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'Precept upon precept': biblical commonplacing in Lucy Hutchinson's *Memoirs*

Anna Wall

University of York, York, UK

ABSTRACT

In the account of her husband, John's, final days, Lucy Hutchinson depicts him as a Mosaic figure, dedicated to biblical reading and shown the 'patterne of [God's] glorious tabernacle'. This article explores Hutchinson's record of John's scriptural study: her list of over seven hundred proofs taken from his Bible and noted in the back of the *Memoirs* manuscript. Offering the first full study of these notes and their relationship to the biographical account of John's life, I argue for the importance of understanding them as an intrinsic part of the *Memoirs* project. Furthermore, this article explores how the curation of these notes has transformed them from an inert list of commonplaces – a straightforward record of John's scriptural reading – into doctrinal 'precepts' designed to preserve the Hutchinson family's theological independence and codify ecclesiastical practices which resist the authority of the Church of England.

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Memoirs; Lucy Hutchinson; commonplacing; nonconformity; materiality

> [H]is businesse and continuall study was the scripture, which the more he converst in, the more it delighted him; insomuch that his wife having brought downe some bookes to entertaine him in his sollitude, he thank'd her, and told her that if he should continue as long as he liv'd in prison, he would reade nothing there but his bible[.][1]

This excerpt from the closing pages of the *Memoirs* demonstrates the extent to which John Hutchinson's final days were marked by intense periods of scriptural study. Willing to read nothing but the Bible, John devoted himself not only to scriptural reading, but to exegetical study. Leaving 'many choice places mark'd … in his bible', he engaged in a collaborative process of scriptural notetaking with his wife: 'looking over some notes upon that Epistle [Romans] which his wife had left in a booke which she had gather'd from him, 'I have', sayd he, 'discover'd much more of the mistery of truth in that Epistle, and when my wife returns I will make her set it downe … she shall collect severall observations I have made of this Epistle since I came into prison' (270).

The final folios of the *Memoirs* manuscript (Nottingham City Museums and Galleries NCM 1922–71 [Nottinghamshire Archives DD/HU/4]; hereafter 'Life') appear to contain the outcome of this collaborative endeavour; after the narrative of John's life come fifty-seven pages in which Lucy Hutchinson has copied out over seven hundred biblical proofs

CONTACT Anna Wall anna.wall@york.ac.uk University of York, Heslington, York YO10 5DD, UK
[1]Sutherland (ed.), *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, 264. Further references will be in text.

arranged under headings in the style of a commonplace book. [2] These include, on the first page, a selection of passages from Romans 7 – the Epistle from which, as we are told in the narrative, Hutchinson collected John's 'observations'.[3] These commonplaces, then, appear to have originated from John's 'mark'd' Bible. While some of the nearly sixty categories under which the passages are organised are fairly generic, ranging from theological matters – 'Promises to the Church', 'Triumphs of faith' – to the prosaic, 'Reputation', 'Concerning Sloth', 'Drunkenness', many are pertinent to John's experiences, the titles stressing his own selection of the excerpts: 'Psalms he had markd when he first began to be persecuted', 'His selected psalmes in the prison'.[4] We are also offered clues to John's system of annotation, a feature which suggests Hutchinson's fidelity to his organisational principles; she notes at one point that the 'whole tenth psalme is markd with C'.[5] Turning to the list of psalms John marked in his time of persecution, which is given simply as a list of numbers, above '10' we find this 'C' while other psalms are marked with an 'x', single dots, or double dots.[6] It seems that, when 'marking' his Bible, John devised a key which allowed Hutchinson to copy out the passages under the relevant headings.

In a sense, then, these commonplaces do not present us with writing 'by' Hutchinson and this is perhaps one of the reasons why they have been overlooked by scholars. Only Norbrook's 2004 study 'Textual Authority and Gender in Editions of *The Life of John Hutchinson*' offers a consideration of these notes, describing them as 'full of denunciations of tyranny and warnings that idolatry will never go long unpunished'.[7] The scholarly response to this section of the manuscript has also been shaped by the decisions made by past editors to excise these notes when publishing the *Memoirs*; Julius Hutchinson does not mention them at all in his 1806 edition; Charles Firth and James Sutherland's otherwise much more detailed editions similarly omit any mention of the notes; and N. H. Keeble's 1995 edition only mentions them briefly in the 'Note on the Text'.[8]

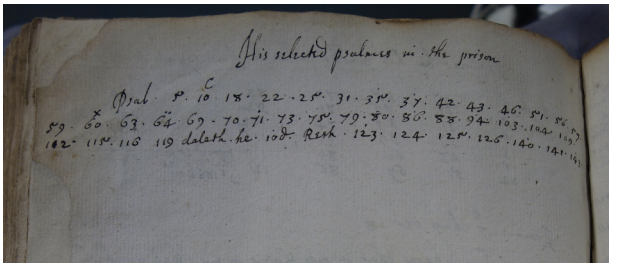

Figure 1. Nottingham City Museums and Galleries NCM 1922–71 (Nottinghamshire Archives DD/HU/4), pp. 424. All images reproduced with the kind permission of Nottingham City Museum and Galleries.

[2] Hutchinson, 'Life', 423-479. In the manuscript, these pages have been left unnumbered; for ease, I have numbered them following on from the final page of the narrative, 419.
[3] 'Life', 423.
[4] 'Life', 442, 445, 462, 463, 423, 424.
[5] 'Life', 492.
[6] 'Life', 424. See Figure 1.
[7] Norbrook, 'But a Copie', 115.
[8] Julius Hutchinson (ed.), *Memoirs*; Firth (ed.), *Memoirs*; Sutherland, *Memoirs*; Keeble (ed.), *Memoirs*, xxx. Norbrook's 'But a copie' gives an excellent overview of the editorial practices of each print edition.

Messy and derivative as they are, the omission of these notes from print editions is, perhaps, understandable. However, by ignoring them, we ignore a tenth of the manuscript – some 25,000 words. More crucially, we ignore a textual venture which Hutchinson seemingly envisioned as an important part of the overall endeavour to record her husband's life. For, while fire damage to the margins of the first and last folios of the biblical commonplaces suggest this part of the manuscript was kept as a separate unit for some time, the pages containing the notes are written on the same paper stock as the narrative and cut to the same size.[9] Moreover, Hutchinson is consistent in her page layout across the different sections of the manuscript; the pages on which the notes are written resemble those of the narrative, Hutchinson having left a fairly wide margin (of about a fifth to a quarter of the page width) to the left of these commonplaces which she uses here to note the biblical verse and chapter. Hutchinson, it seems, intended her readers to view this manuscript as a cohesive whole.

In her study of New England Puritans, Meredith Marie Neuman argued for the benefits of exploring the relationship between divergent materials within the same manuscript notebook, suggesting that, purposefully or not, these 'materially bound … texts inevitably enter into dialogue with each other'.[10] This article, offering the first extended study of the biblical notes, will explore the 'dialogue' that emerges when we consider this record of exegetical study as a part of the *Memoirs*, as the materiality of the manuscript encourages us to do. It will ask why this record of John's scriptural reading was included alongside his biography and, moreover, how its inclusion affects our understanding of Hutchinson's most famous text. Most straightforwardly, these commonplaces provide documentation of John's final period of scriptural study, evidencing the scenario described in the narrative with which this article began. Yet to view them in this way, I would suggest, is to underplay the importance of this vast collection of scriptural proofs. To explore the wider purpose these notes might serve, I will first consider Hutchinson's narrative description of John as a religious patriarch, before exploring how this seemingly straightforward record of John's 'mark'd' Bible appears to have been curated, inviting interpretation from future readers.

While Hutchinson expresses concern in the *Memoirs* when others label John a 'favourer of separatists', a key section of the narrative works to present John as an Old Testament patriarch, the leader of a small group of Christians who, during a time of physical separation, form a new congregation on the couple's Owthorpe estate (125). After the Act of Oblivion, John retreated from London to Owthorpe, and 'liv'd with all imaginable retirednesse att home' (239). As Line Cottegnies has noted, in this section Hutchinson offers a revision of the Royalist *topos* of retirement, 'the motif of pastoral retreat, as popularized by new translations from Horace or Virgil'.[11] Hutchinson aligns this period of retreat at Owthorpe with Old Testament congregations through a series of interwoven comparisons; during this time of persecution, John, like Isaac and Jacob, worked the land, shaping the environment for his community, 'opening springs and

[9]A watermark with a quatrefoil and fleur-de-lis design, topped with a Maltese cross is visible throughout the manuscript while the pages are consistently 22.4 by 17 cm. Norbrook has argued convincingly that the opening descriptions of 'John's virtues' were also kept as a separate unit for some time, Hutchinson having 'letterlocked' the opening pages; Norbrook, 'Lucy Hutchinson's *Memoirs*: What the Manuscript Tells Us'.

[10]Neuman, *Jeremiah's Scribes*, 174.

[11]Cottegnies, 'The Garden and the Tower', 129.

planting trees and dressing his plantations'; like Jacob in Genesis 28, John receives his own prophetic dream which foretold 'those triumphs which he could not read in his mortall estate'; and Hutchinson draws parallels between the secret marriage of their son and the concerns of Isaac and Rebecca regarding Jacob's marriage (239–242).[12] The congregations with which Hutchinson aligns their community at Owthorpe were marked by their physical separation from corrupted forms of ecclesiastical practice and, crucially, overseen by a patriarch who acted as the authority in theological matters, interpreting God's Word. Like Moses in Exodus 18, John adopts the role of theological instructor, 'revolving the law of God, wherein he labour'd to instruct his children and servants' (239).

This Mosaic parallel is introduced early in the *Memoirs* as Hutchinson compares John's first retreat from worldly pleasures into a period of scriptural study to 'the preparation of Moses in the wilderness, with his father-in-law':

> certaine it is he was sequester'd from Pharoah's Court, allow'd the consolation of a wife and blest with two sons in his retirement, and had more pleasure in the contemplation of God's greate workes than in all the enjoyments of the world's vaine pomps, before he was thus prepar'd to be a leader of God's people out of bondage … and afterwards … in the holy mount and wildernesse Tabernacle [he] receiv'd more full and glorious instructions from God and discoveries of him, yett, after all, was but allow'd a Pisgah's sight of Canaan. (35)[13]

What is stressed here is not simply John's continual dedication to scriptural exegesis, but his role as a theological instructor; John is not simply given 'instructions' but, as 'a leader of Gods people', he is responsible for sharing his doctrinal revelations. A page later, turning to the end of John's life and his time in prison, Hutchinson once again 'allegorises' John's situation with Moses' in a passage which I shall quote as it appears in the manuscript so that Hutchinson's amendment is visible:

> whosoe considers the following history shall find, that Mr Hutchinson againe might often take vp the paralell of the greate Hebrew Prince, and if wee may allegorize the eminent place of suffering, into which god calld him vp att last, there it was, in the bleake ~~high towers where they shut him vp~~ mountaines of afliction, that the lord instructed him in his law, and shewd him a patterne of his glorious tabernacle and gaue him a fuller discovery of his person … he was led vp to see the promisd land[.][14]

Changing 'high towers' to 'mountaines of afliction', Hutchinson creates a more direct parallel between John's time in prison and Moses' journey to Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments. Neither man lived to see the 'glorious tabernacle' come to fruition, being granted just a 'sight of Canaan', yet both played an instrumental exegetical role laying the groundwork for others to build God's true church based upon their privileged understanding of His Word. It becomes essential, then, that John's scriptural understanding be recorded for future generations.

It has long been acknowledged that the *Memoirs* demonstrates Hutchinson's desire to uphold John's legacy; most recently, Claire Gheeraert-Graffeuille has argued that the description of John's 'exemplariness' with which Hutchinson begins the manuscript 'was not only a way for his wife to clear his name but also a means to turn him into a historical

[12]For cultivation see Genesis 26 and 28, and for Jacob's marriage, Genesis 28:1 (KJV).
[13]The biblical comparison is with Exodus 18:13-16 (KJV).
[14]'Life', 61.

figure to be emulated by future generations'.[15] Arguably, befitting the comparisons Hutchinson makes between John and Moses, this legacy is in part theological. In the opening address to their children, she writes that they may mourn John's passing, 'yett, if our teares did not putt out our eies, wee should see him, even in heaven, holding forth his flaming lamp of vertuous examples and precepts to light us through the darke world' (3). A single page of prose follows the narrative of John's life, a page which Norbrook has described as a 'bridge into the biblical excerpts'.[16] Here, once again, Hutchinson directly invokes John's theological legacy as she offers a much more emotional account of John's death than that found in the central narrative. She presents herself as Lot's wife, safely removed from his sight so as not to tempt him back from death. As in the address to their children, she mentions the 'precepts' that John has left behind:

> his memory will neuer perish while there ^are^ any good men surviving who desire to preserue one of the fairest copies in the ~~book~~ examplary booke of honor & vertue [.] by the gracious precepts he left with his children to tranferre to their posterity he will preach truth and holinesse to succeeding generations[.][17]

Hutchinson's sense of John's theological legacy here takes on a more physical dimension as the metaphorical 'flaming lamp' becomes precepts '*left* with his children' through which John will preach doctrinal truth. Damage to the corners of this page, which can be found on the following pages but not those which precede it, show that it existed in a bundle with the biblical notes rather than the narrative of John's life before the manuscript was bound together.[18] Here, then, Hutchinson implies that John's 'precepts' have been physically left behind as the reference shifts from the general following of a father's footsteps encouraged in their children, to a direct reference to the passages recorded in the following folios.

It is in this way, I would argue, that we can begin to understand the relationship between the narrative of John's life and the biblical notes. The commonplaces do not simply offer evidence of John's period of scriptural study – they offer a record of the 'glorious instructions' he received from God in his periods of retreat. Able to 'preach truth' to future generations even after John's death, they, like the Commandments of Moses, offer guidance and a means of securing his theological legacy even in his absence. This understanding of the commonplaces is compounded by Hutchinson's description of them as 'precepts'. A now obsolete name for the Ten Commandments, a 'precept' is a 'rule for action or conduct'. [19] In the Geneva Bible 'precept' is used most frequently to describe God's doctrines as taught by the Old Testament patriarchs; in Isaiah 28, in the passage that supplied the title for this article, God's 'mighty and strong one' preaches 'precept upon precept', while Paul describes Moses as having 'spoken every precept to the people'.[20] Precepts set out a cohesive theological and ecclesiastical programme, defining the rules by which Christians can gain access to God's 'glorious tabernacle'.

[15]Gheeraert-Graffeuille, *Lucy Hutchinson and the English Revolution*, 54.
[16]Norbrook, 'But a copie', 114.
[17]'Life', 420.
[18]See Figure 2.
[19]See for example, Cowell, *Divine Oracles*,the full title of which refers to the 'Ten Precepts Recorded in Exod[us] 20'. 'precept, n.', 1.a *OED Online*(2021).
[20]Isaiah 28:10, Hebrews 9:19. See also Nehemiah 9:14 and Jeremiah 35:18 (KJV).

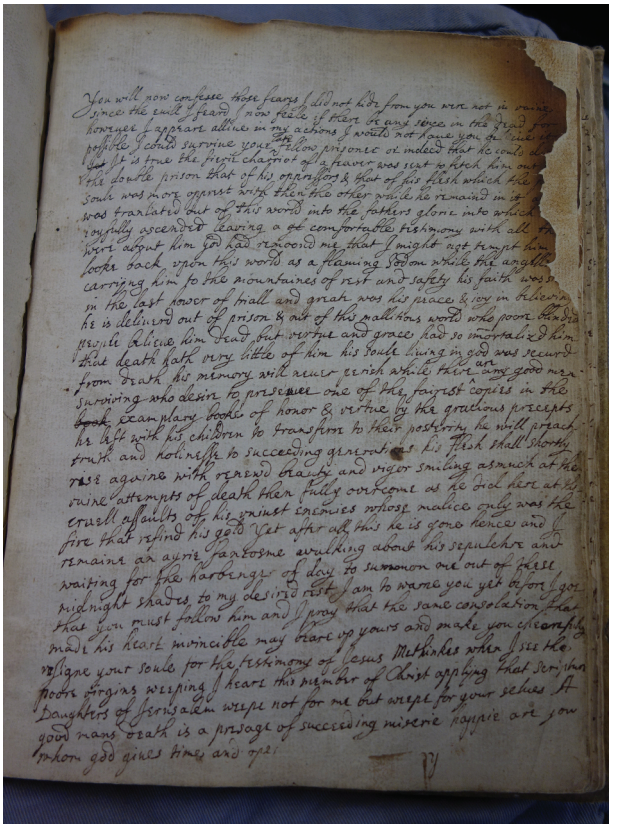

Figure 2. NCM 1922–71 (DD/HU/4), p. 421.

However, to understand a collection of commonplaces as a cohesive and interpretable text exceeds our current expectations of this genre. The unoriginal and borrowed nature of the materials compiled in commonplace books makes trying to interpret meaning difficult. Some scholars, noticeably Kevin Sharpe, have shown the benefits of exploring the *accumulation* of materials in a commonplace book as a means of understanding the reader/writer's worldview, while Robert Darnton in his essay for the *NYRB*, 'Extraordinary Commonplaces', concludes that some 'commonplace books bore the stamp of … consciousness'. [21] Furthermore, Adam Smyth has expanded our understanding of the possible 'legacy' of commonplace books through his study of those compiled by Sir Roger Wilbraham (1553–1616) which, he suggests, offer a 'template' for his children, 'both a record of, and a force to shape their lives'.[22] These studies suggest that we can gather meaning from the accumulation of passages which may reveal what a writer 'found interesting or pleasurable' or, in Smyth's case, what they wanted to pass on to their children.[23] Yet, to read meaning in *the order* in which those materials appear

[21]Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions*, and Darnton, 'Extraordinary Commonplaces'.
[22]Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England*, 150.
[23]Burke, 'Commonplacing, Making Miscellanies, and Interpreting Literature', 222.

may be, as Victoria E. Burke warns us, to apply 'literary criteria to non-literary material'.[24]

However, Hutchinson's very particular description of this record of John's exegetical reading as 'precepts' places pressure on these commonplaces to offer a cohesive interpretation of God's Word – to define, and present in an interpretable way, John's idiosyncratic theological and ecclesiastical rules which will secure the salvation of future readers. In the study of scribal miscellanies, it has been noted that the juxtaposition between two texts can create a meaning which is not inherent in either text alone, 'producing new interpretive possibilities'.[25] I would like to argue that, in the case of these commonplaces, it is not just the choice of scriptural passages, but the order in which they are placed – their 'juxtaposition' – which generates meaning; that we can read them in a 'literary' way (Figure 3).

Despite Hutchinson's suggestion that these commonplaces have simply been extrapolated from John's annotated Bible, arguably the individual lists have been curated, the passages placed in a certain order. The individual lists of passages under each heading pay no heed to biblical order, whether by book or even by chapter and verse within the same book, as this list of proofs, 'Applicable Scriptures to the Prelates', demonstrates:

> Ezekiel 34: 3–5, Ezekiel 35: 20–21, Jeremiah 50: 6, Jeremiah 6: 14, Zephaniah 3: 4, Isaiah 29: 9–15, Jeremiah 6: 7, Matthew 15: 3, Mark 7: 9, 7, Matthew 15: 9, Jeremiah 19: 5, Micah 3: 2, 3, 5, 6, 11, Micah 7: 3, 1 Peter 4: 4, 2 Peter 2: 1–2, 10, 12, 14, 15, 19, 20, 22, 2 Peter 3: 3–4, Jude 8, Hosea 9: 14, Amos 6: 3–6, Amos 5: 18, Habakkuk 2: 4.[26]

Were Hutchinson simply to have gone through John's Bible excerpting the passages he had marked, they would likely match the scriptural order, especially when marked passages were so close to one another (Jeremiah 6: 14 and 6: 7 for example). Disorder of passages was, of course, often a result of traditional commonplacing when a writer wrote down passages as they were encountered perhaps during different periods of reading. Hutchinson's layout, however, unlike a traditional commonplace book, leaves no room to return and add passages as she reread John's Bible.[27] The categories follow directly on from one another, often on the same page, demonstrating that Hutchinson collected all the passages related to one topic before moving onto the next rather than working her way through John's Bible, adding passages to the correct, pre-designed, page; different periods of reading, then, cannot account for the order – or rather, disorder – of these passages.

Can we, however, interpret theological or ecclesiastical precepts from this dissonant layering of scriptural passages? In the list above, the passages are taken from a mix of Old and New Testament books, with no attention paid to biblical order: two passages from Matthew 15 are interrupted by Mark 7: 9, while passages from Ezekiel precede those from Jeremiah. Yet, arguably, from this ordering of the passages, a *doctrinal* sense emerges. The first seven proofs offer Old Testament examples of God's various promises to destroy the ungodly among the people of different places: Israel, Babylon, Jerusalem, Ariel.[28] In

[24]Burke, 'Commonplacing, Making Miscellanies, and Interpreting Literature', 224.
[25]Eckhardt and Starza Smith (eds.), *Manuscript Miscellanies in Early Modern England*, 17.
[26]'Life', 431-3. For the first page of this list see Figure 3.
[27]See also Figure 3, the top of which shows how lists follow directly on from one another.
[28]Ezekiel 34:3-5, 34:20-21 (listed by Hutchinson as 35:20-21), Jeremiah 50:6, 6:14, Zephaniah 3:4, Isaiah 29:9-15, and Jeremiah 6:7 (KJV).

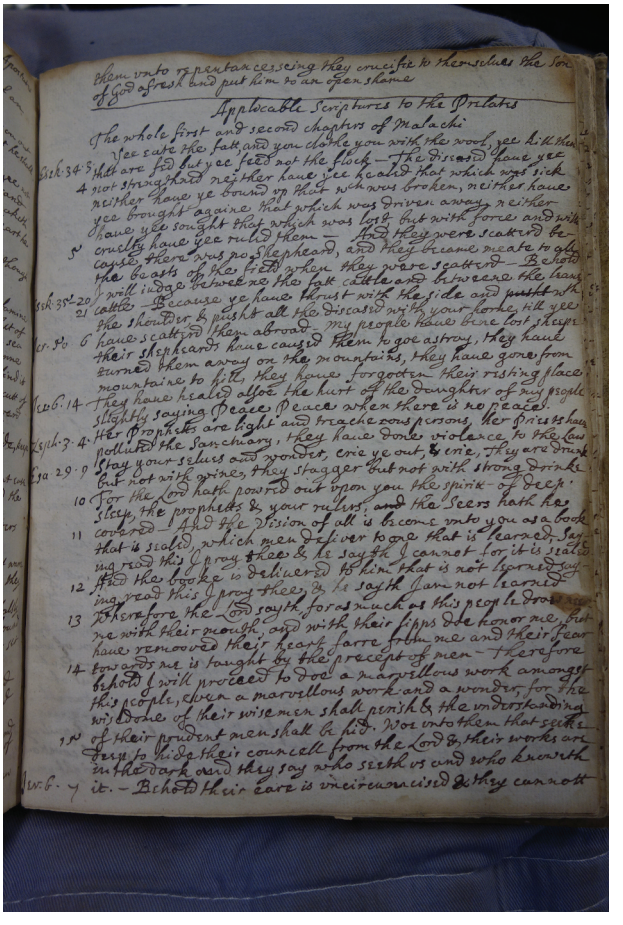

Figure 3. NCM 1922–71 (DD/HU/4), p. 431.

each example, God speaks directly to his chosen prophet, and each attacks the actions of the city rulers or priests. In Jeremiah 50: 6, for example, it is the 'shepheards' which 'haue cause them to goe astray, they haue turned them away on the mountains', while Zephaniah 3: 4 records how the 'Priests haue polluted the Sanctuary, they haue done violence to the Law' of Jerusalem. This section of the passages culminates in Jeremiah 6: 10 with a warning that the people of Jerusalem 'cannot hear' the Word of God and 'haue no delight in it'. Taken together, these passages imply that the negative behaviour of the priests has created a society which cannot comprehend the Word of God.

The passages then turn to the New Testament and the example of Christ chastising the Pharisees as recorded in Matthew 15 and Mark 7. Disrupting the biblical order, Hutchinson places the passage from Mark, which reiterates Matthew 15: 3, before Matthew 15: 9. Clearly here, Hutchinson ascribes Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisees to Prelates – they too, 'transgresse the commandement of God by your traditions' and teach according to the 'commandements of men'. Following these passages are two further examples of God's wrath against Zion from Jeremiah and Micah, the first a direct example of acting according to the precepts of men: 'They haue built alsoe the

high places of Baal to burne their sons with fire for burnt offerings vnto Baal which I commanded not'. The long section from Micah lists the failings of the princes, priests, and prophets. Hutchinson makes it clear that these failings are shared among the powerful with the marginal note, 'Princes and priests are here putt together'.[29] In this return to the Old Testament, the focus changes to how God will respond to these failings rather than, as in the earlier list, simply detailing the failings; Micah 3:6 states how 'the sun shall goe downe ouer the prophetts'.

This sense of narrative cohesion continues as attention turns once again to the New Testament, now the Epistles of Peter. In these proofs Peter first looks back to the time of the Old Testament passages listed before, alluding to the destruction of Sodom (2 Peter 2) in his depiction of current heresies: 'There shall be false teachers among you who privily shall bring damnable heresies euen deniing the Lord'. These passages from Peter encourage an awareness of the past as a means of avoiding current pitfalls – this is the past which has already been recorded in the passages above. The sense of this ever-present danger is enhanced in the last passage from 2 Peter in which he notes that even 'in the last dayes' there will be 'scoffers walking after their own lusts'. This is then followed by another return to the Old Testament, but now passages which also speak of the final day of recompense: Hosea 9: 14, Amos 6: 3, Amos 5: 18 and Habakkuk 2: 4.

Thus, despite the seeming disorder of the biblical passages, a narrative sense emerges from this list, one which bears the weight of ecclesiastical doctrine; the danger presented by mistaken and unlawful prelates has always been, and will always be, present. Furthermore, their presence, as it did in the time of the Old Testament, will lead to the separation of communities into those who follow the commands of men and those who follow the Word of God. Arguably this sense would not be as clear if the passages were presented in strict biblical order. The passages warning of the final destruction are given more contemporary resonance, coming as they do, after the New Testament warnings of Peter and condemnation of Jesus in the Gospel. Similarly, a strong link is created between the inept priests of Old Testament Israel and the New Testament Pharisees through use of juxtaposition. The negative effect of hierarchical ecclesiology is clear – across the scope of biblical history, it has led people into damnation. 'Applicable Scriptures to the Prelates', then, offers not a static list of commonplaces concerning *how* a priest or prelate is supposed to behave, but a doctrinally pointed amalgamation of passages arguing for a different kind of ecclesiastical organisation through a demonstration of the destructive outcome of misguided church ministry. This list has been curated to generate a meaning which is greater than its component parts and which encourages the same kind of Separatist ecclesiastical practices that, in the narrative, marked the family's 'retreat' at Owthorpe.

Limitations of space prevent a full exploration of all the lists which seem to work in this doctrinally pointed way, and it should be acknowledged that some of the lists function as more straightforward collections of commonplaces, particularly the shorter, more worldly based categories such as 'Reputation', 'Sloth', 'Drunkenness', 'servants'.[30] These lists do seem to have gathered proofs which are applicable to their subjects in

[29]This is in apparent reference to the explanatory note for Micah 3 in the Geneva Bible: 'Against the tyrannie of princes and false prophetes'.
[30]'Life', 462, 463.

a more traditional style. 'Against witchcraft', for example, lists a single proof, Deuteronomy 18: 10–12, which simply offers a scriptural refutation of magical practices.[31] Many do offer more complicated doctrinal conclusions, however, meaning emerging from the dissonant layering of scriptural passages. The passages collected under the headings of 'Concerning Magistracy and Magistrates For the choyce of them', 'Magistrates duties' and 'Concerning subiects', for example, work together to define a certain, restrained, kind of ecclesiastical leadership which offers a challenge to the emerging church hierarchy of late seventeenth-century England.[32] Under 'Concerning Magistracy', the reader is given the example of Moses who appointed others to share the burden of ministry before passages expressing the qualities those men must have, namely, to be 'from among thy brethren'. Therefore, when the passages culminate in Peter's exhortation to 'submit' to the leadership of Governors, 'for the punishment of evill doers and for the prayse of them that doe well', the list has already set out the limits to such obedience.[33] If followed, these 'precepts' would bring into being a congregation forged around a dialectical relationship between minister and people, one secluded from legally enforced modes of ecclesiastical association.

At the beginning of this article, I explored the ways in which certain textual features present the notes as 'John's', with Hutchinson's role simply that of scribe. Certainly, it seems central to the function of these notes that readers believe that they present John's theological precepts; he was, after all, the one shown the 'pattern of God's glorious tabernacle'. Yet, Hutchinson does seem to have played an editorial role. Most notably, for her to have compiled these notes from John's Bible would have required John to have used an annotation system far more elaborate than is evidenced by surviving early modern Bibles. While William H. Sherman details a large selection of annotated Bibles in his study of marginalia and finds 'the full range of annotational techniques', none contain annotations detailed enough to have produced Hutchinson's notes.[34] Similarly, from her recent study of Early Modern Dutch Bibles, Renske Hoff has suggested that, while biblical annotation was commonplace, coding systems of this complexity were not, most readers favouring 'NB's, crosses, or manicules – marks which would not allow for the extrapolation of passages in a specific order.[35] It may be that the notes were copied from a, now lost, notebook written by John, but this does run counter to the headings, 'In reference to an vngratefull Peere & others these *might* be marked', and 'a conclusion gathered upon all this from the other places he then marked' which gesture to Hutchinson's editorial intervention.[36] The notes may, of course, be the result of a collaborative endeavour like that described in the narrative where Hutchinson not only acted as scribe, but 'gather'd' and 'collected' John's observations. Bearing the marks of her editorial involvement, however, I would argue that we should at least *begin* to consider this curated list of scriptural proofs as a text written by Hutchinson.

[31]'Life', 473: 'There shall not be found among you - or that vseth devination or an observer of times or an enchanter or a witch or a charmer or a consulter with familiar spiritts &ct For these nations hearkened vnto Observers of times & vnto deviners &ct.'
[32]'Life', 460-461.
[33]'Life', 460.
[34]Sherman, *Used Books*, 79.
[35]Personal communication. See. Hoff, 'Involving Readers', 2022.
[36]'Life', 429, 435. Emphasis added.

I also hope to have shown that these commonplaces should be considered as an intrinsic part of Hutchinson's *Memoirs* project. Not only do they work in dialogue with the narrative depiction of John as an Old Testament patriarch, evidencing his Mosaic role as the founding father of a new church but, as an interpretable collection of precepts, they offer a cohesive articulation of the rules one must follow to be considered a member of this new community. Curated – perhaps by Hutchinson herself – in a way which is decipherable to future generations of readers, these proofs exhort a specific kind of church settlement, offering a manifesto of ecclesiology which rejects the national church. The inclusion of these notes supports the critical understanding of the *Memoirs* as a text concerned with John's legacy, revealing the full efficacy of the manuscript as one designed to encourage the emulation of John. By codifying his beliefs and binding them together with the account of his life, Hutchinson ensures that future generations have both a depiction of the ideal form of ecclesiastical organisation and a textual 'guidebook' which will enable them to recreate John's church based on his 'gracious precepts'.

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ORCID

Anna Wall http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4963-4533

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