

## Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

### Episode 328

### Jesus and the Honeycomb

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### Episode Summary

In Luke 24:36-43 the resurrected Jesus appears to the disciples. To help cure their disbelief, Jesus asks them if they have something to eat. The passage records how Jesus is given a piece of fish which he eats before their eyes to establish his resurrection is physical. Some English Bible translations of Luke 24:42 include “some honeycomb” with the fish. Others omit the detail. This episode of the podcast discusses why English translations differ and what the honeycomb detail telegraphs in terms of the theology of the resurrected Jesus.

### Transcript

**TS:** Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 328: Jesus and the Honeycomb. I’m the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he’s the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike! How are you doing?

**MH:** Pretty good. It’s getting hotter here, Trey.

**TS:** It is?

**MH:** And somebody told me this week that I haven’t seen anything yet, that right now it’s unusually cool. [laughs]

**TS:** Oooh.

**MH:** Oh yeah.

**TS:** So are you wearing shorts yet?

**MH:** Yeah, I’ve worn shorts a few times. If I’m in the house, then the air conditioning is on all the time, so I’ll wear jeans. But if I go out, yeah.

**TS:** We’ve got to get you into flip-flops. You got a good pair of flip-flops?

**MH:** No, those are so annoying, man.

**TS:** [laughs] You’ve got to get some sun on those feet, Mike.

**MH:** Yeah, well, my feet don't need it. Everything else pretty much does. [TS laughs] They opened the gyms, too, so I actually got to the gym this week, which was nice.

**TS:** That's good. Yeah.

**MH:** About a dozen people in there. So there are people creeping back. Throwing off the fear. [laughs]

**TS:** Have you made it to the beach personally? I know Drenna has, but have you?

**MH:** I haven't. I don't know if that'll ever happen. I hate the beach. [laughs] I'll go if she wants to...

**TS:** Is it the sand?

**MH:** Oh, yeah. I just don't like sand and everything. It's just, like, man. I don't like water just generally.

**TS:** You don't like taking your shoes off and letting the water get on your feet and the sand in your toes?

**MH:** No.

**TS:** None of that?

**MH:** No, that's what I hate. Because it takes you the rest of the day to get it out.

**TS:** What? It takes five seconds with the water hose that they have there.

**MH:** No, it doesn't. It doesn't.

**TS:** You must have some weird feet.

**MH:** You'll get it in your shoes walking out there. And then you think you've...

**TS:** You take your shoes off *before* you walk out there.

**MH:** Well, not on the rest of the beach. You know? So then you put your clean feet back into your shoes and then there's still sand there and then you take it home.

**TS:** That's why you get *sandals*. That's why you get *flip-flops*. That's why we've got to get you a pair.

**MH:** I hate those things. I hate them.

**TS:** That's the purpose they serve.

**MH:** I used to have a pair of crocs. They always felt like they were going to fall off my feet.

**TS:** Oh, I love crocs.

**MH:** I hate those. It's a point of irritation. But I might get to the beach once in 20 years anyway, so there's no point buying them.

**TS:** And the dogs? Have they adjusted to Florida? Do they like the weather and humidity?

**MH:** Mori loves the sun. He likes to lay out in the sun. But we have to keep an eye on him because he'll just lay out there and take a nap and we're kind of afraid that this is going to bake him. [laughs] You know? So we bring him in. But he likes it. And the other dogs, too. But Mori especially likes it. They love the lizards. The lizards are the thing. Because the old retriever, this is keeping him young, I think. He'll go out and he just walks the perimeter of the whole property looking for lizards because they'll cling to the sides of the fence. He'll never get one. But he likes to chase them.

**TS:** And how are you doing with no baseball this summer?

**MH:** Yeah, that kind of stinks really. They just keep playing the same games all over again. [sigh] And they're meaningless games, too. Who cares what happened on opening day six years ago? Whatever. So that's been a bit of a struggle. Because I'm used to listening to games while I work and stuff like that. But there's just nothing going on. So we did do our Fantasy draft for the Naked Bible league. So if there *is* a season, I'll at least get to do that and then listen. The Jaguars' schedule came out. So we're planning to go to a Jaguars game. Not during the summer. [laughs] Not going to sit out there in 100° and 100% humidity. Maybe in the fall, but that's about it.

**TS:** Well that's good. Yeah, you've got to go to a Jags game. Darin sent me an email a few days ago, and he ended it... Of course he's got a question. And he ended it, "By the way, the sports talk is fine. It makes y'all less nerdish." So a little shout-out to Darin for letting us know we sound a little less nerdish when we talk sports. So it makes us manly, Mike.

**MH:** There you go.

**TS:** So we appreciate that.

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**MH:** I think the hair on my chest just got a little longer listening to that.

**TS:** [laughs] Okay, wow. Alright, well let's transition here.

**MH:** And with that, we should transition... [laughs]

**TS:** Well, here's my transition: Jesus and the Honeycomb. I assume you're talking about Jesus is going to come back and save the bees.

**MH:** No, no.

**TS:** No?

**MH:** Nope. You missed that one.

**TS:** I thought this was about beekeepers here.

**MH:** You swung at something out of the strike zone there, Trey. [laughter] That's not what it's going to be about.

**TS:** Oh. My bad.

**MH:** Since obviously, obviously, if you don't know what this is about, there's going to be somebody else in the audience, too. So that makes the episode all worthwhile. But honestly, this is a little bit of an arcane kind of an episode because this is really off the beaten path. But again, if it's weird, it's important. And this actually *does* have some importance. But there's sort of a controversy out of the gate because you're not going to find the reference to the honeycomb in a *lot* of your translations. There's a New Testament textual issue here as well. But let's just jump into it. This is going to be Luke 24. And of course, verse 42 is the verse that we'll end up focusing on. But I'm going to read verses 36-43 just so that you get the scene in your head. So this is after the resurrection. And it says:

**<sup>36</sup> As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" <sup>37</sup> But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. [MH: See that's an important line. They thought they saw a spirit. They're going to find out otherwise.] <sup>38</sup> And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? <sup>39</sup> See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." <sup>40</sup> And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. <sup>41</sup> And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything**

**here to eat?”<sup>42</sup> They gave him a piece of broiled fish,<sup>43</sup> and he took it and ate before them.**

Now that’s the ESV. That has no reference to the honeycomb. Other translations will say this. I’ll read verses 42 and 43 again.

**They gave him a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb, and he took it and ate before them.**

Now the fact that you could look in your English translation and some of them will have a reference to the honeycomb (others will not)... I read the ESV, which does not, but it has a footnote here about the other phrase. That tells us right away that we have a Greek New Testament transmission issue—a textual issue. The phrase “and some honeycomb” is, in fact, missing in papyri (which are very old) and the major uncial manuscripts, which of course are old as well.

Now for those who don’t know what papyri and uncial are, manuscripts of the Greek New Testament are grouped by the material on which they are written, and also by the letter styles. In this case, papyri is stuff that’s written on papyri. And that’s the oldest material of the Greek New Testament we have. Uncials were written on animal skin. “Vellum” is usually the term that you’ll see. And they were written in all capital letters. Those are called uncials. So the fact that you have manuscripts written on animal skins with all capital letters and, of course, the words aren’t separated (it’s just continuous lines)... These manuscripts have been called *uncials* for that reason (the letter styling). And this is what they’re written on. Those are older. The major uncials are typically 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. And the major uncials are codexes as well. The codex is the forerunner—the immediate... You could call it a book, but the technically correct term is a codex. Somebody actually had to have the brilliant idea to stop using rolled manuscripts, and instead cut pieces and stack them and bind them on one side. Okay? That was an invention that changed the course of history, really, because of what it did for copying and printing and storage of manuscripts. So the major uncials (these codexes) are Sinaiticus (is one that’s familiar), Alexandrinus, Vaticanus, and Bezae. And *all* of them do *not* have the phrase “and some honeycomb.” These are the major uncials.

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So it’s not in the papyri. It’s not in the major uncials. Father Joseph Fitzmyer, who did the *Anchor Bible Commentary* on Luke, writes:

A few mss. (Θ, Ψ, f<sup>1,13</sup> and the Koine text-tradition) and some versions (Latin, Syriac) add: “and some honeycomb.” But they are not significant enough to be considered seriously.

So most of them are later. So Fitzmyer’s like, “Eh, I’m not going to bother. We don’t have good manuscript data for this.” Darrell Bock’s commentary at Luke

24:42 omits any reference to the honeycomb or the textual issue. He didn't say anything about it. Metzger's textual commentary, which is a commentary on the United Bible Society Greek New Testament... I can't remember what year this was published. But he writes this:

The words *kai apo mellissou kērion* [or *kēriou*] ("and from a honeycomb") in many of the later manuscripts (followed by the Textus Receptus)...

This is the text that became the base for the King James, or at least it's the most familiar term for the textual base in the New Testament for the King James. It has this reading. So the KJV will add "and some honeycomb."

...are an obvious interpolation [MH: that's an addition], for it is not likely that they would have fallen out of so many of the best representatives of the earlier text-types. Since in parts of the ancient church honey was used in the celebration of the Eucharist and in the baptismal liturgy, copyists may have added the reference here in order to provide scriptural sanction for liturgical practice.

That's Metzger's opinion. But we're going to find out that they don't actually have any proof of that. but that's a conjecture he puts in his textual commentary for this textual issue.

So in terms of manuscripts, the textual validity for the reading is not good. But from this point forward, I'm going to be interacting with a few journal articles that look at things in a different way. And the first one here I want to reference (which is going to be in the protected folder for those who subscribe to the MIQLAT newsletter) is by Kevin Sullivan. And it's called "Jesus, Angels, and the Honeycomb in Luke 24:42." This is a chapter out of the book, *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*. This was published in 2015 by Bloomsbury. It's part of the Library of New Testament Studies, volume 522. So Sullivan has a note on the textual argument and his note references the Alands. They're two New Testament critics (Kurt and Barbara Aland). They're a couple. And they wrote a very widely used, famous introduction in New Testament textual criticism. So Sullivan is going to allude to what they write—and it's basically the same verdict as Metzger. So this is from Sullivan's article:

Aland and Aland state that, 'This insertion is significant as an allusion to early popular customs of eating (and liturgical use), but in view of the opposing witness [MH: the opposing witnesses are the ones that don't have it] P75 & A B D L W and so forth it could not have been part of the original Lucan text'. In their strong statement against the originality of the phrase, they [the Alands] make reference to two previous attempts (eating customs and liturgical) that have been put forward to explain the existence of this insertion.

So Sullivan says, “Hey, textually speaking, this has problems.” But then he references Metzger’s comment as well about the baptismal liturgy and the Eucharist speculation. He says, “Yep, Metzger doesn’t think it’s there either, or that it’s original, or he thinks it’s pretty late. So then Sullivan, commenting on Metzger’s speculation that it was added to justify liturgical practice with the Eucharist, writes this:

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This is certainly a possibility, but it is not clear that this would be an appropriate place for an insertion that was meant to give scriptural basis to a practice for something as significant as the Eucharist and baptism. Moreover, if it was, then why did it not make it into many versions of Luke, and why do we not see honey mentioned in any of the other gospels at important moments? The importance of the Eucharist in Christian practice makes it unlikely that such a small number of manuscripts and such an oblique passage [MH: like Luke 24] (there is no such variant in John 21:13...

This is the other place where Jesus is there by the shore and the fish are there. There’s a meal being made. There’s no insertion there of a honeycomb reference. So Sullivan’s saying, “It’s unlikely that such a small number of manuscripts in such an oblique passage as this one, and the fact that there’s no variant in John 21, it’s unlikely that this demonstrates intent...

...to connect the honeycomb to Eucharistic practice. So, while this is a possible explanation, it again does not seem particularly convincing.

So he isn’t buying Metzger’s explanation. And he proceeds in the article to show that the suggestion of Metzger to explain the addition actually lacks coherence in other regards. For instance, in a footnote, Sullivan quotes a work by A. McGowan. The title of that book, which is a 1999 Oxford University Press work, is *Ascetic Eucharists: Food and Drink in Early Christian Ritual Meals*. And the footnote says:

McGowan notes that honey was taken with milk in ritual meals, and that there is ‘no convincing evidence for milk-and-honey baptismal meals in the first or second centuries.’

So McGowan—I mean, he wrote a whole book on food and drink they used to use at ritual meals (baptism and the Lord’s supper)—says, “Hey, when it comes to baptism, you’ve got nothing for two centuries.” So Sullivan’s point is, that really doesn’t sound congruent with Metzger’s idea.

Now Sullivan references another article. This is by Kilpatrick. And I believe this one is also in the protected folder. We’re going to reference this a few times. This one is just simply titled “Luke 24:42-43”. It’s from the scholarly journal *Novum Testamentum* 28:4. This was written in 1986. And it’s only three pages long, so

it's just a short article on these verses. Kilpatrick notes two other passages... Now this is important, because the textual argument is that the passage isn't in these early texts (the papyri and the uncials). But Kilpatrick notes something really important here. He notes that two other passages in the same chapter (in Luke 24) have demonstrable eye skips and points out that the omission of the phrase in two other places can be explained that way—by the scribes' eyes skipping from one part of a word... Like three letters they're looking at and then they look at the text and they're copying and they're looking at the word and then their attention turns to the thing they're writing out by hand. Then they write down the word. Then they look back at the text they're copying, but somehow their eye falls on the same three letters a few words down the line and they don't realize it. And then they start copying the next word associated right next to those three letters. And then that gets put into the text. And the result is the stuff in the middle, from the first three letters (this is a hypothetical example) and then the second three letters that are the same... The stuff in the middle gets omitted. It gets skipped. It's a scribal mistake. It's an eye skip problem. There are fancy terms for this in textual criticism: homoeoarkton and homoeoteleuton. The first one is a scribal error leading to omission of elements of the text that is based on similar *beginnings* of words and the other one is the same thing based on similar *endings* of words. So it's just that the scribe looks at something, starts writing something, turns his attention back to what he was looking at, and his eye falls on the same letters, but he doesn't realize it's not the same place in the manuscript. And then he never figures it out, never sees it, goes back to copying the manuscript, and we have the omission of material. This is how it happens. It's a very human mistake.

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So Kilpatrick is saying, "Look. There are two places in Luke 24 where we have a textual issue where something is missing in certain manuscripts and the omission is explainable by an eye skip. Then he makes his point. Here's why he's drawing attention to this. He says you can explain the omission in Luke 24:42 of the phrase "and some honeycomb" exactly the same way. And he points out in his article that on either side of what would've been the running text, you have identical letters of the stuff that's not there. So Kilpatrick's argument is, "Look, why is it the textual critics can recognize in these other two places in the same chapter that we have a mechanical error here?" We have an accidental scribal error. And this is why this text is missing in certain manuscripts, even old ones. We've got two places where this is apparent in the chapter. But then when it comes to verse 42, nobody is making the same argument.

So what Kilpatrick is suggesting is that this could be really old. The phrase "and some honeycomb" could be just as old as the material in the papyri and in these uncials, but it just got dropped out. It was just missed. And then some scribe later on had a manuscript with it in and then it shows up in later manuscripts. So Kilpatrick actually isn't buying the text-critical assessment, that this can't be very early. And it's a very good argument because the exact same phenomenon that



could explain this omission is actually at work in two other places in the same chapter when it comes to this set of manuscripts.

So Sullivan moves on from that and he shows how very early Church Fathers, when they quote the New Testament—when they talk about this scene in Luke 24—they know about the honeycomb. So they're getting it from somewhere. Justin Martyr references it. Clement of Alexandria references it. So does Tertullian. So Sullivan notes that even if it's not original to Luke... Let's just say it wasn't there and it could've been added (like the other textual critics say), it was added *really* early. So it's either original to Luke or it was added *really, really* early. And again, there's no Eucharistic thing here. Because McGowan's work has shown that there's no use of honey in baptismal formulas for two centuries.

So what's Sullivan's doing here is he's making the case that even though we have a textual problem here and it's not in the major manuscripts, it's still quite conceivable that it *was* in manuscripts that we just don't have now—*very, very* early. Because the first generation of early patristic fathers... They know it. They know it. And we have a good mechanical explanation for how it could've fallen out of the text.

So I wanted to say a little bit about that, because we're going to have people in the audience that are going to like the text critical discussion. They're going to be aware of it here. Just so that you know, that is *far* from a done deal. The assessment of the Alands and Metzger, that does not end the discussion by any means.

So for the sake of the rest of the episode, we're going to proceed as though the honeycomb reference is authentic. We're just going to assume that. And then ask the obvious question: "What's the point? Why is it here? What does it mean? Why mention it? Is it only there for the same reason the fish is there?" Okay, Jesus eats something, so he *has* to be there in physical form. That's part of it, for sure, because he's doing the physical act of eating. But I think you're going to be surprised that there are some other things that this communicates that really actually relate to high Christology and... I'm going to use a term that I've used a couple of times on the podcast: "angelomorphic" Christology. It's going to actually take us back to the Two Powers thing—the Two Yahwehs thing—the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament being God in visible human form (and in some cases physical). It's going to take us back to that.

And so there's this notion in a couple of New Testament passages where Jesus (the resurrected Jesus) is linked to the Angel of the Lord. That makes sense in the post-resurrection. It wouldn't really make sense *pre*-resurrection, obviously, because Jesus is a human. He's incarnate. He's running around preaching and doing things like that. But after the resurrection, you get a couple of passages that actually link Jesus with this particular angel figure. And as odd as it sounds, the honeycomb thing is part of that linkage. This is a post-resurrection scene. So

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assuming that it is part of Luke's original text (we don't know that for sure, but just assuming that it is), it would make sense that it communicates certain things. So that's what I want to devote the rest of the episode to, just unraveling this.

Now in the orbit of biblical studies and biblical scholars, there are a couple of clear points of reference that Luke could have had in mind with the reference. In other words, if we start with the question, "Why would Luke include this detail?" there are a couple of very discernable, very comprehensible reference points that Luke... He's a physician, so he's educated. He's quite literate. Anyone who has studied Greek or who has mucked around in Greek commentaries knows that Luke's Greek is pretty much superior to everything else in the New Testament. It's much more complicated. His writing is elevated. It's like reading something by Shakespeare and then somebody who's not Shakespeare. It's this kind of thing. It's an elevated kind of Greek that approximates more closely classical Greek than the other stuff in the Greek New Testament. Because the Greek New Testament is written in Koine, which is the common vernacular in Greek. But Luke surpasses that in what he's doing. And Hebrews does, as well, which is one of the reasons why some people have argued that Luke wrote Hebrews. But that's kind of a dead end.

But back to Luke here, given Luke's apparent education, there are a couple of obvious things that he could have had in his head that he thought it would be useful to include this detail of the seaside episode. Or in this case, where the disciples have gathered and are talking about the events that have just transpired in Jerusalem, and then Jesus shows up. And I'm going to start... For the first one of these, I'm going to reference a Second Temple Jewish book called *Joseph and Aseneth*. This is a... I want to say short, but it's got a good bit of content to it. In chapters 14-16 of this book, there is a very well-known episode that involves Michael and the honeycomb. So this would've been a clear reference. But let's just see what's in there. So I'm going to quote a little bit here about what this book is about. This is from Burchard's translation of *Joseph and Aseneth* in the second volume of the Charlesworth Old Testament pseudepigrapha. So Burchard writes:

The Old Testament records that Pharaoh gave to Joseph Aseneth, the daughter of Potiphara, Priest of On, for his wife (Gen 41:45). How could Joseph—the model of chastity, piety, and statesmanship—marry a foreign Hamitic girl, daughter of an idolatrous priest? Jewish theology and lore found many answers to this intriguing question and expanded some into narratives. Joseph and Aseneth, the longest of these stories, is a full-fledged romance by an anonymous author; it is nearly twice as long as Esther, and a little longer than the Gospel of Mark. [MH: So it's fairly substantial.]

Date:

Joseph and Aseneth presupposes at least some of the Septuagint, and probably all of it. It is hard to decode this into dates, but we are probably safe to say that the book was written between 100 B.C. and Hadrian's edict against circumcision, which has to do with the Second Jewish War of A.D. 132–135. If Joseph and Aseneth comes from Egypt, the Jewish revolt under Trajan (c. A.D. 115–117) is the latest possible date.

So in round numbers, Burchard is suggesting, we're probably safe to say that *Joseph and Aseneth* was written somewhere between 100 BC-100 AD. (Let's just use round numbers.) Now the story itself is about Aseneth (this woman). She becomes a follower of Yahweh, Joseph's God. Her prayer is... This is all a romance. This is fiction. We don't know that any of this happened. But this is the way it's dealt with, it's portrayed. Her prayer is in *Joseph and Aseneth* chapter 13. So there's this long prayer where she confesses her loyalty to Yahweh and turns away from the gods of Egypt. And then she's visited by a "heavenly man" in chapters 14-16, who introduces himself as the "chief of angels". (That's chapter 14:7.) That's actually in Greek Joshua 5 language. The heavenly man tells her that Yahweh accepts her and approves of the marriage to Joseph. He (the heavenly man) then gives her a new name. And I'm just going to read from the book now. This is chapter 14 and I'm going to start in verse 7:

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<sup>7(6)</sup> "And your name shall no longer be called Aseneth, but your name shall be City of Refuge, because in you many nations will take refuge with the Lord God, the Most High, and under your wings many peoples trusting in the Lord God will be sheltered, and behind your walls will be guarded those who attach themselves to the Most High God in the name <sup>(7)</sup> of Repentance. For Repentance is in the heavens, [MH: I'll come back to Repentance in a moment] an exceedingly beautiful and good daughter of the Most High. And she herself entreats the Most High God for you at all times and for all who repent in the name of the Most High God, because he is (the) father of Repentance. And she herself is guardian of all virgins, and loves you very much, and is beseeching the Most High for you at all times and for all who repent she prepared a place of rest in the heavens. And she will renew all who repent, and wait on them herself for ever (and) ever.

Now on Repentance, in Second Temple Jewish, it's common to have angels representing or presiding over human virtues—this whole idea. In 1 Enoch 40:9 the angel of repentance has a name. It's Phanuel. So this idea that Repentance is in the heavens, in this case it's a specific angel (Phanuel). And that angel is referred to by feminine pronouns as well. So that's part of Jewish angelology between the testaments (Jewish tradition).

Now Aseneth is thrilled when she hears this and so she wants to offer the heavenly man a meal. This is chapter 16, and this is where the honeycomb exchange comes in. So I'm going to read a portion of chapter 16. It goes like this:

16 <sup>1(1)</sup> And Aseneth hurried and set a new table before him and went to provide bread for him. And the man said to her, “Bring me also a honeycomb.” <sup>2(2)</sup> And Aseneth stood still and was distressed, because she did not have a honeycomb in her storeroom. <sup>3(3)</sup> And the man said to her, “Why do you stand still?” <sup>4</sup> And Aseneth said, “I will send a boy to the suburb, because the field which is our inheritance is close, and he will quickly bring you a honeycomb from there, and I will set (it) before you, Lord.” <sup>5</sup> And the man said to her, “Proceed and enter your storeroom, and you will find a honeycomb lying upon the table. Pick it up and bring (it) here.” <sup>6</sup> And Aseneth said, “Lord, a honeycomb is not in my storeroom.” [MH laughs] [MH: It’s like, “Hey, I know what’s in my kitchen, Dude.”] <sup>7</sup> And the man said, “Proceed and you will find (one).”

<sup>8(4)</sup> And Aseneth entered her storeroom and found a honeycomb lying on the table. And the comb was big and white as snow and full of honey. And that honey was like dew from heaven and its exhalation like breath of life. <sup>9</sup> And Aseneth wondered and said in herself, Did then this comb come out of the man’s mouth, because its exhalation is like the breath of this man’s mouth? <sup>10(5)</sup> And Aseneth took that comb and brought it to the man, and put it on the table which she had prepared before him.

And the man said to her, “How is it that you said that a honeycomb is not in my storeroom? [MH laughs] [MH: So now he’s needling her a little bit.] And behold, you have brought a wonderful honeycomb.” <sup>11(6)</sup> And Aseneth was afraid and said, “Lord, I did not have a honeycomb in my storeroom at any time, but you spoke and it came into being. Surely this came out of your mouth, because its exhalation is like breath of your mouth.”

**So in other words, she’s thinking he breathed it into existence.**

And the man smiled at Aseneth’s understanding, <sup>12,13(7)</sup> and called her to himself, and stretched out his right hand, and grasped her head and shook her head with his right hand. And Aseneth was afraid of the man’s hand, because sparks shot forth from his hand as from bubbling (melted)<sup>k</sup> iron. And Aseneth looked, gazing with her eyes at the man’s hand. <sup>14</sup> And the man saw (it) and smiled and said, “Happy are you, Aseneth, because the ineffable mysteries of the Most High have been revealed to you, and happy (are) all who attach themselves to the Lord God in repentance, because they will eat from this comb. For this <sup>(8)</sup> comb is (full of the) spirit of life. And the bees of the paradise of delight have made this from the dew of the roses of life that are in the paradise of God [MH: this Edenic sort of imagery]. And all the angels of God eat of it and all the chosen of God and all the sons of the Most High, because this is a comb of life, and everyone who eats of it will not die for ever (and) ever.

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So that's *Joseph and Aseneth* chapter 16. Now what other biblical stories do is not nearly as detailed as this. This is a long scene. But think about it. Let's just think about it in broad terms. What other biblical stories are there that have food offered to God in human form? What are they? In case this it's B.C. (and it very well could be), what else do we have?

- Well, we have Genesis 18. That's the Lord himself and then two angels. These "three men" come and visit Abraham and they have a meal. If you go to Genesis 19, the first four verses, they eat. They have the meal.
- You have Judges 13. This is the Samson story where, in this case, we don't have the items eaten, but Samson's mother brings food to the angel of God. So there's this gesture of a meal there.
- Later in the New Testament... And by the way, these kind of passages in the Old Testament are what's lurking behind Hebrews 13:2, that you entertain angels unawares. You should always extend hospitality because you never know. Later in the New Testament with the post-resurrection Jesus, we have the Emmaus Road incident. There's food involved in that. He takes the bread and as soon as he breaks it, then they know who it is.
- John 21:13, a reference to the meal by the sea.
- And then of course Luke 24:42-43. In verse 43, Jesus is eating the fish. And then the honeycomb would be in verse 42 if that's the authentic reading.

So Luke 24:42 is not alone. And *Joseph and Aseneth* is not alone in this idea that you have humans at least offering food to a supernatural being. Let's talk about the messaging a little bit. Now that we have *Joseph and Aseneth* as a little bit of a backstory, we're going to get to a second reference here in a moment. But that's the one that is the most obvious. And "chief of the angels"... Most people would say that this is Michael, because he's the highest archangel and keeps it within a Second Temple Jewish orbit. You could just as well go back to the language of Joshua 5 and say, "This is somebody who's higher than Michael because the captain of the Lord's host with the drawn sword in his hand... This is familiar to *Unseen Realm* readers. But the drawn sword in his hand is the key phrase. Because that Hebrew phrase only occurs two other places: 1 Chronicles 21:16 and Numbers 22:23. Both of them are the Angel of the Lord. It says that explicitly.

So if we're going to use *that* and factor that in, this is indeed B.C., this would be like another one of these "God as man" (in Christian language, the second person of the Trinity) showing up in this *Joseph and Aseneth* scene. Again, we're not saying that this happened historically back in the days of Joseph. This is a fictional romance. But it would show you that Jews are thinking in these terms.

This is high Jewish Godhead thinking. So *Joseph and Aseneth* is one of these texts that factors into that whole discussion of binitarian Jewish monotheism. In this case, we bring it up because of the honeycomb reference. But anyway, Kilpatrick makes reference to the honeycomb in his article in *Joseph and Aseneth*, and he suggests that the honeycomb should be understood as “the food of immortality,” and by virtue of its status as such, it is food appropriate for the resurrected Jesus.

So Kilpatrick thinks that the honeycomb reference is really sort of a signifier, that it would've been perceived as “this is the food of the gods.” “This is the food of those who live in heaven.” Because if you go back to what the heavenly man says. “The angels of God eat of it. The chosen of God and all the sons of the Most High eat this.” This is like their favorite food. This is the comb of life. So Kilpatrick says that Luke could have conceivably included this detail to communicate not just that the resurrected Jesus was there physically, but to associate him with these... He's a divine being. It reinforces the deity and the immortality of Jesus, because the honeycomb would've been associated with beings who obviously were not human and who were perceived in Second Temple Judaism as living forever and all this kind of stuff. So he thinks it reinforces not only the resurrection but also even the deity of Jesus. Now Sullivan writes this. He thinks that Kilpatrick is substantially correct...

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...that the honeycomb from *Joseph and Aseneth* is significant for understanding the variant reading in Luke 24, but it is not enough to say that honey is the ‘food of immortality’ as if it was widely accepted in all cultures at all times, let alone accepted within early Christianity...

So Sullivan would like to see this notion in other texts so that he could get a sense that more people thought along these lines. So he says, “I think he's kind of right,” but “without providing stronger support for such an assertion and arguing for the lines of influence between texts” he's not going to be completely persuaded. So Sullivan again is trying to be fair and honest with his readers. “He's basically right but I'm not quite buying... I wish we had more” is essentially what he's saying here. So then he moves to the work of another scholar, Crispin Fletcher-Louis, and Sullivan writes this. Fletcher-Louis has a whole book on angelology (or angelomorphic Christology) in Luke and Acts. It's a well-known but expensive monograph. So he's going to go to Fletcher-Louis and then Sullivan writes this:

With regard to the originality of this phrase as suggested by Kilpatrick, Fletcher-Louis writes:

*However, the idea that the disciples happened to have some heavenly food on hand is not typical of the Lukan imagination. Kilpatrick's appeal to [Joseph and Aseneth] pays insufficient attention to the intricacies of the*

*history-of-religions background. Metzger may well be right that its insertion, unsupported by good manuscript evidence, reflects later liturgical use in the church. Otherwise it makes sense as an attempt to maintain that, in line with the Jewish background we have outlined, [MH: his book is about this Jewish Christology, Jewish binitarianism/monotheism] the heavenly body, though still material, is nevertheless different from the earthly one (cf. 1 Cor 15:35ff).*

So he's basically saying, "Yeah, it supports the physicality of the resurrection, the resurrection body," but Fletcher-Louis is a little hesitant to go where Kilpatrick goes with this. And Sullivan jumps back in here and he writes on his own behalf. And he says:

Fletcher-Louis is correct that Kilpatrick's approach 'pays insufficient attention to the intricacies of the history-of-religions background', because Kilpatrick is suggesting a widespread belief in the idea of honey (or the honeycomb) as the food of immortality, but he does not give strong support for such an idea. [MH: "Where are the other texts?"] However, Fletcher-Louis' last point, namely that this 'makes sense as an attempt to maintain that ... the heavenly body, though still material, is nevertheless different from the earthly one' is perhaps the most important one. The ontological status of Jesus at this particular point in Luke's narrative, i.e., post-resurrection but pre-ascension, is unique and worthy of further reflection. Jesus' appearance to the disciples comes at a pivotal moment when there is both the need to stress the corporality [MH: (the physical nature)] of Jesus—so that the bodily resurrection is clearly demonstrated—but having just defeated death, there is also a need to acknowledge the fact that Jesus is much more than a mere human being.

Sullivan's point is that what's going on in this scene is definitely a demonstration that Jesus' resurrection was physical. But he wasn't raised to just be a now newly alive resurrected man. He's more than a man. He was more than a man *before* (as the son of God and all the incarnation kind of stuff), but what Sullivan is saying here is that, "When we think resurrection of Jesus, we can't just be thinking that the point of the resurrection was to bring a *man* back to life. This is no ordinary man." So what's Sullivan's going to do is he's going to angle for the inclusion of the honeycomb to make that point. He's going to associate this resurrected "man" with the presence of God—and even *more* than the presence of God, but to actually *be* God in this other person (entity), falling back on the notion of the Angel of the Lord who was Yahweh but wasn't Yahweh. This is a well-known discussion by now for this audience and those who have read *Unseen Realm*—the Two Yahwehs idea, the Godhead of Judaism idea, something that used to be part of Jewish theology until the second century when it was declared a heresy for fairly obvious reasons. This whole notion that God could be more than one person at one time is *Jewish*. You get it from the Hebrew

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Bible through four or five different trajectories and streams. The Angel of Yahweh is one of them.

And so Sullivan's argument is going to be that the honeycomb is there to put Jesus again in that conversation—to link Jesus to that discussion for Luke's readers. So Sullivan spends a good deal of time linking this text and others and the "God as man eating" idea with angelomorphic Christology. This is part of what his article does—God as an Angel (think of the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament) and then Jesus getting linked back to that Angel. And so Jesus-as-the-Angel themes is what Sullivan is saying is going on here.

Now the reasoning is important—that the post-resurrection Jesus gets linked to all this. It's more than just, "Oh, now he's a man but in different kind of flesh." Well, okay, yeah. But Luke's telling his readers that, "Okay, he *is* that. He is bodily resurrected and he has celestial flesh now," (to steal a Pauline phrase for Luke). "Yeah, that's true. But you have to recognize, readers, that what's happening here—what was going on in this scene—is part of what was going on in the Old Testament where God himself would show up as a man (as an angel)." And the angel linkage here might not be apparent at this point because now we're coming up to the second reference that biblical scholars would think of when they think of God as man being offered a meal or when they would think of "angel food". Maybe you've already thought of it. And the honeycomb has a point to make. Really it's because of its characterization as angel food, that this is what brings us to the second reference, and that is... Let's just start with Psalm 78:23-25. This is a reference to the wilderness wanderings.

**<sup>23</sup> Yet he [God] commanded the skies above  
and opened the doors of heaven,**

**<sup>24</sup> and he rained down on them manna to eat  
and gave them the grain of heaven.**

**<sup>25</sup> Man ate of the bread [MH: or food (*lechem*)] of the angels;  
he sent them food in abundance.**

You say, "Well, okay. Manna is angels' food. I get it. But where is the honey?" Ah. For that, you need to go back to the manna incident in Exodus 16:31. Let's just go back there. Because there's where you get the specific link. Exodus 16:31. This is the manna chapter.

**<sup>31</sup> Now the house of Israel called its name manna. [MH: the stuff that's on the ground—"What is it?"] It was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.**



Sounds an awful lot like the *Joseph and Aseneth* reference. [laughs] And again, this is why, when scholars look to when *Joseph and Aseneth* might have been written... The language there is going to be borrowed from the Septuagint, not only in that place but other places in that book. But there you go. Exodus 16:31. "The manna was like honey. It tasted like honey."

So Sullivan goes on from this point to reference another article on this point. And this article really is kind of odd because it actually doesn't include *Joseph and Aseneth* in it, which is kind of shocking, given the title of the article. The article is by D. Goodman, called "Do Angels Eat?" [laughs] It's from the *Journal of Jewish Studies*, volume 37 (1986). Goodman goes through a lot of these other passages. But again, somehow he misses or doesn't include *Joseph and Aseneth*. But he *does* have a few things to say about Psalm 78:23-25. He writes:

'Yet he commanded the skies above, and opened the doors of heaven; he rained down on them manna to eat, and gave them the grain of heaven. Mortals ate of the bread of angels; he sent them food in abundance'.

So he quotes the verse and then he says:

Angels are also said to have food in later texts.

Then he references something in Philo.

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Interestingly, the manna from heaven is linked with honey in some texts, especially Exod. 16:31...

Then he goes on. I'm not going to read the whole thing. But he goes on and discusses how other Jewish texts in the Second Temple period have angels eating things. So this is something... I only include that one little quote from Goodman to make the point that, yeah, lots of scholars are going to think of *Joseph and Aseneth*. But here you have a guy who didn't even include that, but he's thinking about biblical stuff. So it's not just Mike straining at a gnat here to justify this. But no, other scholars of the Bible and Jewish studies have looked at Psalm 78 and Exodus 16 as a possible reference to what Luke is doing in chapter 24.

Now for some listeners here (I think for a lot of them) you're going to know what angelomorphic Christology is all about and the Two Yahwehs and Jewish Godhead. If you don't, you need to read *Unseen Realm*. For those of you who do, though, we're just going to proceed. Again I recommend, if it's unfamiliar, read *The Unseen Realm*, at least those chapters, and you'll find out how the God-as-man idea is repurposed. It's there in the Old Testament. It's repurposed in the New.

But I think for the rest of our episode, we're just going to go straight to a passage that I *don't* discuss in *Unseen Realm*. And that is in the book of Revelation. So the book of Revelation actually gives us a good glimpse—a good example—of angelomorphic Christology after the resurrection. We get hints of it in these passages like Luke 24 with the honeycomb. That takes the reader back into the tradition of this particular angel who is God and the wilderness wanderings. Because the angel's supposed to be leading them, right? Again, read *Unseen Realm* if that sounds goofy or unfamiliar to you. The Angel of the Lord is leading them, and then you get this bread from heaven that tastes like honey, and God in human form. You have a celestial God-man. If you're doing things to link the resurrected Jesus back to this matrix of ideas, that's significant. And that's the whole point of what we're trying to say in this episode—that Luke is doing this. And he does it through this honeycomb reference.

Now let's go to a different one. And you're going to have to pay attention to this because this may surprise you a little bit. But if you go to Revelation... Let's just start in the first chapter. And we're going to zero in on the Alpha and Omega language. So in Revelation 1:1-2 we read this. Just think about it carefully.

**The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, <sup>2</sup> who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.**

Those are the first two verses. Now let's ask ourselves some questions.

**The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave *him*...**

So it sounds like God gave Jesus a certain revelation about what was going to happen because he wants Jesus to inform his servants (those who follow him) about things that must soon take place.

***He* made it known by sending his angel...**

Now wait a minute. Is the "he" there Jesus or God? Is the point that God made it known...? This is the method by which God through Jesus (or something) gave this information? Or [laughs] (here's the radical thought)...

**The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place.**

Could it be that God gave the information to Jesus and actually *sent* Jesus in the form of an angel? This is post-resurrection. Could it be that Jesus...? Let's just be a little blatant here. Could it be that the son who had fulfilled this role as the

messenger of Yahweh in the Old Testament many times is now fulfilling it again? That the son is the *angelos* (the messenger—the same term is translated “angel”) to John to tell the followers of Jesus (his own followers) what’s going to happen? Just store that away. Store that away. Because we’re going to loop back to it. We keep reading in Revelation 21:

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**<sup>5</sup> And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” <sup>6</sup> And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end...**

Okay. So who is seated on the throne? It’s not an empty question. Let’s just go back. I’ll go back to verse 3:

**<sup>3</sup> Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.**

**<sup>4</sup> John to the seven churches that are in Asia:**

**Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, <sup>5</sup> and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood <sup>6</sup> and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.**

So we’ve now read the first six verses. Who’s on the throne? Hmm. Well, is God on the throne? Or is it *Jesus*? Who is it, exactly?

**And he who is seated on the throne said...**

How are we to determine what’s going on here? There’s some ambiguity there. But let’s go back to the Alpha and Omega. So the one who’s on the throne (whoever that is) says,

**<sup>8</sup> “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God...**

Okay. Well, that’s probably God then. But you know... There’s this temptation to think that it’s maybe Jesus is God or maybe there’s more than one throne or there’s a co-thing. Who knows? It’s getting a little muddled and we’re only eight verses in. Because verse 8 says, “I am the Alpha and the Omega...” It’s already getting muddled as to which is God and which is Jesus and who’s the angel.

Which one is sending him? Again, it's a little odd. Okay? It's a little odd. So we have some questions here. We're probably landing on God, but again, we're not sure. Because if we go back to the first couple of verses, it's not completely clear as to who is sending whom and who is sent. It could be that the son *is* the messenger here. We don't know yet. It's just a little weird. It's a little confusing. If we keep reading, we're going to hit verse 12. John is speaking here.

**<sup>12</sup>Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup>and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, [MH: that's familiar language from Daniel] clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. <sup>14</sup>The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow.**

Now wait a minute. In Daniel, the one with the white hair is the Ancient of Days. It's not the Son of Man. But this makes it sound like they're the same. Well, that's odd.

**<sup>14</sup>The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, <sup>15</sup>his feet were like burnished bronze...**

That description actually also describes God himself in Ezekiel 1—the divine man on the throne of Ezekiel 1 (that vision).

**...refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters.**

That's also from Ezekiel. In this case, chapter 43.

**<sup>16</sup>In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.**

**<sup>17</sup>When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, <sup>18</sup>and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.**

Now this *has* to be Jesus, even though he is described in terms of the Ancient of Days and the one who is seated on the cherubim throne of Ezekiel 1. By the way, heads up to Jehovah's Witnesses there—this is not just about *theos* vocabulary. So this is clearly Jesus here. But did God, like, disappear from the scene? Or was the whole point of Revelation 1 that Jesus *is* God, and if he is God, he's sending a messenger? But could the messenger also be...? How do you parse this? Where is God in the scene? Where is Jesus in the scene? And what's up with this angel?

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Because if *God's* sending the angel, then it would make sense that Jesus *could* be that angel, because the son occupied that slot back in the Old Testament where God was as a man (or son of man, to steal Daniel's line). Like, what's going on? What's going on here? It's a little hard to know who the characters are and how to divide them (how to parse them).

Then we go to Revelation 22. So we were in the first chapter. Now we're going to go to the last chapter. [laughs] We're going to bookend it. Verse 1:

**Then the angel showed me...**

The angel is going to be telling John stuff in Revelation 22. So Revelation 22 hearkens back to this angel telling John stuff, kind of like the first chapter did, even though it was a little hard to know who the cast of characters actually is.

**Then the angel showed me the river of life... bright as crystal...**

And all this Edenic imagery stuff. Shows him the throne of God and the throne of the Lamb... "The water of life is flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb." By the way, is that one or two thrones now? Is it a shared throne? Is it two thrones? Is it always the same in Revelation? Do we wind up with one that's occupied by two? Again, you have all these questions as you're reading through the book of Revelation. And this isn't even the prophecy stuff. This is the other stuff. [laughs] And you get to verse 6:

**And he said to me...**

He. We have to assume that's the angel from verse 1. "The angel said to me." And by the way, let's complicate it even more. In Greek, Revelation 22:1 doesn't say "Then the angel showed me..." It says, "Then he showed me." Greek actually has the pronoun. But the translator of the ESV is doing us a favor (or is he?) by saying *angel*. He's trying to disambiguate the pronouns. But good luck with that. Verse 6:

**<sup>6</sup> And he [MH: whoever the *he* is] said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place."**

**<sup>7</sup> "And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."**

Now wait a minute. It said, "*he* said to me," and then we have a switch to the first person. So the speaker must be the *I* there. So who's coming? Well... How do we figure this out? Because it doesn't seem like it could be God. It seems like it *can't* be God. Unless of course this is a reference to the Day of the Lord

judgment. Well then, okay, we could go back to the Old Testament and think in those terms. But you would think more that it's Jesus. God would be coming figuratively, like, to punish (the Day of the Lord stuff). Jesus is the one who'd actually be showing up. So Jesus is coming. We saw in Revelation 19 what that's going to look like—the Armageddon scene and all that, the rider on the white horse who *wears the name* of God. And the rider of the white horse is identified as the Word of God, which of course is Jesus. So in that sense it's kind of both. We'd probably have to land on one, but it's kind of both, you know? So here we go again. And is this the angel or not? So the ESV, of course, has made a decision for us in that regard, but we don't have to take that as (if you'll pardon the pun) gospel truth, either. So again, there's just stuff to think about. So let's go to verse 8. That was verses 6 and 7.

**<sup>8</sup>I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, <sup>9</sup> but he said to me, "You must not do that!"**

Ah, now that's a little... You'd think if it was Jesus, he'd be okay with that. But the angel says, "Nah, don't do that." Is it the same angel? I sure hope so, because then it gets even worse!

**<sup>8</sup>I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, <sup>9</sup> but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."**

Okay, so this is an angel. We've got first person. So it feels representational. We're not sure about the identity of the angel. Would the Angel of the Lord have actually said, "Hey, don't worship me. Worship God"? Well, if the Angel of the Lord is the one in Joshua 5, he doesn't say that. He says, "Hey, take your shoes off. You're standing on holy ground." It's the same language as Exodus 3. So again, it's muddled. We're not sure what's going on here. So what do we do with that? Well, we keep reading, and we hit verse 12:

**<sup>12</sup>"Behold, I am coming soon [MH: first person language], bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. <sup>13</sup>I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."**

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So is this the angel who didn't want to be worshipped talking? Or is it Jesus? If it's the angel, it's representational, very obviously. Like, Jesus has told him, "Okay, when you hit John again, this is what you say. And it's okay to use the first person because you're my representative." So again, how do we parse this? Then we get to verse 16 and now look at what happens.

<sup>16</sup> “I, Jesus...

It’s like you look at this and say, “Please don’t say that. Because now it gets even worse.”

<sup>16</sup> “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”

Hmm. So here Jesus could step in as the speaker. Or is the angel just using the first person? But would the angel really call himself Jesus? I don’t know. Well, if Jesus told him to say that, he would. It’s just, like, yeah, boy, this is... How many times are we going to get our minds played with here? Welcome to the book of Revelation! So it’s really difficult to know what Revelation does with God and Jesus and the angel. Are they the same? Are they different? Is the answer yes? I mean, honestly, good luck with that.

But let’s set all that aside. This one thing we *can* know, by virtue of what we just read. In Revelation 1:5-8, God is the Alpha and Omega. That’s probably the case. That’s the best bet there. He’s the one sending the angel to John. Maybe it *is* Jesus. Maybe it’s an angel who is also sent by Jesus at the end. We have the angel winding up not accepting worship, okay? So let’s try to factor that in here. In Revelation 22, Jesus is also called the Alpha and the Omega. So the angel could be speaking for Jesus, but his point is that Jesus is the Alpha and Omega, whereas before you’d have probably God taking that title. And in Revelation 22, as well, we are told that Jesus sent the angel. So if we take that at face value, even if it’s the angel telling John this, the point is still that, “Hey, Jesus sent me.” Well if Jesus sent him, then you go back to chapter 1:5-8 and it says, “God sent.” That’s really the most coherent way to read the initial chapter. Because in verse 8: “I am the Alpha and Omega,” says the Lord God.”

So if he’s the sender in chapter 1 of the angel (whoever that is), and if Jesus is the sender in chapter 22, guess what? They’re both referred to as Alpha and Omega. What the passages (Revelation 1 and 22) do is to link God with Jesus. God as Jesus. Jesus as God. And then it throws in this angel talk. Because in some places, the angel seems to be Jesus, or really, really close. And all of that convoluted kind of stuff is part of what we call angelomorphic Christology. Don’t think, “Oh, this is the Jehovah’s Witness...! They’re going to love this, because now Jesus gets to be an angel!” No. Think of Jesus as a messenger of God precisely the way the Angel of the Lord was the messenger of God in the Old Testament. And then I hope you recall (if you’re an *Unseen Realm* reader) Genesis 48:15-16, where the angel and God are grammatically fused together by a singular verb. “May *he* bless the boys.” Which one? The angel or God? Yes. This is all part of the same arc—all part of the same trajectory.

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And what Luke has done (to loop back to our starting point) in Luke 24:42, when Luke drops in the honeycomb. [laughs] Okay? When that detail is included, it's going to make the ancient reader think of Jesus as that particular angel back in the Old Testament that was leading the nation of Israel when the bread from heaven fell that tasted like a honeycomb. And he's going to think of Psalm 78 that refers to the manna in this way. It's the food of angels. Luke wants people to realize that this is not just a *man* that was raised from the dead physically. Yes, that *is* what's standing here in front of the disciples. Yes. We have a confirmation of a physical resurrection. But we've got more than that. We've got more than that. Luke wants his readers to connect this scene to this other complex of ideas about angels first and then The Angel associated with his food of the angels/honey thing.

And then think of the wider context. They might think of *Joseph and Aseneth* when you have the chief of the angels, the captain of the Lord's host... If we were reading it in Greek, that links back to Joshua 5. And if you had a really astute reader (somebody who could read Hebrew), they would know that Joshua 5 links into two Angel of the Lord passages in the Hebrew Bible (the only other two that use the phrase).

So basically, we get to the Jewish Godhead through a piece of honeycomb. This is not only how Scripture works in its inter-linkability. This is how Scripture cooperates with other Second Temple Jewish material to prompt and prod and direct readers toward inter-linkability. This is what these writers are doing. They want to connect dots. And they want to help their readers to connect dots. Revelation is part of it. The New Testament is Second Temple literature. The Second Temple period in round numbers goes to 70 or 100 A.D. (what's a couple of decades)... It's the same complex here—this Jewish Christianity that has come out of Second Temple Judaism with its high Christology and its effort to understand the Two Yahwehs mindset, these angelomorphic figures from the Old Testament, whether it be Michael or the Angel of the Lord (who are not the same). But they bear enough similarities that some writers thought that, "Hey, maybe they are the same."

So this is the discussion that was going on in antiquity. And so Jesus... Just drop the honeycomb in there. It's Luke's way of reminding readers to think along these lines about who Jesus is in this scene. So again, that's a long way to traverse. But again, this is how Scripture connects. This is how it propels connectivity. And with the wider world of other people writing *about* Scripture, this is what they're trying to do. This is what they're trying to get their readers to think, trying to get their readers to notice things and connect dots.

**TS:** So it's not about honeybee eschatology?

**MH:** No, it's not. It's also not about Babylon Bee eschatology. [laughs]



**TS:** Oh, okay. [laughs]

**MH:** We'll put Babylon Bee in here.

**TS:** There you go. Perfect. Alright, Mike. Well, next week, do you know what we're covering?

**MH:** I have no idea. [laughs]

**TS:** No idea. We're fine here, folks. We have no idea what's going on.

**MH:** That's right. Put the blindfold on. [laughs]

**TS:** Alright, sounds good, Mike. Well, that was a good one. Well, we'll get people out on that. So with that, I want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.