

# Biblical passages referenced in the drafts of Isaac Newton's General Scholium

## Draft A

No biblical references.

## Draft B

Note b: Acts 17:27,28; Deuteronomy 4:39; Deuteronomy 10:14; 1 Kings 8:27; Job 22:12; Psalms 139:7; Jeremiah 23:23,24

## Draft C

Note a: Acts 17:27,28; Psalms 139:7; Deuteronomy 4:39; Deuteronomy 10:14; 1 Kings 8:27; Job 22:12; Jeremiah 23:23,24

Note †: John 1:18; John 5:37; 1 John 4:12; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Timothy 6:16; Colossians 1:15

Note \*: John 1:18; John 5:37; 1 John 4:12; Exodus 20:4; 1 Timothy 6:16; 1 Timothy 1:17; Leviticus; Deuteronomy 4:12,15,16; Isaiah 40:18,19; Acts 17:29; Colossians 1:15

## Draft D

Note a: Acts 17:27,28; Deuteronomy 4:39; Deuteronomy 10:14; 1 Kings 8:27; Job 22:12; Psalms 139:7; Jeremiah 23:23,24

Note b: John 1:18; John 5:37; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Timothy 6:16; 1 John 4:12

## Draft E

Note a: Acts 17:27,28; Deuteronomy 4:39; Deuteronomy 10:14; 1 Kings 8:27; Job 22:12; Psalms 139:7; Jeremiah 23:23,24

Draft A = Cambridge University Library Add. MS. 3965, ff. 357<sup>r-v</sup>, 358<sup>r</sup>

Draft B = Cambridge University Library Add. MS. 3965, ff. 359<sup>r-v</sup>, 360<sup>r</sup>

Draft C = Cambridge University Library Add. MS. 3965, ff. 361<sup>r-v</sup>, 362<sup>v</sup>

Draft D = Cambridge University Library Add. MS. 3965, ff. 363<sup>r-v</sup>

Draft E = Cambridge University Library Add. MS. 3965, ff. 365<sup>r-v</sup>

## Partial draft on the word 'God'

Deuteronomy 10:17; Daniel 2:47; Daniel 11:46 {sic for 11:36}/

Exodus 22:28; Psalm 82:6; John 10:34; Judges 13:21,22; Exodus 14:16 {sic for 4:16}; Exodus 7:1/

Partial draft on the word 'God' = Cambridge University Library Add. MS. 3965, f. 547<sup>r</sup>

*Note:* Strike-throughs = Newton's deletions; \ ... / = supralinear insertions; Newton's originally abbreviated titles of biblical books have been expanded for clarity. Italicised passages = verses cited in the published General Scholium. For colour scans of the original manuscripts, see the Cambridge Digital Library. For professional transcriptions of Drafts A–E in diplomatic and normalised formats, visit the Newton Project website: [www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk](http://www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk)

## Scriptural passages in the footnote on the omnipresence of God

*‘... that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us. For in him we live, and move, and have our being, as certain also of your own poets have said, “For we are also his offspring”.*

Acts 17:27–28 (Drafts B, C, D, E)

*‘Know therefore this day, and consider it in thy heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else’.*

Deuteronomy 4:39 (Drafts B, C, D, E)

*‘Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD’s thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is’.*

Deuteronomy 10:14 (Drafts B, C, D, E)

*‘But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee: how much less this house that I have built?’*

1 Kings 8:27 (Drafts B, C, D, E)

*‘Is not God in the height of heaven?  
and behold the height of the stars, how high they are.  
And thou sayest, “How doth God know?  
can he judge through the dark cloud?  
Thick clouds are a covering to him that he seeth not,  
and he walketh in the circuit of heaven”.*

Job 22:12–14 (Drafts B, C, D, E)

*Whither shall I go from thy spirit?  
or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*

Psalms 139:7 (Drafts B, C, D, E)

*‘Am I a God at hand,’ saith the LORD,  
‘and not a God afar off?  
Can any hide himself in secret places  
that I shall not see him?’ saith the LORD.  
‘Do not I fill heaven and earth?’ saith the LORD.*

Jeremiah 23:23–24 (Drafts B, C, D, E)

## Scriptural passages in the footnote on the invisibility of God

No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John 1:18 (Drafts C, D)

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his

voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

John 5:37 (Drafts C, D)

No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

1 John 4:12 (Drafts C, D)

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Timothy 1:17 (Drafts C, D)

I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebutable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords: who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

1 Timothy 6:13–16 (verse 16 underlined; Drafts C, D)

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.

Colossians 1:12–15 (verse 15 underlined; Drafts C, D)

### **Scriptural passages in the footnote on the non-representability of God (final form)**

'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.'

Exodus 20:4 (Draft C)

'And the LORD spoke unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

'And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it. Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves (for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spoke unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire), lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, the likeness of anything that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth: and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven,

and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven'.

Deuteronomy 4:12–19 (verses 12, 15, 16 underlined; Draft C)

To whom then will ye liken God?  
or what likeness will ye compare unto him?  
The workman melteth a graven image,  
and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold,  
and casteth silver chains.

Isaiah 40:18–19 (Draft C)

'Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device'.

Acts 17:29 (Draft C)

## Partial draft on the word 'God'

### Scriptural passages on the biblical title "the God of gods"

'For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward'. Deuteronomy 10:17

The king answered unto Daniel, and said, 'Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret'.

Daniel 2:47

"And the king shall do according to his will, and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done".'

Daniel 11:36

### Scriptural passages on angels, princes and judges called 'God'

'Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people'.

Exodus 22:28

*'I have said, "Ye are gods:  
and all of you are children of the most High.'"*

Psalms 82:6

Jesus answered them, ‘Is it not written in your law, “I said, ‘Ye are gods’”? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken: say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, “Thou blasphemest”; because I said, I am the Son of God”?

John 10:34–36 (verse 34 underlined; verse 35 italicised)

(But the angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife): then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the LORD. And Manoah said unto his wife, ‘We shall surely die, because we have seen God’.

Judges 13:21–22

‘And thou [Moses] shalt speak unto him [Aaron], and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.’

Exodus 4:15–16 (verse 16 underlined)

*And the LORD said unto Moses, ‘See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet’.*

Exodus 7:1



### Bibliographical details

Quotations from the King James Version (1611) as published in *The New Cambridge Paragraph Bible*, ed. David Norton. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

### Commentary

The references given in the footnote on the omnipresence of God survive in the General Scholium published in the *Principia* of 1713; the other references do not. With respect to notes † and \* in Draft C, the darker colour of the ink used in note † and in the deletions in note \*, along with the fact that the verses deleted in note \* (re)appear in note †, strongly suggest that note \* was written first, with note † being assembled later in the process of composition from select verses taken from the originally longer form of note †. Precisely the same verses in note † of Draft C, constitute those in note b of Draft D (albeit in a slightly different order). The separation of the verses in the original form of note \* creates a distinction between passages on the invisibility of God from those prohibiting iconolatry. Newton sees both sets of verses as teaching the incorporeality of God, something he discusses in the drafts and published versions of the General Scholium.