPl Ha 3, 33–35 (Demosth. 27, 29; Jos., C. Ap. 2, 119 al.).

Ⓞ of compulsion caused by the necessity of attaining a certain result **Lk 12:12; 19:5; Ac 9:6; 1 Cor 11:19; 2 Cl 1:1; B 4:1; IEph 7:1.**—τὰ δέοντα (PPetr II, 11 [1], 6; BGU 251, 5 al.; pap; Pr 30:8; 2 Macc 13:20) *the needs* Hs 2, 5 and 8.

❷ **to be someth. that should happen because of being fitting.**—Ⓞ gener. (Epict. 2, 22, 20 φίλος ἔσομαι οἷος δεῖ; 3, 23, 21 ὡς δεῖ, as Just., D. 114, 1; 2 Macc 6:20; 4 Macc 7:8) **2 Ti 2:6, 24.** καθὸ δεῖ *as is proper* **Ro 8:26.**—δέον ἐστίν *it is necessary, one must* (Polyb.; POxy 727, 19f; 1061, 13; BGU 981 II, 6; Sir. Prol. In. 3; 1 Macc 12:11; EpArist) **Ac 19:36; 1 Cl 34:2;** without ἐστίν (POxy 899, 40; EpArist 227; 242; Philo, Aet. M. 107; Jos., Bell. 2, 296; Just., A I, 4, 6; A II, 2, 7; D. 11, 2) ITr 2:3; Pol 5:3. εἰ δέον ἐστίν *if it must be* **1 Pt 1:6** (s. εἰμί 11d); οὐ δέον v.l. for οὐδέν Papias (4).—On the constr. of δεῖ, note that as a rule the acc. and inf. follow it (Jos., C. Ap. 2, 254; Lucian, Charon 13.

One meaning is “to be under necessity of happening, *it is necessary, one must, one has to,*” and the other is “to be something that should happen because of being fitting.” Using the second definition (as the KJV does[\[3\]](#)), the passage, in context, reads as follows:

⁴⁴ Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.” ⁴⁵ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ And He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was fitting for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”
(Luke 24:44-47)

“Thus it is written,” then, sums up what Jesus showed them “in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms” concerning Him. In light of these things, it was *fitting* “for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day” and *fitting* that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” Christ, therefore, made no mistake at all.

THE TOXICITY OF MAINSTREAM TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Why, then, do we see errors in Jesus’ statement in Luke 24:46 in the NIV, NASB, ESV, and virtually all modern translations? According to the reading in these translations, there is definitely an error in Jesus’ statement here. Where did the reading in these translations come from? They read as they do because our

scholars have been induced into uncritically accepting mainstream textual criticism and its product, the Nestle-Aland Greek text of the New Testament (generally called the “critical text”).

This text, which is touted as being the closest to the original New Testament text, ignores the overwhelming majority of the textual evidence in favour of a small handful of corrupt manuscripts from Alexandria that do not even consistently agree with each other. But they must favour it because they have slavishly followed the “canons” (rules) of textual criticism set out by a German Rationalist scholar, J.J. Griesbach, in 1796 - which conveniently guarantee that errors will be claimed to be the original readings of the New Testament - and the witch’s brew subsequently dished up by B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort in 1881.

The fact that all of the studies and real evidence discovered since then show that this text cannot possibly be the closest to the original text, and that statistical analysis (note: that’s *genuine* scientific data handling) show that secondary (non-original) readings cannot come to dominate numerically the manuscripts, bothers them not at all. It is likely that most of them have no idea about the studies and evidence, let alone about statistical analysis.[\[4\]](#)

In this case, the clause “καὶ οὕτως ἔδει” (“and thus it was fitting”) is missing in six manuscripts: [☐⁷⁵](#), Codex Sinaiticus ([א](#)), Codex Vaticanus ([B](#)), Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus ([C](#)), Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis ([D](#)), and Codex Regius ([L](#)).

- [☐⁷⁵](#) is dated to AD 175-225 though it may date as late as the fourth century. It is of terrible quality, with over four hundred errors scattered among its 1,406 verses; one quarter of its 257 singular readings are nonsensical[\[5\]](#).

- *Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus, dated to the fourth century, are also of very poor quality; a head-to-head comparison of the two yielded over three thousand disagreements among them*[\[6\]](#).
- *Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus and Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis are fifth-century mixed-text manuscripts; Codex Bezae is particularly idiosyncratic*[\[7\]](#).
- *Codex Regius ([L](#)) is an eighth-century manuscript that was “carelessly written by an ignorant scribe”*[\[8\]](#)

Against this handful of poor-quality manuscripts, the clause “**καὶ οὕτως ἔδει**” (“and thus it was fitting”) is found in the late fourth-century Codex Washingtonianus and the early fifth-century Codex Alexandrinus[\[9\]](#) – *and in about 1,500 other manuscripts of the Gospel According to Luke*. That’s right, folks, it is found in 99.5% of the extant manuscripts of the Gospel According to Luke. Add to that the fact that its omission in a miniscule number of manuscripts can readily be explained as due to accidental omission, which the most common scribal error[\[10\]](#), and there can be no question but that the clause is original to the Gospel.

It takes a special kind of blind allegiance to Griesbach and Wescott and Hort to be willing to ascribe errors to Jesus simply to remain loyal to mainstream textual criticism. With friends like these, we do not need enemies.

[\[1\]](#) See Tors, John, “According to What Scriptures? Examining Paul’s References in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4,” posted at <https://truthinmydays.com/according-to-what-scriptures-examining-pauls-referenc>

[es-in-1-corinthians-153-4/](#)

[2] Bauer, Walter, William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. (BDAG) Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000, p. 214

[3] “and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day”

[4] For details about this, see Tors, John, “A Primer on New Testament Textual Criticism (in Manageable, Bite-Sized Chunks),” posted at <https://truthinmydays.com/a-primer-on-new-testament-textual-criticism-in-manageable-bite-sized-chunks/> and Tors, John, “TEXTUAL CRITICISM AND THE END OF BIBLICAL INERRANCY: Follow-up Comments on the Tors/Costa New Testament Text Debate (Part 1),” posted at <https://truthinmydays.com/textual-criticism-and-the-end-of-biblical-inerrancy-follow-up-comments-on-the-torscosta-new-testament-text-debate-part-1/>

[5] Colwell, Earnest Cadman. “Scribal Habits in Early Papyri: A Study in the Corruption of the Text.” in Hyatt, J. Philip. ed. *The Bible in Modern Scholarship: Papers read at the 100th meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature*. London: Carey Kingsgate Press, 1965, pp.374-376. (“Singular readings” are textual variants that are not found in any other manuscript: “Nonsense Readings include words unknown to grammar or lexicon, words that cannot be construed syntactically, or words that do not make sense in the context.”)

[6] Hoskier, Herman C. *Codex B and Its Allies: A Study and an Indictment*. 2 vols. London: Bernard Quaritch, 1914.

[7] Metzger, Bruce M. *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*. 3rd, Enlarged Edition. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, pp.48-51

[8] Miller, Edward. *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*. Vol. 1 (4 ed.). London: George Bell & Sons, 1894, pp. 137-138.

[9] Codex Washingtonianus has only “οὕτως ἔδει,” but the absence of the “καὶ” does not change the meaning.

[\[10\]](#) See, for example, Royse, James R. *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008.