

SCRIPTURE

A Source-First Study of John 20:3–10 and Luke 24:12

The Linen Cloths at the Empty Tomb

John 20:3–10, Luke 24:12, and the Difference between Seeing and Inferring

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1 One Claim, Three Questions

The claim under test is familiar: Peter entered the empty tomb, saw the linen cloths arranged in a remarkable way, and immediately understood that Jesus had risen. It often arrives with a second claim: the face-cloth was folded according to an ancient Jewish table custom meaning that a master would return. The two claims are rhetorically effective because they turn otherwise quiet objects into a coded message.

The canonical text is both firmer and more restrained. John explicitly says that Peter entered and contemplated the cloths. John explicitly says that the other disciple entered, saw, and believed. He does not attach the verb “believed” to Peter. Luke says that Peter saw the cloths and departed wondering. Neither account describes a table custom or calls the face-cloth a napkin in the modern dining sense.

Three questions must therefore stay apart:

1. What did Peter observe, and what state of mind does each Evangelist attribute to him?
2. What can the disposition of the cloths reasonably establish about the absence of the body?
3. Is the folded-napkin return signal an ancient interpretation, or a modern story attached later to the passage?

The resulting judgment is divided. The cloths are real narrative evidence, and ancient Christian interpreters used their disposition against theft. John, however, attributes belief to the other disciple, while Luke leaves Peter in wonder. The modern table-signal explanation is unsupported by the named Jewish, patristic, and historical witnesses searched for this study.

2 The Canonical Scene

2.1 John slows the race at the doorway

Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb while it is still dark, sees the stone removed, and reports an inference: “They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him” (Jn 20:2). Her report distinguishes the first observation from its first explanation. The body is absent; removal is inferred; the agents and destination are unknown.

Peter and the other disciple run. The other arrives first, bends down, and sees the linen cloths lying, but does not enter. Peter arrives, enters, and regards both the linen cloths and the face-cloth. The other disciple then enters, “saw, and believed.” John immediately qualifies that belief: “For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead” (20:9).

The progression is not a contest in spiritual rank. It is an exact narrative sequence. One disciple first sees from outside; Peter crosses the threshold and examines; the first arrival follows and believes. John’s syntax makes the last subject the subject of believing. Peter’s role is indispensable to the scene, but the narrator does not transfer the later verb backward.

2.2 Luke preserves Peter’s wonder

Luke 24:12 gives a parallel in compressed form. Peter rises, runs, bends toward the tomb, sees the linen cloths alone, and departs wondering at what happened. Luke’s *thaumazō* can accompany amazement, admiration, perplexity, or a response not yet settled into understanding. Within Luke 24, the women report the angelic message; the apostolic group initially treats it as idle talk; Peter investigates; the Emmaus disciples later say that some went to the tomb and found matters as the women said but did not see Jesus.

That sequence makes wonder an honest midpoint. Peter has evidence against Mary’s unexamined assumption and evidence that demands an explanation. Luke does not say that he disbelieved the Resurrection; neither does Luke say that he had already concluded it from the cloths.

2.3 The other canonical accounts

Matthew reports the stone, angel, empty place, guard, and later theft story. Mark reports the moved stone, the young man, the place where Jesus had lain, and the message to the disciples and Peter. Neither gives the cloth inventory. Their silence neither contradicts John nor independently confirms the arrangement. The theft polemic in Matthew supplies a live ancient question to which later interpreters could direct John's details.

The Fourth Gospel itself supplies the closest control in Lazarus. Lazarus comes from the tomb still bound in burial cloths, his face wrapped with a *soudarion*; Jesus orders others to unbind him (Jn 11:44). In chapter 20 the risen Jesus is absent and the cloths remain. The contrast belongs to John's own narrative world: resuscitation returns Lazarus bound; resurrection does not present Jesus as a corpse needing release.

3 What the Greek and Ancient Versions Do and Do Not Say

3.1 *Othonia*: linen burial cloths

John uses *othonia* at the burial and at the empty tomb. The term can denote linen cloths or wrappings. It does not specify a single mummy-like shroud, a modern fitted garment, or the exact number and dimensions of pieces. John 19:40 says that Joseph and Nicodemus bound the body with linen cloths and spices according to Jewish burial custom. Any reconstruction of rigid wrappings, a hollow body-form, or cloths collapsed in place adds more physical detail than the noun supplies.

3.2 *Soudarion*: the face-cloth

The *soudarion* is the smaller cloth associated with the head or face. The Latin-derived word is related to sweat-cloth; its New Testament uses include a cloth employed to wrap money and cloths associated with a person's body. In John 11:44 it is around Lazarus's face. The Authorized Version's historical English "napkin" does not make it a dining napkin or connect it to a table etiquette code.

3.3 *Entetylgmenon*: wrapped or rolled

The participle describing the face-cloth belongs to a verb used elsewhere of wrapping Jesus's body in linen. Its lexical range supports "wrapped up" or "rolled up." English "folded" is possible as a result description in some translations, but the Greek does not specify a deliberate set of parallel folds or a culturally coded shape.

The verbal link to burial wrapping creates an important alternative to the image of Jesus tidying the tomb: the face-cloth may be described in the state produced by having been wrapped around the head. John tells where and how it lay relative to the other cloths; he does not narrate an act of post-Resurrection housekeeping.

3.4 The Vulgate and the Septuagint boundary

The Clementine Vulgate preserves the same narrative distinctions without turning them into a diagram. At the burial it says that the body was bound with *lintea*; at the tomb it calls the cloths *linteamina* and the head-cloth a *sudarium*. The latter is *separatim involutum in unum locum*—apart, wrapped in one place. Luke likewise says that Peter saw the *linteamina* alone and departed *mirans*, wondering. This Latin witness therefore reinforces the subject sequence and the language of wrapping, separation, and wonder, but supplies no folded-table signal or precise cloth geometry.

The Septuagint bears here only as lexical background: this is a New Testament scene, not an Old Testament variant. Swete's Greek text of Judges 14:12–13 uses *sindonas* for the thirty garments Samson offers and *othonia* for the thirty garments his hearers must give if they cannot solve the riddle; the Alexandrinus apparatus instead reads *sindonas* in verse 13. This direct locus confirms an ordinary garment use and textual variation within the Greek tradition. It supplies no burial practice, dining custom, or coded fold.

3.5 *Keimena, chōris, and eis hena topon*

The cloths are “lying.” The face-cloth is not lying with them but *chōris*, apart, and *eis hena topon*, in one place. The language establishes distinction and location. It does not yield precise geometry. Ancient and modern interpreters have imagined the face-cloth above, beside, or in a separate area; the prepositions do not select a diagram.

3.6 Three verbs of seeing

John varies his verbs. The other disciple first *blepei*, sees from the doorway. Peter *theōrei*, observes or contemplates, as his attention moves over the evidence. The other disciple then *iden*, saw, and believed. Lexical nuance supports the narrative’s staged perception, but Greek aspect cannot by itself disclose the private content of either man’s mind. John supplies that content only for the final subject.

4 Who Believed, and What Did Belief Mean?

The nearest grammatical antecedent of “believed” is the other disciple. A reading that says Peter believed from the arrangement must therefore be presented as inference or harmonization, not John’s explicit attribution.

What the other disciple believed is itself debated. Possibilities include Mary’s report that the body had been removed, confidence that something divine had occurred, or Easter faith in Jesus’s Resurrection. The unqualified “believed” in this scene, the movement from seeing to believing, and the contrast with not yet knowing Scripture favor genuine resurrection belief, though still incomplete. This is a reading of the local sequence, not a claim derived from a complete concordance of every Johannine use of “believe.” Verse 9 does not cancel verse 8; it explains that the belief arose through the sign before scriptural understanding.

This distinction is theologically important. Easter faith is not irrational because it precedes a complete exegetical account. Nor is the evidence self-interpreting. The empty tomb and cloths can exclude or weaken some explanations without making the Resurrection a laboratory conclusion. The risen Jesus’s appearances and the scriptural illumination complete what the sign begins.

5 Four Ways Readers Reconcile John and Luke

The difference between John’s “believed” and Luke’s “wondering” has generated several harmonizations. Each is possible; none is printed by both Evangelists.

Peter first wondered and later believed. Luke describes Peter’s initial departure; John describes the other disciple’s immediate response; Peter’s own Easter faith comes with the appearance tradition. This lets each narrative subject retain his own verb.

Both believed, but Luke names only wonder. Wonder can accompany faith, so Luke need not exclude an emerging conviction. Plausible psychology does not warrant changing Luke’s predicate to “believed.”

The other disciple believed Mary’s removal report. On this account John 20:8 means only that the empty tomb confirmed Mary’s message. Verse 9 then explains why resurrection faith had not arisen. Against it stand the local movement from seeing to believing and the scene’s movement beyond Mary’s first inference.

Luke 24:12 is a secondary harmonization from John. Westcott and Hort once judged the verse drawn from John with the other disciple omitted. The 2023 SBLGNT running text prints the verse; its edition-comparison apparatus records the verse in Tregelles, NA28, and Robinson–Pierpont while marking it as double-bracketed in Westcott–Hort. That control is not a manuscript apparatus and does not settle the verse’s earliest recoverable form. Even if literary dependence were established, the printed Lukan form attributes wonder, not belief, to Peter.

Textual history asks whether Luke 24:12 belonged to the earliest recoverable Luke; narrative exegesis asks what the printed verse means; canonical interpretation asks how both accounts function together. One answer cannot silently perform all three jobs.

6 What the Arrangement Can Establish

6.1 Against hurried removal

A thief or hostile remover seeking the body would have little reason to unwrap it inside the tomb. Burial spices and cloths would make the process slow, messy, and incriminating. A friendly remover might act with more care, but would still need a motive for leaving valuable or identifying burial material while carrying an exposed corpse.

This is a probabilistic argument, not a deduction. Human agents can act irrationally; narratives omit details; the exact state of the cloths is not recoverable from the vocabulary. The cloths make ordinary removal less plausible. They do not mechanically prove the manner of Resurrection.

6.2 Ancient Christian use

John Chrysostom reads the cloths and the heavy spices as evidence against theft: thieves would not have stripped and carefully separated the burial materials. Cyril of Alexandria likewise treats the order as a sign that something more than removal occurred. Gregory the Great and Bede receive the scene within Easter preaching, but their emphases differ. Augustine is notably restrained: in his Tractate on John he attaches belief to the other disciple and acknowledges the ambiguity about what was believed.

Thomas Aquinas's *Lectura* transmits the anti-theft argument and receives both Augustinian and Chrysostomic readings of belief. His treatment is useful precisely because it preserves alternatives instead of turning one Father's inference into the grammatical surface of John.

6.3 Reception in greater resolution

Chrysostom's argument is practical. A thief acts under pressure. Removing cloths closely attached with a large quantity of myrrh and aloes would consume time and expose the actor. Leaving differentiated burial materials therefore works against the hostile story that disciples stole the body. His homily is an ancient apologetic reading, not an eyewitness measurement of burial technique.

Augustine follows John's subjects carefully. Peter sees; the other disciple enters and believes. He considers whether belief concerned Mary's report and then weighs the stronger resurrection sense. The Fathers are not unanimous transmitters of a "Peter decoded the cloths" interpretation.

Cyril of Alexandria says that both disciples inferred the Resurrection from the linen clothes; he neither bases the inference on the separated face-cloth nor supplies a theft argument at this point. Gregory the Great reads the head-cloth allegorically and follows Augustine on the immediate content of "believed." Bede reconciles Luke's abbreviated account with John's fuller sequence of seeing without transferring John's belief predicate to Peter. Theophylact preserves Byzantine reception of both the anti-theft logic and the removal-report reading of belief. Their evidentiary ceilings differ: Cyril is read in a nineteenth-century English translation; Gregory and Bede in checked Latin transcriptions; Theophylact only in an OCR-accessible Latin column whose Greek has not been collated here.

Aquinas's *Catena aurea* maps earlier voices but does not independently verify them. His own *Lectura* reports the anti-theft argument, identifies Chrysostom, and distinguishes Augustinian and Chrysostomic readings of "believed." Medieval synthesis did not require pretending that John grammatically names Peter as believer.

6.4 Burial practice and material limits

John names Joseph, Nicodemus, about a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes, linen cloths, and Jewish burial custom. This excludes an image of an untouched naked body casually placed on stone. It is not a complete archaeological specification.

John's account does not say that the aromatics formed a hardened casing or that the burial followed Egyptian mummification. Those reconstructions require independent material evidence and cannot be smuggled into the nouns for cloth, face-cloth, spices, or tomb.

The archaeological context is narrower than a generic “Jewish burial” picture. Magness’s Cambridge summary describes first-century Jerusalem’s rock-cut tombs as costly, multigenerational family tombs available to the upper classes, while poorer burials in trench or cist graves left fewer traces. It also distinguishes the initial individual inhumation—the body wrapped in a shroud and sometimes placed in a coffin—from later collection of bones in some tombs.¹ Joseph’s rock-cut tomb therefore belongs to a particular Jerusalem setting and should not be made a template for every contemporary Jewish burial.

Egyptian mummification is a poor positive control for this scene. Its reconstructed classic procedure includes organ removal and prolonged natron desiccation before final linen wrapping; John specifies none of those features.² The myrrh and aloes establish aromatic care because John names them. They do not establish preservation, a hardened shell, a bandage-by-bandage geometry, or any single purpose that the evangelist does not state.

The plural cloths, face-cloth, and Synoptic *sindōn* need not conflict. A larger sheet can coexist with smaller bindings and a head cloth. Neither should they be harmonized into a precise kit whose every fold is known. Material culture clarifies possible objects; it cannot recover this arrangement.

6.5 Modern physical reconstructions

Some readers move from “lying” and “wrapped” to a collapsed shell: the body passed through wrappings left undisturbed. Westcott’s posthumously published marginal notes and private correspondence, recorded by his son Arthur, show sympathy with this reading; Henry Latham developed it.

The proposal is theologically possible but textually underdetermined. It requires a particular burial configuration, adhesion, and spatial reading. It may explain why the scene impressed a witness; it is not what *keimena* or *entetyligmenon* simply means. Westcott’s printed notes must also remain distinct from Arthur Westcott’s editorial footnotes.

6.6 What no arrangement proves

The passage does not describe the cloths as still retaining the three-dimensional shape of the body. It does not say Jesus passed through them, although later theologians may regard that as fitting. It does not describe a flash, collapse, untouched knots, a measurable image, or any relic’s identity. Those proposals require evidence outside John 20 and must not borrow the Evangelist’s authority by being narrated as details he supplied.

7 The Folded-Napkin Return Story

The modern story usually runs as follows: at a Jewish meal, a master tossed aside his napkin if finished but folded it to tell a servant that he would return; Jesus therefore folded the face-cloth to promise his return. Every link requires proof: that such a custom existed in the relevant Jewish period, that *soudarion* means the table napkin in that custom, that John’s participle means a deliberate fold, and that the Evangelist expected readers to decode the gesture.

The exact rabbinic controls inspected for this study do not establish any link. Mishnah Berakhot 8:3 and Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 52b concern where a hand-wiping cloth is placed during a meal; Mishnah Sanhedrin 6:1 describes a cloth waved to halt an execution. None contains a departing master, an end-of-meal fold, or a promise of return. These three loci are controls, not an exhaustive search of rabbinic literature. Roman dining evidence likewise supplies cloths and servants without this code. Patristic and medieval commentators discuss burial, theft, order, and belief; they do not transmit the master-servant explanation. The Authorized Version contributes the old English noun “napkin” but says it was “wrapped together,” not folded as a signal.

The claim appears in modern preaching and internet circulation, often without a primary citation. Its neatness helps it travel: one unfamiliar object, one lost custom, one uplifting message. Those are also warning signs. An explanation

¹Jodi Magness, “Ancient Jewish Tombs and Burial Customs (to 70 C.E.),” in *The Archaeology of the Holy Land* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 230–255, publisher summary, items 1–6.

²Salima Ikram, “Mummification,” *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (2010), pp. 2–4. Ikram also cautions that Egyptian evidence does not yield one uniform procedure.

that depends on inaccessible cultural knowledge should become more credible as its ancient documentation improves. Here the documentation disappears as the search moves backward.

The Christian hope that Christ will return does not need this support. It is explicit in Scripture and Creed. Retiring the story protects that hope from a fabricated historical foundation.

8 Independent Provenance Replay

8.1 Four propositions, not one slogan

The story requires four propositions: table napkins were customary in the relevant Jewish setting; disposal communicated whether a master had finished; folding and crumpling carried the alleged opposite meanings; and John's *soudarion* and participle invoke that code. Evidence for one cannot establish all four. A Roman *mappa* proves dining cloths existed, not that Palestinian masters folded them as messages.

8.2 The directly relevant rabbinic dispute

Mishnah Berakhot 8:3 records Shammai and Hillel disagreeing over where a cloth used to wipe hands should be placed during a meal: table or cushion. Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 52b explains the dispute through ritual impurity passing among moisture, cloth, table, food, and cushion. There is no departing master, servant awaiting a signal, end-of-meal fold, or promise of return.

This is a material negative because the text genuinely concerns a cloth at a meal. It shows the danger of keyword apologetics: a "Jewish napkin custom" exists, but not the alleged one.

Mishnah Sanhedrin 6:1 supplies an actual cloth signal: a person waves one to halt an execution when exculpatory evidence appears. Rabbinic literature can state signals plainly. This signal is unrelated to dining or return.

8.3 Greco-Roman controls

Roman diners could bring a *mappa*, use it, and carry food away in it. Servants could hold towels during washing. Smith's antiquities article gathers such functions without a finished/returning code. The famous ancient public signal involving a dropped cloth begins circus races, not a domestic promise. Cloth gestures were possible; analogy is not attestation.

8.4 Lightfoot's bounded silence

Lightfoot's *Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae* is useful because it pursues rabbinic Gospel parallels verse by verse. In the four-volume OCR searched for the source study, "napkin" occurs only at Lazarus, and John 20 has no verse-7 note. OCR misses and Lightfoot's selection remain possible. His silence is not universal proof; it is evidence that an eager early-modern collector did not transmit the custom.

8.5 The located modern trail

The earliest dated online presentation located is a reader's question posted by *Jerusalem Perspective* in October 2006. David Bivin requested the missing evidence and suggested the archaic English "napkin" helped generate the story. An archived email forward appears in May 2007. Later assessments and apologetic pages repeat a 2007 circulation estimate without supplying ancient evidence.

This is a lower bound, not an origin certificate: earlier oral or print circulation could emerge. The publishable conclusion is "unattested in the enumerated corpus and routes searched," not "no Jew ever did this." A synonym, untranslated source, damaged OCR, or unrecorded custom could escape.

The cumulative judgment remains strong. Four propositions lack joint support; the located trail is late; the Greek lexical control points to wrapping; and commentators positioned to transmit rabbinic parallels do not know the story.

9 Exegetical Alternatives Tested

9.1 Only absence, no positive sign

One reading treats the cloths as inventory: they prove only that the body is gone. This properly resists imaginative geometry, but it underreads John's slowness. The Evangelist distinguishes the two cloth groups, their relation, three acts of seeing, entrance order, and belief. Details can remain multivalent without being narratively inert.

9.2 A deliberately tidied tomb

Another reading imagines the risen Jesus folding or rolling the face-cloth as an act of calm. It captures the contrast with hurried theft, but John never names the agent who arranged anything after burial. The participle can describe the cloth's wrapped condition from burial itself. Calm is a reasonable inference from differentiated order, not a narrated gesture.

9.3 Evidence designed as a message

Chrysostom approaches this: the disposition is providentially intelligible and moves disciples toward faith. A stronger modern version makes every cloth a deliberate encoded communication. That exceeds the text. A sign can be providential without operating as a cultural cipher. John's own explanation is the transition from seeing to believing, not an appended legend about how to decode folds.

9.4 Proof of a glorified body's mode

The collapsed-wrappings account offers a physical mechanism: Jesus rose through the material. Catholic theology affirms a glorified body no longer subject to ordinary constraints, but John 20 does not describe the instant of Resurrection. The later closed-door appearances provide an analogue, not a camera angle into the tomb. Doctrine establishes possibility; it does not turn a possible reconstruction into exegesis.

9.5 A relic-identification text

John's nouns naturally interest readers of relic traditions. This study, however, has not established provenance from the tomb to any surviving cloth. Vocabulary comparison can test whether a proposed object is compatible with a text; compatibility cannot establish identity. Historical custody, material dating, contamination, conservation, and scientific disputes belong to a separate work.

10 Textual History of Luke 24:12

The verse's textual history matters because removing it leaves John as the sole canonical cloth inventory and eliminates Luke's explicit statement of Peter's wonder. Some early witnesses omit the verse, while others include it; modern critical judgment generally prints it with apparatus notice. The registered Robinson–Pierpont artifact includes it and reports the modern eclectic form's difference concerning the participle “lying.”

Westcott and Hort argued that the verse was an assimilation from John 20:3–10, shortened by omission of the other disciple. Their judgment belongs to a nineteenth-century textual theory and must not be reported as present

consensus. Conversely, canonical familiarity must not erase the external and internal evidence that made the verse debatable.

Three conclusions survive either decision. First, John independently attributes careful observation to Peter and belief to the other disciple. Second, an included Luke 24:12 supplies early reception of Peter as wondering. Third, an omitted verse cannot be used to make John say Peter believed. The textual variant changes the amount of canonical evidence about Peter's immediate state; it does not transfer John's predicate to him.

11 Search Boundary

The modern-custom negative is reproducible only if its boundary is explicit. This edition tested:

- the directly relevant rabbinic loci Mishnah Berakhot 8:3, Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 52b, and Mishnah Sanhedrin 6:1;
- Greek and Roman dining terminology and known cloth signals;
- patristic and medieval exegesis of John 20:7 and Luke 24:12;
- early-modern rabbinic-background commentary, especially Lightfoot;
- dated modern print, email, web, and preaching appearances.

That is an enumerated-witness investigation, not a Toseftan, Jerusalem Talmudic, midrashic, minor-tractate, or whole-rabbinic-corpus search. A future broader search would need to test conjunctions as well as single terms: folded cloth, crumpled cloth, master, servant, meal finished, return, and their relevant Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin equivalents. A zero English phrase count could not exclude a differently worded source. Every positive “napkin” hit would still need classification by object, setting, action, actor, and communicated meaning.

This edition does not inherit another provider's hit count or treat a mutable website search as an exhaustive corpus. It independently inspected the exact controls at Berakhot 8:3/52b and Sanhedrin 6:1 and bound the earliest located online claim and contemporary correction. Those witnesses establish a narrow result: the relevant meal-cloth rule concerns ritual-purity placement, the execution cloth is a signal in a different setting, and neither supplies the story's departing-master convention. They do not prove that no differently worded or unpreserved custom ever existed.

Patristic absence is separately bounded. Chrysostom, Augustine, Cyril, Gregory, Bede, Theophylact, and Aquinas discuss the passage without the table story. Their silence is weighty because several explain the arrangement. It remains an enumerated witness result, not a claim about all Christian literature.

The provenance search likewise distinguishes earliest located from earliest existing. The 2006 reader question has the story in mature form and therefore cannot be its origin. The 2007 email proves independent circulation. Later fact-check and apologetic pages help trace transmission, not antiquity. A future discovery predating 2006 would revise the lower bound without supplying ancient Jewish attestation.

12 A Sober Synthesis

Peter is the principal observer in John 20 and the sole apostolic investigator named in Luke 24:12. The canonical accounts honor his action without attributing to him more than they say. John assigns belief to the other disciple; Luke assigns wonder to Peter. Those are complementary narrative judgments, not a defect requiring harmonization.

The cloths matter. They distinguish this empty tomb from a bare absence and make hurried theft or ordinary removal harder to explain. Ancient interpreters recognized that force. Yet their apologetic inference is an inference. The Resurrection is God's act, disclosed through the empty tomb, appearances, Scripture, and apostolic witness together.

The face-cloth matters too, but as burial evidence and part of John's ordered scene. Its separation does not encode a recovered table custom. The strongest reading is the least theatrical: what had wrapped a dead man remained in the place of death; the living Lord did not.

A Scope, Method, and Qualifications

This GPT edition independently tests the claims stated in section 1. It uses the same provider-neutral external evidence identities available to the Claude edition but inherits none of that edition’s prose, publication judgment, or review state. Greek observations were checked in the registered Robinson–Pierpont John and Luke artifacts. The exact Clementine Vulgate controls for John 11:44, 19:39–40, 20:3–10, Luke 23:53, and 24:12 were also checked. Swete’s 1909 Judges 14:12–13 text and apparatus were directly inspected for the bounded Septuagint lexical comparison. The SBLGNT v1.2 Luke running text and edition-comparison apparatus were directly inspected at 24:12; that apparatus is not a manuscript apparatus. English Scripture is quoted only from the registered public-domain Douay–Rheims.

The patristic, medieval, textual-critical, material-culture, rabbinic, and modern-provenance claims were checked against the exact publication-local bindings. The modern folded-napkin conclusion remains bounded to the exact witnesses and dated routes named here; it does not claim an exhaustive search of every language or unpreserved custom and does not depend on another provider’s search receipt. Theophylact and Lightfoot remain explicitly limited by OCR, and present-day web witnesses establish transmission rather than antiquity.

The final PDF and generated web edition received internal source, quotation, theological-boundary, and production review on 2026-07-29. That review is editorial rather than independent or ecclesiastical approval.

B Working References

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