

➤ **2 Sam. 21:19** In another battle with the Philistines at Gob, Elhanan son of Jaare-Oregim the Bethlehemite killed Goliath the Gittite, who had a spear with a shaft like a weaver's rod.

➤ **1 Chr. 20:5** In another battle with the Philistines, Elhanan son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, who had a spear with a shaft like a weaver's rod.

The second is likely to be the correctly preserved transcription. Inerrantist Hebrew scholar Gleason Archer provides a plausible explanation how the first passage could arise by scribal error:²

1. a copyist mistook the sign of the direct object before *Lahmi*, which was *'-t*, for a *b-t* or *b-y-t* (the Hebrew original only has consonants). This results in *Bêthal-Lahmî* ('the Bethlehemite');
 - 2. the copyist also misread the word for 'brother' (אָח *'-h*) as the sign of the direct object (אָת *'-t*) before 'Goliath' (*g-l-y-t*). This made 'Goliath' the object of 'killed' instead of 'brother' as per the original reading in Chronicles;
 - 3. the word 'weavers' (*'-r-g-ym*) was after 'a beam' (so 'a beam of weavers'). But it was misplaced to come after 'Elhanan ben Yair' making the patronymic *ben Y-'r-y 'r--giym* 'son of the forests of weavers', a most implausible name for a father!

Certainly, the preservation of Scripture is far higher than any other ancient document. Appeals to copyist error should be sparing and only with objective justification.

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References

1. See discussion in Holding, J.P., Copyist errors and estimations in the text of the Bible, <www.tektonics.org/copyisterrors.html>.
2. Archer, Gleason L., Jr., *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, pp. 178, 179, 1982.

Fr Seraphim's Rose's book, *Genesis, Creation and Early Man*

In my review of Fr Seraphim's Rose's book, *Genesis, Creation and Early Man*¹ I state that Eastern Orthodoxy

'denies the doctrine of original sin, which they wrongly claim was invented by Augustine, although he merely expounded upon the Biblical teaching in passages such as Romans 5:12–19.'

Thanks to criticisms from one reader and after further study, I have seen that this statement is not totally accurate and I wish to correct the wrong impression given. Though rejecting the Augustinian view, EO theologians do believe that Adam's sin affected all his posterity both physically and morally. Man was now subject to disease, pain and death as well as frustration, boredom, depression and inward alienation. The divine image in man was obscured but not obliterated. His free choice has been restricted in its exercise but not destroyed. Original sin means that people are born into an environment where it is easy to do evil and hard to do good, but sinful man is capable of doing some good, although not sufficient to save himself. So, all people automatically inherit Adam's corruption and mortality. But EO rejects the notion of inherited guilt from Adam and insists that every person is guilty by virtue of his own sins, which imitate Adam's.²

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References

1. Mortenson, T., orthodoxy and Genesis: what the fathers really taught, *TJ* 16(3):52, 2002.

2. See Ware, K., *The Orthodox Way*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, pp. 59–62, 1995 and; Ware K., *The Orthodox Church*, Penguin Books, London, pp. 222–224, 1997.

Flood boundary debate

Concerning the current Flood Geology debate, my own school text book will feature both views.

However a number of issues trouble me, regarding the Recolonisation view. Chief among these is exemplified by Robinson's admission that 'Were there no geological or archaeological evidence to bear on the question, the genealogy might be complete and thus provide the basis for an absolute chronology, but it cannot, exegetically, be assumed to be complete.'

For all the detail of Robinson's arguments, I would need more than external scientific theory to move me from a plain reading of what scripture says. Only an acknowledgement that the textual context required an alternative meaning would suffice. But the context makes no such demands. I am bound to say, therefore, that we have been here before, in terms of re-interpreting scripture to fit with the theories of the age.

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Flood models and chronogenealogy

It appears that only an interpretative whisker separates the 'Main Flood' adherents from those who prefer the 'Recolonisation model' in their understanding of Genesis.

Your comments at the end of the correspondence between Carl Froede and Steven Robinson imply that discussion on the attractive option of Recolonisation ends because the