In this paper I examine the text of three verses from the end of the book of Malachi. I also examine the proposed redactional history of the end of the book of Malachi and the tendency in biblical scholarship to concentrate solely on the masoretic form of the text when attempting to reconstruct the redactional history of biblical compositions. I argue that such reconstructions must take into account all the manuscript evidence for a biblical composition, especially that of the Greek versions.

I use the short passage at the end of the book of Malachi, 3:22–24, and investigate the text according to both Hebrew and Greek witnesses. The reason I use this passage is that a recent reconstruction of the scribal production of the Bible in the Hellenistic period by Karel van der Toorn makes central use of the last three verses of the book of Malachi.1 Van der Toorn hypothesizes the publication of an edition of all of the Minor Prophets on a single scroll by Jerusalem scribes around 250 B.C.E. He builds on observations of many scholars to hypothesize that the book of Malachi was the creation of the Jerusalem scribes at this time in order to bring the number of Minor Prophets on the scroll up to twelve.2 Of necessity he argues that the masoretic order of the Twelve Minor Prophets, with Malachi at the end, is the original order in the collection.3 He further builds on the work of other scholars in suggesting that Mal 3:22–24 is a postscript to the book of Malachi that was intentionally composed as such by the Jerusalem scribes. The postscript functions

2 Ibid., 252–253.
3 See my edition of 4QXIIa (4Q76) in *DJD XV* (1997): 221–231, which seems to preserve the order Malachi-Jonah on the remains of a scroll of the Twelve Minor Prophets dating from ca. 150 B.C.E. See also van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 253, 362–363 n. 68.
to conclude the book of Malachi and the new collection of the Twelve Minor Prophets. Finally, in agreement with scholars such as Rudolph, he holds that Mal 3:22–24 was intended by the Jerusalem scribes to function as a postscript to the scribal edition of the prophets (Joshua through Malachi). Although he understands that the postscript/epilogue was written by the Jerusalem scribes as one piece, he thinks that the two parts of the epilogue allow insight into the concerns of the scribes in creating this multipurpose ending. The first section, which in the masoretic form of the text refers to the Torah of Moses, was intended to indicate that the collection of the prophets was not meant to take the place of the Torah. The second section of the ending, which refers to the coming of the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord, he understands as reflecting the scribes’ expectation of the nearness of that day. He claims that the ending “... suggests that the publication of the Prophets is to be situated in a time of messianic expectations.”

Van der Toorn’s reconstruction is based on the assumption that the masoretic form of the end of Mal 3:22–24 is the original or at least the older form of the text and that the placement of the book of Malachi at the end of the collection of the Twelve Minor Prophets is also original/older than any other form the collection may have taken. The reconstruction does acknowledge the existence of variant forms of the text of Mal 3:22–24, as is found in the Septuagint, and variations in the order of books in other forms of the collection of the twelve such as those found at Qumran, but these are dismissed with little or no consideration for their implications for the reconstruction. It is my thesis that consideration of this evidence has important implications for the canonical history of the Book of the Twelve. Indeed, as a matter of course, all evidence should be considered in the reconstruction of the history of the text.

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